

DOCK LINE

Lake Conroe

MAGAZINE



September 2020

Stone Creek
WELLNESS &
MEDICAL AESTHETICS

Finding Your Beauty Again

In a stress-filled world, learn how Stone Creek Wellness & Medical Aesthetics helps you restore confidence in yourself. *See page 8*



SJRA Receives Two Industry Excellence Awards

See Page 44

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Unrestricted 2.47 acres located within ONE MILE of Highway 105 at Lake Conroe and minutes from 1488/The Woodlands! With 250+ feet on McCaleb Road and great visibility from the recently expanded thoroughfare - this tract has many possibilities to the end user - commercial, residential or a mix-use idea. Three bedroom home sits back from the road (approximately 260+ feet from McCaleb) and offers great updates and tons of charm! A 24x22 detached garage/workshop features concrete slab, electricity + water. **907 McCaleb Road in Montgomery. ML# 72547156. \$549,000**



This "Winslow House by Frank Lloyd Wright" inspired home is perfectly situated on a 1.1 acre lot and offers character and elegance from the outside in! The exterior offers large shade trees, double driveways (one to the main house & attached portico/carport, the other to the 2 car garage w/extended driveway parking) + an over-sized covered back patio w/dual overhead fans. The interior great room greets with high ceilings, floor-to-ceiling fireplace & 3 large arched windows that command the space and allow for great natural lighting. The island kitchen overlooks the great room and offers an eye-catching floor design, gas cooktop on the island, double ovens, serving bar, breakfast area + formal dining room. Private Primary bedroom offers a door leading to the back patio + a spa-like bathroom w/double sinks, vanity, soak tub and a walk-in shower that will WOW! Upstairs offers 3 additional bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, game room/entertainment area w/a balcony overlooking the front lawn. **495 Bass Way Court, Ridgeland Shores in Montgomery. ML# 20015607. \$474,900**



4 +/- acres of pure bliss! This property offers a totally updated/chic home + 3,994 acres + over-sized garage (24x25) + a barn (24x24) with a full bedroom and half bathroom + new private water well (420 +/- ft deep) + two RV hook-ups. Approximately 12 min from I-45 and less than 30 min from 59 and located in sought after Willis ISD. The exterior is equipped with fencing on 3 sides of the acreage and cyclone fencing right off the back patio for a "backyard" space. The

main house boasts a 90% updated home from a new roof to a fully transformed house that includes: New HVAC, new roof, new windows, new interior/exterior breaker boxes, new plumbing (PEX tubing), water heater, whole kitchen, bathrooms, 24x11 back patio, over a 30ft long covered front patio, barn w/room + half bathroom (barn can easily be converted into an RV garage and/or have a second floor built on to living space). This place can easily be horse/animal ready.

10988 Rose Royal Drive, Hillcrest in Conroe. ML# 7888899. \$389,700



Pool Time! The backyard is equipped with a private pool + spa, two levels of covered and uncovered entertainment space and a ground level lawn for kids, dogs and/or garden! The home offers a double car driveway, a 2 car garage + a 2 full car or truck attached brick carport, an extended front covered porch ready for relaxation and all located on a quiet cul-de-sac street. The interior greets w/a two story foyer, warm wood floors lead to the spacious living room w/wall of

windows overlooking the pool area & a gas fireplace. Open kitchen w/island with bar seating space, gas cooktop, granite counters, breakfast area + formal dining room. The Primary bedroom is on the 1st floor and offers double sinks, vanity area, walk-in shower, soak tub, 2 walk-in closets (one has a top notch custom closet system!). Gameroom, study area, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms are located upstairs. Conveniently located in Graystone Hills, minutes to I-45, elementary school is in the neighborhood, walking trails, parks, pool. **2408 Bramlet Drive, Graystone Hills in Conroe. ML# 64958412. \$365,000**



Chic & Clean! This home will WOW from the outside in! The exterior offers a double car driveway, 3 car garage w/custom sleek epoxy floors, shade trees, covered back patio w/cathedral ceiling dual fans, lights + the soothing sounds of the water fountain/feature that all overlooks the fenced backyard (brand new fence!) backing up to a private green belt. The interior boasts a two-story entry that leads to the living room w/solid wood floors & an eye-catching fireplace giving a soft

contemporary vibe. The Kitchen is a stunner! Check out the counter tops w/the continuous flow all the way to the floor! Classic apron front sink w/a bay window, under cabinet lighting, gas range, under cabinet wine fridge, bar for sitting, breakfast area & Formal dining. The Primary bedroom is on the 1st floor providing privacy, wood floors, fresh bathroom w/2 sinks, vanity area, walk-in shower + soak tub. Upstairs you will find the gameroom, 4 very spacious bedrooms and 2 full bathrooms (Jack & Jill setup). **8910 Edenbridge Street, Memorial Creek in Spring. ML# 50821464. \$358,700**



Great location PLUS peace & tranquility all situated on a park-like 1.38 acres with mature trees, manicured flower beds + 2 RV hookups! This 3 bedroom/2 full bathroom + half bathroom w/kitchenette area in the oversized garage offers so much! Tile floors w/wood inlays, fresh interior paint, spacious living room w/brick fireplace, wood ceiling beams and wall of windows that overlooks the back patio. Light & bright kitchen w/stylish granite counters, bar seating, gas cooking, and a dining room w/bay window. The Primary bedroom of-

fers great natural light, awesome storage/closet, vanity area and an oversized shower. The secondary rooms are large and offer great closets. The exterior is equipped with a private water well, oversized garage, storage/covered parking area, HUGE fenced backyard and a generous covered patio. Updates include: Roof, windows, paint, window coverings, kitchen, bathrooms + more! High & dry! No flooding. **23257 Brook Forest Road, Brook Forest in New Caney. ML# 80939415. \$317,700**



This home is CHARMING! From the front to the back this home has a chic mid-century vibe! The interior will immediately WOW when you enter through the 3 Lite front door! The living room greets w/wood-like floors, floor-to-ceiling fireplace & awesome picture windows. Private study/office or gameroom is located off the living w/double entry w/doors on each entry for privacy. The updated kitchen offers wood cabinets, sleek solid surface countertops, stainless gas cooktop and hood vent, stainless dishwasher + industrial farmhouse sink. The Primary bedroom w/walk-in closet & modern

bathroom w/sleek features. Secondary bedrooms are spacious w/great closets. The detached garage boasts a large air conditioned room on the 2nd floor! The exterior has a new roof, large back patio, manicured landscaping. Panorama offers a Golf Course, pool, Golf shop, Restaurant + NO HOA dues! UPGRADES: *new A/C *kitchen remodel *new front door & back French doors *exterior paint job on brick and new landscaping.

134 La Quinta Drive, Panorama-Hiwon in Conroe. ML# 33957776. \$258,900



Check out this charming Craftsman-style, well-kept three bedroom home with a gameroom! The exterior boasts a covered front patio overlooking the shaded front yard, a large covered back patio w/a private fenced yard, fresh exterior paint, 5 year old roof, gutters + sprinkler system. The interior provides a very open & airy floor plan w/tile and wood floors throughout most of the home. Large living room w/wall of windows and striking wood floors. Island kitchen with breakfast bar, breakfast area + formal dining room w/wood floors.

The Primary bedroom is spacious and offers a very sizable bathroom with vanity area, walk-in shower + soak tub. PLUS: a PRIVATE retreat/gameroom between the secondary bedrooms! Great setup for all members of the family! The interior has fresh paint, new carpet in bedrooms, ceiling fans and so much more! The neighborhood is equipped with a refreshing pool, parks, lakes, tennis courts, walking trails and social clubs like swim teams and bunco!

12818 Benton Park Lane, Villages of Northpointe in Tomball. ML# 29716135. \$252,700



Bright & cozy 2 story, 4 bdrm home on almost 1/4 acre lot in highly sought after Kleinwood Neighborhood. This updated Home offers a new roof, double paned Low E windows, new carpet in living room, new concrete driveway and much more! The interior boasts a HUGE living room with a fireplace and picture windows overlooking the large backyard. Fresh kitchen with wood cabinets, granite counters, breakfast bar overlooking the formal dining room, buffet/coffee area, and breakfast area, + formal dining rooms. All bedrooms are

located upstairs and are very spacious. The Primary bedroom has great character w/a sliding barn door leading to bathroom w/double sinks, LARGE walk-in shower + two closets. The backyard is made for fun & entertaining w/2 large covered patios, storage building plus PLENTY of room to add a pool on this almost 1/4 acre lot! Walking distance to all 3 schools, dog park, swimming pool plus Meyer Park. Home did not flood.

7619 Felician Lane, Kleinwood in Spring. ML# 45509520. \$237,300

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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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Well, as we enter into September it is safe to say nothing much has changed from the summer months. We are continuing on the road of uncharted territory as we move through another month of 2020, which means we are continuing to learn what new normal behaviors are expected of us with changing variables on a daily basis and it gets to be a bit confusing. Nobody seems to know what normal even looks like anymore. Here at Dock Line we will continue to be here to support our community, since now more than ever our community needs all of our support. As we continue to navigate the new waters of this ever changing year, just know here in Texas we will still have a few more beach days and cookouts but there will also be social distancing, smaller gatherings and a crazy school year kick off. Our new normal is anything but normal. It is true our vocabulary has changed but throughout it all, the message remains the same. We are a community of resilience, compassion and generosity. It has become apparent what a great community in which we live in. We encourage everyone to take a look around, celebrate the little things and support your local businesses. They need your support now as we all struggle to get through this unprecedented time. If we all stick together we will be stronger than ever. Until next month, be kind and stay safe...



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Lake Conroe

MAGAZINE



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SEPTEMBER 2020



ON THE COVER



If you need to find your beauty again, come to Stone Creek Wellness & Medical Aesthetics. You can find them at 19782 TX-105, #122, Montgomery, TX 77356. They are open Monday-Friday from 8:30AM-5:00PM. Call them at (936) 582-4555 or learn more about available treatment options at <https://stonecreekwellness.com/>.

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Lake Conroe

Verle "Ozzy" Osborne
PUBLISHER

Linda Sharver
EDITOR

Coconut/GT2
MANAGING EDITORS

Kelly L. O'Quinn
ART DIRECTOR

Susan Osborne
OFFICE MANAGER

David Donahoo, Colton Rucker
SEO SPECIALISTS

Walt Thompson
DIRECTOR OF SALES

Angela Glezman
Stephanie Davis
SALES ASSOCIATES

Brian Sherman
Hannah Sherman
Matthew Calhoun
WRITERS

Jessie Smith Photography
PHOTOGRAPHER

CONTRIBUTORS:

James M. Bright • Tom Stark, M.D.

Butch Terpe • Ruby Cross
Lisa Wollin

Walter D. Wilkerson, Jr., M.D.

Dr. Todd R. Custer, D.C.

Chris Wootton, ChFC

Dr. Bonnie Cameron

Bronwyn Clear

Kay L. Lee

Jimmy Thompson

Alice Best

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P.O. Box 1203, Willis, TX 77378

Telephone: 936-890-7234

E-mail: ozzy@docklinemagazine.com

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Finding Your Beauty Again

In a stress-filled world, learn how Stone Creek Wellness & Medical Aesthetics helps you restore confidence in yourself.

BY: BRIAN SHERMAN



Stress has a way of wearing down our bodies and adding “character” in places we wish it wouldn’t. As we get older, more wrinkles and fine lines start showing up and the beauty we once saw in the mirror seems harder to find. Then come along events and circumstances that are out of our control that seem to accelerate the process, further hiding our original beauty behind the constant strain of worry and uncertainty. Saying we live in uncertain times is a bit of an understatement.

In the attempts to manage your ever-changing life, it can be easy to neglect the most important piece of the entire puzzle: you.

Self-care is more important than ever, and one of the best ways to restore your confidence is to find your beauty again. Somewhere in the story of your life, you stopped taking care of

yourself the way you should. Spouses, kids, friends, jobs, and all the other responsibilities of life seem to take precedence, while your own personal care takes a back seat...sometimes for years and even decades. None of those things should be neglected, but you should never have to lose yourself in the process.

It happens slowly - losing sight of your personal beauty. The wrinkles start showing up, your skin starts to look worn out, the extra weight sneaks on your body, and before you know it, you’ve forgotten what the real you looks and feels like. It’s a sad reality, and one that far too many struggle with, perhaps yourself included.

So, if you’re reading this, take it as an invitation to find your forgotten beauty again. Stone Creek Wellness & Medical Aesthetics is here for that very reason.

For over 10 years, Stone Creek Wellness & Medical Aesthetics has been providing life-giving, beauty-restoring services to women (and men) in Montgomery County.

Find Your Beauty Again

With a little help and a talented, professional approach, finding your beauty again is closer than you think. You really can reverse the effect of years of stress and aging, and restore your body to its original beauty. You can look and feel younger and age gracefully.

When it comes to aesthetic and cosmetic services, it’s more important than ever to understand the beautiful truth: no two people are alike. If you want to restore your natural beauty, you need a personalized approach and a skilled team who understands exactly what you want and need to look and feel your best.

“Stone Creek offers services that are based on individual desires, needs and expectations,” says Manager Linda Teague. “Donna Lloyd is a registered nurse who has been in the business and executing the services for the last 14 years. Staying up with the latest training, treatments and practices of the aesthetics and nonsurgical options is an ongoing commitment of everyone in the office.”

