



VOLUME 14 ISSUE 10
OCTOBER 2020

RANCH RECORD

Official Newsletter of The Steiner Ranch HOA



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COMMUNITY INFO

STEINER RANCH

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS OFFICE

12550 Country Trails Lane

Austin, Texas 78732

512-266-7553 – Telephone

512-266-9312 – Facsimile

www.steinerranchhoa.org

OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Friday (Closed from 12–1:00pm) 9:00am – 5:00pm

Saturday & Sunday **CLOSED**

STAFF

General Manager

Melinda Schoch..... steiner@ciramail.com

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Cami Porter..... steiner@ciramail.com

Compliance steiner@ciramail.com

COMPLIANCE, ARCHITECTURAL

Compliance/ACC Coordinator..... steiner@ciramail.com

SRMA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Email the SRMA BOD..... board@steinerranchhoa.org

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

EMERGENCY.....911

Fire.....911

Ambulance.....911

Sheriff – Non-Emergency.....512-974-0845

Travis County ESD No.6/Lake Travis Fire Rescue

Administration Office.....512-266-2533

Travis County Animal Control.....512-974-2000

STEINER RANCH CONTACTS

Steiner Ranch Community Association

Office.....512-266-7553

SCHOOLS

Leander ISD.....512-570-0000

Vandegrift High School.....512-570-2300

Canyon Ridge Middle School.....512-570-3500

Laura Welch Bush Elementary.....512-570-6100

Steiner Ranch Elementary.....512-570-5700

River Ridge Elementary.....512-570-7300

UTILITIES

Travis County WCID # 17.....512-266-1111

City of Austin Electric.....512-494-9400

Texas Gas Service

Custom Service.....1-800-700-2443

Emergencies.....512-370-8609

Call Before You Dig.....1-800-344-8377

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

TDS (Trash & Recycle).....512-329-1752

Austin/Travis County Hazardous Waste

.....512-974-4343

OTHER NUMBERS

Lake Travis Postal Office.....512-263-2458

Coyote Sightings.....311

Five Star Commercial Community Management

Balcones Canyonlands Preserve.....

.....<https://www.traviscountytx.gov/tnr/nr/bcp>

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From the Association Office

FROM THE ASSOCIATION OFFICE

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UPCOMING STEINER RANCH HOA EVENTS

10/01 PPE Drive

10/23- 10/31 Steiner Ranch

Spook-tacular Home Parade

12/05 Holiday House Decorating contest

kickoff and Santa visit

Events are tentative & subject to change or cancel at any time. Events are planned by the Steiner Ranch Event Planning Committee, and are for Steiner Ranch residents in good standing with the association and their guests only. Final approval to participate in any Steiner Ranch program or event is dependent upon HOA approval. For more information, please contact Desirre Ghebremicael at: steiner@ciramail.com

For the most up to date information, follow us at: [Facebook.com/SteinerRanchHOAevents](https://www.facebook.com/SteinerRanchHOAevents) or visit the Steiner Ranch HOA website at:

www.steinerranchhoa.org



Steiner Ranch Master Association Board of Directors

Meets on the third Tuesday of each month at Towne Square Community Center at 6:00pm.

Steiner Ranch Residential Owners Board of Directors

Meets on the last Thursday of each month at Towne Square Community Center at 6:00pm.

Steiner Ranch Neighborhood Association

Meets on the second Tuesday of each month at Towne Square Community Center at 7:00pm.

Trail Committee

Meets on the third Wednesday of each month at Bella Mar Community Center at 6:30pm. The committee also holds monthly trail work days on the fourth Sunday of each month. Meet-up location and time varies monthly. If you are interested in lending a hand, visit the Steiner Ranch Trail Committee Facebook page for the most up to date information. You may also join their newsletter by subscribing at: <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/steinerrails>

Landscape Committee

Meets on the third Tuesday of each month at Towne Square HOA office Conference Room.

Event Planning Committee

Meets on the second Tuesday of each month at Cups and Cones at 9:30am.

Because of the COVID19 Pandemic and the local order to limit gatherings to 10 people only, all Association meetings are conducted remotely. Meetings links are sent to residents' email addresses on file at least 72 hours before the meeting.

COVER PHOTO INFORMATION & CONTEST

The front cover features a photo of the Trails. Contestants need to identify the exact location and correct name of the pictured trail or trail feature and send an email to communications@steinerranchhoa.org.

We will be accepting entries for each featured monthly cover between the 1st and the 10th day of the month. Received entries will be entered in a drawing for a \$50 Tiff's Treat gift card each month to be delivered directly to your inbox.

Please note that participants must be Steiner Ranch residents, registered on CiraNet and be in good standing. Vague name and/or description will not be accepted.

Winners will be contacted via email and announced on the HOA Events Facebook Page at Steiner Ranch HOA Events & Communication and also on the Ranch Record of the following month.

We would like to thank our sponsor, Tiff's Treats for graciously donating the gift cards. Contest started in September and will end in December.

News from the SRMA Board of Directors



Dear Steiner Ranch Residents,

Thanks for reaching out to the Steiner Ranch Board of Directors (all volunteers and homeowners run Board) and the GrandManors HOA management staff regarding required landscape improvements in our community. The Board of Directors are definitely aligned with the community view on the needed landscape improvements. Our GrandManors staff has been working towards that objective the past several weeks. Key steps taken are outlined below along with a background to the current state of affairs and ongoing landscape maintenance operations.

Key step taken the past 8 weeks

- Landscape maintenance providers (currently 2 companies serve Steiner Ranch – Urban Dirt and Brightview) have been given clear directions and an ultimatum in late July to adhere to the agreed upon contractual terms that are in place since 2017 (maintenance operations such as mowing per schedule, mulching, weed control, trimming bushes, irrigation systems check, and repairs). They have been asked to post the schedule online and they have been doing so since then.
- Landscape teams have also addressed mowing / clean up issues brought to their attention.
- The Board of Directors has also approved and retained a landscape consultant and architect in July. The architect's objectives are to evaluate the current state of affairs with our landscape, review homeowners' feedback, conduct competitive analysis of other larger communities in the Austin area and provide executable landscape enhancement recommendations for our community.

