

DOCK LINE

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MAGAZINE



March 2020



Wiggins Furniture

Breaking the Mold
How Wiggins Furniture
Became Conroe's Favorite
Furniture Store

See page 8

TEXAS
PARKS &
WILDLIFE

Excerpt from:
**WHITE BASS FISHING IN
CENTRAL TEXAS**

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This is truly a RARE FIND! 7+/- Acres of Unrestricted Property in Conroe with TWO houses + an AMAZING stocked private pond/lake! Located just off of I-45/Crighton Rd and FM 1314; NO flooding! So many possibilities-make this your private estate, build your business or do both! The property offers a pristine fishing pond stocked w/bass, perch, catfish. Picturesque scenery w/bridge, pre 1941 windmill, curio building dated back to 1934 w/local

history that was relocated to this spot, 24x27 metal workshop, 2 private well + right-of-way into River Plantation! Main home has been loved by ONE family EVER! The circle drive leads to a well-kept home boasting a spacious living room w/FP + game room equipped w/a ceiling fan from the Texas/Pacific Railroad Station in Dallas! The kitchen is light/bright w/solid wood cabinets, solid surface countertop + large dining room w/bay window. Master bedroom + 2 additional beds down. 4th bedroom w/bath is the only room up. 2nd Home is 3/2/2 w/great updates!

10085 Stidham Road in Conroe. ML# 59996989. \$730,000



Rare, Rustic & Pure Country Living! Located on a quiet 1.5+ acres of land w/a 3 bed/2.5 bath+study main house, 1 bed/1 full bath guest quarters, 40x30 steel frame workshop w/concrete floors, air compressor, bathroom, office, 12ft overhead doors (2) & 14ft eaves, 40x15 lean-to shed, small pond + 2 entrances (1 is a circle driveway)! This home was built w/vision; from the landscape/accent lights to the hand scraped cedar beams to the hand se-

lected pecan cabinets. The exterior boasts a 3 sided wrap around porch w/wood ceiling planks, fenced interior yard, finished garage (w/2nd floor quarters) + water well. The interior greets w/a scored concrete floor that offers a distinct look that leads to a GREAT room w/cathedral ceilings, wall of windows & a striking stone FP. The island kitchen overlooks Heart of the house w/granite counters, pecan cabinets + walk-in pantry. Private Master bedroom is equipped w/double closets, double vanities, soak tub + walk-thru shower w/multiple shower heads.

12168 Clint Parker Road in Willis. ML# 90114299. \$539,000



One-of-a-kind is the only way to describe this 4 acre lot with your own private healthy pond in sought after Teaswood! Located in a cul-de-sac on a quiet, tree-lined street a few blocks from the League Line gate entrance. This tract is comprised of two lots. Tons of hardwoods, softwoods and a pristine pond! Teaswood offers executive estate living with tree lined streets, rolling terrain, nature trails, gated access and custom homes throughout. Survey

attached. No flooding/high and dry.

10453 River Ridge Lane, Teaswood in Conroe. ML# 14383090. \$369,000



Former C-Store near Downtown Conroe on a .29 acre corner lot. Interior offers storage rooms, cooler, bathrooms, etc. Being sold in as-is condition. Currently vacant.

**1216 N Roberson Street in Conroe
ML# 18525514, \$199,000**



Perfect location in Cottage Grove! This modern 3-story, three bedroom, three and one-half bath, two car garage (easily fits a Tahoe sized SUV) townhome has gorgeous views, a side yard and easy access to a park for pets, kids and guest parking. Boasting oak hardwood floors, high ceilings throughout, stainless steel appliances, a balcony, and scenic rooftop terrace. Updates include paint, insulation, and a new roof (2018). The large master bedroom

has high ceilings and two walk-in closets. Luxurious master bath w/ granite countertops, his & hers vanity, separate tub & tiled shower. The street has quick access to I-10 and 610 and is close to Downtown, Memorial Park, fantastic restaurants, retail & entertainment. The railroad has deemed this section as a quiet zone, void of loud noise and fast engines. NO HOA FEES!! This lot has never flooded.

5706 Cornish Street #D, Cottage Grove in Houston. ML# 71057192. \$354,000



This home has warmth and charm inside and out! As you enter the front door the wood ceiling of the living and foyer coupled with its stone fireplace will immediately WOW and set this house apart from the others. The high ceiling of the living room adds volume and space to the area while the windows allow for tons of natural light. Open to the living room, the

kitchen is spacious and comes equipped w/solid wood cabinets, SS appliances, granite counters and VERY clean! The Master bedroom boasts a recessed ceiling, double sinks, granite counters, walk-in shower, soak tub plus large walk-in closet. The three secondary bedrooms are located on the opposite wing of the house. All rooms are large and offer great closet space. NO CARPET! The exterior offers a large deck adding the pleasure of an outdoor living space. Fenced backyard. Water softener. New A/C.

12010 Mustang Avenue, Texas National in Willis. ML# 72546068. \$264,900



Panorama on the Golf Course! This 4 bedroom home is situated perfectly on the fairway of a rolling par 4. The exterior boasts a HUGE back patio/deck overlooking the course and backyard. The interior immediately WOWs with the high cathedral ceilings of the living room w/a floor-to-ceiling fireplace and views of the course. Clean/Fresh kitchen w/granite counters, double ovens, modern cooktop, great storage, breakfast room + formal dining room.

The Master bedroom is located on the first floor and offers tons of space w/a bay window, striking tile in the bathroom w/double sinks, granite counters, oversized tub/shower and separate water closet. Three very spacious secondary rooms are located upstairs w/new carpet, a full bathroom w/double vanities, granite counters + a privacy door for tub/shower. The community of Panorama offers The Village Golf Course, NO HOA DUES, restaurant/bar, pro shop, pool, parks and great schools! Sitting on 2.5 lots (0.47 acres)!

111 Rolling Hills Drive, Panorama- Hiwon in Conroe. ML# 12033767. \$255,000



TWO Lake Conroe Waterfront lots in Wildwood Shores. Live the resort life with all the many amenities Wildwood Shores has to offer. Enjoy hunting, fishing, hiking trails, boat docks, 2 pools, tennis and basketball courts, playground for the kids and picnic areas. Wildwood Shores is located on the North end of Lake Conroe next to the Sam Houston National Forest that is 163,000+ acres of hiking

trails, horseback riding, and feeding the fish. This IS the hidden GEM of Lake Conroe.

0 Harbor Point, Wildwood Shores in Huntsville. ML# 30655729. \$150,000

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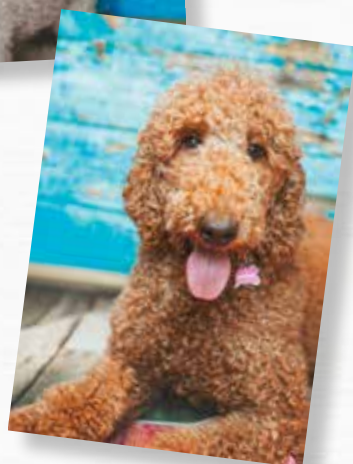
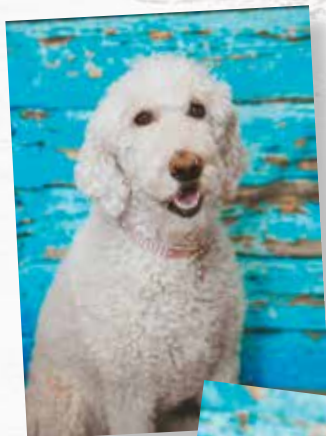
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MAGAZINE

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MARCH 2020



March has officially begun and with it brings a variety of community events, rodeo traditions, green holiday happenings and warmer weather. We are also up and running following the kick off of all our new products and services here at Dock Line Magazine. If you can imagine it, we can promote it. We would like to say a big thank you to all our friends, family, and business and community support we continue to receive as this new chapter unfolds. We hope you have an amazing March.

Until next month,

Bentley & Ellie 

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Kimberly and James Wiggins of Wiggins Furniture, create memories in someone's life, to be a welcome place to land at the end of a long day, and to turn someone's house into a home they are proud to come home to.

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DOCK LINE MAGAZINE - MAGNOLIA

is published by:
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Conroe, TX 77301
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Subscriptions to DOCK LINE MAGAZINE -
MAGNOLIA cost \$25.00 per year.
To subscribe, mail a check with your name and
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P.O. Box 174
Conroe, TX 77301

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Sweet Magnolia Pickins Farmers & Artisans Market

When: March 1 & 15, 2020

Time: 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Where: Corner of FM 1488 and FM 1774, Magnolia, TX 77354

Sweet Magnolia Pickins is inviting you to shop at their Farmers Market on the first and third Sunday of each month from 11:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. Located at the intersection of FM 1488 and FM 1774, you will find the freshest, homegrown produce in the area!

7th Annual Night of Hope 2020 Gala

When: March 21, 2020

Time: 6:00 p.m. – ??? p.m.

