



The Jester Warbler

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Holiday Lights Contest

The holiday season is quickly approaching, and it is almost time to break out those holiday lights and decorations! We would love to continue the neighborhood tradition of this fun and friendly contest, especially considering the fact that we have had to cancel many of our other community events this year. However, we are in need of a volunteer to step in and take it over! Please email me at hopteel@gmail.com with inquiries on what this volunteer position would entail—or if you are interested in helping out!

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Greetings Neighbors:

What a pleasant relief to feel the Fall breeze and the crispness of cooler weather. The holidays will soon be upon us! Let's all celebrate with care as we continue to find our way safely in the midst of the pandemic scenario. I see many enjoying the outdoors amid the beauty and peacefulness of our neighborhood which we are so blessed to have and truly be thankful for.

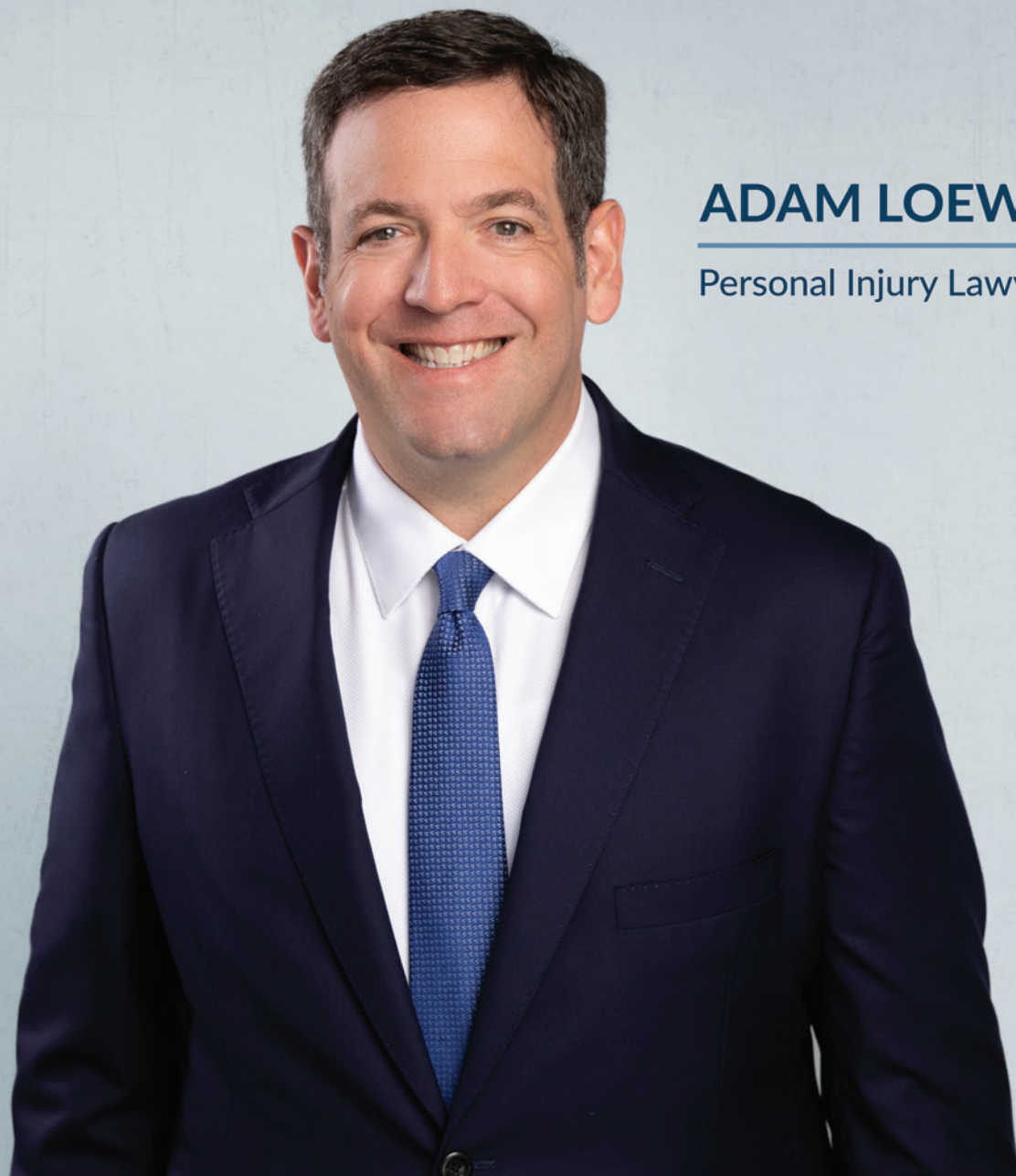
Please continue to be mindful of your neighbors as well as all Jester residents who might need a helping hand – and let us know if there is a situation that we can help with. As always, we welcome input and those who are willing to step into a role to help maintain the pristine neighborhood that we all enjoy