The team at Stone Creek works together closely to give every patient the best possible results. That starts with a free personal assessment. “Stone Creek Wellness offers complimentary consultations and we believe this is critical in working with the patients new and existing to our office,” says Linda. “Services, needs and age of our patients change, as should the goals we have in predicting the realistic outcome for each individual. No two people need the same treatment, the same amount of treatment, or the same process of treatments

as another. We will not do anything you don’t need. This is what we live by.”

Here is what one happy customer had to say:

“This place is amazing! They offer so many different top of the line services ! From Botox to non-invasive weight loss solutions, the list of what they can do is very impressive. It has been recently renovated and looks gorgeous in there! The staff is incredibly caring and VERY well trained, all under the supervision of 2 doctors. Highly recommended!” – Melissa H.

A Professional Approach to Looking Your Best

To help you look and feel your best, Stone Creek Wellness Center and Medical Aesthetics provides a wide range of services such as massage therapy, weight loss, body contouring, HydraFacials, dermal fillers, chemical peels, Botox, laser services, permanent make-up and much more. The facility got its start in 2009 as an extension of Dr. Jennifer Chiles’s Stone Creek Family Practice and has since expanded its range of services with a dedicated staff of medical and aesthetic professionals.

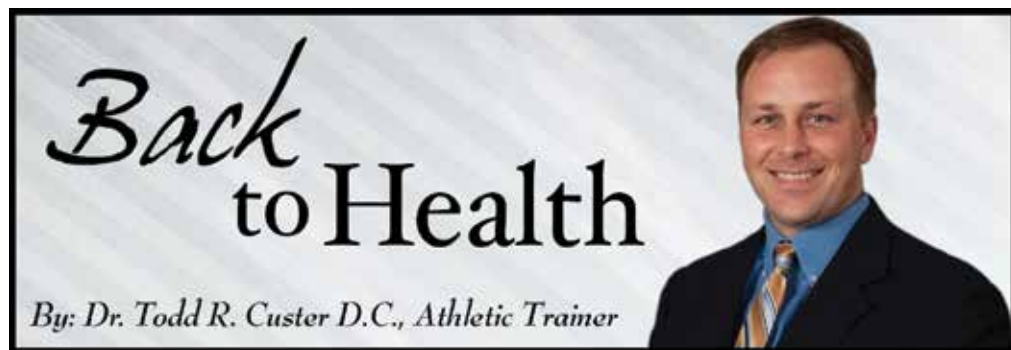
Stone Creek Wellness is part of a legitimate medical practice. Although that seems like a rather obvious statement, it’s actually an important detail to pay attention to. The medical background and knowledge behind every med spa varies widely in Texas. When it comes to safety and medical expertise, Stone Creek Wellness operates at the highest standards. Unlike other programs in which aesthetic injectables are administered by well-intentioned amateur practitioners, at Stone Creek such procedures are handled by trained medical professionals.

Changing without Changing - How Stone Creek Wellness & Medical Aesthetics is Keeping its Doors Open

The current environment of the world has made it necessary to change how most businesses operate. Stone Creek Wellness is not immune to the uncertainty. “This year we sadly have to cancel our yearly “Sip and See” event,” says Linda. “The coronavirus pandemic our world has been hit by has halted all possibilities of our most famous event due to the amount of people we can safely see in the office. We are continuing to follow all guidelines to prevent any possible spread in our office to our patients or ourselves and appreciate the amazing cooperation and understanding so that we can continue to keep our doors open for you.”

The unfortunate changes, however, have not dampened the spirit of good service. “As many of you already know,” Linda says, “we offer and will continue to offer every single savings we can find for you!”

If you need to find your beauty again, come to Stone Creek Wellness & Medical Aesthetics. You can find them at 19782 TX-105, #122, Montgomery, TX 77356. They are open Monday-Friday from 8:30AM–5:00PM. Call them at (936) 582-4555 or learn more about available treatment options at <https://stonecreekwellness.com/>. ♦



Can You Do the “Tactical Frog”?

What is the “Tactical Frog”?

It is a combination exercise that will strengthen the core (back, side and stomach muscles) and the buttock and hip rotators.

Which conditions does it help?

It is an excellent exercise for general core strengthening. It is a very good exercise to treat hip bursitis, hip tendonitis, sciatica and lower back pain.

When should I avoid this exercise?

If you have had a hip replacement it should be avoided due to the internal rotation of the hip. In addition, if you have severe arthritis of the spine, or recent back surgery (within 1 year) it is not recommended.

How do you do the “Tactical Frog”?

1- Lie on your stomach with your weight on your forearms and knees. Make sure your knees

are separated wide.

2- Lift your torso into the air into a front plank position.

3- With your knees bent rotate both legs to the left (this causes your left hip to internally



rotate and your right hip to externally rotate). You should notice your left hip will drop toward the floor, but keep your hips and torso raised from the floor.

4- Slowly rotate the legs to the right until you reach the end of range of motion.

5- Repeat for 10-15 times, or until you feel a cramping/fatigue sensation to the deep buttock/hip.

Todd R. Custer, D.C., A.T.C. – Dr. Custer is a doctor of chiropractic and a certified athletic trainer. He has been rehabilitating injured athletes at the high school, collegiate, and professional levels (Philadelphia Eagles Football Club) since 1994.

Dr. Custer graduated from Texas Chiropractic College summa cum laude, and is currently treating patients at Better Care Chiropractic & Physical Therapy.

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

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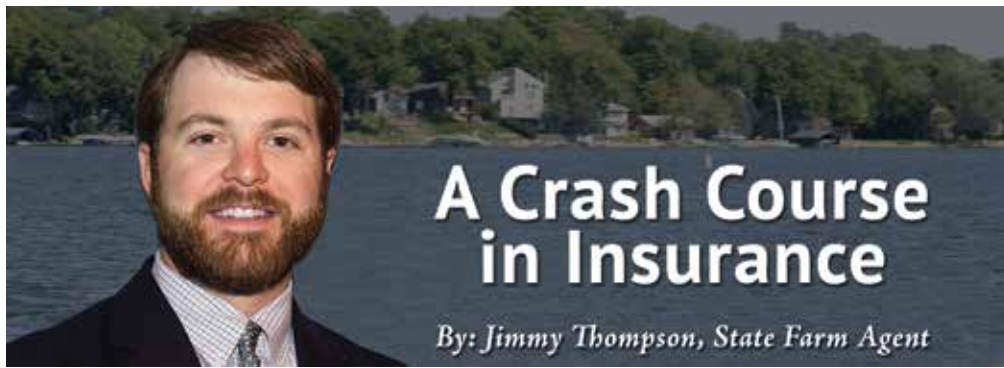
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some days she is the boss, sometimes she is our IT specialist and some days she is our top producer! Many times she is our customer service specialist and every now and then she keeps Jimmy in check! Other days she is our agency psychiatrist, yet other days she is our schedule coordinator, all while remaining the leader of our agency management team; AND despite having to wear so many hats for so many days.....she is deeply committed to our clients, our team and State Farm.

Thank you Mrs. Rhonda for all that you do! ♦

Cheers to Mrs. Rhonda!

We want to recognize our beloved Regional Manager – Mrs. Rhonda Cavalier for her **30 year anniversary with State Farm!!**

Mrs. Rhonda is one of our incredible leaders and a very big part of why our team is so special. There is not a problem she can't solve, there is not a client too big or too small that she doesn't absolutely love AND her commitment to State Farm is rare and unwavering!

Most days she is our Regional Manager, but some days she is the office mom,



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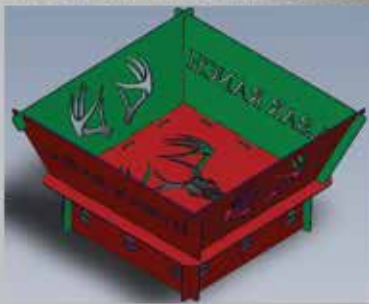
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with names and logos



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***"From plan design, finding the right
piece of property, I guide you through
the entire process."***

—SCOTT GENTRY

BY: HANNAH SHERMAN



You've been thinking about it for a long time now. You have your dream home pictured in your mind and may have even peeked on realtor websites to see if it's out there. What you've discovered is that in order to buy a house in that perfect location you have to sacrifice square footage. Or that the house with both a large walk-in closet and a chef's kitchen does not exist. But you don't have to compromise. Your dream home can be a reality with the help of S. Gentry Custom Homes.

Scott Gentry has been providing custom homes for over twenty years in Montgomery County and its surrounding communities - one of the nation's fastest growing areas. Born and raised in Conroe, Scott could not ask for a better place to live, work and serve. He observes that "Conroe has always felt like a little town with all the things you'd want from a bigger city...it's got the best of everything. You have the lake and the forest, and yet it's not far from Houston and The Woodlands...and it's nice to go out in the community and see people you know or have built houses for."

Something many potential custom homeowners do not think about is how closely they will be working with their builder. Scott says, "You have to make sure that the person that is building your home is a good fit for you."

A local family, the Lancasters, had this to say: "We contracted with S. Gentry Custom



Continued on page 18 ➡

*Your dream home can become
reality with the help of S.
Gentry Custom Homes.*



Homes to build our dream home. One of the best decisions we ever made. We looked into several builders and homes they had completed, none were of the quality of S. Gentry Custom Homes. Once meeting the owners and going over the contract, we realized we made a good decision. They were very kind, professional and paid attention to detail. They were always there to answer any questions or concerns and always made any changes we wanted happen. We not only built a home with S. Gentry Custom Homes, but a friendship as well. I highly recommend this builder to anyone looking to build a home."

Scott's expertise is aided by his experience in all different facets of the construction business, even driving a truck for Yancey Concrete. Before starting his own business, Scott worked closely with his father and became interested in working with people and enjoyed the ins and outs of home building and design. His mother worked as an interior design consultant, which fed Scott's interest in the creative aspects of home design. Scott has since only built on his family's reputation of quality and dependability.

S. Gentry Custom Homes offers a wide range of building services to individuals, families, businesses, and organizations in Montgomery County and the surrounding areas for the following:

- Residential Construction
- Commercial Construction
- Remodeling & Additions
- Construction Consulting
- Metal Buildings, Barndominiums

- Outdoor Living and Outdoor Kitchens
- Pools

"From plan design, finding the right piece of property, I guide you through the entire process. We thrive on personal interaction and also make a point to have subcontractors that do the same," says Scott. "When somebody builds a house with me, they call me. For any meetings, questions or concerns, it's my direct line, not a foreman."

What's on your wishlist? A popular and emerging trend is creating an interesting space in which clients can work from home.

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Happy customers, the Peterson family, spoke of their experience: "Our search for a custom homebuilder was simple. After our first appointment with Scott, discussing our vision and expectations, Scott made our decision easy. We never even met with a second builder and we have never looked back! Scott was so easy to work with, answered all of our questions, he was very quick to respond to a call, text or email. Everything promised was delivered. Scott was super trustworthy, laid back but dependable and very receptive to our dream for our home! We love our house!"

Before you get started, Scott suggests doing your research. "When it comes to building a house, it's almost an infinite amount of choices," he says. "If you can get your mind wrapped around not only the style you want but the plan

that you want, and the more details you can understand before you dive into the process, the easier it's going to be. There are so many decisions to make and contemplate. It is better to have all of those things in mind beforehand."

How do you know if a custom home is right for you? Do you own your own property, want a home specifically tailored to you, and/or want to participate in the creative process? Then S. Gentry Custom Homes can make your dream home come true.

Your forever home is a call away. Learn more about S. Gentry Custom Homes by visiting their website at SGentryCustomHomes.com. Contact Scott Gentry by calling his office at (936) 890-1313. Their office is located at 9560 FM 830, Willis, Texas. Office hours are Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. ♦



Scott has worked in all different facets of the construction business, even driven a concrete truck.



S. GENTRY

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Grease Monkey, for all your Preventive Car
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By: Matthew Calhoun



Our amazing crew members are some of the best in the industry who truly care about our customers, their safety and their vehicles.



Preventative service is not all we do, Grease Monkey also specializes in mechanical services.

Whether it's basic car care maintenance, state inspection or quality automotive mechanical service by a reputable business has just gotten easier at your neighborhood Grease Monkey. Locally owned, and community invested for over a decade, Grease Monkey Montgomery has been here to give you the confidence you need when servicing your vehicle for its preventive maintenance and minor mechanical needs. Trust is the priority when getting any service on your vehicle at Grease Monkey.

Although life may be somewhat different in many ways due to the stresses surrounding the uncertainties we all have been faced with thus far in 2020, that doesn't change the way owners Jim and JoAnn Wheat as well as the entire tenured crew are doing business at Grease Monkey Montgomery. Cleanliness is Key, surfaces are wiped down and sanitized several times throughout the day, employees and customers are encouraged to wear face coverings and precautions are taken to make sure social

distancing stays relevant for the benefit of everyone. "Safety and comfort has always been one of our top priorities here at Grease Monkey, but more particularly during this pandemic," says Jim Wheat. "Our customers expect the highest quality of care for not only their vehicle but for themselves and their family as they visit our service center, and our amazing crew members are some of the best in the industry who truly care about our customers, their safety and their vehicle."

