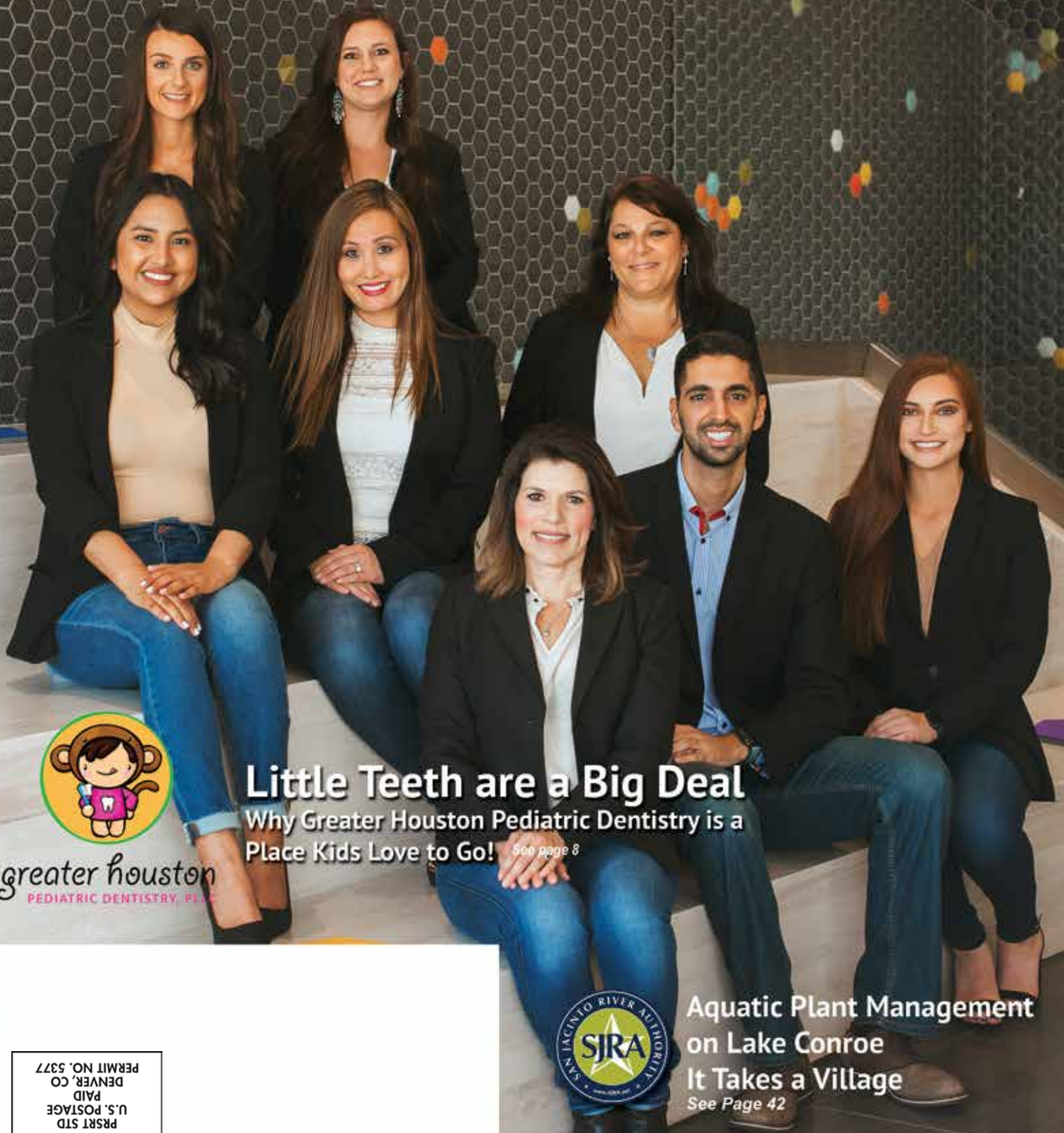


DOCK LINE

Lake Conroe

MAGAZINE

October 2020



greater houston
PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY, PLLC

Little Teeth are a Big Deal

Why Greater Houston Pediatric Dentistry is a Place Kids Love to Go! See page 8



Aquatic Plant Management on Lake Conroe

It Takes a Village

See Page 42

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As we enter into another season, sadly it is safe to say nothing much has changed from the summer. We are continuing on the road of uncharted territory as we move through another month of 2020, which means we are continuing to adapt to the new normalcy society has implemented upon us. Rules with changing variables on a daily basis get 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 us to stand together. We are a community of resilience, compassion and generosity. It has become apparent what a great community it is in which we live. As the holiday season inches closer upon us, we encourage everyone to take a look around, celebrate the little things and support your local businesses, they need your support now more than ever as we all struggle to get through this unprecedented time. If we all stick together, we will be stronger than ever.

Until next month...



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DOCK LINE

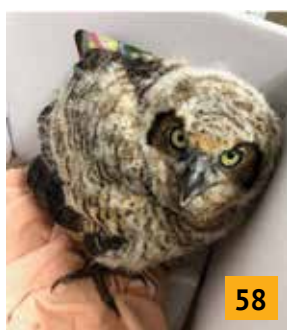
Lake Conroe

MAGAZINE



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Little Teeth are a Big Deal

Why Greater Houston Pediatric Dentistry is a Place Kids Love to Go!



BY: HANNAH SHERMAN

Serving families in the Houston area for ten years - opened the Conroe location last year.

A Gentle and Caring Approach

At Greater Houston Pediatric Dentistry, we strive to create a welcoming environment for all children. When entering, each member of our team will welcome your family with a smile. We are truly invested in making sure each child feels comfortable and safe, and leaves feeling happy and excited with a sense of accomplishment. We are firm believers that every child should love going to their pediatric dentist! Our goal is to make the entire experience as fun and enjoyable as possible. We get to know our patients on a personal level. We are passionate about promoting dental education, prevention, and creating a fun, nurturing environment.

Our Doctors

Dr. Linh Luu and Dr. Badi Misaqi, our pediatric dentists, bring a lot of care and compassion to what we do each day. They combine their knowledge and expertise with clear communication. They will always make recommendations on each child's individual needs and risk assessment, and ultimately what is best long term for your child's health. We gently alleviate fears and build up confidence. We build motivation and give children a sense of pride in their smiles and their behaviors. We communicate with age appropriate techniques. We create a dental home where parents can trust our recommendations, our skills, and our care for their children. Our goal is for children to become the best version of themselves, to be great dental patients for life, and to maintain a lifetime of healthy habits and beautiful smiles.



Houston's #1 Choice for quality dental care for children and adolescents.

Specialized Procedures for Every Need

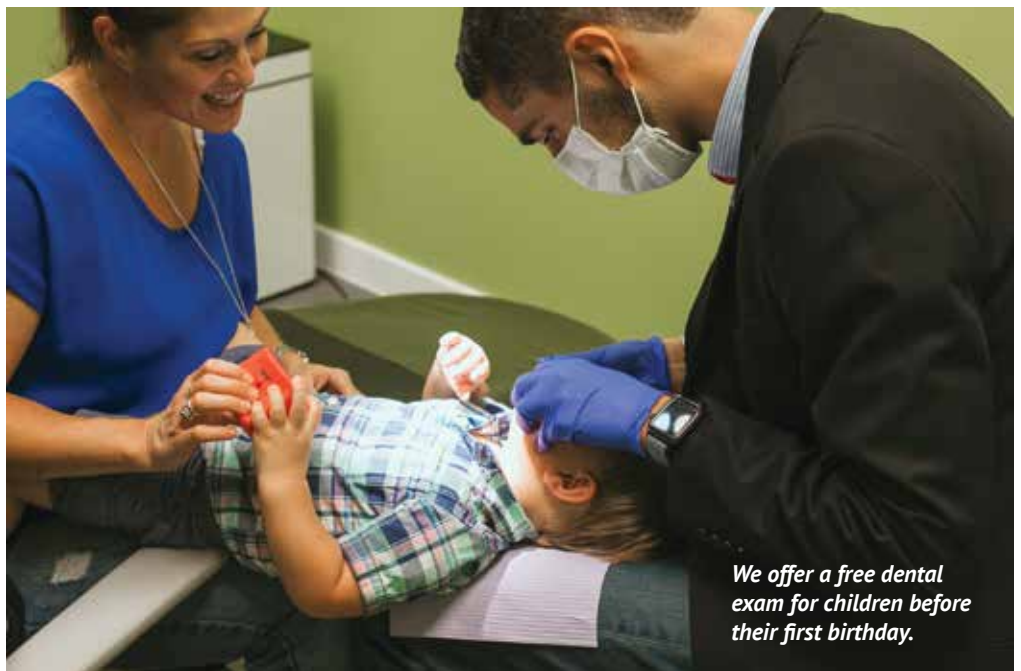
In addition to comprehensive pediatric dental services for children, we offer:

Esthetic white crowns, pediatric partials, laser dentistry, and wisdom teeth extractions with a highly trained and skilled surgeon.

We also provide laser frenectomies to relieve tongue ties and lip ties in newborns, infants, and toddlers.

Continued on page 10 ➡

A foundation of trust in patients is a top priority.



We offer a free dental exam for children before their first birthday.



Advanced Behavior Management Techniques:

We see children with all needs. We offer in nitrous, in-office oral conscious sedation and IV sedation, and hospital dentistry with pediatric anesthesiologists.

State of the Art Facility and Equipment

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Children leave with a good experience and a healthy attitude towards oral health.

longer. Our advanced digital imaging and equipment allows us to accurately diagnose early.

Why an Age 1 visit is Critical

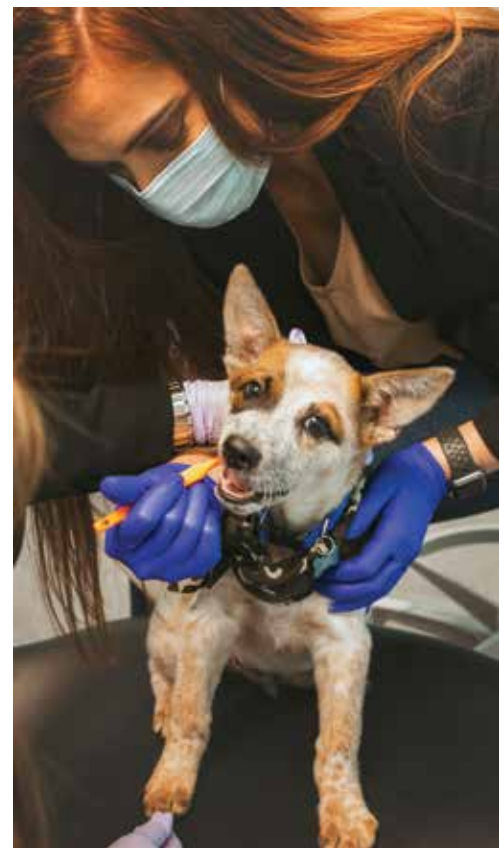
Parents are sometimes nervous to take their child to the dentist or to even treat cavities at a young age. We are trained and equipped to manage behavior to make your child's visit as comfortable and as fun as possible. Our team is specially trained in behavior management, so don't be afraid to take your child to the dentist early. The recommended first dental visit should be as soon as teeth erupt or by age one. The earlier they start, the sooner they feel comfortable in the dental chair, and we can really work on preventing cavities from the start. Establish a dental home early so we can work together for prevention.

Dentistry is absolutely essential, as it is an integral part of overall health.

The ADA strongly encourages keeping routine dental appointments to maintain optimal health. Especially in children, where prevention and early detection of cavities is essential to avoiding big problems later.

Our practice keeps up with the ever changing guidelines and strictly enforces protocols set forth by the CDC and state for safety for your child and our team.

Greater Houston Pediatric Dentistry offers a complimentary dental exam for children before their first birthday, free of charge. ♦



Even puppies need their teeth brushed! Have your kids practice good home care by keeping their dog's teeth clean!

Join us for our (Socially Distant) Fall Festival/Open House!

October 22, 2020 • 5:30pm-8pm

Come in and see Houston's #1 choice for quality dental care for children and adolescents, where we make each visit fun and enjoyable for kids and their parents.

Dr. Linh Luu and Dr. Badi Misaqi and our team look forward to meeting your family and invite you to choose us as your dental home.

Dress up, treat-or-treat, get some Halloween goodies, and take a photo in our pumpkin patch.

Halloween snacks and drinks will be handed out. Other surprises to come!

***Please call to reserve a time slot. Only a limited number of families will enter at a time. *Masks required.**

During the entire month of October, our pumpkin patch is up, so bring the kids in for their check up and photos at the same time!



Greater Houston Pediatric Dentistry's Conroe office is located at 381 South Loop 336 W #1200, Conroe, TX 77304. Their office hours are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday by appointment. To request an appointment, call (936) 703-2131 or go to their website, www.greaterhoustonpediatricdentistry.com.

