

# Dock Line



Magazine

Lake Conroe

February 2020

**El Bosque**  
MEXICAN GRILL

Your New Favorite  
Mexican Food  
Restaurant *See page 8*

Montgomery  
County **Home**  
& Outdoor Living Show



February 29 & March 1, 2020

Lone Star Convention Center



Only rain in the drain!  
SJRA Stormwater Inlet Marking  
(SWIM) Program  
*See Page 40*

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It's hard to believe we are already in the second month of 2020. February has always been an exciting month with lots of festivities but this year brings us even more excitement as we announce our long over due new merger with the great people at Voixly LLC. The innovative new things they bring to Dock Line Magazine will allow us to show our clients even more love when it comes to their marketing visions, the sky's the limit this year and we are stoked.

We would also like to say a huge thank you to all our advertisers, readers and partners for helping us move on through another great year because without your loyalty and support we could not take this next step. Remember to shop local and get out there to enjoy some or all of the fun events your community has to offer in February. Most of all keep reading Dock Line Magazine. Until next month,

GT2 

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# Dock Line Magazine

Lake Conroe

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# YOUR NEW FAVORITE MEXICAN FOOD RESTAURANT

BY: BRIAN SHERMAN

Every town in Texas seems to have a Mexican food restaurant around every corner. The Lake Conroe area is no exception. In the midst of all the choices for Mexican cuisine, one restaurant stands out, and not just because of the food.

Nearly two decades ago, El Bosque Mexican Grill opened its doors and started serving the Lake Conroe area with its exceptional take on Mexican food. Now with four locations in the greater Lake Conroe area and an ever growing throng of loyal

patrons, the Mexican food staple has become one of the most frequented and recommended restaurants in the area.

Is it just because of the food? Well, yes, the food is amazing. Famous cocktails, fresh tortillas, and a delicious array of Tex-Mex





## 5 Surprising Reasons You'll Love El Bosque Mexican Grill in Conroe

options await customers each day. Although El Bosque Mexican Grill wows its customers with their exceptional Mexican recipes and tasty dishes, the real secret to the restaurant's success is found in their values and their story. Diving in to what makes them tick reveals the secrets to their success.

Here are five reasons why El Bosque Mexican Grill stands out and why you'll love them even more:

### 1. They Don't Put a Price on Their Name

Sometimes, as restaurants get more popular and become a more recognized brand name, their prices start to reflect it. On paper, it makes sense to raise your prices as demand for your service increases. El Bosque Mexican Grill breaks the mold with its approach to pricing their food. As Melissa Rodriguez says, "Our chef, kitchen staff, and owner take pride in quality. We also don't put a price on our name. In other words,

you do not pay for our brand, just our food and service."

### 2. They are 100% Family Owned

Another common thread among the restaurant business is the changing of ownership as restaurants become successful. In the not so distant past, nearly every restaurant began as a "family-owned" restaurant. With success comes offers from outsiders to

*Continued on page 10* ➞









buy and expand. When restaurants “leave the family”, there are small nuances that get lost in the transitions. Someone else’s dream takes over and it is noticeable.

El Bosque Mexican Grill has kept the restaurant in the family, and it shows in every aspect of the business. You can feel it in the atmosphere and recognize the care and attention to detail in every dish.

### 3. They Treat You Like Family

Created by the family-owned nature of El Bosque Mexican Grill, the dining atmosphere in each of their locations feels inviting and comfortable. Everyone from the kitchen staff to the servers treats you like family. “We are 100% family-owned. We take pride in our strong Mexican background and always dedicate ourselves to the customer and customer experience.” That family atmosphere is an intangible feature that is hard to put on paper, but it is felt by everyone who comes through the doors. It’s not just the food that brings people back time and time again.

### 4. They Serve Everything Fresh Everyday

A common way to save money in the restaurant industry is to prepackage or freeze certain ingredients to use in the future. As restaurants expand to multiple locations, it becomes more of a challenge to prepare fresh ingredients everyday. El Bosque once again breaks out of the typical restaurant box with their approach to food service. All of their food is prepared and served fresh everyday.

Melissa says, “We believe that serving fresh, never frozen food is of utmost importance. Our Chef and Kitchen Staff and owner take pride in quality.”

*Continued on page 12* ➞







### 5. The Owner Works in the Restaurant Alongside the Staff

When asked what about their restaurant would surprise people the most, El Bosque responded, "The owner is the most humble person you could ever meet. He is not scared to do the grunt work in the restaurant industry, because he has been there before. In fact, if you don't see him around your tables, it usually means he is working in the kitchen, helping out any shortage of kitchen staff members. He is a great entrepreneur and a great person to work for." Following the American dream since he came to the US when he was 17, El Bosque's owner takes pride in every detail of the restaurant. You'll taste it in each dish, and sense it in every smile from his staff.

El Bosque Mexican Grill stands out in Conroe as one of the most loved Mexican food restaurants around. When asked to give their customers a piece of advice, Melissa Rodriguez said "Do not be nervous to give a comment on the food quality or service. We appreciate all opinions and believe they help us improve!" The "always Improving" mentality is the foundation to the growing success of El Bosque Mexican Grill.

Go see for yourself what makes El Bosque Mexican Grill exceptional. Who knows, it might just become your new favorite Mexican food restaurant in Conroe!

Visit El Bosque Mexican Grill, open Monday – Saturday at 11:00 AM, and their Sunday breakfast buffet starts at 8:00 AM. Find them at 1111 W. Dallas St., #105 in Conroe. They also offer catering services for your special event! Learn more and check out the menu at [elbosquemexicangrill.com](http://elbosquemexicangrill.com). ♦





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# Back to Health

By: Dr. Todd R. Custer D.C., Athletic Trainer



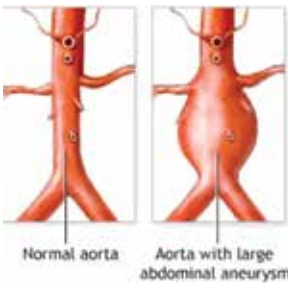
## AAA Pain in the Back!

### What is an AAA?

An abdominal aortic aneurysm is the enlargement and weakening of the aorta (the largest artery in the body). Although it typically is asymptomatic and found on routine imaging studies (x-ray, CT scan), the most common symptom is referred pain to your lower back. Outcomes are deadly if undiagnosed and/or untreated.

### What symptoms are associated with a "Triple A"?

The back pain will typically be sudden, severe, constant and have a pulsing quality.



Pain may radiate into the groin region. Physical examination will demonstrate evidence of a widened and more palpable abdominal pulse (more than 1" from the midline) located above the belly button. Stethoscope auscultation may demonstrate "bruit" a whirling noise made as blood circles within the enlarged artery. Pulses in the lower legs may be weakened and unequal between the legs.

### Who typically develops an AAA?

This condition has a slight predilection toward the male population. Persons are typically obese and may suffer from hypertension (high blood pressure) or hypercholesterolemia (high cholesterol). It is more prevalent in smokers and/or persons with breathing conditions (COPD, Emphysema). There is also a hereditary pattern to this condition. Each of the aforementioned habits/traits promotes arteriosclerosis (hardening

of the arteries) that will predispose the arteries to damage.

### How is it diagnosed?

When physical examination findings warrant further investigation, standard x-ray or a CT (cat) scan may be performed to evaluate the abdominal aorta. If enlargement is noted, it is measured and treated according to its severity.

### When is surgery necessary?

Surgical repair is necessary if the abdominal aorta measures greater than 5.5cm in diameter or if while being monitored it has worsened greater than .6-.8cm within a year. This is considered a high-risk condition with a high mortality rate of 80% if rupture occurs.

### How can chiropractic treatment help?

By proper diagnosis, evaluation and referral to a thoracic vascular specialist. Treatment of an AAA is contraindicated and one of the many disqualifiers of physical medicine treatment. That is one of the many reasons why a proper physical examination is performed prior to any treatment in our facility.

Dr. Custer is the owner/operator of Better Care Chiropractic® Physical Therapy with locations in Willis and Montgomery. Dr. Custer graduated from Texas Chiropractic College in 2005 with highest honors, Summa Cum Laude. He combines his 15 plus years of experience in injury rehabilitation (as an athletic trainer) with his chiropractic education to promote a fast and efficient recovery process. If you have questions or would like to request an article topic please send correspondence to: [whybettercare@gmail.com](mailto:whybettercare@gmail.com). ♦

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# Concrete Evidence You're Paying Too Much for Slab Repair

*By: Brian Sherman*







In 2009, Brett Weary started Discount Concrete Leveling Service to provide immediate solutions to people's concrete problems. His desire was to save customers time and money.

"Removing sunken slabs and pouring fresh concrete is expensive," says Weary, "versus raising and leveling existing slabs."

With his knowledge and expertise, he had a desire to provide home owners with cost effective ways to extend the life of their concrete, and that is what he endeavored to do.

Discount Concrete Leveling Service specializes in repairing and restoring broken, uneven driveways, sidewalks, patios and other freestanding concrete areas. The process is efficient and effective, often completed in a single day and at a fraction of what it would cost to replace the problem areas.

A proud Aggie, Brett Weary operates his family-owned small business with customer satisfaction at the forefront. He has worked in customer service for over 20 years and prides himself in not only a job well done but the customer's gratification in knowing



*Continued on page 18* ➞









they received the attention and workmanship they deserve. How does he do that? Every client of Discount Concrete Leveling Service can feel reassured that their job is being done right because the owner comes and works at every job.

Discount Concrete Leveling Service is located in Houston and provides concrete

services to all of Harris County and Montgomery County. Whenever you call Discount Concrete Leveling Service, you reach a representative ready to respond to your request. Their estimates are completely free. They are committed to serving their new and repeat customers with excellent integrity.

"Being a smaller company allows for

greater time for attention to detail and the client's concerns," says Weary, "that is what makes us different from our competitors."

When asked about his favorite thing about his community, Weary described people that have time and again come together to help one another, like in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey. He felt appreciated for the hands-on hard work he did for the many homes who had incurred heavy rains and flooding, which caused the earth below their slabs to wash out; resulting in sunken slabs. Despite their hardships, Weary saw neighbors helping one another cleaning up and referring each other to small businesses like his that could help and be cost effective.

*Continued on page 20* ➞

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Not only has Discount Concrete Leveling Service saved their customers thousands of dollars in needless replacements, but this practice has kept old concrete out of the landfills. According to the EPA, roughly 50 percent of materials put into the landfills are concrete and demolition debris materials. These materials are heavy and non-compactable and reduce the air space. The community deserves hard-working, honest business owners to aid in the betterment of their cities.

The consensus for most people is thinking of concrete repairs as costly, and they become fearful. "Don't replace it; level it" is the advice this expert would give to residential homeowners looking for a cost effective way to extend the life of their non-load bearing flatwork.

"Water intrusion through the joints degrades the subgrade below the slabs, causing an unstable bedding for the slab," he says, "and sealing joints between the slabs contributes to extending the life of the slab, [called] expansion joint replacement and sealant with self leveling polyurethane."

Many happy customers over the years have been pleasantly surprised at how affordable concrete raising and leveling is, especially compared with the cost of tear-out and replacement. The cost of leveling usually represents a savings of 50%-70% over replacement. The leveling process can be completed and ready for use in a matter of hours. In addition to free evaluations and estimates, Discount Concrete Leveling Service offers a two-year warranty on all work. And unlike other repair options, leveling and restoring concrete requires no building permits or municipal inspections.



"Our work is covered under repairs and maintenance," explained Weary. "That's one reason we can usually get the work done in a single day. If you have a problem with broken, uneven or misaligned concrete at your home or office, give us a call," said Weary. "We can stop the problem, put the concrete back in place and make sure it doesn't happen again."