With service like this, it's hard to beat. A customer recently points out on Google Reviews: "Great pricing and FAST. Also, they made accommodations for Covid-19 with contactless service for me! I stayed in my car the entire time, I put my payment, cash, in my trunk and when they were done they took the money and left my receipt. Many thanks to Grease Monkey for the consideration!"

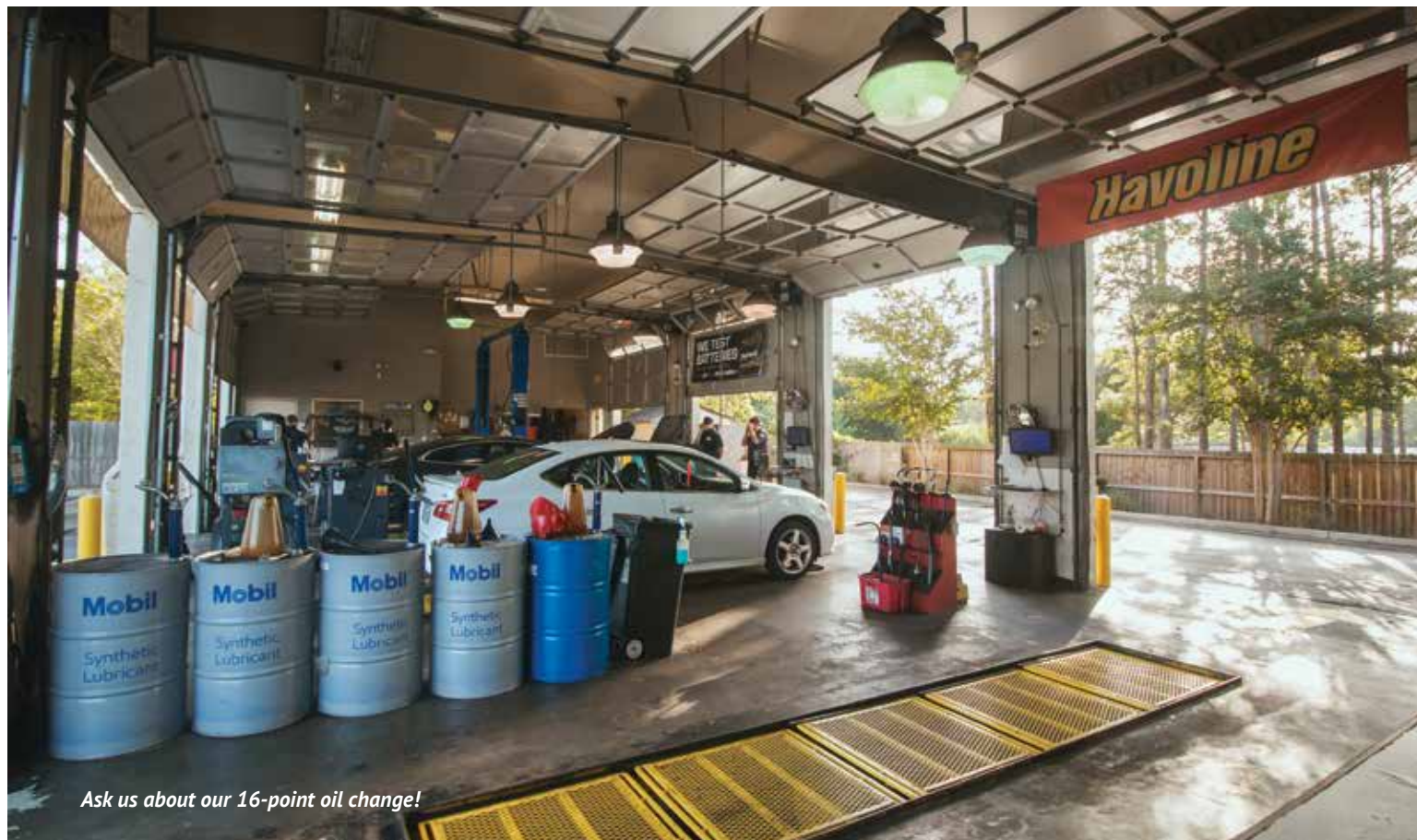
Not only is Grease Monkey a part of the Montgomery community so are its crewmem-

bers. Tyler Blazier, General Manager and "Pit Crew" leader for over four years takes great pride in the quality of work performed on each customer's vehicle. Tyler is also the lead mechanic and sets the highest expectations of the entire crew. "I not only manage this Grease Monkey location but I am also a member of the community and I see myself as a good neighbor to every customer who visits my staff and I here at the store," says Blazier.

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Each make and model vehicle that you drive comes with a list of manufacturers recommendations of regular maintenance items and services at particular intervals to ensure the optimization of your vehicles performance. Checking the fluid levels and changing the oil with quality motor oil at regular intervals helps increase the longevity of the vehicle's engine and parts. Grease Monkey offers a comprehen-

Continued on page 22 ➞



Ask us about our 16-point oil change!

sive 16-point oil change which includes checking the tires, filters, battery, headlights, radiator, belts, transmission and wipers to name a few. The checklist – a routine element for every Full Service Oil Change, is performed by the Grease Monkey trained “Pit Crew” in a manner that is precise, quick and complete to get you on your way in a matter of minutes!

Additionally, at Grease Monkey, a safety

check is performed on each vehicle to give the consumer “Peace of Mind” and knowledge of any future concerns. The outside windows are also cleaned and the vehicle’s interior is vacuumed with each service as well. It’s simply excellent, friendly customer service at your neighborhood Grease Monkey here in Montgomery!

“Everyone there is so knowledgeable and always checks my fluid levels so I know when they need changed”, said a local resident. “I always appreciate the complimentary window wash and vacuuming. This is the ONLY place I go for repairs and services!”

Local franchise owners, Jim and JoAnn set the bar high for community engagement and quality customer service. They believe investing

in the community and supporting local events such as youth sporting events, local golf tournaments, high school activities and charitable events, is invaluable to show their appreciation and to give back to the community. “Small businesses need to be vested in the community, this should be the highest priority when looking where to invest local marketing dollars”, says Mr. Wheat. Grease Monkey also honors customers that serve our country with discounts for active military, first responders, veterans, and any law enforcement. Seniors and students also receive discounted services.

In addition to the preventative maintenance services, Grease Monkey specializes in mechanical services as well, such as brakes,





Precise, quick, and complete to get you on your way in a manner of minutes!

radiator service, air conditioning services, tune-ups, tire rotations, wiper blades, state inspection and minor bumper to bumper vehicle care on all vehicle make and models. Grease Monkey is the fast, convenient, affordable and proficient venue for servicing your vehicle from knowledgeable trained experts. The staff is friendly and a part of the community. Stop by for any maintenance or repair concerns to receive honest advice you can trust. Their reputation is and has been well known in the community for over 10 years!

The 25-foot inflatable Monkey that sets high on the property is hard to miss and a defi-



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nite branding landmark. Wheat says, "Just Look for the Monkey – It's not only a place you can trust, it's a Face you can TRUST!"

Learn more about Grease Monkey Montgomery by visiting their website www.Grease-MonkeyAuto.com/Montgomery-Texas or call (936) 582-5030. Drop by for service at 18550 Hwy 105 West, Montgomery. Service is available Monday through Friday 8:00am-6:00pm and Saturday 8:00am-5:00pm. Closed Sundays. ♦

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Texas Parks and Wildlife Completes Annual Vegetation Survey on Lake Conroe

By: Alice Best, Fisheries Biologist

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Inland Fisheries College Station - Houston District

Twelve patches of hydrilla found in the Caney Creek arm of Lake Conroe and were treated with a selective herbicide to control hydrilla spread with low impact to native beneficial species. Texas Parks and Wildlife Technician Mike Gore dives to feel for hydrilla tubers near the largest patch of hydrilla to determine if it has spread.

Every summer, Texas Parks and Wildlife, College Station-Houston Fisheries district team conducts an annual vegetation survey on Lake Conroe. The Conroe surveys began when hydrilla dominated the lake and were used to track its coverage and control. We still use annual surveys to track invasive species, but nowadays we also get to follow restoration efforts of beneficial native species.



The Lake Conroe Native Plant Nursery was built by Seven Coves Bass Club and Texas Parks and Wildlife and is maintained by the San Jacinto River Authority. Each year the San Jacinto River Authority plants over 600 native plants into Lake Conroe for habitat restoration, often with the help of volunteers, anglers, and Texas Parks and Wildlife.

Many scientific surveys will sub-sample a population instead of counting each individual. For example, we may catch 200 largemouth bass and use their ages, lengths and weights to estimate what the entire population of bass looks like without disrupting the fishery by trying to catch every single fish. Not so with our vegetation survey! Each summer we travel the entire perimeter of Lake Conroe's shoreline—every cove, canal, and island—cataloguing the size and species of each plant we find touching the water. This data is then mapped in a Geographic Information System (GIS) which allows us to calculate the total area each species covers. The process also creates maps that we can share with the San Jacinto River Authority to control invasive species and

with our restoration partners like Seven Coves Bass Club to promote native beneficial species with and find the best fish habitat.

Vegetation surveys can be grueling. We spend long days in direct sunlight, traveling at a snail's pace around the lake with no end to the boat engine's drone as we monotonously note each species. However, it gives provides us with data vital to manage the fisheries and habitat on Lake Conroe and is one of the best chances we have to see every detail

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Texas Parks and Wildlife Technician Mike Gore displays young vallisneria from a free growing colony in the northern end of Lake Conroe.

