## Magazine OCK

**Lake Conroe** 

**December 2019** 



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Dr. Scarborough and Family Life Medical **Providing the Complete** Spectrum of Family Health

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## From the Managing Editor



The weather is great they said. We get to fly on a big plane they said. You'll meet new doggie friends they said. What were they talking about??? I walk everywhere I go, it's hot and the other doggie friends are nuts! Oh, and where is the other side of the lake? I look out and all I see is water - lots of water, like never ending water. They say it's an ocean. Ocean! It's water that's salty and I can't touch the bottom, where I get splashed all the time and there is no one around doing it? Looks like some sort of monster that wants my head underwater all the time. They can keep it. Oh, and sand. Where did they get it all? How do they get so much of it in one place? Looks like I have a lot to learn, but I think I like Texas better, just saying...

OK Dock Line Readers. I hope you have noticed our new website? We have gotten lots of compliments about it and we still have a lot of work to do, but it is going to be amazing! Once our phone app becomes available it will be even better. We have been told that print is dead. Well, after 3 years of hard work with many smart people Dock Line Magazine will not only have a digital side that will do things that I can only dream of, we will be printing more magazines than ever before. 2020 will be an amazing year for both our readers and also our advertisers. I can't give all our secrets away but we will have announcements as each phase is in place. Currently we have video production, SEO, web design, more articles and more areas Dock Line Magazine will be servicing. In other words, Dock Line Magazine is growing even faster than we all expected. With our unique formula, our advertisers will see an increase in business and more opportunities to reach their potential customers. That's about all I can say at this time but watch for our announcements as each phase is added. Thank you Dock Line Readers, contributors and advertisers for the last 20 years of supporting us. Looking forward we know you will enjoy Dock Line Magazine even more!

Enjoy the holidays with your family and friends!!! I know I will...



# Dock Line

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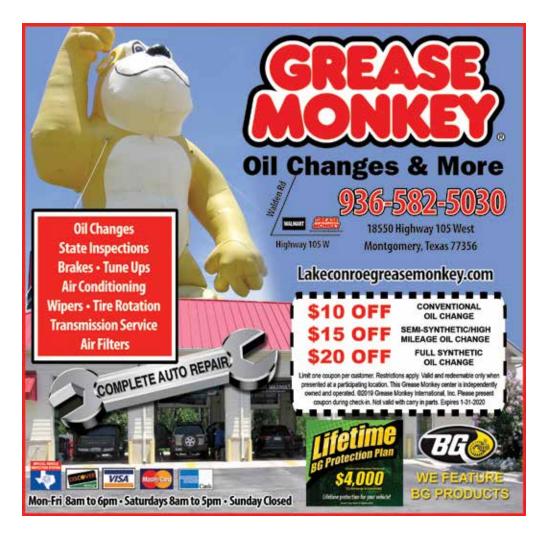
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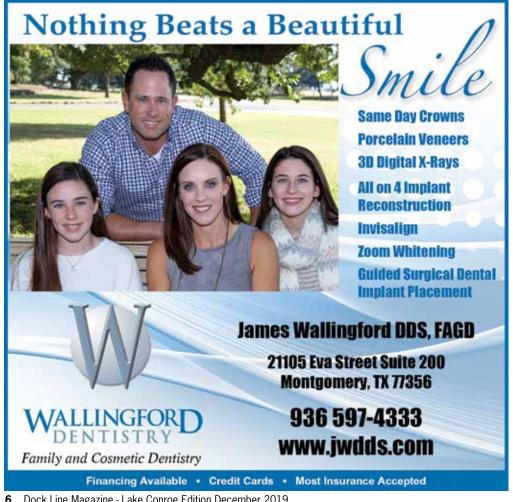
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Scarborough is celebrating his 25th anniversary as a physician in the Lake







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# Dr. Scarborough and Family Life Medical Providing the Complete Spectrum of Family Health





We have a knowledgable, friendly, and caring team of Physicians Assistants and Nurse Practitioners.

This year, Dr. Kyle Scarborough is celebrating his 25th anniversary as a physician in the Lake Conroe area.

He practiced in Richmond Texas after completing his Family Practice residence. In 1993 he was given an opportunity to join the Sadler Clinic. He met with the co-founders of the clinic, Dr. Dean Sadler, Dr. Irv Watson, and Dr. Walter Wilkerson.

"I liked the group and loved the area, so my wife and I decided to make the Conroe area our home."

The mission of Family life Medical is to provide comprehensive primary medical care to family members of all ages.

Patients today face a bewildering array of insurance options, regulations, escalating premiums, and alternatives to traditional medicine. The internet also provides an enormous amount of medical information but it is getting harder to discern objective information from a sales pitch.

Patients need a doctor who will also be their advocate and advisor.

"I try to provide health care and education to my patients, and objective counsel regarding treatment options that are in their best interest."

The Family Life Medical clinic offers care for the entire family, including wellness exams, diabetes care, hypertension treatment, geriatric care, well woman exam, school physicals, and pre-ops and hospital follow ups. In addition to general medical care, Dr. Scarborough's practice provides a wide range of dermatology services, including removal of skin lesions and biopsies when appropriate.

Dr. Scarborough recognizes the need to keep up with the changing demands of medical care as well as high patient expectations.

"I have evolved my practice to be more comprehensive, providing requested services that patients want and expect including an updated website for patients to access their labs, make appointments, or get health records through a secured patient portal", shared Dr. Scarborough.



Friendly faces greet you and make you feel comfortable.



Yearly wellness exams are a great way for a patient and our staff to form a strong connection that helps with total health and wellness.



Schedule your appointment today!

"We have also expanded our clinic to include skin care, facial rejuvenation, tattoo removal, and Dysport treatment."

Dr. Scarborough got his start in multi-specialty and hospital groups. But he is relishing his role as an independent physician and local business owner.

"As an independent provider of health care, I am not required to support any other medical provider, specialist, or network of treatment. I have great support staff and well-established medical specialists in the community I recommend. The best compliment is overhearing patients bragging on our staff saying that our practice is welcoming and feels like a family community of support."

Dr. Scarborough says that many new patients come to after seeing his name in The Dock Line or in The Courier, where he writes a weekly column "What's Going Around", focusing on current health topics.

"The majority of my new patients, though, come from word of mouth referrals from family, friends, and co-workers. I always try to honor those recommendations."

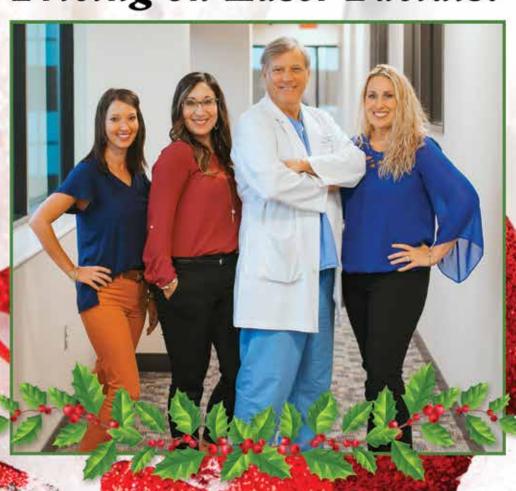
When asked about any retirement plans, Dr. Scarborough says "I'm not going away anytime soon!" He and his staff are making plans to expand their facility and range of services in the near future.

Learn more about Family Life Medical by visiting their website www. FamilyLifeMedical.com or call (936) 760-9900. The clinic is located at 508 Medical Center Blvd. in Conroe. Open Monday through Friday 8:00am-5:00pm. Closed Saturday and Sunday. ◆



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## **EXERCISE FOR NECK PAIN**

If you are one of the unfortunate persons suffering with neck pain, I highly recommend you consider exercising your neck pain away! Back in the day, it was common for your doctor to recommend bed rest (as was leaching, bleeding, etc.), however, numerous studies have proven light exercise to be far superior than rest at relieving pain. Note: the term light is both ambiguous and generalized (it's different for everyone). So, when performing these exercises, don't count repetitions, continue doing the exercises until you feel the muscles of the neck begin to fatigue ( a tired, crampy sensation) and then do a few more. By the end each exercise, you should feel uncomfortable but not true pain. If you can perform these exercises on a consistent basis, you will be on your way to recovery.

#### How will exercise reduce my pain?

First, understand most musculoskeletal injuries have a cause such as lifting, bending and twisting. And they usually resolve within a 6-8 week time-

frame. So if you perform these exercises and they don't help within a 6-8 week timeframe, it's essential to see your doctor to rule out significant illnesses like: fracture, tumor, infection, cardiac illness, etc.

The majority of musculoskeletal pain comes from muscle spasm. The muscles react to the inflammation and act like a splint to the area. Unfortunately, the muscles overreact resulting in undue pain, immobility and physical impairment. By exercising lightly, we make the muscles contract/relax repetitively using light resistance with high repetition. Light repetitive exercise will facilitate a relaxing reflex to the muscles. By performing each exercise 2-3 times per day, you will be well on your way, to many a good day!

#### What do I need to get started?

An air filled playground ball. I prefer one with a semi-rough surface so you don't slip (which could cause damage to the wall!). You may experience some mild discomfort with the exercises, but

you can control the pressure applied to the neck by the amount of bodyweight you apply to the ball. If the exercises cause unbearable pain, then you need to hold off on exercises and apply ice and stretching exercises to the neck (or see your doctor).

#### Neck - Exercises

I recommend performing these exercises 2-3x's per week. Each exercise should be performed to fatigue (when the muscle starts to shake and burn, do 2 more). You will notice some fatigue/mild cramping sensation when finished. Stretch mildly and/or use ice if symptoms develop after exercise.

**Flexion** - Place the ball at forehead level and gently lean into the ball. Slowly tip the top of your head toward the ball until your chin touches your chest. Return to the neutral position. Repeat as tolerated.



**Extension** - Place the ball on the back of your head (no pony tails or buns). Slowly tilt the top of the head toward the ball and then return to a neutral position and repeat as tolerated.





Lateral Flexion-each side - Place the ball on the side of the head and gently lean into the ball. Slowly tip the top of the head toward the ball (ear to shoulder) as far as possible. Return to neutral and repeat as tolerated.



Rotation - Place the ball on your forehead and gently lean into it. Slowly rotate the neck left and right, keeping the shoulders still. Repeat as tolerated.



Todd R. Custer, D.C., A.T.C. - Dr. Custer is a doctor of chiropractic and certified athletic trainer, and has been rehabilitating injured athletes at the high school, collegiate, and professional levels (Philadelphia Eagles Football Club) since 1994. Dr. Custer graduated from Texas Chiropractic College summa cum laude, and is currently treating patients at the Better Care Chiropractic & Physical Therapy..

Questions/comments or requests for future topics can be forwarded to whybettercare@gmail.com. ◆



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# SandStone HEALTH

Our team has grown to *support you* in more ways than ever before. We now offer a complete solution for your total health and well-being.

## Comprehensive care for every step in life

When Sandstone Chiropractic was established in Montgomery, Texas in 2009 - We made it our mission to provide the families of our community with a new perspective on their health by delivering the highest quality of care in a comfortable and holistic setting. Since then, the demand for the same experience in family medicine, neurofeedback and regenerative medicine presented itself. This provided us with the opportunity to continue our pattern of growth by creating a unique blend of comprehensive healthcare to better serve our community and their loved ones. Sandstone Family Medicine and Sandstone Regenerative Medicine are NOW OPEN in the Woodforest community.

The Right Choice Can Change Everything





Our mission at Sandstone Family Medicine is to provide patients the most innovative and highest quality care. We strive to form lasting relationships with the entire family by including patients in the decision-making process and acknowledging them as active participants in their health.

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Our philosophy is to provide the best possible care recommendations, and then allow the patient to choose the type of care they wish to receive. We hope to create lasting relationships with patients who are committed to regaining their health, and who allow us to participate in their full recovery. The committed patients who listen and take action on our recommendations get the best results.

