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NEWS & VIEWS

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Volume 26 Issue 1 • Wimberley, Texas • December 2022

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God bless us, everyone

Wimberley Valley
NEWS & VIEWS



A few weeks back, my son and I were on a run. As I rounded a corner I saw a yard sign that made me stop in my tracks – Kindness 2024. Without even thinking I said aloud, “Thank you!” pointing to the sign and lauding our neighbors.

I don’t need to tell you how worked up people get surrounding politics. I have a good many friends that spend a lot of time researching politicians and issues. These friends fall right, left, and center of the party lines. At the end of the day, we all want what’s best for our families and fellow man. So, shouldn’t that be enough to unite us? Especially this time of the year.

What unites us is more than opinion, more than numbers, more than what we drive or what we do. The spirit of the season moves us all in one way or another. And I believe that spirit is one of love. Love makes us look past our hang-ups and push through to the light on the other side of conflict, be it internal or external. What we find on the other side often-times makes the darkness seem so futile.

I hope this season brings you joy, relief, comfort, and light. As usual, our contributors offer you a little bit of everything – laughter, inspiration, and ways to care for yourself and those you love and those around you living and moving about in the same spaces, frequenting the same places, and seeking all that’s merry and bright.

Happy December, y’all.

Warmly,

Editor, Publisher
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Wimberley Valley News & Views, a subsidiary of Valentino Publications, is mailed monthly to all homes, businesses, and post office boxes in the 78676 zip code. You can also pick one up from local merchants.

Contact us at info@WVNewsViews.com for information on advertising and submissions.
Wimberley Valley News and Views
P.O. Box 91554 Austin, TX 78709
512 375 5590
WVNewsViews.com

The Dripping Springs Outlook, a subsidiary of Valentino Publications, is mailed monthly to all street addresses serviced by the Dripping Springs Post Office in 78620.

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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 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.
- 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. December 12**, 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 for more.
- 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.
- 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
- Every 1st **Tue.** The Wimberley Community Center hosts free medical checks 9:30-10:30am. For more info 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
- 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 HillCountryHerbs.org or email valentine_lisa@msn.com.
- 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. For more information, contact Marilyn Pierce at 512-722-3549.
- Every 2nd and 4th **Thur.** 7pm Wimberley Toastmasters Club meets at 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.
- Every 3rd **Thur.** Live concerts, best music in the Hill Country at Susanna's Kitchen Coffeehouse, 7:30pm; \$20-25 for adults, \$5 for children. Food, coffee, and soft drinks available. Corner of RR 12 & CR 1492 (Wimberley United Methodist Church.) WimberleyUMC.org Proceeds benefit Barnabas Connection & Mother's Day Out scholarships. Performing **Thurs. December 15:** Ray Wylie Hubbard
- Every **Fri.** Celebrate Freedom 6-8pm, pizza, 5:30pm Cypress Creek Church. 512-847-1222 or CypressCreekChurch.com.
- Every **Fri.** Wimberley VFW Post 6441 hosts bingo nights. Doors open at 6:30pm with food concession. Earlybird games start at 7:00pm. Regular games start at 8pm. Visit vfw6441.com/bingo
- Every 2nd **Sat.** Wimberley's Second Saturday Gallery Trail. Visit ten galleries for art, food, and fun, 4-7pm. Email Bent-TreeGallery@gmail.com. Have a glass of wine and 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

- **Sat. & Sun. December 3 & 4**, Wilderness First Aid Course, Texas State University Camp, 1000 University Road, Wimberley, \$220 per person, \$20 access fee to the property.
- **Wed. December 7**, Wimberley Farmers Market 3-6pm, 14100 Ranch Road 12
- **Sun. December 18**, 1-4pm, Josh Baca and the Hot Tamales, Devil's Backbone Tavern

- **November 18 through December 11**, Wimberley Players presents Every Christmas Story Ever Told (And Then Some), Fridays & Saturdays 7:30pm, Sundays 2:30. Tickets available at WimberleyPlayers.org.
- **December 1-3, December 8-10**, The Sights & Sounds of Christmas in San Marcos, every Thursday through Saturday, 5:30-11pm, admission \$5-\$10, carnival rides, food, live music. Kids under 12 get in free.

Have something to add to the Calendar of Events?

Email us at info@WVNewsViews.com

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Good ideas gone bad

by Tim Thompson



Edward Lorenz introduced the concept of the popularly known “Butterfly Effect” by posing a question at a meeting of scientists forty-five years ago: “Does the flap of a butterfly’s wings in Brazil set off a tornado in Texas?”