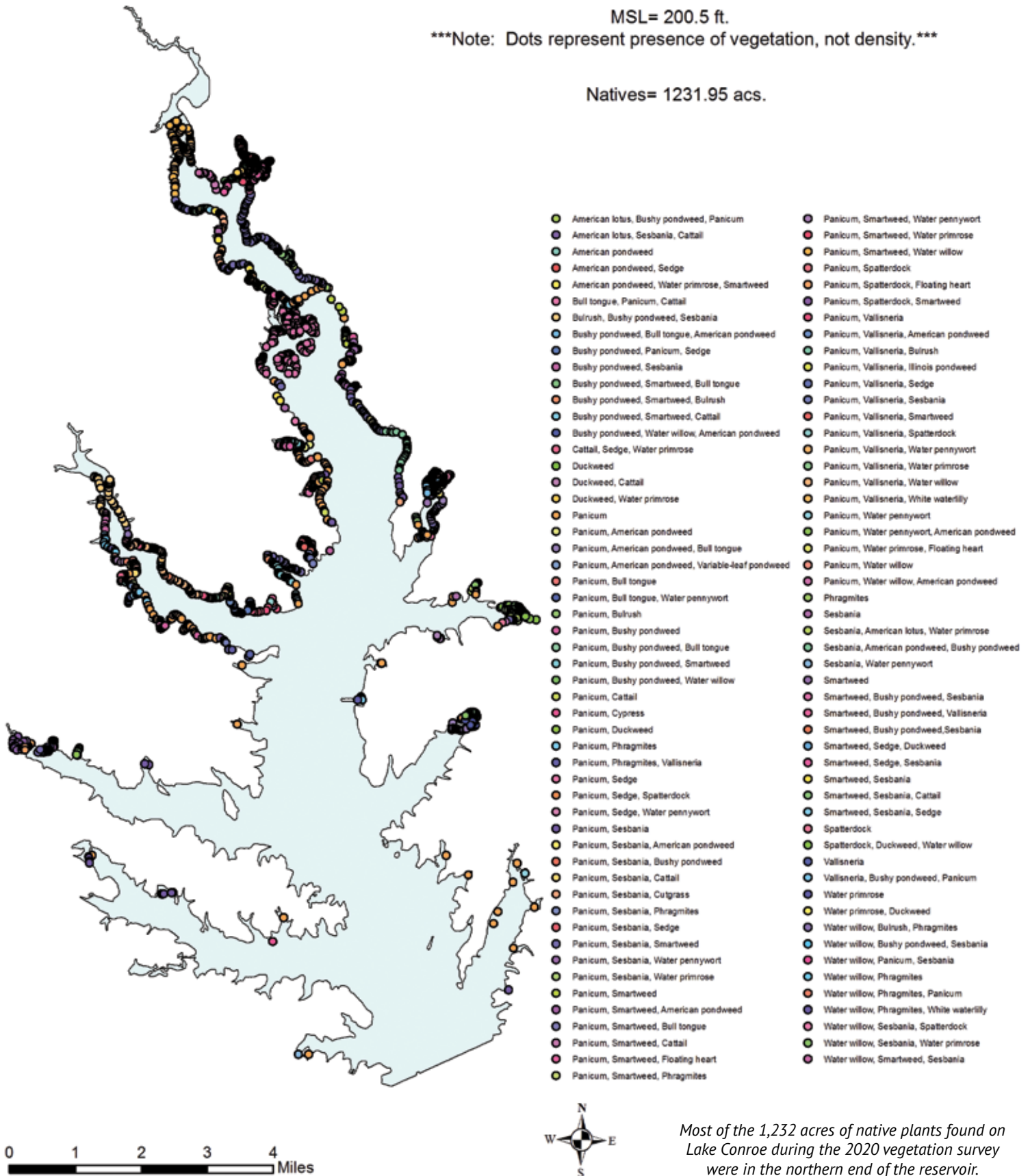
Lake Conroe Natives 2020

Survey dates 07/06-07/07, 07/10, 07/14, 07/16-07/17, 07/22-07/23

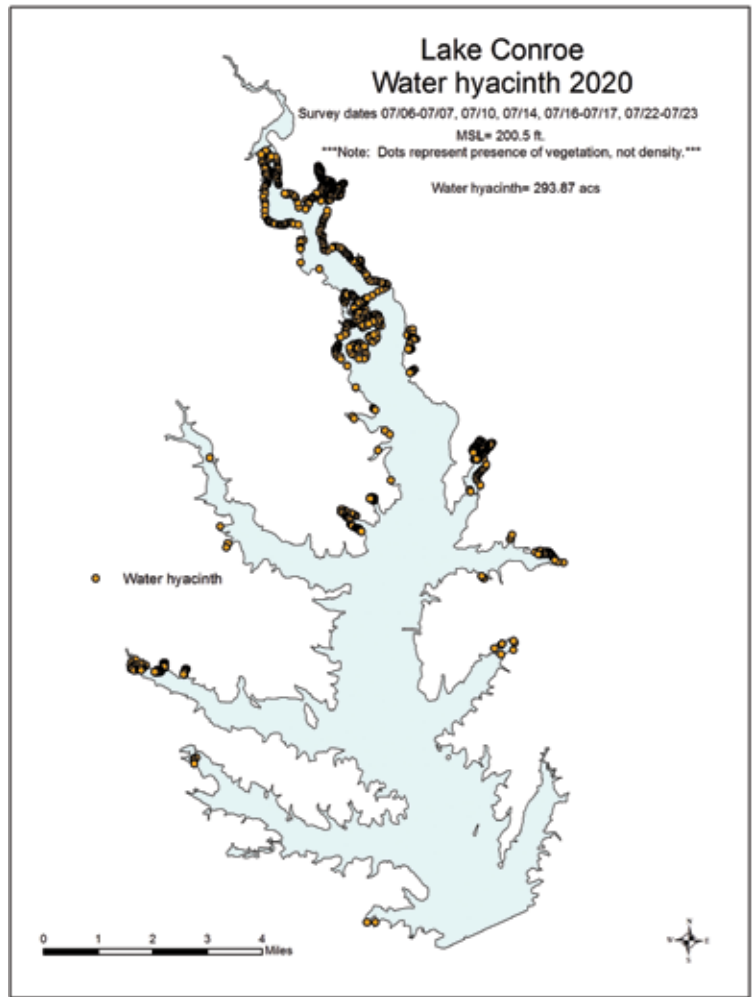
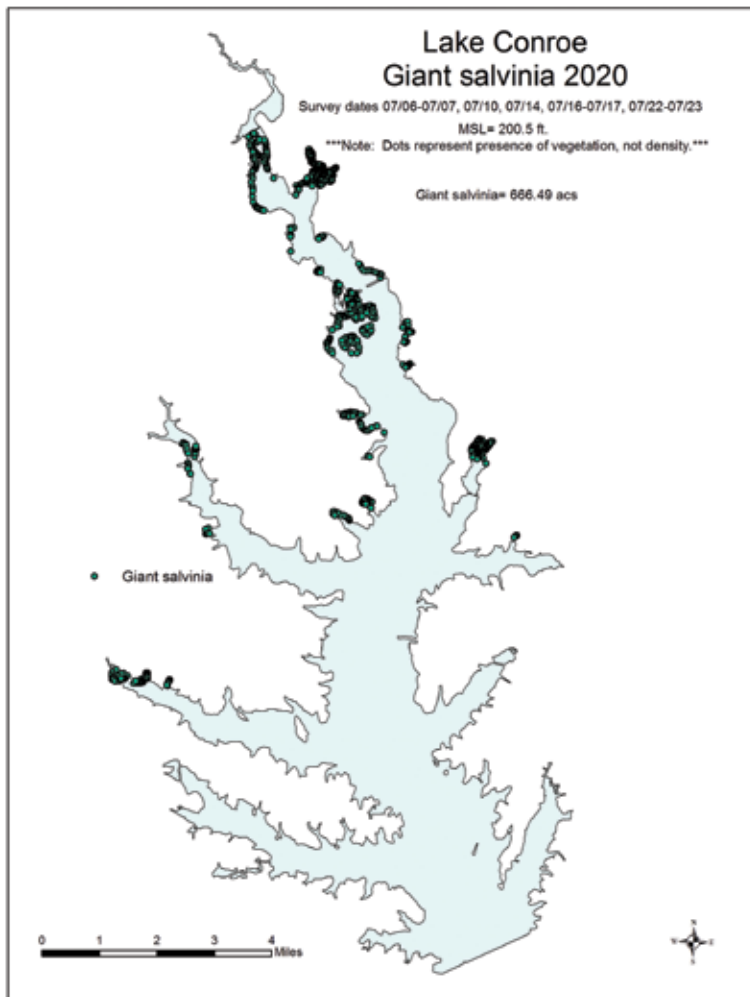
MSL= 200.5 ft.

Note: Dots represent presence of vegetation, not density.

Natives= 1231.95 acs.



Most of the 1,232 acres of native plants found on Lake Conroe during the 2020 vegetation survey were in the northern end of the reservoir.



The 2020 annual Lake Conroe vegetation survey completed by TPWD found 666 acres of giant salvinia and 294 acres of water hyacinth. Both plants expanded coverage in 2020, likely due to a lack of high spring flows that have helped flush them out in past years. The San Jacinto River Authority has been busy treating giant salvinia and water hyacinth throughout the summer.

of the lake. We often see eagles diving for fish, herons gliding over the surface, and Largemouth Bass hunting the shallows.

The 2020 survey wrapped up in July, just in time to send the results off for this article. There has been a marvelous expansion of native submersed and floating-leaved species like American pondweed, bushy pond, vallisneria, and white water lily. These species provide valuable fish and wildlife habitat, reduce erosion, and improve water quality without forming thick mats that interfere with access to the lake.



Plants like vallisneria (also called eel grass) form excellent fish and wildlife habitat and do not block access to the water. Vallisneria has formed waving underwater meadows in several sheltered coves north of the FM 1097 bridge.

These native species were introduced to Lake Conroe from a nursery built by the Seven Coves Bass Club and maintained by the San Jacinto River Authority as part of the Lake Conroe Aquatic Restoration project spearheaded by Texas Parks and Wildlife. This effort has been successful so far: this year we saw 1,232 acres of native aquatic plants, mostly in the northern end of the lake above FM 1097. Natives have been expanding for the last several years, but this year's boom was a surprise to everyone and treat to see our hard work with native restoration bear fruit. The habit these plants create will be boon to fish and wildlife throughout the lake.

Unfortunately, not all plants are beneficial to Lake Conroe. The annual survey also allows us to track the abundance of invasive species like water hyacinth and giant salvinia. Both species

form dense mats on the surface of the water that most boats cannot pass through. They prevent oxygen from diffusing into the water, lowering oxygen levels available to invertebrates and fish, block sunlight, and acidify the water. They grow quickly (giant salvinia can double in size in under 10 days) and they don't even provide good habitat for most fish species!

We did see an expansion of water hyacinth and giant salvinia this year, likely due to a lack of large rain events this spring. Lake Conroe has experienced large rain events each spring for the last several years. The rains pushed the hyacinth and salvinia out of the hard-to-reach coves and back waters, and downstream over the dam. Without Mother Nature's help this year, both species were able to expand more quickly. The San Jacinto River Authority has been busy treating these invasives, running multiple simultaneous vegetation control teams throughout the summer and treating hundreds of acres of water hyacinth and giant salvinia.

We also found minute traces of hydrilla in the Caney Creek arm of Lake Conroe. This is the first hydrilla we've seen since grass carp were stocked in 2006-2008. For several years we have expected hydrilla to reemerge in 2020-2021 as the grass carp naturally die off. Hydrilla can provide good fish habitat in some lakes, but



Native aquatic plant species, like the white water lily and vallisneria shown here, are introduced into Lake Conroe in protected founder colonies to give them a head start over herbivores like grass carp and turtles. Over time, the plants spread beyond the protective wire and create new colonies form seeds and propagules.

on Lake Conroe it has a history of forming dense mats across thousands of acres, preventing access to the water for boaters, anglers, and homeowners. We caught the reemergence early, finding just 1,300 square feet (0.03 acres) of hydrilla in 12 small patches. Each patch was immediately treated with an herbicide that selectively targets hydrilla and has low impact on native species.

Texas Parks and Wildlife and the San Jacinto River Authority intend to strictly control hydrilla on Lake Conroe to prevent access issues while protecting and promoting native aquatic plants to improve fish habitat and fishing. We know that hydrilla brings out many people's passion and love for Lake Conroe and will be seeking public input from anglers, boaters, homeowners, and local businesspeople in the coming months. We will also continue to provide updates through this publication, social media, and regular meetings. If you would like more information, to ask us questions about vegetation management, or to be notified of upcoming public meetings, please contact Alice Best at Alice.Best@tpwd.texas.gov or 979-272-1430 ext 224. ♦



Giant salvinia is a nuisance on Lake Conroe and requires constant control by the San Jacinto River Authority, who have been running multiple vegetation control groups throughout the summer.

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Mother and Daughter To Become Next Door Neighbors in The Woodlands Hills



Mothers and daughters are often close, but Nelda and Melanie are very close – next-door neighbors in fact. They are moving from their adjacently-positioned houses on a rural property in Montgomery, Texas, into new David Weekley patio homes in The Woodlands Hills that are being built right next door to each

other.

“We are going from living on acreage out in the country to a low-maintenance patio home lifestyle in a new master planned community. So, we’re selling the riding lawn mower and other heavy equipment to enjoy a more convenient way of life,” said Nelda.

Melanie said her husband, Scott, is excited about living in The Woodlands Hills as its close proximity to I-45 will easily shave off about 30 to 45 minutes off his commute to work. She notes, “Here, you are not far from the city of Conroe, Willis or The Woodlands and their abundance of shopping and quality healthcare options. The Woodlands Hills, however, is sort of tucked away, so once you take the exit for FM 830, in just one mile, you truly feel like you are worlds away from the hustle and bustle of the city.”

Melanie and Scott became empty-nesters when their daughter started college last year. Her mom convinced her to purchase a David Weekley patio home.

“I am a big fan of David Weekley,” explains Nelda. “Before we lived in the country, I had a David Weekley patio home in The Woodlands. Being here now in The Woodlands Hills is the best of both worlds. It reminds me of The Woodlands, yet it is surrounded by the still, qui-

et and peaceful nature with open green spaces that reminds me of country living. This way, we can enjoy living so close to nature without having to spend a lot of time taking care of it.”

“It’s really nice to live next door to your mom,” said Melanie. “We can borrow things from each other, like coffee beans or a cup of sugar, and she always has a pot of coffee on in the kitchen. Also, we can watch each other’s dog if one of us is traveling.” They also share a cat pet who during the day hangs out with Nelda and John as they garden and then strolls on over to Melanie and Scott’s to spend the evening.

Nelda adds, “Living next door to each other makes family gatherings so much more convenient. Melanie is the family ‘hostess with the mostess’ and loves to cook, and we love to eat and play cards, so that works out pretty well!” Nelda said she appreciates how the David Weekley open floorplan designs smartly integrate the main areas for flexibility and are perfect for entertaining.

The couples have been visiting The Woodlands Hills, taking picnics to the dog parks, and then enjoying a long walk around the neighborhood and on the nature trails. Melanie said, “Our dog Emma is a Shepherd-mix rescue so she likes the big dog park, and mom’s little Papillon dog Tristen enjoys the separate area for



small dogs. It even has a doggie water fountain, a cooling mister and an area to play dog frisbee.”

Nelda adds, “John and I are master gardeners, and we appreciate how The Woodlands Hills has been smart about the planning and placement of landscaping throughout the community. A lot of thought was put into the choices so that it would look great continuously year-round with different plants and flowers thriving among different seasons. I’m a Plein air painter so I’m looking forward to setting up my easel and creating pieces that capture the outdoor beauty of the natural area.”

The shingles are going up on the roof of Nelda and John’s new house, which will be ready for move-in this October. The homesite for Melanie and Scott’s home is currently being cleared, and their new home is targeted for completion in November. “The team at David Weekley has been so good about reporting to us once a week to tell us the status of the construction and answer any questions we may have. That’s been an excellent personal touch. We’ve been very impressed!” said Nelda.

They are installing a gate in the backyard fence they share between their homes. “Sure, we can always dart over by our adjacent driveways, but having access through a backyard gate lends some privacy, which is great when you’re still in your bathrobe!” jokes Melanie.

Just like Nelda and Melanie, it’s time to bring your family to The Woodlands Hills! ♦

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*After closing, The Howard Hughes Corporation (HHC) will make a \$500 contribution to one of the following charitable organizations as selected by the buyer: Montgomery County Food Bank, Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, Yes to Youth, HomeAid Houston or Cy-Fair Educational Foundation. A registration form must be completed at the time the contract is signed. Sales contracts not signed between 9/1/20 and 9/30/20 will not qualify. Homes must close on or before 9/30/21. Homes within The Woodlands Hills are constructed and sold by builders not affiliated with HHC or any of its affiliates, companies or partnerships. Neither HHC nor any of its affiliated companies or partnerships guarantees or warrants the obligations of, or construction by, such builders. Prices and specifications subject to change.



