

Dock Line



Magazine

Tomball

December 2019

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See page 8



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See Page 24

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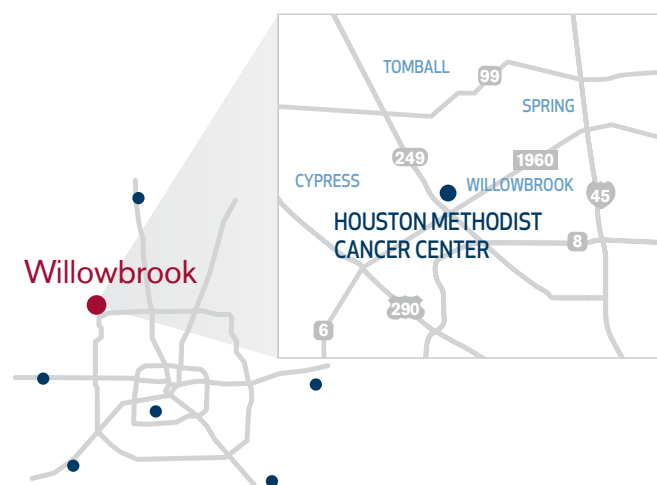
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Tomball

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DECEMBER 2019



Once again December is finally here with the holiday season in full swing. As we take our evening walk through the neighborhood and observe all the amazing lights and decorations it truly does seem to feel like, "The most wonderful time of the year". The entire community is sparkling like the bling on our dog collars. From a dog's perspective, looking past the presents and parties this is the time to focus on what is most important, our family and friends because without them all the sparkle is a bit dull.

So this December while in the midst of all the hustle and bustle, we plan to make time to enjoy lots of great food, attend a few gatherings, sneak in a few naps and take a little time to appreciate those around us as we wrap up another year and put a bow on it. Here's to hoping for big things to come in 2020 for all of my friends, family and Dock Line followers. We would like to say a special thank you to all of our readers, advertisers, and supporters for making it a great year. May you all have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.... See you next year.

Bentley & Ellie 

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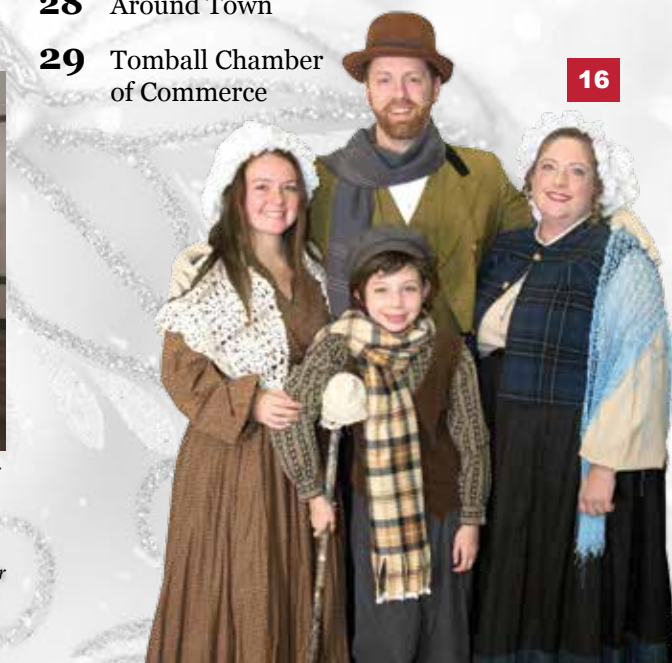


ON THE COVER



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When: Saturday, December 7, 2019

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

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Admission & Parking - FREE

Come and enjoy Tomball's annual Christmas event for kids and their families. Activities include live entertainment, games, Santa's workshop, and a kid's zone. Even Santa and Mrs. Claus are there for photos. There will be vendors and food, too. For more information call 281-351-5484.