He intended to illustrate that complex dynamical systems often exhibit unforeseen results and that small variances in the initial conditions could have profound and wildly unpredictable effects on the outcomes. Indeed, we have seen Lorenz’s work used in many ways, and we should always be wary of how our own actions can have consequences wholly unsought.

In 1883, sugar cane growers in Hawaii imported mongooses to confront the rat problems on their farms. They had a minimal effect on the rat populations, but also had the unintended effect of eliminating indigenous critters including quite a few federally listed endangered bird species and Hawksbill Sea Turtles. A single ignored truth could have been helpful for those early mongoose importers: Rats are primarily nocturnal, feeding in their range at night, while the mongoose is diurnal, mostly feeding during the day. In the state, they are now the primary predator of birds, small mammals, reptiles, insects, fruits, and plants.

Where I was reared, the air smelled like agricultural pesticides-

all the time- but especially in the morning, when the cooler air clung to the ground, working its magic on invertebrates and vertebrates alike, silencing small birds and animals as well as the targeted insects that attacked crops. Dead also were billions of parasitic wasps and ladybugs and preying mantids that could have helped stop at least some of the insect predation. Eliminating certain species from the food chain is tricky business.

Without trying very hard, we can envision countless examples of how something that seemed like such a good idea turned out to be a mixed blessing. Sometimes, the consequences of our decisions seem altogether unknowable, but we can do great good in our gardening and tending of the land if only we are careful to make the best carefully considered choices.

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.

New York, I love you

by Kern Deschner



I love New York but it can be difficult to love. We were recently there on a mission. Everyone talks about the horrible NYC traffic, the potholes, aggressive jaywalkers, and bicycles to match the crazy drivers. New York seemed clearer and safer when Bloomberg was mayor but it seems to be backsliding some now. We saw more drug use this time. The panhandlers seemed to be setting a minimum allowable donation, one’s sign

suggesting \$20. Still, I have never been threatened in NYC, even walking several blocks late at night.

And there are the pluses. There is no place like Broadway if you want to see a show as well as it can be done. A city that is this vertical is going to make a lot of trash but NYC is surprising clean. In spite of talk of *defunding*, there still are cops everywhere and they actually help break up traffic jams, a practice that I wish local cops would adopt. The food is great, easily available, and varied like nowhere else. NYC is a perfect city for foodies, and it is a walking city for shoppers. The shopping is unparalleled but it can also be breathtakingly detailed. And when you go to NYC in search of almost anything, you are likely to find it.

I said we were on a mission. We went looking for an industrial strength sewing machine, a machine that will punch through thick alpaca felt, even leather (note: we do *not* use alpaca leather or pelts,

just the fleece), so that Rhonda can manufacture handbags. This kind of machine is not your usual home sewing machine. Amazon will sell them but you really should go see one in use to see if it is worth the cost. Also, Amazon will not assemble it, and that takes some experience. We went to the garment district, around 37th and 9th, where there are dozens of stores selling fabric. Some just sell every imaginable button, or trim, or zipper. We found two dusty disheveled stores devoted to industrial sewing machines. One was owned by a couple of Russian immigrants who took a few minutes to realize that we were serious, and then became amazingly helpful. They were selling sewing machines that are all metal and are built like a tank. As hoped, they demonstrated how those machines plow through even the thickest, toughest fabrics. They sewed together thick strips of leather like it was silk. They so powerful that they have an oil pump!

Rhonda is now the proud owner of one of the world’s best industrial sewing machines and is excited to get started plowing through the felt that formerly merely laughed at her home sewing machine. Of course, Rhonda insisted we visit several 5th Avenue handbag stores... to get design ideas... *really!* Fact finding mission.

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.

Training together

by Sarah Geenberg



The most successful kids we have had in our karate program were successful because they had the support of their parents. The most successful trained with the parents. Others were also very successful due to their parent's commitment to their success through time.

We are starting a class in January in which kids and their parents will train together. It is great to see families train and through their training they learn how to overcome competitiveness, jealousy, and feeling superior or inferior to one another. Further, they enjoy the time together.

Families who train together are taught that within karate as well as in life, each person will have different strengths and weaknesses. One may be able to jump better and another may have better balance. Another might have a stronger voice while another is stronger at patiently breaking something down in order to figure it out. And they learn not to compare themselves to each other and to respect the differences. They learn only to compare themselves now to where they were, before.