Where: The Woodlands Resort & Conference Center, 2301 N. Millbend Dr., The Woodlands
Join Love Fosters Hope for the 7th Annual Night of Hope Gala celebrating 20 years of serving Foster children in the community. The evening is a fundraiser themed with celebrating the grandeur of the 20's, and will include dinner, dancing, silent & live auctions, and fabulous entertainment. Love Fosters Hope mission is 'To inspire hope and bring healing to Foster children and youth.' For 20 years, they have changed the present and future of children and teens through their programs and camps. This event benefiting Love Fosters Hope will help continue this important work in our community. To become a sponsor or underwriter, donate an auction, purchase tickets or for more information visit: www.lovefoster-shope.org - LFH is a 501(c)(3) organization.

Abandoned Animal Rescue (AAR) Annual Wine Tasting Fundraiser

When: March 22, 2020

Time: 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Where: Balmorhea, 33400 Wright Rd., Magnolia, TX 77355

Cost: \$50.00 single tickets \$75.00 couple tickets
Join us for Abandoned Animal Rescue's (AAR) Annual Art, Wine & Wags Fundraiser. You will enjoy wonderful wine and beer selections while visiting with local artists and listening to music by DJ Greg. We will serve appetizers, and will have a silent and live auction, and a cork pull. For more information email or purchase tickets at events@aartexas.org.

City of Magnolia Spring Festival

When: March 28, 2020

Time: 1:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Where: Lone Pint Brewery, 507 Commerce St., Magnolia, TX 77355

Mark your calendars for this fun, free event. The City of Magnolia is holding their first Spring Festival on the Stroll. There will be lots of activities for the kids, crafts, vendors, food, and live music: Dave Kelldorf Trio 1:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.; KC Williams Band 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Reveille Barbecue Co. will be open in the beer garden as well. ♦

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Breaking the Mold

How Wiggins Furniture Became Conroe's Favorite Furniture Store



By: Brian Sherman



Walking into Wiggins Furniture, the view appears much like most large furniture stores. There are beautiful living room sets, dining room tables and bedroom sets throughout the store – every kind of style you could want in your Texas home. But thirty seconds into the expansive showroom any semblance of a typical furniture shopping experience disappears. You're greeted by a friendly welcome and a smile, and encouraged to take a look around and dream a little.

After all, furniture shopping, in general, captures the epitome of the "I'm just looking" approach by customers. Buying furniture is about visualizing and feeling. Most people wanting new furniture don't know exactly what they want until they see it, sit on it, feel it, and imagine what it looks like in a specific room in their home. They don't want to follow a sales person around. They want to feel at ease to look around and try things out.

Kim Wiggin's history in the furniture industry made her understand this better than anyone. In fact, 20 years ago Kim and James opened their furniture shop for that very reason. People aren't just customers. Their homes are their sanctuaries. The furniture reflects their family and lifestyle. So, it needs to last and be comfortable. It needs to be a soft place to land after a long day, a place to sit and be a family together, and a it's central part of what makes a house a home.

There are big name furniture stores that offer great selections of furniture, Kim says, but quality is often sacrificed for the sake

of volume and profit margins, and personal service is often lost in the process. Kim and James opened their store to be able to offer well-made, high-quality furniture that families could afford, enjoy, and have in their homes for years to come. They have built many great customer relationships over the last 20 years and look forward to the next generations to come.

More than a Couch

When asked what her favorite piece of furniture is in her own home, Kim Wiggins, without missing a beat, says one thing: "my sofa". She elaborates, "When you walk into a room, you want that wow piece...but you want it to be comfortable. My sofa, it's old.

I've had it for a long time, but I love it."

When asked why, she reminisces about growing up in a home with a single mom, along with her brother and sister. "Life was not always easy," she says. "My mother worked hard and money was often tight." Kim and her brother started working at 15 to help pay bills. When Kim later received her first big bonus at work, she bought her mom a new living room set. That experience left a lasting impression on both Kim and her mom. Many memories were made on that sofa, in that living room, in mom's house. Kim's mother has since passed, but

Continued on page 10 ➡





the memories live on.

The furniture in our homes tells a story. They hold memories of love, laughter, growing up, good days and bad days. Wiggins Furniture seems to be built on that kind of foundation. The customers feel it in the ex-

perience at Wiggins. Perhaps it's the real reason that generations of families choose to buy their furniture from Wiggins, and only Wiggins.

Most stores have grown too big for the owner to hang out and help. Kimberly and

James Wiggins, however, are an exception to the rule. As the store has grown over the years, they are always there. In fact, they carry an intimate knowledge of the furniture they choose to sell. Walk in and point to any piece in the store and they will tell you who makes it, how it's made and what it's made of. Matt Johnson has worked in sales at Wiggins Furniture with Kim and James for 14 years now and too knows every piece of furniture and its history. Working at Wiggins is a family atmosphere, not only for the customers, but for the employees also.

The Three Rules of Business *Wiggins Edition*

So, what's the real difference? Why has Wiggins flourished in Conroe for 20 years? Well, according to Kim, they have three rules they live by that all of their success can be attributed to:

1. *Treat people the way you want to be treated.*

This is why Wiggins doesn't hound customers with sales people. They want people to love what they get, not just in the moment at the store, but when they get home and in the days, weeks, and months that follow. "I want them to be proud of what they





purchase, not feel like they got pushed into something" says Kim. So, they put themselves in their customers' shoes, listen to their needs and make sure they will be happy with the choices made.

2. Don't sell anything that you wouldn't buy (and love) yourself.

"I won't buy anything and put it in my store that I wouldn't put in my own home," says Kim. "If the quality isn't good enough for my home, I'm not going to sell it to someone else." A good follow-up rule to treating others the way you want to be treated is this one. Treat others' homes the way you would your own. A great way to make your customers feel like family is to treat them like they already are.

3. Help the customer make the best decision for themselves.

Good business is more about educating customers than just making a sale. Kimberly mentions a scenario in which a customer is asking why two recliners are priced so differently. "I'll flip it over and explain how one is constructed vs. the other one's construction. This one is about a five-year recliner and this one is about a 10-15 year recliner." Educating the customer on the quality and makeup is so important. Even more impor-

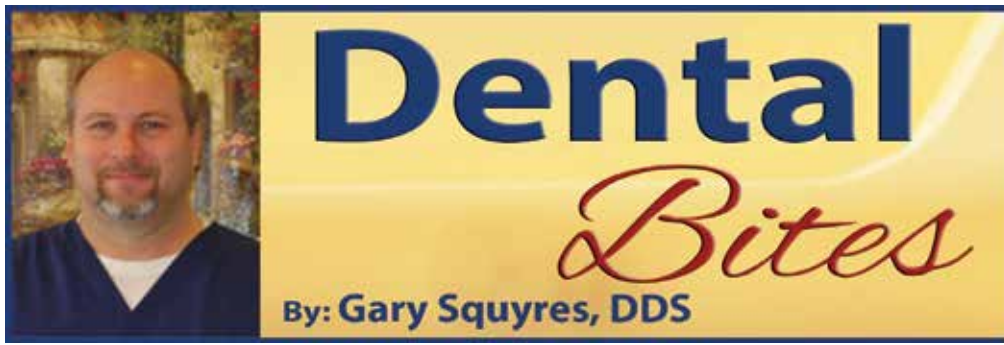
tant, however, is helping the customer understand how often the furniture will be used in their own home and by whom.

At Wiggins, no piece of furniture in the store is there for the sake of just making a profit. It's there to create memories in someone's life, to be a welcome place to land at the end of a long day, and to turn some-

one's house into a home they are proud to come home to.

Wiggins Furniture is open Monday – Friday 10:00AM – 6:30PM and on Saturdays, 10:00AM – 5:00PM. They are located at 5459 W Davis St in Conroe. Learn more about them online and view some of their furniture selection at www.wigginsfurniture.net. ♦

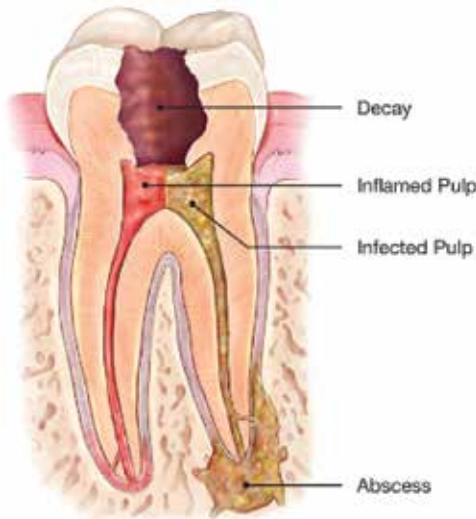




A Root Canal Start to Finish

Do you wait until your tooth hurts before visiting the dentist? If so, there is a chance your dentist will tell you that you need a root canal. Most general dentists do root canal procedures but sometimes your dentist may refer you to a root canal specialist called an Endodontist. Some teeth can be very complicated to perform root canals on due to root curvature and calcified canal or pulp stones. Endodontists have the special tools to handle these types of cases.

Root canals have the reputation of being very painful but steps can be taken to greatly decrease the risk of a painful procedure. When someone comes to my office with a toothache and in need of a root canal I place that person on antibiotics for 1 week to reduce the infection. Bacteria creates an acidic environment around the tooth, which



causes the anesthetic not to work effectively leading to a painful root canal. By being on antibiotics we reduce the infection which allows the anesthetic to work more effectively thus eliminating the pain of the root canal. The antibiotic will give a person relief from pain because of the reduced infection but it will come back because the source of the infection is inside the tooth where the antibiotics cannot reach. A root canal removes the bacteria that is the source of the infection.