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Free "Law Line" Service When: December 2, 2019 Time: 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Have a legal question? A free call-in public Law Line for residents of Montgomery County who have general legal questions is offered on the first Monday of every month at 281-645-6344 from 5 p.m. until 7 p.m. by volunteer attorneys from The Woodlands Bar Association. (If the first Monday is a Federal holiday, then the Law Line will be offered on the second Monday of that month.) Topics include bankruptcy, family law, criminal law, consumer protection, and more. The volunteer attorneys do not provide specific counseling yet offer general information and inform people about their rights and options and what legal resources may be available for callers to follow through with their concern. Callers' identities, as well as the identities of the volunteer lawyers, will remain anonymous. This free public service is a project of The Woodlands Bar Association in conjunction with the United Way of Greater Houston, Montgomery County Center. The Woodlands Bar Association is comprised of private practice attorneys from both large and small law firms, judges and corporate attorneys and seeks to promote high legal standards, education and community service in the area. The Law Line offers a local community service opportunity for members to share their unique legal skills to provide service to others. www.WoodlandsBarAssociation.com

North Shore Republican Women's Meeting When: December 4, 2019

Time: Sign-in begins 10:45 a.m., Meeting at 11:00 a.m.

Lunch 11:30 a.m., Program Noon until 1:00 p.m. Where: Bentwater Country Club, 800 Bentwater Dr., Montgomery, TX 77356

The General Membership Meeting of North Shore Republican Women will feature Entertainment by Willis High School Varsity Choir; Remarks from Senator Robert Nichols; Installation of Officers by Representative Will Metcalf. Plated lunch at noon - lunch is optional, but reservations for a seat much be made by Noon, Saturday, November 30th by clicking on the register link at www. NSRepublicanWomen.org. You do not have to be a member to attend.

Willis "Winter Wonderland" Parade & Festival When: December 7, 2019

Time: Parade at 11:00 a.m.; Festival begins at

12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Where: Downtown Willis TX

All events are FREE and "Family-Friendly." Live entertainment, great food, vendors of all kinds, inflatables, photos with Santa and more!

Montgomery County Mistletoe Market When: December 7, 2019

Time: 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Where: 9055 Airport Rd., Conroe, TX 77303

Admission: \$5.00

The annual Montgomery County Mistletoe Market is a holiday tradition!

This shopping extravaganza will feature 180+ merchants, artists, and crafters selling a variety of hand-made crafts, jewelry, women and children's clothing, original artwork, gourmet goodies, home decor, holiday decor, unique gift items, and much more.

Christmas in Historic Montgomery

When: Saturday, December 14, 2019 Times: Vary by Events during the Day

Where: Activities will be going on all day in historic downtown Montgomery, Texas. Shops and

restaurants will be open late.

Breakfast with Santa - 8 am - 10 am at LIving Savior Lutheran Church, 309 Pond St. \$8 adults/\$5 children 3+. Pictures with Santa \$5.

Holiday Marketplace - 9 am - 5 pm at the Old Community Center on FM 149. Arts and crafts, decorative items, homemade food items, clothing & jewelry, handcrafted furniture and more

Christmas Parade - 11 am downtown streets of Montgomery. Theme is "A Lone Star Christmas" Cookie Walk - 12 pm - 5 pm in the old Community Center on FM 149. Buy beautifully decorated homemade cookies and candies by the pound. Candlelight Home Tour - 4 pm - 8 pm - Explore some of the old buildings and homes in down-

town Montgomery, decorated for the holidays. \$15 adults/\$5 children & students. Tickets for the home tour can be purchased starting at 2 p.m. at the N.H. Davis Museum at 14264 Liberty Street. •

















## **YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD FLOORING STORE SINCE 2000!**

By: Margie Taylor

When it comes to flooring for your home you want it done correctly by a business with experience and knowledge of flooring options that you can trust. All Floors & More has been "Your Neighborhood Flooring Store" since 2000 serving the Greater Montgomery County area, Tomball/ Spring, Sugar Land, Clear Lake, Kingwood, and Hempstead with stores in Tomball, Magnolia, Conroe, and Cypress. Family owned and operated, the dedicated staff take a lot of pride in their work and their ability to satisfy every customer.

Charlton Reich, owner, is passionate about the business. "There is not a day I wake up and say, 'I don't do what I love". I was interested in flooring at a young age and decided to follow my passion and take a risk."

All Floors & More provides services to both residential and commercial customers. Services include tile, stone, laminate, resilient laminate, carpet, hardwood floors, LVP, and area rugs. Luxury Vinyl Plank (LVP) flooring has become a common flooring option in the flooring industry due to the moisture proof floors with realistic visuals now associated with the new look water-

proof planks. Homeowners with pets and children love the luxurious wood look that has a pet-proof, scratch-proof longevity surface. Entire luxurious homes are covered in LVP in many homes.

The "more" is also expertise in remodeling bathrooms and kitchens with updated countertops, tile work, custom showers and tubs. Every

Continued on page 20 ∞





Your style is important to us! Modern, Retro, Natural, Fashion-Inspired, we can help you choose!



service provided by All Floors & More is accompanied by a LIFETIME INSTALLATION WARRANTY. If there is any issue with work provided to your home or business, they will return until the customer is completely satisfied.

Remodels of kitchens and bathrooms can add value to any home. The remodel could be the entire room from countertops, to flooring, backsplash, and seamless showers. Updating the flooring or the shower can be a dramatic change to a room.

"Our extensive knowledge of flooring products, credible reputation, and our commitment to excellence allows us to provide the highest quality flooring solutions available today", said Reich. "We aren't perfect, but we are honest and always strive to do outstanding quality work the first time."

All Floors & More continues to go "Above and Beyond" any expectations resulting in 98% positive reviews and continual referrals from past customers for new or continual business opportunities.

From Richie F. "Awesome company!!!! Used them a thousand times already and never failed me!!! Love these guys. Look for Chris!!! Very helpful and always exceeds my expectations!"

"Price was so reasonable. They did our floors 6 years ago and redid them due to water damage for the same price. Very professional work", said Christie Eaves.

"I had new vinyl plank flooring installed in my condo last week and am very pleased with the job. Charlton was very helpful as were the other employees I met during the process. The installation went smoothly, the workers were friendly and knowledgeable. The price was about \$1,000 less than what Home Depot quoted for similar flooring and install", from Michele in Houston.

So many reviews and comments from past customers, but All Floors & More doesn't like to be recognized for their attention to detail and what they do everyday to instill trust and loyalty in the people they serve through their products and services.

Charlton Reich does not like the attention but is grateful. "We help families in the community because it's who we are. I thank God every day for the ability to do this. It is important to be honest and always perform to the best of your ability".

Tara Harris was amazed by their service and professionalism. "The whole process was extremely easy, professional and great customer service (even when we rescheduled our install 5 times). I couldn't recommend more honest guys than Chris and Charlton! They even put up with my 4 kids under 5. Thank you again for our beautiful floors at the best price in town!!"

Serving customers all over Texas at their 4 locations: Magnolia, Conroe, Tomball/Spring, and Cypress, All Floors & More guarantee selling, servicing, and installing only the BEST products. All Floors & More looks forward to the opportunity of offering their services to the community. They are the flooring experts, so you don't have to be!

Read about the different components of flooring and their benefits to make a decision you can

be happy with by reviewing their website at www. AllFloorStore.com. Free estimates at your location are offered to help with exact measurements and costs to fit your needs. Instore financing is available.





All services are accompanied with our Lifetime Installation Warranty.



Open at all locations Monday through Thursday 10:00am-6:00pm, Friday 10:00am-5:00pm and Saturday 10:00am-3:00pm. Stay connected on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/allfloorstore/. ◆



We are very customer friendly to all who walk through the door at any of our four locations.







## Visit their Stores:

#### CONROE

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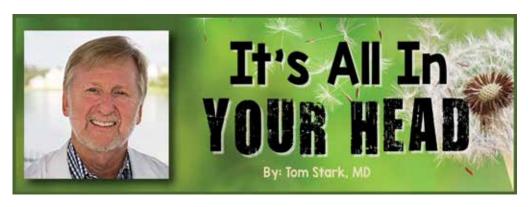
### TOMBALL

24922 Tomball Parkway, Suite 101 281-857-6851

### **CYPRESS**

14140 Fry Road, Suite 200 281-256-9875





## Migraine Headache Syndrome

When we hear the term migraine headache, we think of severe pain that often sends a person

to bed in a quiet room for an hour or more until it is relieved. Over the years in my practice I have seen many patients who have been diagnosed with migraine headache syndrome. The good news is some of them I can help and actually stop their headaches.

Let me give you an example. Approximately one year ago I saw a 17-year-old girl in my office with her mom. They actually came in because the young girl had a sore throat. In talking to both of

them I learned that she had been diagnosed with migraine syndrome 3 years previously and had

been on multiple medications from neurologists to try to eliminate the headache. Upon further questioning the girl said her headaches were always in the same area just above her right eyebrow. This is not normal for a migraine headache as it should be in differ-

ent parts of the head.

Long story short this young lady had a small but significant area of her upper nasal septum was severely crooked. Any time she got any type of irritation to the nasal tissues causing swelling the sidewall of the nose would come in contact with the crooked area of the nasal septum. This small contact is very significant and is the equivalent of a pinched nerve. Pain then radiates up generally to the forehead.

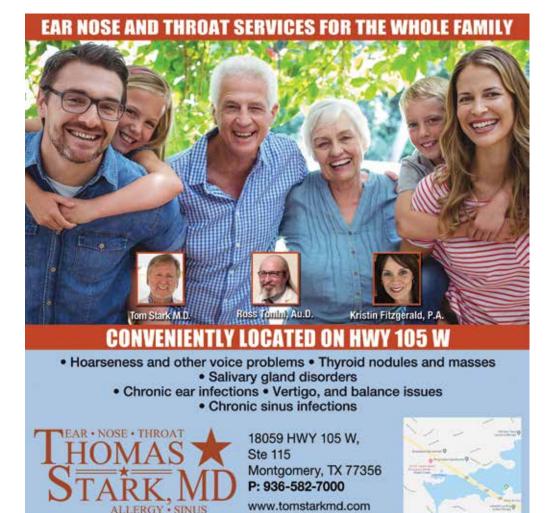
With a minimal surgical procedure to remove the crooked area of the nasal septum and reduce some of the swollen nasal tissues her headaches were gone. I saw her in my office 2 weeks ago and she has had no headaches for over one year.

Migraine headaches are a terrible problem. But if the headache is only in 1 area especially in



the forehead, eyebrow or even in the temple it may be due to the syndrome I am describing which is the equivalent of a pinched nerve inside your nose.

As always, I hope the information I provided is helpful to you or to your family. ◆







## Clear Direction for Your Retirement™

by Chris Wootton, ChFC®

WWW.WOOTTONFINANCIAL.COM





First of all, I want to wish each every one of our readers and their families a very Merry Christmas. Since the season of giving is upon us, I want to try to give you some helpful guidance in thinking about income during retirement.

The most common question I receive is whether a client's savings are going to generate enough income to last for their lifetime. Our income and the longevity of it is important to both living and giving (in whatever fashion that means to each of you) through retirement.

For many, this thought brings angst in the sense that they may have never thought about it in-depth or they may have thought about it and just never followed through on investigating how it applies to their situation specifically. So let me ask you, do you have a specific plan addressing the question of your retirement income, where it will come from and the likelihood of whether it will last? Is there a written strategy to address this? What are the positives and negatives to the solution? A good fiduciary firm can help you with these questions and I will tell you that there is no time like the present to address this important part of your financial plan.

What I see most often is people simply retiring with investments of various types, mostly subject to the risks of the financial markets, but who haven't evaluated and coordinated this risk with the rest of their financial plan

## **Retirement Income and Investing – Will it last?**

(investments, taxes, income, insurance, etc). Unfortunately, they don't consider how this risk and lack of planning could affect their income longevity and how to seek mitigation of those risks effectively.

Many say that they "need" the higher returns so they have to have the risk to make it through retirement. Although this could be true, it is seldom the case and if it's never been appropriately evaluated specifically to your unique situation it is at best a guess. Let me ask you, how much market risk (or let's more appropriately describe it as risk of loss) do you really need in retirement? What rate of return goal do you need for your specific financial plan? Let me give you an example of the dangers of not addressing investment risk specifically in relation to retirement income.

Let's assume that you are one of those I mentioned above who believes they need all the risk of the market to successfully navigate retirement and ignores planning around all other areas (like what your withdrawal rate should be). We will further assume you go full bore and simply choose the passive return of the S&P index (1) including dividends (that is, no risk management). You retire with \$1,000,000 and want to draw income of \$80,000 per year and inflation is 4%. Like most folks, we'll assume your assets are withdrawn from retirement accounts (IRA, 401k, etc.) at an effective income tax rate of 20%. Historically speaking, the results by year of retirement might look like this:

Retire in 1980 – After 30 years you are successful and have ~\$700,000. Congratulations!
Retire in 1990 – After 16 years you run out of money. Plan failure. Uh oh!

