



Dripping Springs

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OUTLOOK

Volume 20 Issue 5 • Dripping Springs, Texas • September 2023



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Sounds & smells of the season

I've always loved the month of September. There's just something about it. Despite being most of the way through the year, a freshness and sense of opportunity glimmers in the month of September. A fresh start in school, a new season that reveals itself all at once and never a moment too soon, and all of the festive events that lead the way into the rest of the year.

Singer and songwriter, Dean Johanesen, holds down the cover this month. His music and overall demeanor delighted audiences last October at the Songwriters Festival. How special to have such a talented and lively group of artists in your very own backyard. And not just that, the Dripping Springs Pumpkin Festival returns this month and carries us through October. Built on a love for community and the autumnal season, the Pumpkin Festival has something for everyone.

I've said it before, but this is a magical place. The voices of our talented contributors are a piece of myriad colors that make this such a vibrant and enchanted community. On every page, you'll find heart and devotion to practice. Capable business owners that serve Dripping Springs well. We're so grateful to be a small part of it.

As always, thank you for joining us this month. We hope have a wonderful September and enjoy the festive atmosphere settling in all around town.



Dripping Springs **OUTLOOK**

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Happy September, y'all.

Warmly,

BUY LOCAL BUY DRIPPIN'

The Dripping Springs Outlook, a subsidiary of Valentino Publications, is mailed monthly to all street addresses serviced by the Dripping Springs Post Office in 78620.

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- Every Mon.-Fri. **Hill Country Senior Center** 1310 W. Hwy 290, offers a delicious lunch served at noon. Call in by 10:30 and order it to go, too. For more information or to see menu: HCSeniorCenter.org
- Mon-Thurs 9am-6pm **RED Arena Gift Shop** is open featuring seasonal decor created by & supporting programs for adults with disabilities. 2435 W. Fitzhugh Rd. Visit REDarena.org for more information.
- Every Mon. 12pm, **DS Rotary Club** meets at Flores, 2440 E Hwy 290 W. For more information visit DrippingSpringsRotary.org.
- Every Mon. 9am **All Abilities Chair Exercise**, Dripping Springs Community Library, 501 Sportsplex DR, 512 858 7825 or DSCL.org
- Every Mon. 6pm **Nar Anon Family Group** at Friendship Creekside Fellowship 14455 Fm 1826. For family & friends of addicts.
- Every 1st Mon. **DS Ag Boosters** meet in Ag Building behind DS Middle School at 7pm. Visit DSAgBoosters.org for updates
- Every 1st & 3rd Mon. 6:30pm, **Lions Club** meets at Dripping Springs Ranch Park located at 1042 Ranch Road 12. Across from the DS Elementary School. For information call Sharon Goss at 512-923-8630 or email dslionsclub@gmail.com
- Every 2nd Mon. Dripping Springs **4-H Club** meets at 6:30pm at the Dripping Springs Ranch Park, September through May.
- Every 3rd Mon. **Eastern Star** meets at Rambo Lodge at 7:30pm. Call Kathy Clark for more info, 512 858 7004.
- Every Mon. **Stroller Strides workout**, 9am, Wimberley First Baptist Church, Summer 512 644 4198, smwimberleyds@fit4mom.com
- Every Tues. 6:30pm **Toastmasters of Dripping Springs**, Pioneer Bank, 100 Creek Rd. Visitors welcome. DStoastmasters.com
- Every Tues. 5:30pm **Al Anon**, Dripping Springs Presbyterian Church, 26650 Ranch Road 12. Childcare provided.
- Every 2nd Tues. **Bluebonnet Auxiliary** meets at 2pm at Hill Country Care Nursing and Rehab Center, 1505 W. 290. Call Janice Ruyle, 512 264 2538. Volunteers needed. Entertainment and special events for the residents of HCC.
- Every Tuesday at 7pm, **Boy Scout Troop 101** meets in the Foundry building of DS United Methodist Church. Contact Jen Medlock at medlock.scouts@gmail.com
- Every Wed.-Sat. Noon-3pm, **Dr. Pound Pioneer Farmstead and Museum** is open for tours. Call 512 858 2030.
- Every Wed. **Farmer's Market** at the Dr. Pound Farmstead, 3-6pm. For more info CityofDrippingSprings.com or 512 858 4725.
- Every Wed. at 8:30am. **The Hill Country Christian Business Networking Alliance** meets at El Rey. Visit (HCCBNA) on Facebook.
- Every Wed. 5-6pm. **Christ Centered Prayer, meditation, and class**. McArthur Hall Meeting Room #1, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church 6000 FM 3237. For more info call 512 847 9956.
- Every 3rd Wed. **Dripping Springs Cook-Off Club**, Acopon Brewery. For more information call Michele Ryon 512 299 7455.
- Every Wed. **Stroller Barre workout**, 9am, Wimberley First Baptist Church, Summer, 512 644 4198 or smwimberleyds@fit4mom.com
- Thur. **Trivia every Thursday at Acopon Brewing** on Mercer Street 7-9pm
- Thurs. 7pm, **Celebrate Recovery**, hurts, habits, or hang-ups. Christ-centered recovery program. ChurchoftheSprings.org/CR
- Every 1st Thur. 7pm **Vince F. Taylor American Legion Post 290 of Dripping Springs** invites all eligible veterans to 231 Patriots Hall Blvd. For information call 512 858 5637.
- Every 1st Thurs. 6-7:30pm, **Nonfiction Addiction Book Club** at Dripping Springs Community Library, DSCL.org, 512 858 7825. Newcomers welcome. Email AdultServices@dscl.org for details.
- Every 3rd Thur. 7pm, **DS VFW Post 2933** invites all eligible veterans with foreign service to 231 Patriots Hall Blvd. Call 858 5637.
- Every 4th Thur. 6:30-8:30pm, **Photographers of Dripping Springs** Sententia Vera-Cultural Hub, PhotographersofDS.us
- Every Thur. 12pm, **Al Anon**, Dripping Springs United Methodist Church, 28900 Ranch Road 12. Childcare provided.
- Every 3rd Thur. Live concerts, best music in the Hill Country at **Susanna's Kitchen Coffeehouse**, 7:30pm; \$20-25 for adults, \$5 for children. Food, coffee, soft drinks available. Corner of RR 12 & CR 1492 (Wimberley United Methodist Church.) WimberleyUMC.org Proceeds benefit Barnabas Connection & Mother's Day Out scholarships. Performing **September 21: Adler & Hearne**
- Every Thursday, **Skate Night** at Dripping Springs Ranch Park from 5-7:30pm, skateboards, roller skates, & scooters
- Every Fri. **Stroller Strides Playdate with Kids Craft Fridays**, 10am, Emily Ann Theatre, contact Summer, 512 644 4198 or email smwimberleyds@fit4mom.com
- Every 2nd Fri. **Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS)** group meets at 9am at the Episcopal Church of the Holy Spirit (301 Hays Country Acres at Hwy 290W). Childcare available. For information call 512 858 4924 or DrippingSpringsMOPS@gmail.com
- Every Fri. 12pm, **Al Anon**, Dripping Springs Presbyterian Church, 26650 Ranch Road 12. Childcare provided.
- Every Saturday, **Live music at the Barber Shop**, 4-6pm
- Every 1st Sunday, Dripping Springs Church of Christ, 470 Old Hwy 290 (across from Tractor Supply), **First Sunday Focus**, a meal after Bible study and worship. Bible study at 9:30am, 10:30am worship. Meal provided at 11:30am. For more information visit DSChurchofChrist.com, 512 858 4500.