What to Expect During a Root Canal:

1. X-rays- If your dentist suspects you may need a root canal, he will first take x-rays or examine existing x-rays to show where the decay is located, and how the infection is affecting the bone that supports the tooth.
2. Anesthesia- local anesthesia is adminis-



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tered to the affected tooth.

3. Pulpectomy- an opening in the tooth is made and the diseased tooth pulp is removed.

4. Filling- the roots that have been opened (to get the disease pulp) are filled with Gutta-percha (a rubberized filling material). This helps to keep the canals free of infection or contamination.

5. Rebuilding the Tooth- A temporary filling material is placed on top of the Gutta-percha to seal the opening. The filling remains until the tooth receives a permanent filling or a crown.

6. Extra Support- In some cases a post is placed into the root next to the Gutta-percha. This gives the crown more support.

7. The Crowning Touch- the crown is cemented into place. A crown looks like a natural tooth. It is placed over the top of the tooth. The crown helps protect the tooth from further damage. After restoration, the tooth continues to function like any other tooth.

How to Avoid Root Canals:

1. See your dentist every 6 months to get your x-rays, dental cleaning, and exam.

2. Having any diagnosed procedures completed. (A small cavity can turn into a big problem if not taken care of in a timely manner.)

Endodontic treatment helps you maintain your natural smile, continue eating the food you love, and limits the need for ongoing dental work. With proper care, most teeth that have had root canal treatment can last a lifetime. Remember root canal treatment doesn't cause pain it relieves it. ♦



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SJRA Highlands Division: Serving Raw Water Needs Since the 1940s



Siphon No. 28 (two 72-inch pipe) off of Jones Road in Baytown was demolished and replaced in 2018 as part of the South Canal Improvements project, which included levee improvements as well.

The San Jacinto River Authority (SJRA) is best known for managing Lake Conroe and providing water supply and wastewater treatment services to all 11 Municipal Utility Districts in The Woodlands. But, on the eastside of Harris County the lesser-known SJRA Highlands Division delivers millions of gallons of raw water to petrochemical partners daily contributing to the economic strength of the region.

The SJRA Highlands Division delivers water from Lake Houston and the Trinity River through an extensive 27-mile system of canals and a 1,400-acre staging reservoir to customers such as ExxonMobil, Chevron Phillips Chemical Company, and a number of other industrial, municipal, and agricultural customers pursuant to long-term water supply contracts.

SJRA's Highlands Division delivers 60-80 million gallons of water per day (MGD)---that's more water each day than all other SJRA operating divisions combined.

The Division's infrastructure was originally built in the early 1940's by the Federal Works Agency to supply water to the war industry in the Ship Channel area of Hous-

ton. Consisting of a pumping station on the lower reach of the river and canals on both sides of the river, SJRA delivered water to Humble Oil and Refining's Baytown refinery (ExxonMobil Corporation today) as well as to other important industries to support the efforts of World War II.

After the war, SJRA purchased the portion of the canal on the east side of the San Jacinto River and the City of Houston purchased the canal on the west side. SJRA began its first steps in the water business with the canal system and a reservoir in Highlands, Texas. Shortly after acquiring the canal system, contracts were signed with Humble Oil to provide 20 MGD to their Baytown refinery, and soon SJRA began to also provide irrigation water for up to 5,000 acres of rice, soybeans, and grass farms in the northeastern part of Harris County.

Today, the SJRA Highlands Division maintains and operates a pump station on Lake Houston, a canal system running from Lake Houston to a 1400-acre reservoir in the Highlands area, and additional canals running from the reservoir east and south to two large industrial customers. A number of municipal customers also purchase raw water from the canal including Crosby, Newport, and Barrett Station. With over 27 miles of canal to maintain, 40-plus road crossings,



Division staff, Bryan Kilgore and Jay Jones assist in the effort to improve access and security through the placement of pipe gates and fencing at the Wallisville Road Siphon structure.

several large pump stations, and industrial customers that require uninterrupted water supply, the Highlands facility operates 24/7, 365 days a year.

The modern-day SJRA Highlands Division strives to address aging infrastructure and other operational needs through extensive planning efforts, constantly evaluating operations and infrastructure to plan for and meet the level of reliable service and hydraulic capacity needed by today's custom-

ers and stakeholders.

To assist with this effort, the Division's 10-Year Project Plan is evaluated and updated annually. This effort begins with a comprehensive technical and geographic field investigation of the entire Highlands system including approximately 27-miles of canals, 54-miles of levees, the Lake Houston Pump Station, East Canal Pump Station, and approximately 55 other crossings, culverts, bridges, and siphon structures. A Structural Risk Analysis is then completed to assist the Division staff with (re)prioritizing projects. The findings from the Comprehensive Field Investigation and the Structural Risk Analysis are utilized by the Division in determining in-house projects versus contracted projects, along with the budgeting and funding required. Planning for projects in advance allows staff to take all the immediate and long-term needs into consideration and to begin making the necessary decisions to provide for the Division's operational needs in the future.

In 2010, a rigorous planning effort began to address aging infrastructure. The most critical projects included levee rehabilitation, siphon replacement/removal, transfer pump station construction as well as intake and pumping bay desilting, pump and discharge pipe repair. Recent projects include demolitions and replacements of siphons near Baker Road in Baytown, Jones Road, and Wallisville Road.

Always in mind when improving access and ensuring reliable infrastructure and hydraulic capacity, is raw water reservation for future use. Staff has to plan well in advance



The Siphon No. 7 (off of FM 2100) Bypass project was completed at the end of 2019.

Coordination occurred with the Texas Department of Transportation to provide for the removal of the current siphon structure and provide bypassing of raw water during the expansion of the FM 2100 roadway.



Actuators installed on gate control structures located adjacent to industrial customers provide for improved and remote operations.

to reserve future contracted water rights to provide for increases in customers' demand. This planning provides for adequate water supplies and conveyance capacity in the System. Ongoing collaboration and planning with all current and potential System customers is required. Additionally, system improvements require coordination and collaboration on projects and possible cost sharing with partners such as the Texas Department of Transportation, Harris County, and Harris County Flood Control District. System improvements are planned over the next decade to continue to address the re-

maining 1940's infrastructure as well as future hydraulic capacity demands.

In 2017, to further improve the efficiency of the Division's operations, the SJRA Highlands Division implemented a new control system comprised of computers, networked data communications, and graphical interfaces. The new supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) system not only improves system operations, but allows for collaboration and data sharing with various customers. Through SCADA automation,

Continued on page 16 ➞



Wallisville Road Siphon structure (two 48-inch pipe) is the most recent siphon project completed on the East Canal. The new structure provides for redundancy and improved reliability. Coordination and cost sharing occurred between SJRA and Harris County on this structure.

SJRA operational staff can now electronically monitor and proactively respond to the fluctuating water demands of the Division's customers. The implementation of SCADA

instrumentation has resulted in timely and more efficient operations within the Division by reducing the need for staff to be in the field manually making adjustments and/or responding to water level changes.

website at www.sjra.net, like SJRA on Facebook @SanJacintoRiverAuthority, follow us on Twitter @SJRA_1937, or find us on Instagram @SanJacintoRiverAuthoritySJRA. ♦



As part of SCADA implementation, Highlands Division and SCADA staff installed an in-pipe flow meter in the 48-inch pipe located at SJRA's HCFCD Siphon structure in Baytown.

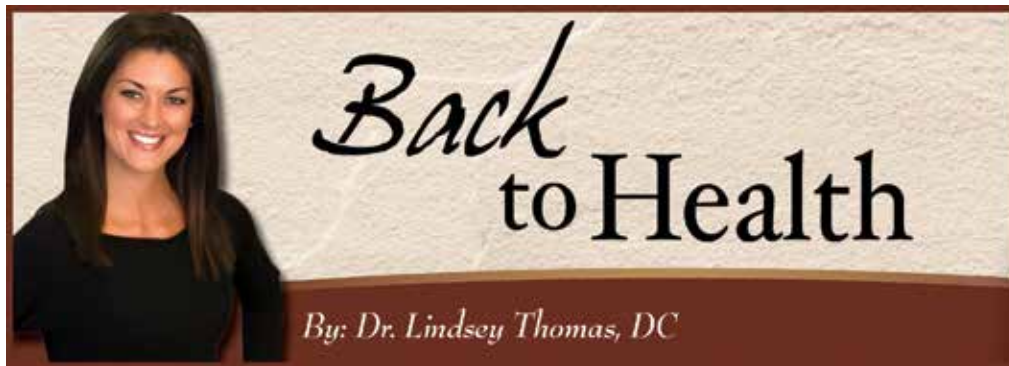
Through significant planning efforts and improvements, SJRA's Highlands Division has continued a history of reliable service that is integral to our region's success. Providing for increased customer demands, coordinating with stakeholders, and improving aging infrastructure through technological advances provides for efficient operations and regional economic growth. The Division will continue to address aging infrastructure, access and security improvements, and improve hydraulic capacity throughout the System.

To learn more about the detailed 10-Year Project Plan for the Highlands Division and ongoing improvements to the System visit www.sjra.net/highlands/.