Christi Campbell
Jester HOA President

**EXCITING
ANNOUNCEMENT
INSIDE!**

See page 4 for details

Bicycle Accidents | Boating Accidents | Car Accidents | Dog Bites | Drunk Driving Accidents
Injuries to Children | Motorcycle Accidents | Slip and Falls | Truck Accidents | Wrongful Death



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ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS

Interested in submitting an article? You can do so by emailing hopteel@gmail.com or by going to: www.peelinc.com/articleSubmit.php.

All news must be received by the 12th of the month prior to the issue.

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for HOA documents and
info on the neighborhood!

New Jester HOA Facebook Page Announcement



As we navigate the 'new normal' induced by the pandemic, it is more important than ever that we stay connected as a community. As our HOA President, Christi Campbell noted in her last President's Corner, we are only as strong as we are united. With this in mind, we have decided to start a new Jester HOA Facebook group, and would like to invite you all to join it. This group is meant to be a positive platform for neighbors to communicate, to share ideas and to stay connected. Please search for "Jester HOA" on Facebook, and request to join the group. The group is visible, but the content we share will be private to members of the community/group only.

Additionally, we will use this platform to encourage further community involvement, including happenings with The Jester Warbler. Please remember that anyone is welcome to submit articles and/or ideas for articles to us at any time. This includes our neighborhood youth, so if any of your kiddos have an interest in writing, we would love to feature them in the newsletter. Any inquiries regarding article submission or the Facebook page in general can be submitted to hopeteel@gmail.com.

Looking forward to seeing you on the new Facebook Page,

Hope Teel

Editor

Changing the Landscape

Without a doubt, we saved money on our water bill. Our first summer here was the impetus for replacing the grass, which at the time, looked terrible. Our new xeriscape requires no weekly maintenance costs, and it provides us with hours of entertainment and fun, watching hummingbirds and butterflies amongst others. This year we've enjoyed watching fledgling cardinals while they learn their flight basics! The plants are native, and adapted to Texas weather conditions, which gives us a variety of flowers all year long. Even the A&M roses put on a show during the winter, followed by our early spring bluebonnets.

We do the maintenance ourselves, which consists of collecting bluebonnet seeds, cutting back foliage in winter (although I leave many seed pods for winter birds), and spring mulching. None of the maintenance is strenuous.

All in all, having no grass, a varied species of flora, and a seating area has been wonderful.

We don't have exact dollar figures for the gallons of water saved, as it is difficult considering the way the water is billed. However, we did keep track of gallons used as the measure. Come by 7901 Jester Blvd., and see for yourself!

Hank & Kate



BEFORE: 7901 Jester Blvd



AFTER: Jester residents save water after a hot summer by changing their landscape

NATURE WATCH

GONE TO SEED

by Jim and Lynne Weber



Flame acanthus seed

Often used as an informal figure of speech meaning to deteriorate or go downhill, 'gone to seed' can have a negative connotation. But each seed contains a new beginning: a tiny plant just waiting for the right conditions such as water, warmth, and a good location, to germinate and grow. Seeds and seed heads form fascinating shapes, varying sizes, and intricate patterns, often adorning the fall and winter landscape.