I encourage parents to not worry about their kids during class. Let them make their mistakes and the teacher will help them through it. And let the kids see you make mistakes. They like seeing that because it is good to know they are not the only ones making mistakes. And importantly, they are watching how you handle

it. They learn from that.

As you grow in the training, you will see your child become more focused. The irritations that children have that have them get frustrated when they fail at something dissipate. They learn how to get up and try again. They learn the black belts are simply people who have tried again and again. They have succeeded because they never quit.

These types of things are the juice of a karate practice. It is funny – the self-defense and the confidence coming from feeling able are just the beginning. The juice is when one realizes they want to live their lives through the lessons they have learned.

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



Omega-3s and your skin

by Karen Laine, Para-Medical Aesthetician



You've heard about Omega-3s benefits for your health, but did you know they are crucial for supple, clear, healthy skin?

Skin cells are short-lived with a rapid turnover rate, meaning nutrients needed to build new cells must readily be on hand. Omega-3s are a key component in

the fatty membranes of skin cells. Without this special type of fat on hand, the body must build new cells with *inferior* fats, resulting in less than optimal skin health. As we age, getting enough Omega-3s is even more important as they are necessary to ensure healthy cell membranes that keep skin hydrated.

The primary cause of skin aging is the sun's UV rays. Think of Omega-3s as internal sunscreen. The two kinds of Omega-3s found in fish oil, *EPA* and *DHA*, increase resistance to UV light and act as protection from harmful free-radicals formed when unprotected skin is exposed to the sun. EPA goes one step further to help block the release of UV-induced enzymes that break down collagen, which leads to fine lines, wrinkles and sagging skin.

Any condition that ends in *itis* indicates a problem associated with inflammation. Dermatitis, psoriasis, rosacea and eczema are inflammatory conditions of the skin. If you've visited a dermatologist lately, chances are he/she probably didn't speak with you about your diet. A number of credible studies strongly correlate the Western diet with inflammatory skin conditions, acne and oily skin,

specifically, dairy, refined carbohydrates and grain foods. Along with diet changes, Omega-3s can improve these conditions by greatly reducing silent inflammation in your body. Unlike acute inflammation from surgery or injury, silent (chronic) inflammation is much more dangerous because it isn't readily apparent. If left untreated, it can lead to serious health conditions like heart disease, arthritis and possibly even some types of cancer.

Whether your goal is to fight aging, reduce inflammation, clear up acne or simply improve your skin's health and appearance, high-quality Omega-3 supplements are great additions to your beauty regimen.

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.



By Appointment
512/847-8052

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Can nutritional intravenous therapies help you?

by Breca Tracy, PhD



Between work and the family, I barely have time to take care of myself. IV therapy gives me the energy to tackle every day. Sound familiar? Whether you are looking to support your immunity during cold and flu season or detox and prepare for the holidays, this may be for you!

Intravenous (IV) therapy can be used as a treatment method to deliver nutrients – such as vitamins or minerals – directly into the bloodstream. This is typically through a vein in the arm. By injecting substances directly into the bloodstream, you eliminate alteration of the nutrients, which may occur from the actions of digestive enzymes. The amount of nutrients in the blood can reach higher therapeutic levels much faster than what is possible when absorption takes place through the gastrointestinal system. For example, few people realize when you swallow a pill or a multi-vitamin, the body's natural absorption process can render up to 85% of that vitamin useless.

Help your body begin to heal itself faster with IV therapy. IV nutrients enter your bloodstream directly and immediately, making them more *bioavailable* (i.e. available for your body to absorb). At REGENERATE we offer IV vitamin/mineral therapies. Whether you are looking to support your immune system, hydrate your body, supplement due to deficiencies, gain energy, diet and detox, or just simply decrease stress, give us a call and our medical team will be

able to steer you in the right direction to meet your expectations.

Education is one of our core values at REGENERATE. We would be happy to educate you on what is most beneficial for your needs. Better absorb and utilize essential nutrients with IV therapy! IV vitamin/mineral therapies can be used in conjunction with regenerative medicine and systemic rejuvenation protocols. For more information, please contact us! We would love to further educate you on the therapies we offer here in Dripping Springs.