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Convention & Expo Center

Upcoming Public Events

You can also access the Public Events
at www.thelonestar.org

(These events are subject to change)

DATE	EVENT/OCCUPANT	CONTACT INFO	FACILITY	GENERAL INFORMATION
SEPTEMBER 2020				
9/5-6/2020	Wellness Expo	wellnessexpo.net	Convention Center	11 am - 6 pm
9/11/2020	Bridge the Blue Silent No More	bridgetheblue.com	Expo	3 - 11 pm
9/12-13/2020	High Caliber Gun Show	texasgunshows.com	Convention Center	Sat: 9 am - 5 pm Sun: 10 am - 4 pm
9/17/2020	Montg. County Friends of NRA Banquet & Auction	friendsofnra.org	Convention Center	6 - 11 pm Doors open at 5:30 pm
9/19-20/2020	Houston Reptile & Pet Show	herpshow.net	Convention Center	Sat: 10 am - 5 pm Sun: 10 am - 4 pm
9/19-20/2020	Great Dane Specialty	annchaffin@gmail.com	Fairgrounds	8 am - 5 pm
9/26/2020	Montgomery County Junque Gypsy Market	holidayextravaganza@yahoo.com	Convention Center	10 am - 5 pm
OCTOBER 2020				
10/1/2020	CLCC Lobsterfest 2020	conroe.org	Expo	5 pm
10/2-3/2020	Garage Sale Montg. Co. Employees' Committee	facebook.com/montgomerycounty employeeecommittee	Fairgrounds	7 am - 1 pm
10/3/2020	Horsemanship Clinic TX AgriLife Extension Service	936/539-7823	Expo	10 am - 4 pm Pre-Reg. Required
10/9-10/2020	Jeanine McMinns Memorial Barrel Race	jmcminnscholarship@yahoo.com	Expo	Fri: 12 pm - 12 am Sat: 10 am - 12 am
10/10-11/2020	International All Breed Dog Show IABCA	iabca.com	Fairgrounds	Sat: 9 am - 6 pm Sun: 8:30 am - 5 pm
10/12/2020	CLCC Candidates Forum	conroe.org	Convention Center	11:30 am - 1:30 pm
10/15/2020	Grounds Maintenance Conf. TX AgriLife Extension Service	936/539-7822	Convention Center	7 am - 4 pm Pre-Reg. Required
10/22/2020	CISD CTE Career Expo	936/709-7821	Convention Center	6 - 8 pm
10/22-25/2020	Swap Meet Hot Rods of Texas	hotrodsoftexas.com	Fairgrounds	Fri & Sat: 7 am - 6 pm Sun: 7 am - 4 pm
10/31-11/1/2020	High Caliber Gun Show	texasgunshows.com	Convention Center	Sat: 9 am - 5 pm



Great Veteran Home Loan Rates

Eligible Texas Veterans and Military Members have an opportunity to purchase a home with a competitive, low-interest loan with 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.

Home Loan base rate 2.89% and discounted rate 2.39%

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.

*All VLB interest rates and available discounts are subject to change at any time. The VLB base rate is subject to adjustment on the first business day of each week. All VLB loans are subject to credit approval.

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



By: Kay L. Lee,
Veterans Service Officer



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.

MILITARY SERVICE DOCUMENTS

- Military Service Records

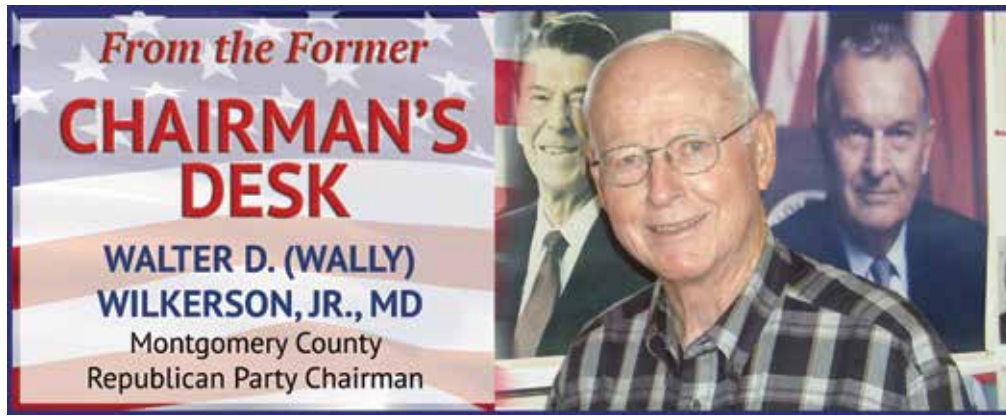
Visit the National Archives to request your military service records online, by mail, or by fax. Records include DD214/separation documents, personnel records and medical records.

- Military Record Request - Standard Form 180 (SF-180)

Request your military record using the National Archives Standard Form 180 (SF-180).

To learn more visit www.vlb.texas.gov. For more information on VA or State benefits, please contact Montgomery County Veterans Service at 936-539-7842 or via email at vetsvc@mctx.org.

Also visit us on Facebook at Montgomery County Veterans Service. ♦



Pandemics

Author Richard Brookhiser recently wrote: "The coronavirus needs no introduction. The disease has stalked the globe, slaying tens of thousands, infecting millions, and erasing trillions in economic activity." But he wondered how this crisis compared to pandemics of the past. "George Washington, who lived through two, offers a handy yardstick", Brookhiser concluded.

The American Revolution coincided with a smallpox pandemic that covered all of North America. The then unidentified virus first appeared in 1774. Soldiers in American forces began showing symptoms of fever and multiple skin ulcers in mid 1775. Washington suspected that the British had smuggled sick persons into the American ranks. Quarantine was initially used. Smallpox inoculation had not been discovered but an imperfect form was adopted. It consisted of pass-

ing a thread through skin ulcers or later known as a skin pox. The thread was then dragged across the skin causing a rash. The thread inoculation resulted in a milder disease and reduced number of deaths from a high of 30%. Washington required his soldiers to be inoculated in their home states and where they were enlisted. But there was no way to ensure consistent and proper inoculation. The British remained clueless until the worst of the pandemic was over and did not take advantage of this opportunity to attack American forces. In 1796 Edward Jenner inoculated a small child with cowpox and ultimately developed a small pox vaccine that saved millions of lives and conquered smallpox.

Brookhiser reported that Washington "encountered his second pandemic early in his second term as president". In 1793, yellow fever

struck Philadelphia, then the nation's capitol and largest city. Yellow fever and its cause were not known to 18th century medicine. The symptoms were fever, chills, bloody vomit and jaundice, the latter providing the yellow in the name of yellow fever. All means of prevention and treatment were tried. Governor Thomas Mifflin gave the order to fire cannons down the streets to clear the air. The governor then left the city along with most of the other officeholders and workers such as councilmen, aldermen, judges, clerks, brokers, chimney sweeps, constables, nurses, printers, scribes and bankers. By the early fall of that year, 5,000 of those who had been ill died. This was one tenth of the total population of Philadelphia. George Washington began to wonder where the government could meet according to Brookhiser. He moved to Germantown a suburb of the city. On November 10, Washington rode back into Philadelphia alone following one of the first frosts of the year. The near freezing temperature would have killed the mosquitoes, which later were found to cause the dreaded yellow fever disease. Philadelphia apparently looked healthy to Washington and so he ordered the government to resume business.

Brookhiser asked - "What 18th century patterns reappear in the 21st? Dueling ignorance is a hardy perennial. Even when a proven remedy exists, as with inoculation and smallpox, doubters will doubt. When all is uncertain, as with yellow fever, doctors quarrel and, worse, take those quarrels to the media." J. H. Powell, modern chronicler of pandemics, writes: "It is not deaths that make a plague, it is fear and hopelessness in people". ♦

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Understanding the Roth IRA **5** Year **RULE**

Tax rates, whether you realize or not, are some of the lowest in decades. If you believe what I believe, that taxes are headed up in the future, the Roth IRA is one of the best tax planning vehicles currently available.

Whether you're young and just getting started with retirement savings or closing in on your retirement years, the Roth can be beneficial to you and to heirs if used properly and in the right proportions in a personalized financial plan.

According to the Investment Company Institute and Plan Sponsor Council of America in 2019, only 19% of U.S. households owned a Roth IRA and only 36% of those owners contributed in 2018. It's a little better on the employer plan front with 69% of employers offering a Roth 401(k) option in 2018 but only 23% of eligible employees contributing to them in that same year.

This unfortunately underscores the tax problem that so many will be facing in retirement as they have over-stuffed pre-tax accounts and find themselves with little to no tax flexibility. Pay now or pay later, but make no mistake, you will pay. The question will be, how much?

However, when utilizing a Roth IRA there are rules. Follow the rules and you'll be on your way to better tax efficiency in retirement and avoid the pitfalls many fall into when using these vehicles.

One of the least understood "rules of the Roth" is the "five-year rule". It typically refers to when you can take tax-free distributions of earnings from your Roth IRA, Roth 401(k), or other work-based Roth account. The rule states that you must wait five years after making your first contribution, and the distribution must take place after age 59½, when you become disabled, or when your beneficiaries inherit the assets after your death. Roth IRAs (but not workplace plans) also permit up to a \$10,000 tax-free withdrawal of earnings after five years for a first-time home purchase.

While this seems straightforward, several nuances may affect your distribution's

tax status. Here are four questions that examine some of them.

1. When does the clock start ticking?

"Five-year rule" is a bit misleading; in some cases, the waiting period may be shorter. The countdown begins on January 1 of the tax year for which you make your first contribution.

For example, if you open a Roth IRA on December 31, 2020, the clock starts on January 1, 2020, and ends on January 1, 2025 — four years and one day after making your first contribution. Even if you wait until April 15, 2021, to make your contribution for tax year 2020, the clock starts on January 1, 2020.

2. Does the five-year rule apply to every account?

For Roth IRAs, the five-year clock starts ticking when you make your first contribution to any Roth IRA.

With employer plans, each account you own is subject to a separate five-year rule. However, if you roll assets from a former employer's 401(k) plan into your current Roth 401(k), the clock depends on when you made the first contribution to your former account. For instance, if you first contributed to your former Roth 401(k) in 2014, and in 2020 you rolled those assets into your new plan, the new account meets the five-year requirement.

3. What if you roll over from a Roth 401(k) to a Roth IRA?

Proceed with caution here. If you have never previously contributed to a Roth IRA, the clock resets when you roll money into the Roth IRA, regardless of how long the money has been in your Roth 401(k). Therefore, if you think you might enact a Roth 401(k) rollover sometime in the future, consider opening a Roth IRA as soon as possible. The five-year clock starts ticking as soon as you make your first contribution, even if it's just the minimum amount and you don't contribute again until you roll over the assets.¹



4. What if you convert from a traditional IRA to a Roth IRA?

In this case, a different five-year rule applies. When you convert funds in a traditional IRA to a Roth IRA, you'll have to pay income taxes on deductible contributions and tax-deferred earnings in the year of the conversion. If you withdraw any of the converted assets within five years, a 10% early-distribution penalty may apply, unless you have reached age 59½ or qualify for another exception. This rule also applies to conversions from employer plans.²

¹ You may also leave the money in your former employer's plan, roll the money into another employer's Roth account, or receive a lump-sum distribution. Income taxes and a 10% penalty tax may apply to the taxable portion of the distribution if it is not qualified.

² Withdrawals that meet the definition of a "coronavirus-related distribution" during 2020 are exempt from the 10% penalty.



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DON'T CRY OVER DRY EYE

Over 40 million Americans suffer with chronic dry eye. Symptoms include burning, redness, irritation, excess mucus, gritty feeling, blurred vision and tearing. Sufferers often attri-



bute symptoms to allergies and then self-medicate accordingly or ignore the issues. Failure to recognize dry eye early on can make management more complicated. It is important to report any symptoms to your eye care professional for proper diagnosis.

Your tears act as a barrier to the environment and the friction created by eye movements. Three important layers make up your tears. There is an oily layer, a watery layer, and a mucus layer. A disruption in any layer will cause the symptoms of dry eye. The proper treatment depends on which layer is defective.

Multiple contributing factors affect the quality of your tears. Visually demanding tasks like computer use, driving, reading and

gaming slow your blink rate. Performing these tasks without the proper spectacle correction decreases the blink rate even further. History of contact lens wear, refractive surgery, or cataract surgery are contributing factors. Medical conditions like Crohn's Disease, Hypothyroidism, and Rosacea alter tear function. Medications including diuretics, allergy, sleeping aids, antidepressants, glaucoma, and caffeine can cause disruptions in your tear layers. Ignoring symptoms for a long time can cause permanent alterations in the tear layers, increasing the severity of dry eye.

