



VOLUME 15 ISSUE 1  
JANUARY 2021

# RANCH RECORD

*Official Newsletter of The Steiner Ranch HOA*

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HAPPY NEW  
YEAR  
2021

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- STEINER RANCH -





Cheers to a healthy and happy New Year to you and your family, from all of us at Avarar Austin Real Estate.



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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](http://www.steinerranchhoa.org)

### OFFICE HOURS

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

Saturday & Sunday ..... **CLOSED**

(Currently office closed to walk-ins because of Covid19)

### STAFF

#### General Manager

Joe Ristuccia ..... [steiner@ciramail.com](mailto:steiner@ciramail.com)

#### Lifestyle and Communication Manager

Desirre Ghebremicael ..... [steiner@ciramail.com](mailto:steiner@ciramail.com)

#### Operations Manager

Sarah Dunlap ..... [steiner@ciramail.com](mailto:steiner@ciramail.com)

#### Architectural and Community Standards Coordinator

Samantha Dominguez ..... [steiner@ciramail.com](mailto:steiner@ciramail.com)

#### Front Desk Coordinator

Cami Porter ..... [steiner@ciramail.com](mailto:steiner@ciramail.com)

**Compliance** ..... [steiner@ciramail.com](mailto:steiner@ciramail.com)

### COMPLIANCE, ARCHITECTURAL

Compliance/ACC Coordinator ..... [steiner@ciramail.com](mailto:steiner@ciramail.com)

### SRMA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Email the SRMA BOD ..... [board@steinerranchhoa.org](mailto:board@steinerranchhoa.org)

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# 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>

## NEWSLETTER PUBLISHER

Peel, Inc. .... 512-263-9181

Advertising ..... [advertising@peelinc.com](mailto:advertising@peelinc.com)



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## UPCOMING STEINER RANCH HOA EVENTS

Multicultural Festival (ongoing - monthly)

Ranch Record Front cover contest (ongoing - monthly)

- 01/16 Love where you live
- 02/06 Family Valentine's celebration
- 03/01 Chalk your Walk everyday in March
- 04/03 Easter Bunny Parade & Egg-stravaganza
- 05/29 2021 Senior Parade
- 07/04 July 4th celebration
- 08/14 Back to school Bash
- 10/18 - 10/28 Steiner Spook-tacular House Parade
- 12/04 Santa Parade
- 12/09 Volunteers' dinner
- 12/01 - 12/17 Santa Mailbox and Elves' Special Delivery Mailbox
- 12/13-12/23 Annual Holiday House Decorating contest

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](mailto: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.steinerhousinghoa.org](http://www.steinerhousinghoa.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.

### 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/steinertrails>

### Event Planning Committee

Meets once a month. To join the committee and for more info, please send an email to [desirre.ghebremicael@grandmanors.com](mailto:desirre.ghebremicael@grandmanors.com)

**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

Have a photo you would like to see published in the next Ranch Record? For consideration, send pictures to [communications@steinerhousinghoa.org](mailto:communications@steinerhousinghoa.org) no later than the 8th of the month prior to publication. Your photo might just be next month's cover!

By submitting your photo you agree to allow your photo to be published in future issues of the Ranch Record and/or other Steiner Ranch communications.



# Steiner Ranch Master Association (SRMA) Board – New Year Greetings

Dear Steiner Ranch Residents,

2020 has been a challenging year due to the Covid19 pandemic, but we can now see the light at the end of the tunnel with vaccine distributions and improved therapeutics. We foresee our HOA staff to return onsite (currently working remotely) and offer walk-ins assistance by late Q2 early Q3 of 2021. We will keep the community informed as things evolve.

Please continue to submit Architectural Covenant Changes requests, pay assessments, submit 'report a problem', and much more online via the Steiner Ranch HOA Website / Ciranet Residents Portal. If you require any assistance, the staff can also be reached by calling 512-266-7553, Monday to Friday, 9:00 am to 12:00 pm, and 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm or via email at [steiner@ciramail.com](mailto:steiner@ciramail.com). You can also reach GrandManors' Residents Services by calling 1-855-947-2636, Monday to Friday, 7:30 am to 7:00 pm.

Despite the constraints imposed on us due to the Covid19 pandemic, we continued our regular HOA operations. Major amenities have opened (except indoor community centers) again in the second half of 2020. The SRMA Board persevered with community enhancement and capital investment projects, including security systems upgrades across the community, sports field renovations, Landscape 2.0, Towne Square 2.0, and Lake Club 2.0 initiatives. The SRMA Board also retained consulting and engineering firms and leveraging them to bring the above projects to fruition. We hope to break ground on some of the above projects beginning in February 2021.

For any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach us at [steiner@ciramail.com](mailto:steiner@ciramail.com).

Our sincere thanks to all committees, volunteers, and GrandManors staff, we wish you all a very Happy New Year 2021!



Naren Chilukuri

SRMA Board President

[naren@steinerranchhoa.org](mailto:naren@steinerranchhoa.org)

[board@steinerranchhoa.org](mailto:board@steinerranchhoa.org)

## Assessments are due January 1, 2021 (considered late by January 31, 2021)

Assessments are due January 1, 2021 (considered late by January 31, 2021)

The January semi-annual Association assessments are due on January 1, 2021. We encourage all residents if you have not done so already to take the opportunity to go on <http://www.steinerranchhoa.org/>, click on "Resident Portal" and register on the Ciranet or use the quick payment option. Not only can the assessments be paid with ease through the portal, you can also view associations documents, current/history of your account ledger, association financials and "report a problem" in your Association. While on the portal please verify your contact information such as your mailing address, telephone number and email address.