We have a very unique team of experts. Come see us, call, or email us! Dr. Breca Tracy currently serves as Director of Science & Operations at REGENERATE Dripping Springs. Breca has resided in Dripping since 2007 after obtaining her Ph.D. in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology from the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center. Contact us at 512-368-4548, 800 Hwy 290 W, Building F, Suite 200. NaturalHealingTX.com.

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The importance of being yourself

by Leslie Tourish, LPC



The whippets saw them first. The hair began to rise on the nape of their necks and their pace slowed as our walk down the country lane stopped. Following my dogs' gazes, I saw three objects swinging from a barbed-wire fence, but I couldn't make them out. Slowly the two dogs and I approached, but the sight still looked weird and unrecognizable. Were they turtle

shells? Rabbit hides? The skins off drums? When I was finally able to make out what they were I'm sure the hair on the nape of my neck rose too – they were three catfish heads the size of hubcaps. What was this? A warning? A payback? Death to bottom feeders?

I asked a West Texas relative about it, who set me straight on the whole catfish head thing. When people land a large fish, they proudly display the head by hanging it off their property's fence or gate. So, if you're in Big Spring or Marfa, Texas, and you drive past an expanse of never-ending fence-line, broken only by a hunk of drying cartilage the size of a dachshund, you don't say, *Oh my gosh, devil-worshipping rituals right here in front of God and the Herefords!* Instead, you would nod, and muse, *Hey, looks like old Ted's back from Corpus and caught himself a nice 40-pound grouper!*

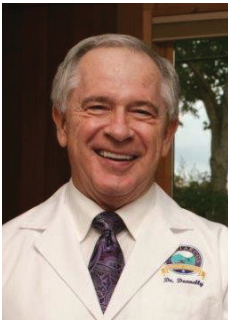
On another walk I met my neighbor and found him to be a genuinely kind and funny man. His hanging catfish heads not a stone's

throw from his mailbox fit him and his personality. Maybe even his friends and family teased him about his trophies. But he apparently held true to his principles because a year later the only ones hanging their heads were the catfish. Sadly, a little worse for the wear.

I admired him for his sense of self. People who are comfortable with themselves have mastered the art of simply being. They don't have to explain their actions, thoughts, or beliefs; they just live them. We're all different. But we lose those wonderful idiosyncrasies and creative quirks when we attempt to cram ourselves into round holes when we're a square peg one day, and maybe an oval peg the next.

To be totally accepting of our true self may be one of the highest forms of self-love. We feel alive and connected to ourselves and others. But we reject our essential nature when we fall prey to such words as *I should, I have to, I can't, or I'm not good enough.* Then we drain the pure potentiality that lies within us. It can be exhausting to go through life attempting to be someone that we're not. Pleasing others may bring small victories at high prices. How much more empowering it is to believe: *I am unique. I am loved. I am lovable. I am loving. I can do it.*

Leslie Tourish, LPC, is a Dripping Springs psychotherapist in private practice. To contact Leslie, visit LeslieTourish.com or LATourish.com



Understanding aging and oral health

by Robert Donnelly, DDS

The aging population in the United States is growing. Older patients should know that maintaining good oral health is vital to having a healthy smile and optimal overall health. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), oral pain, difficulty eating (due to missing teeth, ill-fitting dentures,

cavities, and gum disease) and tooth loss are all signs of oral health problems in aging adults. Dr. Donnelly can help prevent and detect these oral health problems.

What oral conditions am I more prone to as I age? Dental *caries* (tooth decay) is one of the main causes of tooth loss or *edentulism*. About 23 million people are completely edentulous (toothless), according to the American College of Prosthodontists.

Periodontal disease (gum disease) is a chronic bacterial infection that affects the gums and bone supporting your teeth. According to CDC, one out of every two American adults age 30 and older have had gum disease, which can lead to tooth loss.

Xerostomia (dry mouth) is when the salivary glands do not work properly, the amount of saliva in the mouth decreases, resulting in dry mouth, which can lead to decay. Prescription and over-the-counter medications are the most common cause of dry mouth. Dry mouth can make it difficult to eat, swallow, taste, and speak.

Oral cancer, typically is painless in its early stages but can be-

come painful as it spreads. Come see Dr. Donnelly immediately if you observe any of the following: changes in the way your teeth fit together, oral sores that bleed easily or don't heal, lumps, thickening, rough spots or crusty or eroded areas in your mouth, or difficulty swallowing, chewing, speaking, or moving your jaw or tongue. Dr. Donnelly always performs a head and neck exam to screen for oral cancer during your routine checkups.

