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ISSUE 11, VOLUME 20 APRIL 2024



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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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“Nothing ever changes if nothing ever changes.”

There are so many variations of this quote I don't know whom to credit, but I love it. Because it's so true. Albert Einstein said, "The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, expecting a different result."

And yet, most of us do. But when we dare to try something new, a different approach, an unfamiliar path, we are often pleasantly surprised by the results.



Whether it's people, places, or things we fall into a rhythm and develop habits that don't always yield the outcomes we originally envisioned. And because there's so much going on all the time, taking pause to redirect our efforts isn't always our first response to unfavorable or stagnant circumstances.

Both the beautiful and beastly nature of change is that sometimes there isn't an option. Sometimes things change without our consent and we have no choice in the matter. I think of this proud town's founders who first ventured away from what they knew to strike out on their own in hopes of creating a new life for themselves and their families. And look at what they left behind because of their willingness, their boldness to leap into change. They paved the way for so many in this community to embrace life's changes and take a plunge of their own, charting a new course for themselves and their families as well.

Oscar Wilde said, "To live is the rarest thing in the world. Most people exist, that is all."

Oscar also said, "Quotation is a serviceable substitute for wit," but I enjoy my life with a heavy seasoning of both.

*Happy April,
y'all!*

Cyle Elizabeth Johnson
Editor, Publisher

- 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, Acocon 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 Acocon 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@dsccl.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. April 18: Lost Austin Band**
- 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.

FOUNDER'S DAY CELEBRATION: APRIL 26-28

Festival kicks off Friday, April 26, 6:30pm with Grand Parade on Mercer Street. Get there early with a lawn chair and sustenance.

Friday: 4pm - 11:30pm (Carnival is closed during parade)

Saturday: 10am - 11:30pm

Sunday: 11am-5pm (Carnival ends at 7pm)

Note: Church starts at 10am

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

Are you curious 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 or IV hydration? 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 through 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's not new. IV therapy has been around for a very long time simply because it's effective! It's an effective type of delivery and sometimes the only way for an individual to receive an adequate amount of supplementation. When nutrients and vitamins are delivered into the veins, they bypass the digestive system and therefore can be helpful for people that have sensitivities or a gut that is not functioning optimally. IV therapy can help improve nutrient absorption and help reduce inflammation.

The reason we started vitamin therapy here in Dripping Springs six and a half years ago 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 technology, 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 our medical team and let's determine if you could benefit from this type of therapy. Whether you have known deficiencies or symptoms, or 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.

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Get fit with cannabis: Your new workout buddy

by Heidi Pousson



Hey there, fitness enthusiasts! Ready to kick your workouts up a notch? Well, get ready to meet your new workout buddy: cannabis. Yep, you read that right! While you might think of cannabis as something to chill out with after a long day, it turns out it can also be a game-changer when it comes to getting your sweat on.

Now, before you start picturing Cheech and Chong hitting the treadmill, let me set the record straight.

We're not talking about getting stoned out of your mind before hitting the gym. Instead, we're diving into the world of microdosing, where just a tiny bit of cannabis can work wonders for your workout. So, why should you consider incorporating cannabis into your fitness routine? Well, buckle up because I'm about to drop some knowledge bombs on you.

1. Pain relief. Ever hit the gym only to be sidelined by nagging aches and pains? Whether it's CBD or THC, the compounds in cannabis are known for their pain-relieving properties. So, if you've got sore muscles or joint pain, a little puff before your workout can help you power through without wincing at every rep.

2. Enhanced focus. Ever find your mind wandering during a workout? Cannabis might just be the ticket to keeping your focus on point. Some strains can help dial in your concentration, making it easier to stay in the zone and push yourself to new limits.

3. Increased creativity. Tired of doing the same old routine day in and day out? Whether you're brainstorming new exercises or coming up with a killer playlist, a little cannabis can help shake things up and keep your workouts fresh and exciting.

4. Reduced anxiety. Let's face it, hitting the gym can be intimidating, especially if you're feeling anxious or stressed. Cannabis has been shown to have anxiety-reducing effects, helping you feel more relaxed and at ease as you tackle your workout. Say goodbye to pre-gym jitters and hello to a calmer, more confident you.

5. Faster recovery. The anti-inflammatory properties of CBD can help speed up muscle recovery and reduce post-exercise soreness, so you can bounce back faster.

Cannabis affects everyone differently, so it's important to start low and go slow. Experiment with different strains and consumption methods to find what works best for you and always listen to your body. At Haus of Jayne, we have beverages, edibles, and salves. Let's take your pre and post workout to the next level.

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

The Legacy of Seed Saving

by George Altgelt



In an earlier column, you may have noticed that I advocated saving seeds of the plants that you were growing in your garden, even if your broccoli was beset with a plague of Harlequin Beetles. It's never too late to get seeds from a besieged plant. Relax. The seeds will ripen.

The most important aspect of seed collection is physical changes that occur within the genetics of the plants themselves. They become adapted to the environment in which they find themselves – to the soil especially. This takes place from one generation to the next. This may seem slow to us, but the plants are actively doing this from the get go! The changes are subtle at first but become quite noticeable in time.

A case in point would be an experiment set up by Malcolm Beck of Garden Ville of San Antonio. I am fortunate to have known him for many years. On one of my visits to his farm, he showed me the cornfield where he grew the same strain of corn every year. He had no crop rotation – just small additions of compost and trace minerals. The corn was just coming up on that spring day.