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 When: October 7, 2020
 Time: Sign-in begins 10:30 a.m., Meeting
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 Lunch 11:15 a.m., Program Noon until
 1:00 p.m.
 Where: Bentwater Yacht Club, 800 Bentwa-
 ter Harbor Dr., Montgomery, TX 77356 (Off
 F.M. 1097)
 The General Membership Meeting of North
 Shore Republican Women will feature Steve
 Munisteri, 47-Year veteran of Texas Politics,
 Recent Chairman of the Republican Party of
 Texas, Former Deputy Assistant to President
 Donald Trump and Principal Deputy Direc-
 tor of the Office of Public Liaison in The
 Trump Administration, Veteran of 70+ polit-
 ical campaigns. Lunch is optional, but reser-
 vations for a seat much be made by Noon,
 October 3rd. Complete the form online by
 clicking www.NSRepublicanWomen.org or
 call 936-597-6219. Table service, no buffet
 or beverage station DUE TO COVID-19 RE-
 STRICTIONS, only 80 members and guests
 can be accommodated ONLY BY RESERVA-
 TION. Regrettably, guests cannot be added
 the day of the meeting. You do not have to
 be a member to attend.

**Montgomery County Welcoming Neighbor
 Club Luncheon**
 When: October 15, 2020
 Time: 10:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
 Where: April Sound Church
 Montgomery County Welcoming Neighbor
 Club (social club 501c7) monthly luncheon
 will be held at April Sound Church on Oc-
 tober 15, 2020. Social hour begins at 10:00
 followed by a short business meeting and
 lunch. Afterwards, Constable Phillip Cash
 from Precinct #1 will be the guest speaker.
 For more information call Rebecca at 936-
 671-9629.

**The Ladies Association of Walden Presents
 "Walden Expo 2020"**
 When: November 6, 2020
 Time: 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
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on Thursday, October 22 from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m.

We will open up our office for a Halloween party and Open House.
Dress up, trick-or-treat, get some Halloween goodies, and take a fall
photo in our pumpkin patch. Halloween snacks and drinks will be
handed out. Please call to reserve a time slot.

Only a limited number of families will enter at a time.

Also, during the entire month of October, we will have our pumpkin
patch up, so bring the kids in for a dental check up and fall photos at
the same time!



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The Power of Transparency

What REAL customer service looks like from Truwin, the transparent window & door company.™



BY: BRIAN SHERMAN

In most industries, just about every company says they have the best customer service, the best products, the best value...you name it. However, we all know that the real story is told by the customers, not the company.

"Your brand isn't what you say it is. It's what they say it is." - Marty Neumeier

Great marketing can only go so far. In the end word of mouth is still the most powerful force behind business growth. That means the customer experience has to be great, consistently. Good word of mouth can do wonders for a business. Bad word of mouth can destroy it.

Truwin is a bit of an anomaly in the windows and doors industry. They understand the secret behind true success: customer service. This is evident not because Truwin says it, but because their customers say it.

Here's a five star review from one of their recent customers:

"This is the third time we worked with Truwin, and each time was as professional and friendly as a homeowner could want. The quality of the windows and doors is amazing." S. Z.

And this one:

"We chose Truwin because of the quality of their windows and the overall professionalism of their staff. Jay and Tom were really easy to work with from start to finish and we are beyond happy with our windows. Our home is instantly less drafty and a lot more quiet. Now to watch those energy bills drop! I HIGHLY recommend going with Truwin." R. F.

Sure, every company has a few five star reviews like these, but Truwin only has five star reviews just like these across multiple websites online.

It's safe to say, Truwin is different. And that difference is something every other business should pay close attention to.

Jay Chappell, President of Truwin, understands the value of the customer's experience. "We don't want to just sell you windows. We want to build a relationship with you that will last decades." He adds, "the key thing is education. We want to teach the customer about the experience - what to look for and what not to look for - what's important for you and your home. We want to provide those valuable insights as much as possible."

Education is the key. Many companies are built around the sales model to make the most profit and close as many deals as possible. Truwin takes a different approach. They take time to get to know the customer, to educate them on every detail that could affect them, and then help them to make the best decision for their unique situation.

This is why Truwin doesn't just stick to offering one brand to their customers - a common tactic in the industry.

Who is Truwin?

Truwin was born out of necessity. In the



wake of Hurricane Harvey, Jay partnered with Mike Wimberly, a home builder near Kingwood at the time, to rebuild homes destroyed by the devastating storm. They completed 36 homes during that time, and in August of 2018 Truwin was launched.

During builds and remodels, windows and doors are often one of the biggest causes of frustration for homeowners. Truwin set out to change that.

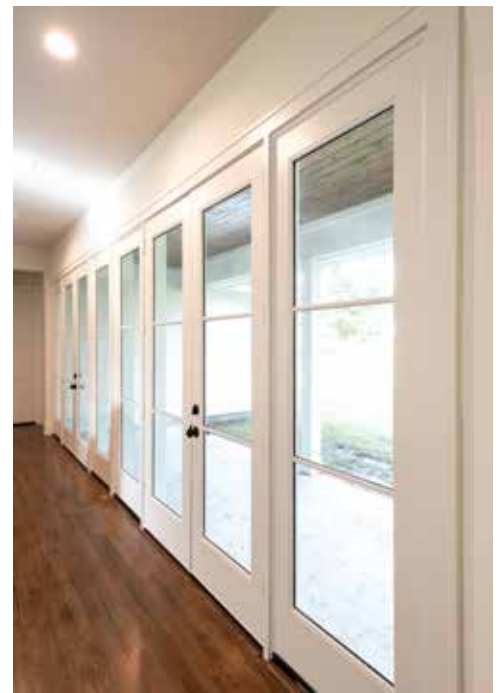
Since starting in 2018, Truwin has quickly grown into one of the highest rated window and door installation companies in Southeast Texas.

Why New Windows?

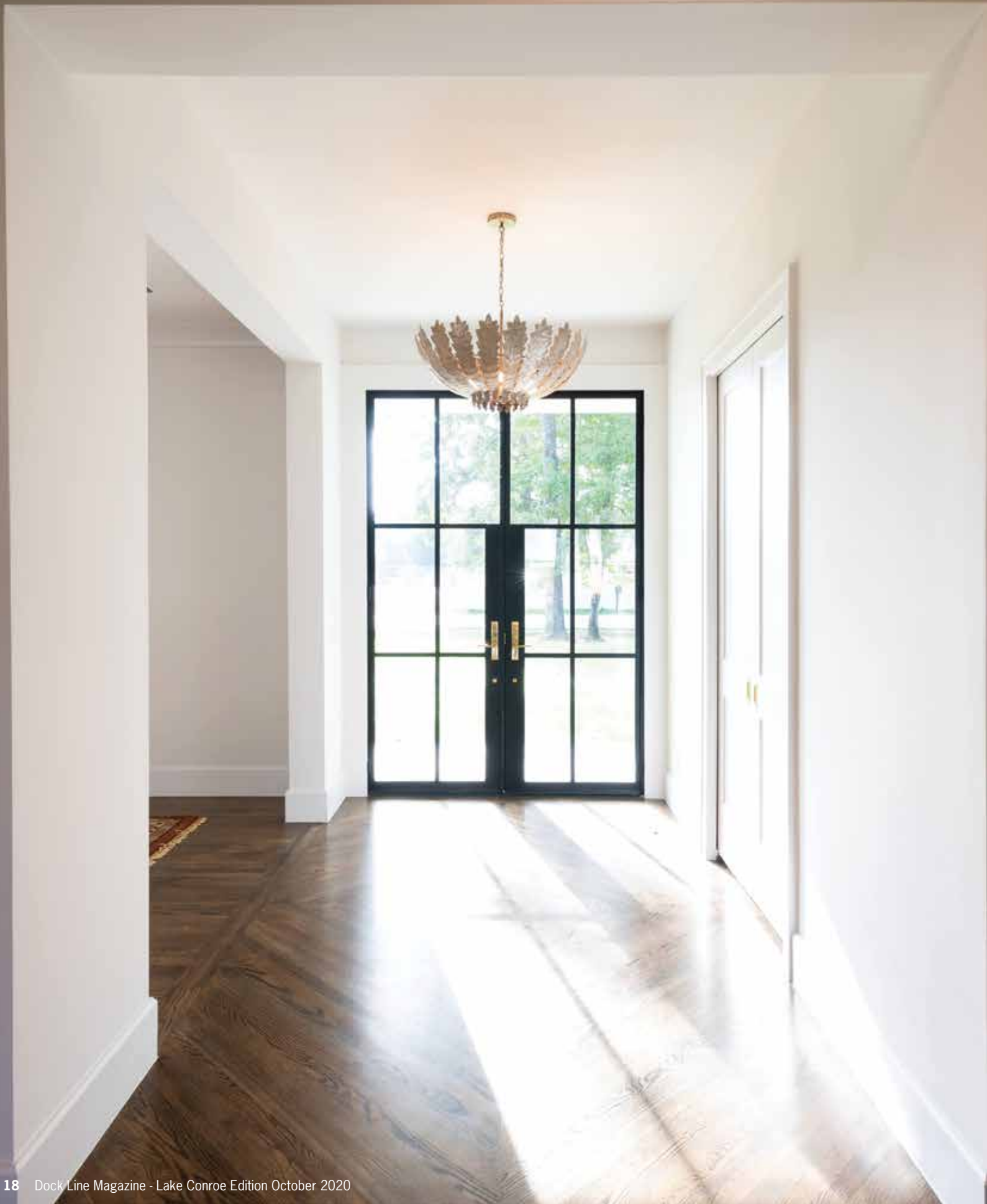
In Texas, we're no stranger to the relentless summer heat and the high energy bills that come with it. You may not realize it, but your windows could be causing you to pay much more than you should be in energy costs.

"One of the main reasons people need new windows is for energy efficiency. They've got old single pane, aluminum windows that are constantly leaking air and their electric bill is high," says Jay.

But it's not just energy efficiency that excites people about new windows. Curb appeal is very much an incentive to upgrade. You may want new windows simply to make the front, side, and back of your house look prettier. Perhaps you want to change out some old win-



Continued on page 18 ➞



dows and revitalize a space by adding french doors. Windows play a huge role in most people's dream projects.

Another key reason to upgrade your windows is for durability and security. Old windows, worn out locks, and tired frames not only look bad, but could be a vulnerable spot in your home. A break-in would not be difficult. More importantly, hurricane season is a real threat every year in Texas. Upgrading your windows could make a huge difference in protecting your home should a major storm hit.

More than Windows

Truwin is more than just a window provider. "A lot of companies just want to sell windows and be done. We look at it from a different perspective. We are always happy to talk with the customer about their dream vision and what that entails, and more than likely we are able to make that dream vision come true."

This is why Truwin also offers services like siding and doors. Your vision is bigger than just windows and Truwin works with you to bring it all to life.

How to Stand Out - Advice from Truwin

Be consistent.

It sounds almost too simple, but at times like we are living in right now, consistency gets easily disrupted. Some companies are trying to think outside of the box and are scrambling to stay afloat, much less grow.

"The big thing I was taught by my dad who was in business for over 30 years is to never live in panic," says Jay. "There will always be ebbs and flows; there will be ups and downs. As long as you can be consistent with maintaining the quality of your service to your customers, then business will come. You will be able to maintain and keep doing business. But you have to keep the faith. You have to make sure you stay consistent. Because when you start making drastic changes out of panic, that's when things start to unravel and you lose control."

There are highs and lows throughout the lifetime of every business. The ones who rise to the top time and time again are the ones who remain consistent to their strengths.

This isn't to say you shouldn't think outside of the box and explore innovation in your business, but you should never lose sight of the most important piece of the whole puzzle: real customer service.

If you want to replace your windows and want to work with a company that cares, go with Truwin.

If you're a business that wants to reach the next level, follow their example. Make your customers the hero and treat them like family.

If it's time to replace or upgrade your windows, you can call or text Truwin at (832) 777-3681 or learn more about their groundbreaking approach to service at www.truwin.com. ♦



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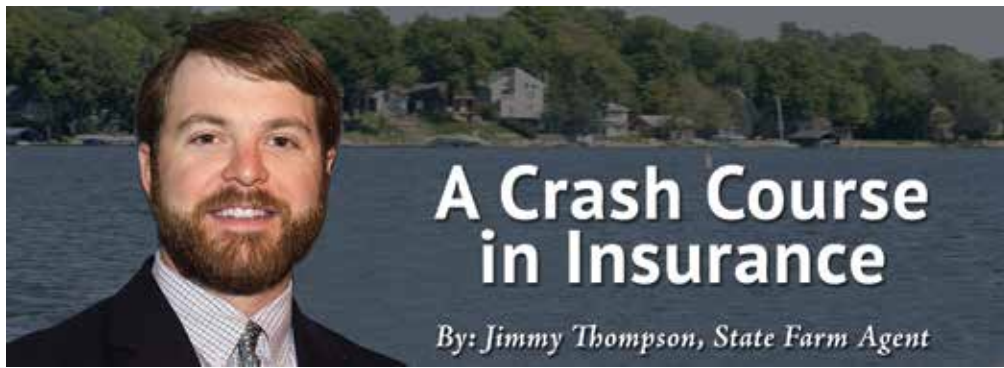



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What I have come to know through all these tough experiences is this.....a great agent proves their worth during a major

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out of my office? That's right, we don't have to wait for an adjuster to get money in your account – we can do that! In the case of a major catastrophe, having a significant check in hand from your agent has always been helpful for our insured to secure the best roofers, contractors and skilled local labor without having to wait for an adjuster or sign a contract with a storm chaser.