**Retire in 2000** – After 6 years you run out of money. Plan failure. Oh my!

Successful Investor Benjamin Graham in his book 'The Intelligent Investor' said, "Successful investing is about the management of risk..." Note, he did not say the management of returns. He also had this to say, "The best way to measure your investing success is not by whether you're beating the market but by whether you've put in place a financial plan and a behavioral discipline that are likely to get you where you want to go". Did you get that last part? What income plan and investment discipline are you leaning on? Do you have one? Do you understand it and its implications to you? Has your advisor discussed volatility and drawdown in your portfolio to set appropriate expectations? What's your next Bear Market exit strategy or the lack thereof? Will you simply ride it out after the example I've just given you? Big returns are great but big losses can ruin your day.

Folks, we are many years into a bull market and have seen extreme volatility to the up and downside in one of the best economies in quite some time by many measures. However, with recessionary signals on the horizon, not evaluating your risks in regards to investments and how it will affect income in retirement is a big mistake. Especially, if you are close to or have started retirement distributions. We can help you with this. Give us a call for your no obligation review today. It would be a great way to end the year and begin the new with a fresh understanding of what challenges your retirement plan may or may not have! I'll see you soon. Blessings.

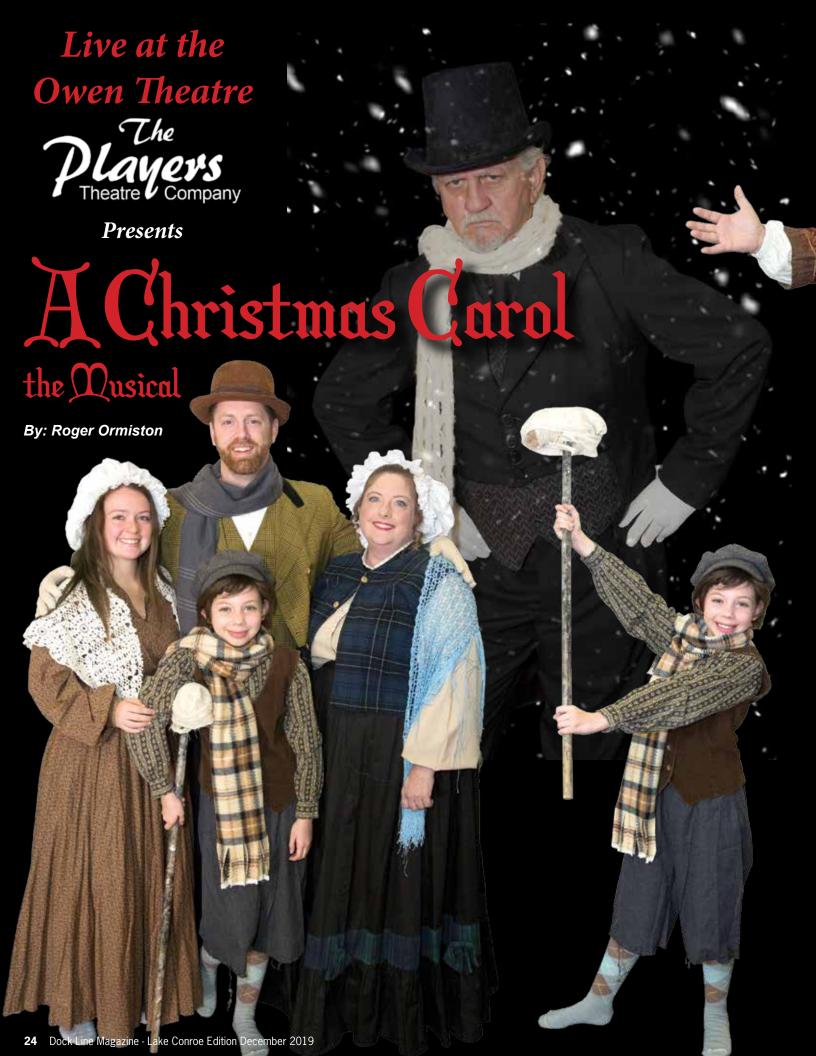
(1) Historical S&P Returns from Robert Shilling and Yahoo Finance. (2) Indices are unmanaged and investors cannot invest directly in an index. Unless otherwise noted, performance of indices do not account for any fees, commissions or other expenses that would be incurred. The Standard & Poor's 500 (S&P 500) is an unmanaged group of securities considered to be representative of the stock market in general. It is a market value weighted index with each stock's weight in the index proportionate to its market value.





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kind word or a generous act to spare for anybody, is visited by the ghost of his old business partner and last friend, Jacob Marley, brought to life by fan favorite Kat Gilcrease, recently seen playing Gomez Addams in The Addams Family, and Franz Liebkind in The Producers, both pro-

duced by Stage Right. Marley warns Scrooge that the greedy way they lived their lives leads to a torturous and lonely afterlife. In order to spare his friend the same fate he suffers in death, he sends to Scrooge three ghosts in order to convince him of a better way to live.

The Ghost of Christmas Past, a role that introduces affable Carl Marshall to the community stage, reminds Scrooge of his humble beginnings, and of the people he loved before his heart grew cold.

The Ghost of Christmas Present, played by Hannah Gilchriest, a bubbly young woman who last joined the Players

Continued on page 26 ∞



### PRESENTS

Music by Alan Menken, lyrics by Lynn Ahrens, book by Mike Ockrent Ahrens & Lynn

# The Musica

## Directed by Roger Ormiston

M delightful Broadway musical adaptation of Dickens' classic tale of redemption and the true meaning of Christmas. A perfect holiday outing for the whole family.

Performances: Dec. 6-22

For tickets & information call 936-539-4090

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and crew that is up to the task. The tale centers around the curmudgeonly Ebenezer Scrooge, played by Rex Comer, who has delighted audiences as a vocalist for decades, but is making his theatrical debut right here on the Owen stage! Scrooge, a cold-hearted miser without a

Charles Dickens' timeless holiday ghost story is gracing the stage at The Owen Theatre from December 6-22, in

musical form! Presented by The Players

Theatre Company, the classic tale comes to life through songs, both whimsical and

heartbreaking, and dance routines that

will have you swaying in your seat. It is a complicated production with many moving parts, but directors Roger Ormiston

and Amber Babcock have put together an incredibly talented and hard-working cast



as Joanie in Happy Days, gives Scrooge a peek into what Christmas is like for the people in his life, including his clerk, tender and hard-working Bob Cratchit. Cratchit is played by Christopher St. James, a familiar face in Conroe's theater scene, who has recently warmed our hearts as Harold Hill in CCT's production of Music Man, as Professor Bhaer in The Players' Little Women, and most recently as one of the Disciples in The Players' production of Godspell. Scrooge is introduced to the struggles and strengths of the Cratchit family, including sweet and sickly Tiny Tim, played by nine-year-old Alayna Yerian, who over the past year has sung and danced her way into the hearts of Conroe theater-goers in Stage Right's productions of Cinderella and Annie, and who came away with a Montie Award for Best Featured Actress in a Musical for her role as Molly in Annie.

Finally, Scrooge is confronted by the Ghost of Christmas Future, the most terrifying specter of all, brought to life by young Lauren Orsak, new to The Players, but no stranger to the stage, having most recently played Martha in Arsenic and Old Lace and Golde in Fiddler on the Roof, both as produced by AD Players. This



ghost shows Scrooge what his future holds if he refuses to let his heart be moved.

"What I want people to notice about this production," said Ormiston in a candid interview, "is the great variety of people involved in the show. Some have been with us for a long time. Some used to be involved and have come back to work on this show. Some have been involved with theatre in other venues. Some are new to theatre altogether. This is what community theatre is all about!"

Join the many local families who have already made The Players' Christmas performance part of their annual holiday tradition. Audiences, young and old, will be awed and touched by this beloved holiday classic.

A Christmas Carol - The Musical will be presented at The Owen Theatre, located at 225 Metcalf Street Conroe, TX 77305. The play runs 90 minutes long, with no intermission. Performance dates are December 6, 2019 through December 22, 2019, Fridays and Saturdays at 8pm and Sundays at 2pm. An additional Thursday performance has been placed on the schedule for December 19 at 8pm. Tickets can be purchased at owentheatre.com, or by calling the box office at 936.539.4090 between 3-6pm, Tuesday through Friday.

And of course, in the immortal words of Tiny Tim, "God bless us, every one!" ◆





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## **Getting the Most Out of Custom Home Building:**

## Pustom Vs. Existing



#### By: George Harrison

Custom Home Building can be the best and only option if you don't want to settle.

Homeowners seek a change of primary residence because their current home doesn't meet their needs.

This means prospective homebuyers usually know what they want in their next home. A home that fits the bill in the area of choice can be nonexistent. Going through the process of building doesn't have to be a hassle.

To overcome any of life's challenges first define the ideal result and then plan how to get there. The first step is to consider your current situations.

Determine how many bedrooms, baths, garage spaces, rooms for special use, and total sq. ft. of living area, etc.

Create "must haves" and a "want" list. Add

line item provisions for future needs and creature comforts. Be sure to make notes about special requirements like large kitchens, large patios, oversized garage, etc.

Gather information about your preferences: Pictures of interior and exterior design features

"Window shop" your big ticket items such as cabinets, appliances, flooring, and front door. List some ideal neighborhoods or the area you would like to live. Establish a price that is comfortable.

Phone interview prospective builders for the

If your criteria is fairly common it may be easy to meet your needs. Some builders require you to choose from their selections. Ask about the selection process. More specific requests most likely means more flexibilty will be required of the builder. Distance from your ideal location. More distance usually means longer build time.

Be prepared to offer some details of your goals in order for the builder to provide information. Reveal a target price - not your budget.

"Name Your Price" concept is not new to construction. Large commercial project design must meet all the demands while keeping a close eye on cost. The same approach can be utilized in custom home construction.

An experienced builder can tell you if the home can be designed and built to meet all your requirements including cost. You will determine quickly who is willing to work with you and feasibility of building a custom home. •



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She completed her pediatric dentistry residency at the Mount Sinai Hospital in New York, NY.
She is an expert in dental prevention, craniofacial growth and development, pediatric oral trauma, medically complex patients, pediatric oral pathology, pediatric genetics that effect the head and neck, childhood growth and development, childhood and adolescent trauma, dental development, restorative procedures and behavior management including extensive training in treating cleft babies and children.

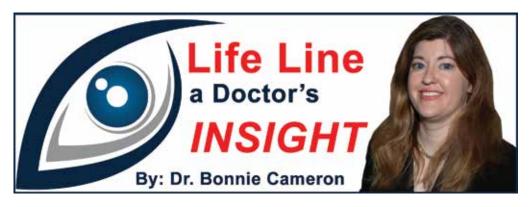
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## **Cataracts**

I have loved all things Christmas, especially the twinkling lights, since I was a little kid. It amuses me still to this day to take my glasses off and watch all the tiny lights blur together into one dazzling abstract Christmas scene. Leave it to an eye doctor to enjoy being Nearsighted. Everyone sees the world differently. What's that phrase? "Its all in the eye of the beholder...". That is quite literally true when it comes your vision. Subtle alterations to the structures in your eye have profound affects on your vision. While not everyone will experience what its like to be nearsighted, everyone is eventually affected by the formation of cataracts.

A cataract is the clouding of the lens inside the eye. This process begins in your 40's and matures over the next two decades. The lens slowly oxidizes becoming yellow and cloudy. The cataract scatters and diminishes the light reaching the retina. Individuals may complain of blurred vision, night blindness, double vision, halos or glare. In more advanced stages the individual may find it necessary to have more lights on in order to see well or avoid driving at night altogether

Really dense cataracts make the eye take on a milky appearance. You are more likely to see this in a dog than in any individual. This is because cataracts are typically removed before getting to this stage. Loss of vision caused by cataracts is reversable. Blindness from cataracts is rare in the United States but extremely common in underdeveloped areas of the world.

Most cataracts are age related; however, some

may be induced by certain medication, by trauma, by co-existing systemic disease, or are present from birth. Cataracts that are not caused by age can from at any point in your life. These cataracts can develop rapidly and often cause more severe changes in your vision. Uncontrolled Diabetes is the common culprit behind these types of cataracts followed closely by medications used to manage chronic pain. Congenital cataracts or cataracts presenting in infancy can be sight threatening. These cataracts can interfere with the normal development of the eye resulting in Amblyopia or a lazy eye. Any infant suspected of having a congenital cataract should be seen by an Eye Care Professional as soon as possible.