Discount Concrete Leveling Service provides cost effective repair services for driveways, sidewalks, patios and other residential and commercial properties throughout Montgomery County and the greater Houston area. For information, visit [www.DiscountConcreteLeveling.com](http://www.DiscountConcreteLeveling.com) or call 713-568-9456. ♦





### Free "Law Line" Service

When: February 3, 2020

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](http://www.WoodlandsBarAssociation.com).

### North Shore Republican Women's Meeting

When: Wednesday, February 5, 2020

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 a Program by Christian Collins, Republican Party Surrogate on Outreach and Education of Citizens on Conservative Principles. Plated lunch at noon - lunch is optional, but reservations for a seat much be made by Noon, Saturday, February 1st by clicking on the register link at [www.NSRepublicanWomen.org](http://www.NSRepublicanWomen.org). You can also call the Country Club at 936-597-6219 to reserve. You do not have to be a member to attend.

### Montgomery County Welcoming Neighbor Club May Luncheon

When: February 20, 2020

Time: 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Where: Walden Yacht Club

Montgomery County Welcoming Neighbor Club (social club 501c7) monthly luncheon will be held at the Walden Yacht Club on February 20, 2020. Social hour begins at 11:00 followed by a short business meeting and lunch. Afterwards, there will a program honoring the past presidents of the Welcoming Neighbor Club. Call Rebecca at 936-671-9629 if you need additional information concerning this meeting and to make reservations. ♦

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# ROOF IT RIGHT...THE FIRST TIME

***What AM Commercial/Residential Roofing Company LLC can teach you about choosing the right person to work on your home.***

***By: Brian Sherman***



**MASTER  
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**“Best contractor we have ever used.” - Craig J.**

Wow, that's quite a statement. That's an actual review from one of AM Commercial/Residential Roofing's customers. There are many more reviews just like this one praising the company for their exceptional service and high-quality work. You may not have heard of AM Commercial/Residential Roofing, but they are setting the bar high in the roofing industry. With so many roofing companies to choose from, AM Commercial/Residential Roofing is finding a way to stand out in a crowded industry.

So, what makes them so special? Well, contractors nowadays are a dime a dozen. Especially after major storms like hurricanes, roofers and home repair contractors seem to come out of the woodwork offering fast and cheap repairs that undercut the market. Most of the time, that's exactly what you get... "cheap" repairs. It seems like it is becoming more difficult to find someone you can trust to work on your home and give you a lot of value for the money.

Here's another customer review: "All

were professional and knew what they were doing. The entire project was done and completely cleaned up in one day. The quote was accurate the first time with everything explained in detail. We are very happy with how it turned out. Thanks AM Commercial/Residential Roofing!"

AM Commercial/Residential Roofing has figured something out. Here's what they do that makes customers trust them time and time again, and what you should look for when hiring any contractor.





### They Value Your Time

One of the most stressful parts of any home repair is the timeline for completion. There are countless stories of contractors dragging their feet, extending a job far beyond their original projected timeline and leaving the homeowner frustrated and feeling helpless. Replacing a roof is quite an undertaking. You may think that the large scale of such a project should take days to finish. AM Commercial/Residential Roofing often finishes an entire roofing job the same day they begin it. They're upfront on the time it will take and they don't waiver from the schedule.

Fast response is also something customers highly value. Waiting days or weeks for a roof repair can be a nightmare. Your roof is a crucial component to protecting the rest of your home. A damaged roof could mean thousands of dollars of damage to the interior of your home if not repaired quickly. AM Commercial /Residential Roofing prides itself on having the fastest response times in the business. Not to mention they are available 24/7 to do emergency repairs.

### They Provide Accurate, Honest Quotes

One of the "tricks of the trade" used by some contractors is to give you a cheap quote in order to secure the job. Then once the work has begun, they reveal additional costs required to complete the job. AM Commercial/Residential Roofing provides an accurate and honest quote from the very beginning. What they quote is what you pay, no exceptions.

They are able to do this because of their proven roof inspection process. AM Com-

Continued on page 26➡



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our reviews**







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mercial/Residential Roofing states on their website, "We offer real-time roof inspections to spot the issues they're having with their roof systems while we are on-site. This allows them to make on-the-spot decisions about repairs that need immediate attention as we build a profile on each building to reference. This saves thousands in repairs as well as extends your roof's life cycle."

### They Stand Behind Their Work

Fast, cheap work doesn't always equate to quality, long-lasting work. In fact, contractors who promise too cheaply often cut corners to stay within their budget. That usually means poor workmanship and low-quality. AM Commercial/Residential Roofing has found a way to do exceptional work, fast, without losing quality. Perhaps it comes from their commitment to excellence and their 25+ years in the business.

"We use only the safest and highest-quality products on your home," says AM Commercial/Residential Roofing, "You won't need to worry about dangerous chemicals or your shingles falling apart in a year."



### They Follow Up With Their Customers

*"After the work was completed, Allen called to ask if I was happy with the work and to remind me of the warranty."*

—Roofing customer **Mona G.**

How many contractors follow up with a customer to make sure they are happy with the job? Not to mention reminding the customer about the warranty they have. It's common for companies to almost disappear once





a job is complete. Having the type of culture that truly wants to make their customer's lives better is what separates average companies from great companies. AM Commercial/Residential Roofing also understands a very valuable truth in business: Repeat business is the best kind of business.

We are a CertainTeed Select Master Shingler for 5 straight years now and carry a 5 star rating based on reviews from our customers. We also are a 5 star rated company on Porch, Angie's List and HomeAdvisor. Our work warranties are also covered by CertainTeed as part of the master shingles program as well as all of our crew members are certified annually. That's what makes the difference between us and the other roofing companies out there. We are insured and carry an open roof endorsement for your protection.

So, take a valuable lesson away from AM Commercial/Residential Roofing. Make your customers happy by being honest, transparent, timely, and professional and your customers will use you again and again.

To get a free quote on your roof repair or replacement, call AM Commercial/Residential Roofing at 936-449-8051 or visit their website for more information at amcommercialroofing.com. ♦

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# Montgomery County Home & Outdoor Living Show

## February 29 & March 1, 2020

### Lone Star Convention Center

The 2nd Annual Montgomery County Home and Outdoor Living Show features appearances by top names in home improvement with over 200 exhibitors sharing products and services. New this year are DIY workshops! Have fun making a floral arrangement with Ashley Wallace of The Tallest Tulip. Board and Brush of Magnolia will work with attendees to build a unique wood home décor project in a fun atmosphere. Create your own and take it home! This is an event you leave with a keepsake!



Ashley Barber, Houston's First Certified KonMari Professional Organizer with Simply Maven, will answer questions one on one with ways to minimize your home to create simplicity. Get rid of the clutter and keep items that bring joy to your life. The KonMari Method is created by Marie Kondo, bestselling author and star of Netflix's hit show, *Tidying Up With Marie Kondo*, and founder of KonMari Media, Inc.

Simply Maven is an organizational coaching company with a mission to teach others the best ways to let go of their stuff, organize their spaces, and create more time and ease in their lives. Owned by KonMari Specialists, Ashley Barber and Jane



McCullough, we show clients – from busy moms to hard-working professionals – how to create an environment where they can thrive.

"I am a big believer in making space for what matters by choosing things that spark joy in an environment you can thrive in", said Ashley Barber. "I will be available Saturday to meet one on one for your personal organizing questions to create a home you love and brings you joy." The KonMari method of organizing focuses on 'curating' what you will use or that has sentimental connections. Developing a different mindset is a lifestyle change from abundance to simplicity. "Spend

time doing things that matter. If you don't have time to store items correctly, you won't have time to do it over again either". Ashley will present, "Choosing Joy! An Introduction to the KonMari Method" several times during the event.

Outdoor Perfection, the featured landscape exhibitor, will display the newest ways to remodel your yard with 20% off during the show to celebrate 20 years of business.



Talk to experts from landscaping, outdoor living, kitchen and bath remodeling, pools, attics, painters, flooring, bathtubs, skylights, pest/mosquito control, kitchen accessories, hot tubs, windows/window treatments, roofing, garages, furniture, mattresses and much more.

New this year: Corburn's Kitchen and Bath Showroom will have products found on Pinterest but never in Home Depot or Lowe's including the TOTO Washlet Toilet with warm water cleansing, a rear soft spray, adjustable water pressure, and a self-cleaning wand! See the latest innovations for







your next remodeling project. Warren's Southern Gardens and Warren's Outdoor Living will highlight landscape remodels and Spring gardening ideas. Katie Stavino-ha, publisher of the Round Top Antiques Show Guide, will share information on the

*Continued on page 30* ➞



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Roundtop Antique Show with 70 venues and over 4,500 dealers attracting people from across the world for antiques.

Visit the luxury kitchen and bath designs from ABM Cabinets featuring custom cabinets in granite and quartz with amazing fixtures to complement the remodel. See the newest Hunter Douglas window treatments of shades, blinds, shutters, and the newest technology of Powerview Motorization that includes safety features with app control by Simple Elegance.

#### Additional Professional Speakers appearing at show:

- LIVE broadcast from Randy Lemmon of GardenLine on AM KTRH 740. Meet Randy and get a signed copy of his new book!
- Tom Tynan, host of HomeShow Radio on KTRH 740, until 2pm both days
- Dany Millikin, HomeShow Garden Pro speaking on "Unlocking a Better Lawn"
- Montgomery County Master Gardeners-answering questions one-one
- Brandon Heitzweibel, Landscape Designer, Warren's Outdoor Living

"Benefits of using Virtual Reality in a Landscape Architectural Presentation

- Mary Scalli, President, CEO, of Simple Elegance and Accredited Staging Professional Master sharing information on Hunter Douglas Window Treatments and Home Staging
- Sherwin Williams Color Snap Color Consultants

Je'Nae Boyko, Color Consultant from Sherwin Williams encourages attendees to meet one on one with her team. "Meet your local color consultants from Sherwin Williams, see the 2020 color pallets, see the color of the year and discover how to use the ColorSnap Visualizer App to explore color on your next project."

Visit with local home improvement specialists in many categories, including kitchen, bath, spas, landscaping, patio's, trees, outdoor kitchens, game rooms, flooring, windows, doors, mosquito systems, home-painting, patio furniture, pools, roofing, remodeling contractors, builders, generators, storage solutions, mattresses, blinds and shutters, water systems, air conditioning and heating, garage organization, concrete

resurfacing and so much more during the event.

Community Assistance Center (CAC) and Inspiration Ranch are the non-profit organizations spotlighted during the Montgomery County Home and Outdoor Show. CAC is a source of hope for Montgomery County residents experiencing financial crisis in basic needs of housing, utilities, food and clothing with a goal of delivering lifelong solutions. Inspiration Ranch provides equine therapy programs to special need individuals with expertise certified through the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International.

Show hours are 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, Feb.29 and 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Sunday, March 1 at the Lone Star Convention Center, 9055 Airport Road in Conroe. Tickets for the show are \$10 for adults, \$9 for seniors, and children 12 years and younger free. Visit [www.Texwood-Shows.com](http://www.Texwood-Shows.com) where a downloadable discount coupon for \$2 off admission is available. ♦



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## STAGE RIGHT Presents Sweetheart Show: Thoroughly Modern Millie

By: Carolyn Corsano Wong  
Photos by:  
Michael Pittman Images

STAGE RIGHT of Texas, resident theatre company at the historic Crichton Theatre, will present *Thoroughly Modern Millie* February 14 – March 1, 2020. The show is directed by Manny Cafeo with New Lyrics by Dick Scanlan, New Music by Jeanine Tesori, Book by Richard Henry Morris and Dick Scanlan, with the original story and screenplay by Richard Morris for the Universal Pictures Film.