• Saturday, September 23, Dripping Springs Pumpkin Festival begins. Runs through October.
Visit DrippingSpringsPumpkinFestival.com for tickets & details.

- Saturday, September 23, Oktoberfest, Vista Brewing, 12-9:00pm, German-style brews, food, music, games. Family friendly.
- Saturday, September 30, 10am-5pm & Sunday, October 1, 11am-4pm Wimberley Valley Art League Studio Tour
- Friday Night Music, Ghost Note Brewing, 6-8:00pm, 23663 Ranch Road 12. Free live music Friday nights.
Open air taproom, shaded beer garden, finely crafted beer, local wine & cider. Food truck on site.

How do you know if you could benefit from vitamin drips?

by Breca Tracy, PhD



As intravenous (IV) hydration and nutrition (often referred to as vitamin therapy or vitamin drips) become more and more popular, many wonder if it's a good fit for them or a loved one. Have you been curious about vitamin therapy? Have you ever questioned whether vitamin drips could be beneficial to you? Let's dive a little deeper and learn more about this

type of therapy and if it's a potential fit for you.

First and foremost, let's talk about what vitamin drips are. Vitamins and minerals can be delivered into your body via your veins. You may ask, why is this necessary and why is it so popular? The necessity is because this is the fastest, most efficient and effective way to deliver hydration and vitamins to your body. This type of delivery allows your body to absorb much more of what is being given to the body through this route of administration via your veins versus a traditional oral route. IV therapy has become trendy but it not new. IV therapy has been around for a very long time because it's effective!