Semi-annual assessments are due January 1, 2021 and considered late if received after January 31, 2021. If you require any assistance, please call GrandManors Residents Services at 1-855-947-2636.

Residents are encouraged to use one of the following payment methods:

**1) ACH/Auto Debit (\*\*Recommended\*\*) – Sign Up Today!** (<http://www.steinerranchhoa.org/>, then click on "Resident Portal", register and make payment. You can also do quick payment on portal)

This is the easiest way to pay! The ACH system automatically debits your account for the correct amount when your assessment is due. You will need your GrandManors Community ID; Account #; and Check Digit ID. This is on your assessment statement. For further assistance call 1-855-947-2636.

### 2) eCheck/Credit Card

You can make a one-time payment using eCheck (electronically debited from your checking account), Visa, MasterCard, American Express or Discover\*. Visit Resident Portal and choose "Make a payment" or call 1-855-947-2636 to pay over the phone. \*The bank charges a \$14.95 convenience fee if you pay via a credit card.

### 3) Check

You can write a check payable to your homeowners' association and mail it along to the address listed below. Please write your homeowner account number on the check:

c/o GrandManors

2633 McKinney Ave #130-502

Dallas, TX 75204-2581

Payments received after January 31, 2021 are subject to an initial \$25 late fee per Association and for each subsequent month that the assessment remains unpaid.

\*\*\*Please note: resident access to pools, facility rental, and attendance at or registration for social functions and programs may be terminated if association account becomes delinquent. \*\*\*

# From the Association Office

## SRMA Board Landscaping Update and Sports Fields Renovation Projects at Towne Square, Westridge, & Bella Mar Parks

Dear Steiner Ranch Residents,

We are pleased to announce that we have made great progress concerning landscaping and would like to provide you with an update:

**Landscape General Maintenance** (*Mowing, Trimming, Weed Control, Mulching, Tree Removal, New Plantings, Irrigation Maintenance*)

After evaluating multiple landscape providers, the SRMA Board approved Urban Dirt and signed a contract to provide general landscape maintenance across the entire SRMA community. For the last three years, we had two providers serving Steiner Ranch. That posed several challenges. With a single top provider with significant capacity, we will see consistency and improvements across the community. Urban Dirt is a local landscape provider that services various large-scale master-planned communities and commercial entities (Teravista HOA, The Domain POA, Vizcaya HOA, Dell Campuses, YETI Headquarters, St. David's Hospitals, Whole Foods, The University of Texas, Rough Hollow HOA, Tuscan Village, Google, The Four Season's Hotel, Westin Hotels, Wolf Ranch HOA, SouthPark Meadows, Longhorn Village, Querencia Barton Creek, La Frontera). To learn more about Urban Dirt, visit [http://steinerranchhoa.org/document\\_view.asp?id=1098](http://steinerranchhoa.org/document_view.asp?id=1098)

Urban Dirt, in collaboration with the SRMA Board and staff will be striving to make significant landscape improvements in 2021 and beyond and pursue the Landscape Excellence Award for Steiner Ranch.

**Landscape 2.0 Initiative** (*New Plant Material, Beds, Signs, Lighting*)

The SRMA Board has approved to allocate additional funds for the 2021 budget year towards new plant material. Landscape consulting firm Coleman & Associates, in collaboration with the community's landscape provider Urban Dirt, came up with a thorough plan for the initiative. Below is the schedule specific to new plantings and landscape improvements:

- Two Main Entrances Planting: 11/21 - 2/9
- Quinlan Park Boulevard Planting: 1/26 - 3/26
- Neighborhood Entrances Planting: 3/16 - 5/7
- Three Main Quinlan Rd Intersections Planting: 5/10 - 5/27
- 29 Mailbox Kiosk areas Planting: 5/21 - 7/1

The above schedule is contingent on weather, completion of new plant material design by the consulting firm, and securing new plant material by Urban Dirt.

### **Sports Fields Renovation Projects**

In addition, considering the popularity of our sports fields at Towne Square, Westridge, and Bella Mar Parks and the extensive usage year-round by our homeowners, the Steiner Ranch Master Association Board of Directors decided to invest and renovate them to the state of art performance sport fields. Steiner Ranch currently has 400 soccer, football, Lacrosse teams, and approximately 3,200 residents, utilize these three fields throughout the year.

The SRMA Board approved up to \$150,000 for a complete renovation of all three sports fields that require extensive work, including areas measured and marked out, irrigation capped, sod cut at .75" depth, and 44yds of USGA sand added after laser grading the highs and lows. Irrigation will be replaced and adjusted as needed, and sod will be replaced with 36 rolls of Bermuda sod and rolled with a double drum roller. Soccer equipment will also be upgraded.

A contract with Ryan Sanders Sports Services (RS3) has been signed to achieve the above objectives. RS3 Sports is the leader in the sports field industry (to learn more about RS3 visit [http://steinerranchhoa.org/document\\_view.asp?id=1095](http://steinerranchhoa.org/document_view.asp?id=1095)). They installed and maintain Dell Diamond, Minute Maid Park, BBVA Stadium for the Houston Dynamo, and more. RS3 will bring the fields up to the level of expectation that Steiner Ranch residents deserve.

The sports field renovation projects involve extensive work and time for turf and sod to be established before homeowners can use them. All three sports fields will be closed and fenced as per the schedule below and reopen on Feb 1, 2021.

- Westridge Park- Closed from December 7, 2020, to Jan 31, 2021
- Towne Square- Closed from December 10, 2020, to Jan 31, 2021
- Bella Mar- Closed from December 15, 2020, to Jan 31, 2021

Looking forward to a successful landscape and completion of sports fields renovation within our community. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the HOA via email at [steiner@ciramail.com](mailto:steiner@ciramail.com).

