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**NEWS & VIEWS**

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**Volume 26 Issue 2 • Wimberley, Texas • January 2023**



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# Freedom

As one year ends and new one begins, reflection and planning seem inevitable. What is a year but a small collection of time, a series of months and seasons gathered into one unit, identifiable by the highs and lows, ebb and flow, the changes and the constants. When we look ahead to plan or even as we approach the current moment, there is freedom in how we show up.

Most of us have standards for how we behave. Values, beliefs, and morality act as guides to help us gauge what we value and what is worth pursuing. That said, therein lies a vast field of freedom in the way that we approach our lives. For instance, love. Act with love. To act with love can mean a great many things. And the way one acts with love can have a great deal to do with who they are and how they were designed to be. Love can be a big gesture or sometimes love is simply silence. Criteria and boundaries offer us a framework to build upon, but freedom – true freedom – gifts us the opportunity to shape and color the fruits of our labor.

Our contributors this month offer you wisdom, humor, wonderful stories, and opportunity. Wishing you your best year yet.

*Happy January, y'all.*

Warmly,



## Wimberley Valley NEWS & VIEWS

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# • Community Calendar of Events •

- Every 2nd Mon. Wimberley Valley Art League meets at the Wimberley Community Center at 6:30-8:30pm. Visit [WimberleyArtLeague.org](http://WimberleyArtLeague.org) for information.
- Every 2nd Mon. Wimberley 4H meets during the school year at VFW Hall on 401 Jacobs Well Rd. Our next meeting is Monday, April 11, 7pm. 6:30pm Clover Kids Program. April community service: We will be collecting items for the Dell Children's Hospital family room.
- Every 3rd Mon. The Wimberley Area Parkinsons Association meets at the Chapel of The Hills Church, 14601 RR 12 in Wimberley from 9-11am. Caregivers, friends, and relatives are welcome. Guest speakers and general discussion. Parkinson's exercise program. Email Paul, [paulwilj99@gmail.com](mailto:paulwilj99@gmail.com).
- The Wimberley Chapter of Overeaters Anonymous meets every Monday at 7pm. This is a face-to-face only. Please call or text Aida at 512-787-8313 for the meeting location.
- Mon. January 9, 2023 Jacob's Well Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, meets at the Emily Ann Theater in Wimberley at 9:40am, for chat time and 10am for our business meeting. Please email [jacobswellnsdar@gmail.com](mailto:jacobswellnsdar@gmail.com) for more.
- Mon. Toddler Time, Wimberley Village Library, 10:30-11:30am, beginning January 9.
- Every Tues. 6:30-8pm. Community Bible Study, an interdenominational Bible study. To register contact Karen Bryson at 512 644 8805 or [kb17@txstate.edu](mailto:kb17@txstate.edu).
- Every 3rd Tues. The Lions Club meets from 6pm-8pm at the Wimberley Community Center. Call 512-847-0207 for info.
- Every Tues. at noon, Rotary Club of Wimberley meets at the EMS Classroom on Twilight Trail. Carolyn Manning is our President, 512-558-1626, [director@wimberleylibrary.org](mailto:director@wimberleylibrary.org)
- Every 1st Tue. The Wimberley Community Center hosts free medical checks 9:30-10:30am. Call 512-847-2510.
- Every 1st Wed. 5:30-7pm, Wimberley Valley Arts and Cultural Alliance (WVACA) holds a mixer at Middleton Brewing. Opportunity for members and curious non-members to meet and mingle, share ideas, learn about upcoming events and get involved. It's always a lively good time with interesting people! Open to all. All are welcome. For more information visit [WimberleyArts.org](http://WimberleyArts.org)
- Every Wed. Join Wimberley Valley Chamber of Commerce for breakfast at the Wimberley Cafe for networking opportunities, 8-9am. Bring lots of business cards.
- Every 3rd Wed. Sept. thru May, 9:30am-12pm. The Hill Country Unit of the Herb Society of America meets at the Wimberley Presbyterian Church. Visitors are always welcome! Refreshments at 9:30am. Program starts at 10am. Visit [HillCountry-Herbs.org](http://HillCountry-Herbs.org) or email [valentine\\_lisa@msn.com](mailto:valentine_lisa@msn.com).
- Wed. Bilingual Storytime, 5-6pm Wimberley Village Library
- Every 1st Thur. The Wimberley Alzheimer's Caregiver's Support Group meets at 1pm at the Presbyterian Church Library on FM 2325. Contact Linda Germain at 512-924-3661.
- Every 2nd Thursday, Hill Country Bead Society meets at 1pm at the Wimberley Community Center. All levels and types of beading and metal work. Marilyn Pierce at 512-722-3549.
- Every 2nd and 4th Thur. 7pm Wimberley Toastmasters Club, First Baptist Church Wimberley, 15951 Winters Mill Parkway, Wimberley. Toastmasters teaches public speaking and leadership. For more info contact Amy O'Neil at [amy@texiasllc.com](mailto:amy@texiasllc.com).
- Every 3rd Thur. Live concerts at Susanna's Kitchen Coffeehouse, 7:30pm; \$20-25 adults, \$5 children. Food, coffee, soft drinks available. Corner of RR 12 & CR 1492 (Wimberley United Methodist Church.) [WimberleyUMC.org](http://WimberleyUMC.org) Proceeds benefit Barnabas Connection & Mother's Day Out scholarships. Performing Thurs. January 19: Warren Hood
- Thurs. Gentle Yoga 10-11am, Wimberley Village Library
- Every Fri. Celebrate Freedom 6-8pm, pizza, 5:30pm Cypress Creek Church. 512-847-1222 or [CypressCreekChurch.com](http://CypressCreekChurch.com).
- Every Fri. Wimberley VFW Post 6441 hosts bingo nights. Doors at 6:30pm with food concession. Early bird games at 7:00pm. Regular games start at 8pm. Visit [vfw6441.com/bingo](http://vfw6441.com/bingo)
- Fri. Storytime, 10:30-11:30am, Wimberley Village Library
- Every 2nd Sat. Wimberley's Second Saturday Gallery Trail. Visit ten galleries for art, food, fun, 4-7pm. Email [BentTreeGallery@gmail.com](mailto:BentTreeGallery@gmail.com). Have a glass of wine & enjoy art after hours.
- 1st Sat. Wimberley Market Day, 7am-3pm, March thru December, rain or shine
- 1st Sun. of every month, Wimberley Coffee & Cars, 8am-11am, at Blanco Brew located at 14200 Ranch Road 12