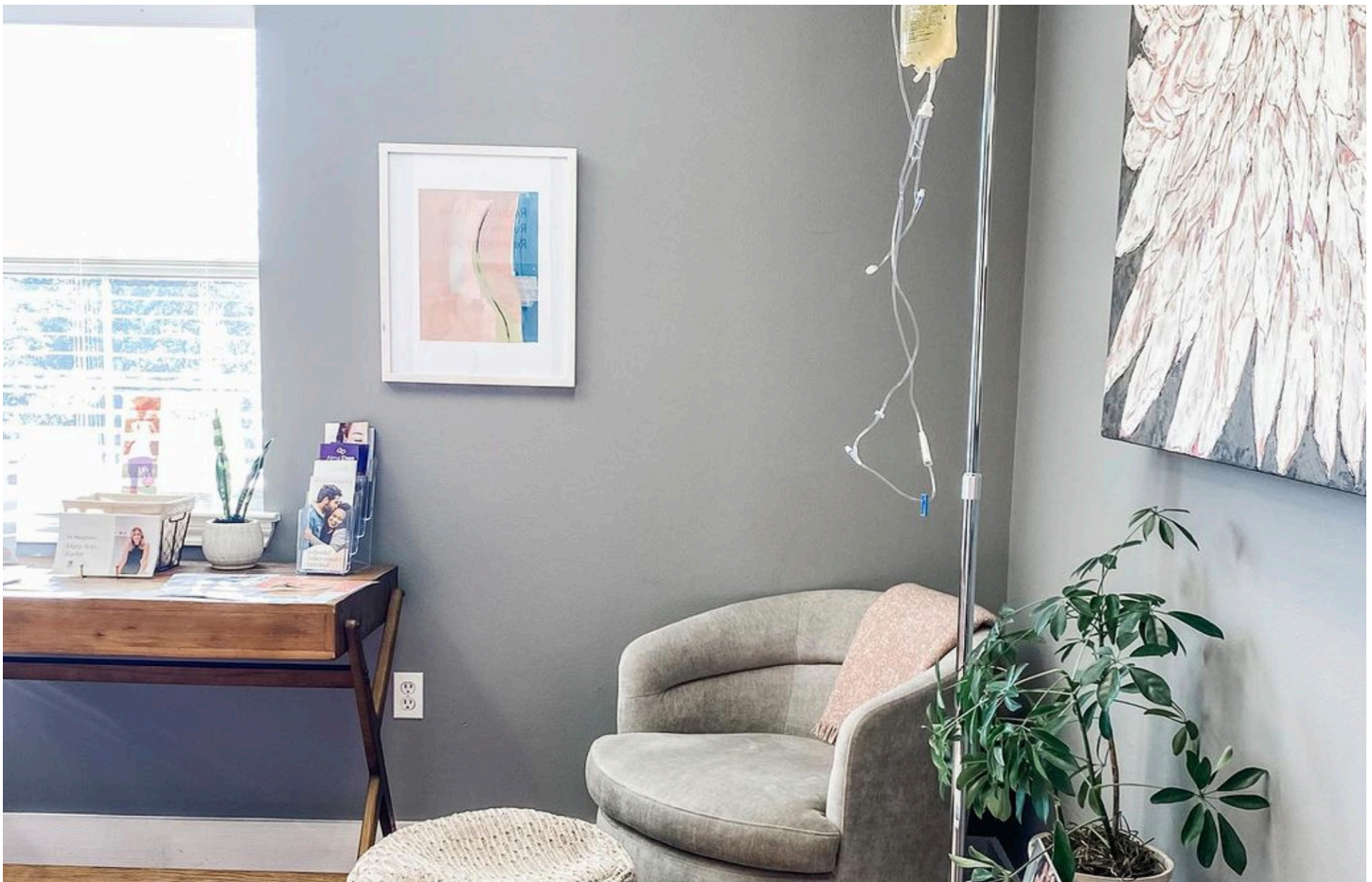
The reason we started vitamin therapy here in Dripping Springs is because it didn't exist in our community! Our goal is always to be market leaders and innovators who bring the best types of tech-

nology, natural solutions, and therapies to benefit our community. We brought vitamin therapy to Dripping not because it was trendy, but because IV and intramuscular (IM) routes of administration are the best delivery methods available! Your body will absorb and therefore benefit from these routes of administration much more than from taking a vitamin or supplement orally.

Finally, is it a fit for you? Pop into the clinic, speak with one of our medical team members and let's determine if you could benefit from this type of therapy. Whether you have known deficiencies or symptoms, and are curious to understand if we can help, let's get to the bottom of it! It's just that easy. We look forward to diving in with you soon and educating you along your journey.

We have a very unique team of experts. Come see us, call, or email us! Dr. Breca Tracy currently serves as Director of Science & Operations at REGENERATE Dripping Springs. Breca has resided in Dripping since 2007 after obtaining her Ph.D. in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology from the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center. Contact us at 512-368-4548, 800 Hwy 290 W, Building F, Suite 200. NaturalHealingTX.com.

REGENERATE
rebuild • rejuvenate • rewind



StaX: A combination laser approach

by Rocco C. Piazza, M.D



As we approach end of summer, many of our clients begin looking for opportunities to reverse the UV damage they've experienced during our long Texas summer. Fortunately, we have some great combination treatments for rejuvenation that don't require multiple treatments or a lot of social down time.

The Sciton StaX procedure is designed to accommodate multiple laser and light modalities that can be easily combined to provide a wide range of treatments. These treatments may include laser hair removal, skin rejuvenation, pigmentation correction, vascular lesion treatment, and so much more. By combining several treatments in one, patients can achieve their results faster and with one recovery time.

The Halo laser is a hybrid fractional laser system that combines two laser wavelengths (ablative and non-ablative) to target both the surface and deep layers of the skin. It is designed to address sun damage, wrinkles, fine lines, uneven texture, and scars.

Moxi is a non-ablative laser treatment designed to improve skin texture, tone, and overall appearance. It is a gentle and versatile treatment that uses fractional laser technology to stimulate collagen production and target various skin concerns like fine lines, mild wrinkles, sunspots, and acne scars. The treatment is typically well-tolerated and requires little to no downtime.

