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“Is the spring coming?” he said. “What is it like?”...
“It is the sun shining on the rain and the rain falling on the sunshine...”
—Frances Hodgson Burnett, *The Secret Garden*

What a delicious time of year. The air is fresh and the flowers are aching to burst forth. The sunshine is gentle and I love the breeze that chills afternoon.



We really never know what we're in for when the new year comes around. Spring officially begins on March 19, but we have been able to taste it ever since that easy drop in temperatures a few weeks back. Hope springs eternal for the little buds on the trees and bluebonnet leaves that dared to emerge

in one of the most notorious months of the Texan year. I think we're all ready for the flood of color and raw beauty spring brings with it.

Walks in the early evening, dinners outside, lingering at the playground longer than usual - spring offers us the space for renewal and refilling. It's also time when I revisit the habits and hobbies I hoped to adopt this year. Once the supercharged nature of the holiday season is firmly in the past and all the things have been given the time to be caught up on and conquered, there's space to consider the newness I hope to welcome in before another trip around the sun has elapsed.

There's beauty in the second, the minute, the hour, the moment that can last a lifetime or a split second. The trick is staying present for all of it and not letting the human construct of time weigh too much. Being sure to breathe in fully the cool, fresh air, bask in the temperate sunshine, savor the present moment. I hope this season brings all you hope for.

Happy March,
y'all!

Cyle Elizabeth Johnson
Editor, Publisher

Community Calendar

- 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. 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. 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. DSAgBoosters.org
- 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, 6:30pm Dripping Springs Ranch Park, September through May.
- Every 3rd Mon. Eastern Star meets at Rambo Lodge at 7:30pm. Call Kathy Clark, 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 DS, Hays county office 195 Roger Hanks Pkwy. 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 Todd Ashby at todd.ashby9064@icloud.com
- Every Wed.-Sat. Noon-3pm, Dr. Pound Pioneer Farmstead and Museum open for tours. 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. 512 847 9956
- Every 3rd Wed. Dripping Springs Cook-Off Club, Acopon Brewery. 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. 512 858 5637
- Every 1st Thurs. 6-7:30pm, Nonfiction Addiction Book Club at Dripping Springs Community Library, DSCL.org, 512 858 7825. 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 DS, Holy Spirit Episcopal School, 301 Hays Country Acres, 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; \$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 *Thurs. March 21: Eliza Gilkyson*
 - 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, 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. 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, Bible study 9:30am, 10:30am worship. Meal provided 11:30am. Visit DSChurchofChrist.com, 512 858 4500.

**HAVE SOMETHING TO ADD TO THE CALENDAR?
REACH OUT TO US AT INFO@DSOUTLOOK.COM
OR 512 375 5590.**

Learn how we can help support your immune system!

by Breca Tracy, PhD



Eating a healthy diet, staying hydrated, exercising, and doing the best you can to keep your stress at bay are all important. Additionally, making sure you are getting adequate amounts of proper vitamins and minerals. At REGENERATE, we offer an entire menu of vitamins and minerals delivered to you through intravenous infusions or intramuscular shots.

Whether you are looking to support your immune system during cold, flu, and viral season or just replenish due to depletion, check out what we have to offer! Some of the most common options include our Super Myers Cocktail Infusion, B12, Vitamin B Complex, Lipotropic (MIC) + B12, Vitamin D, Vitamin C, Glutathione, Nicotinamide Adenine Dinucleotide (NAD), Alpha-Lipoic Acid (ALA), Chelation, High-Dose Vitamin C, Hydration, Migraine Recovery, and Athletic Recovery Infusions.