Tomball Farmer's Market

When: December 7, 14, 21 & 28, 2019

Time: 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Where: Corner of Main St. and Walnut St. in downtown Tomball TX

Home to growers, craftsmen & artisans the Tomball Farmers Market is a registered non-profit and works as a cooperative effort of local families dedicated to providing the highest quality food and handmade products to our community. This market was created by farmers and is operated by farmers. We can only exist and attract more farmers through your continued support. For more information call Sarah Starnes at 281-826-2196 or email tomballfarmersmarket@gmail.com

Tomball German Christmas Market & Festival

When: December 13 - 15, 2019

Time: Friday – 6:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m.; Saturday – 11:00 a.m. -10:00 p.m.; Sunday – 11:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.

Where: Railroad Depot, 201 South Elm St., Tomball, TX

Admission, Parking & Shuttle: Free

German Christmas Market & Festival showcases products like selling German Christmas items, arts, and crafts, including traditional German food and drink, Glühwein, beer, Christmas Stollen & Homemade Breads, Bratwurst, red cabbage, sauerkraut, apple strudel, etc.

2nd Saturday at the Depot

When: Saturday, December 14, 2019

Time: 4:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Where: Historic Downtown Depot, 201 South Elm St., Tomball, TX 77375; Rainout location – Community Center, 221 Market St. Admission & Parking - FREE

2nd Saturday at the Depot is a family oriented event held on the second Saturday of every month. Enjoy themed arts and crafts, to games, music and a movie under the stars on the giant inflatable screen. Bring your lawn chairs and picnic dinner and join us for a movie under the stars! ♦

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All FLOORS & MORE



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

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"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

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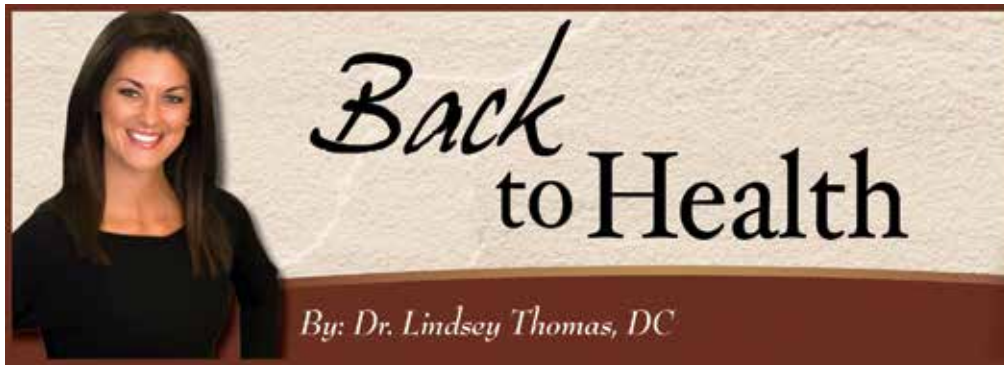
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What Does Health Mean To You And Your Family?

The current view of health holds that if we have symptoms, we are sick and if we are without symptoms then we are healthy. So much of modern health care is geared toward getting rid of symptoms. Some of the sickest people are symptom free. They just don't feel anything. Their bodies are so consumed with toxins, stress and injury (emotional and physical) that they have shut down. So lack of symptoms does not necessarily prove to be

gets hot as the body increases the circulation to repair and heal the injured tissue. The runny nose we get at the change of seasons is the body sluffing off the old respiratory lining, much like the trees sluff off their leaves and animals sluff off winter coats.

Every symptom our body gives us is a message. The body can only speak to us in two ways, pain or pleasure, discomfort or comfort, ease or dis-ease. When symptoms occur, when our body is



a healthy individual. Conversely, a person with symptoms is not necessarily "sick."

Many of the symptoms people experience are actually signs that the body is healing and abating those symptoms can interfere with the healing process. For example, a fever is the body's first line of defense against infection. The temperature goes up, which increases the body's activity and signals the immune system to essentially "turn on." When we take something to lower the temperature it compromises the body's natural healing response.

When we ingest something that the body considers to be toxic, nausea and diarrhea are healthy responses. When a joint is injured, the body, along with a host of inflammatory chemicals, gives us pain to let us know to be careful, to avoid using it and re-injuring it. It swells to provide a natural splint to the area to protect the injured joint and

trying its best to communicate with us, do we listen to what it is trying to say? Or, do we just try to stop the symptoms?