BBL (broad band light) is an advanced light-based therapy

that uses broad-spectrum light to target various skin conditions – sunspots, age spots, freckles, redness, and small blood vessels. BBL delivers precise wavelengths of light to the skin, selectively targeting the pigmented and vascular areas, while leaving the surrounding skin untouched. The body's natural healing process then removes the treated tissue, revealing a more even and youthful complexion. Combining Halo and Moxi laser with BBL can provide synergistic benefits for patients. The combination of these three treatments, often referred to as *StaX*, may offer a comprehensive approach to produce noticeable improvements in skin tone, texture, and overall appearance.

As with any medical treatment, it's essential to consult with an experienced provider to determine if a *StaX* treatment is suitable for your specific skin type and concerns. At The Piazza Center we provide personalized recommendations based on your unique needs and desired outcomes. We hope you'll contact us The Piazza Center to schedule your consultation today.

Rocco C. Piazza, M.D is a Diplomate of The American Board of Plastic Surgery, a member of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, as well as a national spokesperson for the ASPS. Call 512 288 8200 and visit the website ThePiazzaCenter.com.





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We have nothing to fear...

by Leslie Tourish, LPC



What four letter word limits us and contains us more than any other force on earth? Fear. And like many emotions, it runs scales from healthy to unhealthy.

Healthy fear alerts us to look before we leap and to read the fine print of a contract before we sign. This is the fear of worthy self-preservation designed to keep us alive long enough to pass on our DNA to the next generation. In other words, fear is an important tool in our survival

kit to make it to a ripe old age.

So, while fear is hard-wired into our brains as a survival tool, when does it become a burden and hinderance? Usually when it keeps us from growing mentally, emotionally, or spiritually. For example, public speaking is the number one fear in America, beating out the fear of flying and death (and pretty much in that order, too). Say you have this common fear of the speaker's podium, then ask yourself how important is this skill in your life? Is it keeping you from joining certain social clubs or advancing your career?

If the answer is no, then perhaps you have other mental dragons to slay, and this may not be a top priority fear to reduce. However, if the answer is yes, then you're in even greater luck because now you are on the path of possible tremendous personal growth.

Facing fear is the key. Humans often go to great lengths to avoid something we fear, but all along not realizing a simple fact:

we're spending many more times the effort and emotion in the running away from our fears than simply tolerating the emotions and facing our perceived demons.

Dr. Susan Jeffers wrote in her book, *Feel The Fear and Do It Anyway*, "The only way to get rid of the fear of doing something is to go out and do it. Not only am I going to experience fear whenever I'm on unfamiliar territory, but so is everyone else. Pushing through fear is less frightening than living with the underlying fear that comes from a feeling of helplessness."

How do we fight fear? We fight fire with fire. Generally, fears stem from some type of cognitive distortion, which simply means we have a belief about ourselves that may not be true. When we were children, we may have been told we looked silly playing the snowflake in the school Christmas play (probably from that jealous, no-talent icicle behind us). We took it to be true that we looked silly in front of others, stored it way back in our minds, and continue to live that false belief today. To rewire your brain, tell yourself you are capable, you can handle whatever happens, and that you love and approve of yourself. Lean into what scares the socks off of you, and then notice that while it may have been hard, it wasn't impossible. And you're stronger for it.

Leslie Tourish, LPC, is a Dripping Springs psychotherapist in private practice. To contact Leslie, visit LeslieTourish.com or LATourish.com

Cannabis & sleep

by Heidi Pousson



Do you have trouble falling or staying asleep? According to the American Sleep Apnea Association, "About 50 to 70 million Americans have sleep disorders, and 1 in 3 adults (about 84 million people) do not regularly get the recommended amount of uninterrupted sleep they need to protect their health."

Cannabis products are different from prescriptions and over-the-counter sleep medicines. There is no one size fits all. In order to better understand this, it's important to take a closer look at the two different parts of the sleep cycle: *REM* and *Non REM*. There are three phases to the Non-REM cycle, which come first. Phase 1: *Just getting sleepy, wake up very easily, usually about 5-10 minutes.* Phase 2: *Heart rate slows, body temperature drops, eye movement slows.* Phase 3: *Getting into deeper sleep with slower brain waves, harder to be woken up, ready for REM sleep.*

REM, or rapid eye movement, helps your body process new information and aides in long-term memory storing. Have you ever said *I need to sleep on it?* Well, REM sleep can actually help with this. This stage is also when you dream, and your body rejuvenates and regenerates. Understanding this may help you when you're deciding on which product may be best for your sleep needs. THC

can decrease the amount of time it takes to fall asleep, but too much THC can actually block REM sleep. CBD, on the other hand, decreases the amount of time it takes to fall asleep, but it doesn't disrupt sleep. The magic happens when you combine CBD and THC in the right dosage with studies showing this combination to be effective. How is this possible?

Cannabis regulates *gabba* in our body. According to *Medical News Today*, "Gabba is naturally produced in our body, helps promote sleep, relieve anxiety, and protect the brain." So it seems cannabis can actually help our bodies return to a more normal function by working with your endocannabinoid system (ECS).

Terpenes can also be beneficial for sleep as well as CBN, which is like a natural sleep aid found in cannabis, which has also been shown to help ease anxiety. If you are prone to racing thoughts, this may be beneficial to you. Thankfully, there are so many options available with different ratios, cannabinoids, and terpenes.