Many of our patients wonder if they should consider intravenous vitamin infusions. *If I'm already taking vitamin C and B supplements, is there an advantage to doing infusions?* The answer is YES! Intravenous (IV) Therapy can be used as a method to deliver nutrients, such as vitamins or minerals, directly into the bloodstream. This is typically through a vein in the arm. By injecting substances directly into the bloodstream, you eliminate alteration of the nutrients, which may occur from the actions of digestive enzymes. The amount of nutrients in the blood can reach higher therapeutic levels much faster than what is possible when absorp-

tion takes place through the gastrointestinal system. Few people realize when you swallow a pill or a multi-vitamin, the body's natural absorption process can render up to 85% of that vitamin useless. Help your body begin to heal itself faster with IV therapy. IV nutrients enter your bloodstream directly and immediately, making them more *bioavailable* (ie, available for your body to absorb).

High-dose IV Vitamin C has shown great anti-inflammatory activity. Our Super Myers Cocktail contains ingredients that have been shown to improve many types of symptoms. Try adding glutathione and acetylcysteine to a Myers cocktail blend for antioxidant and detoxifying properties.

Education is one of our core values at REGENERATE. We have been blessed to support our community for the last 6 years by offering IV vitamin/mineral therapies via shots and infusions. Please give us a call or drop us a line online, and we would be happy to educate you on what is most beneficial for your needs. Better absorb and utilize essential nutrients with IV therapy!

Whether you are looking to support your immune system, hydrate your body, or just simply decrease stress, give us a call and our team will be able to steer you in the right direction to meet your expectations.

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.

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High on Love:

Exploring the intimate connection between cannabis and romance

by Heidi Pousson



In the ever-evolving landscape of relationships, some couples are turning to a laid-back remedy to enhance their connection – cannabis. With its growing acceptance, both medicinally and recreationally, this green companion is making its way into the realm of intimacy, bringing a relaxed vibe to the bedroom.

Picture this: soft music playing, dim lights, and a hint of cannabis in the air. It's not about getting blasted, but

rather finding that sweet spot where relaxation meets heightened senses. Many couples are discovering that incorporating cannabis into their intimate moments can lead to a deeper connection and a more relaxed state of mind. For some, cannabis acts as a natural aphrodisiac, intensifying sensations and promoting a sense of euphoria. Strains with a balanced THC and CBD ratio are often favored, offering a gentle lift without the mind-numbing effects. It's like adding a dash of spice to a recipe – just enough to enhance the flavor without overpowering it.

Communication is key and so is consent. The laid-back nature of cannabis doesn't mean assumptions are in order. It's about exploring together, being open to new experiences, and respecting each other's comfort levels. Some find that sharing a joint sparks

meaningful conversations, fostering emotional intimacy alongside the physical. Edibles, with their slow-release effects, can be a game-changer for couples seeking a more sustained connection. From sensual massages to shared giggles over a favorite movie, the possibilities are as diverse as the strains themselves. The key is to go at your own pace and savor the journey together.

Of course, it's important to be mindful of individual preferences and legalities. Checking local regulations, understanding personal tolerance levels, and choosing a comfortable environment are crucial steps in incorporating cannabis into intimate moments.

It's about creating an atmosphere of comfort, exploring together, and finding joy in the shared experience. So, why not light up, relax, and let the sparks fly? At Haus of Jayne, we have a variety of products. Let us help you find what you're looking for or what you didn't even know you were looking for!

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



HAUS OF JAYNE

Botox before your wedding: Planning is key – Start early, not last minute

by Rocco C. Piazza, M.D



Here's the secret, ladies and gents: don't wait until the week before your wedding to consider Botox. While it might seem like a quick fix, it's not a one-size-fits-all solution. Botox, a neuromodulator, takes around two weeks to show its full effects and lasts roughly 3-4 months. So, planning is crucial to

achieve the natural, radiant look you desire.