Best Regards,

Steiner Ranch Master Association Board of Directors

***For more Information on the SRMA Board, Vision, Projects, Communications, please visit [steinerranchhoa.org](http://steinerranchhoa.org)***

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# CHRISTMAS TREE RECYCLING



Texas Disposal Systems will offer curbside Christmas Tree pick-up on resident's regular trash pick-up day from December 26th through January 9th. Trees must be free of décor, must be 4 feet in length, and any cut pieces must be bundled with rope or twine. This recycling service is exclusively for real trees and not artificial trees. TDS will NOT pick-up trees that are not within the above guidelines.

**Do not drop trees at the entrance of the WCID Water Treatment driveway off of Quinlan Park Road and Logan's Way. Christmas tree recycling at this location is no longer an option.**

## *Remove Exterior Holiday Decorations By January 15th*

Per Steiner Ranch HOA governing documents, exterior Christmas decorations must be removed by January 15th.





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## Community Compliance Reminders

The HOA office would like to remind residents of the following Steiner Ranch rules:

- Trash containers are to be stored out of sight and should not be visible from the street.
- Parking on the street overnight is not allowed.
- Items should not be left in driveways. This includes mulch bags, garden hoses, and sports equipment.
- Any alterations to the exterior of your property (front, back and sides) must be submitted to the HOA office for review and approval.

Thank you for abiding by these rules, which are part of Steiner Ranch governing documents.

## SAFETY REMINDERS

For resident safety, please adhere to the following association rules and/or state laws:

### Motorized Vehicles

Please DO NOT operate motorized vehicles (including ATV's and golf carts) on neighborhood trails and on basketball and tennis courts, soccer fields and sand volleyball court as those are for the specific sports and not for operating motorized toys, vehicles or bikes. Doing so poses a potential safety hazard to the riders and the other people using the sport courts and the trails. In addition, it damages the courts, soccer fields, parks, and expenses such as these drive HOA costs up, which in turn may cause assessments to increase. It also damages the trails, which the Trails Committee and other community volunteers graciously maintain.

### Speeding

Please SLOW DOWN and follow posted speed limits. Should you witness speeding, aggressive, or dangerous driving, contact law enforcement.

## FIREWORKS & FIRECRACKERS PROHIBITED IN STEINER RANCH

### Steiner Ranch Fireworks Policy

Homeowners are reminded that fireworks within Steiner Ranch are prohibited. There are several reasons for this:

- 1) The use of fireworks places homes at serious risk of fire.
- 2) The topography and green space of Steiner Ranch is conducive to fires.
- 3) Federal rules regarding management of the Balcones Canyonlands (which borders Steiner Ranch) impose significant restrictions on activities that may affect wildlife therein. Serious penalties for violation can be imposed by federal officials.
- 4) Homeowners are entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of their property.

Should you believe a violation is occurring, please contact the Association Office, at (512) 266-7553 as soon as possible or immediately following an occurrence. Physical and/or photographic evidence is helpful in substantiating a violation.



## Clean Up Decorated Community Trees by January 1st

If you took part in Austin's tradition of decorating an outdoor community tree here in the neighborhood, please do your part to keep Steiner beautiful by removing decorations by January 1st. Decorations not removed by the 1st. will be recycled or disposed of by HOA staff.

## Prune Oak Trees Before February



Residents are reminded to trim trees in need of attention before February, as the risk of oak wilt infection is greatest from February through June. For those who don't know, oak wilt is a destructive fungus affecting oak trees which causes tree mortality. Unfortunately, the fungus has been identified in Steiner Ranch.

Because the risk for oak wilt is low between July and January, now is a good time to trim trees to allow for visibility of pedestrians, traffic and traffic signs. Limbs which extend over sidewalks and roadways pose a potential hazard and

should be addressed, too.

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](http://texasoakwilt.org).

The Steiner Ranch Master Association and Steiner Ranch Residential Association each have Oak Wilt Policies in effect. To view each policy in its entirety, visit the HOA website and click the 'Oak Wilt Policy' tab located under the 'FAQ' drop down menu.

## Steiner Ranch Neighbors — It's a Great Time to Refinance Your Mortgage

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**Email:**  
[john@loansbyprodigy.com](mailto:john@loansbyprodigy.com)

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891346  
RMLO - John Campbell  
**Website:**  
[loansbyprodigy.com](http://loansbyprodigy.com)

# Steiner Activities & Events

## *Events Committee Wraps Up Another Great Year of Service*



*Monica Little - Desirre Ghebremicael - Jenni Gary - Christina Morales - Amie Harris  
Kristi Lee-Nordin - Candice Palmers - Erika Shavulsky - Praveen Kamsetti*

The Steiner Ranch Events Committee hosted its final event of the 2020 calendar year with the Holiday House Decorating Contest which closed on December 23rd and winners were announced on the 24th. This was the 20th event of the year.

Shortly into the year 2020, right after the completion of the 6th event of the year, the COVID-19 pandemic forced the Committee to cancel all the events that were on the calendar for the remainder of the year.

However, despite all the roadblocks the year kept presenting them, the Committee started thinking outside the box, got creative and flexible enough to adapt to virtual or individual events that could survive the un-forecasted challenges while creating memorable experiences for our residents, keeping them connected even when socially distanced, strengthening their sense of community and cultivating a sense of belonging and ongoing pride in ownership within the Community.