To prevent loss of vision and regain normal function, cataracts are surgically removed. Intraocular Implants are inserted at the time of surgery. These perform two functions. They maintain the division between anterior and posterior structures of your eye and they are able to correct for refractive error. Which means you may no longer have to use glasses after cataract removal. Different corrective lens options are available, including astigmatism, multifocal and mono vision. Make sure you discuss at length which option is best for you. What worked for your sister or your best friend may not be suitable for you.

Give yourself the gift of sight this holiday season and the rest of 2020 year by getting a routine eye exam. Happy Holidays to all and to all good sight. ◆



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## What in the world is SCADA and what does it mean to the water industry??



32 Dock Line Magazine - Lake Conroe Edition December 2019



PLC Panel

For those not in technical or engineering fields, SCADA may be an unfamiliar term. SCA-DA is an acronym for Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition. The San Jacinto River Authority's (SJRA) SCADA system is a control system architecture that utilizes networked data communications between servers, operator workstations, programmable logic controllers (PLCs), field instruments, and human machine interfaces (HMIs) to allow for supervisory control and management of the processes of the SJRA. But, what does that really mean?

When most people think of SCADA, at least those that have even heard of it, they picture someone sitting at a computer with a process laid out on the screen and the ability to turn on a pump, open or close a valve, and make process decisions from a centralized location. Those kinds of operations are certainly part of SJRA's current SCADA systems, but these systems consist of much more than just the computer and screens with buttons to turn equipment on and off. SCADA relies on fiber optic cables to connect distant devices, radios and cellular communication devices to reach remote locations, and Ethernet cables to link nearby devices.

Many of the devices on a SCADA network are similar to those of an IT Department. In fact, the SJRA SCADA/Instrumentation & Controls Department (I&C) has a dedicated network of servers, switches, routers, and computers along with fiber optic and Ethernet cables connecting them all. In addition to computers and servers, the network includes all the PLCs, local HMIs, and network connections that import data from process instruments installed in the field. All told, SJRA's SCA-DA systems host over 1,200 network devices. For all this to be installed, maintained, and monitored, SJRA has a staff of three highly-trained SCADA employees who specialize in networking, programming, communications, and cybersecurity.

Now, where does the data that is shared between the PLCs, HMIs, servers, and operator









The Seven Coves Clubhouse is a fantastic location for your next party, wedding, family reunion or business meeting with spectacular views of Lake Conroe. Accommodations for 150 with dance floor, bar, kitchen and featuring a spacious deck and gazebo with ample and convenient parking.

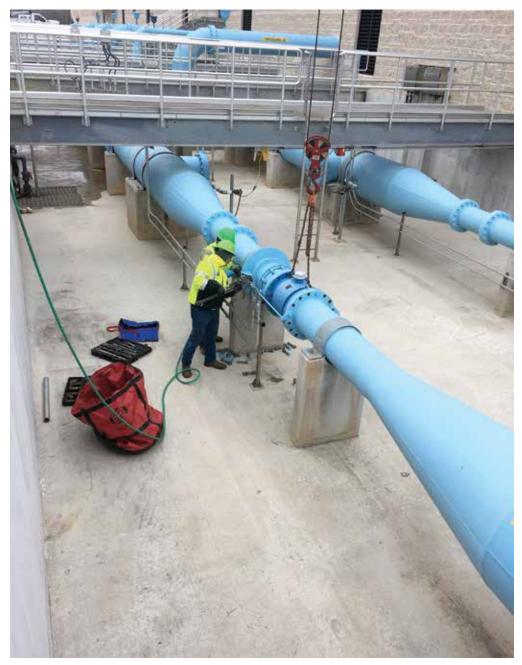


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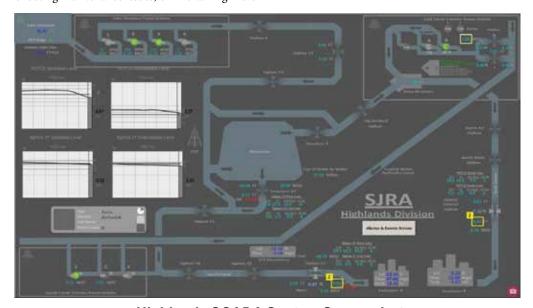


Fiber Optic Cable Installation

workstations actually come from? It comes from the process instruments in the field (flow meters, pressure transmitters, pump starters, etc.). The instruments send data to a local PLC via a network connection or by means of a direct, electrical connection. A PLC is an industrial computer that can be programmed to perform a specific task. The PLC is programmed by the SCADA team to do any required tasks the machines are capable of doing. The program could be as simple as starting a pump if a tank gets low, or it could be as complicated as checking the dissolved oxygen content in a basin and starting or stopping any of six blowers while also setting the positions of 20 different valves at a wastewater treatment plant. The PLC can then send its data to any remote location that requires it. A water plant may send data to an off-site well location miles away telling the well to start, or it could be sending the data back to the office. Back at the office, it can be archived and stored for many purposes including generating reports, troubleshooting maintenance issues, or fine-tuning more



Flow Meter Removal for Callibration



Highlands SCADA System Screenshot

efficient processes. With the complex processes of SJRA, operators are often finding ways of improving plant operations. When this happens, they ask the SCADA specialists to modify the PLC programs.

Like the SCADA Team, the I&C team consists of highly skilled technicians. I&C professionals have the responsibility of maintaining, calibrating, installing, commissioning, decommissioning, and troubleshooting all the field instruments of SJRA. This includes more than 780 different instruments (e.g. pressure transmitters, level transmitters, position encoders), over 190 flow meters, more than 75 uninterruptable power supplies, and over 20 different electric valve and gate actuators. This team also maintains all the analytical instruments, including chlorine analyzers, sulfur dioxide analyzers, pH probes, dissolved oxygen probes, and turbidity meters. Altogether, there are over 1,200 assets that the I&C team maintains on a daily basis.

This team is also tasked with maintaining all of the control panels. Some control panels come



however there are many that the I&C team needs to build and install. Also, with three licensed electricians on the team, I&C assists the SJRA operating divisions that do not have their own dedicated maintenance department. The I&C team also has

with a project (e.g. when a process is installed),

the responsibility of monitoring raw water customer instruments to verify they are calibrated to our standards.

SCADA systems constantly monitor all SJRA systems. Because of this, SJRA SCADA staff can be alerted 24/7 if there is a situation that requires their attention. If there is a power outage that happens at 11:00 P.M. on Saturday, the maintenance staff will be alerted; if a pump fails to stop at any

#### Radar level transmitter

time, an operator will be notified to go out and manually stop it. Additionally, it allows the operators to remotely monitor and manipulate the systems they are responsible for with better precision and accuracy.

With the ever-growing demand for reliable water delivery, the collection and treatment of wastewater, responsible discharge of treated wastewater to the environment, and delivery of raw water to serve industry, the water business is becoming more complex. This complexity requires the knowledge and expertise of the most experienced operators as well as a dedicated team of technicians and specialists to keep the systems running at peak performance.

One of the major river authorities in Texas, SJRA's mission is to develop, conserve, and protect the water resources of the San Jacinto River basin. Covering all or part of seven counties, the organization's jurisdiction includes the entire San Jacinto River watershed, excluding Harris County. If you would like to know more about SJRA, what we do, and how we work for the community, check out our website at www.sjra.net, like SJRA on Facebook @SanJacintoRiverAuthority, follow us on Twitter @SJRA\_1937, or follow us on Instagram @SanJacintoRiverAuthoritySJRA. ◆

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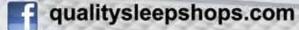
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# Look out! The horrible Herdmans are coming! STAGE RIGHT Presents The Rest Christmas Pageant Ever - The Musical

# The Best Christmas Pageant Ever – The Musical Dec. 6-22

By: Carolyn Corsano Wong Photos by: Michael Pittman Images

STAGE RIGHT of Texas, resident theatre company at the historic Crighton Theatre in downtown Conroe, is pleased to present the area premiere of *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever - The Musical* with book and lyrics by Jahnna Beecham, music and lyrics by Malcolm Hillgartner based on the play by Barbara Robinson. The show will be directed by Tina Cafeo.

The Herdmans are the worst kids in the histo-

ry of the world-so when they crash Sunday school and demand parts in the Christmas pageant, the whole town panics. There's not supposed to be biting or cigar-smoking in Bethlehem, and while these kids have never even heard the Christmas story, they definitely have rewrites! Soon everyone is calling for reluctant director Grace Bradley to cancel the whole thing. It's up to Bradley and the Reverend to help their community see the Christmas story and the Herdman kids through new eyes in this buoyant musical adaptation of the funny and touching holiday classic.

Amy has recently performed as Mistress Page in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and Ursula in *Much Ado About Nothing*. Bob Bradley is played by Frank Purcel. This will mark Frank's Crighton debut. Frank is a retired IT consultant who has sung with the Houston Symphony chorus, Houston Grand Opera chorus and Indianapolis Opera Chorus. Charlie Bradley is played by Sam Siemonsma. Sam is no stranger to STAGE RIGHT. You may have seen him perform in *Mary Poppins, A Charlie Brown Christmas* or *Annie*. He was encouraged by his theatre friends & amazing voice teacher Brenda Storseth to get involved in musical theater and we're very glad he has! Charlie's sister Beth Bradley is being played by Kayden Solomon. This show marks Kayden's Crighton debut. Kayden has been performing since the age of six making this her 16th show! Some of her favorite roles include *James and The Giant Peach* (Ladahlord), *A* 



Tree Lot Christmas (Karly), 101 Dalmatians (Pepper), and Beauty & The Beast (Chip). Jim King is returning to the Crighton stage to play Reverend Hopkins. Jim was last seen on stage as the Narrator in Into the Woods and was Col. Pickering in My Fair Lady. Becki Kinch will again grace the Crighton stage as past pageant organizer Helen Armstrong. Becki has enjoyed performing with STAGE RIGHT in past shows such as Hello Dolly! in the ensemble, the "eager to please" Maxine in the acting role of "show stage manager" for 42nd Street, and a dual role of Granny and her mooooving portrayal of cow Milky White in Into The Woods. Also returning from 42nd Street is Debbie LaRue appearing as the hoity-toity Luanne. In addition to performing on stage Debbie has done some backstage work for STAGE RIGHT including costumes for Savannah Sipping Society. Prior to that, she was actively involved for 18 years in the Dhahran Theater Group located in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. Melodie Lippold is portraying church lady Betty. Melodie was in the ensemble of Hello Dolly! and sings with the Woodlands Show Chorus. One of STAGE RIGHT's most valued and lauded volunteers is making a rare stage appearance in this show: Denise DeBold is playing Connie. Denise is also Costumer, Set Designer, and Scenic Artist & Prop Mistress for this show! She's been a volunteer with STAGE RIGHT since 2013. Denise received a Pursuit of Excellence award and has accumulated eight Monties for her work on Singin' in the Rain, Mary Poppins, and Young Frankenstein. Appearing as Imogene Herdman is the talented Daire Mc-Leod. With professional TV credits already to her name, Daire has appeared here most recently as Pepper in Annie, a hyper sugar-addicted beauty queen, Barbie Spangles in Glitz - The Little Miss Christmas Pageant and the iconic Lucy in A Charlie Brown Christmas. James Pate is appearing as Ralph Herdman. James leads the cast of Willy Wonka as Charlie Bucket and was also seen over at the Owen as Flounder in The Little Mermaid. New to the Crighton is Tripp Brown who is playing Leroy Herdman. Also new to a STAGE RIGHT main stage production is Cooper Ashley playing Claude Herdman. Cooper is a member of Bravo Company. He appeared in Rockin' Robin Hood as Robin of

Continued on page 40 ∞

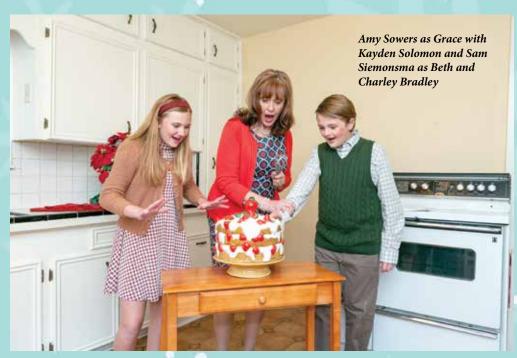
"No, there is no biting in Bethlehem."