For example, antibiotics remain the most popular medical treatment for an earache, with doctors reportedly writing 15 million prescriptions per year in the United States alone. It is estimated that at least half of the prescriptions are unnecessary and ineffective for helping this problem. To add to that, most ear infections are vi-

ral in nature so antibiotics, in many cases, will not be effective in eradicating the problem. Quieting the symptoms will most likely lead to a recurrence of the symptoms later on. It has been shown that 80 percent of people with ear infections or earaches get better without antibiotics within 48 to 72 hours.

Due to the widespread overuse of antibiotics, drug-resistant germs have been reproducing rapidly, constantly evolving new levels of drug resistance. For over a decade our health leaders have been sounding the alarm to doctors to stop writing so many prescriptions for antibiotics because of growing drug resistance as well as serious health risks to the user.

As these statistics are becoming better known, people are seeking alternative treatment to keep themselves as well as their family healthy. Chiropractic is becoming more and more the popular choice.

Chiropractic is not the diagnosis or treatment of any condition or disease. The focus of chiropractic is to reduce stress to your nervous system so your whole body can function better. At Sandstone Chiropractic, we use techniques designed for adults and children that are very gentle, effective and safe.

It's important to note that chiropractors are not opposed to antibiotics when necessary, but the chiropractic profession acknowledges that over usage is prevalent in our country and that the habits of some prescribing doctors may not have caught up with the latest research, or simply give-in to the persistent demands of uninformed parents.

Health is not the absence of symptoms, as sickness is not the presence of symptoms. Health is a condition of wholeness in which all of your organs are functioning 100%. Symptomatic or not, chiropractic care offers your body the best possibilities for better function, therefore better health.

For the overall wellness of you and your family, participate in all decisions when it comes to the usage of antibiotics and seek other non-invasive forms of care. Remember, it's your body and you have a choice. Most importantly, initiate healthy lifestyle choices for your family and include regular chiropractic care as part of your family's goal towards wellness. ♦



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STAGE RIGHT

Look out! The horrible Herdmans are coming!

STAGE RIGHT Presents

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 rewritten it! 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.

Director Tina Cafeo has assembled a delightful cast to bring this funny and heartwarming show to the Crighton stage for the very first time in the area:

Leading the cast as Grace is Amy Sowers. Amy is a founding member of STAGE RIGHT and is the executive director of Bravo Company: the children's educational wing of STAGE RIGHT.

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*

LOOK OUT! The Herdmans are here!



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 Shipping 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 McLeod. 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 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

"No, there is no biting in Bethlehem."



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 Wendleken 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

Continued on page 18 ➡



Performances at the historic
Crighton Theatre in Conroe, TX

THE BEST

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PAGEANT EVER

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Dec. 6-22, 2019

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Funded in part by the City of Conroe visitconroe.com
Presented by arrangement with Broadway Licensing



Amy Sowers as Grace with Kayden Solomon and Sam Siemonsma as Beth and Charley Bradley

(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. ♦

An incapacitated Helen Armstrong giving her loud opinion to the Reverend about the Herdmans being in the Christmas pageant

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*

Beth Bradley and some not too happy girls





The choir prepares for the Christmas pageant

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Online with Dock Line

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 profile with the most up to date informa-

tion, 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@docklinemagazine.com! ♦

Do you have a suggestion topic for our next article?