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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A little Thanksgiving relaxation

by Heidi Pousson



Don't you just love this time of year? Pumpkin bread... pumpkin spice lattes... *everything* pumpkin! I love walking into a store or a coffee shop and just breathing in the scents of fall.

Thanksgiving will be here before you know it. That wonderful time of year spent with family or friends. So much food. Tired after too much eating. And a time to reflect on all that we have to be thankful for.

Do you cook the same thing every year? Or are you more adventurous and like to try new things? This year, I'm going to venture out and try a little something different when cooking my turkey gravy. Of course, I use the broth from the turkey, but this year I'm going to add Identity CBD Instant Savory Chicken Bone Broth. Even though it only has 10mg of CBD, it definitely won't hurt for me to add a little antioxidant, anti-anxiety, anti-inflammatory, and immune boost to this Thanksgiving staple. Or in my broccoli casserole, I could add the Chanterelle Mushroom CBD Bone Broth along with my cream of mushroom. Either way, we are going to be nice and relaxed whether it's from the tryptophan in the turkey or from the CBD gravy.

If you're planning to entertain with some adult beverages (I'm just saying... a *pumpkin martini sounds amazing!*) and want to in-fuse them with CBD or delta 8, I recommend using something that

is water-soluble. Haley, owner of Haus of Jayne, said, "Girl, I just add a few drops of the Third Coast Blends water-soluble drops to my drink, and it's like having a *fine* glass of wine."

It sounds like this could take apple cider to a whole other level. Or if you want to do things *old school* you could just use a delta 8 or 9 or a CBD only drink as a mixer. The Wonder Water and Beach Break are the best because they can be mixed with anything without changing the taste, but the WYLD CBD orange and lemon are easy to mix in too.

Finally, after all the preparation, cooking, stuffing your face with amazing food, drinking, and cleaning (too many dishes to count), I plan to end my day with a nice, hot cup of tea. I'll probably go for a Mellow Mint or Golden Dream by Apothecary. I'll be ready for the super relaxing 60mg of CBD by that point.

Thanksgiving is by far one of my favorite holidays! I can't wait to see how my new gravy is going to turn out. When you drop by Haus of Jayne, let us know how your turkey gravy or pumpkin martini turned out.

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.

Christmas On Mercer!



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10:00am-5:00pm
 Downtown Dripping Springs



- Arts & Crafts & Food Vendors!
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- Live Music!
- Holiday Cheer!

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 Full Blown Christmas Fun on Saturday, December 3!**

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Photos with Santa at Santa's Workshop on Saturday!
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Celebrating heritage & creating new traditions during the holidays

by AJ Harwood



Honor your family's heritage by researching ancestral holiday traditions. Incorporate something new that you learned into your celebrations and start some new family traditions this holiday season! Oh, by the way... Happy Holidays from the REMAX Harwood Family to yours!

Beloved foods...

- Gather everyone together to make your family's favorite holiday treat. Or try making a popular dish from a country that honors your family's roots.

Ancestral rituals...

- Learn ways your ancestors celebrated the holidays. Incorporate some of those traditions into your family's celebration. It will be fun and give you a meaningful connection to prior generations.

Share stories...

- Create a special display of family photos, including those of members who have passed. During your holiday celebration, encourage older members to share stories and have someone either video or write these stories down for future generations.

Creating new traditions...

- When you gather with your family, be sure to take a lot of photos. Create an online album and send the link to everyone after the holidays.

- Take a long walk after a holiday dinner either through your neighborhood, a downtown area, or along the river park, etc.
- Volunteer for a local charity during the holiday season.
- Visit a local attraction that is open on the holiday itself. Often-times it will be less crowded than normal!

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.

Getting soft water doesn't have to be hard

by Randy Lawrence



Considering all of the different water-related products currently being advertised, deciding which technology is right for your water can be confusing for homeowners. Most are aware that a water softener is necessary, yet many will admit that these systems are a mystery to them.

A softener is considered *point of entry* treatment, meaning that all of the water entering your home is treated as it flows through the unit. Water softeners are a proven method of eliminating scale

and salt-based ion exchange is the only technology that physically removes the calcium from your water. Salt-free alternatives leave hardness minerals in your water, which will continue to cause scaling and corrosion. Many current marketing campaigns for alternatives make unsubstantiated claims regarding the efficacy of these products and seek to capitalize on myths surrounding salt-based softening by using outdated facts or overstating figures. Many of these technologies are not new, but simply being re-introduced with catchy new names. What you may not know is that advances in the water treatment industry have resulted in softening systems

which are far more salt-efficient and user-friendly than ever.