Performances at the historic





Locksley and Midsummer Night's Dream as Mote. Appearing as Ollie Herdman is Austin Krueger. In his 14th show at the tender age of 8 yrs., Austin's favorite part thus far, has been Woodstock from A Charlie Brown Christmas. He has enjoyed being in several other STAGE RIGHT productions including Willie Wonka (James), Glitz - Little Miss Christmas Pageant (Elf), Annie (Wacky), and most recently Cinderella (Gus Gus). Another Cinderella mouse also appears in this show: Amy Massey is playing Gladys. A member of Bravo Company, Amy first appeared in STAGE RIGHT's Glitz - The Little Miss Christmas Pageant (Rona Chernobyl), Annie (Mabel-orphan ensemble) and Cinderella (Lucy Mouse). Splitting the role of Alice Wend-

leken are Collisa Payne and Emma Melley. Collisa has appeared in *Willy Wonka*, *Glitz - The Little Miss Christmas Pageant*, where she played the sassy Angela Aquafresca, and most recently *Annie* where she had the opportunity to play an adorable orphan. This is Emma's 4th production on stage and her 1st with STAGE RIGHT. Sharing the role of Ivy Reed are Addison Burleson and Mia Melley. Addison has been a dancer since she was 5 yrs. old, and moved into competition dance by age nine. Addison also enjoys sports, gymnastics, baseball and soccer. This is Mia Melley's second production with STAGE RIGHT. In addition to performing on stage she also enjoys practicing with stage

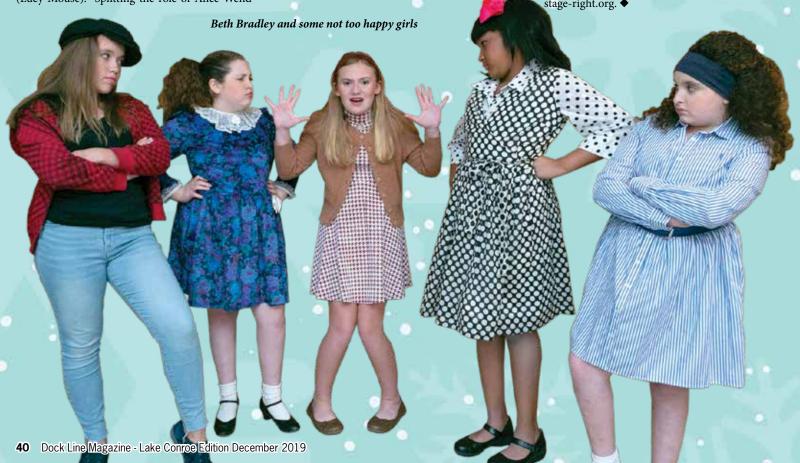
make-up and taking voice lessons. Newcomer Josh Fine is playing Elmer Hopkins. Josh has performed elsewhere and loves meeting new people. Returning to the Crighton as Teddy Shoemaker is Wesley Burns. This is Wesley's third appearance with STAGE RIGHT. Wesley made his Crighton Theater debut as Rerun in A Charlie Brown Christmas and was also in Glitz - The Little Miss Christmas Pageant Musical. Playing the Nurse is Lauren Thompson. This is Lauren's Crighton debut. She performed in two previous school plays in California in the two years she lived there. Lauren's roles in school include Lost But Now I Am Found and a lead role in The Born Again Identity. The chorus includes Lilly Prescott, Sean Sears and Cheyanne Williams. Lilly Prescott is very excited to be performing on the Crighton Theatre stage for the second time. Her first performance was with Missoula Children's Theatre in Blackbeard The Pirate (Parrot). Sean Sears has been on a roll of roles! He first appeared in 42nd Street then went on to The Diary of Anne Frank, Annie and most recently Cinderella. Cheyanne Williams has been involved in theater for 3 years. She has been in two plays at the Crighton Theatre: Twinderella and Rockin' Robinhood.

#### **SPOTLIGHT NON-PROFIT**

In keeping with the reason for the season, we are asking our patrons to consider bringing NEW (in the original package) socks, underwear and blankets for donation to the Salvation Army. Let's help our neighbors in need this holiday season!

#### **SHOW DATES:**

December 6-22, 2019, Friday & Saturday nights at 8 pm and Sunday matinees at 2 pm. There will also be a Saturday matinee 12/21 at 2 pm. Tickets available at 936-441-7469 or www. stage-right.org. ◆







# By: Kay L. Lee, Veterans Service Officer

## Commissary & Exchange Privileges Open to Certain Veterans

Under a 2018 law, Purple Heart recipients; former prisoners of war; veterans with a service-connected disability from 0 to 90 percent as documented by the Department of Veterans Affairs; and certain primary veteran caregivers will be newly eligible to shop at commissaries and exchanges. It applies to all military bases, including Coast Guard.

Commissaries sell discounted groceries. Military exchanges sell a variety of items ranging from clothing and shoes to toys, furniture, home appliances and electronics.

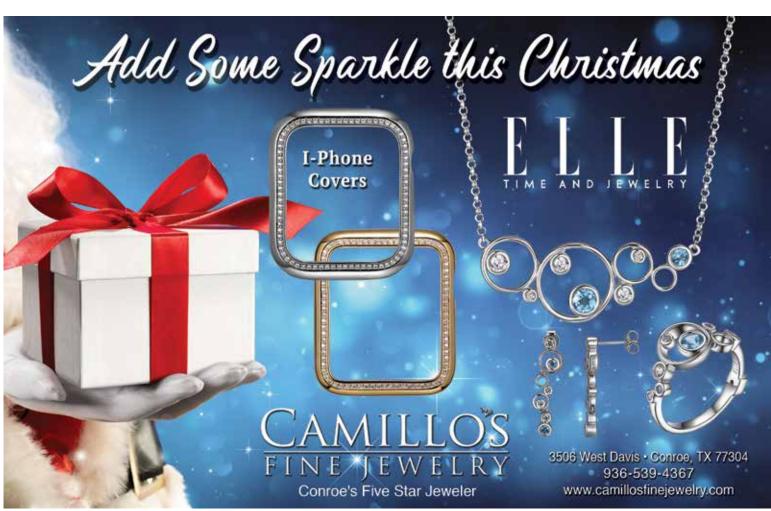
This newly eligible population will also be able to use certain morale, welfare and recreational, or MWR, facilities such as golf courses, movie theaters, clubs and certain other programs and facilities that are self-sufficient, generating enough revenue through fees and/or sales to pay their operating costs.

The departments of Veterans Affairs, Defense and Homeland Security have been working together for months on plans for how the program will be implemented. A crucial part of that is the credential required to get onto the base and to shop at the stores, because most veterans who aren't retired don't have access to installations.

Defense officials are working to enable technology at the front gate to scan those veteran cards so veterans can get in to use those benefits. Commissary officials are working on adjusting their technology to enable systems to read the cards.

This program is set to launch on January 1, 2020, but with every change in the requirement of increased technology comes issues, so just some fare warning there is a good change there will be delays.

For more information on VA & State benefits, contact Montgomery County Veterans Service at 936-539-7842 or via email at vetsvc@mctx.org, or follow us on Facebook. ◆









# Kitchen & Bath Remodels

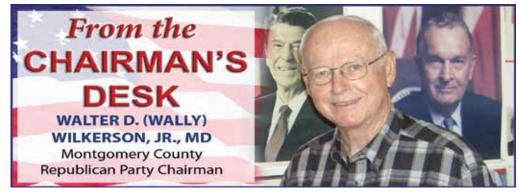


# Patio Covers & Outdoor Kitchens









### A Soldier's Sacred Duty

Senator Tom Cotton from Arkansas was elected in 2014 after serving one term in the U. S. House of Representatives. He was commissioned Lieutenant in the U. S. Army in 2005 and served in Iraq, Afghanistan and in an assignment to the 3rd Infantry Regiment, known as the Old Guard, which is responsible for funerals of soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines in Arlington National Cemetery. In his book "Sacred Duty" Cotton describes his tour of duty with the Old Guard. "Every headstone at Arlington tells a story", he wrote.... "The Old Guard is literally the old guard, the oldest active-duty infantry regiment in the Army, dating back to 1784, three years older even than our Constitution."

Arlington National Cemetery has a history which matches that of the Regiment. It was originally a large plantation owned by George Washington's step grandson, George Washington Parke Custis who died in 1857, leaving the management

to his son-in-law, Robert E. Lee. Following both legal action and monetary exchange, the federal government took possession in 1882. Cotton discovered that the Old Guard's duties were not as hazardous as those of an infantry soldier, but "include demands that stretch the soldiers to severe limits of other sorts". In wartime, the work of the old guard begins at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware where bodies of those who died in service to their country are received for a "dignified transfer" to home soil.

The Thursday before Memorial Day at Arlington National Cemetery is known as 'Flags In'. Old Guard soldiers place over 200,000 U.S. flags on graves. Cotton described the process in his book-"I placed the toe of my combat boot against the white marble. I pulled a miniature flag out of my assault pack and pushed it three inches into the ground at my heel. I stepped aside to inspect it, making

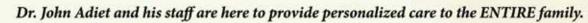
sure it met the standard that we had briefed to our troops: 'vertical and perpendicular to the headstone'. Satisfied, I moved to the next headstone to keep up with my soldiers. Having started this row, I had to complete it. One soldier per row was the rule; otherwise, different boot sizes might disrupt the perfect symmetry of the headstones and flags....Bending over to plant the flags brought me eye-level with the lettering on those marble stones. The stories continued with each one....Some soldiers died in very old age; others were teenagers.... every religion, every race, every age, every region of America is represented in these fields of stone'.

But the most recognized duty of the Old Guard is the Sentinels of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Cotton explains that the training for the Sentinels is daunting by any standard. It includes weeks of tests, learning how to stand for 75 minutes without collapsing, learning the 21-step pacing that marks the sacred tomb not to mention how to deal with bugs, rain, squirrels as well as some clueless observers.

Senator Cotton wrote: "These poignant moments at Dover, like the old Guard's unflagging dedication to our fallen at Arlington, tells not only a story about our war dead and the soldiers who honor them, but also a story about the nation on whose behalf they serve. We go to great lengths to recover fallen comrades, we honor them in the most precise and exacting ceremonies, we set aside national holidays to remember and celebrate them. We do these things for them, of course, but also for us, the living. Their stories of heroism, of sacrifice, and of patriotism remind us of what is best in ourselves, and they teach our children what is best in America."



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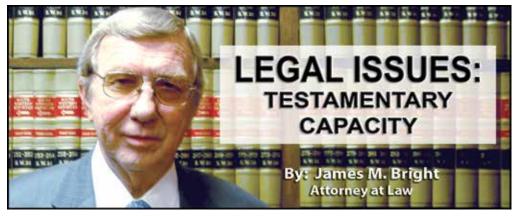
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The following is provided for informational purposes only and is not, nor should it be construed as legal advice.

An area of concern experienced by many persons who visit my office involves determination of when a person has sufficient testamentary capacity to make a will and when they do not.

Pursuant to Estates Code §251.001, there is a two-part test to determine testamentary capacity.

The first portion of the test is a simple status and age requirement and is usually fairly easy to prove. The intended testator must be at least eighteen years of age or be lawfully married or be a member of the armed forces of the United States or the auxiliaries thereof or be a member of the maritime service.

The second portion of the test is more problematic and requires that a testator be of "sound mind." The litigation sometimes triggered by this requirement revolves around the definition of sound mind together with an understanding of what is *not part of the definition of sound mind*. The concern about this element of the test ends up being very subjective in nature and therefor is open to different interpretations.

Rebuttable presumption of capacity - The law assumes that an adult person who has not been legally adjudicated as incapacitated is capable of making a will. The burden of proof falls upon the person, if any, who is questioning the competence of the testator regarding capacity to make a will.

Elderly are not presumed to lack capacity

Many people (usually very young ones) make
the false assumption that just because someone has achieved the status of having advanced
years, they are no longer competent. Such an
assumption is not supported by law. The law
will not shift the burden of proof from the person questioning capacity to the testator's representative to prove capacity.

Even temporary incompetence will not prove lack of competence on the day of the will. A person may be incompetent at one time but competent at a different time. Dubree v. Blackwell, 67 S.W.3d 286 (Tex.App.—Amarillo 2001). The Court determined in the Dubree case that even though a person might suffer from a degree of diminished capacity, they can still have "lucid" clear moments.

What is required for capacity? The law has been fairly clear on this point in Texas for many years and with few refinements for the past 130 years. (*Prather v. McClelland, 13 S.W. 543(Tex. 1890*). The five-part analysis offered in that case has the person contesting the will try to prove the falsehood of one or more of these factors while the proponent of the will attempts to show that each of the five factors did "in fact" exist at the actual time of the will signing.