The winner of six Tony Awards, including Best Musical, *Thoroughly Modern Millie* was the 2002 season's most awarded new show



Carolyn Wong as Mrs. Meers with Ara Hollyday as Ching Ho and Steve Wong as Bun Foo.  
*Up to no good.*

on Broadway! Based on the 1967 Academy Award-winning film, *Thoroughly Modern Millie* takes you back to the height of the Jazz Age in New York City, when "moderns," were bobbing their hair, raising their hemlines, entering the workforce and rewriting the rules of love. This high-spirited musical romp is a delightful valentine to the long-standing spirit of New York City and the people who seek to discover themselves there. Set in 1922, young Millie Dillmount from Kansas comes to New York City in search of a new life for herself. Her grand plan is to find a job as a secretary for a wealthy man and then marry him. However, her plan goes completely awry. The owner of her dingy hotel kidnaps young girls to sell to the Far East, her wealthy boss is slow in proposing marriage and the man she actually falls in love with doesn't have a dime to his name... or so he tells her. A happy ending will prevail, of course. *Thoroughly Modern Millie* is a bright, funny, and charming musical comedy full of thundering tap dance numbers and beautiful love songs



-- a heartfelt valentine to New York City and the people who love her.

Multi-award winning director Manny Cafeo has assembled a wonderful cast to bring this hilarious musical comedy to the Crighton stage.

#### CAST

Millie Dillmount.....Lizzie Camp  
 Jimmy Smith ..... Cain Hamilton  
 Ruth ..... Monique Lott  
 Gloria ..... Monae' Lott  
 Rita..... Lydia Derksen  
 Alice..... Kristin Conrad  
 Cora ..... Rachel Ochterbeck  
 Lucille ..... Rebekah Ochtebeck  
 Ethel Peas ..... Nicole Kimbrell  
 Mrs. Meers.....Carolyn Corsano Wong



*Miss Dorothy and Millie- on the dole mates, soulmates, stormy weather friends*

Miss Dorothy Brown.....Madison Mapes  
 Ching Ho..... Ara Hollyday  
 Bun Foo ..... Steve Wong  
 Miss Flannery..... Brandy Leigh Pyle  
 Mr. Trevor Graydon.....Michael R. Martin  
 Clerk..... Jared Ball  
 The Pearl Lady .....Dinah Mahlman  
 Policemen.....Will Radcliffe, Chuck Smith  
 & Jim Murph  
 Muzzy Van Hossmere ..... Christina Sato  
 George Gershwin..... Jared Ball  
 Dorothy Parker..... Kaitlyn Whitmore  
 Rodney .....Bradley Rice  
 Kenneth ..... Jim Murph  
 Dishwasher ..... Will Radcliffe  
 Muzzy's Boys ..... Jaren Ball, Bradley Rice,  
 & Sean Sears  
 Daphne ..... Stephanie A. McCartney  
 Dexter ..... Will Radcliffe  
 Mathilde ..... Stephanie Cleverly

#### CREW

Director.....Manny Cafeo  
 Assistant to the Director..... Tina Cafeo

*Continued on page 34* ➞

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# STAGE RIGHT

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 Book by Richard Henry Morris & Dick Scanlan  
 Original Story & Screenplay by Richard Morris  
 For the Universal Pictures Film  
 Directed by Manny Cafeo

**Feb. 14 - Mar. 1, 2020**

Fridays & Saturdays 8 pm, Sundays 2 pm  
 Saturday matinee 2/29 at 2 pm

Tickets \$17-26 Group discounts available

**Tickets: 936-441-SHOW (7469)**  
**Online: [www.stage-right.org](http://www.stage-right.org)**

Funded in part by The City of Conroe CVB [visitconroe.com](http://visitconroe.com)

By arrangement with Music Theatre International [MTISHOWS.com](http://MTISHOWS.com)





*Dancers kick up their heels and tap their toes*



*Christina Sato as Muzzy with  
Cain Hamilton as Jimmy*

Stage Manager .....Jill Villalobos  
Music Director..... Ana Guirola-Ladd  
Choreographer.....Dinah Mahlman  
Set Design & Props ..... Denise DeBold  
Costumes .....Abby Cleverly & Denise DeBold  
Hair & Makeup.....Kara Kowalik  
Master Carpenter .....Matt Czahor  
Light Design..... Steve Wong  
Sound Design ..... Carolyn Wong  
Sound Engineer..... Ashley Anthony  
Running Crew .....Deanie Boy, Sean Sears,  
Bradley Rice, Jim Murph, Chuck Smith,  
Angelie Aggarwal  
Playbill ..... Brenda Storseth  
Producers..... Steve & Carolyn Wong

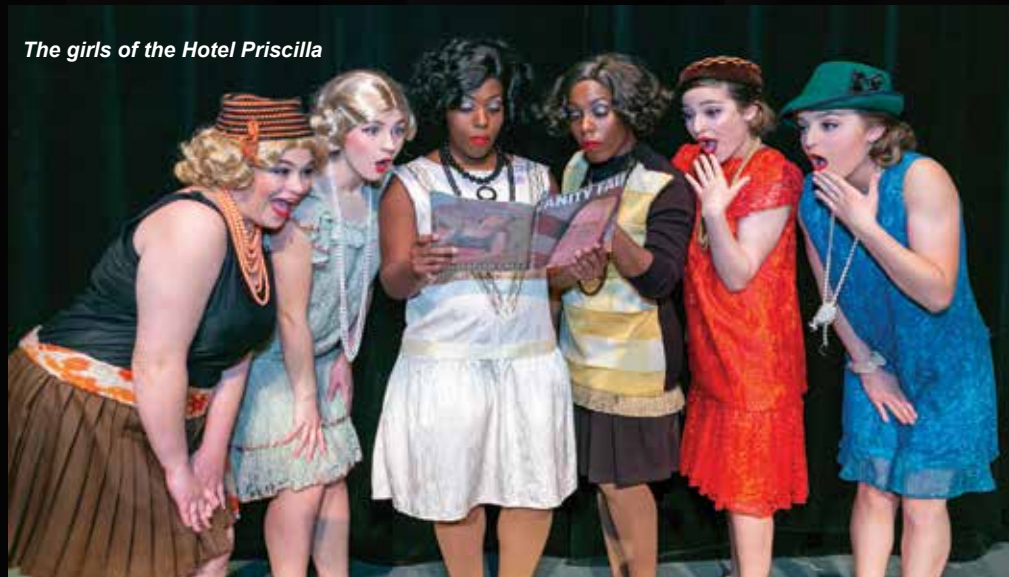
**FEATURED DANCERS:**

Stephanie Cleverly  
Monique Lott  
Monae Lott  
Kristin Conrad  
Lydia Derksen  
Abigail Hudson  
Nicole Kimbrell  
Dinah Mahlman  
Jared Kyle Ball  
Rachel Ochterbeck  
Rebekah Ochterbeck  
Stephanie McCartney



*Michael Martin as Trevor Graydon, Lizzie Camp as Millie and Brandy Pyle  
as the exasperated Miss Flannery*

*The girls of the Hotel Priscilla*



*Gimmie, Gimmie That Thing Called Love*



## COSTUME CONTEST

To help get you in the mood of the roaring 20s, we are having a costume contest during the run of the show! All you need to do is dress in 20s attire (1920s!) and take a selfie while attending a performance of the show (picture needs to be taken at the theatre) and post it on our Facebook page (Stage Right of Texas) and Instagram and tag us in the photo #stagerightoftexas and #2020TMMcontestphoto. A winner will be chosen at the end of the run to receive 2 Tickets to Peter Pan and 2 tickets to River Plantation Golf Club Brunch. Get your glam on for a fun night out and a chance to win!

## SPOTLIGHT NON-PROFIT

As with every STAGE RIGHT show, we highlight a need in the community and then throw a spotlight on a non-profit that is helping with that need. For Thoroughly Modern Millie we have chosen Journey Home. Journey Home is a Christ centered non-profit maternity home. They seek to encourage and empower the women who walk through their doors. Journey Home offers a comfortable family environment in which she can learn skills and acquire tools that will help her succeed in life's journey. They offer housing to a woman during her pregnancy and through the child's first year. In addition they will have accommodations for moms who already have a child. Journey Home is Montgomery County's only home for women and their children in crisis pregnancy. To find out how you can help, stop by their information table at our show and/or visit their website [www.journeyhometx.org](http://www.journeyhometx.org).

## TICKETS/INFORMATION

Show dates are February 14 – March 1 - Fridays & Saturdays at 8 pm, Sundays at 2 pm and an added matinee on February 29 at 2 pm. Performances will be held at the historic Crighton Theatre at 234 N. Main in downtown Conroe. Ticket prices are \$26 for adults, \$22 for seniors 65 yr and older, \$19 for Groups of 12 or more, and \$17 for youth 16 yr and under. Tickets for the show can be obtained by calling the Crighton Theatre box office at 936-441-SHOW (7469) or online at [www.stage-right.org](http://www.stage-right.org).

Come step back into the 20s with us and get a peek at the progress of the lobby renovations! ♦



Madison Mapes as Miss Dorothy with  
Michael Martin as Trevor Graydon



This new year we vow to make the world a better place one cupcake at a time. Cheers!!!

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## Vision in 2020

Efforts to improving and understanding eye health and all its implication are under way in 2020. New research and development are re-shaping and defining new avenues in eye care. Here is what the future holds.

Clinical trials are under way using existing eye tracking devices to aid in hearing tests for infants, children with developmental deficits, and others who cannot perform the push button response to auditory stimuli. Researchers out of Oregon University found that pupils dilate in response to sound.



Studies designed to compare the accuracy of this finding demonstrate this involuntary response to be just as accurate as the traditional push button method. This could lead to earlier and more accurate diagnosis of hearing loss in children.

New research out of Stanford University has proven artificial vision can be paired with natural vision. Testing is still being done with mice, but researchers have been able to replace damaged retinal tissue with a prosthetic implantable device and blend it to work along with the remaining healthy retina.

Millions of Americans suffer from vision loss due to Diabetes and Macular Degeneration. Once fully developed this device could help some regain lost sight. Human trials are still in a distant future, but the technology looks promising. This technology may also be the steppingstone for other prosthetic neural devices that bridge the interface between machine and the brain. Can you say cyborg?

Researchers in the United Kingdom have found that Glaucoma has been linked to air pollution. The populous living in polluted areas has a 6% higher chance of developing Glaucoma. Glaucoma is the leading global cause of irreversible blindness and affects over 60 million people worldwide. It most commonly results from a build up of pressure from the fluid in the eye, causing damage to the optic nerve that connects the eye to the brain. The increased pressure causes degeneration of the optic nerve which leads to loss of vision. Air pollution may be contributing to Glaucoma due to the constriction of blood vessels, which ties into air pollution's links to an increased risk of heart problems. Another possibility is that particulates may have a direct toxic effect damaging the nervous system. Further research is underway.

The only way for new technologies and improved detection systems to be affective is for you to get your yearly eye examination. Let the year 2020 inspire everyone to be more vision and eye health conscience.