One of the major river authorities in Texas, SJRA's mission is to develop, conserve, and protect the water resources of the San Jacinto River basin. Covering all or part of seven counties, the organization's jurisdiction includes the entire San Jacinto River watershed, excluding Harris County. For additional information on SJRA visit our



Paul Hardin, SCADA Technician works diligently at the East Canal Pump Station to install and setup VFD's for improved and remote operations of the pumps and motors.



Sniffing, Sneezing and Wheezing: Avoiding Those Springtime Allergies

Springtime is here and many of us are probably noticing that we are starting to sniffle and sneeze a little more often. We have pollen to thank for that. Tree pollination is in full swing during the springtime months. When pollen gets into the noses of certain people, it triggers the runny nose, itchy eyes, and other allergy symptoms.

Air pollution can make allergy symptoms worse. One of the most common pollutants is ozone, which is created in the atmosphere by a combination of sunlight, nitrogen oxide, and hydrocarbons from burning fuel. Clouds of ozone are created around some cities as the sunlight becomes stronger.

Inside, molds love damp areas, including the basement and bathrooms. Their spores get into the air and can cause problems for allergy sufferers.

Dust mites, tiny insects, thrive in warm, humid temperatures and nest in beds, fabric, and carpets. Their residue can get into the air, triggering sneezes, wheezes, itchy skin and runny noses.

In a healthy person, when the immune system is stressed by being exposed to these environmental triggers, chemicals are released that produce inflammation. These chemicals are made by immune cells that migrate to the site where the body is compromised. By the end of the inflammatory process another group of immune cells begins to produce chemicals that have anti-inflammatory properties. These anti-inflammatory chemicals help in calming the area of inflammation. As a result, the symptoms of inflammation begin to resolve. The body, in the ideal situation, is genetically programmed to heal itself.

These symptoms become a chronic occurrence when your immune system is not functioning at 100%. Here are some tips to keep you healthy throughout the springtime months.

Chiropractic Care

Since chiropractic deals directly with allowing the nervous system to function at its highest ability, chiropractic care for an individual with allergies can be extremely beneficial. It is a safe, effective, and natural form of care.

It's most important to understand that chiropractic is not a treatment for allergies. Its purpose is to reduce stress on the body. Stress interferes

with the proper functioning of the nervous system, can weaken the immune system, lower resistance and reduce the body's ability to heal effectively.

The chiropractic adjustment frees the nervous system from spinal stress allowing the immune system to function properly. This allows you to respond to internal and external environmental stresses more efficiently.

The adjustment is very gently and customized to each patient's needs. At Sandstone Chiropractic, we offer a variety of ad-



justment techniques to best fit the patient.

DIET

Clean up the diet by removing simple sugars. Sugar, like salt, is dehydrating to the body. Dehydration increases histamine levels. Histamine is another pro-inflammatory chemical that can worsen symptoms. Water helps reduce histamine levels. Approximately, seventy percent of our body is made up of water. Make sure you drink water as your main beverage and stay well hydrated.

Remove unhealthy fats. These include partially hydrogenated oils, margarine, vegetable shortening and cooking oils such as corn, vegetable, safflower and sunflower oils. Use olive oil, organic butter, grape seed oil, coconut oil and cold pressed oils for cooking. You can also supplement your diet with good quality fish oil.

Eliminate the dyes, preservatives, food colorings, artificial sweeteners and additives found in most foods. Even pay attention to the color of your toothpaste and deodorant.

Of course, we all have those urges to eat ice cream, chips, candy, etc. That's why I recommend the 80/20 rule. 80% of the time stick with a diet that is filled with whole foods (i.e. vegetables, legumes, meat, chicken, fish, fruit) and the other 20% of the time satisfy your craving!

If you find that you keep having the same allergic response or the response intensifies even after eliminating all inflammatory factors, further allergy testing may be necessary to identify the source.

Sandstone Chiropractic provides comprehensive allergy testing for all ages. Please contact our office for more information regarding these tests. ♦

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Texas Veteran Land Board Home Loan Program

Eligible Texas Veterans and Military Members have an opportunity to purchase a home with a competitive, low-interest loan featuring little or no down payment. Veterans, Military Members and their spouses may receive up to \$510,400 on a fixed-rate loan for 15, 20, 25 or 30 year terms. Veterans with a VA service-connected disability rating of 30% or greater qualify for a discounted interest rate.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify, homes must meet the following requirements:

- The home must be the Veteran or Military Member's primary residence in Texas.
- The home must be a single family attached or detached home, townhome or condominium.
- Duplexes or other multi-family units must have been constructed at least five years prior to the closing date of the loan.
- New homes must have either ENERGY STAR certification or HERS Index score of 75 or less.
- The home must remain the Veteran or Military Member's primary residence for at least three years, and the Veteran or Military Member borrower must occupy the home within 60 days after loan closing.

The VLB does not offer to refinance. If you have an existing loan on your home, the VLB cannot provide refinancing to lower your interest rate, nor can the VLB Veterans Housing Assistance Program be used for a down payment on a home.

The VLB Veterans Housing Assistance Program provides Veterans and Military Members with loans, where VLB is in first lien position of the primary residence. It's possible for a Veteran or Military Member to have one active loan in each program — land, home, and home improvement — at the same time.

Once a Veteran, or his or her successor, has successfully paid off a VLB home loan s/he may obtain another VLB home loan. The same applies to the VLB Land Loan Program. All VLB programs are self-funded, using no public taxpayer funding. VLB programs are financed with bonds, which are serviced by loan payments from Veteran and Military Member participants.

VETERAN ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for VLB programs, Veterans, Military Members and their spouses must be:

- At least 18 years of age.
- A bona fide and legal resident of Texas on the date of application and meet one of the following service criteria:
- An active duty Military Member.
- A member of the Texas National Guard.
- A reserve component Military Member having completed 20 qualifying years for retirement.
- A Veteran having served at least 90 active duty days unless discharged sooner due to a service-connected disability and not discharged dishonorably.
- A surviving spouse of a Veteran listed as missing in action or whose death was service-connected.

For more information visit the Texas Veterans Land Board Loans website at www.vlb.texas.gov. You can also get information on other VLB programs. For more information on VA and State benefits, contact Montgomery County Veterans Service at 936-539-7842 or email at vetsvc@mcctx.org and like us on Facebook (Montgomery County Veterans Service). ♦



By: Kay L. Lee, Veterans Service Officer

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The SECURE Act

What You Need to Know



If you are not part of our e-newsletter or a client of our firm then you haven't had the opportunity to read my thoughts about this important piece of legislation till now. We always like to make a new friend so I would encourage to go to our website at www.woottonfinancial.com, take a look at the articles and educational resources and sign up for our e-newsletter so you don't miss these important topics in the future.

In the past 2 years, two primary pieces of Congressional legislation have been passed. The first was the "Tax Cuts and Jobs Act", the largest tax overhaul of the tax code in 30 years. The second, more recently passed (and effective January 1st, 2020) was the "Setting Every Community Up For Retirement Enhancement" Act or as is now known, the "SECURE" Act. This Act again is one the largest changes to affect retirement planning and retirement plans (IRA, 401k, etc.) in decades and there are some important things you need to know. This article focuses primarily on the individual investor or plan participant but there are important considerations for corporate plan sponsors as well which are not covered here. However, call us and we can go over those with you as we can help corporate or individual plan sponsors with their fiduciary obligations as well.

Although we don't have space here to cover everything in the Act, I've tried to narrow it down to some of the items that will have the most effect on individual retirement account investors. It is important that you visit with a fiduciary advisor and review your financial plan to see how this may affect you, your spouse and most importantly the beneficiaries of your retirement accounts as they are the most affected. If you've not done financial planning with a professional in the past, now's a good time to start.

New Rules

- 1. Elimination of the "stretch" IRA/Retirement account provision** – For people passing away in and after 2020, their non-spousal beneficiaries have now lost the ability to "stretch" forced taxable required minimum distributions over their lifetime. They will now be forced to liquidate the beneficiary IRA or other inherited retirement accounts within 10 years. This does not affect the spouse as a beneficiary and there are some other narrow exclusions to the new rule such as certain minors (till the age of majority) and the disabled (as IRS defined) but check with your advisor for more specifics as to whether any of those exclusions apply to your situation. For most, even if the spouse is the beneficiary of your retirement account, when your spouse is gone, they're non-spousal beneficiaries will be subject to the new rule. Sooner or later it will affect every retirement account, so plan now to the extent you can. Also if you have a trust involved with your IRA at death, you'll want to review this arrangement as well since certain "see-through" trust arrangements could be affected.
- 2. Contributions to traditional IRA's post 70.5** – The new law now allows contributions after 70.5 to your IRA as long as you have earned income.
- 3. Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) age increase** – If you turned 70.5 and were due to take an RMD in 2019, sorry, you will have to continue taking those taxable distributions as originally scheduled. However, if you weren't 70.5 in 2019 then you now get to defer RMD's till age 72. Congratulations! The round age will also help clear up the confusion many have as to exactly when the first RMD must be withdrawn and which life expectancy factor age to use.