Embrace the *trial run*: 8 months out is your sweet spot. Ideally, start your Botox journey at least 8 months before your wedding, what we like to call a "trial run". This gives you ample time for:

- **Consultation:** Discuss your goals and concerns with a practitioner like our experts at The Piazza Center. We'll create a personalized treatment plan based on your unique needs.
- **Trial run:** This initial appointment allows you to see how your body reacts to Botox and tweak the dosage or injection sites if needed. Remember, everyone's different!
- **Fine-tuning:** With a few months buffer, you can schedule touch-up appointments to ensure the perfect results for your wedding day.
- **Timing:** This allows you to have a trial treatment at the eight-month mark, followed by a treatment three months later for consistency, and then your last treatment a month before your wedding day. The effects will kick in just in time for your big day, leaving

you with a refreshed, natural look. Optimal Timing: Buffer Room: If any minor side effects like temporary bruising or swelling occur, they'll have time to fully resolve before your photos and ceremony.

If you're also looking to add filler to your regimen, we recommend your first filler treatment at the six-month mark and then your last filler treatment a maximum of one month out before your big day to allow for downtime from bruising and or swelling.

Always choose a qualified healthcare professional experienced in Botox injections. Our team of expert nurse injectors prioritizes your safety and satisfaction. Botox isn't a magic wand and communication is key. Discuss your desired outcome openly with your provider to ensure realistic expectations. Botox can be a great tool, but it's just one piece of the puzzle. Maintain a healthy lifestyle with proper hydration, sleep, and a balanced diet for a truly radiant glow. For our full recommendations for prepping for your wedding day, check out our bridal packages. Contact us for a personalized consultation and to discuss how Botox can contribute to your wedding day glow.

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](#).



Dripping Springs Outlook | March 2024

We only succeed together

by Leslie Tourish, LPC



A woman recently told me that she'd made a decision on how to approach this new year; she's going to stop pressing her nose against the candy store glass window and wishing for all of the goodies just outside of her reach. Several years ago, her life turned upside down when she discovered her husband of 25 years had not only been having an affair with a family friend,

but he had also contacted their family attorney to obtain a divorce.

Within months her once seemingly secure life was only a memory, as she mourned the loss of her husband, their shared home, and belief that the world was a safe place. In a protective stance to shield her wounds, she withdrew from taking chances and letting others too close. She turned inward. Slowly the malaise of mourning began to lift like heavy drapes, revealing one new day melding into the next. She wondered how she was going to fill all those tomorrows without filtering it through the likes, dislikes, and beliefs of another person by her side.

What became clear was that while the marriage had given her the illusion of safety, it had also kept her free of the very important and painful lessons taking risks gives. "It was like I'd been given a book of how things worked that everybody else had learned way back in elementary school, and I had to learn from scratch," she said. One of her biggest lessons? Learning how to ask for what she wanted.

She had allowed her husband to become the committee for problem solving. Car blew its transmission? Husband was on the phone with the mechanics wrangling whether the car was worth the several grand for the repair bill. Ball moss choking the life out

of the live oak trees in the front yard? Husband not only knew the right tree doctor, but got them set up for quarterly lawn maintenance services to boot.

Slowly, through trial and error, she began to learn the *Aladdin Factor* of gathering up your courage and asking for what she wanted. She said that after the divorce, she learned the skill of asking others what she wanted. When the car leaked mysterious fluids all over the garage, she was able to wrangle with the mechanics to get the price of the repairs down to a more reasonable fee. When she decided to go back to college for a graduate degree, she asked friends and admissions office staff what steps needed to be taken for each new challenge. Each time she asked for help, she was amazed that almost all the requests were not only requested, but often with far less angst that she had anticipated.

So many of us are just not comfortable in asking others for help because we're afraid of being rejected or appearing helpless and weak. Yet think how you feel when someone sincerely asks you for help. Helping that person to achieve their goal may be a rewarding experience, and the warm feeling you can carry within yourself lasts long after the favor is completed.