Don't cry, there are lots of wonderful advancements for the management of dry eye. Supplements help balance out your tear layers where they are lacking. These include artificial tears and oral supplements. Conserving your own tears. These include lacrimal plugs and specialty contacts designed to hold moisture and tears in your eyes. Tear production can be increased by neurostimulation and prescription eye drops. Diagnosing and treating the underlying condition is a major factor in controlling the severity of dry eye. Properly treating your thyroid disorder, correcting loose saggy eye lids, unblocking the oil glands located in your eye lids are some examples. Proper treatment and management of dry eye all starts with a visit to your eye care professional. Tell your doctor any and all symptoms you are having. Learn what type of dry eye you have. Early detection and management can save you a lifetime of dry eye misery. ♦

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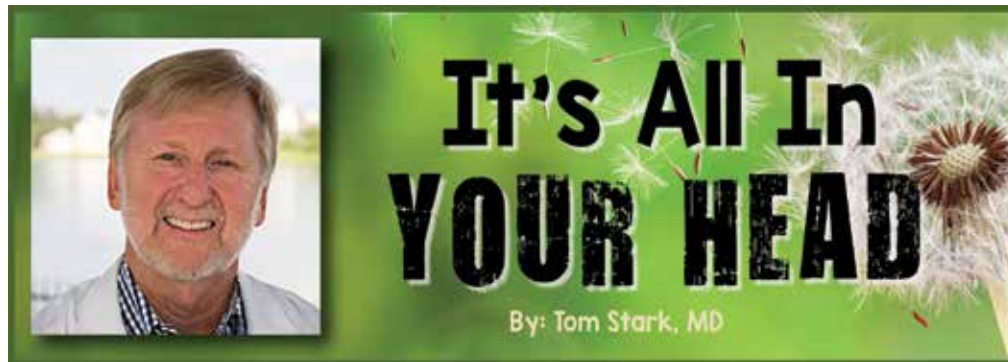
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AN UPDATE ON OUR OFFICE AND HEARING CARE

Those of you who have read my short articles in the past know that I have placed a strong emphasis on preservation of hearing. The importance of hearing for our overall well being cannot be over emphasized. The ability to hear our family and friends keeps us connected in the world. Multiple medical studies have shown that hearing loss in elderly people leads to isolation and can contribute to onset of dementia. I have found that some other ENT practices focus only on other areas such as nasal and sinus problems and do not put equal emphasis on the ear problems and hearing issues.

I am very pleased to announce that Janet Wilson, Dr. of Audiology has joined my practice. Janet has extensive experience in the field of audiology including diagnostic testing and of

course proper fitting of hearing aids. She originally did her extensive training and education in Wisconsin. She moved to Texas in 2013 and worked for a group of ENT specialists in College Station until December 2017. From January 2018 until just now she was the dispensing audiologist at Connect Hearing just down the road from my office on Highway 105 in Montgomery. She was very well liked and respected there and many of her patients will be happy to know that she has not left the area.

Many of you who have been to my office know that I personally have a hearing loss and have been wearing hearing aids for approximately 6 years now. In my teenage years (which was unfortunately a long long time ago) my favorite sporting activity was shot gun shooting.

I have very fond memories of dove hunting in South Texas with my late father and late uncle, Dr. Tom Stark of Beeville, Texas. But at that time in the 1960s none of us wore any type of hearing protection. Because of that I have similar problems to many others in my age group, hearing loss with difficulty understanding speech especially in crowded environments such as restaurants.

I am excited that Dr. Wilson has joined our practice and know that she can provide excellence in diagnosis and treatment of hearing disorders. ♦



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SJRA Receives Two Industry Excellence Awards



Congratulations SJRA! Special thank you to all of our employees for effort, devotion, and commitment to providing first class, uninterrupted services to our communities. Our employees are our greatest asset.

This year, the San Jacinto River Authority (SJRA) had the honor of receiving multiple awards at Texas Water 2020—the largest regional water conference in the U.S. The awards were the Watermark Award and the Wastewater Treatment Plant of the year award.

Know Your Watershed

SJRA received the Watermark Award for the Know Your Watershed educational campaign. The campaign was created to help residents of the San Jacinto River Basin identify their watershed, understand the San Jacinto River basin as a whole, and learn how water naturally drains throughout the region, while also providing

important water-related facts. Armed with the information on this website, residents will be able to understand how their property is being impacted by a given rainfall event by monitoring regional rainfall and stream gages from the SJRA and Harris County Flood Control District websites.

The Watermark Award for communications excellence recognizes Texas Section - American Water Works Association (AWWA) and Water Environment Association of Texas (WEAT) members who have produced top quality communications. Effective internal and external communication is essential to a member's ability to provide excellent service. Today's water resource professionals must communicate with a variety of audiences to achieve success. Through these awards, Texas Section AWWA and WEAT hope to heighten awareness among all water resource professionals about the importance of effective communication.

Texas Water 2020 held a virtual Watermark Award Reception on Friday, July 17th. The event was broadcast live on Facebook.

Wastewater Treatment Plants (WWTP) #2 and #3

Additionally, SJRA's Woodlands Division WWTP #2 and #3 received the WWTP of the Year award from WEAT in each of their designated categories. This award is presented to a WWTP in Texas that has consistently showed

outstanding performance of daily activities beyond the normal call of duty.

WEAT held a virtual award ceremony on July 10th to congratulate the winners of this year's award. SJRA is very proud of the hard work and dedication of our staff at the Woodlands Division which is working 24/7, 365 days to serve the community and ensure superior wastewater treatment.

For more information on WEAT and their awards, visit their website at <https://www.weat.org/>, like them on Facebook at The Water Environment Association of Texas and follow them on Twitter @WaterEnvAssnTX.

For information on AWWA, visit their website at <https://www.awwa.org/>, like them on Facebook at American Water Works Association and follow them on Twitter @awwa.

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 website at www.sjra.net, like SJRA on Facebook @SanJacintoRiverAuthority, follow us on Twitter @SJRA_1937, or find us on Instagram @SanJacintoRiverAuthoritySJRA, or connect with us on LinkedIn @San Jacinto River Authority. ♦



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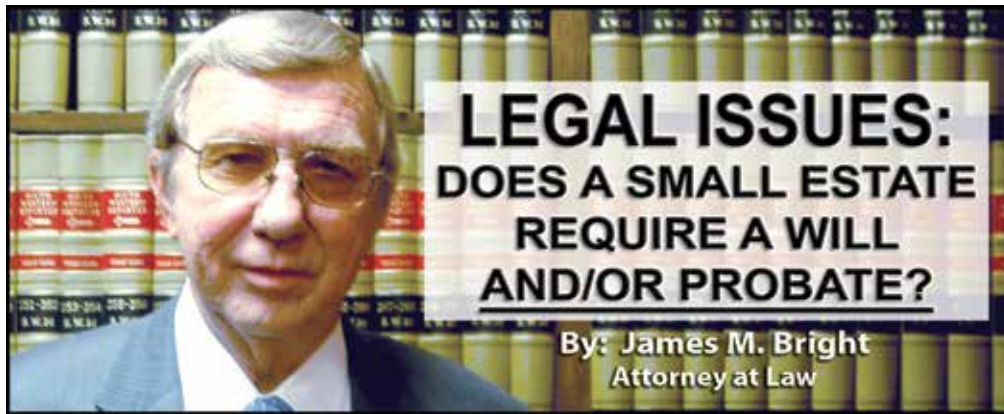
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Schedule a tour today and see why your most important wedding day decision could be the easiest one.





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

A common question that presents itself in my law practice is, "Do I need a will and should it be probated if all that I own is a house, car, some furniture and a small bank account or savings account?"

Unfortunately, the answer to this question is not always a simple "Yes" or "No" and, sadly, sometimes inquiry regarding the need for a will is not made until after a person has died. The only safe answer to, "Do I need a Will?" is "Yes".

The need for probate really depends not so much on the value of the decedent's property as it does upon the type of property.

A greatly over-simplified rule of thumb

is, "If the property being passed after death is property that must pass by title or deed, then the estate will probably need both a will and a probate proceeding."

Examples of assets which are commonly held by small estates include:

Bank or Savings Accounts – If they are only in the name of the decedent and do not have a designation on the account that they are "joint with right of survivorship" or "payable on death," then they must pass through probate.

Residence – Settling title to real property will in most cases require a probate proceeding even if the property is a community interest which is passing to a surviving spouse. This becomes even more important if the decedent had children from a prior marriage. This cir-

cumstance can result in the surviving spouse owning only one-half of the residence, and the children from a prior relationship owning the other one-half. In the most simple of cases, where the residence is being offered for sale and all of the heirs-at-law agree (a situation that does not often exist with blended families), and a title company is willing to write a title policy to protect the new owner solely upon the authority of an affidavit filed by the heirs, probate may not be required. (This is not usually a viable alternative and should not be relied upon.)

Automobiles – Typically, automobile titles may be transferred without probate through an "Affidavit of Heirship for a Motor Vehicle." A form of the affidavit may be found free of charge by downloading from the Texas Department of Transportation site online at www.txdmv.gov

Insurance Policies and IRA Accounts – These accounts typically pass outside of probate, and "letters testamentary" are not normally required to transfer ownership. A large and often encountered exception is when the decedent has failed to designate a beneficiary or the beneficiary predeceases. In those cases, probate will be required to transfer title. If there is a will, accounts will be transferred pursuant to the will; if no will, the accounts will be distributed pursuant to intestate succession.

Personal Belongings – Most personal items do not require a probate proceeding to determine how they should be distributed after death, and if those items are the only items in controversy, it is recommended in most cases that you not submit it to probate and simply find a way to distribute the estate to the decedent's heirs. In some cases, however, no matter how small the estate, it may take a probate proceeding and a court declaration of heirs to keep one heir from riding roughshod over the others.

If the decedent's estate is less than \$75,000.00 exclusive of homestead and no will exists, then it is possible to obtain a court order declaring the identities of the heirs and establishing the percentages of property which should pass to those persons. (Although this is still a probate proceeding, it is greatly simplified and is only used when no will exists.)

In addition to the preceding, at least two other things should be considered before a person decides that they may not need a will:

1. If they have minor children, they should have a will to designate a guardian. (A designation can also be made without a formal will.)

2. If they have a blended family, it is almost certain that they will need a will if they are to protect either their current or previous family.

Should you have questions regarding the necessity of a will or the necessity of probate, do not hesitate to call an attorney of your

choice to make your needs known. Most attorneys will not try to perform those tasks if all of the indications are present that they are not needed.

If you do need a will, which is probable in most cases, please be advised that it is far less expensive to do a will that expresses your intent than it is to die intestate and leave your heirs with the burden of sorting out the relationships.

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

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

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How to Start a Podcast in 2020

Starting a podcast in 2020 is a lot easier than it was a couple of years ago. Equipment is easier to use and cheaper to come by. However, that's not to say that there aren't a couple of learning curves when it comes to starting a podcast. Although the field may be less crowded than the blogging sphere, there are over 800,000 podcast shows and will soon be in the millions. If you are going to start a podcast in 2020 you'll need to up your game to be noticed even with a captive audience. Starting a podcast can be daunting, but it doesn't have to be. You can launch a podcast for your business or as a hobby. You should know that the average podcast takes time to build an audience. It's time to mix your creative side with the marketing side.

Picking Your Topic and Niche

Before you start buying equipment and scheduling podcast episodes, you are going to want to know what to talk about. Defining the topic and niche of your podcast is critical to growing and building your audience. Answer questions for yourself like:

1. What are your interests?
2. Is this just a hobby or do you want to eventually start a business with this podcast?
3. Which interest of yours would you like to further explore? Do you want to become an expert in that interest or a casual observer?
4. Do you want your podcasting to be dependent on a product or service? For example, movie reviews or political news? Going down this route may mean that your content needs to be extremely relevant or target specific niches. Meaning you'll have to keep up with timely movies and news or be very specific in who you cover. For example, you only review horror films from the 1960s or your podcast is over the rise and end of the Vietnam War covering multiple angles. The downsides of covering relevant reviews or movies is that you are always dependent on content from other sources and that content can be worthwhile or not.
5. Do you want your topic to have clearly definable facts to base itself off of? For example, a Supreme Court ruling. This is different from talking about a topic like Buddhism vs. Christianity. This is also different from talking about personal taste, i.e. ranking the albums of a classic rock band. These decisions all affect workload as you'll need to gather more information and establish yourself as trustworthy to your audience. Try brainstorming ideas that you are interested in using brainstorming techniques.

Spend some time on this process, as clearly knowing what you are

going to talk about can help guide the format, duration, and production process of your show. Defining topics and niche can also help you discern whether you need a co-host or not when you start a podcast in 2020.

Recording and Preparing Your Podcast For Launch

So you've narrowed down your topic, figured out your niche audience, and have a format for your podcast. Great! Now it's time to get to recording. If you never have tried to record a podcast or worked with microphones, you DO NOT need to spend hundreds of dollars on a microphone. Quite frankly, you need to keep your investment low as a first-timer. There is a very real possibility you don't have the right set-up for an expensive microphone and you may always quit podcasting. If that happens, you're stuck with a \$300 dollar paperweight that isn't benefiting you any. Some common items you may need for a podcast setup include:

- Computer
- Recording Software
- Microphone
- Pop Filter
- Boom Arm
- Isolation Box
- Headphones
- Audio Interface
- Mixer





Some of these items are optional or not necessary depending on your set-up. When starting out, try to keep your set significantly smaller and easy to operate. The last thing you want is to have a very technical process of recording as that can kill your enthusiasm for an episode. Do your research before buying any product and make sure it is absolutely necessary that you buy the item. Be creative, with the right treatment to a room you can even record a podcast with a voice recorder.

Where to Host Your Podcast

So, you've recorded the first couple of episodes of your podcast. You've edited them in your software. Now you're ready to upload to iTunes, except, you can't actually upload your podcast straight to iTunes or Spotify directly from your computer. iTunes and other podcasting apps need an RSS feed submitted to them. An RSS feed can come from two places, either a website or an audio host. To get started, you just need an audio host and can later transition to building a website.