2020 successful virtual or social distanced events worth mentioning are:

1. Easter Scavenger Hunt
2. Steiner Cookbook
3. Chalk your Walk
4. Step out Steiner
5. Mother Day poster Board contest
6. 2020 Senior Parade

7. Steiner Schools PPE drive
8. Multicultural Festival (monthly)
9. Ranch Record front cover contest
10. Steiner Spook-tacular House Parade
11. Santa Parade
12. Volunteers' dinner
13. Santa Mailbox and Elves' mail
14. Annual Holiday House Decorating contest

2020 has also been the year that the Committee has grown: from a small group of only four active members, it is now a group of 9 members (pictured above – from left to right):

Desirre Ghebremicael - Erika Shavulsky - Christina Morales - Candice Palmers - Amie Harris - Kristi Lee-Nordin - Jenni Gary - Praveen Kamsetti - Monica Little.

Please join us in expressing our gratitude to the Events Planning Committee and their dedication and passion in serving the community and making 2020 still a fun and engaging year for all Steiner Ranch residents.

For information about how to join the committee or simply volunteer at events, email [desirre.ghebremicael@grandmanors.com](mailto:desirre.ghebremicael@grandmanors.com). Visit the Steiner Ranch HOA website for a calendar of upcoming events at [SteinerRanchHOA.org](http://SteinerRanchHOA.org) or simply check out page 4 of this issue.



# Santa & The Elves Visited Steiner Ranch!

On December 5th, 2020, Santa visited Steiner Ranch. It was such a jolly outdoor event with Santa parading around the neighborhood in his sleigh preceded by his reindeer! In addition, Santa's Elves also hosted a workshop at Cups & Cones, gave out complimentary hot chocolate and candy canes and collected many letters addressed to Santa. Many Steiner Residents came out to cheer on the parade and made it a unique and memorable way to kick off the 2020 holiday season.

A heartfelt thanks goes to the Travis County Constable Office Precinct 2, the SRMA Board of Directors, the Steiner Ranch Events, Trails, Firewise and Architecture Committees and the Homeowners Association Staff for making the event happen.

(Photo credits: Erika Shavulsky & Monica Little)





# Steiner Activities & Events

## Holiday Home Decorating Contest Spreads Cheer!

Much thanks to Steiner Ranch residents who participated in this year's Holiday Home Decorating Contest. This year the Event Planning Committee opted to bring the contest on an online platform and make sure all residents could participate and vote for their favorite Holiday decorated house. It turned out to be a very successful event with many participating: 22 homes entered the contest and over 400 votes were received.

Categories were: Most lights, Most cheerful, Most unique, Community Favorite.

Congratulations event winners and thank you for sharing the spirit of the season!



## Steiner Ranch Multicultural Festival



Steiner Ranch is a unique and diverse community with residents coming from many parts of the world. In order to strengthen our sense of community, increase awareness and foster cultural acceptance, celebrate each member's unique heritage and culture, and bridge the understanding of what makes us unique and yet very similar, the Event Planning Committee presents to you the Steiner Ranch Multicultural Festival.

The event started in November 2020 and will go through December 2021. Each month we will feature a Steiner family or group of families sharing their unique culture and heritage on the Ranch Record. We hope you will join us in this exciting journey, and you will contribute to the Festival. To participate, please contact us via email at [communications@steinerranchhoa.org](mailto:communications@steinerranchhoa.org)

## JANUARY HIGHLIGHT – THE PAPI FAMILY

*Submitted by Patrizia Papi*

We are the Papi family and we are super happy to be part of the Steiner Ranch Multicultural Festival! I'm Patrizia and I'm from Taranto, a beautiful city in the Apulia region in Italy. My husband Paolo is from Rome. We met in Livorno, in Tuscany, about 30 years ago. I work as an Italian language teacher at the Austin Community College and Paolo works for IBM Watson. We have one wonderful son, Pierfrancesco or better known as Chicco. He is in 8th grade at Canyon Ridge Middle School and is the real Texan of the family, since he was born here. He swims for Nitro and can't wait for the Steiner Ranch Stars season to happen again!



*(From left to right: Patrizia, Chicco, Paolo)*

We moved to Austin 22 years ago, all the way from Rome. The plan related to Paolo's IBM job was to stay in Austin for a couple of years and then go back to Rome. But Paolo and I fell in love with Austin, and we decided to stay. While driving around the city to find the right place to stay, we discovered the very beautiful Steiner Ranch. The wonderful landscape, the hills, and the blue water of Lake Travis reminded us a lot about the Mediterranean views.

*Continued on Page 14*





~~2020~~

2021

New Year. New You. But for Real this time.

Gerard DeSantis, DMD  
In Quinlan Crossing-Across from Randall's



# Steiner Activities & Events

## Continued from Page 12

We loved it and we moved to Steiner in the year 2000. Every day in the last twenty years we have been enjoying how safe and wonderful our community is. There are people from all over the world, it is a wonderful multicultural community with many fun activities year round, the schools are fantastic, everyone is nice, educated and ready to help in time of need. It is simply the perfect place to be!

In Italy there are hundreds of traditional and cultural events throughout the year. Even if Italy is a relatively small country (less than half the size of Texas) there are twenty regions and each one has completely different traditions, events, and foods from hundreds of years ago. Even within the same region there are different traditions among cities and towns. You can move from a little town to another distanced by just a few miles and find totally different traditions, dialects, foods, and wine. To name a few: in La Befana in January (an old woman who delivers gifts to children on Epiphany), Carnevale in February (the one that is in Venice is world known), Palio of Siena in July (a very old horse race in Siena, Tuscany), Ferragosto in August (introduced by roman Emperor Augustus to celebrate the harvest of crops), the Live Nativity in Matera in December, and hundreds more. Italy being almost entirely catholic, Christmas and Easter are the main celebrated holidays across the country.