Plants have many ways of dispersing their seeds, and most have evolved over millions of years. While many of the methods are tried and true, certain seeds have developed in very particular ways to take advantage of such methods, and some plants only release their seeds in response to specific triggers.

Wind helps seeds float or flutter away, often aided by seed structures such as thin wing extensions or long, feathery tails like those on the endemic Scarlet Clematis (*Clematis texensis*). Texas Bluebonnets (*Lupinus* sp.) employ the expulsion or explosion method, where the small, pebble-like seeds are forcibly expelled when the dried pods twist open in the warm sun. Similarly, Flame Acanthus (*Anisacanthus quadrifidus* var. *wrightii*) has hood-shaped capsules enclosing seeds attached to a hooked stalk, and ejects the seed from the capsule when it dries and breaks open.

Gravity plays a part in many plants seed dispersals, where weighty seeds fall off the plant and roll to a new location. The best example of this are the round, heavy fruits that simply fall off a plant when ripe, such as those on Mexican Plum (*Prunus*

mexicana) or Texas Persimmon (*Diospyros texana*). If the fruits have a tough outer shell, they may travel some distance from the parent plant, and if they have a soft skin, they may break open where they fall and scatter the seed or seeds within.

Some plants produce very light seeds, seeds with buoyant fluff, or seeds with air trapped in them, so they can float away from the parent plant that grows in or around water, like Common Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*) or Black Willow (*Salix nigra*) or Eastern Cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*). Others employ the assistance of animals, which can come in the form of seed or fruit eating (where the seed can pass undigested through the animal), seed caching or burying, or seed transportation. Common examples of seed and fruit eating include Cedar Waxwings and American Robins consuming juniper and yaupon berries, and seed burying is a common practice of both ground and tree squirrels, who eat and cache acorns. Often unbeknownst to the animal, some seeds can be covered with tiny hooks or spines that catch on a passing animal's fur, eventually transported to and rubbed off in another location.

This fall and winter, let the seeds linger, at least until early spring. Not only do they provide much needed food for wildlife, but leaving them allows for some beautiful and mysterious patterns in your winter landscape, and the promise of renewing the cycle of life that begins again each spring!

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.



Scarlet clematis seed

Fire Safety *Carol Phillipson*

Here are some FireWise precautions to think about all year round but especially now! The Greenbelts are ripe for wildfire and the temperatures still above 90 with NO rain in the forecast.

"Since Jan. 1, 2020, state and local resources have responded to 3,330 fires that have burned a total of 171,204 acres. Aviation resources have flown 1,510 hours, dropping 1,517,151 gallons of water and retardant on Texas wildfires so far this year."

Source: Texas A&M Forest Service

Jester is considered "High Risk for Wildfire" so please....

*DON'T toss cigarettes of any kind out of the car window. Every summer, multiple fires start in the grassy medians of roads or along the sides of highways due to cigarette butts.

* DON'T park your car on the grass. The heat from the engine can easily start a fire. This year's Phoenix fire, which burned 150,000 acres, was caused by a car pulling off the highway into tall dry grass to check the GPS. This

is something you might not think about or realize could happen.

*DON'T use charcoal briquettes if you barbecue. Did you know an ember from these little squares can travel up to a mile and start a wildfire?

*DON'T let your trailer chain drag behind you while driving. Sparks can float through the air igniting dry grass. DON'T put out reflective trash on "bulk pickup" days. A fire was started last year near Jester Estates on 2222 from someone's bulk shiny trash igniting the dry grass 5' away from the trash pile.

*DON'T put off scheduling your FREE FireWise Home Evaluation, a little information could make the difference in how you and your home responds to fire. Contact Carol to schedule— completely outside, masked, safe and worth 45 minutes of your time to be prepared and aware.



*Thankful to be
treating our friends
and neighbors!*



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Note: Due to the ongoing cancellation of events, we cannot publish an accurate calendar of activities this month.