Water softener pricing and quality can vary greatly. There are units available from \$500 all the way up to \$5,000. The lower priced units do not include installation, which can significantly change the final cost. Then there's the question of who will make repairs when they become necessary. On the other end, the highest priced units are often so proprietary that parts and service come at a premium. The goal is to find a reliable treatment system that can last for many years without paying too much.

Unless you are a serious do-it-yourselfer, it's probably in your best interest to purchase a unit from a licensed independent dealer who can properly size and install the best unit for your home and remain available after installation to make any necessary adjustments to the equipment. A simple water analysis and a few simple questions will determine the proper softener for your home.

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.

Where your tree roots are and why it matters

by Steven Austin



This time of year, we often see remodeling, repairs, or renovations taking place on residential and commercial properties. If any of these activities involve excavating in the yard, your trees could be at risk of harm to their health and stability. They could even die prematurely.

A problem for property owners in managing their trees is that what seems logical regarding their care is often incorrect and harmful. A tree's perceived ability to well withstand substantial wounding and other mistreatments contributes to this notion. For example, a construction crew can cut a trench within five feet of the trunk and deposit fill over the tree's base, and the tree might still *look good* in five years. Some logical assumptions are: 1) Tree roots grow downward and deep, so they're not subject to harm from trenching five feet out from the trunk. 2) Even if you tear some roots, it doesn't hurt the tree. 3) Fill material over the tree base can only help secure it. 4) The test of time (the five years) proves these assumptions because the tree still looks fine.

All of this is incorrect. Generally, most of a tree's roots grow within the top foot or so of soil and take a horizontal path that usually extends well outside the tree's canopy edge. One could easily sever 40% or more of the root system by placing a single trench several feet from the stem. Severing larger roots can compromise stability and invite pathogenic organisms to enter the tree. Far from securing the tree, fill material placed around its base can harm a tree by preventing adequate gas exchange and encouraging decay.

A tree may not display symptoms of damage for several years, leaving property owners bewildered about the reason for its decline.

Before your contractor begins digging trenches, making elevation changes, or excavating for that new pool in the back yard consult with a qualified arborist. Professional guidelines exist for protecting trees at construction sites, and your arborist can help you with implementing them.

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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Fire safety for the holidays

by Jim and Debbie Donaldson



The holiday season is one of the most dangerous times of the year for household fires according to the U.S. Fire Administration. The number of fires on Christmas Day are double the average and the amount of property loss in a fire is 34% higher during the holiday season. The number of fatalities per thousand fires is nearly 70% higher.

Here are a few household safety tips for the holidays:

- Cooking. Unattended food is the most common cause of kitchen fires. Stay focused and keep a fire extinguisher nearby. Both ACE Hardware and King Feed stock fire extinguishers.
- Candles. Maintain a one foot clearance from flammable materials and extinguish when leaving the house or going to bed. Consider flameless LED candles this year.
- Fireplaces. Never burn wrapping paper. Make sure you have a fireplace screen in place. Have your chimney inspected and cleaned if needed. Only burn seasoned wood.
- Children. The number of blazes and deaths caused by children playing with fire goes up dramatically during the holidays. Keep matches and lighters out of their reach.
- Decorative lights. Inspect light strings and throw away frayed

or cracked cords. Limit the number of connected strands to three and choose LED when you purchase new lights.

- Christmas trees. Buy a fresh tree, make a fresh cut on the trunk, water it every day and keep it three feet from a heat source.

Thank you for taking steps to have a safe holiday season!

Jim and Debbie Donaldson are Sales Agents with Keller Williams, Partners in Real Estate Group, in Wimberley. They moved to Wimberley in 1993 and enjoy helping sellers and buyers have an awesome real estate experience. You can reach Jim at 830-857-3371 or Jim.Donaldson78@gmail.com or Debbie 512-665-9588 or Debbie.Donaldson79@gmail.com.

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Year-end 2022 tax tips

by Scott G. Hackett, CFP®

Defer income... Consider opportunities to defer income to 2023, particularly if you think you may be in a lower tax bracket then. For example, you may be able to defer a year-end bonus, rent, or other income to postpone payment of tax on the income until next year.