Next Steps

- The Board of Directors has received an initial report from the landscape architect which is encouraging. We will take the next steps towards executable landscape enhancements in phases (weather permitting) by approving \$\$\$\$\$ for the landscape architect's continued engagement.
- Once executable designs are received, they will be implemented. Timing is TBD as many factors come into play including weather.
- Contracts for ongoing maintenance operations (not enhancements) are up for renewal for current landscape providers in November 2020. The HOA staff is working to get the bids from various vendors.
- We will continue to provide regular updates via monthly board meetings and minutes (please check in by logging into the resident portal at <https://www.ciranet.com/ResidentPortal/user/login> .

Background information and Overview of the current situation

- Steiner Ranch was incorporated in 1987 and has been built out in phases since then. Nevertheless, it is a 30+ years' old community and is showing signs of aging.
- In 2015/16, the prior Board of Directors and the Landscape Committee run by homeowners, made the recommendation to switch from annuals to perennials landscaping at all monuments in order to be more environmentally friendly.
- In 2017, the prior self-managed HOA management recommended split the Landscape contract and awarded the bid to two landscape vendors. Contracts were implemented in October of 2017 along with recommendations from the 2016 Landscape Committee to switch to the perennial landscaping.
- In September 2018, GrandManors, a national professional management company was hired to run operations and manage vendors including landscape providers (contracted in 2017).
- In 2018/2019, inhouse staff made recommendations for landscape enhancements including front two main entrances (structural, lights, irrigation and landscape), landscape for subsection monuments across Steiner Ranch and other landscaped areas. This project was managed and reviewed and executed in conjunction by the new Landscape Committee run by homeowners, staff and vendors. Approximately \$300,000 was approved by the Board of Directors per above recommendations and was spent last year towards these front entrances and landscape enhancements. Unfortunately, we did not realize value for the amount that was invested in the enhancement project.
- In December 2019, the Board of Directors began revisiting the idea of retaining services of an outside landscape architect and consultant. It was approved after thoroughly vetting various consultants in July 2020 and an architect was hired.

Current Landscape Ongoing Maintenance Operations

- Mow schedule (daily schedule included below)- Overgrown grass could be on the schedule to be mowed later in the week. The landscapers are required to sign off on this mow schedule each week. Please keep in mind that weather and holidays will throw this schedule off, but otherwise, if you see that they are not mowing areas on time, please let the HOA know.
- Occasional Mows - Not all areas in Steiner Ranch are contracted to be mowed every week. Even some areas along Quinlan Park Rd and Steiner Ranch Rd are designated as 'occasional mows'. These are the areas back off the road that do not look irrigated and have trees and undergrowth. If they get mowed before the wild flowers seed in the fall, they will not come back.
- Organic Weed Killer - What appears to be overgrown grass, could also be weeds. The decision to move away from Roundup to organics was put into place last year by request of the Community. Although the best organics are being used, there is a difference in their effectiveness.
- Greenbelts - The HOA does not maintain the greenbelt areas throughout Steiner Ranch. They are meant to be left as native. These areas will have downed branches and overgrowth on the ground. Basically, if there is no sod, there is likely no irrigation in place, which means it is not an area that is meant to be maintained.

Continued on Page 6

From the Association Office

Continued from Page 5

- Irrigation - Brown spots in the sod are common at this time of the year when we have 100 degree plus heat and no rain. We currently have multiple irrigation repairs being completed in Steiner Ranch.

- Trees - Some of the trees that look dead are only dormant, especially if they are in an unirrigated area. It is their way of protecting themselves and they will come back next year. The crape myrtles, cypress and bur oaks are notorious for this.

- Perennials - The perennials that look to be overgrown are not meant to be trimmed at this time of the year. We have trimmed all of them that are in front of signage or that obstruct the view for traffic, but the rest of them are left alone. We do not normally trim back perennials until after the first freeze so that they can bloom.

We hope that the above information will provide deeper insights into landscape operations and actions that are being taken towards landscape enhancements.

We encourage all homeowners to:

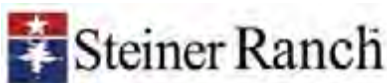
- Attend monthly Board meetings
- Log into the Residents / Ciranet portal available at <https://www.ciranet.com/ResidentPortal/user/login>, review monthly board meeting minutes, review financials that are posted every month to understand where the money is being spent, and how operations are being run.

- Continue to provide objective feedback by emailing the HOA and attend monthly Board meetings. The Board of Directors does not formally respond / manage social media posts from homeowners. Best way to engage with the Board of Directors is through the above-mentioned communication tools.

For any more question or concerns, please do not hesitate to send us an email at steiner@ciramail.com.

The Steiner Ranch Master Association Board of Directors

(All Volunteer run Board, for more info about the SRMA Board Members, scan the QR code on the Schedule to the right.)