Did you know as a State Farm agent.....I represent YOU to State Farm during claim time? Me and my team work for YOU! We work with your adjuster on your behalf to make sure that all coverage and payments due to you are fair, honest and timely.....and we are great

at what we do! We are passionate about helping people, so it's our time to shine when you need us most!

I was born and raised in Lake Charles, Louisiana – so returning home after Hurricane Laura to help family, friends and clients alike, it reminds me once again how important it is to have a great agent and a great local team to support you during a major catastrophe. So this is just a friendly reminder that we are here and we are ready when you need us! ♦

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“Pampered Pets Beg to Stay” at One of Montgomery’s Top-Rated Boarding Facilities, The Barkly Pet Retreat & Spa

By: Matthew Calhoun



Seven acres of puppy paradise



Since 2014, owner Amber Murphy has used her passion for animal care to fuel her family run business. Amber tells us, "The Barkly Pet Retreat and Spa is a safe and fun place for your fur baby to stay while you are away or even just for a day of playtime and fun. We provide different types of unique accommodations including grass yards and a pool for doggie playtime, we also provide multiple services that are personalized for your dog."

The Barkly hosts their furry friends on its 7-acre lot with 7,000 square feet of indoor space and a 30,000 gallon "beachfront" pool for dogs to enjoy getting their paws wet using the inclined entrance.

The services offered at The Barkly don't stop with Boarding though, with other options including Daycare, Training, Grooming, and more.



Passion for animal care has fueled this family run business since 2014.

Over 15 years of dog training experience on staff

Continued on page 24



Personalized Boarding and Daycare That Will Put Your Furry Friend At Ease

When you leave for several days at a time, it can be a headache to figure out care for your beloved pets. When you choose The Barkly, you can feel confident that you are bringing them to an environment that couples love for animals with experienced supervision to make sure your family members are comfortable.

Every Barkly canine guest receives a minimum of 3 walks a day, customized feedings, and fresh water in clean, air-conditioned private rooms and suites. Have several dogs you would like to board? No problem! In fact, you can take advantage of the “same-room” discount!

The Barkly allows you to bring belongings from home, but remains stocked with raised beds, toys, blankets, and more to ensure The Barkly feels like their home away from home. Looking to board a feline friend? They offer feline guests a private space away from boarding dogs to ensure they're happy, too!



As Hallie Richardson on Google Reviews puts it:

“This place is so awesome. Needed to have my dog boarded last minute. The place looks like a doggy paradise and the staff is so nice!! They explained how the whole visit will be. I even called the next day to see how my pup was doing and they had already walked him and said he was so happy!! I picked him up and he was exhausted!! My dog and I 10/10 recommend!”

Perhaps you have a busy schedule that leaves your best friend at home alone all day causing trouble in the form of chewed up belongings. The Barkly's Full and Half Day Camps make both you and your pet happier by letting your pup burn off energy in the puppy playground or pool with caring staff until you're ready to reunite. Not only does Day Camp provide them with a good distraction, it can also help to socialize your dog when you choose their Group Day Camp option.

Still think your pup may want more? The Barkly allows for you to add on A La Carte services to your pets' stay, such as administering medications, extra play time and walks, treats, or even pick up and drop off services for those within a 15 mile radius.

Professional Grooming that Makes Life Easier

Their full-service grooming salon is open to every size and breed by appointment only or as an add on to the end of their boarding or daycare.

The precision and care their stylists bring helps your pet feel calm and relaxed while getting their hair done. Whether your pet is prone to chronic matting, shedding, nail growth, or any other hygienic or visual concern, The Barkly's knowledgeable groomers will leave your pets looking, smelling, and feeling their best.

Do You Want the Best Out of Your Pet?

15+ years of dog training experience on staff, The Barkly can assist with problem behaviors such as chewing, barking, and jumping, or simply teaching your dog commands such as “sit, down, leave it, drop, come, stay, off.” Their staff prioritizes compassion and results in their private and group obedience training classes to help you achieve your behavioral improvement goals. Training can also be added on to their boarding stay to keep puppies or excitable dogs positively stimulated.

Each “board and train” and/or “learn and play” session is paired with a free day of daycare. This creates an environment that fosters learning even for dogs that seem distracted. The Barkly Pet Retreat wants you to be able to bring the best out of your pet. You can even schedule one on one sessions with instructors to help learn specific commands and devise programs that best work for you and your dog's needs.

The Barkly Pet Retreat is Here for You - A Reminder for Emergencies

In 2020, we have all witnessed how quickly life can change. Whether from a pandemic or



a natural disaster, life can be unpredictable. It's important to have your pet's information ready in a safe space should you need a pet kennel. As Amber Murphy points out, "Unfortunately, it can be difficult to get shot records required to set up boarding in the midst of a hurricane. We urge you to have your pets prepared even if you don't normally use a boarding facility in the event of an emergency."

If you do need a facility to board your pet even in uncertain circumstances, The Barkly Pet Retreat and Spa will be ready to help your furry friend feel comfortable and loved while away from home.

Learn more about The Barkly by visiting their website at www.TheBarkly.com. You can also give them a call (936) 447-2275 to set up appointments, ask questions, and check availability, or visit their location at 15000 FM 2854 Rd., Montgomery. Their lobby is open from 7am-7pm everyday, including Sundays, except for Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. ♦

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Back to Health

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



Compression Fractures of the Spine



What is it?

A compression fracture is a crushing-type injury that may occur to the body of the spinal vertebrae. It causes a localized sharp, stabbing pain in the area of the fracture. The injury may occur as a result of a fall or heavy crushing injury, however, most compression fractures occur as a result of osteoporosis or bone weaknesses (hemangiomas or bone tumors that hollow out the bone) within the body of the vertebra that reduce its ability to absorb forces. Fortunately most of these fractures occur in a crumbling mechanism with little backward displacement of bone into the spinal canal.

What symptoms are associated with it?

Compression fractures are most common in the mid-back and typically cause a sharp, stabbing, burning sensation localized to the midline of the back. The muscles on both sides of the spine will spasm. The pain will be greatly increased if pressure or vibration (like a tuning fork) is placed to the bone in the midline of the back. Pain tends to worsen as a person stands upright (dependent upon gravity).

How is it diagnosed?

Diagnosis is typically made with X-ray or a CAT scan. X-ray diagnostic findings demonstrate a collapse of the front of the vertebrae as compared to the back edge of the vertebral



body (as the X-ray demonstrates). The vertebra typically "caves in" to the front, causing the person to have a hunched over appearance.

How do you treat compression fractures?

If the compression fracture is estimated to be 50% or greater compressed (comparing

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Dr. Todd Custer
Chiropractor/Athletic
Trainer

Dustin Cook, P.T.
Physical Therapist

front to back height of vertebral body), a procedure called "vertebroplasty" or "kyphoplasty" can be performed. Vertebroplasty is a process of injecting a fast drying cement into the bone. Kyphoplasty is similar, but uses a "balloon-like" bladder that contains the cement to control the spread of cement.

If the fracture is severe or causes potential compromise to the spinal canal, surgical fusion may be required to stabilize the spine to protect from future spinal cord injury.

Fortunately, most compression fractures are mild and uncomplicated; they typically require only rest and pain medications. Aquatic therapy is excellent for those suffering with osteoporosis fracture pain. The water's buoyancy creates a natural decompression to the injured area and the patient is able to move without pain to strengthen the back and abdominal muscles to get back to "Living".

If you need our guidance with Aquatic Therapy--Call us today @936-856-8908!

Dr. Custer is the owner/operator of Better Care Chiropractic & Physical Therapy. He is a doctor of chiropractic as well as a certified Athletic Trainer. He works in conjunction with a physical therapist to combine chiropractic manipulation with active rehabilitative techniques to restore pain-free living. If you have questions/comments/suggestions, please feel free to contact Dr. Custer at whybettercare@gmail.com. ♦

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STAGE RIGHT of Texas

Praying for a Christmas Miracle with PETER PAN taking Flight at last!

By: Carolyn Corsano Wong Photos created by: Sara Preisler and Adam Isbell



Madison Mapes as Peter Pan

We told you July, then September and finally December. We're praying the third time is the charm! The magical musical *Peter Pan* is scheduled to take flight Dec. 4-20, 2020. The show is full of imagination sure to thrill and entertain audiences of all ages. Memorable songs include "Never Never Land", "I Won't Grow Up" and "I'm Flying" and just like the song says, Peter Pan will be flying. This production is directed by multiple Montie Award winner and audience favorite: Sara Preisler. Sara directed *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, *Glitz - The Little Miss Christmas Pageant Musical*, *Cinderella* and was co-director of the musical *Annie*.

Peter and his mischievous fairy sidekick, Tinkerbell, visit the nursery of the Darling chil-



Wyatt Langehennig as Capt Hook



Christina Sato as Mrs. Darling



The Darling children-Katie Kowalik, Keagan Pepper and Austin Krueger



Parker Manning as Liza

dren late one night and, with a sprinkle of pixie dust, begin a magical journey across the stars that none of them will ever forget. In the adventure of a lifetime, the travelers come face to face with a ticking crocodile, a fierce Indian tribe, a band of bungling pirates and, of course, the villainous Captain Hook.

As of this writing we don't know if social distancing recommendations will still be in effect so we haven't opened tickets up for sale.



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Paige Manning as Tiger Lily

When we do, sales will be made by calling so we can fit as many folks safely in the Crighton as possible while still adhering to distancing requirements. It is likely that the 6' rule will still be recommended in December and if that is the case we will need to shuffle the tickets already bought for the show into new seats with the restriction of every other row be an empty one. Please keep up with the latest about ticket sales on our website www.stage-right.org or call the box office 936-441-7469. Clap your hands if you believe!! ♦

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Options Are Abundant For Working and Learning From Home



As working and learning from home is more prevalent than ever before, and home builders are responding to the needs of homeowners. Trending today, families are needing more than one space to use as a study.

The group of award-winning quality home builders in The Woodlands Hills offers many innovative options to establish more than one perfect place for you and your family to work and learn.

Many builders are offering optional “flex” spaces in their floorplans. These areas that were traditionally considered to be used as a formal dining room or guest bedroom can now be converted to a study with French doors, children’s playroom, or hobby/fitness area. These flexible options make a home more functional and livable with the option to use that however you desire.

In select floorplans, builders offer “pocket offices” which are small nooks with a built-in desk that is installed off the kitchen area, in a bedroom or media room, or upstairs within a loft, for example.



Homeowners are now planning for their children to be home more now for schooling, so they need a place to do their schoolwork and study, as well as a place to play. Parents need more of a retreat, away from the kids’ space, to focus optimally and have privacy when working from home.

Talking technology, many homebuilders offer the Google Home Connect program with every home that includes the Google home bug to control your thermostats, lights and stream music or news. A HomePro technology consultation can guide homebuyers through everything they need to know about state-of-the-art technology and pre-wiring for optimal working from home with little to no interruptions to your daily lives and activities. You can also install extra plug outlets throughout the home as well as several USB charging locations.

The added insulation you would find in a media room is now ideal for an office where Zoom meetings and conference calls can take place without noise interference, or in children’s areas where little ones can cut loose be “kids” without disturbing the rest of the home.

To keep noise away from your work / learn space, or to keep noise down from a kid’s play area or a teen’s cave, there are many strategic additions you can do during construction and right before you move in:

- Extra insulation in walls
- Full-wall bookshelves
- Sound-reduction paint
- Soundproof wallpaper
- Textile wall covering
- Acoustical wall paneling
- Acoustic cubical partitions
- Soundproof room divider curtains

“With the latest innovations in home design, a new home in The Woodlands Hills offers a perfect opportunity to create the ideal spaces for working and learning from home,” said Heath Melton, Executive Vice President, Master Planned Communities, Residential Development, The Howard Hughes Corporation.



The lineup of seven stellar homebuilders in The Woodlands Hills offering quality, masterfully-designed one- and two-story new homes priced from the \$227s include:

- Century Communities
- Chesmar Homes
- David Weekley Homes
- Gehan Homes
- Highland Homes
- Ravenna Homes
- Westin Homes

New homes offer the fresh opportunity to have the freedom to use the floorplan's areas in ways that best suit the needs and preferences of today's modern family. The possibilities are endless! ♦

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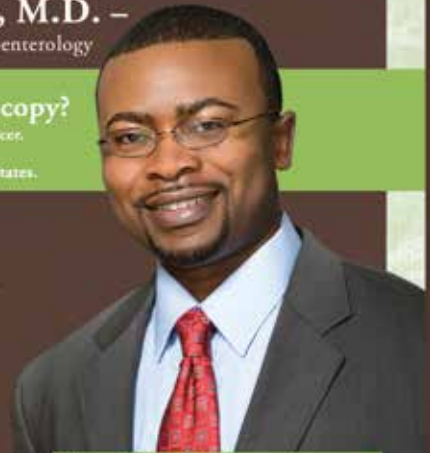
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*This offer is available only to buyers signing a new home sales contract with one of The Woodlands Hills® approved builders from October 1, 2020 through November 30, 2020. The offer provides a \$7,500 incentive on new homes on 65-75-foot lots, a \$5,000 incentive on new homes on 50-55-foot lots and a \$2,500 incentive on new homes on 40-45-foot lots toward the price of the home, design center upgrades or closing costs on eligible new homes purchased in The Woodlands Hills. Some restrictions may apply. No substitutions will be permitted. A registration form must be obtained from the builder's sales office prior to signing the new home contract. Sales contracts not written between 10/1/20 and 11/30/20 will not qualify. Homes must close on or before 12/31/21. The incentive will be awarded to the buyer at the time of closing. Homes within The Woodlands Hills are constructed and sold by builders not affiliated with The Howard Hughes Corporation® ("HHC") or any of its affiliated companies or partnerships. Neither HHC nor any of its affiliated companies or partnerships guarantee or warrant the obligations of, or construction by, such builders. Prices and specifications subject to change.