- 4. Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) unaffected** – This is important to the charitably minded folks out there who are already 70.5 or will be in 2020 and beyond. If you're already 70.5 the QCD rules don't change. The law kept the QCD rules intact allowing them to start at 70.5 and satisfy RMD requirements but not count towards income. For those who can defer RMD's to 72, this is giving you a 1-2 year tax planning or giving opportunity window where IRA distributions may be counted as a charitable contribution but not as an RMD.
- 5. 10% early withdrawal change** – For those seeking a distribution before 59.5 from a retirement account for a Qualified Birth or Adoption distribution, the typical 10% penalty you would incur doesn't apply up to \$5000 as long as you follow the timing rules for the withdrawal. Get with an advisor for more details on this change.

Non-Retirement Account SECURE Act Tax Benefits

- 1. Mortgage Insurance premium deduction** – Retroactive to 2018 and through 2020.
- 2. Medical expense deduction** – The AGI threshold has been kept at 7.5% of AGI for 2019 and 2020.
- 3. Qualified Disaster Distributions from retirement accounts** – If meeting the qualifications in the Act, distributions up to \$100,000 would be exempt from the 10% early withdrawal penalty, be treated as distributed evenly over 3 years if desired, be exempt from mandatory withholding requirements and may be repaid within 3 years of the distribution.

To be sure, this Act will require some adjustment and repositioning of many financial plans. Give us a call or come see us for an initial, no obligation review so we can help give you... Clear Direction for Retirement.



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Songbird and Raptor Nesting; Does That Baby Bird Need Help?

By: Lisa Wolling, Executive Director

Spring is once again in the air, and baby animals and baby birds will soon be all around us. Understanding natural behavior is important as it can save wildlife lives. Sometimes well-meaning individuals think they are helping or saving baby animals from harm when, in fact, they are taking healthy babies away from their wild parents. Understanding the natural behavior about how baby birds grow and leave the nest can help to prevent them from being needlessly kidnapped.

Some of the large birds of prey in our area, such as eagles and great horned owls, begin nesting as early as December/January, so chicks may hatch out by January/February. The largest raptors nest earlier and then the smaller raptors nest later into the spring and early summer. Songbirds begin choosing nesting sites as early as February and may begin laying eggs in March. This means there are several times throughout the year when baby birds will be hatched and raised, with baby birds leaving their nests sporadically throughout the warmer months.

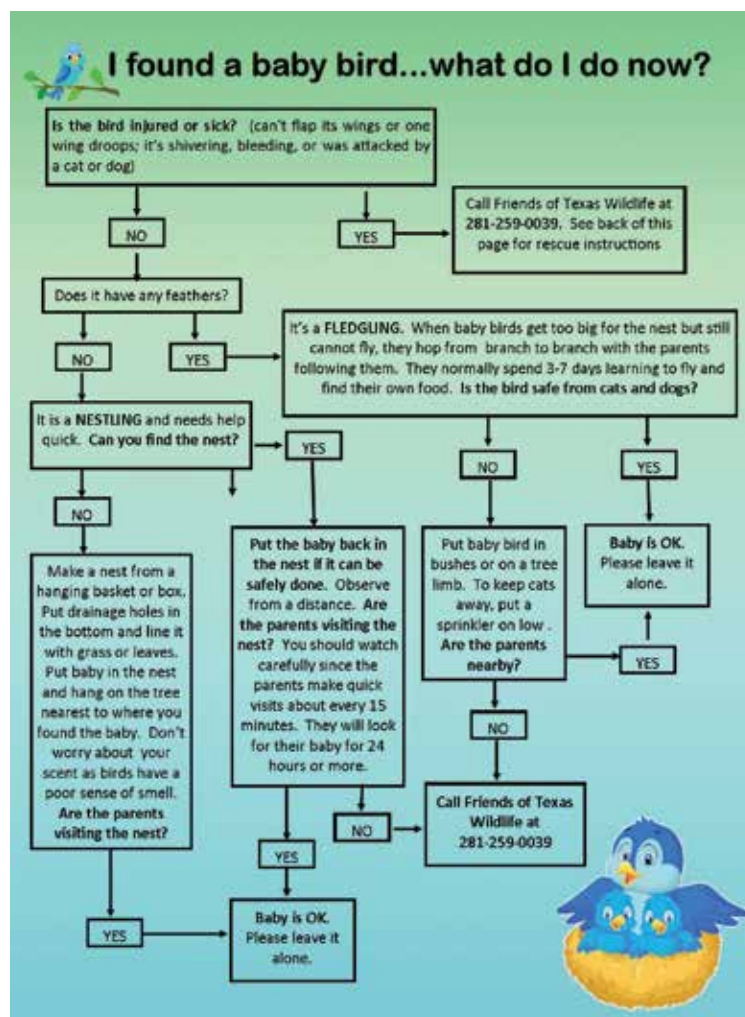
Raptors (hawks and owls) are typically born anywhere from January through May. Generally, the larger the bird the earlier in the year they are born. By May, many of the early arrivals are beginning to leave their nests. Similar to songbirds, when raptors first leave the nest, they cannot fly well yet. They are called "branchers" at this age and sometimes they wind up on the ground inadvertently. If they have feathers as opposed to down and they are in a safe location, they should be left alone. Their parents will still attend to them while they learn to fly. If you are not certain whether a baby owl or hawk may need help, please call us for assistance. Sometimes even younger birds that have fallen from nests can be "re-nested" in a large basket so their parents can continue to care for them.

Songbirds are busy nesting in spring and summer, and some birds will even raise two or three broods each season. Hatchling birds have no feathers. Nestling birds have fuzzy down feathers and/or are just beginning to have pin feathers emerge (it looks like they have toothpicks sticking out of them). If either a hatchling or nestling has fallen from a nest, it does need help. If you can place it back in the nest, that is the best thing to do (it is an old wives' tale that touching the baby will cause the parents to reject it). If the nest has been destroyed or cannot be located, take a small basket or bowl (like a margarine container), punch some holes in the bottom, and line it with pine needles, leaves, or straw. Tack the nest on the tree closest to where you found the baby and watch for at least a couple of hours to see if the parents come back to feed. Fledgling baby birds are fully feathered and have about one inch of tail feathers. They leave the nest TO learn how to fly, not WHEN they can fly. It is normal for them to hop from branch to branch or even wind up on the ground. The parents will still tend to them while they learn to fly. If they are in danger from domestic pets or not in a safe spot, it is ok to pick them up and place them in a nearby bush or low tree. This is the most dangerous time for baby birds, but they just need a day or two before they can fly quite well. If possible, keep cats indoors if you notice fledgling birds in your area.

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). Educational displays will also be presented by: The Spring Creek Greenway Nature Center; Texas Master Naturalists; Texas Wildlife Association; Caleb Paul (snake wrangler/reptile rescue and removal); Montgomery County Sheriff's Office; Lake Houston Nature Center; Texas A & M Forest Service. 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.

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



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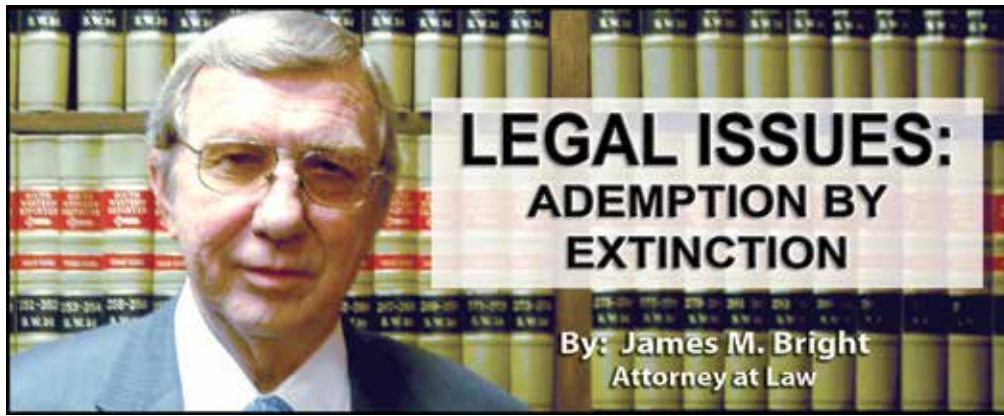
By using neurofeedback we are able to retrain the brain by correcting frequency abnormalities associated with various neurological conditions such as ADD, ADHD, autism, anxiety, depression, PTSD, memory loss, and auditory processing issues just to name a few. At the Sandstone Center for Neurofeedback, we combine neurofeedback therapy with various brain-base therapies in order to stimulate optimal results.

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

The question is sometimes asked, "What happens when my will specifies a particular asset to go to a particular beneficiary, and that asset was sold or destroyed prior to my death?" The answer is typically "ademption by extinction."

"Ademption describes the extinction of a specific bequest or devise because of the disappearance of or disposition of the subject matter given from the estate of the testator in his lifetime. Unless the testatrix specifically provides otherwise in the will, the sale or removal of a specific bequest from the estate adeems the devise or bequest. A will speaks at the time of the testatrix's death, and only the estate the testatrix then possessed passes under the terms of the will. When a specific devise of realty is adeemed because the testatrix sold it before her death, absent

a contrary intent expressed in the will, the beneficiaries of the realty under the will are not entitled to the sale proceeds; instead, the proceeds pass under the residuary clause." San Antonio Area Found. V. Lang, 35 S.W.3d 636, 641-42 (Tex.2000).

An example of this type of specific bequest might be, "I bequeath my fully restored 1958 Corvette to Joe Doe."