Steiner Ranch Mow Schedule

Urban Dirt	Brightview
Front Half of Steiner Ranch to Country Trails	Second half of Steiner - Country Trails to The Grove
MONDAY	
Starting at Country Trails on Quinlan ending at 620 Main entrance (Mowing, line trimming, edging, blowing, and weed spray)	Bella Mar Park and Amenity Center (between 2-4pm); Quinlan - Longhorn Canyon to Bella Mar (Mowing, line trimming, edging, blowing, and weed spray)
TUESDAY	
Detail Trimming on Quinlan, Town Square, and Country Trails	Quinlan - Bella Mar to Lake Park Lake Park Santa Luz (Mowing, line trimming, edging, blowing, and weed spray)
WEDNESDAY	
Towne Square on Country Trails to River Heights; Steiner Ranch Blvd Loop and part of Flat Top (Mowing, line trimming, edging, blowing, and weed spray)	Bella Mar subdivision (Mowing, line trimming, edging, blowing, and weed spray); treat ants at Summer Vista, Las Brisas, Savannah, Rio Mesa Savannah Pointe, Lakewood Hills
Thursday	
Continuing Flat Top and detail on Steiner Loop and Flat top (Mowing, line trimming, edging, blowing, and weed spray)	Capella Trail Park, The Grove, Sierra Vista, Tierra Grande, The Bluffs (Mowing, line trimming, edging, blowing, and weed spray)
Friday	
Bellagio Maintenance and Detail. Half of Native trail mowing and spraying half of the trail. The other half is sprayed and mowed the following week as trails are serviced 22 times per year per contract.	Onsite for catchup

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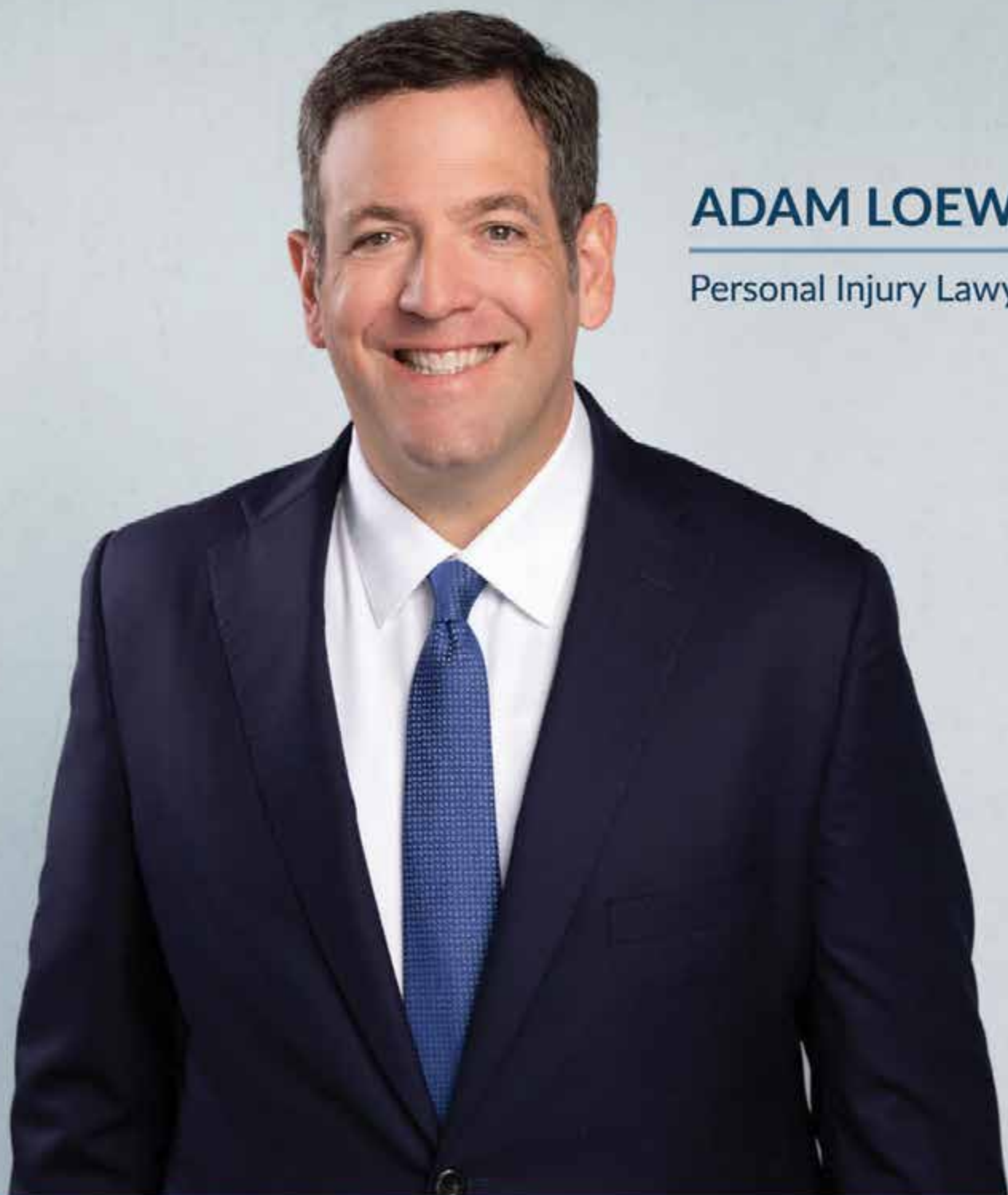


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From the Association Office

Balcones Canyonlands Preserve – Ongoing Issues and Rules

We are unfortunately continuing to see illegal trespass, tree-cutting, and dumping on the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve (BCP) at Steiner Ranch. These are serious actions that damage habitat and may increase community wildfire risk. They could also result in civil or criminal penalties, including federal prosecution under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, fines, and/or jail time. These penalties can be very costly, with some recent violations estimated up to \$60,000 in damages.

As you may know, the BCP protects rare and endangered wildlife and also provides recreational trails for Steiner Ranch residents. The preserve was created to off-set the removal of habitat when Steiner Ranch and other parts of western Travis County were developed, so it is especially important that the remaining habitat be protected.

Please be aware that:

- Cutting vegetation, dumping materials such as landscape trimmings, draining swimming pools into the preserve, and building forts or other structures on the BCP are illegal.

- Any use of fire on the BCP at Steiner Ranch, including smoking, is strictly prohibited.