• Monday, January 2, Open Mic at Middleton Brewing, 101 Oakwood Loop, San Marcos

• Thursday, January 12, Wimberley StoryFest 2023 Kick-Off Event: Once Upon a Time... where stories began, Old Glory Ranch 5:30-9:30 PM. Tickets available at [WimberleyStoryFest.org](http://WimberleyStoryFest.org)

• January 15, Wimberley Arts Fest Application Deadline

Have something to add to the Calendar of Events?

Email us at [info@WVNewsViews.com](mailto:info@WVNewsViews.com)

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## The No Good, Very Bad Day

by Tim Thompson



Every seed carries the long history of its evolutionary journey. Packed in tiny germplasm are thousands of compact instructions about the exact destiny of the plant it is to become. Its color, height, leaf shape, cold tolerance, fruiting habits, pollen type, and

life expectancy were programmed into its DNA when its mother plant was pollinated and bore the seed, perhaps in a pod or fruit.

Small changes in DNA that happen from generation to generation do not dramatically detour the adaptability of an organism, but all changes are either adaptive, allowing the plant or animal to pass on those altered genes, or they are non-adaptive, or fail to reproduce, and that genetic change is relegated to the scrap heap of nature's experiments.

The result is a wonderful process by which every living thing has developed and improved itself over the eons. Everything living today has been through countless repetitions of this process. The smallest influences can make nearly imperceptible changes in genetic code. Errors in DNA replication, chemical or radioactive influences, and physical environments are all common ways of changing the path of evolution.

There is another way that fortunately does not happen often, and that's when mass extinction events occur on the Earth, such as

the Chicxulub asteroid that ended the reign of the dinosaurs a little over 66 million years ago. Life in the Yucatan peninsula is quite pleasant in these days of beach resorts and cenote swimming, but that single day was easily the worst day in the history of the Earth, with about three quarters of all plant and animal species dying because of the disaster.

Nature gives rise to some amazing resurrection stories, and this is part of our own, since that terrible day made possible the rise of mammals on Earth, including humans.

So, every time you awaken to the sun shining on another beautiful day, give thanks for the gift of history that allows us to live out our own peaceful days on a planet whose worst day is in our past.

*Horticulturist Tim Thompson has managed the garden center at King Feed and Hardware for the past 25 years. They offer everything you need to have the garden of your dreams without stressing your budget. Pick up Tim's Tips, free one page sheets on how to carry out dozens of gardening projects available only at King Feed Nursery. Call Tim at 512 847 2618.*

## Bad hair

by Kern Deschner



One of my favorite scenes from the movie *Pirates of the Caribbean* develops in this way – one of the older pirates is telling the younger pirate a tall tale about how Captain Jack Sparrow escaped from being marooned on an island. The storyteller claimed that Captain Jack had lashed together two sea turtles and rode them to escape the island. The incredulous listener replied, “Well, what did he use to lash the turtles together? Where

did he get a rope?” The storyteller, knowing his exaggeration had been caught, had no reply, but suddenly Captain Jack, apparently eavesdropping, walks up and interjects that he made the rope from human hair (pause), “from me back!”

Obviously, it's funnier if you watch the movie. But it does illustrate that there may be a use for hair we normally would not value. We have definitely found that to be true in the alpaca business. We realize that the best part of an alpaca's fleece, the part that you just want to roll in, the *filet mignon*, the *caviar* of the fleece, is the blanket. In animals, like alpacas, that are raised for their fleeces, it's important that most of their fleece is this level of quality. However, there is a lot of fleece on the legs and the belly that is not the same quality as the blanket. It may still be very soft and quite warm, but it's not the quality of fleece that you would want next to your skin. Many alpaca owners just throw away this part of the fleece but we

have found value even here – by making rugs!

We are about to receive a shipment of rugs that range in size from 2x5 to 9x12 feet in size. Alpacas come in 16 shades and the rugs are generally a combination of the many earth tones that alpacas display. They especially look good in Southwest decor. Except for the webbing that holds them together, which is cotton, they are 100% alpaca, manufactured in Paint Rock, Texas, from fleeces grown right here in Wimberley on our ranch. They are soft, warm, durable, and the grandchildren – and the cat – love to roll on them. These rugs generally sell out within a few months, so, if you'd like to look at them, give Rhonda a call. She can set up a showing. While you are at it, you can check out the rest of the farm store and even get a quick look at the new babies. We had six of them just over Thanksgiving weekend!