If you continue to own the 1958 Corvette (don't we all wish) at the time of your death, then Joe Doe inherits it outright and your executor can pass title.

On the other hand, if you decided after the will was signed to sell your Corvette, the asset would no longer exist at the time of your death, and the gift would fail because of ademption by extinction. Joe would not receive the Corvette or the proceeds from the sale.

The same principle of ademption applies to

real property. If your will declares that you devise your interest in "Blackacre" to Sally Sue, and if you sell "Blackacre" prior to your death, then your gift to Sally Sue is ignored, and she will receive nothing unless she is included in another part of your Will or the residuary clause.

"The doctrine of ademption applies only to specific bequests and devises." In re Estate of Brown, 922 S.W.2d 605-607 (Tex. App. – Texarkana 1996, no writ).

EQUITABLE CONVERSION:

A twist to the above examples might yield a different result when a contract for sale of "Blackacre" is pending at the time of the testator's death. "When a specific devise is subject to a contract for sale executed by the testator before his death, the doctrine of equitable conversion applies." Mattlage v. Mattlage, 243 S.W.3d 763,768 – Tex. App. – Waco, pet. denied).

Assume the same facts recited in our above example of Sally Sue and "Blackacre" but with the sale not fully consummated at the time of testator's death. In this case, there exists the possibility of an equitable conversion. The devise of real property to Sally Sue may be considered a conversion to personal property rather than real property. If this occurs, Sally Sue would receive the proceeds of the sale instead of nothing as in ademption by extinction.

Courts have held that the question of whether or not to consider the gift as an equitable conversion will likely turn on whether or not the potential buyer could successfully sue to specifically enforce the agreement between the buyer and the testator.

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SOLUTIONS:

It is very common for clients of this firm to request a provision in their will leaving a particular automobile to a grandchild and propose something like, "I bequeath my 2008 Toyota to my grandchild, Tad."

This type of bequest will likely fail through ademption by extraction, because when you die it is probable that you have traded that 2008 Toyota for a newer model something.

A better approach to this bequest suggested by your attorney might be, "I bequeath the automobile that I may own at the time of my death to my grandchild, Tad." If you own an automobile at the time of your death, it will be inherited by Tad without ademption.

The type of unintended results that are demonstrated by this article can easily be avoided by careful estate planning done by the attorney of your choice. Remember that your attorney is a "paid pessimist" being constantly on the lookout for what might or could go wrong.

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. ♦



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It's All In YOUR HEAD

By: Tom Stark, MD

I sincerely enjoy writing these monthly articles about different areas of my specialty of Otolaryngology (Ear, Nose and Throat). I try to educate and inform especially regarding any new therapies.

On a personal note, I am frequently asked why I chose this specialty. In medical school, I knew that I wanted to be in a surgical field. I enjoy being able to "fix things with my hands", rather than prescribing medications. In 1977, during my third year of med school I spent month training in ENT. Not only did I find the field fascinating but also all of the physicians who were in the area really seemed to be en-

joying themselves.

My formal specialty training, or residency, was done at Bethesda Navy Hospital just outside of



Washington, DC from 1979 through 1983. Since that time obviously I have seen multiple advances.

For example when I trained, all nasal and sinus surgical procedures involved the surgeon wearing a headlight to see inside the nasal passages. Instruments were very similar to dental tools for removing diseased tissue from the bony walls of the nose and sinuses. Visualization was extremely difficult and because of the location of the sinuses near the eye and brain could often be very dangerous. Since the late 1980's, nearly all sinus surgery has been done using small pencil thin fiber-optic scopes attached to a video camera. Following that came powered shaving-like instruments to remove diseased tissue such as polyps in a much safer manner. Then in the last 12 or so years sinus balloon treatments became available.

I feel that my early training, done under precise "old school" professors using techniques we might consider now to be ancient or primitive, gave me a very strong foundation and confidence. The new endoscopic techniques that I now use are far superior and safer. My nature is definitely an eagerness to try new things in the field of surgery and medicine. One advantage of being in my field for nearly 40 years is that I have learned that just because something is new does not necessarily mean it is better. And also some "new" developments are just variations of old techniques.

My favorite uncle was also Tom Stark, MD. He practiced general medicine and surgery in Beeville, Texas. I try to incorporate his small town doc values in my practice using both very new and some "older, seasoned" techniques together. ♦

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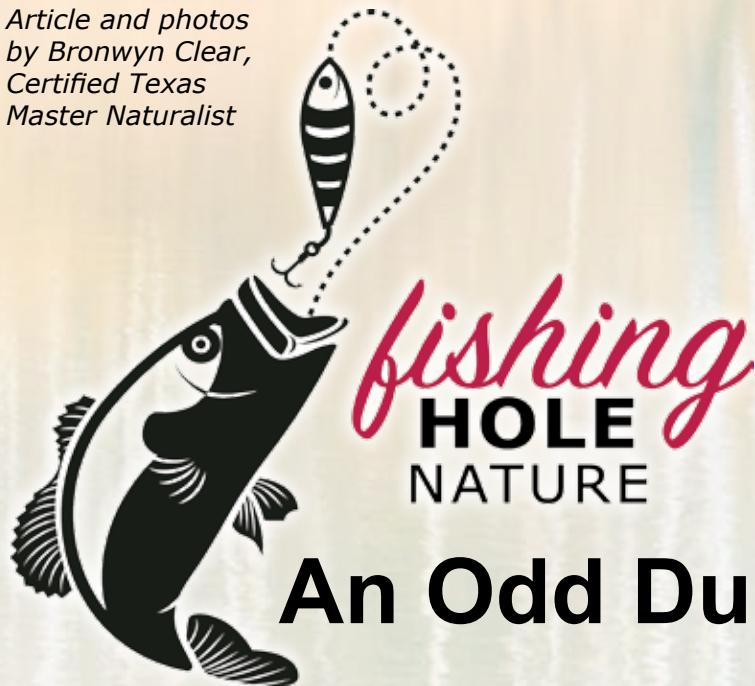
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When alarmed, muscovies hiss and raise their head crests.

An Odd Duck – The Muscovy

What's not to love about ducks! They quack, they waddle, and oh those feet! From the domesticated "Donald" varieties to the wild varieties, they make people smile.

Have you heard someone shout "DUCK!" when a ball sails past your head? Have you ever



A watchful family. The green tinted feathers are remnant colors from a native population.

wondered about that command? It comes from way back in the past because of the duck-raptor predator-prey relationship. When a swimming duck realizes an eagle is about to drop out of the sky to make him a meal, a smart duck's maneuver is to plunge entirely under the water. The eagle keeps dive-bombing, and the duck keeps "ducking". Sooner or later the duck wins, or the eagle does, but don't count the duck out!

There are so many duck phrases - "Sitting duck", "Water off a duck's back", "Like a duck to water", "Lame duck", "Duck soup", "Ducks in a row", "Dead duck", "Ugly Duckling", "Duck, Duck, Goose!". And don't forget about Daffy and Donald. Yes, ducks are endearing, and ingrained in our American culture, history, food supply, and language.

Floating near the banks is the ever-present iridescent green headed Mallard, or the ornately detailed Wood Duck. But these days some odd ducks have also been paddling along our lakes and ponds, and they are Muscovy Ducks. A male drake can be as big as a goose at 15 pounds, and they have red facial ornamentations called caruncles, somewhat like those on a turkey! Muscovies also have a feather crest on their heads that they raise and lower at will. They are considered to be one

of the more intelligent ducks, and they don't scare easily. If you get near one, he might just stand his ground and hiss at you!

Muscovies originated in regions south of the border, and have been expanding to areas inside the States. They are dabbling ducks and eat plants, small fish, bugs, and frogs. Unlike other ducks they don't quack so much as trill or giggle, but like many ducks they hiss when something threatens their territory. Although they spend their days on the water, the Muscovy roosts on land in the safety of tree cavities or shrubs, or they use their webbed claws to dig out shallow nest holes in the ground. Domesticated Muscovies are raised by farmers and duck lovers for meat and eggs, poultry show contests, and for pets. Some are bred for their spectacular colors - pied white and black, pastel, blue, lavender, red and speckled! This makes for a very striking bird indeed. People who raise them really love their personalities and antics. They might jump into the air to eat bugs, or chase and catch mice on the farm! To other communities they are



These large ducks have bright red ornamental facial wattles, also called caruncles.



With a weight up to 15 pounds the Muscovy drake is as big as a goose.

major pests and allowed to be destroyed. Florida's feral populations have grown to enormous numbers, passing disease to other ducks, breeding with native ducks, taking over neighborhood ponds and leaving huge fecal messes for landowners.

The regulations regarding these migrating ducks are somewhat confusing, possibly because they are both loved and hated. A few years ago they were added to the US protected species list when indigenous populations were found in a few Texas counties along the Rio Grande. However, due to the explosion of feral populations in unexpected areas, the US Fish and Wildlife Service calls them a problematic invasive species. What is clear is that these ducks are flourishing, and we are seeing more and more of them on our waterways.

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



A pied black & white Muscovy.



Muscovies come in many colors – including dappled grays and pastels



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6 Things Your Website Should Include

If you want your website to convert more visitors to customers, it must have these features..

If you own a business, your website should be working for you to consistently bring in new leads everyday. Most websites come with a hefty price tag and may look pretty, but they don't do much to grow a business. Very few people see the website, much less know what to do when they do see it. Worst of all, the message is unclear.