We are connected to each other as friends, family, and society. Giving and receiving from others reinforces those bonds. When you think about it, nothing of value in your life was created in a vacuum. There are scores of people behind your accomplishments who were there as part of your team and wanting you to succeed. While failure can occur whether you're by yourself or supported by others, success can only occur with the aid and support of others. But the first step? Taking the risk of being vulnerable and asking for what you need.

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

Believe in leaves: The power plant of the plant

by George Altgelt



As many gardeners have noticed, that last cold snap did some damage to the plants in the garden. But surprisingly, some plants showed very little damage or no damage!

My broccoli plants did very well. Only two of them sustained damage on the broccoli florette. That's the part that we eat. But, there is still plenty of edible crown to harvest on those that got frost bit. Long before the head is

ready to be harvested, the leaves were doing the work of growing the plant. Make no mistake, the leaves are edible as well as the broccoli stems. Many people enjoy eating broccoli leaves while they wait for the head to mature. The leaves are quite good and they taste a lot like broccoli. However, do not take too many broccoli leaves from any single plant. The power to produce to maturity, in that plant, and in all other plants, is the leaf.

I once had an employee who was very zealous about gardening. It was his first experience with a garden. He pruned the leaves off of the broccoli from the bottom up while they were still small. He had each plant looking like a miniature palm tree with only a few leaves at the top of the stalk. When I saw it, I almost panicked. There wasn't enough leaf to grow that plant out. It did wind up

stunted because of a lack of leaves, there was no way to grow the plant to its full robust potential.

You do not want the leaves to overshadow each other. That is why you plant broccoli 18 inches apart minimum. Other plants can grow large and have the same problem of overshadowing each other. Always let some of the broccoli go to seed. You will have improved yield using those seeds next year. Also, broccoli flowers are a source of nectar for honeybees in the winter. They will love you for it!

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.

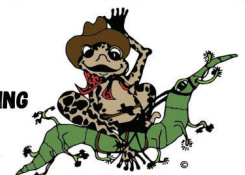
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PAWS works with over a dozen Central Texas animal shelters to rescue as many homeless pets as possible. Once in our care, we provide love, enrichment and veterinary care for all of our pets. Every adopted dog, cat, puppy and kitten goes home with the following:

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We are always looking for volunteers and fosters and would love to have you join our amazing group of animal lovers!

Join us for our Dinner by the Bite
Event on March 21st, 2024 at
Wilson Appliance in
Dripping Springs

Generalization: The missing link

by Diana Ozimek



What is generalization in terms of dog training? Generalization is taking a behavior and making it more robust by practicing in different environments. This is the missing link for many people, knowing how to take a behavior from your living room to a public space.

Always teach a new behavior in a comfortable environment where your dog can learn. Once they have mastered it with no distraction, start practicing with more going on around them or in a new space. For example, you teach your dog a down stay in your living room. Once they have mastered it, start practicing with more distraction, kids walking around, making a sandwich...

The next step is to try this in a new environment. This could be the backyard, during a walk or in the park. Here's the part that makes it hard for people to transfer it from the living room to a public space, you may need to start over. When a dog practices a newly learned behavior in a new place, they may struggle or seem to have never learned it.

When you start practicing in more difficult locations you may need to back up a few steps. If your dog follows voice commands in the house, you may need to go back to luring into the position like you did when you were first teaching them. You may need to use higher value treats as well. Some dogs may train in the home for their kibble but will need something more important in public. If you want your dog to perform a specific command or behavior in public, you will need to consistently practice in new spaces to generalize the behavior and make sure they have built the ability to follow through no matter what is going on.

Diana is the owner & 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.



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- Socialization

Diana Ozimek
Owner/Trainer

773.899.1960

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good_dog_in_the_making



AN EARLY START TO SPRING

By Cody Johnson



YOUR LOCAL HILL COUNTRY EXPERTS
[NESTHAVENPROPERTIES.COM](https://www.nesthavenproperties.com)



Welcome to March. Punxsutawney Phil didn't see his shadow, and it's feeling like spring seasonality is turning on early this year. After a long, dark winter the real estate market in Dripping Springs and the surrounding Hill Country is beginning to show signs of improvement.