- No access to the BCP is permitted EXCEPT FOR the J-Canyon, Eastridge, and Powerline Hill trails, which may only be accessed from established trailheads. Users must stay on approved trails at all times. Creating additional trails is prohibited, including trails from the back of residents' lots. Violations could result in trails being closed.

Travis County natural resources staff routinely patrols the BCP, and while no one wants it to reach this point, legal action can be taken when the law is broken. The full list of rules and a comprehensive trails map can be found on the Steiner Ranch HOA website – go to http://www.steinerranchhoa.org/document_view.asp?id=1070

If you have questions or would like to report a problem, please contact Travis County:

General BCP information: BCCP@traviscountytx.gov
(512) 854-7213

Land management concerns: Paul Fushille, BCP tract manager
(i.e. trees growing into fence, etc.) (512) 854-1696, paul.fushille@traviscountytx.gov

Report a violation or concern: Sally Wolfe, BCP patrol
(512) 854-1693, sally.wolfe@traviscountytx.gov

Conservation easement questions: Debra Scott, Conservation Easement Manager,
(512) 854-7214, debra.scott@traviscountytx.gov

In the case of an emergency such as a fire, always call 911 first.

Special Note on Wildfire Risk

When people remove trees from the BCP, they may think they are reducing wildfire risk, but it can actually increase fire risk for everyone. Studies done by Baylor University have shown that contrary to popular belief, a mature closed-canopy juniper-oak woodland, like that found around Steiner Ranch, has the lowest wildfire risk of all the vegetation types found on the BCP.

Opening the tree canopy by cutting down trees promotes the growth of grasses, which are more easily ignited than live trees. Also, dumping branches and leaves onto the preserve might seem OK because it is “natural,” but yard waste dries out and becomes accumulated fuel.

Travis County has been working since the Labor Day Fires in 2011 to reduce wildfire risk on the BCP, with a heavy emphasis in the Steiner Ranch community. Travis County has worked with Lake Travis Fire and Rescue to create shaded fuel breaks where feasible to reduce the amount of fine fuels located near homes. Learn more about that work, as well as actions homeowners can take to reduce wildfire risk on their own property, at www.traviscountytx.gov/tnr/nr/bcp/neighbors - scroll down to “Reducing Wildfire Risk”.

Please don't hesitate to contact Travis County with questions. You can also reach out to the Steiner Ranch Association for more information about the BCP. We appreciate your assistance in keeping this area beautiful and safe, and look forward to working with you in the future.

LAKE CLUB PARKING PASSES



Please note that the issuance of permanent parking permits stickers has been suspended because the SRMA Board of Directors is exploring options to install permanent fencing and gates with ID readers. However, until the new system is installed, please keep using the temporary permits or stickers in order to avoid being towed when parking at the facility.

Please make sure to clearly display the permit on the inside of your front windshield. If you have misplaced your permit, please scan the QR code here to download a new one to print at home.

If you have any questions or concerns, please email us at steiner@ciramail.com.

Slow Down & Pay Attention In School Zones!



School is officially in full-swing, which means many children are walking to and from schools and bus stops within the neighborhood. Please slow down, obey speed limits, stop at traffic lights when red or flashing and be mindful of the various school zones in the community.

Fall Is A Good Time to Trim Trees

If you have oak trees with branches over-hanging the street, please contact a professional tree trimming company now so that this can be remedied as soon possible. Residents are reminded to trim trees before February, as the risk of oak wilt infection is greatest from February through June.

Regardless of seasonality, residents are encouraged to follow proper pruning techniques. TexasOakWilt.org recommends the following:

- Always paint fresh wounds on oaks, including pruning cuts and stumps, with wound dressing or latex paint immediately after pruning or live tree removal at all times of the year.
- Clean all pruning tools with 10% bleach solution or Lysol™ between sites and/or trees.
- Debris from diseased red oaks should be immediately chipped, burned or buried.
- Pruning should be completed before February 1 or after June 30.

If uncertain about trimming, consult with a Texas oak wilt certified arborist, an oak wilt specialist from a city, county or state government agency such as the Texas Forest Service or Texas AgriLife Extension Service, or visit texasoakwilt.org.



Steiner Ranch HOA Events & Communication
@SteinerRanchHOAEvents - Community Organization

Contact Us
SteinerRanchHOA.org

Follow Us On Facebook

Want to be in the know about Steiner Ranch Events and latest Communication? Follow us on Facebook! Steiner Ranch HOA Events & Communications is the only official Facebook page of the Steiner Ranch HOA. Search Steiner Ranch HOA Events & Communications to find us. To see our posts in your news feed, do the following:

1. Like our page.
2. After liking our page, hover your mouse over the button that says 'Liked.' You'll see a dropdown menu open. Click the option that says 'See First' and our posts will then appear in your feed. Because we are a business, simply liking our page will not necessarily result in our posts appearing in your feed.

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Fall Green Waste Pick-Up & Bulky Waste Pick-Up Information

Green Waste Pick-Up:

Texas Disposal Systems (TDS) will provide Steiner Ranch residents with a Fall green waste collection pick-up (bagged leaves, brush, limbs and other yard waste) during the week of November 9th to November 13th, 2020.

To participate, residents may place up to 20 thirty gallon **paper** bags of green waste at their curb on their designated trash pick-up day during the week of green waste pick-up.

NOTE: Green Waste materials are composted and therefore must be bagged in **paper** bags. Plastic bags will not be picked up.

Bulky Waste & Bundle Pick-Ups:

Residents may schedule free bulky waste and/or bundle

pick-ups twice per year by calling TDS. Bundle pick-ups may include tree, shrub, and brush trimmings; newspapers or magazines securely tied together, not exceeding 4 feet in length or 40 pounds. Bulky waste pick-ups consist of large pick-up items such as sofas, refrigerators, water tanks, etc. Call TDS at 512-329-1752 to schedule individual pick-ups.