If you are wanting to try something different because you want a more natural alternative, head on over to Haus of Jayne!



Wife, mother, friend, 8th-grade teacher, member of Haus of Jayne. Follow Haus of Jayne on social media: [hausofjayne_official](https://www.instagram.com/hausofjayne_official) on Instagram and [Facebook.com/HausofJayne](https://www.facebook.com/HausofJayne). Visit Haus of Jayne at 766 Old Fitzhugh Road. They can be reached at 512 648 7420.



A great October tradition is the Dripping Springs Songwriters Festival, now in its 9th year and taking place October 20-22. The festival offers a close-up and personal chance to see, hear, and get to know some very talented performers who have a deep passion for the art of songwriting.

Forty-five songwriters will play in-the-round on Friday and Saturday on 8 *listening room* stages located at The Barber Shop, Acoyon Brewing, Mazama Coffee Co, Hudson's on Mercer, The Warehouse District, Dog 'n' Bone, Haus of Jayne, and Sidecar Tasting Room. Most stages are outdoor and all within safe, easy walking distance of each other in the quaint Historic Districts of downtown Dripping Springs. Golf carts are available to ride back and forth on Old Fitzhugh Road to Mercer Street. The stages are sponsored by Estes Audiology, Craft Pride, 6 String Ranch, Buckner Creek Ranch, Community Impact, Hill Country Dining, Destination Dripping Springs, and Tejas Tonic.

Performances run continuously on Friday and Saturday starting at noon until evening. Saturday morning's Songwriting Series showcases 3 songwriters and their methods of writing at Home-spun Kitchen & Bar from 10-11:30am. Sunday the festivities include the ever-popular Gospel Brunch Showcase at Hudson's on Mercer at 10am featuring the Kyle Sisters, as well as several festival artists. The Sunday Wrap-Up Showcase begins at 1pm under the big tent on Mercer Street and ends at 5pm. Parking is plentiful (see map on website) and food and drinks are served at each stage location. Admission to all downtown shows is free.

Friday night's headliner ticketed concert at Mercer Dancehall features the award-winning songwriter, Radney Foster. Famous for his own songs, "Nobody Wins", "Angel Flight", and "Just Call Me Lonesome", Foster has also written for Keith Urban, Tanya Tucker, Sara Evans, Holly Dunn, and more. Husband/wife duo, Goldpine will open the show. Tickets are available on the festival website.

Since the festival was founded in 2014, it has proven to be one of the most successful events in Central Texas. Visitors of all ages come to hear great music and meet the musicians in a listening room atmosphere. Don't miss a single note of the 9th Annual Dripping Springs Songwriters Festival.

For more information about the 2023 Dripping Springs Songwriters Festival, visit DrippingSpringsSongwriterFestival.com.



Chamber of Commerce Focus on Business: Rootline Coffee Company

We know how overwhelming it can be to find ethically sourced specialty-grade coffee. The truth is most coffee companies pick up the process after the beans have already reached the United States. This lack of accountability often results in the farmers being mistreated and underpaid. Child labor, poor working conditions, and exploitation are just a few ways that corruption has entered the coffee industry.

Britt and Audrey Hancock saw corruption firsthand and knew they had to do something different. Their dream to improve the lives of impoverished people in developing countries through sustainable business led them to the coffee industry. They wanted to empower locals and impact the community, so they bought a coffee farm and named it Esperanza De Gloria, which means Hope of Glory. “Some coffee companies are trying to solve corruption through direct trade, to cut out the middleman who takes advantage of the farmers,” Britt said, “But we go beyond direct trade by actually owning the farm.



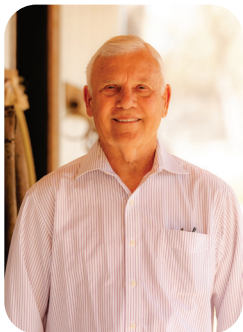
That way, we can pay our harvesters 48% above the national minimum wage, give them three meals a day, provide daycare for children, and a place to live.”

Rootline Coffee Company has intentionally integrated into the beautiful city of Dripping Springs, where we believe this community and our connection with Nicaragua will flourish in unity. This coffee shop is a celebration of supporting farmers and impoverished people while giving DSTX a place to connect. We’re so excited to finally announce the opening of our new coffee shop, but we are

even more ecstatic to raise an overall awareness that the coffee you purchase can make a difference in the lives of farmers. We’re open Monday through Saturday from 6:30am-3pm, so stop in. We would love to meet you!

For more information, visit RootlineCoffeeCo.com and follow us at [@RootlineCoffee](https://www.instagram.com/RootlineCoffee) on Instagram or Facebook.

All in the family: Those were the days



If you’re of a certain age, you may remember the TV shows *All in the Family*, *The Partridge Family*, *Family Ties*, *Mama’s Family*, *Bonanza*, *The Waltons*, *Happy Days* – whether representing picture-perfect or crazy families, they were big hits. Nothing quite like them exists now! Today with the availability of so many ways to be entertained, for many folks, the

old *family night* in front of the TV is a thing of the past, along with other family-centered activities. Seems everyone is in front of a phone or computer screen these days.