If you want, something made from human hair, though, you'll probably have to ask Captain Jack Sparrow.

*Rhonda and Kern Deschner are experienced alpaca ranchers raising alpacas through all kinds of Texas weather since 1997. Tierra Prometida Alpaca Ranch can be visited by calling Rhonda at 512 753 9962, or at [tierra@alpacausa.com](mailto:tierra@alpacausa.com).*



## 2023 SEASON

FEB 24 - MAR 19



**Comedy**

by Oscar Wilde

Two gentlemen lead double lives, provoking elaborate deceptions and hilarious difficulties for themselves and their ladies, all for the sake of living and loving their way. With wit and charm, the absurdity of Victorian norms are exposed.

APR 28 - MAY 21

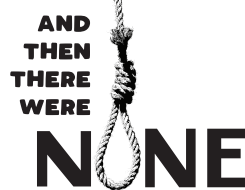


**Comedy**

by Kate Hamill (from the Jane Austen novel by the same name)

When their father dies, the Dashwood sisters face a bleak future when their brother inherits the estate. The characters, relationships, and emotional truths of Jane Austen's classic novel are brought to life in this brilliantly funny, fast-paced play.

JUNE 30 - JULY 23



**Mystery**

by Agatha Christie

In this classic whodunnit, ten strangers are invited to a remote mansion not knowing the identity of their host. When the first guest is murdered, they grasp that they have been tricked by a maniac with revenge on his mind.

SEPT 1 - SEPT 24



**Drama**

by Tennessee Williams

After a series of losses, Blanche DuBois, a faded Southern belle, is forced to move into a shabby New Orleans apartment with her younger sister and brother-in-law. Explosive, passionate, and heartrending, this is modern American theatre at its best.

NOV 17 - DEC 10



**Musical Comedy**

by Dan Goggin

Your favorite Nonsense characters do Christmas as only they can, in the basement of Mount St. Helens Convent. They wrap up a hilarious package of wacky carols, a performance of the Nutcracker, and a "Secret Santa" drawing you'll love. It's the perfect way to make your holiday merry and bright!

**All Shows Fri, Sat 7:30 PM; Sun 2:30 PM**

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## WORKSHOPS & MOVIES



**Audition Workshop**

Six-week class  
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Adults \$150



**First Stage Theatre Camp**

July 18, 19, and 20  
10 AM – 2 PM; Ages 8 – 12  
\$99 for all 3 days



**The Rocky Horror Picture Show**

Sat, Oct 21  
10 PM  
\$13 Adults & Teens



**White Christmas Sing-Along**

Bring the whole family!  
Sat, Dec 16, 7 PM  
\$10 Adults | \$5 Children 12 & under

### Support The Wimberley Players

- Join as an annual or monthly Member
- Make a donation of any amount to support us
- Become a business Sponsor for the 2023 season
- Underwrite a play or musical
- Contribute to opportunities for student interns and scholarships
- Volunteer in all areas of making theatre

More information about our season, auditions, opportunities, and news at [www.wimberleyplayers.org](http://www.wimberleyplayers.org)

512 847-0575  
450 Old Kyle Road

## At any age

by Sarah Geenberg



I am very proud of two 70+ year old's who earned their black belts at the beginning of the month. Congratulations! The youngest we've ever had earn black is 10 years old, which is very rare, but great, too!

Either way, all it took was commitment. Older people are very good at that, naturally. They can get very good at anything they choose to do because of their patience and persistence. Our older yogis even easily beat out 30 year old's in what they can do because they are consistent. And they don't even care if they are better. In the case of the young student, the parents are the ones who have to be committed so that their child can learn what success really takes.

We are generally going the wrong way as far as settling into a commitment goes. We fly from one thing to the next way too fast. It is easy to get sucked in, and it feels good to get a lot done. But we lose ourselves in all of that and end up frantically searching for joy and meaning. But those things are there, if we just slow down. For example, it is easy to trust people who have thought things out before they speak. When they have slowed down, they are more likely to speak in alignment with how they truly feel or what they truly know. We can also trust decisions we've made and adjusted over time. We can even trust processes that have been evolving for a long time.

We commonly say that yoga or karate becomes a lifestyle. That's because the real lessons we learn, we have actually taught ourselves. When we slow down, our own inner wisdom has a chance to surface. What we are searching for is right there. Joy comes from being in the moment, and meaning comes from our own inner wisdom.

Again, congratulations to our new black belts. They are leaders who I know will make a difference for many in the future, both in and out of class.

*Sarah Geenberg is the owner of Wimberley Karate and Yoga Studio, near Blue Hole, and OnlineSeniorsYoga.com. The yoga, Tai Chi, and karate classes are building again. Classes are offered indoors, outdoors, and online. Feel free to come check us out.*

### Wimberley Karate and Yoga Studio



**Sarah Geenberg**  
(512) 971-8528

**501 Old Kyle Road**  
**Wimberley, TX 78676**

**wimberleykarateyoga.com**



## Dehydration and accelerated aging

by Karen Laine, Para-Medical Aesthetician



Our bodies have the miraculous ability to renew themselves. Every organ, every system is made up of a collection of cells, the basic units of life. Each cell is a *capsule* created by our body utilizing nutrients to form the cell membrane and the water or *life force*, inside the cell.