Dr. Bonnie Cameron is owner and operator of Cameron Optical in Montgomery, TX. Visit us online at [www.CameronOptical.com](http://www.CameronOptical.com) or see our ad in this issue. ♦



# S. GENTRY

## CUSTOM HOMES

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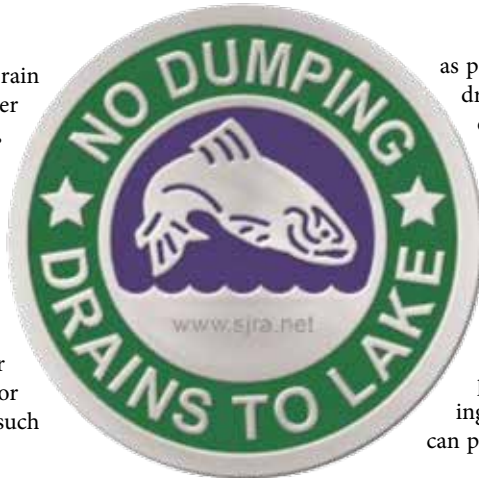


# Only rain in the drain!

## SJRA Stormwater Inlet Marking (SwIM) Program

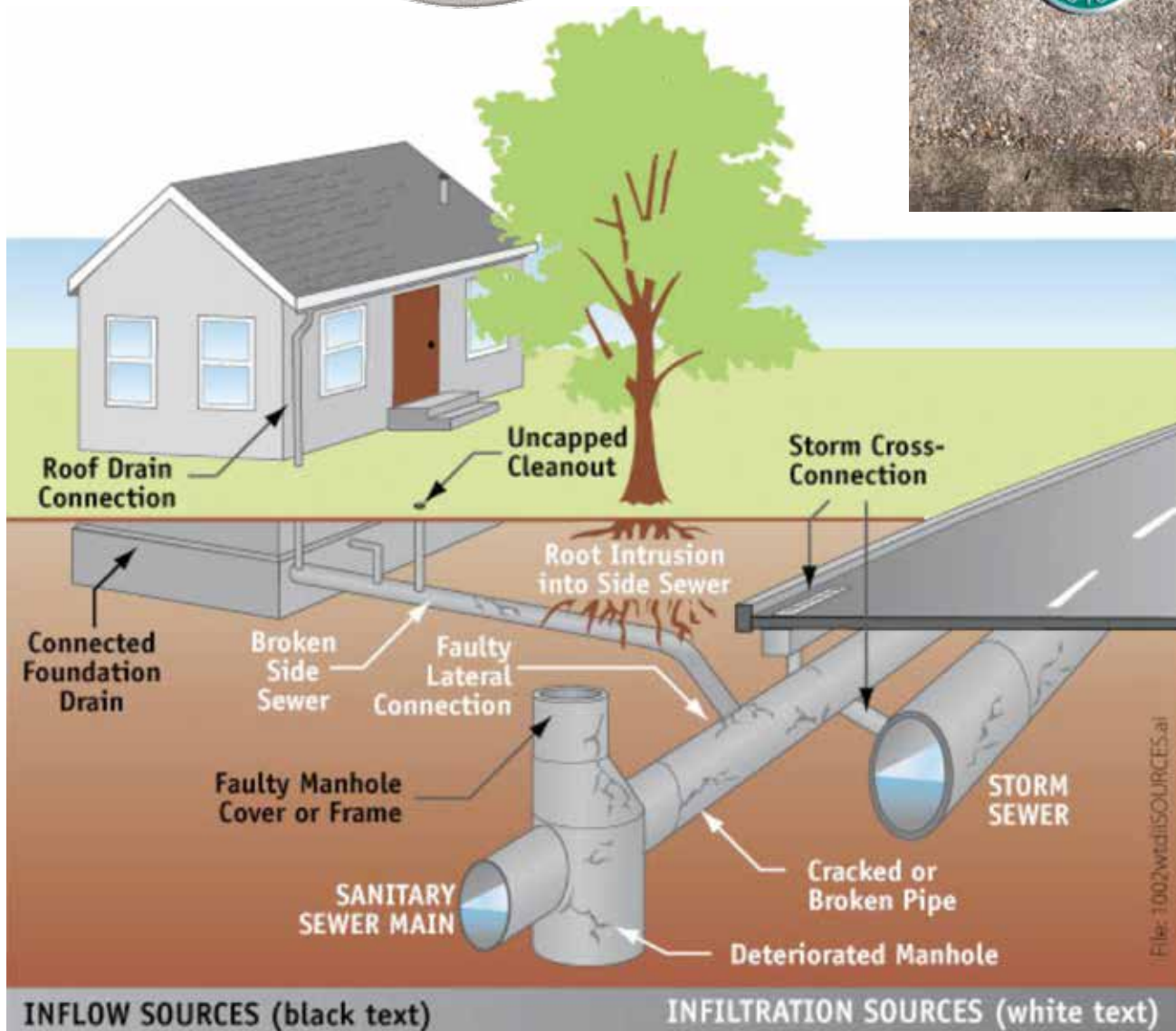
Most people do not realize the rain water that flows down our streets, over parking lots, through parks and yards, and into open drains flows directly into Lake Conroe. Our community actions and behaviors have a significant and direct impact on preserving high water quality in the Lake Conroe Watershed.

Stormwater runoff drains directly to waterways without being filtered or treated at a wastewater treatment plant or sewage facility. It picks up pollutants such



as pet waste, grass, oil residue, pesticides, and fertilizers on its way to the drain and the lake. Additionally, disposing of liquids such as paint, gasoline, or motor oil in the storm drain is the same as dumping it directly right into the lake.

Contaminated stormwater runoff can be harmful to plants and animals that inhabit the lake, can clog pipes and drains increasing the risk of flooding, and can pose a health risk to those







who come in contact with the water fishing, swimming, or skiing.

With a focus to preserve the high quality of Lake Conroe, the San Jacinto River Authority's (SJRA) Stormwater Inlet Marking (SwIM) Program was created in 2015 as a visual reminder that only rain belongs down the drain. SwIM is an educational and "hands-on" outreach program to improve water quality by raising awareness of illegal dumping of pollutants into the storm sewer system.

The program not only aims to reduce dumping, but it also serves as a community service activity. The SwIM Program gives local communities, schools, groups, and others the opportunity to lend a hand by applying storm drain inlet marker medallions to the top of storm drains in neighborhoods throughout the Lake Conroe Watershed.

Lake Conroe is currently one of the highest quality bodies of water in the greater Houston area, meeting or exceeding all the Clean Water Act standards for contact recreation, public water supply, and aquatic habitat. Proper removal of pet waste, trash pick-up, suitable chemical disposal, and accurate fertilizer application can all preserve the high quality of Lake Conroe.

For more information on SwIM or to schedule a SwIM inlet marking event contact SJRA at <https://www.sjra.net/lakeconroe/stormwater-inlet-marking/>

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 Coun-

ty. For additional information on SJRA visit our website at [www.sjra.net](http://www.sjra.net), like SJRA on Facebook @SanJacintoRiverAuthority, follow us on Twitter @SJRA\_1937, or Instagram @SanJacintoRiverAuthoritySJRA. ♦





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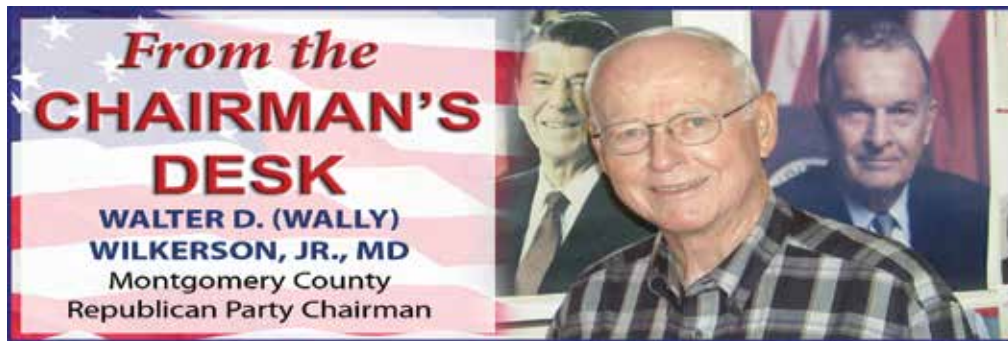


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## TREE LIGHTING

Christmas tree decorations have become an accepted custom dating back to the 19th century when it was the custom to decorate the tree with candles. By the mid 20th century, decorating progressed to a display with strings of electric lights.

The first known lighting with strings of electric lights was the creation of Edward H. Johnson, an associate of inventor Thomas Edison, in 1882. He proudly decorated a tree with hand-wired string of electric bulbs, 80 red, white and blue bulbs the size of walnuts. In 1891, electricity was brought to the residence of the president of the United States in the US Capitol in Washington, DC, according to a story in the Association of Mature American Citizens Holiday edition of their magazine. The Association is a competitor of the ACLU. The Edison Company installed a generator for the White House and for the State, War, and Navy building next door, today known as Eisenhower's Executive Office Building, according to the Association's story.

"Wires were strung across the lawn and en-

tered the White House under the conservatory. Round switches were fitted in each room to turn the current on and off. However, in those days, many people preferred gas lighting over electric

based on the fear of electric shocks," the Association's article reported. President Benjamin Harrison and his family, who resided in the White house at the time, reportedly were afraid to operate the lights and asked the White House staff to handle this task. In 1894, during the presidency of Grover Cleveland, electric lights appeared for the first time on a White House Christmas tree. A picture of the tree appeared with the article.

This publicity helped to "popularize the use of Christmas tree lights in America." However, it was not until 1923, during the presidency of Calvin Coolidge that the present tradition of the National Christmas Tree on the Ellipse began. A 48-foot balsam fir from Vermont was decorated with a "variety of 2,500 red, green and white electric lights" that year. The tree lighting ceremony remains a very important part of White House traditions in Washington, DC today. ♦



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# Why an Income Analysis is a Critical Part of Your Retirement Plan



In the first article of our series “Why an Income Analysis is a Critical Part of Your Retirement Plan”, we detailed several factors that need to be taken into consideration when developing your retirement income plan, including:

- Increasing longevity for both men and women
- The reality that woman typically outlive most men by over two-years
- The fact that women traditionally don't derive as much Social Security benefit for several reasons
- Rising healthcare costs

In this second installment, we're going to cover an additional healthcare consideration that could significantly eat into your retirement savings...long-term care.

## Take Good Care of My Baby

As outlined above, one of the reasons a retirement plan income analysis is so important is that people are simply living longer and living longer means you need to make sure you have enough retirement savings to cover the duration of your life.

Living longer doesn't always mean living better and with longer lifespans comes the reality of needing care for sickness or general age-related decline that make if difficult or impossible to care for one's self.

With the very real prospect of the average retiree living to their mid-eighties...84.3-years-old is the average age males live to and 86.7 for females...there is an ever-increasing need for long-term care. On average, over half of all American's (52.3 percent ) turning 65 will need long-term care at some point...46.7 percent of men compared to 57.5 percent of women.<sup>[1]</sup>

According to *Genworth's 2019 Cost of Care Survey*, median long-term care costs can range from approximately \$45,000 to \$97,455 per year. Factors affecting the cost include geographic location, type of care needed and length of stay. Those costs obviously

represents a substantial cost and could consume a large chunk of your retirement nest-egg, negatively impacting your financial stability and peace of mind.

Government programs of Medicare and Medicaid might not offer a lot of help either. Medicare doesn't provide benefits for long-term care; while Medicaid does pay for long-term care, it requires "spending down" assets before it will provide any coverage.<sup>[2]</sup> Waiting to purchase personal long-term care coverage can be expensive, as rates increase with age.

## I Wanna Hold Your Hand

Many Americans require care that may not qualify for long-term care facilities or in-home services. As a result, more individuals are finding themselves in the role of primary caregiver, both in the years leading up to and during retirement.