Reminder: Aside from scheduled green waste pick-ups and individually scheduled bulky waste/bundle pick-ups, TDS will not pick up items/bags left outside of trash containers, unless bags are tagged with TDS trash tags. Tags are available for purchase, by check, at the HOA office for \$2.50 per bag. Additional trash/recycle carts may also be ordered directly from TDS.

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October Steiner Ranch Firewise Focus – Common Wildfire Vulnerabilities Identified by 2020 Firewise Home Evaluations

Submitted by Chuck Allen - Firewise

The primary wildfire risk to Steiner Ranch homes is windblown embers that can travel up to a mile from the main fire front. Firewise has done evaluations of over 15 homes this year and from our observations during these Firewise home inspections, we have identified common vulnerabilities in Steiner Ranch for fires initiated by windblown embers.

Decks and Unenclosed Areas. There are many wooden decks and stairs in Steiner. Some have ember resistant solid wood barriers reaching to the ground. But most have some sort of open lattice work enclosing the space underneath decks and stairs, which is often used for storage. This makes them susceptible to accumulating flammable debris under the wooden decks and stairs and increases their vulnerability to windblown embers.

Wooden Fences. There are miles of cedar fences in Steiner

Ranch. Often, they are attached to homes, creating a pathway for fire from a greenbelt and/or another home, and/or vegetation close to fences right up under the eaves of homes. Some sort of mitigation action needs to be taken to replace flammable fencing attached to homes where eaves are only a few feet above the fence line.

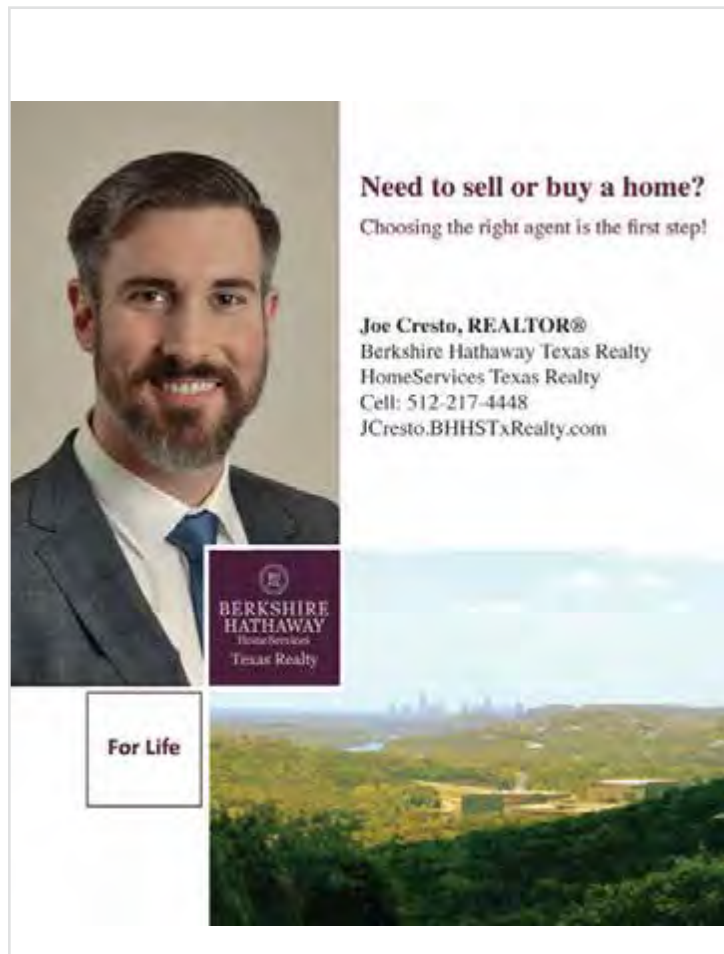
Vents and other Openings. In addition to the vents under eaves, there are typically a few vents like dryer vents that need attention. The highest vulnerability is unscreened gable vents.

Patio Furniture. There is a lot of patio furniture sitting on wood decks in Steiner, most with some degree of flammability. Furniture set on fire by embers can set a deck on fire also. If evacuation orders are given, move flammable material inside or place away from home.

Landscaping- Standards for Landscaping were not in place when most of Steiner Ranch Homes were built. Landscaping within 5 feet of a home should use nonflammable materials such as rock, pavers and perennials with high moisture content. Most landscaping in Steiner does not meet this standard, it is especially important in front of windows, which can break and allow fire to enter a home. Vegetation which can act as “ladder fuels” to reach other vulnerable places such as under eaves, should also be eliminated.

Homeowners need to create a “Defensible Space” for at least 30 feet of the home. Plants in this area should be well irrigated, low growing and free from oils, and waxes that burn easily, and the area should be free of firewood, propane tanks, etc. Many neighboring homes are well within the first 30’ zone, emphasizing the importance of community action since a house fire ignited by windblown embers has a good chance of igniting the home of a close neighbor.

Request a Home Ignition Zone assessment and encourage your neighbors to request one as well (SRFirewise@gmail.com). Also, sign up for “Warn Central Texas” so emergency notifications can reach you and family members.