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By: Kay L. Lee,
Veterans Service Officer

SBP-DIC Offset Phase Out

Congress included a phased elimination of the Survivor's Benefit Plan-Dependency Indemnity Compensation (SBP-DIC) offset in the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act. The first adjustment to the offset formula will be for January 2021 (paid on February 1, 2021). The offset will be eliminated entirely beginning on January 1, 2023.

Who this change affects

- This change affects surviving spouses who are, or who will become in the future, eligible for both Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) payments and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) payments, and who are subject to the SBP-DIC offset.
- The law also affects the spouses and children of service members who died while on active duty or inactive duty, in the line of duty, if the children are currently receiving SBP payments because the surviving spouse chose the optional child annuity.
- This change does not affect surviving spouses who receive only SBP (but do not receive DIC). It also does not affect spouses who receive DIC only, either because SBP was declined by the service member at retirement or because the service member was a disabled veteran who was not also a retiree.
- It is important to note that this change does not impact any retirees or surviving spouses if SBP spouse coverage was previously declined or if a retiree elected child-only coverage at retirement. The change also does not create opportunities for new enrollment in SBP for retirees who previously declined coverage.

What you need to know

- Surviving spouses who are subject to the SBP-DIC offset will potentially see the first change in their January 2021 SBP payment that is paid on February 1, 2021.
- We are unable to provide individual estimates of the upcoming changes in spouse SBP annuity payments due to this change in the law. Please do not call our Customer Care Center to request an individual estimate.
- If you previously received a refund of SBP premiums paid due to the SBP-DIC offset, you won't need to pay back that refund because of this change in the law.
- Eligible survivors will continue to receive SSIA, up to the prescribed maximum amount (\$323 per month for 2020) or the amount of SBP that is offset due to DIC, whichever is less. SSIA will no longer be paid once the SBP-DIC offset is fully eliminated in 2023.
- Please keep in mind that there are many different situations for individuals, and you may have individual questions we cannot answer yet. We are continuing to develop full implementation guidance for this change.

What you need to do

- You do not need to notify us that your SBP payment is affected by this change in the law.
- The most important action SBP annuitants can take at this time is to ensure your annuity account information is up-to-date and includes your correct mailing address so we can contact you, if needed. Also, if you're not using myPay, set up a profile now and add your email address. Please note: only annuitants who are currently receiving an SBP or SSIA payment from DFAS can access myPay.
- If you are a surviving spouse who previously chose the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) child annuity when your spouse died on active duty or inactive duty, you do not need to take any action at this time. You will be contacted by the appropriate military service prior to the annuity reverting to you as the surviving spouse on January 1, 2023.

When you can expect changes

Based on the NDAA, the phases of the SBP-DIC offset elimination are:

- In 2020, surviving spouses will continue to have their SBP offset by the full amount of Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) they receive from the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- In 2021, SBP will be reduced by no more than two-thirds of the amount of DIC rather than by the entire amount of DIC, even though eligible surviving spouses will continue to receive the full amount of DIC.

Please note that not all surviving spouses will see an increase in their SBP payment in 2021. It is possible that if a spouse's SBP monthly payments are less than two-thirds of the amount of monthly Dependency Indemnity Compensation (DIC), they may not see an increase in 2021.

- In 2022, SBP will be reduced by no more than one-third of the amount of DIC received.
- In 2023, the SBP-DIC offset will be totally eliminated, so that surviving spouses eligible for both programs will receive both SBP and DIC in full, effective January 1 (paid on February 1, 2023).

For more information on VA & State Benefits contact Montgomery County Veterans Service at 936-539-7842 or via email at vetsvc@mctx.org, and like us on Facebook – Montgomery County Veterans Service. ♦




TAXES and the 2020 Election

With the COVID-19 pandemic dominating the news cycle for most of the year, many may have moved the thought of the upcoming presidential election to the back burner for much of the year. However, election season is upon us and it's time to review the candidates.

With any administration, existing or new, the question of tax policy tends to loom on the minds of voters, regardless of whether they favor red or blue. So what are the tax positions and proposals of Trump vs Biden? Interestingly, public accounting firm Crowe has a nice summary of these two candidates' proposed policies for taxes on individuals. I've summarized this below and it is a neutral statement of the facts upon which you get to decide. Vote your conscience and may the best man win.

Individual Tax Rate

Current law is a top marginal tax rate of 37%. Rates are scheduled to increase to pre-Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 (TCJA) amounts after 2025. These are some of the lowest effective rates seen in decades.

Trump wants to enact a 10% middle-class tax cut, which could include lowering the 22% marginal tax rate to 15%. He also wants to extend the individual TCJA rates that are scheduled to expire after 2025.

Joe Biden proposes raising the top marginal tax rate to the pre-TCJA rate of 39.6% for income over \$400,000.

Deductions

Current law has the basic standard deduction for married couples filing jointly at \$24,800 (\$12,400 for single taxpayers or for married taxpayers filing separately, and \$18,650 for heads of household). After 2025, the basic standard deduction is scheduled to revert to pre-TCJA amounts.

The TCJA suspended the personal exemption and most individual deductions through 2025.

Trump is proposing extending the higher basic standard deduction and other deductions enacted by the TCJA that are scheduled to expire after 2025.

Joe Biden wants to limit total itemized deductions so the reduction in tax liability per dollar of deduction does not exceed 28%, which means taxpayers in tax brackets higher than 28% will face limited itemized deductions. He would also like to phase out the 20% pass-through deduction for income over \$400,000.

Capital Gains

Current law has the top tax rate for capital gains and qualified dividends at 20% in addition to a 3.8% net investment income tax.

Trump wants to index capital gains for inflation, reduce the capital gains tax rate and enact a capital gains tax holiday that eliminates capital gains taxes for a yet-to-be-identified period.

Joe Biden endorses removing the preference for capital gains and qualified dividends for income over \$1 million by taxing them at ordinary rates.

The net investment income tax remains.

Tax Credits

Current law says a child with an individual taxpayer identification number cannot be claimed for the Child Tax Credit but can be claimed for the \$500 other dependent credit. A taxpayer with an individual taxpayer identification number is eligible to claim the Child Tax Credit and the \$500 other dependent credit.

The maximum CTC is \$2,000. This amount is scheduled to revert to the pre-TCJA amount of \$1,000 after 2025.

The maximum child- and dependent-care credit is \$1,200.

Workers older than 65 who do not have a qualifying child are not eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit.

There is no tax credit for first-time homebuyers.

There's also no tax credit for renters.

Donald Trump will require a dependent to have a Social Security number to be eligible to be claimed for the \$500 other dependent credit and require a taxpayer to have a Social Security number to claim both the CTC and the \$500 other child dependent credit.

He also wants to extend the \$2,000 CTC enacted by the TCJA that is scheduled to expire after 2025.

Joe Biden wants to raise the CTC to \$8,000 for one child and \$16,000 for two or more children for taxpayers with income up to \$125,000 per year. The credit phases out for income between \$125,000 and \$400,000 per year.

Expand the EITC to workers older than 65 who do not have a qualifying child.

Enact a \$5,000 tax credit for family caregivers of people who have certain physical and cognitive needs.

Enact a refundable, advanceable tax credit of up to \$15,000 for first-time homebuyers.

Enact a renter's tax credit, designed to reduce rent and utilities to 30% of income for low-income individuals and families who make too much money to qualify for a Section 8 voucher.

Estate and Gift Tax

Current law for 2020 has the estate and gift tax exemption at \$11,580,000. This amount is scheduled to revert to the pre-TCJA indexed amount of approximately \$5.8 million after 2025.

Transfers of appreciated property at death get a stepped-up basis.

Donald Trump favors extending the higher estate and gift tax exemption enacted by the TCJA that is scheduled to expire after 2025.

Joe Biden wants to eliminate stepped-up basis on transfers of appreciated property at death.

Regardless of who wins, you will want to be informed and prepared on the tax front and how it may affect your financial plan. What preparation are you doing now? We'd like to help and give you Clear Direction for Retirement®. Come see us, call us or visit us on the web. We always like making a new friend. Stay safe out there.



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A Real Eye Opener

Currently around 12 million people in the USA are age 50 or older. In 50 years that number is expected to be over 20 million. Those of us who are over the age of 40 know all too well what age does to our eyes. The quality of vision decreases and our eyelids become droopy to name a few. There are new advances in technology which may be making an impact combating these changes.

A new study out of England has proven that the eye loses 70% of function by the time you have reached the age of 65. This study looked at the main cause behind this and found that certain cells in the eye lose the ability to maintain energy levels needed to sustain good vision. This is not a disease process but an aging process. So what can you do about aging? Well, this



study also found these energy losing cells can be recharged like a battery. Researchers used a certain wavelength of light to recharge these aging cells. The study included people of ages ranging from 20 to 65. Those over the age of 40 benefitted the most by regaining 20% or greater visual function. The technology behind the therapy will not be available to the general public for some time.

The eyelid is also affected by aging. The skin becomes looser and the lids begin to sag. This is called blepharoptosis. When someone has acquired blepharoptosis, also known as "Droopy Eyelid", it may impact how well a person can see, and how that person sees him or herself. When droopy eyelid affects vision, it can interfere with day-to-day functions, such

as reading, driving, and computer use. It may cause one to strain by constantly having to tilt one's head in order to see around the saggy lid. Droopy eyelid can impact not only vision but also appearance, which can be distressing to some by also affecting our mental health. Our mental health is just as important.

Droopy eyelid may result from an underlying issue requiring additional medical attention, such as in neurologic conditions. It's important to be examined by an eye care provider to establish the cause and effect of droopy lids on your vision. In the past, the only available treatment for droopy eyelid was surgery, which was reserved for severe cases only. A severe case is classified as having vision obstructed in a way that limits daily functioning. For those who are looking for treatment options and are not classified as severe, help is now available.

A newly FDA approved eye drop called "UP-NEEQ" can be used to treat droopy lids. UPNEEQ is the first and only topical treatment option for adults with droopy eyelid. The drop stimulates the muscle in the eyelid to contract and this effectively causes the lid to lift. The drop is administered once a day and starts working within 20 minutes. The effects lasted between 6-8 hours in the study group. There are some contraindications to use so make sure you fully disclose all medical conditions when talking to your eye care provider.

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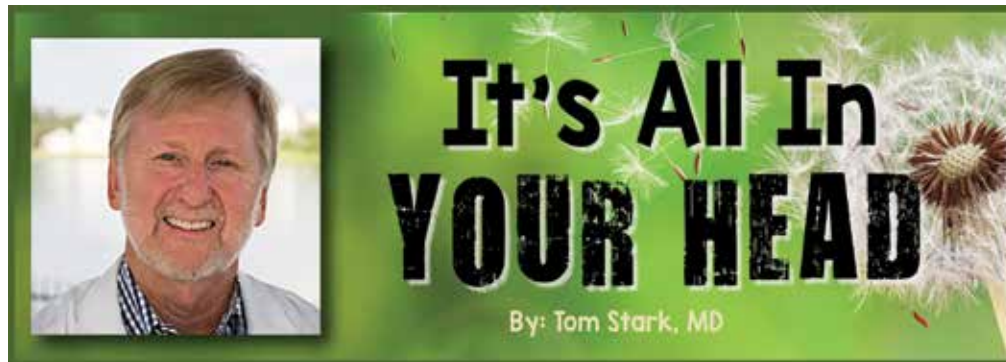
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Nosebleeds

Luckily, there are not many emergencies in my field of ear, nose and throat that require me to go to an emergency room in the middle of the night. However there is one situation that I get called to treat and that is severe uncontrolled nosebleeds.

Bleeding from the nose can be a minor irritation or can be severe enough to hospitalize a patient. I thought I would discuss the most common causes of bleeding from someone's nose as well as home treatment that often will prevent a trip to an emergency room.

The tissues of the nose have a very rich blood supply. Almost every-

one has had minor injuries to their nasal tissues causing a little bit of bleeding that usually



stops within a few minutes. Many children under the age of 8 have temporary nasal bleeding often associated with allergies. Usually these will stop on their own after a few minutes.

More severe or prolonged bleeding from the nose is rare in the general population but certainly occurs especially in people over the age of 50. Almost all bleeding is from the nasal septum, which is the wall between the 2 nasal passages in the middle. The nasal septum has a particularly excellent blood supply with blood coming from 3 different small arteries. The area that bleeds is usually in the front where it is a transition zone between the dry skin of the external nose and the moist nucleus coated membrane farther back.