It's estimated that 34 percent of caregivers are 65 years or older.<sup>[3]</sup> In some cases, they are caring for an aging spouse, and in others they are providing for a disabled child. The number of grandparents raising grandchildren has also increased dramatically. More than 2.7 million grandparents have primary custody of their grandchildren, an increase of more than 7 percent from 2009.<sup>[4]</sup>

Caregivers often find it rewarding to take responsibility for loved ones, but it can also take a toll on the caregiver's financial and physical well-being. Tending to a chronically ill or disabled loved one may mean additional expenses that place a financial burden on the household. Many caregivers spend more than 20 hours a week providing care for ill loved ones,<sup>[5]</sup> making it difficult to work outside the home. Taking in extended family may also mean postponing retirement or returning to the workforce to provide for the additional people in the household.

A solid financial plan is flexible and adaptable to life as it happens. After laying the initial groundwork in a retirement income analysis,

your financial advisor should meet with you regularly to review the plan and adjust to any life events as they happen, no matter the circumstances.

Your financial advisor can assist you in structuring a long-term care strategy that accounts for your unique needs. The planning conducted in a retirement income analysis can provide you with more choices and options you might not have considered, increasing the likelihood your funds will last as long as you do.

If you need help planning your retirement, contact us today to schedule a free income analysis. We'll help you determine if you have enough to retire comfortably, when you can retire and help you put all the pieces of your retirement plan in place.

SOURCES:

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<https://www.genworth.com/aging-and-you/finances/cost-of-care.html>.
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# VA Mission Act Success



By: *Kay L. Lee, Veterans Service Officer*

When VA began implementing the VA MISSION Act this past June, they knew it had the potential to make an enormous positive impact for Veterans. Now, more than six months later, we know that that is the case: With the MISSION Act, VA is helping more Veterans access the care and services they need, when and where they need them.

One of the biggest accomplishments VA has achieved under this law is the launch of a new, consolidated community care program. This program uses simplified eligibility standards that are easier for Veterans, their families, VA staff, and community providers to navigate. This new network now includes 880,000 community providers across the country.

This program also includes a new urgent care benefit that allows Veterans to seek care for minor injuries and illnesses from urgent care clinics that are a part of VA's contracted network

But improving access to community care is just one piece of the puzzle. Under the MISSION Act, VA is now implementing "anywhere to anywhere" telehealth, meaning VA can bring provider expertise across state lines and into Veterans' own living rooms – meeting them where they are. VA recently announced the delivery of telehealth services to more than 900,000 Veterans over 2.6 million episodes of care in fiscal 2019 – an increase of 17% over the previous year. This extraordinary progress gives Veterans more convenient care options without traveling to their provider's office.

## Looking toward the future

The provisions of the MISSION Act stretch out to 2034, and VA progress will continue. In the next few months VA will enhance secure information sharing with community providers, delivering safer, better-coordinated care for Veterans. The VA has also stood up a new Innovation Center, intensified focus on underserved facilities, started a pilot program to include Veteran peer support in primary care, and will expand VA's Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers to support Veterans of all eras.

If veterans want additional information on VA & State benefits, please contact Montgomery County Veterans Service at 936-539-7842 or via email at [vetsvc@mctx.org](mailto:vetsvc@mctx.org). ♦

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## MEET OUR DOCTOR

Dr. Luu's passion for working with children developed early in life and led her to incorporate that into her dental career. She completed her pediatric dentistry residency at the Mount Sinai Hospital in New York. During her residency, Dr. Luu had extensive training in hospital and clinical pediatric dentistry.

She has treated and managed patients with complicated medical conditions ranging from hemophilia, congenital heart conditions, and childhood cancer, to unique syndromes and special needs.

She is an expert in dental prevention, craniofacial growth and development, oral trauma, and has extensive training in treating cleft lip and palate in babies and young children.

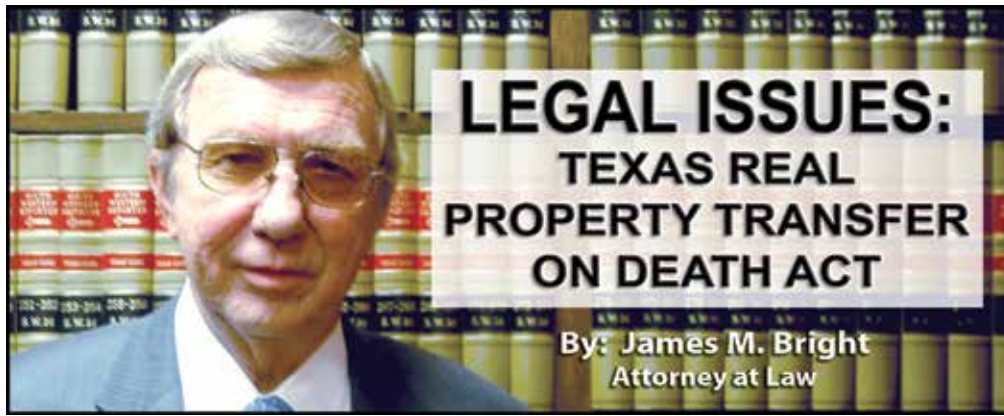


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- Children should receive routine dental exams and cleanings every six months to be screened for oral cancer and tooth decay.

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

Effective on September 1, 2015, Texas joined a growing group of other states by passing legislation that can transfer title to real property upon the death of a person without going through probate proceedings. It should be noted that this procedure does not eliminate the need for a Last Will and Testament or for the trust provisions in that Will, but it does fill a long needed niche for those persons who have relatively simple estates and have the ability to pass other assets owned as non-probate assets. This article is dedicated to answering common questions which are anticipated surrounding this new law/estate planning tool.

• **WHAT IS A "TRANSFER ON DEATH DEED?"** - Simply stated, it's a deed which does

not take effect until your death. It yields a result similar to a survivorship designation on your bank account. It will automatically pass title to the beneficiaries that you name without the need of a probate proceeding. It is anticipated that this tool will be particularly useful when the only real asset owned by decedent is an interest in real property such as the Homestead.

• **CAN I NAME AN ALTERNATE BENEFICIARY, JUST IN CASE THE PRIMARY BENEFICIARY NAMED HAS PRECEDED ME IN DEATH?** Yes, in a typical situation where a deceased spouse wishes to pass his/her interest in community property to the surviving spouse and then to the children if there is no surviving spouse, this creates a very simple and uncomplicated method of doing so.

• **WHO CAN EXECUTE THIS TYPE OF**

DEED? Anyone who holds title to real property in Texas can execute a transfer on death deed.

• **WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS TYPE OF DEED TO BE EFFECTIVE?** (Est. §114.055)

1. It must contain the essential elements and formalities of a deed;

2. It must state that the transfer of an interest in real property to the designated beneficiary is to occur at death; and

3. It must be recorded before the transferor's death in the deed records of the County Clerk's office of the county in which the real property is located.

• **IS IT A TESTAMENTARY DOCUMENT?** No, it is a non-testamentary document; therefore, the deed passes title to the real property involved outside of probate. (Est. §114.053)

• **IS IT REVOCABLE?** Yes, if you wish to cancel or otherwise void the deed during your lifetime, it can be done fairly simply through a revocation filed in the real property records with the same formality as the original deed. This is true even if another instrument, such as your Will, contract, or other document contains provisions which have contrary terms. (Est. §114.053)

• **CAN I USE A POWER OF ATTORNEY TO EXECUTE THIS TYPE OF DEED?** No, this is not a power that can be delegated to another person through a power of attorney. (Est. §114.054)

• **WHAT IF MY WILL AND MY TRANSFER ON DEATH DEED ARE DIFFERENT IN**

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THE DISPOSITION OF MY REAL PROPERTY? A Will may not revoke or supersede a transfer on death deed. Therefore, if your Will gives "Black-acre" to Joe, and your transfer on death deed gives the same "Blackacre" to Sally, the title to "Black-acre" passes to Sally. ((Est. §114.05 7(b))

• WHAT IF I MAKE MY SPOUSE THE BENEFICIARY OF MY TRANSFER ON DEATH DEED AND THEN GET A DIVORCE? If a marriage between the transferor and a designated beneficiary is dissolved after a transfer on death deed is recorded, a final judgment of the court dissolving the marriage operates to revoke the transfer on death deed to that designated beneficiary, if notice of judgment is recorded before the transferor's death in the records of the County Clerk's office of the county where the deed is recorded. ((Est. §114.057 (c))

• HOW DOES THE COUNTY CLERK DETERMINE WHEN THE PROPERTY TITLE PASSES FROM THE TRANSFEROR TO THE TRANSFEREE? A copy of the transferor's death certificate should be filed in the County Clerk's office in the county where the property is located in the deed records.

• MUST I HIRE AN ATTORNEY TO DRAFT THE DEED? The simple answer is both, yes and no. There is nothing in the law that prevents you from drafting your own legal documents, but most people find out (many in a hard way) that the relatively minor legal cost of performing this service is very small compared to the cost of the litigation and unintended consequences which could ensue from improperly drafted documents.

• WHAT IF I OUTLIVE ALL THE BENEFICIARIES NAMED IN MY TRANSFER ON DEATH DEED? If there are no surviving beneficiaries of this transfer on death deed, then the deed shall be deemed to be canceled by you.

It is believed that future cases filed in the court will further clarify this statute. It should further be noted that this relatively new legislation does not replace the need for estate planning--- it only puts another tool in the toolbox of your estate planning attorney when he/she is drafting your Last Will and Testament.

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](http://www.houstontxprobate.com). ♦

IF YOU WISH TO SUGGEST A TOPIC FOR THIS COLUMN, SEND TO:

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Email: [topics@houstontxprobate.com](mailto:topics@houstontxprobate.com)



## A Great Addition to My Office

I have been writing articles in this space for over 5 years now, and I really enjoyed doing. Usually I tried to educate those of you reading about different aspects of medical conditions I treat as an Ear Nose and Throat specialist.

Today I want to briefly talk about some staff changes that have occurred in my office. I am pleased to now that Christi Dodd, Physician's Assistant will be joining me in my practice. Christi has had many years of experience in dealing with patients. She has been a physician's assistant in Montgomery for years working for primary care physicians. Many of you may have seen Christi in either the office of Dr. Tomlinson or Dr. Zobal. She is well-respected and has an excellent reputation which she has justly earned.

Before working for a primary care physician Christi worked for another ENT specialist

in College Station.


For those of you who are unclear about the role of a Physician's Assistant, they have extensive education and training much like medical school. In the State of Texas, a PA must work under a licensed physician but can independently see patients, diagnose the problem as well as prescribe most medications.


Christi will be working under my supervision and I will be available to answer difficult questions on patients with very complex problems.

I hope the holiday season finds you well and in overall good health despite all the stresses it can bring. It also can bring joy, and I hope all of you had your share of holiday fun.


I am excited about the changes in my office and the challenges for the New Year! ♦

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# Online with Dock Line

## Can You Really “Make Money Online?”

*Cutting through the spam to find out what really works, and how much work it really takes.*

By: Brian Sherman

How many times have you seen those ads promising you an escape from your 9 to 5 job, living a life of luxury while you make tons of money using only a laptop and an internet connection? It's safe to say that no one is immune to these kinds of messages coming across their social media feeds almost daily. At this point, we aren't fooled. People running those ads are just selling something and we aren't “buying” it. But it does make you wonder...

Aside from the sensationalist advertising that bombards us with the promise of financial freedom, is it actually possible? Can you really make money online? Can you really make enough to quit your job and travel the world?

Well, actually, yes, you can, but to understand how, you need to let go of all those ideas you've been given and discover what it really takes. You also need to change your perception about the time commitment necessary to do it.

So, forget about all the survey-taking and network marketing and let's focus on a value-based way of making money: blogging. Starting and running a blog is one of the best ways to provide value to the world and make money online...if you do it right.