Skin is the largest organ of the human body. Normal skin, comprised of a collection of cells, is designed to shed its dead surface at the end of their 28-day life span. At a rate based upon your metabolism, younger cells from the deeper basal layers of the epidermis replace what is shed. However, this cycle of renewal and replacement is disrupted when skin experiences damage and dehydration resulting in premature aging. When dead skin cells accumulate on the skin surface, the horny layer becomes thick with lifeless buildup, and that's when problems begin. Skin looks dull, fine-lined, often discolored and congested. Nourishing and protective treatment products cannot penetrate through the build up. New cells are not moving upward through the epidermal layers. This roof-like surface is weakened and no longer functions as a protective barrier. Sensitivity develops as deeper layers are no longer protected against harsh environment and ingredients that come in contact with the skin.

Accelerants to dehydration and aging are poor nutrition, lack of sleep, stress, exposure to UV rays, smoking, pollution and exposure to harsh chemicals.

If you think of your skin layers like a sponge; a wet sponge is more functional than a dry sponge. A wet sponge, like hydrated, healthy skin, is thicker, more plump, elastic, flexible and smoother than a thinned, inflexible, often rough surfaced dry sponge. Water is allowed to evaporate away from the deeper, support layers of cells. When skin is dehydrated, the sebaceous glands go into overdrive, secreting too much oil in an attempt at providing nature's protective barrier or sebum to help hold the water in the skin. Premature aging can be avoided and is reversible through proper nutrition, choosing the correct products for your skin and following the guidance of a properly trained, experienced skin care professional.

*Karen Laine is a para-medical aesthetician and makeup artist with 23 years experience. Contact her at 512 847 8052. Her office is located at 120 Joe Wimberley Blvd. Suite 106, in Wimberley.*



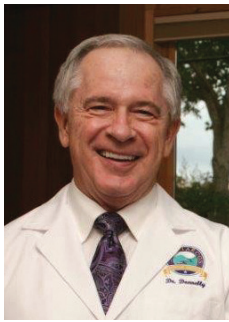
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**karenlaineskintherapy@earthlink.net**





## Easing dental related anxiety

by Robert Donnelly, DDS

Going to the dentist can cause anxiety, and that's a normal reaction. It's estimated that between 15 and 40 percent of people are affected by dental anxiety. This often leads to unnecessary oral health problems as a result of avoidance behavior, which can ultimately lead to more time spent in the dental chair to receive more extensive and potentially costly treatment.

There are many causes of dental anxiety:

- The fear of pain
- Feeling embarrassed about the condition of your teeth
- Recalling you own past experiences or the experiences of your family and friends
- The fear of needles, drills, and gagging
- Anticipating costly and/or extensive treatment

Please come talk with me at San Marcos Gentle Dental, I can help dispel any negative or frightening perceptions you may have. Having an understanding of your dental health and the dental services or treatment you may need will help to relieve dental anxiety. Make sure to avoid caffeine and sugar before any a dental appointment; they may make you anxious. Focus on relaxing, breathe regularly and slowly during any procedure. When you are nervous you tend to hold your breath, which decreases oxygen levels and further increases feelings of panic.

Prior to any dental treatment we can discuss options of sedation. There are different types of sedation methods. The most common would be breathing a mixture of nitrous oxide and oxygen (laughing gas), and/or orally taking a medication by mouth. Sedation will make you feel more relaxed and even sleepy. We offer a comforting environment including headphones, with a variety of music options to choose from, large windows overlooking a bird haven and a staff that cater to our patients needs.

*If you or someone you know are interested in learning more about maintaining oral hygiene, Dr. Donnelly is here to help you. You can contact San Marcos Gentle Dental by calling 512 396 5225 where we will be happy to get you scheduled. Come see why Dr. Donnelly was voted a Texas Super Dentist by Texas Monthly Magazine and Best Dentist in Hays County!*



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## Grateful

by Heidi Pousson



If someone had told me a year ago that I'd be working at a hemp boutique, I would have said they were crazy. But here I am, working at Haus of Jayne and it is the furthest thing from crazy – it's a blessing.

My mind has been opened to a whole new world and, at this point, I am only just beginning to touch the surface in understanding the medicinal benefits of our products. And yet, there is so much still to learn. All I know is that there are so many ways we can help our bodies be healthier while also aiding our mental health.

When I offered to help Haley this summer, I had no idea this would turn out to be such a blessing.

Thank you, Haley and Christie, for welcoming me as a member of Haus of Jayne and trusting me to spread your message to others. Since working here, I have had the chance to meet so many amazing people who have opened up and shared their stories – their journeys. I've learned just as much from all of you as I hope you've learned from me.

Thank you for reading my articles and spreading the word to others. It is the coolest thing when new clients come in and tell us they heard about us or about something because of you. All of you play such a significant role in our success here in the Texas Hill

Country. When I first moved here seven years ago, I had heard that this was a supportive community. That statement has rang true so many times over these past seven years, and I see it working here when you want to share your experiences with your friends or family members.

We're looking forward to the new year and hope you and your families have a safe and blessed holiday season. We truly feel blessed to be a part of this wonderful community.

*Wife, mother, friend, 8th-grade teacher, member of Haus of Jayne. Follow Haus of Jayne on social media: hausofjayne\_official on Instagram and Facebook.com/HausofJayne. Visit Haus of Jayne at 766 Old Fitzhugh Road, Dripping Springs, 78620. They can be reached at 512 648 7420.*



**HAUS OF JAYNE**

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hello@hausofjayne.com  
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# Has stressed out or overwhelmed become your new normal?

by Scott Krippel



With the holidays fast approaching, do you feel a gentle warmth as you anticipate family gatherings or does your already inflated to-do list seem to triple in size? Are you having trouble falling asleep or staying asleep? Do even the smaller decisions seem to cause stress?