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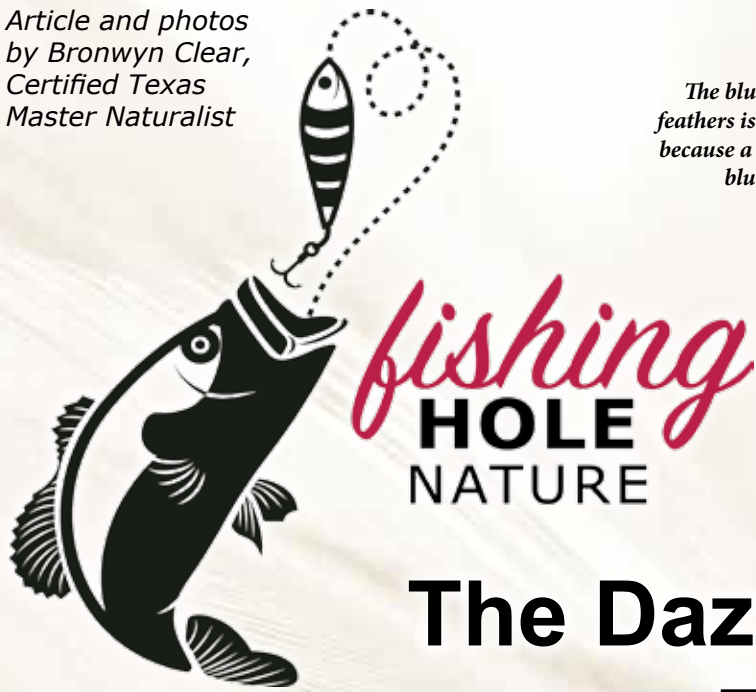


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The blue in a bluebird's feathers is an optical trick because a bluebird has no blue pigmentation!



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 systems. In



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.

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 microstructure rather than pigmentation. To create iridescent feathers



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!

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! ♦



The red in cardinal feathers is caused by the colorful fat soluble pigments found in what they eat – insects, seeds and plants.

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

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 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



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

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 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.



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.

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 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". ♦

Citizen of the Year Nominations Accepted Through December 6

The Greater Tomball Area Chamber of Commerce (GTACC) is now accepting nominations for its 2019 Citizen of the Year award. Applications will be accepted through Friday, December 6.

"We look for community leaders



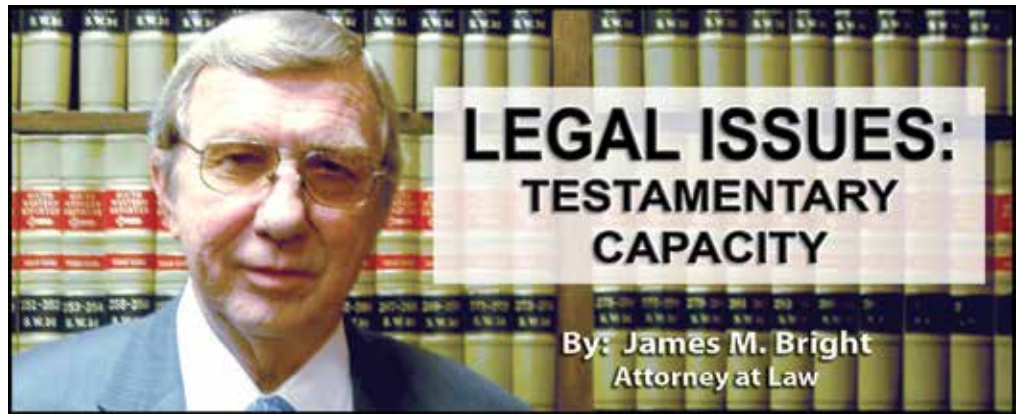
Latrell and Sam Shannon were the Greater Tomball Area Chamber of Commerce's 2018 Citizens of the Year

whose volunteer contributions have significantly benefited the greater Tomball area," said GTACC President Bruce Hillegast.

To be considered for the award, candidates must live or work in the greater Tomball area, and their contribution to the community should be in civic, community, professional service, church involvement and/or service to the Greater Tomball Area Chamber of Commerce or other service organizations.

The Citizen of the Year recipient will be publicly announced mid-December, and his/her accomplishments will be celebrated at the GTACC Annual Chairman's Ball, which will be held on February 7, 2020.

Citizen of the Year nomination forms are available at the chamber office, 29201 Quinn Road, Suite B, or may be found online at www.tomballchamber.org. For more information, call the Greater Tomball Area Chamber of Commerce at 281-351-7222. ♦



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 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.

Testamentary Capacity vs. Contractual Capacity - 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. ♦

Fishing ADVENTURES

with Derek Pietsch



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 plankton 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 paddlefish. 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! ♦



Around **Town**

Photos By D&K Photography

Miss Tomball Pageant Contestants for 2019-2020 Miss Tomball

Pageant was held November 23, 2019 Salem Lutheran Church





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