A few things have started happening that are pointing to a rebound as spring gets underway. First, we're seeing more inventory beginning to hit the market, and less listings expiring or being withdrawn. This means more options for buyers that have been sitting on the sidelines for the last year plus. In addition to increased inventory, pending sales have begun to increase as well. For the first time in a long time last month, new active listings equaled active under contract transactions in the MLS. While this is encouraging for the housing market in the Hill Country, there is one caveat that needs to be called out - the Austin metro has seen the largest home price decrease in the nation since the 2022 peak at just over 20%. The hope is that we've seen the bulk of the correction and prices should begin to stabilize through the spring and summer.

Of the homes that are beginning to go under contract, there are two main paths: homes that have been on the market for 150+ days going under contract under ask, and homes that are priced correctly and marketed well going under contract quickly.

These paths highlight two pivotal aspects to consider when selling your home: pricing and marketing. Of these two, pricing your home is absolutely most important, but as inventory enters the market it is critical to work with teams that understand how to market your home. From photography and videography, to SEO and social media, there are a number of channels where modern buyers find their homes.

In summary, we are becoming more confident that Dripping Springs and the greater Austin MSA took its beating in 2023, and that there will be stabilization and a return to a normal amount of transaction volume, albeit at lower prices than we saw in 2021-2022, as we continue through 2024. This could become increasingly true if market predictions around interest rates hold true and rates dip up to 1.5% by December, and inventory in the market continues to increase.

The article is written by Cody Johnson, who is an owner and co-founder of NestHaven Properties, a full service real estate company established in Dripping Springs in 2023. He has spent the last decade entrenched in all facets of the Real Estate industry; Capital Markets, Mortgage, Title Insurance, Brokerage and Technology. Call 512.327.7800 or 512.781.4499.

Improvements or wishful thinking?

by Steve Mallett



Houses are like body shapes; most have two arms and two legs but all bodies are not created equally. Some have better bones and finishes than others. Like our bodies, we can do things to improve our houses. Some of the *improvements* may seem like real upgrades but overall they can give you no added desirability (value). In some cases, they can decrease your value.

a few years before they turn into a supplier of ER visits. They become the buyer's headache.

8. Skylights. Buyers think *when will that start leaking, if it hasn't already?* They do light up a room, but not a buyer's smile.

The best way to add value to your home are to clean, clean, clean, fix up the landscaping with plants and mulch, stage your home (virtually or with actual furniture) and make sure the paint is fresh and complete. Then, clean again.

The best tool an agent has to help you sell your home is to know what increases the market price of your home and what doesn't. Getting the price right is the number one thing you can do to sell your home for the most money. Price it right from the start and avoid the headaches of sitting on the market for way too long.

Steve has been selling real estate in DS & 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.

1. Solar panels. Saving the earth is admirable, but adding solar panels to your roof does not increase the value of your home. Panels decrease in performance over time, are expensive to remove and replace when you need a new roof, and many buyers are wary of the complexity of owning panels.

2. EV chargers. Everyone could drive a Tesla, but the fact is the majority of the potential buyers do not drive electric cars. For the average buyer, the expensive charger brings no added value.

3. Above ground pools. These are only valuable to the current owner. Most buyers see these as an expense and something that needs to be removed.

4. Hot tubs. Do you know what people do in those things?

5. Storm bunkers and panic rooms. Overall people just consider these *prepper* conversation pieces.

6. Solar screens. Take them off and hide them in the garage. No one likes a dark house – even if you did save \$12 on your electric bills last year.

7. Playground equipment. Many wooden playgrounds last for



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US Prime Insurance (USP) is a Commercial Property and Casualty insurance agency, located in Dripping Springs, TX that specializes in insurance for businesses of all sizes. USP has access to all the major carriers that are rated A and above by AM Best, allowing them to leverage those relationships to provide the best possible coverage at the best price for their clients.