It may be that you are out of balance. Not necessarily dizzy or wobbly but at a

deeper level of your brain – the autonomic nervous system.

This critical part of our brain is divided into two sides – on the right, the sympathetic or *fight or flight* side, helps us handle stress, make decisions, and engage. On the left, the parasympathetic or *rest and digest* side, helps us to slow down, recharge, and reset.

Sometimes a serious event, like a concussion, can throw this delicate system out of balance. But you don't have to have a traumatic brain injury to experience autonomic imbalances. We need both sides to navigate the ups and downs life brings our way – and this is where Cereset can help.

Cereset is a relaxing, non-invasive modality, helping the brain restore balance at the autonomic level, which can then help with a variety of issues like anxiety, sleeping issues, brain fog, fatigue, and more.


Cereset borrows from EEG (electroencephalogram) sensors to listen to the brain's electrical energy and determine if you may be leaning to the sympathetic (right) or the parasympathetic (left).

You'll get to see exactly what your brain is doing.

Then, using simple tones, Cereset works via acoustic resonance imaging – the brain listens to its own reflection. It's a bit like holding a mirror up to the brain, allowing it to reassess, relax, and restore. Introductory trial sessions are always available for children and adults.

My wife, Carol, and I moved our family to Dripping Springs in 2018, and we are excited to bring this amazing technology to the community. We've been very encouraged by the people Cereset has already helped and we look forward to helping individuals and families all over the Texas Hill Country.

*Scott & Carol Krippel are native Texans and graduates of the University of Texas. They feel very blessed to be in Dripping Springs with their 6 children. You can often find them at the DSUSA baseball and softball fields, or may see Scott fronting his band, Buzz & the Blue Cats.*



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701 Hwy 290 West, Ste. 101 Dripping Springs, TX 78620

# Unwrap new traditions

by Leslie Tourish, LPC



Christmas 'tis the season to engage in insane acts you'd never do in the other eleven months. Such as shopping at a store specializing only in Christmas gear with the goal of buying a new tree skirt.

Entering the store, my senses were ambushed. Music blared, lights twinkled from overly festooned holiday trees, and cinnamon potpourri wafted through the

air in a thick cloud. I contemplated doing an about-face and going home to wrap my tree in the skirt with the tattered fringe I've used for years, but decided to be brave and soldier on.

After roaming through aisles filled with blue pine cone ornaments, gold pine cone ornaments, teal pine cone ornaments, and purple pine cone ornaments, I finally located the tree skirt section. Apparently one rule of tree skirt design is that there can never, ever be colors too gaudy, nor sequins too few. Who knew trees like dressing up in an Elvis getup – the later years. Finally, I locate one skirt sporting a tasteful bit of burgundy-colored brocade. Checking the price tag, it read \$300. I blanched and carefully set it back down.

As I write this column, I am content that in the next room my tree is warm and snug with its simple red-and-green skirt and tattered fringe wrapped around its base. Who knows, perhaps this humble skirt will eventually become a treasured heirloom, passed down

through the generations.

Of all the holidays, Christmas is the one steeped in the richest traditions. People crave treasured continuations from the past. Many of us already have traditions handed down from generations long past, but that doesn't mean we can't begin new ones now.

I have a friend who, along with some of his friends, began going around his neighborhood on Christmas Eve to sing carols. At first his neighbors, who suddenly discovered these off-tune singers on their doorsteps, didn't know how to respond. They often shuffled uncomfortably in their foyers while being treated by the singers to rousing rounds of "Jingle Bells" and "Deck the Halls". Now he says his neighbors call him in advance to find out what time the band of singers will come around so they can have apple cider and holiday cookies ready for them. He said the joy of this activity has made the spirit of Christmas for him come alive, like nothing a shopping mall can provide.

Traditions can begin with you and they can begin now. Creating that special meaning for the holidays takes only your imagination and desire.

*Leslie Tourish, LPC, is a Dripping Springs psychotherapist in private practice. To contact Leslie, visit [LeslieTourish.com](http://LeslieTourish.com) or [LATourish.com](http://LATourish.com)*



## Looking ahead to the 2023 real estate market *by AJ Harwood*



Although experts believe that the market will shift to being more favorable for buyers, mortgage rates and inflation are impacting many Americans' decisions to buy or sell a home. But there is good news. For those who want to buy a home, there is less competition. And because inventory is still tight, sellers will still be able to sell their homes if priced right.

- Existing home sales: 4.7 million with -23.8% year-over-year
- Median sales price: \$384,800 with +8.4% year-over-year

Although existing home sales declined, tight inventory led to an increase in the median sales price.

- New single family homes: Volatile lumber prices have added \$14,345 to the average sale price.
- New home starts: 1.4 million with -7.7% year-over-year

New home starts are still below the rate that homes were built prior to the pandemic. The projected number of single-family housing units in 2023 is estimated to be over 1.2 million.

- Home equity: Increased +\$60,000 year-over-year
- Average rent: Increased +14.4% year-over-year

Since 2017, the average year-over-year increase in rent was 5.77%

I know the market can be confusing, but I am here to offer clear, concise information you can trust. Feel free to contact me and I

will answer any questions you have. Texas is still one of the top states people are moving to.