Deductions... Look for opportunities to accelerate deductions into the current tax year. If you itemize deductions, making payments for deductible expenses such as medical expenses, qualifying interest, and taxes before the end of the year (instead of paying them in early 2023) could make a difference on your 2022 return.

Charitable contributions... If you itemize deductions on your federal income tax return, you can generally deduct charitable contributions, but the deduction is limited to 50% (currently increased to 60% for cash contributions to public charities), 30%, or 20% of your adjusted gross income, depending on the type of property you give and the type of organization to which you contribute.

Retirement accounts... Deductible contributions to a traditional IRA and pre-tax contributions to an employer-sponsored retirement plan such as a 401(k) can help reduce your 2022 taxable income. If you haven't already contributed the maximum amount allowed, consider doing so. The window to make 2022 contributions

to an employer plan generally closes at the end of the year, while you have until April 18, 2023, to make 2022 IRA contributions.

Required minimum distributions... If you are age 72 or older, you generally must take required minimum distributions (RMDs) from your traditional IRAs and employer-sponsored retirement plans. The penalty for failing to do so is substantial – 50% of any amount that you failed to distribute as required. Annual distributions from inherited retirement accounts are generally required by beneficiaries (as well as under the 10-year rule).

Harvest losses... Though you shouldn't let tax considerations drive your investment decisions, if you have realized capital gains from selling securities at a profit, you might avoid being taxed on some or all of those gains by selling losing positions. Any losses above your gains can be used to offset up to \$3,000 of ordinary income or carried forward to reduce your taxes in future years.

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.

Spendthrift provisions and survival clause

by Carrie Campbell



A formally executed will drafted by an attorney specifically for you and your unique family dynamics has several advantages. The will can address not only who inherits, but how and when, especially when children and/or grandchildren are involved. The will can address several contingencies, as well. The most important of contingencies is naming

alternates to serve as executor or to inherit if your first choice dies before or with you. With these carefully considered details, executed wills should also include spendthrift provisions and a survival clause.

Spendthrift provisions protect your estate and trusts created by your estate from creditors to whom your heirs or beneficiaries owe money. For instance, if a young heir has a large credit card debt, the spendthrift provisions stop the credit card company from coming after the estate for payment. Instead, the creditor must wait until the heir has taken possession of his or her inheritance, then attempt to collect from the debtor directly. If the debt is known about in advance, parents can also protect the funds for a longer period by setting up a trust for the young person until they are better able to manage their financial resources.

A survival clause serves to prevent a double probate that is unnecessarily expensive and delays closure. The clause will state a

length of time that an heir must outlive the testator (person executing the will) to inherit. The time period is usually between 30 and 90 days. For example: Parents John and Jane have a will that names each other to inherit everything. If a car accident occurs that results in John's immediate death, but Jane lingers for a few days before her death, then the survival clause allows the inheritance to go directly to their children instead of going first through Jane's estate.

Many options exist for tailoring a will that reflects your wishes. For a review of those options, you should consult with an attorney experienced in 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: The power of judges

by Roland Brown



I recently spoke at a conference of lawyers and judges. I shared some of my memorable experiences with judges over the past 47 years, including some rather humorous encounters. I also shared situations in which judges used their considerable power to cut to the chase and get to a just result.

One such instance involved a then well-known federal district judge from Tyler, Texas, William Wayne Justice. Judge Justice's name could not have been more apt as he presided with a no-nonsense approach to holding accountable those who were prone to abusing their positions of power and privilege. He was perhaps best known for bringing about needed changes in the Texas prison system as a result of a case in his court known as *the Ruiz case*. Wikipedia contains this comment about that case: "Ruiz v. Estelle, 503 F. Supp. 1265, filed in United States District Court for the Southern District of Texas, eventually became the most far-reaching lawsuit on the conditions of prison incarceration in American history."

Back in the day, when I was still handling criminal defense cases, I had the pleasure of being the recipient of that same sense of justice when one of my clients was charged with illegally selling mortgaged cattle. My client explained that the FBI had taken all of his paperwork relative to the cattle, and that without that paperwork, he could not trace the transactions in order to show

that he had not violated the law. The FBI claimed that they could not locate his files, leaving our hands tied as we sought to defend the case. In response to a motion which I filed, Judge Justice made it abundantly clear (I can still picture him glaring at the federal prosecutor at the hearing) that those files were to be located and brought to him promptly. Magically, the files appeared. He then turned his large chambers over to us to sort through the files which led to the case being dismissed by the prosecutors.