What is an Audio Host, though?

An audio host is an online platform that houses all of your audio and syndicates it through an RSS feed. It makes it easy to upload and submit your podcast to iTunes, Spotify, etc. They usually will run you around \$20 dollars, although there are some free options. Select an audio host that has in-depth analytics about your podcast. It should monitor things like downloads, playing time, what country your podcast is getting the most downloads, and more.

Submit Your Podcast to iTunes and Spotify

Once you have recorded your podcast, edited them, picked an audio host, and uploaded an episode, now is the time to submit to iTunes and Spotify. This is a fairly simple process, and you'll want to submit to these podcast directories because these are the biggest platforms available. Uploading to these platforms gives you instant access to millions of listeners around the world. Try making a list of specific people on your friend's list to share the podcast with. Also, when you post your first episode on social media try to write engaging headlines about the episode or who is involved. Really sell yourself and your work, and position yourself as a content provider. What would make a potential listener's ears perk up? Start a podcast off right with having a couple of marketing tactics to get noticed. This will help get you on the new and noteworthy page which will grab you a sizable subscriber base to start with.

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 share it, then yes, you can and should start a podcast. If you want to start a podcast in 2020 and need a more in-depth resource we have you covered! At Dock Line Magazine, we have compiled a comprehensive guide (over 12k words) on starting a podcast. We go in-depth about planning and buying equipment as well as picking an audio host. Contact us today to find out more! ♦



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Garden Thyme

By: Growers Outlet

The two biggest problems homeowners encounter in the fall are Brown Patch and the emergence of cool season weeds.

Brown Patch

Rhizoctonia solani, or Brown patch appears as circular or irregular shaped patches of light brown thinned grass. The grass is yellowish and may have a smoke ring on the outside edge. The grass in the center of the ring may recover, leaving a ring effect. Brown Patch can spread rapidly and can be up to several yards in diameter. The leaves become rotted and can be removed from the runner with only a slight pull. The fungus attacks the base of the leaf creating a water soaked dark grass blade that soon wilts and turns brown. Unlike Take All Patch, Brown Patch usually is not fatal.



Brown Patch thrives when nighttime temperatures are between 60-70 degrees and when daytime temperatures do not exceed 85. BROWN PATCH WILL NOT GROW IN THE HEAT OF THE SUMMER. In September, we can see the onset of Brown Patch if we get a little cool front blow in. However, if daytime temperatures rise and stay consistently above 90 degrees the spread of the disease will cease. Another contributing factor to the spread of the disease is prolonged leaf wetness. Usually we see heavy

rain events in front of those approaching cool fronts creating ideal conditions for the spread of Brown Patch.

Cultural conditions that contribute to the spread of Brown Patch are over fertilization, overwatering, poor air circulation, bad soil aeration, poor drainage, excessive thatch, or too much shade.

We often get customers that tell us that the Brown Patch will reappear in the same spots every year. By improving some of cultural conditions many times you will see these reoccurrences stop. Improve drainage, reduce irrigation, thin out some trees and make sure you are using the proper fertilizers such as the Nitro Phos or Microlife products. DO NOT USE FERTILIZERS HIGH IN NITROGEN CONTENT IN THE FALL!

If you get Brown Patch in the same spots every year, it is advisable to pre-treat those areas just before the first cool front. Almost all the fungicides on the market with Brown Patch on the label, work well as a preventative but not as well as a curative.

For much more information on lawn problems go to our website, WWW.growersoutletinwillis.com and click on the tab for Lawn Care/ Problem Solver

Fall and Winter Weeds

Once the daytime temperatures remain below 90 degrees it is safe to use most broad leaf weed killers again without the stress that they sometimes put on St. Augustine and Bermuda lawns. Always use caution with these products as they can kill all broad leaf plants they come in contact with. Flowers are broad leaf plants and these products do not know the



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difference between weeds and flowers.

All those weeds that you saw last winter will be back because before they died from the heat they spread some of their descendants in the wind. Even those weeds that you killed with a weed killer in the spring went to seed before they died. So if you want to break that cycle of winter weeds popping up every year another course of action needs to be taken.

Most of our customers have found a better approach to control weeds is the use of pre-emergent weed killers such as Nitro Phos Barricade. These products work by killing plants in the first stages of germination. I said plants instead of grass because they will kill ALL plants in the early stages of germination. The chemical has no way of distinguishing between a weed and a leaf marigold or whatever flower or vegetable seed you may have planted. So be careful not to introduce these products into any area where seeds have been planted and have not yet germinated.

For an organic approach to pre-emergent weed control you can use corn gluten meal in a powder form.

Things to do in September

Not a whole lot to do in September because it is still plenty hot and too early to plant much of anything. Listed below are a few things you can be doing this month in your lawn and garden.

*In September the nighttime temperatures start cooling which will start promoting new plant growth. Light pruning on most plants followed by fertilization will get some healthy new growth and flowers for the fall.

*Prune roses not more than one third and fertilize.

*Prune your flowering perennials lightly and fertilize to get a good show in the fall.

*It won't be time to start fertilizing the lawn again until later in the month. DO NOT USE A FERTILIZER WITH A HIGH NITROGEN CONTENT as it promotes Brown Patch. Use Nitro Phos Fall Special lawn fertilizer or Microlife 6-2-4 organic fertilizer. Both are formulated to give you just the right amount of nitrogen.

*Get a jump start on brown patch in your lawn. Apply Nitro Phos Eagle Fungicide to areas where you have had brown patch in the past.

*Many cool season bedding plants will start showing up in the big box stores. DO NOT BUY PANSIES until the end of October or the first of November.

*Our homegrown snapdragons and pansies should become available in the last week of October or the first week of November.

*Grub damage may start showing again as the grubs start maturing. Grub control must be done in July when the grubs are immature. The treatments available today do not work well, if at all on mature grubs.

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.grower-soutletinwillis.com. We have the products and knowledge to help you have the prettiest yard on the block. ♦

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Rescue Pets... *Unconditional Love!*

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

It's always good to have pets – in good times or bad. Having a little animal to love, and be rewarded with unconditional love.

What can your children learn from a pet? Love, Commitment, Empathy, Patience and Appreciation.

Children of all ages have been a large part of Animal Shelter Volunteers of Texas (ASVT) success.

Sometimes children need a special pal to hold or read to. What better pal than a rescue dog or cat? The love that is given to these beautiful animals is returned to us tenfold. They teach an unconditional love and loyalty.

WHY DO ANIMALS NEED FOSTER CARE?

Fostering saves two animals. The one you foster and the one that can now take the empty kennel left by your foster. Many times homeless pets are found on the streets having been dumped by uncaring humans or simply lost and don't find their way back home. ASVT can take these pets into our rescue only if we have a foster home for them.

Whatever the reason, these pets need extra love and care before they can be adopted. Providing foster care can be a lifesaving gift for a homeless pet.

How about a family project? Fostering is a perfect way for a family to share the experience of rescuing, nurturing and finding a loving home for the pets in need. Worried about falling in love and not being able to part with your foster? Once you have adopted your foster to that perfect person or family you will feel the reward of saving a life. Yes, there have been times when fosters cannot part and they become affectionally known as "Foster Failures"... but as a rule loving families adopt these foster pets and live happily ever after. Is it an emotional rollercoaster? You bet, but it's happy tears of joy and emotion when you save a life. It is a great lesson of empathy. FOSTERING IS A LIFELINE FOR THE RESCUE PETS! Please consider fostering and let us know if you prefer to foster puppies, kittens, dogs or cats! Just submit a Foster Application at www.ASVTexas.org/foster-application.html.

LET'S NOT FORGET SENIOR PETS...

Teach your children to respect and appreciate senior pets. Seniors have a value and can be great teachers.

Today's children are tomorrow's leaders and from what has been experienced with our community's children, we are going in a great

direction for the future in regard to commitment and caring for pets in need.

If you would like your children to learn some additional valuable lessons in life, please sign up to join ASVT so we can continue our mission! Contact us today if you can foster and/or volunteer to help the animals or organize fundraising at www.ASVTexas.org/volunteer-application.html.



Nala

might find them visiting with the customers in the store. ASVT was chosen to be their rescue partner and they collect donations for our foster pets. July was Pet Supplies Plus Corporate Campaign



Noreen and Kathy

campaign by the Montgomery store. Store Manager Noreen said, "We were pleased with the outcome of our campaign and all the donations. Our stores focus on helping the community by working with local rescues and shelters." ASVT President Kathy Joslyn, accepted the donations with her partner Tuffy!

Meet Nala and Stormi! They are being fostered by Pet Supplies Plus in Montgomery. These two little cuties are in their Adoption Room. Pet Supplies Plus staff care for them and spoil them. Anytime during the day you



Stormi

for their stores to do a special donation drive for their rescue partners. ASVT was the fortunate recipient of the



Nala and Stormi



Tuffy

Fundraising and donations keep ASVT going. ASVT continues to focus on community animals in need before they reach the shelter and placing them into ASVT foster homes so they can be adopted.

ASVT pays for medical, spay/neuter, vaccines and microchip. ASVT funds transporting of animals to other states with high adoption rates.

Because of overpopulation of unwanted animals when the shelters are full, animals will be euthanized. ASVT also helps these animals.

ASVT has been saving lives of community animals in need for more than 10 years and rehomes over 700 pets a year. No one is paid a salary, the money goes to help the animals. We count on the contributions from the community to "Help Us Help Them" and we thank you for your support.

Visit www.ASVTexas.org or contact us at asvtexas@gmail.com. See all our animals available for adoption, receive information on low cost spay/neuter, fill out applications for fostering and volunteering or donate by using the DONATE button.

**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, Ransoms Steakhouse, Animal Hospital of Montgomery, Dock Line Magazine and so many more. ♦



Support Our Fall Fundraiser!

Go to threeriversfundraising.com
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Our Annual Bulb Fundraiser is in full swing. It includes flower bulbs, such as daffodils, tulips, allium, crocus and other varieties. Plant these bulbs in fall to enjoy the blooms in springtime. Orders can be placed through September 15 at <https://threeriversfundraising.com/fund/asvt-fall2020>

All pets shown in this article are available for adoption.



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

Corn Salad

- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, rinsed, cut in half
- 1 package Hidden Valley® Original Ranch® Salad Dressing & Seasoning Mix
- 1 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1 small red onion finely chopped
- 4 tbsp. butter room temperature
- 2 poblano peppers
- 8 ears fresh corn on the cob, husks and silk removed

Dressing:
extra virgin olive oil
red wine vinegar

In a small bowl, mix the Hidden Valley® Ranch salad dressing & seasoning mix and the butter together until well blended. Brush the corn with the butter mixture and grill, together with poblano peppers turning often until the corn is golden and the peppers have blackened.

Remove the corn and peppers to cool. Once cool enough to handle, peel, seed and stem the peppers and chop into ¼-inch pieces and place in a large mixing bowl. Scrape the corn into the bowl with the peppers. Add the onion, cherry tomatoes and feta cheese. In another bowl, stir the olive oil and vinegar together until emulsified. Pour the oil and vinegar mixture over the salad and toss until well coated.

Crock Pot BBQ Beef Stew

- 1 tbsp. oil
- 2 lb. beef stew meat (1-1/2-inch cubes)
- 5 carrots peeled, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 large onion, cut into chunks
- 2-1/2 lb. small red potatoes, quartered
- 3/4 cup barbecue sauce, divided
- 1 tbsp. instant coffee
- 1 pkg. (10 oz.) frozen peas

HEAT oil in nonstick skillet on medium-high heat. Add meat, in batches; cook 8 to 10 min. or until evenly browned, stirring occasionally. Place carrots, onions and potatoes in slow cooker; top with meat. Pour 1/2 cup barbecue sauce over meat; sprinkle with coffee. Cover with lid.

COOK on LOW 7 to 8 hours (or on HIGH 5 hours). STIR in peas and remaining barbecue sauce; cook, covered, 15 min. or until heated through. ♦

Send Us Your Recipes!

E-mail to: linda@docklinemagazine.com



This adorable fluffy chick is only around 2 weeks old, and out exploring a great new world with its siblings.

Carolina Wrens – Little Brown Jobs

In the birding world small brown birds are sometimes lumped together and called Little Brown Jobs, or LBJs for short. Our local wrens fall right into this category. You may see House Wrens and maybe even a Bewick's Wren, but a very common LBJ in East Texas is the beguiling little Carolina Wren. You will hear them before you see them, and their call gives them away.

A huge noise comes out of these little round birds, and when they blast, they often repeat their call in 3's or 4's. From the males you will hear loud calls of "CheeseburgerCheeseburger-Cheeseburger" or "WeNeedYou WeNeedYou WeNeedYou", or even "FigaroFigaroFigaro"! Listen for any loud repeating call of three, and it is probably a Carolina Wren. However, when they

are encouraging their chicks to leave the nest for the first time, the parents make a lovely quiet trilling call.

These bitty birds are easy to hear but often very hard to spot! They blend in extremely well with leaf litter and tree trunks. Shy, restless, but very curious, these fellows are always on the move. Carolina Wrens will explore your garage or patio, pillage through your yard leaves and brush piles, and then flit to low branches or to climb up and down tree trunks. They hop around endlessly and never seem to quit moving! Extended flight is not one of their strong points. Mostly they just fly a few feet up to the next tree or down to the nearest ground litter.