Can you relate? Are you consistently getting new customers through your website?

At Dock Line, we've built hundreds of websites for small businesses to help them grow their business online. No matter what industry you're in, there are six things that we've suggested most often when designing a highly profitable business website.

Incorporate these six components in your website and you'll get more visitors, more sales, and more fans of your business. You'll stop losing to your competition.

1. Your business website should include a 3-second headline.

When someone visits your website they should understand what you do in 3 seconds or less. People make instant subconscious decisions about you and your brand when they visit your website. If you confuse, you lose. Your website headline needs to clearly tell the reader what you do and how it helps them.

To help you clarify your main headline (the company's tagline), use this formula to get started.

_____ to help you _____ your _____.

= (Main service you provide) to help you (Result of your service) your (Thing your service benefits).

Example: Landscaping services to help you manage your lawn.

Here are a couple of guidelines to follow when developing your main tagline.

Don't:

- Don't use insider lingo.
- Don't be too vague.
- Don't be long winded.

Do:

- Use language anybody will understand.
- Be specific.
- Be concise.

2. Your business website should include a clear call-to-action.

If possible, give visitors only one call to action on each page of your website. If your main objective is to get them on the phone, make that the only option. You may also offer a lead generator as a call-to-action. Make sure it points people to your main call-to-action. Make your call-to-action specific and straight to the point.

What is it you want the website visitor to do? Do you want them to book a call with you? Do you want them to buy your product? Be up front and direct. Also, make the call-to-action obvious – put it just under the header of your website, and in the top right of the main menu.

- Bad CTA's: "Learn More" "Get Started"
- Good CTA's: "Call Now" "Buy Now"

3. Your business website should include a "Success Header Image".

The header background at the top of your home page is prime real estate. It is where your 3-second headline goes and it is the first thing people see when they visit your website. Your header image gives people their first impression of your business, so it needs to imply success.

Use an image that shows the success of your product. It doesn't have to be an actual photo of your product or even a real customer of yours. You can use a stock image if you want, as long as it conveys a message of success, as if someone used your product or service and achieved their desired goal because of it. Images with people work best, especially if they are happy and smiling.

4. Your business website should include search engine optimization.

What's the use of having an amazing website if no one sees it? Search Engine Optimization (SEO) works to get your website higher in the rankings on search engines like Google.

Nearly everyone begins a search for a product or service online. With SEO you can use Google to your advantage and get more visitors to your website by showing up on the first page of search results.

How to start implementing SEO:

- Use strategic keywords in your writing based on what people type into Google to find the services you offer.
- Optimize your website so that it loads quickly and looks good

on any device (See "Mobile Optimization" below).

- Put engaging content like video on your website.
- Invest in good technical SEO (Back-end website optimization).

SEO stats you need to know:

- 93% of online experiences begin with a search engine.
- 81% of people perform some type of online research before making a large purchase.
- Google currently holds over 80% of total search engine market share.
- 75% of people never scroll past the first page of search engines.
- Leads from search engines have a 14.6% close rate, while out-bound leads (ex. cold-calling, direct mail, etc.) have a 1.7% close rate.

5. Your business website should include responsive design.

52.2 percent of all website traffic worldwide is generated through mobile phones.

Simply put, more people are searching online using their mobile devices compared to desktop computers and the gap is widening each year. This means your website needs to be optimized to look good on any device, especially mobile phones.

If you have a website, pull it up on your phone now and see how it looks. You can also open your website on a desktop and click and drag the web browser to make it thinner. You can see how the appearance changes to match the screen size...or not.

If your website doesn't adjust to various screen sizes it becomes difficult to navigate and read. You can make it more mobile responsive by doing the following:

- Rebuild using a responsive website design template.
- Eliminate the use of popups.
- Make buttons and links large.
- Optimize for fast page load.

It's worth investing in an experienced web designer who can optimize your site to be mobile responsive.

6. Your business website should include sales oriented copywriting.

Not only should your website look good, it also needs to compel people to buy your product or service. As Donald Miller, CEO of Storybrand, says,

"Pretty websites don't sell things. Words sell things."

When we talk about sales-oriented copywriting, we simply mean this: Don't talk about yourself. Talk about your customer.

As hard as it might be to hear, people don't care about how long you've been in business, what your mission statement is, or the whole backstory about how you started your business. What they do care about is how you can help them and if you understand their pain.

It's also important to remember that you only have a few seconds to grab someone's attention and persuade them to keep reading or not. Good sales copy will keep the reader's attention and carry them through your desired process toward a sale.

Answer these questions in your copywriting:

- Who is your ideal buyer?
- What problem do they face?
- What kind of life are they aspiring to that the problem is hindering?
- How can you solve their problem?
- What bad thing will happen if they don't solve their problem?
- What will their life be like when you solve their problem?
- What simple plan can people follow to solve their problem?
- How can they get started right now solving their problem?

So, how does your website fare in relation to these essential components? Can you see areas where you can improve right away by implementing some of these? Maybe, you have a website that is outdated, or just doesn't do anything to grow your business. Or worse, maybe you don't have a website at all. If you'd like some help getting a website that you are proud of and one that works every day to grow your business, we can help.

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Excerpt from:

WHITE BASS FISHING IN CENTRAL TEXAS

TEXAS
PARKS &
WILDLIFE

Written by Michael Tennant, Steve Magnelia, Craig Bonds, and John Tibbs
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Inland Fisheries Management

The white bass, commonly referred to as “sand bass” or “sandies”, is an abundant and popular sportfish in Texas reservoirs. This is due to its willingness to bite artificial lures, schooling behavior, and outstanding quality as table fare. White bass provide anglers with exciting action throughout the year, but most notably during their annual spring spawning migration up river and stream tributaries. From January through April, large schools of white bass concentrate in the far upper ends or riverine sections of reservoirs making them more susceptible to anglers. The complete white bass angler understands the biology, migrational behavior, preferred habitat, appropriate fishing techniques and local “hot spots” for this popular species.

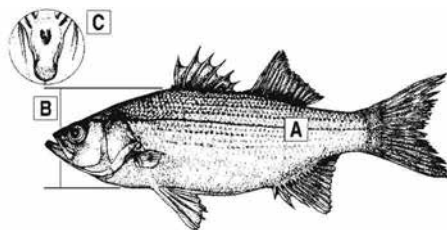
IDENTIFICATION

The white bass is a silvery, spiny-rayed fish with several incomplete lines or stripes, which run horizontally on each side of the body. The head is fairly small and pointed, and the dorsal (back) fin is conspicuously double, separated into spiny and soft-rayed portions. The white bass can be easily confused with striped bass and hybrid striped bass (a cross between white and striped bass), which are other members of the temperate bass family. However, striped bass and hybrid striped bass grow much larger than white bass. Anglers must be adept at differentiating between them as they often coexist in the same reservoir. White bass can be distinguished from the others by the tooth patch on the tongue (one is present on white bass

whereas there are two on striped bass and hybrid striped bass). Striped bass and hybrid striped bass also have several distinct “stripes” that extend to the tail, while the white bass has only one stripe extending to the tail. Study the pictures below, including the detail of the tooth patches.

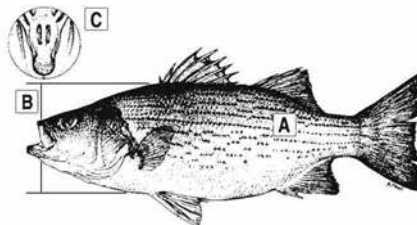
WHITE BASS STRIPED and HYBRID STRIPED BASS

White Bass



- A: Stripes faint, only one extends to tail.
B: Body deep, more than 1/3 length.
C: Has one tooth patch near the midline towards the back of the tongue.

Hybrid Striped Bass



Also known as Palmetto or Sunshine bass.

A: Stripes distinct, usually broken, several extend to tail.

B: Body deep, more than 1/3 length.

C: Has two tooth patches near the midline towards the back of the tongue. Tooth patches may be distinct or close together.

Note: For hybrids, all characteristics should be considered in combination, as characteristics in individual fish may vary.

LIFE HISTORY and BIOLOGY

White bass are migratory open-water fish. Most of their life is spent in the open-water portions of reservoirs chasing schools of small gizzard and threadfin shad. In late winter (December-January) schools of white bass migrate to the upper portion of reservoirs awaiting environmental cues signaling the start of the spawning migration up major tributaries. In February and March, they begin their spawning migration seeking clean gravel and rock substrate with good flow to spawn. Riffles and shoals are common spawning locations. How far white bass migrate is extremely variable, but it is not uncommon to find spawning white bass 25-50 miles above the reservoir. This may be related to river and stream flow, which varies among years. Fisheries biologists are unsure if adult white bass return to the same spawning spot each year, or if it is a random occurrence. After spawning, adult fish migrate back into the main body of the reservoir. The whole spawning migration is usually complete by sometime in May. Interestingly, “tributary”

spawning may not be inherent in all white bass. Some white bass may spend their entire lives in the main portion of reservoirs, spawning on wind-blown, rocky shoals instead of in major tributaries.