Steiner Ranch™

Halloween Spook-tacular House Parade

OCTOBER 23-31, 2020

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Gerard DeSantis DMD



Steiner Activities & Events

Free Activities for Residents

Water Aerobics

Want to exercise, have a pool in your backyard but can't get motivated? What better time than now when we are all staying home? Perhaps the pavement plays havoc on your knees, legs or hips. Try water aerobics! Ann Sperling-Kennedy, the water aerobics instructor of Steiner Ranch for the past 12 years has compiled multiple videos to share with the Community. To follow and see her latest videos, scan the qrcode below:



Community Yoga

Community Yoga is a Steiner Ranch volunteer-based group that formed in June 2017. Classes are led by Senior yoga teacher and Yoga therapist, Hetal Matta, and they are focused on sharing and practicing the ancient eastern wisdom sciences of yoga, pranayama and meditation and touch upon ayurvedic lifestyle choices for the physical strength/immunity and emotional wellness leading to spiritual growth. To learn more and to register to receive the Zoom pro link to the classes, join the group Facebook Page (you will need to be a Steiner Resident). The group Facebook page can be accessed by scanning the QR code below:



Bombay Jam

Bombay Jam is a Bollywood fitness classes offered by resident Heera Pillai through Facebook live/Zoom usually on Saturday mornings at 10:30am CST. You will need to join the Facebook group in order to access the live videos and get all the details. The Facebook page can be accessed by scanning the QR code below:



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Tip of the Month

It's a good time to be planning your vacations for 2021!



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News from the Trails Committee

Submitted by Eric Morton



As I write this, we just finished getting a tremendous amount of rain. While the trail committee does not have an official “open” or “close” policy on trails, it bears reminding that the trails are a resource that should not be abused. The volunteers put in a tremendous amount of effort into maintaining these trails, fixing runoffs and erosion areas, building bridges, and rerouting areas that need a better path. After rains, please stay off the trails with a mountain bike. My rule of thumb is that I avoid biking based on whether or not the “worst 5%” of the trail is able to handle it, rather than to consider riding based on the “best 95%”. And I know that we’ve mentioned this before, but the best thing to do when you are hiking and you come up with on a muddy part is to step gently through the mud or over the mud if you can. Do not widen the trail by going around it. The most likely impact of that is that there will be a wider muddy part the next time around...

I’d like to introduce a new section of trail in Steiner called “Dozer’s Run”. It is a bit of a labor of love, a bit of a response to COVID-19 coup-effect, but it really is a nice trail. The HOA has agreed to adopt it into our trail network after reviewing the site. We haven’t yet signed it, or added it to our trail map, but that will come shortly.

The trail starts near the intersection of Serrulata/Stampede/Mustang/Highland right near the Halsell Drive entrance. I refer to this intersection as “the other four points”, but I think that is just my name for it. Start down Serrulata but take a left after about 20 feet. The trail runs along a ridge line, crosses over a creek on a bridge, and then meanders its way until it finally gets to the bridge on Serrulata again. Overall, the trail is about a mile and a half with lots of cutbacks and “upsy-daisies” to make it interesting. At the point where it crosses over a normally-dry creek, it is near the Headlands switchback and there is an entrance from that section of the trail as well.

I’ve attached a picture of the bridge and would like to thank Rich for all his work on this trail. I personally enjoy it a lot. While I’m not sure if we will decide to sign it blue (intermediate) or black (expert), the trail kind of runs at the high end of our intermediate trails but is definitely not harder than some of our black diamond

sections (Phoenix Pass, Bear Creek and an entrance off of Appaloosa Chase Dr are the only areas that we have labeled black.) Remember that all trail difficulties are “relative” to other trails within this area. You cannot compare a black diamond trail in Steiner to one in a completely different trail network. This is similar to the method used at ski areas. While the bridge has added width and railings for safety, please do pay caution especially when the bridge is wet. The bridge is probably the highest off the ground that we have.

Thanks very much to everyone that puts in reports after our storms of downed trees, and more on the trails. You can find our committee page on Facebook and message us there, or you can report it through the HOA Residents Portal at <https://www.ciranet.com/ResidentPortal/user/login> and they will pass it along to us. With over 20 miles of trails, we rely on our neighbors’ reports. We have recently cleared downed trees off of Westridge Canyon, Lakeview and Mustang. All of our committee members and volunteers at work events are instructed to follow best practices to minimize oak wilt. It takes extra time to paint the wounds and to disinfect the tools, but this is a very important part of our commitment to the neighborhood.

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MONARCHS ON THE MOVE

Submitted by Johanna Arendt and Jeremy Hull, Travis County Balcones Canyonlands Preserve



Monarch butterfly migration map from Monarch Watch

Starting around mid-October, keep an eye out for monarch butterflies migrating. They'll be flying through Central Texas on their annual journey down to Central Mexico where they spend the winter in the mountains. Many monarchs flying through Steiner Ranch have come a long way already – some travel up to 3,000 miles in total! We're in a good place to see them because the majority of migrating monarchs east of the Rocky Mountains funnel through Texas on their way south (see map).

Many people have heard that monarchs need milkweed, and they are very important in the spring and summer when monarchs lay their eggs. During the fall migration though, what monarchs need most is a place to rest, drink some water, and fuel up on nectar. Planting fall-blooming natives like shrubby boneset (*Ageratina havanensis*), cenizo (*Leucophyllum frutescens*), and autumn sage (*Salvia greggii*) provides the food they need to keep going. You can also put out puddling stations to give monarchs and other butterflies some water. Just remember to dump and re-fill them every day or two to keep the water clean and prevent mosquitoes from breeding.

A Note on Tropical Milkweed

If you have non-native tropical milkweed (*Asclepias currasavica*) in your garden, please remember to cut it back before monarch migration starts. Unlike native milkweeds, tropical milkweed blooms through the fall and can cause monarchs to get confused and lay eggs instead of continuing their migration south. This is especially problematic because tropical milkweed can have high levels of a parasite known as *Ophryocystis elektroscirrha*, or OE for short. It has devastating effects, significantly weakening and even killing monarchs. OE levels are lower on native milkweeds because they die back after blooming, causing the OE to die off too. Unfortunately, here in Texas tropical milkweed grows all year, so it's the perfect breeding ground for OE.

Magical Mystery Tour

Monarchs are the only butterfly known to make a two-way migration similar to birds. Even more amazingly, these migrating monarchs have never been to Mexico, yet they find their way to the same trees that their ancestors wintered on several generations before. It's still a mystery how they do it, but one recent study suggests they use the sun to navigate.