Nesting generally no more than 6 feet off the ground, these wrens will nest almost anywhere. On your patio or in your garage you may be surprised to find their little 5 inch nests in a flowerpot or a cardboard box! Outside they nest in dense yaupon stands or tall thick shrubbery. Clutch sizes range from 3-7 eggs, and these little birds can have up to 3 broods per season! Once eggs are laid it takes only about 4 weeks total for chicks to hatch and fledge, and these newly fledged chicks are tiny, only 2-1/2" tall! Looking more like a plop of old leaves, the babies have fuzzy head feathers, short wings and the tiniest of tails! Encouraged by their parents, they hop and climb, staying low to the ground on their first day out of the nest than most other fledging birds. They simply cannot fly well until their feathers grow more, but they can climb trees, forage for insects, and explore their new territory.

The East Texas Piney Woods is a fine home for our Carolina Wrens. During springtime, leave your garage door open and you may discover a batch of nesting LBJs. But during winter, if you care to keep these cute birds close, put out a suet feeder for them. Carolina Wrens will enjoy the feeders, and this way you can enjoy them!



Since it cannot yet fly, one of the first instinctive actions this fledgling has is to get off the ground and climb up into the safety of a nearby pine tree.



Adult Carolina Wrens are only 5" tall. Shy but loud, they blend into the forest with cinnamon wings, white eyebrow stripes and little round bodies. They use their curved beaks to turn over ground litter and find insects.



What better camouflage than for a chick to look like a small pile of leaves! Note how tiny his tail and wings are during his first hours out of the nest. He can flit, climb and hop just fine, but not yet fly.

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



A Carolina Wren nest is made of mud, leaves and twigs, and is only about 5" wide by 5" deep. These birds build them almost anywhere, and they often have side entrances. This nest sits under a car jack in a garage!

CREATURES FROM the deep

OR WHEREVER THEY COME FROM!



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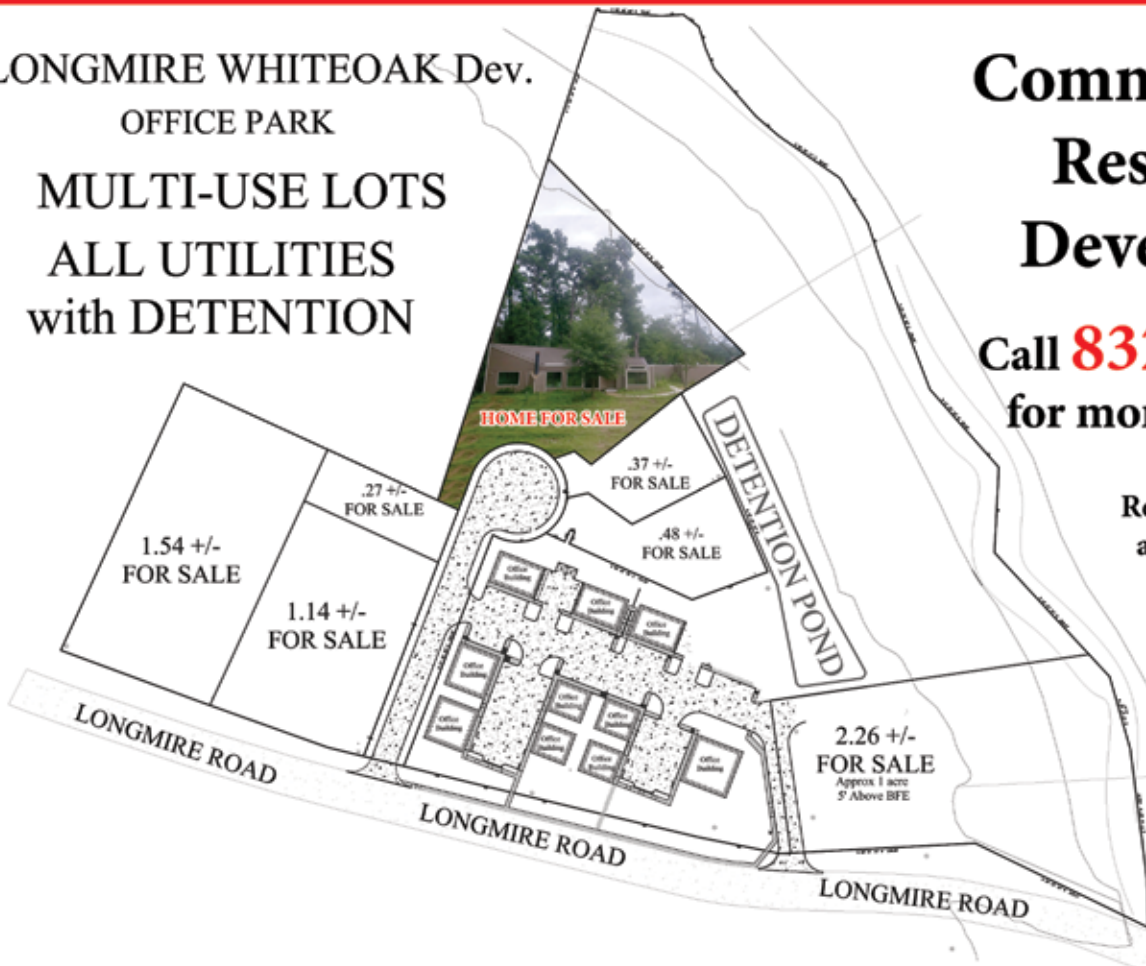
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TIME FOR FALL BABIES; SQUIRRELS, ROUND TWO

By: Lisa Wolling, Executive Director

As we head into “fall” here in Southeast Texas, most wildlife species are done raising their young for the year. However, most of our native squirrels have litters twice a year; the first cycle is very early in the year, January through March, and the second cycle is August through October. So once again for our little squirrel friends, it is nesting time.

In our part of Texas, there are three different species of squirrels found; the eastern fox squirrel; the eastern gray squirrel; and the flying squirrel. The fox and gray squirrels are diurnal (out during the day) and the flying squirrel is nocturnal (out at night). All three species spend the majority of their lives in the trees.

The eastern fox squirrel is the largest species of squirrel in our area. Most of them have black-tipped gray fur on their bodies with orange fur on their bellies, legs, and feet. Their tail fur is fringed in orange fur as well. Around Southeast Texas, there are some groups of fox squirrels that have all black fur. Fox squirrels are most active in early morning and again in late afternoon. They prefer to nest in tree cavities, but they will also build leaf and twig nests high in the tree tops. Female squirrels often construct multiple nests. In the event one nest is damaged or becomes infested with fleas or

are about ten weeks old. By three months of age they are able to survive on their own. Fox squirrels can live to be up to 15 years of age.

About 90% of all squirrels found in eastern Texas are eastern gray squirrels. While similar in many ways to the fox squirrel, the gray squirrel is slightly smaller, has slightly larger ears, and its fur is mainly gray with white fur on the belly. They are more social than fox squirrels so they are more likely to feed in groups. The gray squirrel is faster and more skittish than the fox squirrel, and for that reason they are sometimes also called cat squirrels. Like the fox squirrel, they prefer tree cavities to nest in, but if none can be found they will build a nest (called a drey) consisting of leaves and twigs. They are more apt to breed throughout the year, but mainly from July-September and again from December-February. Pups eyes open at five weeks of age and they begin to explore outside of the nest by six weeks old. They remain in family groups for about another month after that until they are fully independent.

The third species of squirrel found in our area is seldom seen although quite common. The little flying squirrel is only about the size of an adult hamster. They don’t actually fly, but rather glide from tree to tree, sometimes

mates, flying squirrels often colonize in groups of up to fifty to spend the winter together. Although often confused with sugar gliders, they are completely different species; sugar gliders are indigenous to Australia and Indonesia.

Female squirrels often have multiple nest sights, which enables them to move their young should one nest be destroyed or contaminated by insect pests. If you happen to come upon a baby squirrel that has fallen from its nest, or if the entire nest is found on the ground, it may still be possible to reunite the baby or babies with their mother. Check our website (www.ftwl.org) for helpful flowcharts, listed by species, about how and when found animals may need some assistance.

Squirrels are an important part of a balanced ecosystem, and they help to keep our environment a little more verdant and healthy. They are well known for burying seeds and nuts, which they do to save them for feasting on later. Many of these seeds or nuts are carried away to areas far from where they were found and buried in locations away from their host plant. This helps to spread the new growth of plants and trees. Squirrels bury so many that some studies indicate as much as 75% of these seeds and nuts remain uneaten, so they are left to sprout into new plants, shrubs, and trees. A single squirrel can bury several thousand nuts over the course of a few months. Squirrels also eat different species of mushrooms, which keeps forested areas healthier by helping to disperse fungi which are beneficial to many trees. Squirrel’s constant digging and burying helps to aerate the soil and introduce organic matter into it. They eat many insects (especially during breeding season) including beetles and grubs which might otherwise infest trees and lawns. Squirrels are also an important part in the food chain, often being taken as prey by hawks, eagles, and owls. We love our nutty little friends, and we hope once more people understand their behavior and how they benefit the environment they will come to appreciate their antics as well.

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. Details can be found at www.ftwl.org, and then click on “How to Help”. We also have a great deal of helpful information on our website about other species of animals and how to assess if they need help or not. If you need assistance with an animal in need, please email us at ftwl.help@gmail.com. For the time being, due to ongoing Covid concerns, our educational center remains closed. ♦



Left: baby fox squirrel, about four weeks old. Note the buff/orange fur coloration on the belly and tail.

Center: baby gray squirrels, about three weeks old. They have white fur on belly and fringe of tail.

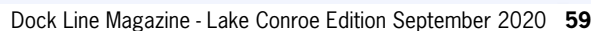
Right: baby flying squirrels, about four weeks old. They are much smaller, have smaller ears, a flat tail, and skin flaps between front and rear legs.

mites, the mother squirrel will move her pups to one of her alternate nesting sites. Fox squirrels usually breed twice a year in our part of Texas, once in January/February and again in May/June, although occasionally litters are born in late summer or early fall. Most litters consist of three to four pups, which are born hairless, blind, and helpless. They mature slowly with eyes opening at five weeks of age. They leave their nest at about eight weeks of age but won’t venture out of their nest tree until they

as much as 150 feet in a single flight. Flying squirrels have skin that forms wing-like flaps which stretch between its “ankle” and “wrist”. Its fluffy, flattened tail acts as both a rudder in flight and a brake to slow down forward movement as they come to the end of their glide. Flying squirrels eat many nuts, berries, buds, grasshoppers, moths, bugs, and grubs. They, like all squirrels, prefer to nest in tree cavities. They mainly breed from March to May, although pups may be born year round also. In colder cli-



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Lake Conroe FISHING REPORT



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

Black Bass: September marks the beginning of a season change on Lake Conroe and even though it is still hot, the action will get progressively better over the next few weeks. Shad will start moving shallow toward the back of creeks and coves in which many bass will follow. Spinner baits and plastic worms fished along boat docks or shorelines with some type of cover in the early morning is your best bet. Later in the day concentrate on deeper structures such as pond dams, roadbeds and any type of rocks such as bridges or breakwaters.

Crappie: Crappie action will gradually pick up especially toward the end of September, since water temps will cool down. Minnows or small jigs work well along the pilings of bridges around submerged brush in 12' - 18' depths.

White Bass & Hybrid Striped Bass: I like to start out by trolling pet spoons over the top of main lake humps and points in 15' - 30' depths. If I locate a group of these fish I will concentrate on that area until the action slows a bit. Often they may just move a short distance away, so try locating another school of these fish.

Catfish: Catfish action has been fair all through the summer and will greatly improve during the upcoming months as well. Fishing baited holes along main lake creeks and along the river in 15' - 22' depths are prime catfishing spots. Chicken livers, shrimp and dip baits are all good bait choices. ♦

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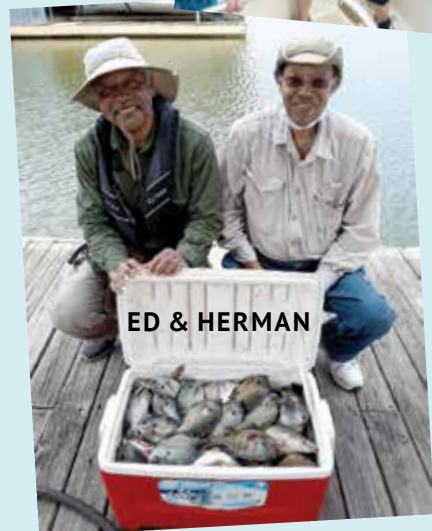
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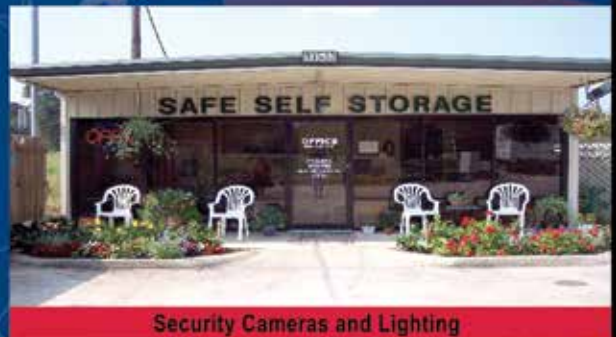
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