Along with these changing family dynamics, multigenerational families rarely live near each other in today’s world – family connection and re-connection are more important than ever. Are we taking advantage of connecting with our families and giving our kids a family knowledge and legacy to carry forward?

A family reunion is a great way to do this! Those summers when my now grown children were young and we vacationed together eventually had them saying *I’m bored*. This was my inspiration to create a place where fun is accessible for all ages – where old memories are revived and new memories are created! I wanted a place for families to gather where no one in the family, no matter what age, was bored.

So, Camp David Retreat was born! We love hosting family reunions and other events, and it’s the perfect venue for getting

everyone together in one place: lodging for up to 28 guests, pool, hot tub, fire pit, sports courts, hiking trails, obstacles courses, indoor games, chef’s kitchen, large lounge with fireplace, expansive deck overlooking the hill country – and the most awesome sunsets around!

Family reunions can be held any time of the year, but we mostly see them in spring and summer, and around holidays. They do take planning ahead to make sure everyone has time to schedule on their calendar. It’s never too early to get on our books and we are happy to help you reserve the perfect time with us and discuss further details.

David E. Jones, a longtime resident of the area, is owner and general manager of Camp David Retreat, located at 4451 McGregor Lane, Dripping Springs. See more at CDAventureretreat.com, or give us a call 800 813 2689, or email info@campdavidretreat.com. Please follow us on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Pinterest and YouTube.



Getting soft water doesn't have to be hard

by Randy Lawrence



Considering all of the different water-related products currently being advertised, deciding which technology is right for your water can be confusing for homeowners. Most are aware that a water softener is necessary, yet many will admit that these systems are a mystery to them.

A softener is considered *point of entry* treatment, meaning that all of the water entering your home is treated as it flows through the unit. Water softeners are a proven method of eliminating scale and salt-based ion exchange is the only technology that physically removes the calcium from your water. Salt-free alternatives leave hardness minerals in your water, which will continue to cause scaling and corrosion. Many current marketing campaigns for alternatives make unsubstantiated claims regarding the efficacy of these products and seek to capitalize on myths surrounding salt-based softening by using outdated facts or overstating figures. Many of these technologies are not new, but simply being re-introduced with catchy new names. What you may not know is that advances in the water treatment industry have resulted in softening systems which are far more salt-efficient and user-friendly than ever.

Water softener pricing and quality can vary greatly. There are units available from \$500 all the way up to \$5,000. The lower priced units do not include installation, which can significantly

change the final cost. Then there's the question of who will make repairs when they become necessary. On the other end, the highest priced units are often so proprietary that parts and service come at a premium. The goal is to find a reliable treatment system that can last for many years without paying too much.

Unless you are a serious do-it-yourselfer, it's probably in your best interest to purchase a unit from a licensed independent dealer who can properly size and install the best unit for your home and remain available after installation to make any necessary adjustments to the equipment. A simple water analysis and a few simple questions will determine the proper softener for your home.

Randy Lawrence is the owner of ProQuality Water Systems, a full service water treatment company. He is one of only six Class III Certified Water Treatment Specialists in Hays County (LIC# WT0002693). With over 20 years of experience he has serviced Wimberley and surrounding areas for over a decade.

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There's a sucker born every minute

by Steve Mallett



There's a sucker born every minute is a phrase closely associated with P. T. Barnum, a mid-19th century American showman. Although there isn't any evidence that P.T. actually said it, the phrase is still used today. In this era of marginalized media, the phrase is more relevant than ever.

People are consumed by information and most of the information is slanted toward doom and panic. The sky could fall at any minute folks! A few people are ignoring the constant deluge of dull talking heads and are making some great buys. Buyers are in charge right now and they are driving a hard bargain.

Prices are declining all across the Austin area. Yes, interest rates are up. That is the cause of the downward pressure on pricing. If interest rates were still at 3% we'd still be in a frenzy of home sales and inflated prices. Does anyone believe that the Austin area is going to suddenly become a terrible place to live and home prices will plummet? Of course not.

You make money when you buy a home, not when you sell it. If you buy when the market is down you will reap the rewards when the market increases again. Prices will eventually go back to the levels reached during the covid real estate boom. The question is when, but everyone knows prices will rise again.

If you are buying a stock you look at the fundamentals of the company. You do the same when purchasing real estate. The fundamentals of Austin are that tech companies are moving here in

record numbers, industry has identified Texas as a great state to be based, and the Austin area is one of the most desirable cities in the country because of the unique mix of urban and suburban activities. None of that is going to change.

Don't listen to the babbling talking heads on social media saying that we are all doomed. The present inflation bubble, caused by too much government spending, had to be tamed. Raising interest rates is the only tool the government has to fix the problem they created. Eventually inflation will ease, rates will come down and homes will rise in price again.

Buy low and sell high is a Wall Street proverb. It works for all the rich hedge fund managers and it can work for you.

Steve Mallett has been selling real estate in Dripping Springs and Austin since 2003. His team can help with all of your real estate needs. Residential, commercial, farm and ranch. Co-Host of the Mallett and Michelle on Dripping Springs Podcast. Call 512 829 2062 or 512 627 7018.