If you are wondering what your home would look like on the market, give me a call! I would be honored to complete a comparative market analysis (CMA) to see what homes in your neighborhood are selling for right now – you might be surprised! At the end of the day, real estate is local, and I'm here to walk you through with the best information so you can make the best choices and how it applies to you in the Wimberley and Texas Hill Country area. If you're thinking of selling your home, call me today! Experience matters – especially in the current changing market!

*This information is designed to provide a brief overview of the subject matter covered and is offered for general educational and informational purposes only. Used with permission by the Buffini & Company.*

*Allison "AJ" Harwood, JD, MBA, GRI, is the Broker/Owner of RE/MAX REAL PROPERTIES. When Experience matters...Call "AJ" Today! Your Hill Country Luxury Property Expert. Member: Institute for LUXURY HOME MARKETING. He is Wimberley's "Peak Producer" offering Professional Representation for both Buyers and Sellers in Real Estate Transactions. He may be contacted at 512.847."SOLD" 7653 or at AJ@REMAX.net or drop by our office location at 160 South River in the South River Business Park, Wimberley, Texas 78676.*

## Well water storage systems *by Randy Lawrence*



During times of drought, there is a great deal of concern with the possibility of wells going dry in the area. Many people are forced to take action when they no longer have a constant supply of water to their home. Some have to replace well pumps, only to find that the old pump failed due to low water conditions. Others must drill new wells in order to access a larger supply of water. In most cases, these repairs are unexpected, and time-consuming. During

severe drought, many well service companies are overwhelmed with calls, causing some families to endure days without a supply of fresh water. A water storage tank would be helpful to many of these homeowners.

The benefits of a properly installed storage tank are numerous. These tanks are normally installed near the well so that the well pump sends the water directly into the storage tank. This removes much of the back pressure from your well pump so that the workload on the pump is greatly reduced. The water can be sprayed into the top of the storage tank, eliminating odors which may be present. The water is then re-pressurized by an external pump which can maintain higher pressure, and is much less costly to repair

or replace than a submersible pump. Protection systems are also available for both pumps to ensure longevity.

Even on existing storage tanks, an early warning system, such as a light or alarm, can be installed to activate when the water in the tank drops to a certain level, indicating the need to check your well for problems. This buys you the time you need to contact a professional. Should you happen to run out of water before the well is operational, there are water delivery services which can bring you a supply of water to replenish your storage tank, thereby maintaining your day-to-day routine while you await repairs. For homes in remote areas, stored water is also a valuable asset for firefighters.

Now is an ideal time to consider adding a storage tank to your well. Then you will be prepared before another Texas summer takes it's toll on your well.

*Randy Lawrence is the owner of ProQuality Water Systems, a full service water treatment company. He is one of only six Class III Certified Water Treatment Specialists in Hays County (LIC# WT0002693). With over 27 years of experience he has serviced Wimberley and surrounding areas for over a decade.*

## Pruning in winter

by Steven Austin



Certain types of pruning can be performed on trees any time of year, but winter in Central Texas provides an especially good opportunity. In particular, visibility in deciduous trees is better, and the beetle responsible for vectoring the oak wilt pathogen is less active.

One thing that's easier to spot in winter concerns structural issues in the canopy. These include conditions such as over-extended branches, same-sized branches originating from a common junction, bark that becomes embedded between two stems that have a common junction, cracks, and cavities. Such conditions suggest that structural stability may be compromised, or it could become so over time. Trees that are pruned properly tend to sustain less damage during storms and windy conditions.

Another problem that's easier to spot in winter is the presence of mistletoe. This plant is called a *hemiparasite* because it can produce its own food through photosynthesis, but it takes moisture and nutrients from the tree to do so. Although ball moss is not a parasite, it, too, can be easier to spot in winter. Heavy infestations can be controlled through pruning, topical treatments, or a combination of both. Incidentally, winter provides greater opportunities for the ideal weather conditions that make ball moss control more effective.

Finally, winter offers the last opportunity for pruning oak trees before spring, the season that increases risk of oak wilt infection from pruning wounds on live branches. The Texas Forest Services recommends avoiding such pruning from February 1 through June

30. Pruning for safety, line clearance, building clearance, storm damage, dead branch removal, and similar situations may still be performed on oak trees in any season, but professional standards should be observed in the process.

Property owners should be aware that too much foliage removed in a pruning session is not good for trees, nor are flush and stub cuts. For your winter pruning this year, contact an ISA Certified Arborist, who should be able to answer your questions about proper practice.

*A Wimberley resident, Steven Austin is a member of the Texas Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture and is an ISA Board Certified Master Arborist and ISA Tree Worker/Climber Specialist. His expertise includes integrated pest management of trees and shrubs and state-of-the-art organic treatments. He holds a commercial pesticide license with the Texas Department of Agriculture and is Texas Oak Wilt Certified by the Texas Forest Service. Steven is an Arborist Representative for Bartlett Tree Experts. Call 512 392 1089 or toll-free at 800 443 8733.*

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## Secrets to selling a house

by Alice Gumbert Lebkuecher



**Selling Secret #7: Half-empty closets.** Storage is something every buyer is looking for and can never have enough of.

**Selling Secret #6: Light it up.** Maximize the light in your home. After location, good light is the one thing that every buyer cites that they want in a home. Clean the windows and increase the wattage of your light bulbs.

**Selling Secret #5: Conceal the critters.** You might think a cuddly dog would warm the hearts of potential buyers, but you'd be wrong. Not everybody is a dog- or cat-lover.

**Selling Secret #4: Take the home out of your house.** One of the most important things to do when selling your house is to depersonalize it. Consider hiring a home stager to maximize the full potential of your home. Staging simply means arranging your furniture to best showcase the floor plan and maximize the use of space.