Each spring, monarchs return north from Mexico and stop to lay their eggs on milkweed in Texas and other southern states. Some of their offspring remain here and others continue their journey north. It can take 4 to 5 generations to make it all the way back up to Canada. Summer monarchs only live about 5-7 weeks, but the fall "super generation" can live up to 8 months. This allows them to migrate south, spend the winter in Mexico, and return to lay their eggs here in the spring all in one lifetime. So let's help the "super" monarchs make it all the way to Mexico and back. Learn more about creating Monarch Waystations in your yard or local school at: <https://monarchwatch.org/waystations/>. You can also track their migration and even contribute data at <https://journeynorth.org/>.

For more information about the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve, please visit our website at <https://www.traviscountytexas.gov/tnr/nr/bcp/> and follow us on Instagram @bcp_traviscounty. You can also always email us at BCCP@traviscountytexas.gov.



Remember to cut back Tropical Milkweed each fall. Photo by CameliaTWU, shared through CC BY-NC-ND 2.0 license



Monarch Butterfly, photo by Julia Land

Ranch Record Front Cover Contest



Congratulation to the winners of the September Ranch Record Front Cover Photo contest:
Rich and Lee Ann Rathburn

They identified the correct location of the September cover photo.

They received a \$50 Tiff's Treats gift card.

Thank you to everyone that entered the contest. Winning entries that were entered in the raffle were received from:

1. William Shelton
2. Rich Rathbun
3. Doug Driggers
4. Joseph Melcher
5. Lisa Pacheco
6. Tom Forshee
7. Amy Robertson

Please enter again in this month's contest by identifying the exact location of the Trails featured on this month's Ranch Record cover.

Contestants will need to identify the exact location and correct name of the identified trail or trail feature and send an email at communications@steinerranchhoa.org.

RULES

1. Entries will be accepted for each featured monthly cover between the 1st and the 7th day of the month.
2. Received entries will be entered in a drawing for a \$50 Tiff's Treat gift card each month to be delivered directly to your inbox.
3. Participants must be Steiner Ranch residents, registered on CiraNet and be in good standing. Vague name and/or description will not be accepted.

The Steiner Ranch Trails run for over 20 miles and offer views of beautiful Texas Hill Country, creeks, waterfalls and much more. They are often compared to national parks because of the variety in their flora, fauna and terrain, great for both beginner and experienced hikers and bikers.

If you have not recently biked or hiked the trails, please do so and enjoy them and what better time than now! This contest is brought to you by the event Planning and the Trails

Committees. In addition, for your safety and convenience, the Trails Committee has recently installed new trail map signs (please remember that if you take your dog along, they must be on leash).

We would like to thank our sponsor, Tiff's Treats for graciously donating the gift cards. Winners will be announced in the following month Ranch Record and contacted via email.



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Steiner Activities & Events

Steiner Ranch Mountain Bike Team Gears Up For the 2020-21 Season with Largest Team Yet



Registration is open for the 2020-21 Season!



The **Steiner Ranch Composite Mountain Biking Team** (SRMTB Team) is set to begin the 2020-2021 season with the first practice scheduled for November, while sporting their largest team yet!

Serving students in grades 6-12, the SRMTB Team officially participates in five races as sanctioned by the National Interscholastic Cycling Association (NICA), Interscholastic Texas Mountain Bike League during the season, competing on trails throughout Texas from January through April. The races are weekend long events where we pre-ride the course on Saturday followed by a team dinner and campfire prior to the races starting Sunday mornings.

The team was established in 2016 by Erik Enge and other mountain biking enthusiasts with a small but mighty team of 28 with a strong appreciation for the values of NICA – Inclusivity, Equality, Strong Body, Strong Mind, Strong Character and last year grew to almost 70 Student Athletes. The mission of the team has always been to simply encourage **#MoreKidsOnBikes**.

While the team provides an outlet for those students who are

highly competitive with the sport (the team has a large number of kids that have been State Champions and finished in the Top 5 in their categories), it is primarily focused on fostering an environment for development of kids of all levels and to garner a love for Mountain Biking as a lifetime sport.

Lead by a volunteer coaching staff certified by NICA the team conducts organized practices 3 times each week, while primarily utilizing the 20+ miles of trails in Steiner Ranch and sometimes nearby trails in the Austin area.

“Our goal has always been to share these core beliefs with our neighbors in the Steiner Ranch and Four Points communities,” said Rob Lowe, Team Director. “We are so happy to share this great sport and the values and benefits that this life skill can create and build for our student athletes.”

Training is comprised of at least four skill level groups designed to promote maximum individual development without regard to age or gender. For example, the entry-level, novice group includes students with very minimal to zero mountain biking experience, with instruction focused on building fundamentals and techniques and skills, and goal of fostering confidence and speed. The most advanced group consists primarily of High School students who are able to earn their Off Campus PE credit, with even more rigorous and structured training programs in addition to regular practices, to build and optimize their individual performance levels for competitive racing. All groups have at least two certified coaches to ensure safety while providing instruction and practices meet at John Simpson Park.

There has been tremendous interest in mountain biking for the upcoming season, in part due to the concerns around indoor extra-curricular activities from COVID. Fortunately, mountain biking is a sport that lends itself to social distancing and is conducted completely outdoors which can limit exposure while allowing kids to stay active. The team has also put in place a number of safety protocols to help ensure a healthy environment for our members.

The team is open to any student-athlete grades 6-12 in our area and accepting new member registrations beginning in September 2020 for the upcoming 2020-21 season. Those interested in learning more about competing as a student or even volunteer coaching, are encouraged to visit the team website at <http://www.srmtb.org/> or email Shaylah Enge at shaylah@srmtb.org for additional details.