Nosebleeds are usually associated with cooler dry air. Once we do get some winter here the humidity will drop, and of course we start turning on the heat in the house, which is usually very dry. This contributes to cracking of the membranes especially in the front of the septum with tiny blood vessels opening up if they are close to the surface.


Another very large factor contributing to nasal bleeding is the use of medications which we think of as "blood thinners". These include prescription drugs such as Coumadin, Eliquis or Plavix but also include of course the use of aspirin. Even so called low dose or baby aspirin of 81 mg a day is enough to contribute to nasal bleeding.


Controlling the nosebleed at home is usually not that difficult. If you or a family member is prone to nosebleeds I strongly recommend that you have Afrin (oxymetazoline 0.05%) nasal spray in your home medicine cabinet. This medication acts quickly to constrict blood vessels and can often stop bleeding combined with a maneuver I will describe. If you are having bleeding from your nose that lasts more than 5 minutes, the first step is to blow your nose forcefully to remove all blood clots from the nasal passage. We think that blood clots are helpful, but in actuality they prolong bleeding in your nose. After blowing out as much blood as possible, spray the side that is bleeding with the Afrin, 3 or 4 sprays. Then wait 5 minutes and repeat the process of forceful blowing and for 3-4 sprays of Afrin. Then gently pinch the lower half of the nose together. Lean forward but do not lay back flat, as this will just make the blood go into your throat. Sometimes soaking a paper towel rolled up with Afrin and placing it in the bleeding side and pressing will also help. Pinching the upper half of the nose that is hard bone does not do any good at all.

Saline nasal sprays containing moisturizers such as xylitol, (Xlear spray) are very helpful in keeping the nasal passages moist to prevent bleeding so they can be used very, very frequently.


Hopefully this information will be helpful to you in the upcoming months of cooler dry air. Keep all your blood on the inside where it does the most good. ♦

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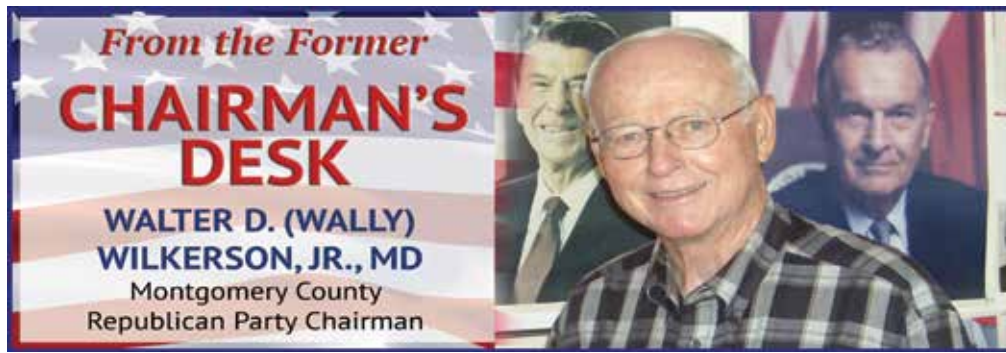
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75th Anniversary

As I write this article on September 2, 2020, it is the 75th Anniversary of the official end of WW II. I am certain there are hundreds of heroic stories that pay tribute to those involved which I could write about. None were more dramatic though than the story of the Second Ranger Battalion whose job was to scale the 10-story high cliffs of the French Pointe du Hoc and destroy the massive German 155 mm cannons aimed right at the Normandy beaches where the American soldiers were to land on D-Day June 6, 1944.

The Second Ranger Battalion was a very unique military group. That is why their story is different than most. Allied Commanders chose Lt. Colonel Earl Rudder, a native Texan, as the leader. He was a Texas A & M University graduate, who later served as the President of the University. General Omar Bradley wrote about the difficult task assigned to the Ranger Battalion: "No soldier in my command has ever been wished a more difficult task than that which befell the 34 year-

old Commander of this Provisional Ranger Force." A U.S. Intelligence Officer described the task: "It can't be done. Three old women with brooms could keep the Rangers from climbing that cliff." Not only did the Rangers have to be in impeccable physical shape, they had to be smart, learn basic German language and undergo grueling training.

Colonel Rudder personally interviewed many of the volunteers for this dangerous mission. One of the candidates had suffered broken legs years ago but "gutted out" the qualifying physical activity. When the physical exam revealed that he wore false teeth, a disqualifying item, the candidate requested a personal interview with Rudder. Rudder listened patiently and told the candidate why he was being rejected. The soldier was quoted as replying: "Hell sir, I don't want to eat them, I want to fight them." A 40 year-old physician whose wife had convinced him not to join the paratroopers, then convinced her that the Rangers had "something to do with

trees" so he could become a Ranger. There were remarkable physical specimens who could have become football players, as well as lean, muscular farm boys among those joining the Rangers.

On D-Day, the 225 men in the Battalion landed on the beach below the Point du Hoc Cliffs and plunged into 40 degree water under fire from the top of the cliffs. Using propelled grappling hooks and ropes, they commenced climbing up the cliffs. They endured withering fire from automatic weapons, as well as explosions from hand grenades and mortars. But a fair number reached the heights only to discover that the 155 mm cannons had been moved. In spite of heavy casualties and a serious chest wound to one of their leaders, First Sergeant Leonard Lomell, the Rangers found and rendered the cannons unusable by placing thermite grenades down the barrels of the guns.

They regrouped and discovered that all of the radios were damaged and unusable. Always prepared, several carrier pigeons had been provided just in case of this mishap. The message that the cannons had been rendered unusable was sent across the Channel to England with the good news via the carrier pigeons. At first, the pigeons seemed confused because of all the fighting below, but in short order headed for England. The regrouped Battalion set out on their next objective, controlling the road leading to the cliffs. After successfully completing their objectives on June 8th, they were relieved by fresh reinforcements. By then, only 75 of the original 225 men and several carrier pigeons remained fit for duty. One of those Battalion leaders chose to be married on the second anniversary of D-Day. ♦

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Aquatic Plant Management on Lake Conroe It Takes a Village



A cage with White Water Lilly.

For more than 40 years, aquatic vegetation has been a matter of concern on Lake Conroe. The San Jacinto River Authority (SJRA) and Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPWD) are close and collaborative partners in the on-going effort to manage aquatic vegetation in the lake. Though spearheaded by SJRA and TPWD, the program has grown because of the ongoing contributions of many area stakeholders representing multiple interests. The Seven Coves Bass Club and Lake Conroe Association in particular have been staunch supporters of aquatic plant management and have had a major influence on the program's growth.

The idea of "management" within the context of aquatic plants, includes both native as well as exotic (i.e. non-native/invasive) species. The overall objective is to maximize the amount of native plants while limiting exotic species to an acceptable level. As eloquently described by TPWD Fisheries Biologist, Alice Best, in last month's issue of Dock Line, these exotic plants can be very aggressive, often out-compete native plants for existence, cause a multitude of undesirable consequences and upset the delicate balance of the



Bull Rush from the Native Plant Nursery.



White Water Lilly from the Native Plant Nursery.

natural ecology. One of the most significant and impactful effects of exotic plants is that they can form such large, dense mats that they can severely limit recreational opportunities on the lake. In fact, certain plants can become so entangled in boat propellers that they can render vessels virtually inoperable. Though well intended, certain methods used to control exotic species often also reduce the amount of native vegetation.

Shortly after the reservoir filled in 1973, the exotic plant, water hyacinth, was first identified. Over the years, other exotic species have found their way into Lake Conroe including giant salvinia, crested floating heart, and hydrilla. Historically, the two most troublesome in terms of the labor and expense to control are hydrilla and giant salvinia. Once established, eradication is simply not a realistic objective. Therefore, a sustained maintenance program is essential. Both SJRA and TPWD have active exotic-plant treatment programs and each dedicates an extensive amount of time and resources, including experienced, licensed applicators to help fight the battle.



Pickerelweed from the Native Plant Nursery.



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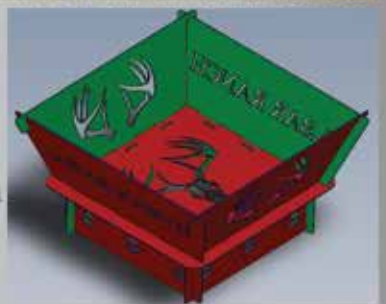
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Vallisneria being harvested in the field for propagation in the Native Plant Nursery.

Seven Coves Bass Club constructed an aquatic plant nursery on the SJRA Lake Conroe campus. The Nursery, which consists of eight individual waterproofed wooden troughs, is used to grow a variety of native plant species. Plants grown in the nursery are propagated from clippings of "mother plants" that have been well established in the reservoir from previous planting efforts. Those grown in the nursery in any given year can be transferred back into the reservoir the following year in a continuous, self-sustaining cycle. Each year an estimated 600 plants are transferred from the nursery back into Lake Conroe. Transplanting excursions often include the assistance of volunteers passionate about preserving the overall health of the lake's ecology.



Water Willow thriving on the shoreline in Caney Creek.

In 2020, SJRA decided to try something new and create a living nursery test and demonstration site at the west end of the Lake Conroe Dam. For this, project staff chose to plant Bull Rush, Water Willow, Pickerelweed, and White Water Lilly. The test site will give SJRA a chance to monitor the growth patterns of each species thus providing insights on survival and proliferation rates once plants have been re-introduced into the natural shoreline of the lake. This living nursery will also serve as erosion control, provide suitable fish habitat, create educational opportunities, and act as a secondary nursery for future clippings and propagation. From the beginning, the plan has been to establish native plant colonies on the north end of the lake that, once established, would reproduce through mechanisms such as seeds and fragmentation, allowing plants to migrate to and populate other areas of the shoreline.



Living Nursery Site at the Lake Conroe Dam (Shane + Jace).

A stakeholder meeting was held on September 10th to allow for an open forum to discuss the current status of aquatic plants in Lake Conroe, the effectiveness of control and restoration efforts, and to outline a unified path forward.

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, find us on Instagram @sanjacintoriverauthoritySJRA, or connect with us on LinkedIn @San Jacinto River Authority. ♦



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Online with Dock Line

How to Win at Social Media: The Exact 5 Strategies Used by the Top Brands and Influencers in the World

There are 3.8 billion social media users in the world today. If you own a business, you can bet that nearly all your current and potential customers are on at least one social media platform. By now, you've been told by everyone that your business needs to be on social media sites like Facebook and Instagram, among others, and you likely have a page on one or more of those platforms.

However, you've probably seen how these sites have taken away much of the organic reach of businesses and brands, forcing them to invest in paid social media advertising to get in front of their potential customers. Many business owners think organic reach is just about dead.

Well, we're here to tell that it hasn't. In fact, if you follow the right strategies you can grow your organic reach and build up a special media presence that works every day to grow your business and bring in new leads. The biggest influencers and brands in the world are growing massive audiences organically by following some simple methods and best practices.

Without further ado, here are the five strategies that will guarantee organic social media growth that results in growing your business.

1. Post more than you think you should.

Many business owners have built a belief that social media can't do much for their business. At least, not organic social media. Sure, you can pour thousands of dollars a month into

Facebook and Instagram ads and you might see some results if you know what you're doing. However, organic results from social media are not easy to come by for businesses or brands.

That is, unless you post the right kind of content...and you post often - much more than you probably think. Influencers like Gary Vaynerchuk post up to seven times a day and big brands like Starbucks and Nike post once a day or once every two days. Most small businesses post much less than that. Maybe you can relate. The point is, if you aren't getting the engagement you want out of social media, you probably aren't posting enough.

2. Be consistent for 2 years (more like 5 years).

An even bigger challenge for businesses wanting to use social media as a growth strategy is consistency. Most businesses create a page for their business and post a lot early on, but begin to post less and less over time, sometimes stopping altogether. Trust is a powerful force in online marketing, and the best way to build trust is to show up consistently for a while. You need to create an expectation for your followers and meet that expectation every time.

Whenever you decide to post and however often you do it, keep doing it the same way. Do it for at least two years and you'll see your social media channels become a reliable marketing tool for your business. Do it for five years and you'll grow to become a trusted authority in your industry.

3. Document. Don't Create.

You may be wondering, "what am I supposed to post every day (or several times a day)?" Trying to come up with the most beautiful, attractive, viral-worthy post every time you post is exhausting. You don't have the time for that and you likely aren't a bottomless well of creative content. But you might be...

Gary Vanerchuck, a successful online marketer and influencer that we mentioned above, gives this simple, yet powerful advice: Document. Don't create. Don't try to create something out of thin air every time you post. Just document your personal journey in your business. Post daily with a challenge you're facing or wisdom that is helping you. Share your successes and failures. Give advice. Help others.

A way to summarize this simply is to just be yourself. Be genuine and post every day about your journey. You could go live for a few minutes a day on Facebook or Instagram or just share a couple of sentences about your experiences. Yes, you'll feel a bit uncomfortable early on, but that will fade away as you get better and people start following you. People love connecting with authenticity.

4. Give, give, give, ask.

As a business owner, it can be tempting to talk about your products or services all the time and try to sell with your posts. This is a huge mistake and it's the fastest way to get people to ignore you on social media. Instead,

give away value when you post without asking for anything in return. Help out your audience. Post valuable content that will improve their lives. Post industry expertise that people would pay for elsewhere. Share what you know freely. Then, every now and then you can ask for something.