- Sufficient ability to understand the business in which he is engaged;
- Sufficient ability to understand the effect of his act in making the will;
- The capacity to know the objects of his bounty;
- The capacity to understand the general nature and extent of his property;
- Memory sufficient to collect in his mind the elements of the business to be transacted, and to hold them long enough to perceive, at least their obvious relation to each other, and to be able to form a reasonable judgment as to them.

<u>Testamentary Capacity vs. Contractual Capacity</u> - It is safe to say that it is commonly accepted that it takes less mental capacity to make a will than it takes to enter into a contract.

Some of the scholars regarding this truth have rationalized that the testator's duty is less in signing a will because he need not take into consideration the effect that signing the will may have on his/her life. This logic argues that because the testator will no longer be living at the time that the will takes effect, and that because he/she shall always have the right to revoke the will, the burden of competency is "in fact" less.

In my own practice, if there is an obvious or at least reasonable expectation of a contest being filed due to the possible allegation of "lack of capacity," we attempt to make notes on the record. Although this firm does not hold itself out to have any type of expertise in the diagnosis of mental acuity, we do have an ability to



conduct conversations with the testator which can reveal the elements outlined in the Prather case quoted earlier. If the person who is making the will can discuss their families with me and know to whom they are leaving their property and why, it is believed that notes to the file regarding those conversations could be very valuable down the road if a contest is filed.

James Bright has been admitted to practice before the Federal Courts for the Southern District of Texas and Eastern District of Texas as well as all of the Justice Courts, Probate Courts, County Courts at Law, District Courts, Courts of Appeal and Supreme Court for the State of Texas. He maintains an office in Houston and by appointment another at 208 McCown Street in the heart of historic Montgomery. Contact may be made by telephone (936) 449-4455 or (281) 586-8277. For more information about wills or probate in Texas, please see - www.houstontxprobate.com. ◆

IF YOU WISH TO SUGGEST A TOPIC FOR THIS COLUMN, SEND TO: JAMES M. BRIGHT 14340 TORREY CHASE BLVD., SUITE 150 HOUSTON, TEXAS 77014 Email: topics@houstontxprobate.com

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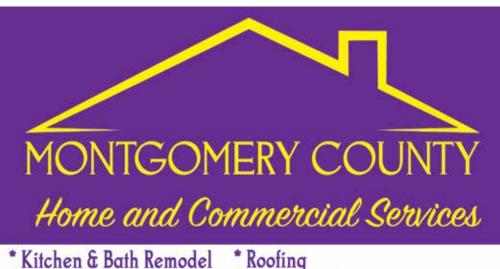
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1/2-teaspoon salt

1 (9 inch) unbaked piecrust

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. Whisk pumpkin, sweetened condensed milk, eggs, spices and salt in medium bowl until smooth. Pour into crust. Bake 15 minutes.

Reduce oven temperature to 350 degrees F and continue baking 35 to 40 minutes or until knife inserted 1 inch from crust comes out clean. Cool. Garnish as desired.

# Southwest Turkey

1 1/2 cups shredded cooked turkey

4 cups vegetable broth

1 (28 ounce) can whole peeled tomatoes

1 (4 ounce) can chopped green chile peppers

2 roma (plum) tomatoes, chopped

1 onion, chopped

2 cloves garlic, crushed

1-tablespoon lime juice

1/2-teaspoon cayenne pepper

1/2-teaspoon ground cumin

salt and pepper to taste

1 avocado - peeled, pitted and diced

1/2-teaspoon dried cilantro

1 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese

In a large pot over medium heat, combine turkey, broth, canned tomatoes, green chiles, fresh tomatoes, onion, garlic, and lime juice. Season with cayenne, cumin, salt, and pepper. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat, and simmer 15 to 20 minutes.

Stir in avocado and cilantro, and simmer 15 to 20 minutes, until slightly thickened. Spoon into serving bowls, and top with shredded cheese. •

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### The Importance of Google My Business

In the current race to improve rankings, Google My Business cannot be overlooked. It needs to become part of your marketing strategy, and rate as one of the most important things you do.

By: Dock Line Social Media Team

The Importance of Google My Business

If you haven't already done so you should ensure you have added your business to Google, but stopping there is not enough, you then need to optimize your listing to make sure it is working for you.

#### Where Do Customers Come From?

This might sound like a trite question, but you must understand how your customers find you. In the current age of technology, social media is another critical piece of the jigsaw, and you might well have someone on board to take care of your social platforms. Most businesses find that Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are the best to be active on, for B2B companies you should also consider LinkedIn. Social media works well with referrals, and this is another essential way to increase your customer base. Previous customers share and comment on their positive experiences. Because human nature is to trust friends by extension, you become a reliable source for new customers as you have been endorsed.

If you are a local business, then Google My Business should not be overlooked. Did you know each second Google receives over 63,000 searches on any given day? If you do the math, you will see that this means, there are 5.6 billion searches each day. You are going to want some of that action, and suddenly you can see why Google My Business becomes one of the most crucial internet platforms for your company.

This is where an excellent Social Media Strategist comes in; it is their job to ensure that every possible outlet is considered for your business, not just the prominent places. Google My Business

needs to be treated with as much importance as other platforms, and this means daily updates, images and videos should be posted. This helps to ensure that your page ranks towards the top when Google visitors use the relative search terms.

#### Put Your Business in the Spotlight

The statistics above should speak for themselves, but it is also worth knowing that Google is the first port of call for customers looking for local businesses. Furthermore, almost 75% of these searchers go onto make purchases online. It makes

business sense to open as many doors as possible, making yourself highly visible to prospective customers looking for products and services that match your own. It is a more specific platform for business, as while we know and utilize the merits of platforms like Facebook it is worth remembering that users are there for a lot of reasons not specifically to find businesses and services.

Google My Business is a much better function than the old style of Google listings and Google Plus. It has a lot more relevance and gives you the chance to create a dedicated business pro-



file with the most up to date information, and of course, because Google owns it, it is favored in the search engine rankings. You may even find your Google My Business profile outranks your website, but in this case, that is not a problem.

#### The Takeaway

In the current race to improve rankings, Google My Business cannot be overlooked. It needs to become part of your marketing strategy, and rate as one of the most important things you do. If you would like help with Google My Business or any of the other marketing channels you should be targeting, have a chat with us at The Dock Line Social Media Strategy Team today!

If you have any questions about this article or would like additional tips and tricks or information. Don't hesitate to contact us at social@dock-linemagazine.com!

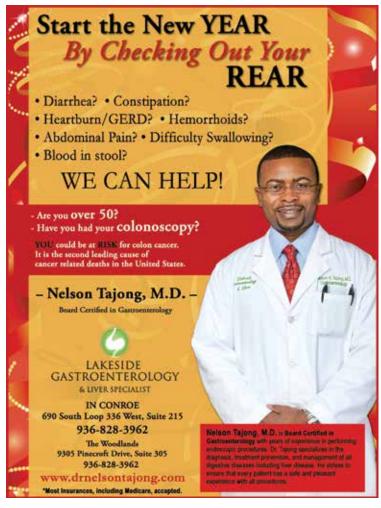
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#### Winter Freeze Protection for Plants

December should usher in the beginning of our coldest time of the year and we should see the end of it by the first week or two of March. Sometimes we are blessed with mild winters, like last year. NOAA's long range climate prediction for us this winter shows an above normal chance of a milder drier winter. At the time of this writing, Accuweather is showing above normal temperatures into the middle of December. But, the hard freeze we had in the first part of November may have already done serious damage to some of your more tender plants. During mild winters we can get lucky and get many plants to survive that would normally freeze without protection. Plants such as begonias, vinca, impatiens, alyssum, petunias, tropical hibiscus, and crotons are some plants that can make it through mild winters with little or no protection. Keep in mind that plants close to the south side of your house will stay much warmer because of radiant heat and the absence of the cold north wind.

Follow these steps to help your plants survive freezing temperatures.

WATER: Before an imminent freeze, make sure that all plants are well watered. Usually cold weather here is accompanied by very dry wind. Cold dry wind can be devastating to dry plants, even more so than hot weather during the summer. Move potted tender plants indoors, including tropical hibiscus, plumeria, young or tropical fruit trees and bromeliads.

MULCH: Give your plants a "blanket" of mulch. Together with moist soil, this helps protect their roots.

This is adequate protection for many shrubs that can withstand freezing temperatures, including abelia, azalea, boxwood, eleagnus, hawthorn, holly, ligustrum, loropetalum, mahonia, nandina, roses, wax myrtle and yaupon.

Duranta, hamelia, angel's trumpet and root-hardy hibiscus may lose all or some of their tops in a hard freeze. But water and mulch, and they will likely return from their roots in spring. Covering them is optional.

Be sure to protect the grafts of citrus trees by mulching up above the graft. This will leave the grafted "citrus making wood" intact. We have had several people tell us that after a very hard freeze that their citrus trees grow like crazy but never put on fruit again. This has happened because the grafted citrus wood has died and left only the root stock to grow. The root stock will never produce anything but a lush quick growing very thorny tree with nothing to show for it.

PROVIDE COVER: Freeze cloth is the favored product for covering plants. It is a lightly woven material that can provide you with 15 degrees more heat when installed properly without putting so much pressure to cause damage to your tender plants. DO NOT PUT PLASTIC DIRECT-LY ONTO PLANTS.

Many shrubs, trees and winter annuals tolerate cold, but may have their blooms freeze. Cover flowering azaleas, camellias and fruit trees with row cover, sheets or blankets. Anchor the covers with bricks or stones.

Use nursery pots or cardboard boxes to create mini greenhouses for smaller plants. Milk jugs make great little greenhouses.

Tender palms like queens can be protected by wrapping with small Christmas lights and then wrap with frost cloth. Be sure and protect the new growth area coming out of the middle as well. Many times when that freezes your palm is history.

Tender trees like avocados can be protected by covering and using pipe insulation around the trunk if it does not have any bark on it.

Winter plants like pansies, dianthus, ornamental cabbage and snapdragons are very cold tolerant that I have seen take temperatures down into the teens without any damage. However, snapdragon blooms tolerate slight dips but show damage unless covered when it drops into the 20s. Plants like petunias, alyssum, calendula, and lobelia take our normal winters ok but may suffer minor damage when temps go and stay too long into the twenties. When hard freezes are predicted it would be a good idea to throw some frost cloth on these to limit damage. Cyclamen plants will tolerate more cold than the flowers. If a freeze is predicted it would be wise to protect the flowering cyclamen to preserve those beautiful flowers.

When freezing rain is forecast, cover plants with sheets and blankets, then cover these with a heavier plastic and secure with bricks and stones.

AFTER FREEZE: Do not wash frost/ice off plants the morning after a freeze. This raises the temperature too quickly and usually damages the plant's cell tissues. Be sure to remove frost protec-

Wait until the ice thaws, then assess plant damage. Hire a certified arborist to remove large or heavy broken branches from trees. If one-third or half of the major limbs are broken, or the trunk

is split, decide whether first aid is practical or whether it is best to remove the tree.

Provide support for young trees bent with the weight of ice.

After a freeze, remove soggy, damaged parts on soft-stemmed plants such as impatiens and crinums. Do not prune woody plants such as garden hibiscus and hamellia. Leave the freeze-damaged wood to protect live wood farther down the branch. Prune to green, live wood in the spring, after the threat of freezes has passed.

In the spring, fertilize to encourage new growth and rejuvenate damaged plants.

Things to do in December

\*December is a great time to relocate any shrubs or trees.

\*Remember that in absence of rain, watering still needs to be done to help plants rebuild damaged roots from the summer heat and drought.

\*Take a break from yard work and enjoy the holidays with loved ones.

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#### 10-24-19 BFL REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP GRAND LAKE – GROVE OKLAHOMA Day 1

I am very excited to be going to the Regional Championship for the BFL on Grand Lake in Oklahoma. The boaters and co-anglers from four divisions will be competing. The divisions are the Arkie, Cowboy, Illini, and Ozark. The field consists of 45 of the top boaters from each division and the first place winner from 5 tournaments, which makes the field up to 200 teams. I am very fortunate to make it to the regionals the first year. I was ranked 24 in points out of 258 teams this year.

It is quite miserable for fishing today. I am bundled up with long johns, shirt and jacket and rain gear. The only thing is, I only brought my tennis shoes. We all know they will be soaked. This is the beginning of a very rainy tournament.