Of the three temperate basses found in Central Texas (white bass, striped bass and hybrid striped bass) only white bass successfully reproduce in significant numbers, although the other two species may also migrate up tributaries in the spring. Central Texas striped bass and hybrid



Close-up of White Bass caught from the Sabine River

striped bass populations are completely supported from stockings by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) fish hatcheries. White bass are not nest builders. Spawning takes place in mid-water. The female rises toward the surface enticing males to follow. Fertilized eggs drift to the bottom and adhere to gravel or rock. Eggs usually hatch within 2 to 3 days. The newly hatched fry migrate downstream in schools seeking food and protection. On many Central Texas reservoirs white bass grow rapidly, normally attaining a size of 9 to 10 inches in their first year of life and 12 inches by the end of the second. This is faster than the statewide average. The life expectancy of white bass is short and few reach 5 years old. Although no studies have specifically looked at sexual maturity of white bass in Central Texas, fisheries biologists think that males become sexually mature at age one (8-9 inches) and females at age two (12-13 inches). This would be similar to fast growing populations in Tennessee and Arkansas. No studies in the Southern United States found significant numbers of female white bass less than 10 inches that were reproductively mature. A white bass weighs approximately 0.5 pounds at 10 inches and 0.9 pounds at 12 inches.

FISHERIES MANAGEMENT and FISHING REGULATIONS

White bass in Texas are currently managed with a statewide 10-inch minimum length and 25-fish daily bag limit. An experimental 12-inch minimum length limit was implemented on sev-



Larry Hodge (retired TPWD) holding a Hybrid Striped Bass.

eral Central Texas reservoirs between 1995 and 2003. The purpose of the experimental regulation was to test whether additional protection would delay harvest of immature female white bass and increase population abundance and average size of white bass. Evaluation of the 12-inch minimum length limit indicated this regulation failed to improve white bass populations in Central Texas Reservoirs. In addition to fast growth, a high level of angler harvest was required for this regulation to work. These requirements were based on computer generated models utilizing fisheries data collected on these populations. Angler creel data collected by TPWD, suggest that harvest rates for white bass were likely below the threshold level needed for the greater length restriction to be effective. Other research conducted by TPWD, and

supported by recent scientific literature, indicates white bass reproductive success is highly correlated with springtime reservoir inflows. In other words, higher than average spring inflows to reservoirs correspond with higher than average white bass spawning production and vice versa. Environmental conditions can play a large role in determining white bass densities.

TPWD will continue to monitor white bass populations and angler harvest rates to determine what length limit is best suited for these fisheries. If fishing pressure significantly increases in the future and harvest levels reach a critical point, TPWD will consider alternative regulations. Currently, alternative regulations are not warranted.

Continued on page 36 ➡

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SEASONAL FISHING PATTERNS

Spring (March-May): White bass will be in the rivers or major creek tributaries. A variety of artificial lures will work, but this is a good time for small jig fishing. Small, medium-running crank baits also work well. Trolling the river or creek channel with small crank baits is a good technique. Fishing early in the spring can be inconsistent, but if the bite is on you can have the day of a lifetime. Many old timers say, "when the redbuds (or dog-woods) are blooming the white bass are running". This old saying usually holds true. April and May can be the most consistent months as many white bass have finished spawning and are hungry as they migrate back to the reservoir. Spring is also a good time to try night fishing using lights. Floating or submersible crappie lights, which attract baitfish, work well for this. Flats at the mouths of major creeks, main-lake flats, and floating breakwaters near lighted marinas are consistent producers of white bass at this time.

Summer (May-September): May to early June is characterized by good schooling action for white bass. The mouths of major creeks and main-lake points are good areas to try. Look for birds chasing baitfish. The whites and stripers won't be far behind. Topwater lures, lipless crank baits, and small twister tail jigs cast into schools are good bets. Anglers might also try night fishing as described for spring, although this pattern often weakens as the water warms throughout May. As the water heats up, anglers should concentrate on main lake structure near deep water, or look for schooling fish at dawn or on cloudy days. In the heat of summer good marine electronics for finding the fish in deep water are vital to consistent success.

Fall (September-November): Early-fall fishing is much like summer. Keep looking for the schools with your electronics. As the water cools, white bass will begin feeding at the surface in earnest. Cloudy days with a little wind are the best. Concentrate on creek mouths and major points. October and November can be good for surface schooling. Look for stripers mixed in with whites.

Winter (November-February): The water is coldest this time of year. Two patterns are noteworthy. One is to locate schools in deep water on major structural elements such as river channel ledges, humps, and tips of points. Vertically jigging spoons and tail spinners in these areas will produce some of the most consistent action of the year, if you can locate the fish. In January and February structure in the upper end of reservoirs near major tributaries is a good choice. A secondary pattern is night fishing around lighted boat docks and marinas in the main lake. Fishing from lighted dock to lighted dock casting a small twister tail jig into the light will produce consistent action, if you can stand the cold. Don't be surprised if you catch some nice stripers as well. January and February are two good months to try this pattern.

PLACES TO GO

Some of the best white bass fishing in the spring can be done from the bank and while wading in the upper reaches of tributaries. County road maps available from the Texas Department of Transportation, or "The Roads of Texas", Shearer Publishing, Fredericksburg, TX, (800-458-3808) are invaluable for locating some of the ac-



Dawn Dorsett (with TPWD's College Station - Houston Inland Fisheries Management District) holding a stringer of White Bass caught on Lake Somerville in an undisclosed tributary. Said tributary may or may not rhyme with aqua.

cess points described. Always get permission from the landowner if you cross private land to enter a river or stream. Topographical reservoir maps are often available from controlling authorities or at retail fishing stores. The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department maintains an internet web site which contains information on many fishing-related topics, including reservoir access, regulations, and fishing news, among many others. Check it out at <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us>.

For the full publication, visit: https://tpwd.texas.gov/publications/pwdpubs/media/pwd_br_t3200_0022e.pdf.

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For more information on length and bag limits, check out the TPWD Outdoor Annual or download the app! <http://tpwd.texas.gov/regulations/outdoor-annual/>

Information on where to fish in Texas public waters, including the Community Fishing Lakes, is available at <http://tpwd.texas.gov/fishboat/fish/recreational/wheretofish/>. If you have any questions, please contact us at 979-272-1430 or by email at niki.ragan@tpwd.texas.gov or alice.best@tpwd.texas.gov

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Follow TPWD's College Station-Houston Inland Fisheries office on Facebook and Instagram: www.facebook.com/TPWInlandFisheriesCollegeStationHouston <https://www.instagram.com/fisherieshouston/> ♦



Larry Hodge (retired TPWD) holding a White Bass caught on the Sabine River.

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

Four Way Chili

- 1 pound lean ground beef
- 1 pound mild pork sausage
- 1 large red onion, chopped
- 1 green bell pepper, seeded and diced
- 1 red bell pepper, seeded and diced
- 1 yellow bell pepper, seeded and diced
- 2 (14.5 ounce) cans Mexican-style stewed tomatoes
- 2 (15 ounce) cans pinto beans, drained
- 2 (1.25 ounce) packages chili seasoning mix
- 1 (8 ounce) package angel hair pasta
- 1 (4 ounce) packet saltine crackers

2 cups shredded Cheddar cheese

Crumble the ground beef and pork sausage into a large skillet over medium-high heat. Cook and stir until browned. Drain, and set aside.

Coat a large pot with cooking spray, and add the green, red and yellow bell peppers, and onion. Cook over medium heat until tender, stirring occasionally. Add the beef and sausage to the peppers. Puree the stewed tomatoes using a blender or food processor, and stir them into the pot along with the chili seasoning. Mix in the pinto beans, and heat to a simmer.

Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Add the angel hair pasta, and cook until tender, 2 to 3 minutes. Drain.

When serving the chili, place the items on your plate in the following order: Start with pasta, then crush some saltine crackers, then some shredded cheese, and then chili.

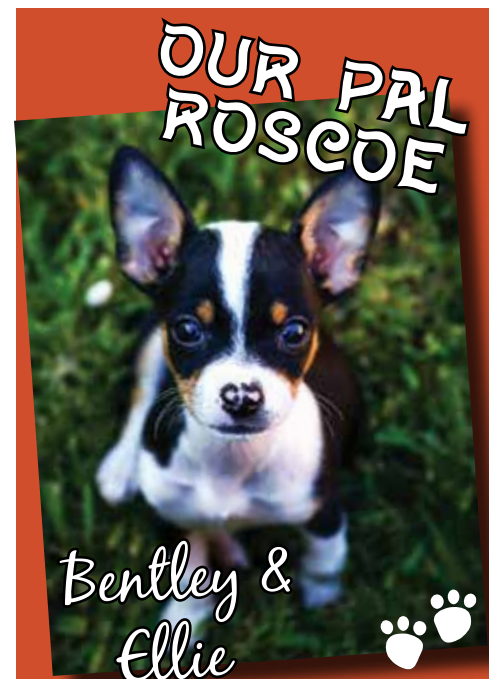
Team Four Tuna

- 2 tablespoons minced red onion
- 2 pepperoncini peppers, minced
- 1 tablespoon mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon rice vinegar
- 2 imitation crab legs, chopped

2 (5 ounce) cans tuna, drained

In a mixing bowl, stir together red onion, peppers, mayonnaise, vinegar, imitation crab, and tuna. Chill if desired.

Serve on your favorite bread. ♦



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