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The soil temperature that kills

by George Altgelt



I promised you a further discussion of soil pH, but I'm going to delay that discussion for next time. What's more urgent is to talk about soil temperatures – in other words, the necessity of mulch.

What you must know is that hot soil stops your plants from producing anything. The upper limit is 92°F. That's when the plant dies. The only thing

that saves it are the deep roots, as they can still gather moisture. The top layer of soil, at 92°, still won't move vital nutrients into the plant, because there's no enzyme activity. Cactus or some other such desert adapted plant are the exception.

As gardeners in central Texas in the summer, we must mulch with a light-colored, fluffy mulch. This keeps the soil from absorbing sunlight. When sunlight is absorbed into soil, it turns into heat! It will also act as an insulator. There is no quicker way to ruin the plants in your garden than to let this occur. I recommend mulch to be 4 inches thick. Multiply the area of your beds by four, then divide that by 324. That will give you the number of yards you need.

That one act alone will affect several positive changes. You won't lose water nearly as quickly. You can cut water loss by 50%

at least. In addition to keeping the plants growing, the microbial life, which is extremely important to productive soils, will be saved from frying. You need those single celled critters. They're symbiotic with the plants. Heat them up and they die. Cool soil also preserves your nitrogen. Nitrogen is one of the only materials that is not a solid. It gasifies very easily! Given half a chance, it'll float off in the breeze on a hot day right out of your soil.

Right now you can get light colored, fluffy, insulating mulch at GeoGrowers. It's called Shredded Cedar. You can bag it yourself or have us load it in your truck. You can also order truckloads of it to be delivered right to your house. Mulch your garden in the cool of the day. Don't let your water and nitrogen get away!

George Altgelt is the owner of Geo Growers, located on 290 and Bells Springs Road. Geo Growers has been in business since 1995 and sells bulk material as well as bagged gardening products and plants. George believes we need to be producing more of our own food, and each one of us can contribute. His goal is to make that as easy and effective as possible.



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What is the CGC? CGC stands for Canine Good Citizen, this is a certification you can earn with your dog. This test is comprised of 10 skills combining obedience, socialization, and handling. Even if you don't think you will take the test, using the 10 skills as a focus to train your dog is a great way to make sure you are working on all the right things. This is also a good way to tell if your dog could make a good therapy

dog and some therapy programs require passing of the CGC to participate in their programs.

So, what are the steps?

1. Accepting a friendly stranger, letting them approach.
2. Sitting nicely for petting.
3. Appearance and grooming; here's where your handling skills come in – you should be practicing with your puppy.
4. Loose leash walking.
5. Walking through a crowd.
6. Sit down and stay on command.
7. Coming when called. You may put your dog in a stay, then call them to you.
8. Staying calm around other dogs, walking toward, stopping, and walking by.
9. Reaction to distraction. This may be something moving by or a loud sound.
10. Supervised separation – your dog will be left with the evaluator for 3 minutes while you go out of sight.

What equipment can you use during the test? Dogs can be on buckle collars or a martingale collar with a 4 or 6 foot leash. Retractable leashes, training collars, harnesses, and head halters may not be used. Treats are also not allowed during the test. You may use any equipment listed to help train your dog but be sure to transition and practice on acceptable equipment before your test.

I think the CGC is a great way to gauge how prepared a dog is to be in public spaces. It would be amazing to see businesses who have shut out dogs, allow dogs who can show their CGC certificate... if the research has been done to make sure it's not a fake. I don't have it all ironed out but I'm sure there's a way. I think I'll work on it!

Diana Ozimek is the owner and lead trainer at Good Dog in the Making. She is excited to bring her puppy training expertise to her new community and help families raise a confident, well-mannered dog. GoodDogintheMaking.com, 773 899 1960.



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DRIPPING SPRINGS PUMPKIN FESTIVAL



It's that time again, y'all. The Dripping Springs Pumpkin Festival is back! And it's bigger and even better than last year. This is the final year at the Pound House because the festival has grown so much. The tradition will continue on a new property in Dripping Springs – as well as the future Dripping Springs Christmas Festival – in 2024. The festival was created by Christopher Durst and his wife, Gretchen Bray. Gretchen was in the 82nd Airborne Division in the Army. Now an executive at Dell, the festival is a creative outlet for Gretchen and you can see her input all over the festival – from the photo op installations to the Scarecrow Disco. Christopher has been throwing festivals and events since he was 18-years-old. He was in music and wasn't pleased with the business practices he saw, so he decided to do it his way. Growing up, his family would put on pumpkin patch fundraisers, "I grew up around that non-profit spirit. The pumpkins and the hay – that really kind of seasonal, festive vibe – I grew to favor the fall season... We didn't want to let the tradition die."

And so the Dripping Springs Pumpkin Festival was born with the ethos Christopher brought to the music festivals he produced and the wholesome nostalgic vibe he grew up with. There are a ton of food and beverage trucks, but they welcome you to pack a picnic basket to enjoy on the property (just no glass containers). The festival always has the most surprising and thoughtful touches. There are as many opportunities for education as there are for fun. "It's a great opportunity for everybody to come together to learn about their culture, the history of the indigenous people in the area, and work to celebrate them," Christopher says.