There are 173 teams fishing today. We will fish for 2 days and the top 12 teams will advance to the 3rd day. My co-angler is Mike. He is from Illinois and he was a prison guard for 19 years and is still working for the prison today. He told me some really wild stories of what goes on in prison.

It's raining and the wind is blowing 15-20 mph and it is 45 degrees. It is cold and wet. I am wearing my motorcycle helmet today to spear the waves

The first stop we caught a few shorts. We continued to fish and half way through the day we still had no keepers. Mike caught one and it came around the back of the boat, the fish jumped and I netted it and as soon as we got it in the boat the hook fell out. He was lucky he didn't lose that





one. We fished in Duck Creek and caught about 15 shorts.

My chatter bait did not work at all except on one fish. Mike caught a 3 ½ and a 2 pounder. He caught 3 fish for the day. I was by a dock and a bass wrapped me up in the wire and bent the hook and came off. I ended the day disappointed with only one fish.

#### Day 2

It is a miserable cold tournament this time. It is still raining and cold, but is supposed to stop raining after noon. Today my co-angler is Trey. He is from Arkansas. The fishing was a little better since I caught 4 fish but they were all small. I ended up with 9-6 total. Not a good weight for 2 days of fishing.

While I was fishing my mom went to the local fishing/tackle store. When she walked in, there was a GIANT FISH suspended from the ceiling. It was the Grand Lake State Record Paddlefish, also called a Spoonbill. She met a man named David that worked there and asked why these fish like living in Grand Lake. He informed her that the lake is filled with plankton. There are farms in Kansas and Missouri that are being fertilized. The run off comes in as the Spring River and Neosho River meet to make one river called the Grand River, which feeds into Grand Lake. The fertilizer makes the planton thrive. Paddlefish swim through the water with their mouths open to scoop up zooplankton. They have an ability to use special cells on the bill to sense the weak electrical signals generated by plankton. Since paddlefish don't bite on bait anglers have to catch them by snagging. Anglers have to find a pod or school of fish. Then they drive the boat through the school with a dipsy diver and a hook to snag one in the pod. Once you keep one, you are done fishing for the day. The limit is one a day and 2 per year.

The Spring River is the sanctuary for the pad-



dlefish. They go up the river to spawn. You can only catch them in the Neosho River. The weight of these fish range from 20-120 pounds. Although the record fish caught weighed 132.8 pounds. Monday and Fridays are snag and release days.

They survived the Ice Age and the effects of the impact from meteorites. Fossil records of this fish date back over 300 million years, almost 50 million years before the first dinosaurs appeared. Throw It Out, Pop It In, Fish On! ◆









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By: Ruby Cross, Animal Shelter Volunteers of Texas, 501c3 (ASVT)

Animal Shelter Volunteers of Texas has more than 200 animals in foster care and it is a revolving door. Every animal has a story and how it came to us. The stream of homeless animals never ends.

ASVT takes in unwanted, discarded community animals to lighten the load in shelters and places them in ASVT foster homes until they are adopted. Unfortunately we can't take them all. Unwanted animals are at an all-time high and the local shelters are continuously over capacity. There is no sign of slow-down in sight!

How can you help our homeless community animals this holiday season?

#### **Donate**

Animal Shelter Volunteers of Texas is a 501c3 nonprofit organization. We are dedicated to helping abandoned, abused and neglected animals. NO ONE IS PAID and we appreciate the Donations, Fosters and Volunteers to help us continue. ASVT relies on your support with donations and support to continue saving our community animals.

This holiday season please consider making a donation. Remember, it is tax deductible. Just visit our website and use the DONATE button.

#### **Fostering**

Animal Shelter Volunteers of Texas is a foster

based rescue organization. We depend on foster parents to help us improve the quality of lives for animals in our community. ASVT has been active in rescuing homeless and abandoned pets since 2010.

Please consider opening your heart and home to a foster pet. Make their holiday a joyous one with a loving family, warm bed and good food to eat.

Submit your Foster Application today to foster a homeless pet at www.ASVTexas.org/foster-application.html

#### Adopt

Montgomery County Animal Shelter (MCAS) located on Hwy 242 in Conroe takes in an average of 100 animals a day and houses 500 plus and has over 400 in foster care. Can you visualize what that must be like? They arrive unwanted, some starving, sick and neglected.

ASVT, other rescues and MCAS are working together to rehome shelter animals and increase spay/neuter in our community. There are LOW COST spay/neuter programs available. There is not a good reason to not have animals spayed or neutered. Most of the photos shown here are victims of unwanted litters. Just during the months of







September and October ASVT took in over 80 puppies. If you find a pet you are interested in adopting, just submit an Adoption Application at www.ASVTexas.org/adoption-application. html\

ASVT also hosts adoption events at various locations. Just look for our signs! We use social media and a number of pet finder sites to network our available animals for adoption. Our foster families take in animals to free up kennels in our local shelters and rehabilitate and socialize them. ASVT also networks with other rescue groups. We believe in working together for the welfare of the animals.

#### Volunteer

As a non-profit organization, ASVT relies on the assistance of caring and hard-working volunteers. Volunteers are the lifeline for each and every animal that comes through our program. Volunteers who work directly with rescue animals can increase an animal's chance of adoption by providing additional human contact.

Just look into the eyes of any of our rescue animals and you will see gratitude for the second chance at a better life given to them by our volunteers. These are just a few of the ways volunteers can help.

- Attend adoption events or assist with meet and greets.
  - Implement fundraising events.
- Serve on a committee or serve as an event coordinator.
  - Be part of our marketing team.
- Transport animals from shelters, foster homes and/or veterinarian appointments.
- Provide TLC (Tender Loving Care). We sometimes have animals that end up with longer than desirable stays at a boarding facility. These

Continued on page 60 ∞







to mention some time away from where they are

Please submit a Volunteer Application if you have a little extra time to help the animals at www. ASVTexas.org/volunteer-application.html

Some safety tips to keep your pets safe during this holiday season.

- Keep people food out of the reach of your pet, and ask your guests to do the same.
- Make sure your pet doesn't have any access to treats, especially those containing chocolate, xylitol, grapes/raisins, onions or other toxic foods.
- Don't leave your pet alone in the room with lit candles, a decorated tree or potpourri.
- · Keep holiday plants (especially holly, mistletoe and lilies) out of reach of pets.
- Consider leaving the tinsel off your tree if you have a cat.

- falling over if your dog bumps it or your cat climbs it. Hanging lemon-scented car air fresheners in the tree may deter your cat from climbing it.
- Provide a safe place for your pet to escape the excitement (such as a kennel, crate, perching place, scratching post shelf or hiding place) if you're entertaining guests. If your pet is excitable or scared, consider putting your pet in another room with some toys and a comfortable bed.

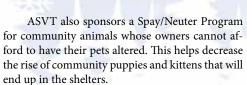
#### HOW CAN YOU HELP US HELP THEM? ADOPT, SPONSOR, VOLUNTEER, FOSTER, DONATE!

You can visit our website to sign up to volunteer and/or foster and donate using our DONATE button. Donations help us pay for medical expenses, food, supplies and transporting animals to areas with high adoption needs.









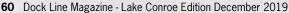
The accomplishments of ASVT would not be possible without partners like Wiesner Automotive, Empire Electric, Dock Line Magazine and so many more. •











## KNOWLEDGEABLE. DEPENDABLE. STRATEGIC.



Lake Conroe Waterfront on .78 acres w/ open views for MILES! Located on the south shore of Lake Conroe in a gated subdivision & conveniently situated near restaurants, Golf + only a short drive to both downtown Conroe/ Downtown Montgomery! You are greeted by an estate-style driveway that leads to a 3-car garage. The interior provides a blank canvas to reimagine the beauty of this home. The liv-

ing room has amazing views, SOARING ceilings + a floor-to-ceiling brick fireplace! Kitchen offers solid wood cabinets (making a restain or paint easier!), breakfast bar, breakfast room + formal dining! The first floor offers a spacious master bedroom w/double sinks, walk-in shower, soak tub + HUGE closet, second bedroom w/private bath & door leading to sunroom plus private study w/solid wood wainscoting. Upstairs provides 3 large secondary bedrooms, enormous game room + an additional sunroom w/walk out balcony overlooking the pool & Lake. The backyard boasts a pool w/hot tub w/tons of decking.

2521 Sand Shore Drive, Waterford Estates in Conroe. ML# 49913534. \$735,000



Classic, cozy and an effortless elegance makes this home stand apart from the rest. Perfectly situated on a .8-acre lot in a gated, waterfront community in Montgomery close to the Lake, Golf, Restaurants & more! So many extras from the striking statement of the Old-World wood floors to the large picture windows overlooking the pool area. The heart of the home offers style & charm in the island

kitchen w/bar seating, apron front sink, classic white subway tiles, Carrara marble counters, custom cabinets, chef inspired appliances & open to the living that is filled w/natural light, stacked stone FP + custom trim/millwork. Just beyond the kitchen/ living is a grand dining area enhanced by exposed beams. Attractive/relaxing master boasts an eye-catching shower, vanity area +tub under a barrel ceiling design. Rich/warm wood study w/doors leading to covered porch. Game room up w/3 bed, 2 baths. Exterior: pool/spa/beach entry/waterfall, shower, decking + covered patio. Lot goes past the back fence.

233 E Blue Heron Drive, Blue Heron Bay in Montgomery. ML# 78445337. \$620,000



A River Plantation delight that features a high and dry over-sized lot w/a fenced backyard that is equipped w/a gate from the driveway (easy outdoor storage) & a generous covered patio. The interior sets this home apart with an open floor plan with high ceilings and a sky light over the island kitchen. The heart of the house will make entertaining easy with a HUGE breakfast bar that overlooks the kitch-

en and living area. Granite counters, double ovens, gas 5 burner cooktop, under cabinet outlets, tons of cabinet space + a formal dining room. Living room offers a cast stone fireplace and tons of windows. Large master bedroom w/double sinks, soak tub, sizable walk-in shower + an AWEsome walk-in closet. Two additional secondary bedrooms w/walk-in closets + a study w/French doors.

635 Spring Forest Drive, River Plantation in Conroe. ML# 54817360. \$267,200



New construction at an amazing price! Located in a quiet subdivision in Montgomery surrounded by National Forest and offers a fishing lake and community pool! The interior offers an open concept living with stylish polished concrete floors, great natural lighting and three spacious bedrooms. Builder has additional homes in the neighborhood; con-

tact for more information. Ready for move in!

15897 Pecan Drive, Hidden Forest Estates in Montgomery. ML# 49933806. \$144,900



Located in a quiet subdivision in Montgomery that is minutes from Lake Conroe, restaurants, shopping, schools and golf courses! This 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom bungalow offers an eye-catching exterior with a generous front porch that will welcome relaxation! The floor plan offers a spacious living room that flows into the dining room and overlooks the kitch-

en that will boast rich wood cabinets, granite counter tops, breakfast bar that will be great for entertaining and a stunning back splash. The Master bedroom will provide a private door leading to backyard, an awesome shower and great storage. The two secondary rooms will be spacious w/great storage.

241 Ridgeside, Lake Conroe Village in Montgomery. ML# 28576388. \$124,900



Located in a quiet subdivision in Montgomery that is minutes from Lake Conroe, restaurants, shopping, schools and golf courses! This 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom bungalow offers an eye-catching exterior with a generous front porch that will welcome relaxation! The floor plan offers a spacious living room that flows into

the dining room and overlooks the kitchen that will boast rich wood cabinets, granite counter tops, breakfast bar that will be great for entertaining and a stunning back splash. The master bedroom will provide a private door leading to backyard, an awesome shower and great storage. The two secondary rooms will be spacious w/great storage.

245 Ridgeside, Lake Conroe Village in Montgomery. ML# 50148568. \$114,900



2.006 acres! Quiet subdivision with light deed restrictions surrounded by very well-kept homes! Located in Texas Grand Ranch where you can escape from the hustle and bustle of the city. Only 10 minutes from I-45. This lot is wooded and has both soft and hardwood trees. Great lot to build your dream home!