US Prime agents meet with business owners to assess their business, looking for areas of exposure that might lead to financial loss, and help the business owner by finding insurance solutions to protect them from such loss, at the lowest possible cost. USP agents do all this while translating complicated insurance language into everyday language so that their clients have a full understanding of their coverage terms, conditions, and premiums. USP works both with business owners and other retail insurance agents to provide access to major carriers and coverage options, nationwide.

Although agents at US Prime are licensed to do business in all 50 states and DC, and have clients all over the country, Dripping Springs holds a very special place in their hearts. Whether it is helping a new business navigate the types of coverage needed, helping an established business look at their coverage with new eyes, doing policy reviews, or helping businesses get competitive terms, USP cherishes the relationships it has with local business owners.

US Prime was founded in 2017 by Greg Coots after a career in commercial real estate. Greg and his wife Beth were looking for a business that would involve their family and serve their community, and commercial insurance was a natural fit. After visiting Dripping Springs in 2014, Greg and Beth were struck by the vibrant and independent business community they saw thriving in the area, as well as the wholesome, small-town atmosphere. In 2019, they relocated their family and business to Dripping Springs from the Dallas/Ft. Worth Metroplex and have thoroughly enjoyed being involved in the local community through their business, church, and children.

Along with his wife, Beth, Greg has 5 children, 2 grandchildren, and an elderly cat named Beanie. When not assessing risk solutions for businesses, Greg enjoys golfing, watching football, working on home improvement projects, and spending time with his family.

"US Prime is hands down the most efficient and trustworthy agents we have ever worked with. There are a lot of moving parts when starting your own business, and US Prime handled each of our questions with extreme diligence and made us feel incredibly comfortable with the entire process. Always available, always willing to go the extra mile, and always extremely professional. I know we're well-insured, and I can't recommend them enough!"

-Stephen and Katie Dotson, owners of HC Elite Cheer

Understanding hard water

by Randy Lawrence



It's well known that in central Texas, we have some of the highest water hardness levels in the country. Something you may not know is that those levels can vary greatly from one water source to another. The amount of calcium and other hardness minerals dissolved in water is expressed using grains per gallon, or GPG. The amount of scale buildup and corrosion you'll experience is directly proportional to the hardness of your water. It's safe to say that, with a test result of 10 GPG or more, the home's plumbing system and water-using appliances would benefit from a water softener.

Unfortunately there are few, if any, available ground or surface water sources in our area which contain less than 12 GPG. Most of our local municipal and community water supplies contain between 20 and 40 GPG. At the lower end of the range, visible issues can be relatively manageable with cleaning chemicals, but calcium scale will definitely accumulate in the pipes, fixtures and water heater. The news isn't any better with private wells. Depending on the location and depth of your well, hardness can range from 15 GPG to as much as 160 GPG. At the higher end of the range, the calcium will cause excessive buildup on fixtures and surrounding surfaces, etching of glassware and premature failure of water heaters, dishwashers and other water-using appliances.

It is important to know that all treatment equipment is not *one size fits all*. Despite misleading claims by some, traditional salt or potassium-based softening is the only method which physically removes hardness from your water. Recent advances in electronic controllers have made the new generation of softeners more reliable, efficient and user-friendly than ever. A water treatment specialist can test your water in order to determine the necessary softener size 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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Litigation: Watching a trial

by Roland Brown



Last week I spent a day in a San Antonio courtroom watching testimony in a traumatic brain injury case. The science regarding what are euphemistically called *mild* traumatic brain injuries is developing rapidly, particularly since the relatively recent studies relating to concussions suffered by football players.