In short, here is the most common way to make money online by blogging in 3 steps:

1. Start a blog
2. Run ads on your blog
3. Sell something through your blog

(Again, this is the most common way. There are hundreds of other ways, but for the sake of simplicity let's focus on this method.)

That's really all you need to do. However, making a list like that simplifies the formula too much. In reality, here is a more honest approach:

1. Start a blog about something you care a lot about and that





other people are interested in, too. The more defined the topic, the better.

2. Learn the basics of writing for SEO (search engine optimization) and write articles that rank high on Google. It will take 3-6 months or longer to start seeing ranking results.

3. Start an email list of subscribers and email them new, highly valuable content consistently.

4. Depending on the size of your audience and the amount of competition, you will need to write 50-100 articles or more before you start to run ads. Basically, when your monthly traffic numbers exceed 10,000 visitors, you can start to make money through ads on your website.

5. Write and publish consistently for 2 years, minimum.

6. Add affiliate links to your blog (like Amazon Affiliates) and send readers to those links through articles and resource pages.

7. Create your own product or write a book and start selling it.

If you follow those steps you will make money online, guaranteed. If you continue this process for 5-10 years, you could eventually make a lot of money every month. However, you must know that it will take time to start seeing results, like real money in your bank account. Also, when you do start making money, it will be small amounts that trickle in. It will snowball into a lot more money over time...if you stick with it month after month for several years.

Before you go searching online for how to start a blog, please consider the following advice:

#### 1. If you're just after the money, don't do it.

If your sole goal is to make money, then I strongly suggest not doing it. Why? There is a good chance you will get burnt out when things don't happen soon enough and you'll likely stop and start something else instead. You will make money when you provide value consistently for a while. That means you need to focus on something that you care about yourself – something that you consider valuable.

#### 2. Commit to two years...minimum.

It takes time to rank on Google and to build trust with an audience. People start and stop blogs all the time. Your potential audience will pay more attention to you after they have seen you for a while and you've earned their trust by providing real value to their lives. This is the biggest reason people quit their blog. They don't see results fast enough and start to wonder if they are doing things wrong or if their content isn't very good. Ignore those thoughts and keep going.

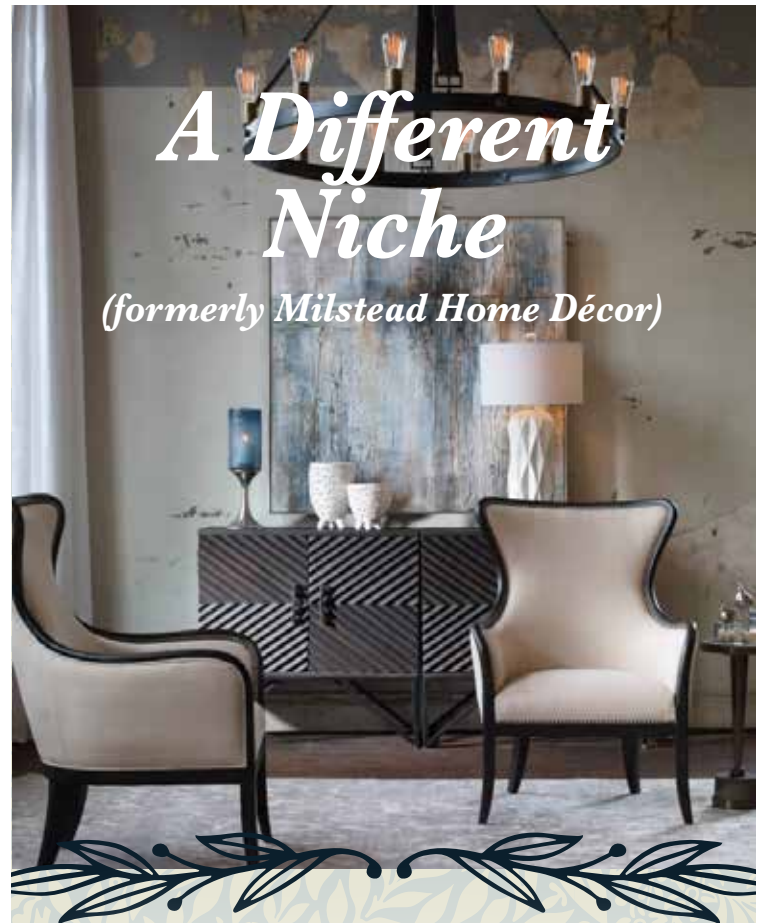
#### 3. You will have to grow as a person.

Committing to something for two years or more takes a lot of self-discipline and self-motivation. If you're the type of person who wants a quick fix, easy approach, then you will struggle. Commit to changing your habits and breaking out of old ways of thinking. Start a writing routine that ensures you publish consistently. Set goals and work hard to reach them. Get crystal clear on why you want to make extra money and what you plan to do with it.

Most importantly, you will need to let go of your expectations about how long it should take and how much money you should make.

So, do you have a passion that you love learning about? Are you an expert about something that you could help others get better at? Do you have a hobby that you spend a lot of time on? If you have something valuable to share with the world and are willing to devote a few years to sharing it, then yes, you can make money online.

If you want to (eventually) make money online and start sharing your wisdom or curiosity with the world through a blog, then let us know! At Dock Line Magazine, we have several resources to get you started. If you'd like more info and want these resources sent to you, just send me an email at [brian@docklinemagazine.com](mailto:brian@docklinemagazine.com). Good luck! ♦



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# CATCH *Em* CLEAN *Em* & EAT *Em*

## Chicken and Sweet Potatoes With Shallots

1 1/2 pounds sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 2-inch pieces

kosher salt and black pepper

4 tablespoons olive oil

4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts (each 6 ounces)

4 shallots, sliced into thin rings

2 tablespoons roughly chopped fresh rosemary

Place the sweet potatoes in a large pot. Add enough cold water to cover and bring to a boil.

Add 1-teaspoon salt, reduce heat, and simmer until tender, 14 to 16 minutes. Reserve ¼ cup of the cooking water, drain the sweet potatoes, and return them to the pot. Mash with the reserved cooking water.

Meanwhile, heat 1 tablespoon of the oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Season the chicken with ½ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper.

Cook the chicken until golden brown and cooked through, 7 to 8 minutes per side. Transfer to plates. Wipe out the skillet. Heat the remaining 3 tablespoons of oil over medium-high heat. Add the shallots, rosemary, ½ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper and cook, stirring, until the shallots are tender, 3 to 4 minutes.

Serve the chicken with the potatoes and drizzle with the shallot mixture.

## Balsamic-Glazed Lamb Meat Loaf

2 slices white sandwich bread, torn into small pieces

1-pound ground lamb

1 large egg

4 cloves garlic, chopped

2 tablespoons fresh thyme leaves

kosher salt and black pepper

2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 small red bell pepper, thinly sliced

1/2 red onion, thinly sliced

2 15.5-ounce cans cannellini beans, rinsed

1-tablespoon fresh lemon juice

Heat oven to 400° F. In a large bowl, combine the bread and 3 tablespoons water. Add the lamb, egg, half the garlic, half the thyme, ¼ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper.

Place the mixture on a foil-lined baking sheet and shape into a 6-inch loaf (about 3 inches thick). Bake, brushing with the balsamic vinegar several times during cooking, until a thermometer inserted in the center registers 150° F, 30 to 35 minutes. Let rest at least 5 minutes before slicing.

Meanwhile, heat the oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the bell pepper, onion, and the remaining garlic and thyme and cook, tossing occasionally, until the vegetables begin to soften, 4 to 5 minutes. Add the beans, ½ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper and cook until heated through, 2 to 3 minutes; stir in the lemon juice. Serve with the meat loaf. ♦

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# Garden Thyme

By: Growers Outlet

## Growing Your Own Food

There is nothing tastier than homegrown fruits and veggies. Most people think that they are unable to grow their own food but it is easier than you think. As a matter of fact, home food production is now the fastest growing segment of the gardening industry with young people leading this trend.

Last month we talked about fruit trees. Remember, get your fruit trees planted before the end of March, preferably by the end of February. This month we will start focusing on vegetables. Next month we will talk more about veggies and touch on herbs.

### How Much Room do I Need?

If you have room for a 12" pot you have enough room for a vegetable garden, however most people will allocate much more room for their bounty. We have customers that have started growing their vegetables in large plastic pots because of the ease of weeding and picking. Growing in pots will also help you control soil moisture because of improved drainage. For those that prefer growing in the ground, they will grow their edibles in raised beds as small as 2'x4' to plots as large as 2 acres. The most important thing is to have a location that gets plenty of sunlight with good organic soil and drainage. Over the past several years with our increased rainfall, we have had many of our customers fail with their gardens because of poor drainage.

### Soil Preparation

The proper soil is paramount to a successful vegetable garden. A good vegetable garden requires soil that has good drainage, has a good amount of organic matter, with proper PH and the right balance of fertilizer. For those of you that have struggled with a vegetable garden in the past, I recommend having a lab like the one at Texas A&M perform a basic soil sample analysis. These tests are inexpensive and can end up saving you a lot of money in unnecessary fertilizer and other amendments as well as time and money in plants that won't grow or produce. If you go by the Agrilife Extension Office, over by the Montgomery County Airport, they have the soil sample kits.

### Varieties of Vegetables

We can grow many of the veggies you see in the grocery stores here without much trouble. These plants can be planted by seed or starts in small pots. The most common spring veggies we sell as 4" starts are tomatoes followed by peppers then squash and cucumbers. We also sell strawberries and some melons. You will find the largest selection of vegetable starts in the area in our vegetable greenhouse.

### When to Plant Spring Veggies

Because of our usually mild climate, we can plant tomatoes as early as mid February with vigilance and readily available protection. Seeds can be started indoors in small pots and moved outdoors once the weather has changed. Seeds planted outdoors need to be planted at the right time to

assure good germination.

We have those gardeners that always want to be the first in the neighborhood to have tomatoes and will come in as early as the first of February for their plants. They are brave souls. As a rule, by the end of April most people are done planting their spring gardens.

If you go to our website, [www.growersoutletinwillis.com](http://www.growersoutletinwillis.com) and click on Edibles on the Home Page it will take you to our edible section which has some good information on what and when to plant.

### Tomatoes

Tomatoes are by far the most popular plant for home gardeners. They are easy to grow and will produce the most bang for your buck. They range in size from the sweet million that will only grow to about 3/8 inch in diameter to something like the Beefsteak, which can get to be a pound or more.

Heirloom tomatoes have become all the rage lately. Heirlooms are the predecessors of our modern day tomatoes and many people claim that the heirloom tomatoes are better for you and have much better taste. That may be the case but I can tell you that modern hybrid varieties resist common diseases much better than most of the heirlooms.

### Peppers

The second most popular vegetable plants we sell are peppers. Whether you like mild or hot, there is a variety for you. All peppers grow well here and take our heat well. I have seen and heard of peppers lasting through the winter and getting woody stalks on them and continue to produce peppers year after year. However, new tender peppers are one of the wimpiest plants I have ever seen. They are grown in warm greenhouses in the early spring and do not have the ability to take cold windy weather that we might occasionally see before it finally turns warm.

### Cucurbits

Cucurbits are plants such as cucumbers, squash, watermelon, cantaloupe, and pumpkins. The plants in this group are easy to grow and are heavy producers. As you probably know these plants will need much more space to grow because of their aggressive spreading nature. Plants in the squash family will produce a large crop then fizzle out. Because of this many people will plant at least one more crop after the first one if they want to keep getting squash later in the summer. Most people buy the squash and cucumbers as starts whereas the watermelons, cantaloupes and pumpkins are planted by seeds.

### Other Vegetable Plants

If you go to our website [www.growersoutletinwillis.com](http://www.growersoutletinwillis.com) and go to our Edibles page there is a great amount of information available on what and when to plant in Montgomery County.