Lot 60 Stagecoach Circle, Texas Grand Ranch in Huntsville. ML# 34631397. \$89,900

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2 buildings plus an additional covered storage area on 0.64 acres off Hwy 75 near



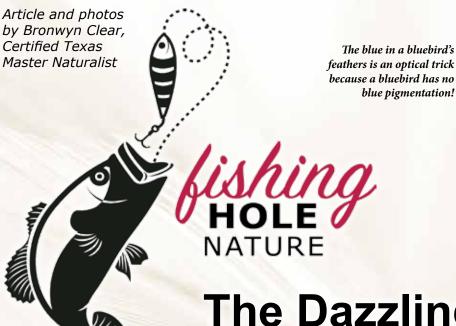
the 336 and 3083 intersections. Building #1 - Office - reception area, 2 bathrooms, 2 kitchenettes, conference room, flex space, 5-7 office rooms (easily partitioned if more space is needed), workshop space + additional storage rooms in workshop (2 overhead doors). Building #2 - All workshop with one bathroom. Fenced with unfenced parking area. 508 Bryant Road, Conroe, TX 77303





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# The Dazzling Colors Of **Feathers**

Birds can be such glorious colors...reds, blues, greens, oranges, yellows, and some are even iridescent! We humans see a particular feather color because that is the color reflected back to our eyes, while all other colors in the spectrum are absorbed by the feathers. But it becomes even more complex because the feather color we see happens in two ways. One way is due to pigmentation, and the other is due to microscopic feather structure.

Those bold red feathers of a male cardinal and the pink feathers of a flamingo are created by what they eat. Seeds, insects, plants and crustaceans all have carotenoids, which are fat soluble red-orange-yellow pigments. These colorful pigments are absorbed into some birds' systems. Birds such as cardinals and flamingos are able to process the pigment so the color permeates their bodies and feathers. In flamingos the pink is caused by the crabs, crustaceans and algae they eat. In cardinals it's plants, seeds and insects. If you found a feather from either bird and crushed it to a powder, you would see red or pink powder because those pigments are disbursed throughout their feathers. Additionally, a melanin pigment naturally occurs in birds (and humans) which causes feathers to be primarily brown and/or black. Finally, some birds can produce green feathers due to the amino acids, or porphyrins, in their



Is it boring to see a bird with only brown and black melanin pigmentation? No way! Ospreys are stunning!

Special feather microstructure scatters light like a prism, and causes the shimmering iridescence of green-headed mallards.

systems. In short, what birds eat and how their bodies process food give their feathers almost all the colors in the crayon box. Almost all, except for blue!

Blue. Now there is a bird of a different color! In nature there is no blue pigment in blue feathers...not in bluebirds, blue jays, parrots or any bird with blue feathers! So why do we see blue if there is no blue pigment? Blue is created when light hits the birds' unusual microscopic feather structure, and all the colors of the light spectrum that humans can see are absorbed, except for blue. Blue is reflected back, and therefore is what we see. If a molted blue feather is crushed into powder thereby destroying the feather structure, we would only see a pile of brown dust! Amazing! Blue feathers are truly an optical trick. In addition, the iridescence seen in some birds - the chin of a hummingbird, the shimmer of a green-headed mallard - is also caused by feather mi-



The astounding feather colors of a painted bunting are made in a mix of ways – amino acids, pigment-rich foods, and feather microstructure.

This fellow has it all going on!

crostructure rather than pigmentation. To create iridescent feathers light is refracted off of a special feather structure, as if it were a prism, making the feathers shimmer and glow.

This leads us finally to the painted bunting. These males are a dazzle of colors! They not only have that special feather microstructure that makes us see blue, they also have all possible types of biochemical pigmentation! It's all mixed and jumbled in this one bird, and we see amazing feathers of red, green, yellow, orange, and blue. A painted bunting is a living rainbow!

Learn more about the incredible nature in our area by joining a chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist organization. To find a chapter close to you, or to read about the state program, go online to www.txmn.org. Volunteer and get involved!



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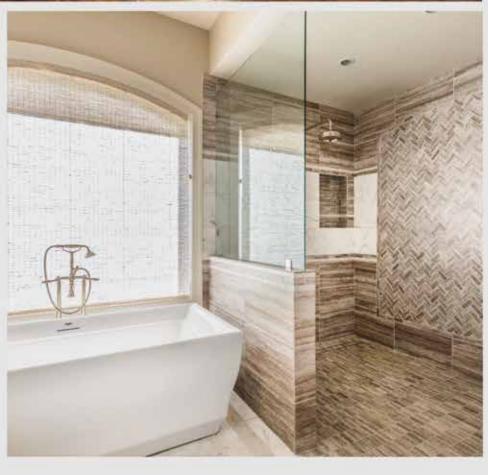
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# Please Give Animals a "Brake"

By: Lisa Wolling, Executive Director

One of the most commonly-asked questions wildlife rehabilitators get from the general public is the following: by rehabilitating wild animals, aren't we interfering with nature, and shouldn't we simply let nature take its course? If rehabilitators were simply rescuing animals that were down from storms, or other natural occurrences, that statement would ring true. However, the reality is that about 90% of the wildlife animals that are injured or orphaned

chasing rather than where they are going, so they are more apt to be hit while they are hunting. Conversely, owls will be hunting after dark. It is difficult to be on the lookout for flying birds while you are driving, of course. Be more alert if you are driving on tree-lined roads (birds of prey may be chasing prey that is out in the open, i.e. along roadways). Roughly 85-90% of the birds of prey we care for at Friends of Texas Wildlife have been struck by a vehicle, and









Left: Armadillo, hit by vehicle in August, severely injured. Left center: Armadillo in November, still recovering, but armor is healing. Right center: Fawn hit by vehicle, broken leg. Right: All healed up and ready for release.

are needing assistance due to human impacts (habitat loss; poisoning; attacks by domestic dogs or cats; gunshot). However, the most common reason for wildlife animals needing help is that they have been struck by a vehicle. As our county and surrounding areas continue to grow, this is a problem that will no doubt unfortunately get worse. Animal/vehicle accidents are not only dangerous (if not fatal) for the animal, but they cause millions of dollars of damage to vehicles every year. There are some important things to bear in mind to help avoid, as much as possible, hitting wildlife animals.

It is helpful to be at least somewhat familiar with what animals are most common in our area and a little about their normal behavior. In our part of Texas, we don't have too many wildlife animals that are active during daylight hours, so that minimizes somewhat the risk of hitting anything during the day. However, birds of prey such as hawks and falcons, as well as songbirds, are active during the day. With raptors, they tend to be focused on prey they are

of course birds are the most difficult to avoid because it is so difficult to see them coming. Squirrels are also active during the day, and they are another commonly hit animal, mainly due to their behavior. In a squirrel's mind, the best way to avoid capture is to run erratically in order to confuse the predator. This strategy works fairly well if you are being pursued by a hawk or coyote. However, it is largely ineffective against cars...an alert driver might swerve to avoid hitting a squirrel, only to have said squirrel dart right back into the path of the car. Best thing to try to avoid hitting a squirrel is to brake, but not alter direction (because usually the squirrel WILL alter direction).

It never ceases to amaze us how many turtles and tortoises come in after being hit. If ever there was an animal that should be easy to avoid, it would be these. They are not generally known for darting out into traffic. We would hate to think that people might hit them intentionally. As reptiles, they have a very slow metabolism, and even with very grave, fatal injuries, death comes slowly

to them. It is horrific...please help them out if you can. If it can be safely done, any turtle on the road should be relocated to the side of the road. Make note of which direction the turtle is headed, and then take them to the side of the road they were trying to get to. Especially in spring and early summer, turtles are on the move to breed and lay eggs. They know where they want to go, so don't relocate them, just help them to cross the road.

Many of the mammals we have in our part of Texas are nocturnal. We commonly see raccoons, opossums, skunks, and armadillos coming in as victims of being struck. Most of these animals are relatively slow moving, and they are not too likely to suddenly dart out in front of a car. Where they tend to get into trouble is on poorly-lit roads, or roads with curves where they cannot be easily seen. Raccoons have very good eyesight and hearing and will generally try to run to avoid getting hit. Skunks, opossums, and armadillos all have fairly poor eyesight. By the time they can SEE a car, it's often



Left: Great Horned Owl, hit by vehicle, broken wing (wing is wrapped for stabilization while it heals). Right: All healed up. Release day!



Left: Red-tailed hawk, hit by vehicle, broken beak. Right: Months later, all recovered and ready for release.

too late for them to run. A skunk's defense, as we all know, is to turn around to spray anything they deem threatening (rather than run), so that is clearly not helpful to avoid being struck. Opossums are timid and slow so that, coupled with their poor eyesight, just leaves them almost defenseless against cars. They also have a very thin skull as compared to other animals, so if they do get hit, they suffer more severe head trauma. Then there are armadillos...when they get scared, their reaction is to jump straight up in the air, about three feet. Although this may work to frighten off other predators, again it is not a good strategy against a car or truck. By the time they see a car, and react by jumping, it is almost inevitable that they will be hit. All these animals are common in suburban as well as rural areas, so please be aware of their normal behavior and slow down a little at night, especially on very dark roads or roads with curves. Given the chance, they will move along and out of your way.

The most costly and dangerous vehicle/animal accidents involve deer. There are several things to keep in mind to avoid having a collision with a deer. Most important is to be extra alert during the times deer are most active, which is from sunset to midnight and during the hours shortly before and after dawn. Remember that deer seldom run alone, so if you see one, there are probably others nearby or behind the one you see. Obviously use extra caution if you see any deer crossing signs. Use your high-beam headlights on darker roads (if there are no oncoming cars). The higher beam will better illuminate the eyes of any deer nearby. If there is a deer in the roadway, brake firmly but do not swerve and stay in your lane. Many accidents occur when drivers swerve and either hit another vehicle or lose control of their own vehicle. Once you stop, blow your horn to frighten the deer off the road.

The best way to avoid collisions with wildlife is to simply be aware and alert to your surroundings. Distracted driving is dangerous on many levels, so try to pay attention and slow down when conditions warrant it. Not only will that help to keep wildlife safer, but it will keep you and your loved ones safer too!

During this festive time of year, we want to send our best wishes to everyone for a wonderful holiday and a happy and healthy new year. Please remember that Friends of Texas Wildlife is wholly dependent on fundraising and donations to support the thousands of animals we rehabilitate every year. We truly cannot do what we do without the support of the community we serve. Donations can be made at www.ftwl.org (via Paypal or credit card), or mailed to our physical address at 29615 Highland Boulevard, Magnolia, TX 77354.

To learn more about what we do and view pictures of many of the animals we assist, please visit our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/SavingTexas-Wildlife. Our educational visitor's center is open the second Saturday of each month from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., located at 29816 Dobbin Hufsmith Road, Magnolia, Texas, so the next open house date will be Saturday, December 14. Come on out and visit us, learn a little more about local wildlife, do some fun activities and a craft, and meet some of our non-releasable wildlife educational animals. We also host birthday parties, camps, and educational presentations. For more information about events, birthday parties, camps, or educational presentations for scouts, schools, or other groups, please visit our website or email ftwl.education@gmail.com. There are many other ways you can help support our efforts, too (such as Kroger Community Rewards, Amazon Smile, etc.). Details can be found at www.ftlw.org, and then click on "How to Help". ◆









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# Lake Conroe FISHING REPORT



#### BY: BUTCH TERPE AT STOW-A-WAY MARINA & R/V PARK

Black Bass: During this time of year the action can be fair by fishing crank baits, spinner baits and plastic worms around any rock structures such as bridges or breakwaters. Also, boat pilings will also be a prime target to fish as may of these docks have brush under them which bass will hold to.

Crappie: Now that the water temp is in the 50's, these slabs of crappie often bunch up in large numbers and once located the action can be very good. I like to fish deep structures, bridge pilings, timber and brush in 18' – 30' depths with minnows and jigs.

White Bass & Hybrid Striped Bass: Most of these fish will be cruising around main lake humps and points in 20' – 30' depths, so you will need to use your depth or fish finder to locate them. I start out by trolling pet spoons along the tops of main lake humps and points in 18' – 30' depths. Sometimes if they are along the bottom I will try bouncing slab spoons in that zone to trigger a bite.

Catfish: Catfishing is great this time of year. By baiting up areas near river or creek channels with range cubes and using chicken liver or dip baits and fishing near the bottom in 20' or so, you should have some good action in a very short time. The best thing about this time of year is that they will be active at anytime of the day, and larger cats are more active at this time as well. ◆

Call Butch Terpe at Lake Conroe Guide Service at 936-856-7080 to inquire about fishing trips.

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Johnwitha

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Call Butch Terpe at Lake Conroe Guide Service 936-856-7080 to inquire about fishing trips.

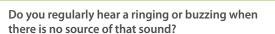
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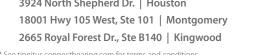
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