"There's so much more this year. All the games are different. We've realized we need to open up the games and make them bigger, more inclusive. And just design them where kids can run around and get the energy out." There's live music everyday in the Blacksmith Barn from 1-3:00pm. And the legendary DJ Bones will have his seasonal playlist going by the food trucks.

The whole festival is full of so much heart. "It really just reminds me of childhood. And I think that's why we work hard to ensure we're creating memories for families... All of our family are behind it."

Weekend 1: Scarecrow Disco (September 23 & 24)

Weekend 2: Butterfly Jubilee (September 30 & October 1)

Weekend 3: Celebration of Indigenous Tradition (October 7 & 8)

Weekend 4: Pioneer Palooza (October 14 & 15)

Weekend 5: Bubble Extravaganza (October 21 & 22)

Weekend 6: Pumpkin Jamboree (October 28 & 29)

Litigation: The alternate juror

by Roland Brown



Well, here I am. It's 3am and I've dragged myself out of bed after four hours of rest and managed to make a pot of coffee which will hopefully jolt me into some state of awareness sufficient for the task ahead. Recently I wrote an article about the hectic days of a lawyer that precede a jury trial. Those days have just passed for a trial that began yesterday morning

when we selected a jury in a vehicle crash personal injury case. This morning I am up early to do some fine tuning before we begin presenting evidence in just a few hours.

One thing that crosses my mind this morning is that it may not be widely known that we pick one or more *alternate* jurors to hear the evidence in a case. The purpose of adding them to the typical jury of 12 jurors is to avoid a problem if one of the other jurors becomes ill or is otherwise unable to complete their jury service, in which event an alternate juror can fill the spot left by the missing juror and the trial can proceed. Otherwise, unless the attorneys were to agree to continue with less than the full complement of jurors, a mistrial would occur and the process would have to begin

again with a new trial setting and jury sometime in the future. In the past, I have been in situations in which we had not selected an alternate juror, and when one of the jurors was unable to continue, the attorneys agreed to complete the trial with only 11 jurors. In this week's case, we selected one alternate juror because the case will last less than a week, so the likelihood of losing more than one juror is slight. In a longer case, a judge may select more than one alternate as a hedge against multiple jurors becoming ill or otherwise being unable to complete their jury service. If, at the end of the evidence and closing arguments, all the original 12 jurors remain, then the court excuses the alternate juror, thanking them for their service, and the 12 original jurors retire to the jury room and deliberate. So now I get another cup of the coffee and get back to work.

Attorney Roland Brown handles exclusively personal injury claims.

Roland, who offices in Wimberley, has been voted HAYS COUNTY'S BEST PERSONAL INJURY ATTORNEY for 2020 and for 2021 in annual polls of Hays County attorneys. For more information call 512 847 2500.



What to know about HSAs & FSAs

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor



Gavin J. Loftus

Paying for health care can be challenging – are you taking full advantage of all the resources available to you? You might have access to a Health Savings Account (HSA) or a Flexible Spending Account (FSA), so let's look at both.

An HSA is a personal savings account used to pay health care costs. If you're enrolled in a high-deductible health plan, you also may be eligible to contribute to an HSA. You aren't

taxed on the money you put into this account or on the earnings generated from your contributions, as long as withdrawals are used for qualified health care costs such as deductibles, copayments, and coinsurance. There's no *use it or lose it* provision with HSAs – the money stays in your account until you use it. In fact, you can carry your HSA with you all the way until retirement, when you can use the money to pay for qualified expenses that Medicare or Medicare Supplement Insurance (Medigap) doesn't cover. In 2023, you can contribute up to \$3,850 to an HSA, or \$4,850 if you're 55 or older; for family coverage, you can put in up to \$7,750.

It's important to keep in mind that your HSA's tax benefits only apply when your withdrawals are used for qualified health care costs. Non-qualified expenses are considered taxable income with a penalty of 20% on the amount withdrawn. Once you turn 65, you

can use your HSA funds for any purpose without a penalty, though the withdrawals will still count as taxable income.

Now, let's turn to the Flexible Savings Account. An FSA may be available to you if you get health insurance through your employer. And because you fund your FSA with pretax dollars, your contributions can reduce your taxable income. (In 2023, you can contribute up to \$3,050 to an FSA.) Your employer may also choose to contribute to your FSA. Once your account is funded and active, you submit claims with proof of your medical expenses, along with a statement that these expenses aren't covered by your plan, and you can be reimbursed for your costs.

It's helpful to have a good estimate of your yearly medical expenses for a Flexible Savings Account. An FSA generally needs to be spent before the end of the plan year – if you don't use all the money, you can only carry over some of it. Any remaining balance is forfeited. (You can carry over up to \$610 from 2023 into 2024.)

You can't contribute to an HSA and a traditional FSA in the same year. But if you have an HSA, you might be able to use what's known as a Limited Purpose Flexible Spending Account (LPFSA) for dental and vision expenses.

Managing your health care expenses should be a key part of your overall financial strategy – so consider putting an HSA or FSA to work for you.

Gavin J. Loftus, CFP, AAMS, Financial Advisor specializes in helping individual investors and business owners reach their financial goals. He can be reached at 512-894-3801.

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