The best way to sell anything organically online is to provide value first, then ask for the sale later. When it comes to social media, you need to post value-based content at least three times for every post that asks for something - like an offer for your product or service.

5. Hire a social media manager.

If you're a business owner and you're reading all of this, you may be thinking that you simply don't have the time to invest in social media; at least not the kind that will actually grow successfully organically. Yes, you need to be on social media if you want to grow into the future. All of your customers are hanging out somewhere in these online channels. But, you don't have to do it yourself. One of the best investments you can make when it comes to marketing your business is to hire a social media manager.

A social media manager can post for you every day. They can create all the content for your social media pages and manage all the communication from your posts and messages. It's a great investment to make for the future of your business.

At Dock Line, we have an entire team of so-



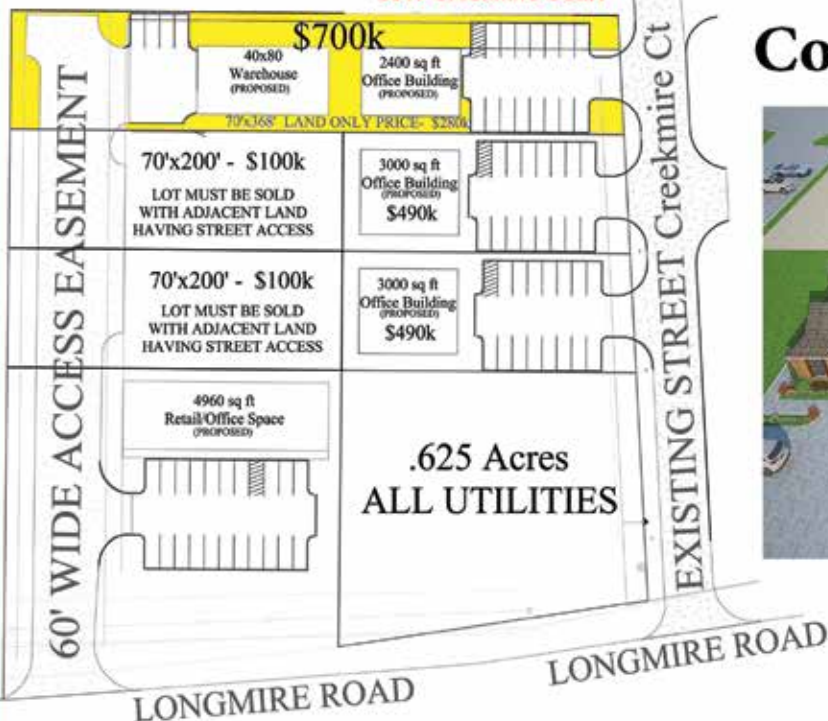
cial media managers that help local businesses grow online. If you would like to find out how we could help your business grow through social media, let us know! Not only do we post beautiful content that your audience will love, but we study your market to post at the most optimal times, constantly test and tweak content so it gets maximum engagement, and nurture followers into leads and customers, all

while you focus on the parts of your business you do best.

If you're interested to learn more about Dock Line's Social Media Services for small businesses, send us an email today at ozzy@docklinemagazine.com. You'll be glad you did! ♦

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TPWD Angler Recognition Program: Making Memories for a Lifetime

By: Mike Gore, Fisheries Technician
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
College Station – Houston Inland Fisheries Management District

"Many go fishing all their lives without knowing that it is not fish they are after." - Henry David Thoreau

As I am sitting in front of my computer today, I started reminiscing about the times my parents took us fishing. We enjoyed many long hours on the water, bass fishing at Sam Rayburn or trying to catch white bass at Lake Livingston. Spending time with my whole family outdoors are the childhood experiences I remember the most. Was it the hunting or fishing or was it the feeling of togetherness that I remembered with such fondness? I know it was the latter. It was the feeling of knowing that we had taken time out of our busy lives to be together; to share and make memories that would last a lifetime. Now, as a father and husband, I am aware of the fishing experiences that made my childhood filled with joy. I try to impart the same experiences to my family, especially my kids.

I caught my first Largemouth Bass on a black and white Heddon Lucky 13 Hula Popper on Sam Rayburn. A school of bass broke the surface chasing shad. I had never seen anything like it before. I sat in awe. Action was fast and furious for a few moments. The bass went down, but my dad turned to me and said that they would come back up at any moment, and to throw my lure as close as I could to the school. When the fish returned, I did just as I was told, hooking up with my first bass. It was only 12 inches long, but at 11 years old, it was big to me. The next few moments were even more important to me and are the vision I see every time I think about that moment in my life.

My dad removed the hook from the mouth of the fish. He was excited that I had just caught my first fish and desperately wanted me to get another before the school went deep again. He turned to me and said, "Hurry up and throw back out there..." His sentence stopped. On the word "throw" the fish, my first bass ever, slipped from his hands and returned to the water. I was devastated and upset. I did not get to admire my first bass. However, the hurt quickly faded and it has become one of my most cherished memories.

I could go on and write several stories about my experiences in the outdoors. My point in telling this story is to emphasize the quality time and memories that can be made on family trips.

Now COVID-19 is forcing people to find new things to do, and I have a suggestion that can create lasting memories for you as an individual or your family. The Texas Parks and Wildlife Angler Recognition Program recognizes anglers catches for waterbody and state records for every species of fish. Now this may sound like a hard goal to reach, but many waterbodies have never had a record application submitted! This means that many waterbody records are within easy reach. Before going out to your local lake or pond, go to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Angler Recognition page, <https://tpwd.texas.gov/fishboat/fish/programs/fishrecords/rules/> to ex-

plore how you can participate.

There are many different ways an individual can challenge themselves and make their fishing trip even more memorable by qualifying for the Angler Recognition Program: State or Waterbody Records by weight, Waterbody Records by tackle type (rod & reel, fly fishing, etc.), First Fish Awards, and Big Fish Awards. You can even practice catch and release with Catch and Release Records by length. Categories exist not only for public waterbodies, but private waters as well. Imagine adding a fish award to the memory of beloved family fishing trip. It would be priceless!

The Junior Angler Recognition Program started in 2003. It is similar to the Angler Recognition Program. You must be 16 years old or younger to participate. It was developed to encourage adults to take a kid fishing and motivate kids to ask someone to take them fishing. The Junior Angler Recognition Program provides an opportunity for a young angler to be recognized separately from adult anglers and be listed in the record book in a standalone division. Junior Angler Records are displayed on the Texas Parks and Wildlife website. Just because it's for young anglers, doesn't mean the categories are any lighter. Kids can qualify for Junior State Records, Junior Waterbody Records, Big Fish Awards, First Fish Awards, Outstanding Angler, and others.



Angler Recognition Application



Angler Recognition Certificates

Since the Junior Angler Recognition Program is not so well known, many of the categories have not been filled yet for many waterbodies. Parents can help a child get as many records as they can or catch the biggest fish out of any waterbody of their choice. It is a great way to spend quality time with a child. Any species of fish qualifies, whether it is as small as a Golden Shiner or as big as a Smallmouth Buffalo. To qualify, a fish must weigh at least 2 oz., otherwise many of the rules for the normal Angler Recognition Program apply to the Junior Angler Recognition Program. Junior Anglers receive a certificate in the mail of the achievement and will be able to see their name on the Texas Parks and Wildlife website if they qualify for a record. Both of my kids have waterbody records at a local pond in College Station, Texas. My son, 7 years old at the time, even qualified for a Junior State Record with a Red-bellied Pacu he caught on a worm. His sister caught her record fish at 3 years of age. Let me tell you, there is nothing that will make a parent prouder than to see their child grinning from ear to ear knowing that they had just accomplished something on their own. The days could not go fast enough with the anticipation of getting those certificates in the mail.

Here's some guidelines before you head out to your favorite fishing spot to pursue a potential record catch:

- 1) Look at the records for that waterbody you are going to visit. <https://tpwd.texas.gov/fishboat/fish/programs/fishrecords/record-search.phtml>
- 2) Print an application and participation brochure for the rules. <https://tpwd.texas.gov/fishboat/fish/programs/fishrecords/scales.phtml>
- 3) Take a camera or phone that takes good pictures to capture photo evidence of your fish.
- 4) Take a measuring device (ruler, tape measure, etc.) to get a length and girth of the fish. Girth measurement is the circumference around the biggest part of the fish's belly.
- 5) If you have a record fish by weight, you'll need to find a place that has a certified scale to weigh your fish. You'll need the date it was certified, and by whom for the application. The most common place to find a certified scale



Certification process of a potential waterbody record by TPWD staff at a local fishing event



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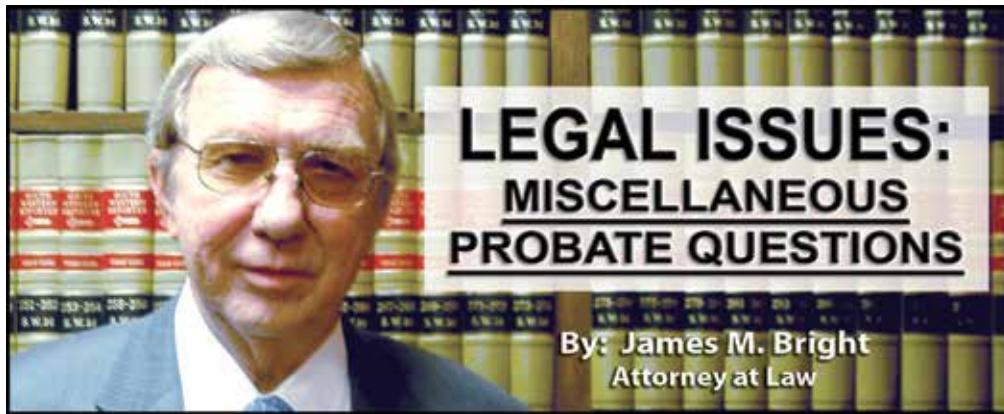
*Junior Waterbody
Record & Junior
State Record Pacu
in 2005*

is a local meat market. Certified scales listed with Texas Parks and Wildlife can be found at: <https://tpwd.texas.gov/fishboat/fish/programs/fishrecords/scales.phtml>

- 6) Fill out the application for your catch according to the procedures in the brochure. If you have any questions call the fisheries biologist for your area, and they will be glad to guide you through any questions you may have to complete the application.

Take the time and take a child out to create some great memories!

For information on the Angler Recognition Program go to <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/fishboat/fish/programs/fishrecords/>. For additional questions, contact our office by phone at (979) 272-1430, or by email at mike.gore@tpwd.texas.gov or alice.best@tpwd.texas.gov. Also, visit us on Facebook at <https://facebook.com/TPWInlandFisheriesCollegeStationHouston>. ♦



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

The following is a list of common questions that are encountered in my law practice regarding estates and probate of Wills. The answers may vary depending upon circumstances of that particular client, but are offered as a guideline for situations which are not extraordinary.

What is the difference in legal title and equitable title and how do the differences relate to probate of estates? As applied to real property issues, equitable title gives the right to possess or use the real property, while legal title shows the person or persons on the deed. A common way that these dramatically different rights appear in probate is when one person (such as a surviving spouse) receives a life estate and remaindermen (children of the

decendent or others) receive legal title. The result of this situation is that remaindermen hold legal title to real property that the surviving spouse has a right to occupy or possess. Technically, the remaindermen (children or other) can sell legal title, although the property would be encumbered by a life estate. In practice, the remaindermen are not likely to find a buyer who is willing to accept those conditions. As regards probate—these issues can be resolved by even a simple Will.

What are revocable life estate deeds (sometimes called “Lady Bird Deeds”)? This is a deed where a person grants a life estate in property to himself and grants legal title to his children or others. This instrument differs from a life estate in the fact that the grantor retains for himself the right to sell or encumber the property during his lifetime. The so-called

“Lady Bird Deed” is often used in anticipation of application for Medicaid benefits. It attempts to transfer the property to descendants without making it subject to Medicaid reimbursement after the death of the grantor. These deeds, if done, must be with a full understanding that there may be title company objections. It should also be noted that if this vehicle is initiated as a shield to Medicaid Recovery, the Internal Revenue Service has a “look-back” period of 60 months.

It is also important to note that laws may change so that the so-called “Lady Bird Deed” may not be effective for its intended purpose.

Does a probate of a Will automatically transfer title to real property? The answer to this question depends upon the type of probate proceeding done. If the Will was probated as a Muniment of Title, then the answer is yes. Transfer of title to real property in Texas is essentially complete upon the filing of a certified copy of the Will together with a certified copy of the Court’s Order in the Real Property Records of the county where the real property is located.

If there were debts to be paid or other cause that an administration be opened, then transfer of title to real property is **NOT** automatic. Transfer of title to real property in this instance would be accomplished by signing and filing an executor or administrator’s deed. An executor or administrator’s deed is a deed wherein the grantor is also the executor or administrator that has been authorized by the

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Court to represent the estate of the decedent. The executor's deed transfers title of the real property to the beneficiaries under the Will.

An example might be, husband dies; surviving wife is the executor and the beneficiary. In this case, wife, in her capacity as executor, signs a deed transferring husband's ownership interest in real property to herself in her individual capacity.

This is an often overlooked duty of the executor. Being authorized by the court to act for the estate does not automatically transfer title to real property; it only gives the executor the authority to act.