During this time of the year we usually start wrapping up the Christmas holiday which starts on the first of December and ends on

January 6th with the La Befana Holiday. According to the Italian legend, La Befana, a witch-like woman riding on a broom, refused to join the Wise Men on their journey to see the baby Jesus. When she regret her decision, she set out to bring gifts to the Child but never found him. Since then, she leaves gifts for other children. So, every Epiphany Eve, the old, tattered and soot covered Befana, flies around the world on a broomstick and comes down chimneys to deliver candy and presents to children who have been good during the year. For those who have fallen a bit short of model behavior, the Befana will leave lumps of coal. Knowing that all kids can't be perfect year-round, some shops in Italy sell black rock candy that actually looks like pieces of coal, so even those not quite perfect can still enjoy a sweet treat. Italian children put up stockings for La Befana to fill on January 5th, Epiphany Eve. On Christmas Day kids don't hang stockings and only receive their presents under the Christmas tree from Babbo Natale (Santa Claus). In Italy the schools restart after the Befana Holiday.



(La Befana)

Between Christmas and La Befana Italians get together frequently with family and friends, spending fun time together playing various types of card games and eating (of course!) wonderful traditional food.

In Italy the most classical Christmas cakes are the Pandoro and the Panettone. Panettone is often compared to fruitcake because it contains raisins and candied fruits. Pandoro, true to its name (pan d'oro means "golden bread") has a bright yellow color and doesn't have raisins or candied fruit. But each Italian region and town has very different food traditions, so there are really hundreds of appetizers, first/second courses, side dishes, desserts, wines and liqueurs. As a traditional recipe from my region, the Apulia, I want to mention the "sanacchiudere". This is one of the most simple and delicious treats typical for the Christmas and Carnival season. These slightly crunchy fried dough balls coated with honey and orange zest are simply irresistible.



(The Papi celebrating Christmas at home in Austin)

Continued on Page 15

We look forward to helping you find that perfect vacation, when you are ready to travel again.



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### Tip of the Month

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Continued from Page 14



*(Panettone and Pandoro)*

## HOW TO MAKE SANACCHIUDERE



### Ingredients for the dough:

- 500 gr flour 00 (brand can be Caputo or Anna at HEB)
- 100 gr. extra virgin olive oil
- 8 gr. of yeast for cakes
- 50 gr. sugar
- 2 eggs
- 60 ml white wine (add it gradually to see how much is sufficient)
- Grated orange zest
- 500 gr. honey
- Sprinkles
- Sunflower oil (only to fry tiny cubes)

### Preparation:

- In a skillet heat up the orange zest with the olive oil (it doesn't have to fry) and then let it cool down.
- On a pastry board put the flour with all the other ingredients and then add the wine. The dough must be smooth and solid.
- Cut the dough so you can do small sticks. Cut the sticks into tiny cubes and fry them (a small quantity every time) in sunflower oil.
- Heat up the honey and add all the fry cubes. Make sure to add sprinkles!
- Enjoy them!

## Happy New Year Steiner Ranch!

*Submitted by Jenny Gary – Event Planning Committee member*

To follow the Multicultural festival, we thought it would be great to also explore the many unique celebrations that take place around the globe on New Year's Eve and day. We are all familiar with the Times Square ball drop followed by a New Year's kiss, dazzling fireworks, the iconic New Year's Eve song "Auld Lang Syne" which roughly translates to "old long since," or "times gone by." On New Year's Day, many people also prepare a traditional Southern spread which consists of black-eyed peas and collard greens (symbols of wealth as coins and green folding money, respectively), ham or pork (for prosperity), and cornbread (for gold). We then make a New Year's resolution often a diet or exercise goal, perhaps resolving to get more organized. But how do other cultures celebrate this holiday? Here is a roundup of some of the most interesting traditions that usher the start of the New Year.

In Brazil, the custom is to light a candle and throw white flowers into the water as an offering for 'Yemoja', the queen of the ocean. Brazilians also believe you should jump into the ocean at midnight and jump into 7 'ondas' (waves) for good luck. For each wave you make one wish! **White** is the color you are supposed to wear and depending on the accent color you choose to wear is said to attract certain kinds of luck.

*Continued on Page 16*

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# Steiner Activities & Events

*Continued from Page 15*

White represents peace, green means good health, yellow represents money, red for romance and passion and purple denotes inspiration.

The 'folha de louro' (bay leaf), also known as the Priest's leaf, is a very spiritual token and is said to sharpen one's intuition. During New Year's celebrations, many Brazilians keep one in their pockets for extra good luck. Brazilians also start the New Year off with a tradition to midnight countdown from an elevated surface. They stand on a sturdy chair, climb up on a table, or get on a spouse's shoulders until midnight, and step down on the right foot- literally!

In **Spain**, at the stroke of midnight the locals eat exactly 12 grapes in honor of a tradition from the late 19th century. Vine growers in the 1800's in the Alicante area came up with this tradition to sell more grapes and this sweet celebration quickly caught on. Today, Spaniards and non-Hispanics alike enjoy this custom of eating one grape for each of the first 12 bell strikes after midnight with the hope that this will bring about a year of prosperity and good fortune. Spaniards also drop a gold object from wedding rings to coins into their glass of cava before the midnight toast. For the good luck charm to work, you must drink the entire glass of cava after the midnight toast and then retrieve your object.