I just discovered that there is a book about Judge Justice published by The University of Texas Press. I invite you to order a copy and join me in learning more about a judge who used his power for good.

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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Human disease from non-traditional pets by Tracy Sheffield, RVT



If your psychiatrist did word association with you, and said PET, your response would likely be dog or cat. When we say pet, we generally think dog or cat. However, ownership of non-traditional pets (NTPS) is on the rise, growing annually by about 4%. More than 13% of households own a NTP.

The bulk of NTPs can be divided into three groups – backyard poultry, rodents and small mammals, reptiles. Of these – since the pandemic – backyard poultry is the fastest growing group.

There are a variety of diseases that can be harbored by NTPs that can be transmitted to humans (*zoonotic disease*). It is important to remember that an animal may be able to transmit the disease without appearing to be sick itself.

Common risk factors that lead to illness associated with NTP species:

- Not washing hands after handling animals, their food, their waste, or their habitats
- Engaging in risky forms of contact (snuggling, kissing, or holding near face)
- Eating and drinking around NTPS
- Cleaning the habitat in the kitchen or food preparation areas
- Allowing the animals to roam freely in the home or in food preparation areas

Salmonella is the pathogen most commonly associated with human disease acquired from all three groups of NTPs. Between 1996 and 2017 there were 9,798 individual NTP associated salmonellosis cases were detected. Other diseases and pathogens transmitted to humans by NTPs include rat bite fever, hantaviruses, leptospirosis, campylobacter, and avian influenza.

When selecting an NTP talk with your vet about the following:

- Is anyone in the house immune compromised, pregnant or planning to become pregnant?
- Animal source (captive or wild-collected)
- Animal temperament and choice of species
- Steps for engaging in safe animal contact and ways to practice proper personal hygiene (washing hands) and pet hygiene (cleaning up after pets)
- Principles of responsible NTP ownership

Non-traditional pet ownership can be as enjoyable as dog and cat ownership. Doing your research before acquiring a NTP will help keep everyone people and pets happy and healthy.

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 or call us at 512 847 5630.

The European way

by Diana Ozimek



If you have followed my articles or have done puppy training with me, you already know I am a big fan of *not* letting people pet your puppy in public. This doesn't mean you aren't socializing them; this is actually an amazing way to socialize them.

I just returned from a week in Lisbon, Portugal. If you haven't heard, it's not popular to pet other people's dogs

in Europe. If you asked and definitely if you approached without asking, you'd probably get a pretty good shocked and dirty look from the owner. It's like reaching out and petting someone's child. I knew this going in and I was excited to sit back and observe the difference between dog in public there compared to here.

We saw lots of dogs walking the streets. It's their busiest city; lots of apartment living with little grass and no yards, so dogs depend on walks and lots of outings with their owners. I was able to observe some dogs, who must have lived near our hotel, several times. Here are a few things I observed. Dogs looking at their owners while they walked. Dogs relaxing at café tables on sidewalks and in streets blocked off for dining. Dogs who were not trying to get to strangers. Dogs not jumping on people. Dogs relaxing at their owner's feet. No dogs were approached or pet by strangers.

Another thing that stood out to me were some of the off-leash dogs walking through town – not through a park – through the city.

The biggest thing I noticed, the dogs were not trying to wander off toward anyone or anything and the owners were enjoying a conversation with their friends as they walked, barely needing to pay attention to their dog. They just walked together.

The biggest challenge we have raising a puppy to become one of these relaxed well-behaved dogs in the U.S. is due to strangers thinking they have the right to squeal, run up, and pet your puppy. Wrong. I always advise my puppy clients to work hard on building their relationship and not letting strangers pet their puppy and learn to enjoy their owner instead of looking elsewhere for attention.

Diana Ozimek is the owner and lead trainer at Good Dog in the Making. She is excited to bring her puppy training expertise to her new community and help families raise a confident, well-mannered dog. GoodDogintheMaking.com, 773 899 1960.



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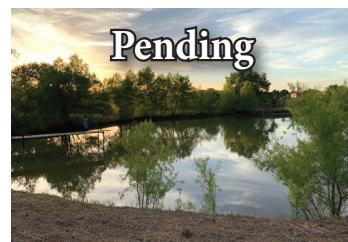
118 Camino De Robles MLS 6375624
 \$1,025,000 3/2, pool, barn, view.
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