The questions answered above cannot begin to answer all of the questions as they relate to your particular loved one's estate. You are encouraged to have an experienced attorney of your choosing answer questions as they relate to you or your loved ones as well as to prepare documents which express your wishes at the time of your death.

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

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Garden Thyme

By: Growers Outlet

PLANTING COOL SEASON ANNUALS

We have been focusing on lawn problems for the past several months and this month I want to talk about adding fall color to your landscape.

The Changing Weather

Fall is my favorite time of the year because it is so refreshing to get a break from the long hot days of summer. This summer was not extremely hot and dry as what we have seen in the past but hot and very humid as usual. The shorter days and cooler nights should trigger a brief growth spurt in most of your plants. Many of your bedding plants probably did not make the trip and will need to be replaced. With this change of weather, we get an opportunity to freshen up our flower beds with some plants that will tolerate much cooler temperatures.

Amend The Soil

It will be too hot to plant pansies and snapdragons until the end of October, but now would be a good time to do proper bed prep. Most bedding plants like organically rich



well-draining soil. Heavy clay soils stay too wet and harbor moisture loving diseases. These pathogens when combined with other stress factors like abnormally high temperatures will find it easy to attack the root system and cause premature death, especially in snapdragons. By adding compost to heavy clay soils, you can accomplish two things, compost will add billions of beneficial microbes to your soil as well as enhance drainage by keeping clay particles from sticking together. Also keep in mind that if you have heavy clay soils that don't drain well you will have to raise your beds preferably about 12". Just adding good soil in a hole of clay will give you a bowl of spongy wet soil that will not drain.

If your soil appears to be rich but will not grow plants well, it would be advisable to get a comprehensive soil test done before guessing what to do. Adding too much of the wrong thing like phosphorous can cause your soil to lock up much needed nutrients and render it

useless for several years. Too much nitrogen can give you very fast-growing massive plants without very many flowers or none.

Less Watering in Winter

One of the nice things about cool season bedding plants is that they normally require almost no extra water once they are established. Because of the short cool days of the winter, water demands are not that high. During normal winters, there is usually enough rain to satisfy the water needs of most cool season plants.

What and When to Plant

The following is a list of annuals that we have found will grow well in a normal mild southeast Texas winter. Some of these will take very cold weather without any damage at all.

Alyssum - is a mild winter annual that grows 5" tall x 8" wide. Needs at least 6 hours of full sun, small fragrant flowers, great border plant, comes in white, purple, pink. Low growing. Deer Resistant. Wait until October to plant.

Cabbage and Kale - are very cold hardy that can take temps in the teens, needs at least 6 hours of full sun, deer will not eat this stuff, starts off green but cold weather makes it change colors. Center of plants will turn red, pink, white or purple.

Calendula - takes temperatures into the low twenties, blooms with quarter sized flowers in orange or yellow. Grows to about 12" tall and wide. Deer do not like these.

Cyclamen - are the only cool weather plant



we sell that will do OK in the shade. These are always a little more expensive than the others because of the time it takes to grow them. They make beautiful flowers that come in the following colors: red, pink, rose, purple, and white. BEWARE, deer think these are candy!!

Dianthus - are great bedding plants that will last for several years. Will grow in hot or cold weather. 8-10" tall and wide. Multiple colors to choose from. Deer resistant.

Dusty Miller - is a silvery gray foliage plant. Grows to about 12" tall x 6" wide. Deer resistant.

Lobelia - 6" tall mild season annual with shades of blue flowers. Will grow in light shade. Deer resistant. Will suffer major freeze damage in the mid to low twenties.

Pansies - DEER LOVE THESE. Mainstay of Texas winter flower beds. Come in all colors. Grows 8-10" tall and wide. Grow these in as much sun as possible. Wait until the last week of October or the first week of November to plant. When planted during hot weather, plants do not start off well. Will take very cold weather and bloom all winter.

Petunias - have been around forever and most people think of them as a warm season annual but they have shown to work well during our normal mild winters. The deer won't eat them and they are tough. Temps in the 20's for short duration only does minor damage. Plant in as much sun as possible with more than 8 hours of full sun, starting as soon as you can find them for sale in the fall.

Snapdragons - these come in dwarf, medium and tall. We only sell the dwarf that grow 8" tall x 8" wide and the medium that grows 18" tall x 8" wide. Deer do not like these but will pull them up sometimes to taste the flowers but will then spit them out. Grow these in as much sun as possible for best blooms. These bloom heaviest in the fall and spring when the days are warmer and longer. When planted during hot weather snapdragons many times will get root rot. The pathogens that cause root rot thrive in warm moist soils. Once the soil cools down we no longer see this problem. We

advise to wait til later in October to plant snapdragons. If you plant them before that, monitor soil moisture. They will not freeze.

Violas-these are mini-pansies. They come in all colors and are much more heat tolerant than pansies. They bloom with smaller flowers but much more profusely than pansies. Have a semi-trailing habit. Deer love these too.

Things to do in October

*If your crape myrtles have black branches with white spots, bring in a small sample in a sealed bag and some close-up pictures of the branches. We can help.

*If you have had problems in the past with brown patch then pretreat your lawn, especially those places that had the disease last year, with Nitro Phos Brown Patch Control or Eagle Turf fungicide. Keep in mind that most fungicides work much better as a preventative than as a curative.

*Fertilize your lawn with Nitro Phos Fall Special or if you want to go organic, use Microlife 6-2-4. DO NOT USE FERTILIZERS WITH A HIGH NITROGEN CONTENT!

*Think about changing the schedule on your irrigation system. Water demands on grass and plants will go down with shorter cooler days and nights. Less water will save money and lessen disease problems.

*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.

*If you have been putting off any major landscape projects, now is the time to start

them. Trees, shrubs and perennials do much better the following summer when planted in the fall.

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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GHOSTS, GOBLINS, PUMPKINS & PAWS... ASVT

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

What are you doing the month of October? Getting ready for Halloween? This is one of the biggest times of the year. So, think about what you can do besides ghosts and goblins.

ANIMAL SHELTER VOLUNTEERS OF TEXAS (ASVT) helps hundreds of animals in our community throughout the year. Stray animals continue to be turned into shelters and go unclaimed. Owners who no longer care for their pets also turn them into our local shelters. The animal shelters remain full. OUR MISSION is to help improve the lives of every animal in our community.

VOLUNTEERING SAVES LIVES. SIGN UP TODAY TO BE AN ASVT VOLUNTEER.

How can you help? In any way that you have time and desire.

- Volunteer
- Foster
- Sponsor
- Donate
- Adopt

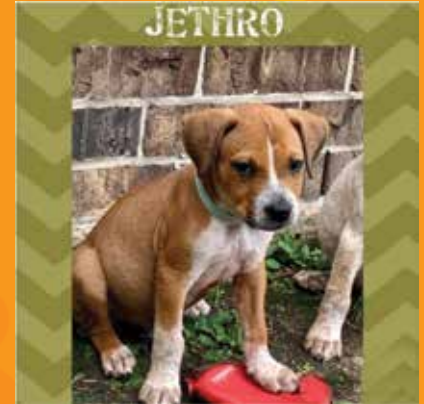
It looks as easy as it is. It just takes the dedication of people like all of you out there to donate time to help the animals of our community. Visit www.ASVTexas.org for more information.

We get calls and emails every day to help animals in need. On the side of the road injured, running in the street, puppies in a box by a dumpster; and the cruelty and neglect goes on and on. We can only help by taking an animal into our program if we have a committed foster.

The case of these three puppies came via message. Finder was trying to keep five puppies from being hit by a car so she was looking for a rescue to help. ASVT stepped up with a

puppy foster that ran out to get them. By the time she got there two of the puppies had already wandered off into the woods. Three were caught and put into the car. We won't give up. The watch is out for the remaining two puppies. The puppies have been vetted and will be ready for adoption soon.

Meet Jed, Elly May and Jethro. They look to be Blue Heeler mixes. Submit your application today! Visit www.ASVTexas.org/adoption-application.html.



Sponsorships help offset some of the costs of medical care so ASVT can continue to help other dogs and cats in need. Other Sponsorship opportunities include participating in our annual fundraisers.

ASVT is a nonprofit 501c3 animal welfare organization. 100% of our funding is from individual and corporate donations and grants from other animal welfare groups. No one takes a salary so all the money donated is used to help dogs and cats who have been abused, abandoned or neglected.

Our organization provides medical expenses for the animals we help. This includes:

- Spay/neuter surgeries, vaccinations, microchips, wormers, flea and heartworm preventatives.
- Medications to treat skin problems like mange and ringworm or respiratory issues like kennel cough and feline upper respiratory



infections.

- Lifesaving procedures including heartworm, parvovirus and distemper treatments.
- Surgeries such as hip replacement, setting broken bones, amputations, extracting infected teeth and removing tumors.

ASVT also sponsors a Spay/Neuter Program for community animals whose owners need assistance altering their pets. This helps decrease the rise of community puppies and kittens that end up in the shelters.

Now you know all about the work ASVT does for the animals of our community. Something to think about the next time you see a small kitten or dog on the side of the road.

If you shop Amazon you can help ASVT rescue animals! Amazon will donate a percentage of every purchase to Animal Shelter Volunteers of Texas when you shop with Amazon Smile and designate Animal Shelter Volunteers of Texas to be your rewards recipient. Just go to your Amazon account to enroll. It's easy and there is no cost.



<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/46-5486022>

Keep Your Pets Safe...

Halloween is a fun, family time but can be scary and dangerous for our pets. Some tips to think about for your pets.

- Watch the treats. Candy can be very harmful to pets, even poisonous. Make sure your candy is out of reach from even the highest jumping cat or counter surfing dog.
- Watch the decorations and wires. Animals will eat wires and decorations that are easily accessible. If your pet ingests a foreign object, contact your vet ASAP.
- Keep pets away from the door. Every time your door opens to a goblin or a ghost, your pet can slip out the door without you even knowing it.
- Instead of having your pet join you trick or treating, consider keeping your pet at home. Costumes, loud noises, door bells and new people can scare them.
- Identification is key. As always, the best thing you can do for your pet is to ensure he is wearing identification and is micro-

chipped. Make sure your contact information is current and you know where your local animal shelter is located in case your animal gets lost.

All pets shown in this article are available for adoption.

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. ♦



Article and photos
by Bronwyn Clear,
Certified Texas
Master Naturalist



Heron bring bigger catches to shore and stab them to death. This makes fish easier to swallow, but Herons have been known to choke to death on a large catch!



Great Blue Heron – The Really Big Bird!

One of the most splendid and fierce birds around our local waterways is the Great Blue Heron. Their size and coloring give them their name. Great Blues can grow to an enormous height of 4-1/2 feet tall with a wingspan up to 6-1/2 feet, but a weight of only 4 to 7 lbs. Their coloring is black, white, and grey with hints of blue. During springtime they have a shaggy look with long plumes down their shoulders, fronts, and behind their heads. In flight the Great Blue is recognized by long trailing legs,



Look at those gams!! Drying and cooling off.



The Great Blue Heron. 4-1/2 feet tall with a wingspan of 6-1/2 feet, but a weight of only 4 to 7 lbs!

a tucked S-shaped aerodynamic neck, and slow graceful beating wings. And if a Great Blue is surprised, it flies off making a ferocious growling honk!

In East Texas the Heron rookeries are usually high in tall pine trees, but never far from the water. Their nests are made of loose sticks and twigs, and are about 3 feet in diameter. Females lay around 3 to 6 light blue eggs in a clutch, and generally produce only one spring-

time clutch each year. Both parents take turns incubating the eggs and feeding the young, requiring almost 2 months of hard work before the nestlings can fly.

The Great Blue Heron is a true carnivore and can hunt prey day or night due to special photoreceptors in its eyes. Fresh fish are their preference, but they have been known to eat rodents, crabs, and even baby alligators! These birds are found near most bodies of fresh or



Great Blues constantly need to repair their loosely made stick nests.

salt water, and occasionally in roadside ditches. Great Blues have even been known to raid backyard goldfish ponds! They are long-legged waders and can stand like statues, waiting patiently to snatch small fish hiding around their tall legs. Or from the side banks a Great Blue will swoop down, grab a much larger fish, carry it to land, and stab it to death with its dagger beak. Once the fish stops wiggling there is less chance of choking on it, but a bird occasionally does die by choking on too large a fish! Therefore, these birds always eat fish headfirst to

prevent having them get stuck in their throats. Make no mistake, these birds are relentless stone-cold predators!

Learn more about the incredible nature in our area by joining a chapter of the Texas Mas-

ter 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! ♦



During breeding season in springtime, their long plumes create a shaggy look.



Hérons are long-legged waders that slowly stalk smaller prey in shallow water.

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Pasta With Pumpkin Alfredo Sauce

Kosher salt
2 9-ounce packages cheese tortellini
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
1 small shallot, finely chopped
1/2 cup canned pure pumpkin
Pinch of freshly grated nutmeg
1 1/4 cups heavy cream
1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
Freshly ground pepper
Chopped fresh parsley

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the tortellini and cook as the label directs. Reserve 1/2 cup cooking water, then drain the pasta.