### Pollination

Pollination is one of the most important elements of fruit and vegetable production. The big-



gest part of pollination is the presence of bees. As bees go from flower to flower they carry with them the essence of life. Pollination is also accomplished by wind but the efficiency is far less superior than with bees. It is possible to pollinate mechanically but it is a painstaking process using an artist brush going from flower to flower. If you have had trouble getting a good harvest from your plants in the past and the plants are healthy and flowering, pay attention to the number of bees flying around your plants. This could be the problem.

#### Things to do in February

\*It is important to resist the temptation to heavily prune plants with major freeze damage until after the threat of a heavy freeze. If you feel compelled to trim some of the ugliness from your plants, just give them a tidy haircut. If you trim down into green wood, STOP. Green wood exposed to hard freezes can sometimes cause fatal damage to tender plants.

\*Get your bare root fruit trees planted before it starts warming up.

\*Amend your vegetable gardens with well composted organic material, such as our leaf mold compost, worm castings, or soil conditioner if you prefer, use some mushroom compost.

\*Put down Nitro Phos Barricade pre-emergent weed killer to get a jump on those weeds that normally start popping up early in the spring or as an organic alternative you could use some corn gluten meal.

\*Prune Crape Myrtles anytime in February. At a minimum, remove last year's seedpods. A good rule of thumb; do not prune anything bigger than a pencil.

\*Valentine's Day is rose pruning day. Prune back hybrid tea and floribunda roses not shorter than 18 inches in height. Make all cuts  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch above the outward facing buds. DO NOT PRUNE climbing or antique roses until after their bloom cycle. Knock Out roses can be pruned to 6-8" above the soil line if you want to keep them shorter and bushier. After pruning, fertilize with a good rose food like Nelson's Color Star, Microlife organic fertilizer or Nitro Phos Rose fertilizer.

\*Broadleaf weeds can be controlled now with a product like Bonide Weed Beater Ultra.

\*Spray plants like hollies, hawthorns, camellias, magnolias, and other waxy leaf plants for scale. Recently we have seen an outbreak of scale on crape myrtles. Those should be sprayed as well at this time. The scale on crape myrtles is noticeable by the black sooty mold on the bark that may or may not have white patches on it. Come in to get our spray schedule to help control this problematic and persistent pest.

\*Feed cool season annuals one more time.

\*Prune peaches and plums

\*If you didn't already do so in January, prune and fertilize shrubs and small trees except for azaleas and camellias. Those need to be trimmed and fertilized after they bloom.

\*It is not uncommon for azaleas to lose a lot of leaves this time of year. Don't Panic.

\*Now is the time to fertilize your pecans with a fertilizer formulated for pecans.

For great gardening products and information, come by the Growers Outlet and visit with any member of our team to get the help you need or go to our website at [WWW.growersoutletinwillis.com](http://WWW.growersoutletinwillis.com). We have the products and knowledge to help you have the prettiest yard on the block. ♦

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# Fishing ADVENTURES

with Derek Pietsch



## TIME ON THE WATER

The most relaxing time to me is when I am on water. Recently, I have been doing a few other sports on the water. I have started surfing and also duck hunting. I have done these two sports before but just now have really practiced to really get better and enjoy them even more. Hope you enjoy the images from my journey on the water as much as I did.

### 12-18-19 Lake Tawakoni

I went to meet my friend, Parker at Lake Tawakoni, which is close to Lake Fork. We fished with Garrett, one of his friends from college and Lee Lavesay, he is a pro on the Elite Bassmaster team.



We fished shallow water and I used green pumpkin chatter bait. Lee and the other guys used an Alabama rig, Jerk bait and rattle trap. I ended up catching the biggest fish, which was a 6 pounder. Parker caught 2 fish, Garrett caught one, I caught 5 and Lee caught 5. It was a great day with my friends.

### 12-22-19 Duck Hunt

I just recently started to learn about duck hunting. Trey has always been an avid duck hunter and now I know why he loves it so much. Before the hunting season started, I helped Taylor build duck blinds. I really enjoyed learning to build them with my friends. We got them all ready and then it was time to hunt. Being out in nature is so fulfilling to me. You are always there at the best times when you duck hunt. It's right when nature wakes up and right before the sun goes down and most creatures settle down for the evening. I watched videos on how to call a duck and I actually got pretty good at it. I sat in the blind and called them for my friends. I learned how they talk on the ground, in flight and when they are ready to fly away when they are in danger. That same day I shot one of the prettiest ducks ever. It was a wood duck, it had so many beautiful colors. Those are hard to find. I shot it down in the creek.

### 12-29-19 Surfing at Surfside



One of the things that I love to do when I am not fishing is to surf. I got a surfboard for Christmas. My dad used to surf when he was in high school, he was always going to surfside every chance he could. Grant and I went down to Surfside to catch a few waves. I enjoy the peace I have with the water and nature. This also helps build my endurance and my arms for fishing. As you all know when I fish on the beach for the bull reds I swim out to the 3rd sandbar and cast my line and swim back. This is a good way to keep your arms in shape for fishing. It's good for the heart, the soul and helps strengthen my arms. When Trey and I are out fishing at the tournaments we fish till the last second. I know it's very tiring and if you fish hard like we do you cast well over a 1,000 casts a day. Now that will wear your arms out if you are not used to it.

### 1-4-20 Time to Fish

Trey and I have not had much time to fish over the holidays. We decided to go to Fayette for the day and go fishing. We caught a few nice ones and also 2 on one lure. We always enjoy going there.

### 1-2-20 Surfing on a Rainy Day

This time I took my mom with me. I know she loves being at the beach so I took her along for the ride. On the way there we stopped at a store to get gas and a man named Chester, a disabled veteran approached me and wanted to talk about fishing with veterans. He told me that he wrote the poem that was in the 911 museum and was raising money by selling decals and t-shirts to buy land with a pond for veterans and their families to come fish. If anyone is interested in supporting the veterans here is the website to order your t-shirt. [Custompartriottees.com](http://Custompartriottees.com). He also had a coin from the Chris Kyle Frog Foundation that he received from Chris's wife for supporting the veterans.

When we arrived at the beach it was a dreary day. It was fine because I was going to be in the water anyway. My friend, Collin from school came and met me at the Octagon. This is the same place my dad and his friends would go to surf. It

stayed dreary most of the day but we caught a few waves and were happy. The sun peaked through the clouds briefly, only to disappear a few minutes later. The surf was not that big, but big enough to catch several good rides. It started to rain more in the afternoon and I was getting tired so we packed up and went home. **THROW IT OUT, POP IT IN, SURF ON!**

### 1-11-20 Hunting Ducks in Matagorda

Trey and I were invited to go to Matagorda to



hunt. We had a great time hunting pintail ducks. ♦





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# Love is in the Air...

## Rescue pets make your heart happy!

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

You could be the world's most romantic person, enjoying a lovely evening with your significant other, or happily single. Love works either way and our compassion to give and receive has no boundaries. So before you plan your evening take time to remember all the pets this Valentine's Day.

Valentine's Day is a perfect time to introduce yourself to your next "true love" and Animal Shelter Volunteers of Texas (ASVT) will help you!

You have to ask yourself sometimes, who is really getting rescued, the animals or us. A pet's love is unconditional and they are so eager to constantly demonstrate how much they adore us.

As with any love that we are fortunate enough to receive we must not take it for granted. Pets have a positive impact on our lives. From unconditional love and friendship to helping with health issues. Pets not only help keep us stay healthy, they make us happy to be alive too.

ASVT has been dedicated to helping the homeless animals of our community since 2009. Every year we make new goals, every year we help more animals in need, and every year we save hundreds of lives. The animals need us and we need you to "Help Us Help them". The variety of different types of animals and the different situations they come from are many.

Puppies arrive by the box full – innocent and hungry. They usually have a good chance of being adopted – others may wait for 3 or 4 months for their special person.

The holiday season brought ASVT two feral Lab mix females that had been on the street all their lives. They were trapped and birthed their puppies the day after being trapped. They were safe in foster homes by this time. Sadly the puppies of one of the females had major health issues and



some had to be pulled and put with other fosters to bottle feed. We did lose some to the illness but mama is doing great. All these puppies are beau-



tiful brown Lab mixes and ready for adoption. The feral moms, Maddy and Kiki are being given love and help for them to learn trust in humans. They will be spayed so no more puppies for them. We



look forward to finding wonderful homes for them.

In the first weeks of January ASVT took in multiple litters of puppies with and without moms to nurture



them. We couldn't do this without our team of fosters.







## FOSTER

Fostering is an emotional rollercoaster helping these helpless animals but we are committed to them. ASVT animals are housed in foster homes where they can be socialized and learn to trust humans. Fostering gives an animal a second chance and can be a wonderful life experience for the entire family. Fosters are the unsung heroes of rescue!

We try to be proactive for what we expect, but it can still be overwhelming. We are fortunate to have a partnership with Pet Supplies Plus in Montgomery that has an ASVT Cat Adoption Room. We have adopted out a number of cats and kittens from this venue.

These two cuties are currently at Pet Sup-



plies Plus available for adoption. Be sure to stop to stop by and meet Sofia and Matteo.

ASVT has many cats and kittens in foster homes that are looking for their forever homes. Please consider adopting if you are looking to add a cat or kitten to your family.

## 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.

On Valentine's Day there are some dangers to pets that go unnoticed. These dangers can be prevented, if these simple safety tips are observed:

- Chocolate is the food for lovers but it is very toxic to dogs and even a small amount can cause serious consequences and even death. Be very careful with all of your chocolate treats and remember to contact your vet immediately if you suspect your pet has gotten into the "sweets."

- Flowers are very romantic but they are also harmful. Certain plants and flowers are toxic to your pets. And the freshness packets that come with some floral arrangements seem quite interesting and even tasty to your cat and dog causing serious stomach upset.

- Planning a nice candle lit dinner for your loved one? That's great but cats and dogs are intrigued by the dancing flames and not only will whiskers get burned but sometimes the hot wax will cause harm.

- Pets love things that sparkle. Diamond bracelets, rings, necklaces, etc. will often end up in your pet's stomach if you're not careful.

## 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.

ASVT also sponsors a Spay/Neuter Program for community animals whose owners cannot afford to have their pets altered. This helps decrease the rise of community puppies and kittens that will end up in the shelters.

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



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Article and photos  
by Bronwyn Clear,  
Certified Texas  
Master Naturalist



At about 8" in  
length with a 15"  
wingspan, Purple  
Martins are the  
largest swallows in  
North America.



## Purple Martin Majesty

January and February are the months to thoroughly clean and wash out your Purple Martin houses! The cleaner the house, the better your chances of attracting nesting martins. Soon now, the old males migrate back to Texas from South America and scope out nesting sites. Females and younger birds follow along later, and they eventually all come together in tight little family colonies. There is safety in numbers, and groups roost together, nest together, raise their young together, hunt together and warn each other of predators. If you are lucky enough to have some choose your martin houses, you will enjoy a constant noisy

whirlwind of community activity until the young birds have fledged and they all migrate back to South America in the fall.

Purple Martins are the largest swallows in North America with a 15" wing span but short forked tails. Like all swallows, martins are aerial insectivores that expertly snatch bugs while flying, so you won't see them at your seed feeders. They prefer to nest near water due to the flying insect hatches that swarm up from lakes and ponds. Although some people believe they are great for mosquito control, studies prove martins eat only a few mosquitoes! They tend to fly much higher to



*This handsome purple  
fellow is singing to  
his love, and she  
is considering his  
proposal.*

*This one invasive common  
house sparrow ran off an  
entire family of Purple  
Martins. Without some  
human intervention he will  
keep this entire block of martin  
apartments for himself.*





*Females & juveniles look similar with white undersides and simpler coloring.*



catch their meals.