POOL RULES



Red Giants Masters Swim

Red Giants Masters Swim takes place right here in Steiner Ranch for residents 18+ years' old and who want to get more proficient in their swimming. Levels of swimmers range from beginner to advanced. Now through the end of the year, we will be working on FREESTYLE technique. Make your own goals, and we will help you get there. With a combined 55 years of swimming experience, our coaches are excited to work with you.

The swim schedule is as follows at Bella Mar Pool Year-round:

- Wednesdays and Fridays at 5:30 a.m. till 6:45 a.m.
- Sundays 6:30 a.m. till 7:45 a.m.

Cost is \$50 per month for residents and you will need to join U. S. Masters Swimming in order to be eligible to compete in masters' meets, receive the Swimmer magazine, and to satisfy the HOA insurance requirements.

To join, please visit the United States Masters swimming website, <http://www.usms.org/reg> and join our team Red Giants Masters Swimming under South Texas. Print your card and email a copy to program lead, Hollie Kenney at goldstarsswimming@gmail.com.

Contact Hollie Kenney at goldstarsswimming@gmail.com for any additional info.

This is a great way to meet new friends and be a part of a fun community of swimmers while reaping the long list of health benefits.

Please note that lifeguards will not be on duty at Community pools until the Summer of 2021.

To ensure Steiner Ranch pools remain fun, safe, and sanitary for all residents during this time of COVID19, the below rules are in place. Pools are for residents of the Steiner Ranch Master Association and the Steiner Ranch Residential Owners Associations only and no guests are allowed. Residents must have a waiver on file to be able to use the facilities.

1. Pool gates must remain closed and locked at all times. A facility fob is to be used to access locked facilities during hours of operation. **DO NOT PROP GATES!**

2. The Association may deny access to the pools at any time due to occupancy limits, weather, pool conditions, or if maintenance is required.

3. At the discretion of the association, and as approved by the Board of Directors of the SRROA and/or SRMA, certain periods of the normal open swim hours may be set aside for specialized activities.

4. All facilities are cleaned overnight daily; however, they are not sanitized. Pool usage is at the resident own risk and COVID-19 may be present.

5. Lifeguards, when present, have full authority and are responsible for the interpretation and enforcement of all rules.

6. Only lifeguards are permitted on the lifeguard stand.

7. An adult must accompany children 14 years old and under at all times.

8. Proper swim wear is required. Swim diaper and plastic pants must be worn by children who are not completely toilet trained.

9. No diving. Dive blocks are for use by Swim Teams and/or private lessons approved by the Association.

10. No Smoking.

11. No glass containers of any type are allowed in the pool facility.

12. No pets in pool area.

13. Residents are responsible for any damage they, their guests, or their children cause and for cleaning up any mess or trash created by them prior to leaving the pool facility.

14. It is the responsibility of each resident using the pools to follow the protocols from local health experts, State and CDC guidelines including staying at home if you are experiencing symptoms, practicing social distancing of 6 feet between parties, wearing facial covering when necessary and washing/sanitizing your hands before and after entering the facilities.

15. Violation of these rules may result in suspension of pool privileges, fines or other charges, and/or legal action.

The pool hours are as follows:

Bella Mar Pools - HEATED

- Monday - Sunday 8:00am – 10:00pm

Towne Square Pools

- Monday - Sunday 8:00am – 10:00pm

John Simpson Pools

- Monday - Sunday 8:00am – 10:00pm

Residents may use lap swimming lanes at Bella Mar Lap Pool and John Simpson Pool at 5:30am upon request to the Community Associations Office.

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Fat-Free Wastewater System

How to Prevent Fats, Oils, and Greases from Damaging Your Home and the Environment

Fats, oil, and greases are not just bad for your arteries and your waistline; they are bad for the wastewater system, too. Wastewater overflows and backups can cause health hazards, damage home interiors and threaten the environment. A common cause of overflow is collection pipe blockage by grease. Grease gets into the pipe from household drains as well as from poorly maintained grease traps in restaurants. WCID 17 has a firm grease trap maintenance program for restaurants to follow. This article is for you, our residential customers, to help reduce any grease load you can prevent.

Most everyone knows grease is the byproduct of cooking. Grease is found in such things as:

- Meat fats;
- Lard;
- Cooking oil;
- Shortening;
- Butter and margarine;
- Food scraps;
- Baking goods;
- Sauces, gravies; and
- Dairy products.

Too often, grease is washed into the plumbing system, usually through the kitchen sink. Grease sticks to the insides of collection pipes (both on your property and in the streets.) Over time, the grease can build up and block the entire pipe.

The myth that home garbage disposals keep grease out of the plumbing system is just that, a myth. These units only shred solid material into smaller pieces and do not prevent grease from going down the drain. Commercial additives, including detergents that claim to dissolve grease, just pass grease on down the line to cause problems there. Some results can be:

Raw wastewater overflowing in your home or your neighbor's home;

- An expensive and unpleasant cleanup that you must pay for;

- Raw wastewater overflowing into yards, streets and parks;
- Potential contact with disease-causing organisms; and
- Operation and maintenance costs for WCID 17 which could cause higher bills for you.

The easiest way to solve the grease problem and help prevent overflows of raw wastewater is to keep this material out of the system in the first place. If you don't start putting grease in the drains, you won't have to stop!

- Never pour grease down sink drains or into toilets.
- Scrape grease and food scraps from cooking surfaces into the trash for disposal. Hot grease can cool in a can first.
- Do not put grease down garbage disposals. Do not put meat scraps down garbage disposals. Put baskets in sink drains to catch food scraps and other solids.
- Speak with your family and neighbors about the problem of grease in the wastewater system and how to keep it out.

GREASE: SCRAPE IT, WIPE IT, AND TRASH IT!



TEENAGE JOB SEEKERS

ATTENTION TEENAGE JOB SEEKERS

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