**Selling Secret #3: Kitchen comes first.** You're not actually selling your house, you're selling your kitchen – that's how important it is. The benefits of remodeling your kitchen are endless, and the best part of it is that you'll probably get 85% of your money back. The fastest, most inexpensive kitchen updates include painting

and new cabinet hardware. Use a neutral-color paint so you can present buyers with a blank canvas where they can start envisioning their own style.

**Selling Secret #2: Always be ready to show.** Your house needs to be *show-ready* at all times – you never know when your buyer is going to walk through the door.

**Selling Secret #1: The first impression is the only impression.** No matter how good the interior of your home looks, buyers have already judged your home before they walk through the door. You never have a second chance to make a first impression. It's important to make people feel warm, welcome, and safe as they approach the house. Spruce up your home's exterior with inexpensive shrubs and brightly colored flowers. Entryways are also important so make it welcoming by putting in a small bench or a vase of fresh-cut flowers.

If you are thinking of selling your home, now is a great time to sell. The market is very low on housing inventory. Call me today to discuss getting your home ready to sell.

*Alice Gumbert Lebkuecher is a sales agent with Keller Williams Realty, Partners in Real Estate, in Wimberley. She works with both buyers and sellers in Wimberley and surrounding areas. To contact her, call her cell at 713 253 1311 or by email at AliceinWimberley@gmail.com.*



## A 529 plan can help jump-start your college fund

by Scott G. Hackett, CFP®



Building a college fund, even a small one, can help families feel more in control and less stressed during the college research and admission process. Think of a college fund as a down payment. Then at college time, it can be supplemented by financial aid (grants, scholarships, loans, and work-study), current income, and student funds.

A 529 savings plan offers the opportunity for tax-free earnings if the funds are used for college, making every dollar count. (For withdrawals not used for qualified education expenses, earnings may be subject to taxation as ordinary income and a 10% penalty.) You can set up monthly electronic fund transfers from your bank account to put your savings on autopilot. But one-off contributions are allowed, too, and the holidays can be an excellent time for grandparents or other relatives to make a small contribution as a gift.

*Should I open one 529 account for both of my kids or a separate account for each?* That depends on your personal preferences, but opening separate accounts often makes sense. Two accounts let you contribute different amounts for each child as needed, tailor your investment portfolios to each child's age, and avoid commin-

gling funds. If you choose one account and invest too aggressively, you might incur losses when your older child is close to college. And if you invest too conservatively, your investment returns may not keep pace with college inflation for your younger child. You also run the risk of depleting most or all of the funds for your oldest child.

*Does it make sense to open a 529 account if my child is a few years from college?* It might. Even if your child is only a few years from college, you could theoretically save for another four or five years, right up through junior year of college. You could open a 529 account, contribute monthly, and any earnings would be tax-free if the money is used for college. Having a designated college account instead of a general savings account might also lessen the temptation to dip into it for non-college expenses.

*Scott G. Hackett, CFP® is the president of the Hackett Financial Group LLC (HFG), a fee-only registered investment advisor. Contact Scott at 512-847-0630.*

## Contingent trusts for children

by Carrie Campbell



If a child under the age 18 inherits through a will, life insurance, or intestate (probate without a will), the default procedure is for the court to secure the inheritance by depositing any funds into the court's registry, then releasing those funds to the child on its eighteenth birthday. To access the funds requires a court proceeding.

When very young children inherit, it is often worth obtaining a guardianship over the child's estate in order to more practically access the money necessary for his or her everyday care. A guardianship is needed even if one or more of the parents survive. The guardianship is the court's way of making sure that the inheritance is handled responsibly and in the best interest of the child. It will require an initial court proceeding, posting of an insurance bond, then an annual accounting until the minor reaches adulthood.

However, these bureaucratic measures can be easily avoided by including a contingent trust within your last will and testament. The will's contingent trust is triggered if the person inheriting is under any age you select. While the court will hand over money to an 18-year-old, you may well want to consider a more mature age. For example, parents may want to establish a contingent trust that takes effect if they die, and their heirs are under 21. The trust will appoint a trustee who will manage the money for the children and

provide instruction to the trustee regarding what the funds can be used for until the heir/beneficiary of the trust reaches 21, such as education, health, and support. You can also include incentives that allow additional distributions upon certain events like graduating from university or earned income. The trustee then distributes to the heir whatever funds still exist on their twenty-first birthday. If the heir under the will is over 21 at the time the parents die, then the contingent trust is ignored.

To determine if this provision is a good fit for your family, you should consult with an attorney experienced with estate planning and probate.

*Carrie Campbell has lived and practiced law in Wimberley since 1997. She is the managing partner of Mounger & Campbell law firm. Carrie is an active member of the Rotary Club of Wimberley and president of the Wimberley Village Library Foundation. She proudly has three wonderful daughters and two lively grandsons.*



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# Litigation: A Christmas in court

by Roland Brown



I've got another story about a judge for you this month. It comes from one of the most interesting, unusual, and satisfying trials I was ever involved with. Very early in my career I assisted my dad, one of the most passionate and persuasive trial lawyers you can imagine, in an intense murder trial. Space is too limited to cover all of the unusual things


about this trial here. You can read about them in an expanded version in Roland's Blog at Your-Personal-Injury-Lawyer.law (the url is "law" not "com"). Our client was accused of the murder of his wife. He was found not guilty by the jury which realized he had acted in self-defense.