In **Ecuador** leading up to the new year many streets are guarded by young children or teens using a rope or chain demanding citizens pay for access. Citizens parade around with scarecrows called a 'monigote' that look like popular icons such as a cartoon, superhero, celebrities, and politicians. A 'monigote' signifies all that went wrong or right with the new year. At the stroke of midnight, the scarecrows are burned to cleanse the new year of anything evil. Tradition also dictates you jump over the fire 12 times to ensure happiness and prosperity in the new year. Ecuadorians also eat 12 grapes per person as the grapes are said to symbolize the twelve apostles or represent the 12 months of the year. The grapes must be eaten in the final minute of the old year.

In **Scotland**, the day before January 1st is Hogmanay. The Scottish observe many traditions, among the most famous is first footing. According to Scottish beliefs, the first person who crosses through the threshold of your house after midnight on New Year's Day should be a dark-haired male for good luck in the coming year. Traditionally, these men come bearing gifts of salt, shortbread, coal and whiskey, all of which further the idea of having good fortune. Why a dark-haired man? When Scotland was invaded by the Vikings, the last thing you wanted to see at your doorstep was a light-haired man bearing an axe.

In **Germany** "lead pouring" (das Bleigießen) is an old practice using molten lead like tea leaves to predict the future. This process is called "molybdomancy" in English. A small amount of lead or tin is melted in a tablespoon (by holding a flame under the spoon) and then poured into a bowl or bucket of water. The resulting pattern is interpreted to predict the coming year. In Germany Berliner Pfannkuchen (jelly-filled doughnuts) are generally available year-round, German bakeries bake up extra amounts of Berliner Pfannkuchen for New Year's and Karneval/Fasching. These German-style doughnuts usually have a jelly (Konfitüre) filling in the center, but in a practical-joker twist, a few random Berliner may have a surprise taste of mustard or onions rather than jelly! Eierlikör (egg nog) and Glühwein (mulled wine) are sweet alcohol drinks enjoyed during the holidays.

In **Italy** it is customary to have a huge meal with lentils which are symbolic for coins to represent wealth. Prosecco is the typical drink used

to toast at midnight also sealed with a kiss or with friends a double cheek kiss. To ring in the new year, Italians have a tradition of wearing red underwear. In Italian culture, the color red is associated with fertility, and so people wear it under their clothes in the hopes that it will help them conceive in the coming year. Italians believe in "out with the old" and literally will throw out old things so be careful if you are on the street below. On January 1st it is customary to leave the house with money in your pocket as the superstition is you will always have money and fortune to spend the rest of the year.

In **Russia** residents start the new year with a clean slate paying off debts to be joyous, free from worry and arguments and by forgiving those who have wronged you. In addition to cleaning the soul and the house, it is customary to purify the body. For that reason, on December 31, many Russians go to 'banya' (Russian saunas) or take a hot bath. Their holiday feast is not just for indulgence's sake. It's believed that an abundant table with the best variety of dishes and refreshments symbolizes prosperity and well-being in the coming year. If the food is scarce or ordinary, the year will be "famished." It is also a bad omen to sleep through New Year's as it is believed the year will be uneventful or "sleepy". To properly meet the new year, means saying goodbye to the old year. Before midnight, usually around 10 pm, everyone gathers at the table to discuss the year that is ending, to revisit its best moments, and to wish each other good luck and new achievements in the coming year. It is also believed that to honor the new year, it's best to wear new clothes, or at least new underwear. That is why underwear, socks, t-shirts etc. are popular holiday presents. At 11:55 pm the president addresses each time zone announcing the achievements for the year. As the clock strikes midnight at the Kremlin's Spasskaya Tower, people toast with champagne and make wishes. To make sure that the wish comes true, you need to write it down on a scrap of paper, burn it, throw the ashes into the champagne glass and drink it before the clock strikes 12!

In **Japanese** culture, it is custom to welcome the new year with a bowl of soba noodles in a ritual known as 'toshikoshi' soba, or year-crossing noodles. It is believed that the soba's thin shape and long length is meant to signify a long and healthy life. Japanese believe the buckwheat plant used to make soba noodles is so resilient and is to signify their strength. At the stroke of midnight on New Year's Eve, Buddhist temples all over Japan ring their bonsho (temple bells) an even 108 times, an event known as 'joya' no 'kane'. This number represents the number of human desires, which according to the Buddhist faith led to pain and suffering. The ritual is meant to drive away these negative emotions from the past year. 'O-sechi ryori' is the New Year's Day feast. Each element of the dinner is intended to invite prosperity, luck and good health for the new year. Mochi, a type of chewy rice cake, is a classic Japanese New Year's desert. These little round cakes are even used in certain New Year's decorations, such as the 'kagami' mochi.

Nochevieja ("New Year's Eve") in **Mexico** is filled with excitement, wishes and traditions. December 31st is a big deal in Mexico, and people like to get together with family and friends to celebrate the year-end. Before midnight, Mexicans like to have a big dinner, similar to Christmas, with the whole family. The most traditional dish is Bacalao, dried salted coldfish, cooked with tomatoes and olives. In Mexico it is also tradition to eat 12 grapes in 12 seconds.

*Continued on Page 18*



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# Steiner Activities & Events

*Continued from Page 16*

The grapes represent the 12 months of the year. Hoping to travel in the New Year? Do as the Mexicans do on New Year's Day, grab a suitcase, put a few clothes inside and go around the block. If you can't really leave your place, place your suitcase in the middle of the room and walk around it several times. These rituals are said to bring good travels. Another Mexican New Year's Eve tradition is to sweep coins for prosperity. Drop 12 coins outside your doorstep, grab your broom and sweep the coins into the house. Mexicans believe that doing this will bring them economic growth and financial success.