Meanwhile, heat the butter in a skillet over

medium-high heat. Add the shallot and cook, about 2 minutes. Add the pumpkin and nutmeg and cook, stirring, 1 minute. Stir in the cream and bring to a low boil. Reduce the heat to medium low; simmer, stirring, until slightly thickened, about 5 minutes. Stir in the cheese and cook until thick.

Add the tortellini to the skillet and toss with the sauce, adding some of the reserved cooking water. Serve with more cheese and parsley.



Caramel Apple Bars

1/2-cup cold butter
1 (17.5-ounce) pouch oatmeal cookie mix
1 egg
1 cup peeled and chopped apple
3/4-cup caramel topping
1/4-cup all-purpose flour

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Coat a 9-x-13-inch pan with cooking spray.

In a large bowl, cut butter into cookie mix. Stir in egg until mixture is crumbly. Reserve 1-1/2 cups of cookie mixture. Press remaining cookie mixture in bottom of prepared pan. Bake for 15 minutes.

Sprinkle apple over the cookie crust. In a small bowl, mix caramel topping and flour and drizzle over apples. Then crumble the reserved cookie mix over caramel layer and bake 20 to 25 minutes. ♦



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WHAT EVERY WILDLIFE REHABILITATOR WANTS YOU TO KNOW

By: Lisa Wolling, Executive Director

As a wildlife rehabilitator, one quickly learns that educating the public is a large part of the services we provide. When people bring animals to our intake center, they are often curious about what we do and how they can help animals. There are also many misconceptions about wildlife rehabilitation in general. This month's article will try to address these topics.

First, here is a little background information about wildlife rehabilitators in general:

- In almost all cases, wildlife rehabilitators are completely unpaid and unfunded. Many of us work at "real" jobs to earn a living (unrelated to rehab "work"). We pay for most, if not all, of the expenses of caring for the animals we take in out of our own pockets. Donations at the time an animal is dropped off with a rehabber are very much needed and appreciated. Anything helps!

- Rehabbers will generally ask the public to bring animals to them. Please be understanding of this request. Most rehabbers have many animals in their care at any given time which require frequent feedings and attention. Time spent running around in the car picking up animals is time taken away from the animals already in care.

- Rehabbers do not have unlimited resources and/or space for animals. Some can only take certain species. Most will get to the point that they are completely overwhelmed and cannot take in any more animals at times. If a rehabber refers you to other resources, it is not because they do not care about the animal. It is actually because they want the best care for that animal; that may mean it needs to go to somebody else who has more time and space to properly care for that animal.

- In Texas, as in almost any other state, wildlife rehabilitators are required to have state and/or federal permits (issued by Texas Parks & Wildlife and U.S. Fish and Wildlife), and they are also required to work within the rules and regulations set forth by those organizations. We all are required to obey those rules, at the peril of having our permits taken away if we do not follow them.

- All training and continuing education rehabbers have is obtained on our own time, at our own expense. That is also a requirement for obtaining and retaining ones permit, although once again we receive no funding or assistance to help pay for it.

- Wildlife rehabilitators have a lot of expertise and knowledge, but we are not licensed veterinarians. There are limits as to what a rehabber can realistically do, both from a medical standpoint as well as the fact that we

are dealing with wild animals. Treatment that might be possible for a pet is not necessarily possible for wildlife, especially in the cases of adult animals (such as deer, coyotes, bobcats, foxes, and raccoons). Sadly, sometimes helping a wild animal is not possible. While many of us are fortunate to have veterinarians who will assist us, we generally pay for these services out of pocket. Thankfully, some veterinarians will offer rehabbers discounted services.

- Please bear in mind that rehabbers are often overwhelmed, overworked, and sleep deprived. We are on call 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Animal emergencies do not take vacations, and most of us do not either. Please be understanding if we seem harried and exhausted. We generally are.

Generally, people who are seeking help for an animal they have

found have a love for wildlife as well. We often get asked how people can help, or how they can get involved. We understand that not many people can make the commitment to be a hands-on rehabber, but there are many other ways you can be a friend to wildlife, as well as to wildlife rehabilitators. Here are just a few:

- Consider volunteering with a rehabber or at a rehab center. This can include helping hands-on with animals in care, answering phones, help with animal transport, help with fundraising (VITALLY IMPORTANT!), or help with administrative tasks.

- Are you handy? Offer help with building of cages, nest boxes, etc. This kind of assistance can be invaluable to both new rehabbers just getting started as well as to rehab centers in need of more caging on site. Scout projects are always welcome too!

- Do you own rural property? We are



Injured animals often require around-the-clock care. Top left: bald eagle with lead poisoning; top right: baby squirrel with a broken leg; bottom left: baby rabbit with a broken leg; bottom right: armadillo with dog-bite injuries.

always looking for release spots for rehabilitated wildlife animals. As our county continues to be developed, finding safe release locations is becoming more of a challenge.

- Help us out if you can by donating. Direct donations can be made at www.ftwl.org. You can also support our organization through AmazonSmile and Kroger Community Rewards (details also found on our website). Many corporations offer matching donations for direct donations, payroll deductions and/or volunteer hours.

- If you have a cat or cats, please consider keeping them inside. Free-roaming cats kill or injure millions of wildlife animals every year. We get many, many songbirds, squirrels, rabbits, opossums, and even young owls and hawks that have been attacked by cats. Many of these animals have non-survivable injuries.

- Please do not use rodenticides (rat or

mouse poison). Even with bait stations, these poisons often affect non-target animals such as owls, hawks, raccoons, squirrels, and foxes. Wildlife and even domestic dogs and cats can be inadvertently poisoned, either by direct ingestion or by ingesting a rat or mouse that has eaten the bait.

- Be mindful of other toxins, such as pesticides, fertilizers, etc. Many animals ingest insects, or drink from run off, and they then ingest the toxins as well. Songbirds and screech owls are particularly at risk from pesticides.

- If you do find an animal that appears injured or orphaned, PLEASE call or email a rehab facility as soon as possible! In many cases, especially with baby animals and birds, it may be possible to reunite with their parents. Time is of the essence in these cases. We have helpful flowcharts on our website (www.ftwl.org) and Facebook page that are species specific and give reuniting information. Reuniting baby animals with their natural parents can help to keep rehabbers from getting overwhelmed too quickly.

- Please do not "rehab via the internet". There is so much misinformation out there. Many animals we get require critical care when they first come in due to improper feeding and care. Please remember that a Google search does not qualify one to be a rehabber. Animals that are dehydrated, ill, emaciated, and/or hypothermic cannot digest food or formula, so feeding them can in fact kill them. Improper feeding can cause severe gastric upset as well as a host of other issues. For any animal found, warmth is the most important thing. Hydration should only be done with warmed Pedialyte (or other electrolyte-type of drink) given with a small syringe or eye dropper.

- The fastest way to get in touch with us is by emailing our help line at ftwl.help@gmail.com. This help line is monitored frequently, even when our center is not open. For rehabbers listed by county, help can also be found by checking <https://tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/rehab/list>, or by searching ahnow.org (put in your location, and then click on "wildlife emergency").

- Please do not set traps to relocate wildlife animals. This often results in orphaned babies being left behind. If you have nuisance wildlife issues, please reach out to a local rehabber for advice, or call an expert company such as 911 Wildlife or Skeedaddle Humane Wildlife Removal. These companies will not harm any animals, and they will assure no babies are left behind.

- If you can help us out with volunteering, cage building, or being a release spot,



Many of the animals that rehabbers care for need frequent care and feeding. Top left: baby raccoon being bottle fed; top center: adult opossum; top right: fawn being bottle fed; bottom: three baby gray squirrels.



Some baby birds require feeding as frequently as every twenty minutes. From top left: baby wrens; top right: baby barred owls; bottom left: baby mockingbirds; bottom right: baby great horned owl.

please email ftwl.center@gmail.com.

These are simple things everyone can do to help wildlife animals as well as your local wildlife rehabilitator. 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.ftlw.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. ♦

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Lake Conroe FISHING REPORT



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

Black Bass: Now that we are getting a taste of fall, bass action is getting better each and every day. Many of the coves and backs of creeks are producing decent action by fishing plastic worms, spinner baits or shallow running crank baits along any of the cover in these areas. Boat docks, stumps and any rock structure can be good cover to hold bass.

Crappie: Better crappie action is showing up as the season changes. Minnows and jigs are both picking up some good slabs around the 1097 Bridge and brush piles in 12' - 20' depths.

White Bass & Hybrid Striped Bass: During this time of year to locate and catch those fish I start out by trolling pet spoons along the tops of main lake humps and points in 18' - 25' depths. These fish are constantly moving, so try different areas until they can be located. Sometimes different times of the day can be when they are the most active, so it might be a good idea to backtrack some of the areas you have already fished.

Catfish: Catfish action at this time of year really starts to heat up as the water temp drops. Larger catfish get much more aggressive and can be caught under the 1097 Bridge or along the creek and river channel is 15' - 25' depths. Best baits are shrimp, chicken liver or dip baits on sponge hooks. ♦

~~~~~

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Conroe Guide Service at  
936-856-7080 to inquire  
about fishing trips.**

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Rolling Oaks - 555 +/- acres located between FM 1488 and Honea Egypt (less than 15 miles to I-45). Prime development land or investment opportunity (Water/sewer available).
0 Corolla Road in Magnolia. ML# 43255781. \$12,783,101



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. \$364,500



This home brings modern farmhouse chic to sought-after Graystone Hills (parks, trails, pool w/slides, elementary school)! Crisp colors + earthy floors makes for the perfect balance of clean, modern spaces w/comfortable touches of rustic charm! The interior is white & light-filled, setting off the sumptuous wood floors that lead to the island kitchen w/double ovens,

Bosch 5 burner cooktop w/pot filler, granite peninsula, apron front farmhouse sink, all overlooking the spacious & airy living area w/a drool-worthy shiplap wall accented by the fireplace. The primary bedroom is a reTREAT for sure w/a bathroom fit for the pages of a magazine! Double sinks, vanity area, free standing tub, HUGE walk-in shower + an amazing closet! The 3 secondary bedrooms are located in a separate wing w/a Jack/Jill style bathroom setup. A bonus room off the living would be an excellent media room or playroom. Exterior-welcoming covered front patio, extended back patio great for entertaining! Upgrades galore!

2417 W Bramlet Drive, Graystone Hills in Conroe
ML# 19114416. \$359,000



Excellent opportunity to own a 1.565 acre unrestricted tract on FM 1774. Great traffic exposure, located in an established commercial area. Curb cut in place on FM 1774 and opportunity for additional access at the back of the property. Survey available. Can divide. Owner will build to suit. **0 FM 1774 in Magnolia. ML# 71917730. \$289,900**



Fresh, clean and situated in sought after Lakes at Northpointe (parks, tennis courts, pool, rec center + great schools)! This well-kept home welcomes w/a covered front porch overlooking a finely manicured lawn on a quiet cul-de-sac street. The interior greets w/high ceilings, appealing archways, open floor plan w/a very spacious living room w/wall of windows, tile flooring and all flows nicely into the chic kitchen w/stylish countertops, crisp white cabinets, coffee bar w/picture window, breakfast bars open to the dining area & living room. Off of the living area you'll find a room perfect for a game room/sitting area/formal dining room or a study! The Primary bedroom is tucked in the back of the home for added privacy & features double vanities, double sinks, soak tub, walk-in shower + a HUGE closet! Two secondary bedrooms w/great closet space. Private fenced backyard w/patio and extra side yard space. Fresh paint throughout, upgraded fixtures, remodeled kitchen + more! **13614 Cypress Heath Court, Lakes of Northpointe in Cypress ML# 96088108. \$276,800**



Picture this, a white farmhouse situated on approx. one acre in New Waverly, two-side wrap porch w/room to relax. This 1920 farmhouse is replete w/charm & character, brought back to life & transformed into the perfect blend of original vintage detail + modern living. The interior immediately WOWs from the wood multi pane window in the entry to the hand hewn wood trim around the living room entrance. The fully updated kitchen features the original shiplap wall accents, quartz countertops, SS appliances, subway tile backsplash, breakfast bar + dining area. The Primary bedroom is a newly-constructed addition, however, it has the original wood floors, wall of windows, spa-like bath w/double sinks, quartz counters, walk-in shower + HUGE walk-in closet. One of the secondary rooms features the original Queen Anne Sash windows! Updates include windows, new plumbing and electrical, paint, all new bathrooms, flooring, newer HVAC system and so much more! Private water well and no restrictions.

24 Novark in New Waverly. ML# 73793538. \$273,000



4 acres on the corner of FM 1486 and Hall Drive! 2 entrances on FM 1486! So many possibilities!

7121 FM 1486 Road South in Montgomery
ML# 68712031. \$258,900



Waterfront for lease! Wide open views of Lake Conroe! Take a break and relax at the Lake Conroe Waterfront rental located in Walden. (Walden offers an award winning Golf Course, workout facilities, pools w/food/beverage service, tennis, racquetball, restaurants and much more!) This one story floor plan offers a very spacious living/entertainment area all with great views of the Lake. Island kitchen w/bar seating + dining room. Master bedroom offers double sinks, walk-in shower + soak tub. HUGE screened in porch overlooking Lake Conroe! **3810 Walden Estates Drive, Walden in Montgomery ML# 83979908. \$3,900 LEASE**

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