Trial began the week of Christmas. This judge was prosecution oriented and was not fond of me or of my dad. He did not allow us sufficient time to question the jury panel members or to determine which panel members we wished to strike. He pushed us throughout the trial and was generally difficult to deal with most of the time. We simply had to fight throughout the trial to get the evidence before the jury that we knew would show that our client was an exemplary individual caught in an unimaginably horrible situation. It didn't help that our client was a young black man in a very conservative county.

We presented numerous witnesses, white working men and women, who worked with and knew both our client and his vola-

tile wife. They helped the jury understand how abusive she could be and how she could wind up dead as a result of the fight in which she attacked our client with a hammer and butcher knife. I believe those witnesses, as well as a surprise witness who is discussed in the expanded version of this article, affected the judge as well. I will never forget how, on the evening of December 23, as the jury returned its not guilty verdict, the judge addressed our client and sincerely said, "Young man, this jury has given you the greatest Christmas gift you will ever receive – your freedom. You are free to go!"

*Attorney Roland Brown handles exclusively personal injury claims. Roland, who offices in Wimberley, has been voted HAYS COUNTY'S BEST PERSONAL INJURY ATTORNEY for 2020 and for 2021 in annual polls of Hays County attorneys. For more information call 512 847 2500.*



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# Travel stress

by Tracy Sheffield, RVT



When does a good idea seem like a bad idea? When you are in the car with your cat on the way to the vet's office and the yowling starts. Yowling can be the tip of the iceberg. There can be vomiting, urination, and defecation as well – making a simple visit to the veterinarian unpleasant and stressful for all concerned.

cerned.

The stress associated with transporting a cat to their veterinary office is the number one reason that kitties often do not get the annual medical care they need. When owners consider the stress of the transport process and the fact that their cat looks outwardly healthy it can seem easier for all concerned to skip the annual veterinary visit.

Outwardly healthy appearing cats can have a variety of health problems that can shorten their lives. This applies to house cats as well as indoor/outdoor cats. Dental issues such as infected gums and cracked teeth can lead a cat to just feel bad. These cats hide more and sleep more but don't show outward pain. Owners see this and just suppose the cat is aging and never realize that there is a painful condition causing the lethargic behavior. Metabolic disorders such as diabetes or Cushings syndrome may go unnoticed as well in the early stages if the cat is not receiving regular check ups.

Using the product Feliway can help alleviate travel stress for many cats. But for many cats they need more help to travel without anxiety and stress.

What researchers have found is that a commonly prescribed medication for cats also works extremely well in the relief of travel stress they gave the medication in a treat about two hours before travel to the veterinary office. The study yielded good evidence that pre-medicating the cat in this manner led to a significant reduction in stress related behaviors during travel. The kitties were also much more relaxed for the examination procedure. Everyone – the owners, the cats and the veterinarians – were very pleased with the outcome.

Talk to your veterinarian about pre-medication for your cat before your veterinary visit. You and your cat will be very glad you did.

Tracy Sheffield, RVT works with her husband, Dr. Mike Sheffield, at Wimberley Veterinary Clinic. Wimberley Veterinary Clinic sees all kinds of animals, dogs, cats, horses, birds, pocket pets, reptiles and other exotic animals. Make your boarding reservations online at [WimberleyVetClinic.com](http://WimberleyVetClinic.com) or call us at 512 847 5630.

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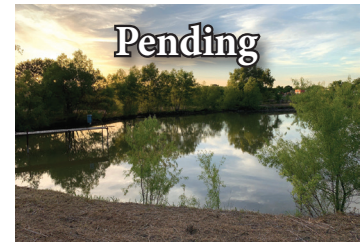


501 Rancho Grande Dr MLS3482009 Home  
 tucked away on 2.6 acres. Studio, green-  
 house, workshop. \$850,000 Alice lebkuecher



**New**

25 Woodcreek MLS 1226006  
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 \$485,000 Alice Lebkuecher



**Pending**

5216 FM 725 NB MLS 4424931 Home to be  
 remodeled soon on 11 acres. Large pond,  
 potential commercial. \$895,000 Jeff Hutto



**New Price**

TBD Sierra Loma MLS 5008273 5 acre  
 tract, expansive views. Well and electricity.  
 Gated community. \$428,000 Jim Donaldson



460 Lloyd Ln MLS 9395690  
 Beautiful 5/3.5 on 2.75 acres in  
 Butler Ranch Estates. \$1,375,000



**Pending**

410 Buttercup Ln MLS 9354111 \$990,000  
 Great Views from this 3/2 on 4.29 Acres!  
 Alice Lebkuecher



**New Price**

131 Champions Cir MLS3735414 3/2  
 Beautifully remodeled.  
 \$430,000 Debbie Donaldson



**Sold**

29 Presidio Rd. MLS 9086658  
 Charming cottage, 1,488 sq ft, .41 acre  
 lot \$410,000 Linda Germain



120 Patriotic MLS 8913032  
 \$172,000 2 acres, Hill country views!  
 Jeff Hutto



**Commercial Lease**

12589 RR 12 MLS1405278 High  
 visibility commercial with 5 offices, kitchen  
 and conference. \$4000 Jim Donaldson



**Sold**

805 Deer Lake Rd. MLS 9636429  
 Backs to Lone Man Creek, Custom, 2,192 sq  
 ft, on 2.65 acres. \$997,000 Linda Germain



**Mickey Brown**  
 512-468-4509



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 713-253-1311



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