Did this inspire you to try a new recipe or tradition? Have a fun and Happy New Year! Wishing you the best in 2021! Here's how to say Happy New Year in different languages.

- French – Bonne Année.
- Spanish – ¡ Feliz Año Nuevo!
- Welsh – Blwyddyn Newydd Dda.
- Italian – Buon anno.
- German – Frohes Neues Jahr.
- Dutch – Gelukkig Nieuwjaar.
- Icelandic – Gleðilegt nýtt ár.
- Japanese (although this one is customary after midnight) – あけましておめでとう (Akemashite omedetou)
- Mandarin – Xin Nian Kuai Le – (sheen nian kwai luh)
- Cantonese 0 San Nin Fai Lok – (san knee fy lock)
- Turkish – Mutlu yıllar Czech – Šťastný nový rok
- Danish – Godt nytår
- Finnish – Hyvää uutta vuotta
- Norwegian – Godt nytt år
- Polish – Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku
- Portuguese – Feliz Ano Novo

## News from the Trails Committee

*Submitted by Eric Morton*

Happy New Year to all. May 2021 be a much better year for all of us than 2020.

It is amazing how much everything has changed since the last New Year. Many of us found this time to go back to nature and enjoy the trails of Steiner Ranch. The fresh air, sunlight, and rejuvenation that a good hike or bike can do for your spirits is something else. And 2020 was also the year that we rebuilt both bridges on Bear Creek, another rejuvenation of sorts. We had lost both bridges a while ago because this "little creek" that flows down beside the trail can reach significant volume. Well over five years ago, one of the two bridges got washed downstream, and the other one just succumbs to the water and bent to the point where it was unsafe.

Over the summer, boy scouts rebuilt the first bridge. The second bridge, which keeps one from having to climb a muddy and steep section was in plan for many months but Covid-19 kept delaying our workdays. The other weekend, some hearty volunteers came out, masked and all, to finally get this bridge back in place. Knowing how much water goes through the area, we had to make sure this one is sturdier than the last.

Speaking of sturdy bridges, the widest and one of the longer bridges in our neighborhood is on Summer Vista (the section that goes parallel to Capella Trail). Every time I cross over this bridge, I think about how sturdy this one is. And it is original! As far as I know, there is only one

other bridge in the neighborhood that dates back to the original trail building. We have basically had to replace (or build new) any other bridge on the trails. I wonder who can name where that bridge is? One hint - we have done a slight modification to this bridge, but the actual bridge was left intact.

Some of you have probably noticed an uptick in middle and high school boys and girls that are out on the trails on mountain bikes. The MTB team of Steiner Ranch practices three times a week - Tuesday and Thursday evenings and Saturday mornings. It is wonderful to introduce the children to a sport that demands so much individual development, but also involves a team setting. We recognize that having so many bikers coming down a trail may be intimidating to other users, but hopefully you will find the team respectful and safe to all. Safety is always the number one goal. The team has evolved a bit due to Covid-19 safety, keeping in smaller pods. My pod - the "Fluorescent Flyers" - has been a lot of fun and I am impressed by how quickly they have improved. I've shown them a few "secret" areas in the trails too. You know, there are things that I do not advertise in such a wide forum like this newsletter or Facebook. But if you see me on the trails, ask and maybe I will give one or two of them up.

In the spirit of 2021, I will give one of the better known "secrets". Enter Bear Creek Trail near the entrance at Steiner Ranch Boulevard and Latimer. After a short period (less than a quarter of a mile), there is a section where you cross over some cement blocks. Look for a little offshoot to the right and you will be rewarded with a waterfall that you might not have noticed from the trail. Come to this one only after a bit of rain though. And do be careful to watch for any poison ivy around that area.

I am sure you are reading this just after you have made your New Year's Resolution. I hope that at least one of your goals is to spend more time with family (with a bonus if it is in the outdoors). Pick up a new hobby, volunteer in the community, and be grateful for everything that we have around us. As always, see you out on the trails.





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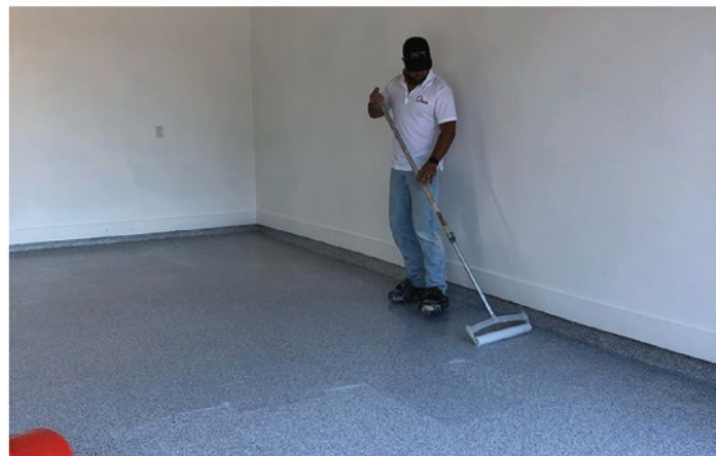
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# Steiner Activities & Events / Swimming News

## Become Firewise in 2021 – Get a Free HIZ Evaluation of Your Home

*Submitted by Bill Hamm, Firewise Committee Chairman*

HIZ stands for Home Ignition Zone. The evaluation, by a Steiner Ranch Firewise volunteer, is free and is designed to show you how to harden the outside of your home against windblown embers from a wildfire. It takes about an hour and is contactless. Windblown embers cause about 90% of wildfire related house fires; almost all of which can be prevented. Just because your home is not next to a greenbelt does not mean that it cannot catch fire. Windblown embers can ignite homes over a mile away from a wildfire. This was the case in the 2011 Steiner Ranch fires, which destroyed 23 homes and damaged many others. The wildfire actually started across 620. Windblown embers travelled across 620, igniting the greenbelt and starting multiple spot fires that eventually ignited the homes that burned. The high winds caused the fire to spread rapidly, which triggered the complete evacuation of Steiner Ranch.