Unfortunately, there has been a decline in Purple Martin populations over the last few decades due to competing, non-native common house sparrows and starlings. These invasive species take over martin nesting sites, toss martin eggs and kill the chicks in the process. An entire martin condo with a dozen apartments can be forcefully taken over by just one determined male house sparrow!

In general Purple Martin houses have divided apartments, multiple perches, and are on retracting poles. The retracting pole allows the house to be brought down and cleaned before the next season starts. Man-made deterrents such as "sparrow spookers" can be attached to dissuade invasive bird species from destroying martin nests and taking command of the entire house. In addition, many people have had great nesting success by hanging batches of hollow gourds with the proper hole entry size.

For more information consider an excellent resource by Texas Parks and Wildlife. "The Purple Martin and its Management in Texas" by James D. Ray. It can be found online [tpwd.texas.gov/publications](http://tpwd.texas.gov/publications).

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](http://www.txmn.org). Volunteer and get involved! ♦

*Colonial birds prefer colonial birdhouses! This type of housing allows Purple Martins to live, nest and hunt together.*





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# Dead Trees Give New Life

By: Lisa Wolling, Executive Director

Oh no, that tree is dead! We've all probably said that at one time or another. Spring arrives, all the trees and plants are budding out and "springing" back to life, but there's that one tree that just doesn't come back. The first inclination, of course, is that the tree has got to go. However, leaving dead trees is a vital part of maintaining a healthy environment, as dead trees can truly provide life after death.

The forestry term for a standing dead or partially dead tree is a snag. However, many people are starting to refer to these ghosts as "wildlife trees". In North America, as many as 85 species of birds, 50 species of mammals, and many, many reptiles and amphibians depend on dead trees



Many small mammals will nest in hollow tree limbs or tree cavities. Left: baby flying squirrel. Center: baby raccoon. Right: baby fox squirrel (injured by tree-cutting equipment)



Most owls in our area prefer to nest in tree cavities if they are available. Left: barred owllet. Center: Great Horned owllets. Right: Easter Screech owllets. They were left homeless after dead trees were cut down, destroying their nests.

for shelter, food, and nesting. Dead trees are, of course, also home or food for many types of invertebrates (such as insects, spiders, worms, and more), which in turn also attract the birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians that feed on them. However, by far the greatest benefit dead trees provide to wildlife are cavities, or holes, in branches or trunks. These cavities are vitally important nesting and sheltering sites to many species, such as:

- Many types of birds will only nest in cavities, such as woodpeckers, chickadees, bluebirds, nuthatches, wrens, tree swallows, titmice, kestrels, and wood ducks

- Eastern screech owls, barred owls, barn owls, and great horned owls
- Mammals such as flying squirrels, gray squirrels, fox squirrels, raccoons, bats, porcupines. Even opossums, which are marsupials, will use tree cavities as dens.

Woodpeckers are the primary excavators for drilling cavities into snags. Abandoned woodpecker holes are then used by other species of birds that depend on them for nesting sites. Cavities are also used by frogs, snakes, honeybees, wasps, and spiders. In addition to providing shelter, dead trees or trees with dead limbs are also invaluable to

wildlife for other reasons:

- Eagles, hawks, or owls use snags or dead branches when hunting to get a clear view of prey
- Ospreys may nest in larger snags near open water
- Birds that catch insects on the fly (such as flycatchers, smaller hawks, kites, shrikes, kestrels, and small owls) will use snags to launch their aerial attacks
- Snakes use logs from snags for multiple things, such as sheltering, hunting for prey, sunning themselves (for thermoregulation), or hibernating in winter.
- The woodpeckers who depend on snags for nesting also excavate them for insects, which provide them with the food they need for themselves and to raise their young. Some woodpeckers also store food (such as nuts or acorns) in holes they drill into dead trees.
- Salamanders use rotting logs as both shelter and a source of food (insects)
- Many species of fungi grow only on dead wood

In wooded areas, it is thought that to maintain a healthy environment four or five snags should be left per acre. Of course, safety to people and property should be taken into consideration, and it is advisable to seek the advice of a profes-



All of these songbirds nest in cavities. Left: bluebird. Center left: red-bellied woodpeckers. Center right: black-capped chickadees. Right: red-headed woodpecker. These birds are insect eaters and beneficial to have around yards and gardens.



sional arborist in some cases. It is important to assess the feasibility of leaving a dead tree as is, modifying the tree, or having to remove it due to safety concerns. Bear in mind that all dead trees will eventually lose limbs and fall, so retained dead trees should always be periodically reevaluated and trimmed or removed as needed. Not all snags can or should be saved. However, in some cases removing the entire tree may not be necessary.

When assessing a dead tree, look to see if there is any risk to a structure, pathway, or driveway from either falling limbs or the tree itself. Consider shortening the tree to a height that reduces its risk of falling. The wider the trunk and taller the tree, the more value it is to wildlife. However, even a tree 10 feet in height can be of value for foraging and possibly for nesting. If limbs need to be trimmed back to lessen the fall hazard, try to leave at least 18" in length or longer (if you can safely do so). Limbs that are 6" or more in diameter are better suited for cavity excavation. If there is too much of a risk of falling limbs causing damage, you can always remove most limbs, just leaving some short and sturdy ones cut close to the trunk that can at least be used for perching.

While snags may not be the most attractive element of your landscape, they are invaluable to many types of wildlife, and they can provide you years of interesting and varied wildlife viewing. Please consider including snags in your landscape plans. If wildlife animals have a natural place to nest and shelter, it also greatly reduces the chances that they will try to get into your home, garage, or attic.

Friends of Texas Wildlife will be having an Open House on Saturday, March 21 from 11 am to 3 pm. At this open house, we will have many interesting educational displays. All our educational animals will be there for you to visit with (opossum; box turtles; snake; owls; and hawks). Staff from the Spring Creek Greenway Nature Center will be there with some of their snakes. For the first time ever, we will be offering "behind the scenes" tours of our flight enclosures and intake center. This is the only time this year our entire facility will be open to the public. \$5 per person, kids 3 and under free. More details available at [www.ftwl.org](http://www.ftwl.org).

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/SavingTexasWildlife](http://www.facebook.com/SavingTexasWildlife). 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, February 8. 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, Spring Break & summer 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](mailto: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.ftwl.org](http://www.ftwl.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:** Many of the bass at this time of year will be holding to some type of cover while the water temperature stays cold. Boat docks, stumps and any rock or concrete are great areas to locate bass. Medium diving crank baits, plastic worms and spinner baits are good bait choices in all assorted colors.

**Crappie:** Decent numbers of crappie are caught along the pilings of the 1097 Bridge and around brush in 15' - 20' depths. Also, the Stubblefield Bridge on the far north end of the lake is holding good slabs of crappie as well. Minnows and jigs are both good bait choices.

**White Bass & Hybrid Striped Bass:** At this time these fish usually hold along drop offs of submerged humps and points in the main lake area. Slab spoons bounced along the bottom or trolling small pet spoons in these areas are great methods in locating and catching these strong fighting fish and they are good eating as well.

**Catfish:** Your best catfish action can be by baiting up areas along creek and river channels with sour grain or range cubes and fishing either chicken liver, shrimp or dip baits near the bottom in 15' - 25' depths. Also under the 1097 Bridge is another great catfishing area this time of year. ♦

~~~~~

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options for outdoor entertainment! Exterior features include eye-catching facades, warm stone/stucco accents, arched walkways/doorways, wrought-iron balconies, courtyard, TWO full size garages (4 car spaces) + a private water well! The interior will immediately WOW once you walk through the iron front doors to the two story foyer! The interior was designed w/the following: high ceilings, heavy use of hardwood and travertine tile floors, architectural details including arches and use of large picture windows, stylish granite throughout, high-end cabinetry + very spacious bedrooms. 5 bedrooms, game room, office/sitting room, bonus room, covered/uncovered porches/patios/balconies, breakfast + formal dining room.

**315 Mapleleaf Street, Country Forest in Magnolia**

**ML# 41144855. \$710,000**



Motivated Seller, BRING ALL OFFERS! The estate-style drive welcomes you home to a 1.1 acre lot surrounded by shade trees & located on a quiet street. The outdoor living not only offers spacious covered/uncovered patio/porch space + privacy, but a pool w/waterfall! The home greets w/a cozy porch that overlooks the front

yard w/eye-catching wood accent ceilings. Interior - large living room w/high ceilings, wall of windows, wood floors and fireplace. The kitchen overlooks the living area & is equipped w/solid surface countertops, gas cooking, solid cabinets, breakfast area + formal dining w/French doors. All bedrooms downstairs (only room upstairs is the gameroom). Master bedroom offers 2 walls of windows, double sinks, soak tub + walk-in shower. 2 secondary bedrooms w/shared full bath. Large gameroom/flex space upstairs! The backyard offers a sunroom/enclosed back patio, fencing, pool + decking! The neighborhood offers a fishing lake, park + more! Seller has done a ton of updates!!!

**8946 Catamaran Way, Ridgeland Shores in Montgomery**

**ML# 41531627. \$359,900**



RARE FIND! Ranch style 3 bedroom/2 bathroom home perfectly situated on a +/- 1.3 acre lot! Located on a quiet street close to I-45 and FM1314 near shopping and schools + no flooding! The property boasts large shade trees, a private water well + the use of a stocked fishing pond almost steps from your back patio! The interior greets with a large living room with

high ceilings, fresh paint, new carpet, fireplace + great views of the pond! The

kitchen offers solid wood cabinets, brand new double ovens/cooktop/vent hood, tile backsplash, new stylish tile floors + a spacious dining room w/fresh paint. Master bedroom is HUGE w/large picture windows overlooking the pond + fresh paint, new carpet and new eye-catching tile surround in shower/tub! Two secondary bedrooms w/great closets, fresh paint + new carpet. Second full bathroom has new tile floors and a walk-in shower.

**10053 Stidham Road in Conroe**

**ML# 16210984. \$249,900**



2.12 acre lot in sought after Teaswood! Teaswood offers executive estate living with tree lined streets, rolling terrain, nature trails, gated access and custom homes throughout. White Oak Creek offers a refreshing backdrop to any custom design! 3 more lots available contiguous with this lot (could be a total of 11.3 acres).

**10205 Paradise Valley, Teaswood in Conroe**

**ML# 25787989. \$189,900**



Well maintained and ready for you! This 3 bedroom, 2 bathroom home will not last long! Enjoy entertaining family & friends in your large fenced front and backyard; perfect for the family pet as well! Covered back patio is 22x12 and the front patio is 12x7, both great for relaxing! Kitchen offers granite countertops and

great counter space + a breakfast area w/built in seating. Spacious living room w/wall of windows and laminate wood floors. Large Master with great closet space + a shower/tub combo.

**10945 Royal Forest Drive, Royal Forest in Conroe**

**ML# 30727298. \$169,700**



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 boasts rich wood cabinets, granite countertops, breakfast bar that will be great for entertaining and a stunning backsplash. Nice Master bedroom with an awesome shower and great storage. The two secondary rooms are spacious w/great storage.

**834 Omeara, Lake Conroe Village in Montgomery**

**ML# 13444501. \$124,900**



Available now! This 4 bedroom, 2.5 bathroom home is conveniently located in the gated subdivision of Lake Breeze that boasts a subdivision pool, Lake Conroe access, close proximity to schools and I-45 access. Fenced backyard, detached 2 car garage. **10761 S. Lake Mist Lane, Lake Breeze in Willis**

**ML# 95344036. \$1,900,000**

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