In assisting my clients who suffer such injuries in motor vehicle collisions, I do a lot of reading, attending seminars, and discussing the science with doctors and other attorneys. However, the opportunity to watch one of the pioneers in the field of neuroscience as it relates to mild traumatic brain injuries explain the testing, analysis and interpretation used to diagnose what can be an elusive cause of life-altering impairments was fascinating and informative. While I plan on discussing in a future article these injuries which often go unrecognized following relatively minor crashes, today I want to offer a suggestion prompted by my experience last week.

My suggestion for you is to go watch a trial. It is live entertainment, and it is an opportunity to see the time-tested American justice system at work. It won't look like what you see on TV. There was a time when the courthouse was a regular source of

entertainment for the community. One of the stories I heard repeatedly as a young man was about a trial in which my father was the prosecuting attorney, and the renowned criminal defense lawyer, Percy Foreman, represented the accused. Over the years, I heard many accounts from folks who watched the trial which ended with the defendant being convicted of murder. What really caught my attention was the fact that folks attending would pack a lunch and eat in the packed courtroom because, if you left to go eat, you would lose your seat to someone waiting for an opportunity to watch the trial.

Things have changed, and few people attend trials unless they are involved or have a family member who is involved. Still, true life dramas play out weekly in courtrooms you have access to. Some are more interesting than others, and it can be a little challenging determining when and where to go, but like my experience as an observer rather than a participant, it can be fascinating. Local options include, among others, courthouses in San Marcos, New Braunfels, Austin and, one of my favorites, San Antonio.

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, 2021, and 2023 in annual polls of Hays County attorneys. For more information call 512 847 2500.

Time for financial spring cleaning?

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



Don McGraw

Spring is almost here, which means it's time for some spring cleaning. In addition to tidying your home and surroundings, you might want to consider sprucing up your financial environment, as well.

- Improve your vision. Once the days are warmer and longer, you may want to get outside and clean all the winter grime and smudges from your windows, allowing you to see the world more clearly. And you may

want to bring more focus to your financial vision by asking some key questions: *Is my investment strategy still appropriate for my needs, goals, and family situation?* If not, what changes should I make? *And am I prepared for changes in my life, such as health challenges or a need to retire earlier than planned?*

- De-clutter. As you look around, you may find things such as expired products, old prescriptions, ancient cleaning solutions, and so on, in addition to duplicate household items (how many blenders do you really need?) and non-working equipment – printers, laptops, etc. Most people find that eliminating clutter gives them a good feeling. You can also find clutter in the form of redundant investments – for example, you might own several nearly identical mutual funds. You might be better off selling some of these funds and using the proceeds to find new investments that can help you further diversify your portfolio. Diversification is a key to invest-

ment success, but keep in mind that it can't prevent all losses.

- Plant seeds of opportunity. Whether they're planting camelias and crocuses or carrots and cilantro, gardeners are busy in the spring, hoping their efforts result in lovely flowers and tasty foods. And when you invest, you, too, need to plant seeds of opportunity in the form of investments. Review your portfolio to ensure it's providing growth potential, given your individual risk tolerance.

- Reduce dangers. You may not think about it that much, but your home and surroundings can contain potential hazards. You might have ill-fitting caps on cleaning products with toxic chemicals, or sharp cutting instruments protruding from shelves in your garage, or heavy, cracked tree branches hovering close to your roof. Spending some time on a spring-cleaning sweep can get rid of these dangers – and devoting time to consider the possible threats to your financial security, and those of your family, can pay off, too. Review your life insurance to determine if you've got enough. Your employer may offer some coverage as an employee benefit, but it might not be sufficient, so you may need private coverage. And the same is true for disability insurance, because if something were to happen to you, and you couldn't work for a while, you'd still want to protect your family's lifestyle.

Spring is a great time for brightening your physical space – and your financial one, too.

Don McGraw, Financial Advisor specializes in helping individual investors and business owners reach their financial goals. He can be reached at 512-858-2850. Edward Jones, its employees and financial advisors are not estate planners and cannot provide tax or legal advice.

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