In 2020 your Firewise committee estimated that only about 1% of homes in Steiner Ranch have been hardened against windblown embers, so make it one of your New Year resolutions to sign up now for an HIZ evaluation by e-mailing [srfirewise@gmail.com](mailto:srfirewise@gmail.com). Have your neighbors sign up too. If their house burns, there is a good chance yours will burn too. If your home is not hardened, firefighters may judge that it cannot be saved and focus their efforts on others that they can save.

Also, do not delay, sign up now for emergency notifications at [www.WarnCentralTexas.org](http://www.WarnCentralTexas.org). If there is another wildfire evacuation, this is likely the only way authorities can notify you. It is a system that can deliver focused messages to your cell phone down to individual homes, so you will not get unnecessary notifications. In 2020 your Firewise committee estimated that fewer than half of Steiner Ranch residents had signed up with WarnCentralTexas. It is not just for wildfires, but any emergency.

### Start the New Year Right!



**Become Firewise in 2021  
Get a HIZ Evaluation TODAY!  
Sign up for WarnCentralTexas  
notifications at  
<https://warncentraltexas.org/>**

## News from BCP – Winter Birding on Steiner Ranch Trails

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



*(Pond on J-Canyon Trail. Photograph by Steiner Ranch resident John Laisy.)*

When people think about birding, they often think of spring and fall migration. But winter can be a great time for bird-watching here in Texas too. Year-round residents like the northern cardinal, red-bellied woodpecker, and red-shouldered hawks are joined by visitors from the north including many waterfowl and songbirds.

Texas is located in the middle of the central flyway that runs from Canada to South America – sort of a bird migration super-highway. Some of the migrants we see this time of year are just stopping off to rest and refuel before continuing their journey south. For others, Texas is their final winter destination and they will stay here until they fly back north in the spring.

Bird-watching is popular in part because birds are relatively easy to see. They can fly away if danger approaches, so they don't need to stay hidden like most mammals and other critters do. At Steiner Ranch, the trails, ponds, and outdoor spaces offer plenty of opportunities to see a range of birds. A great place to start is the J-Canyon Trail, which runs through the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve (BCP). Other trails within the BCP include the Eastridge and Powerline Trails. For a map of the Steiner Trail system, visit [http://www.steineranchhoa.org/picture/sr\\_trails\\_map\\_jan\\_2012.pdf](http://www.steineranchhoa.org/picture/sr_trails_map_jan_2012.pdf).

On J-Canyon Trail, check out the pond (pictured) for ducks and other waterfowl. Along the banks, keep an eye out for herons and songbirds. Another good place to look for songbirds is edge habitat - anywhere two types of habitat meet, like where the tree line of the oak-juniper woodland meets a grassland (pictured).

A real delight of winter birding is seeing flocks with a mix of species roaming through the woodlands and grasslands together. Mixed flocks are uncommon in the spring and summer when birds are usually busy competing for nesting areas and defending their territories. In the winter, with all that drama behind them, they often travel together, helping each other find food and watch for predators.

### Tips for Winter Birding:

- **Timing is key.** Early morning and late afternoon are usually best for birding, unless you're hoping to see (or hear) nocturnal birds like owls.
- **Go where the birds are.** Water can be just as scarce in winter as in summer, so birds congregate where they can find it.
- **Food is fuel.** Find winter food sources like yaupon holly berries or wildflower seeds and you might get to see birds enjoying a meal.

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• **Listen for noise.** Birds do not sing as often in winter, but they still make lots of calls.

• **Watch for movement.** Flocks of birds moving through the tree canopy or foraging on the ground can catch your eye. Or you may see a single bird like a ruby-crowned kinglet flitting through the trees and shrubs.

Besides the charming ruby-crowned kinglets, other common winter birds include American robins, cedar waxwings, northern flickers, and house wrens. If you want a little challenge, see how many types of sparrows you can find. Texas is home to more than 15 species of sparrows in the winter. From dark-eyed juncos to white-crowned and Lincoln's sparrows, there are a variety in different sizes and colors to observe.

So, grab your binoculars, your favorite bird field guide (or app), and maybe a hot cup of coffee or hot chocolate for the frigid days, and hit the trails to see how many different species you can find! Apps like eBird and iNaturalist can help you keep track of your discoveries, and you'll be contributing to science!

For more information about the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve, please visit <https://www.traviscountytexas.gov/tnr/nr/bcp>. You can also check us out on Facebook at [facebook.com/traviscountybcp](https://www.facebook.com/traviscountybcp) and Instagram @bcp\_traviscounty.



*Edge habitat along J-Canyon Trail.  
Photograph by Steiner Ranch resident John  
Laisy.*



*Cedar waxwing. Photograph by  
Jim and Lynne Webber.*

## Red Giants Masters Swimming (Adult swimming)

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## Ranch Record Front Cover Contest

Unfortunately, none of the entries received for the December Ranch Record Front Cover Photo contest were correct, therefore we have no winner in December. The featured trail was Mustang Run Trail.

**Please enter again in this month's contest  
by identifying the exact location of the Trail  
featured below:**



### Contest Rules:

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](mailto: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.

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.



# TEENAGE JOB SEEKERS

## ATTENTION TEENAGE JOB SEEKERS

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