Then we went to his office and he opened a book he had pub-

lished to show me the matured corn. I looked at the pictures in awe. The stalks were 14 feet tall and had 5 or more ears of corn on each stalk! He said that corn, "tasted so good it was like no other."

This is an awesome example of epigenetic gene expression, which plants are doing all the time. The plants in your garden are playing that game to optimize from their location for you and themselves – to the benefit of all! Save those seeds and replant them!

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.

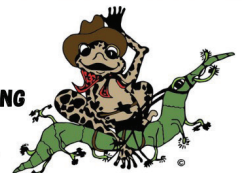
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Dripping Springs Outlook | April 2024



Paying it forward

by Leslie Tourish, LPC

While I wasn't exactly on my last nerve as the recent Saturday morning drug on, it felt as though it was just on that razor's edge. I was at an appointment in Austin that normally took two hours, but it was stretching out closer to three. I

kept my eye on the clock, knowing I was going to be late to meet my friend Doris for lunch. And of course, the secret sauce to make any situation worse, I was hungry. Finally, I was released from my appointment and hurried to the car, having texted my friend, who was already waiting at the restaurant, that I was indeed going to be late. And in my rush, I got turned around on the drive over and wandered around a bit before I made it to Russell's Bakery and Coffee Bar in northwest Austin. Great.

Doris, long acquainted with my lousy sense of direction (having known me since we were kids at Travis Elementary School in San Marcos), still gave me a warm hug before we got into line to order. She ordered and paid, and then it was my turn to put in my order to the young woman behind the counter. My stomach growled as I ordered a sandwich, soup, latte, *and* a cookie. Like I said, I was hungry. As I pulled out my wallet, a voice behind me said, "I'm paying for your lunch."

Surprised, I turned around to see a man, casually dressed in his running-around-town-doing-errand clothes, holding out his credit card to the cashier. I had never seen him before.

"What? Why are you doing this?" I asked.

He smiled and said, "I'm paying it forward. And maybe you can pay it forward too, sometime."

Instantly, I thought of the 2000 movie, *Pay It Forward*, with the theme of bestowing random acts of kindness to strangers, while having no expectation of personal reciprocation. And by engaging in such good deeds, it might encourage others to do the same and pay it forward, thus changing people's experiences for the better.

He said his name was Trey and that when his son was young, they used to come to the bakery on Saturday mornings. Those were special times for him, and whenever he dropped by Russell's now, he would buy the person in front of him in line their meal. And in my case, Trey had shelled out some bucks for my lunch. I noticed he only bought a coffee for himself.

I was so touched by his act of generosity, and by his hope that it would spark generosity in others to do the same thing. To have kindness go viral as an antidote to these unsettling times is the best medicine. As a therapist I hear my clients' concerns about our economy and polarizing politics, and they're exhausted by it. There seems to be a sense of the center wobbling, augmented by the pull of the media to grab our attention by focusing on all the bad news. As the expression goes in journalism, If it bleeds, it leads.

But such negative stories are statistically a smaller portion of our lives. Humans are generally motivated towards good and being cooperative. If not, then the world would be far worse than it is now. The helpful, generous stories are elbowed out by the loud, scary stories.

When an act of kindness, such as what Trey engages in, happens – it's a delight. And an affirmation that we're stronger, safer, and smarter when we work together. Because when we give someone a gift of kindness, we're radiating happiness, which karmically nourishes others. And the gift comes full circle, leaving a glow that burns within our own hearts.

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



YOUR MAP TO HOMEOSTASIS

Tolmao is from a Greek word that means courage, “It’s sort of like the courage to be in your life boldly; I’m standing boldly with others as they take responsibility for their health and wellbeing. To take full responsibility for your own health takes a lot of courage, so I wanted to really call that up in people and embody that myself,” says Julie Gosh, owner of Tolmao Wellness.

For years, she has helped people heal emotionally and mentally with proven techniques that heal the brain and thus rewire the nervous system. Julie’s latest offering is the Flowpresso™. “It’s so cool. It’s a suit that has 22 different compression chambers. I wrap everybody, so it’s a very personalized nice experience. It mimics the lymphatic system, so it goes all the way up the body and stops at the chest area. The Flowpresso was designed to significantly heal the detox pathways in the body by bringing in the parasympathetic nerve system, but what we’ve found is that it’s healing people’s sleep and healing their anxiety and depression.

“WE’VE ALL NORMALIZED STRESS –

we don’t really live in homeostasis most of the time anymore. Our limbic systems run in fight flight more than they should and we don’t really know what inner calm and peace feels like anymore. I’m a good example of this; I thought my calm was calm until I started doing sessions and realized there’s a whole other calm I had forgotten about. And that’s a really beautiful thing, this treatment helps all people, including children, heal and deal with anxiety.”

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Infrared heat combined with compression and deep pressure, similar to the effect of a weighed blanket. Some people come out of it feeling like they’ve been massaged by four people. It can be fine tuned to the kind of pressure the client wants. “There’s something about it that puts people in the deepest parasympathetic state. It’s resetting the nervous system and helping to heal the body.

“I love to meditate but this really forces – that sounds too strong – but it kind of forces the body to let go. That’s what’s powerful too, because a lot of people can’t get to a relaxed state on their own. It kind of makes you go there in a really gentle way. So a lot of emotional releases happen, sometimes there are tears or maybe the next week you feel you’re letting go of a lot of things you haven’t been able to, so it can impact the emotions as well.” Therapy on a very physical level.

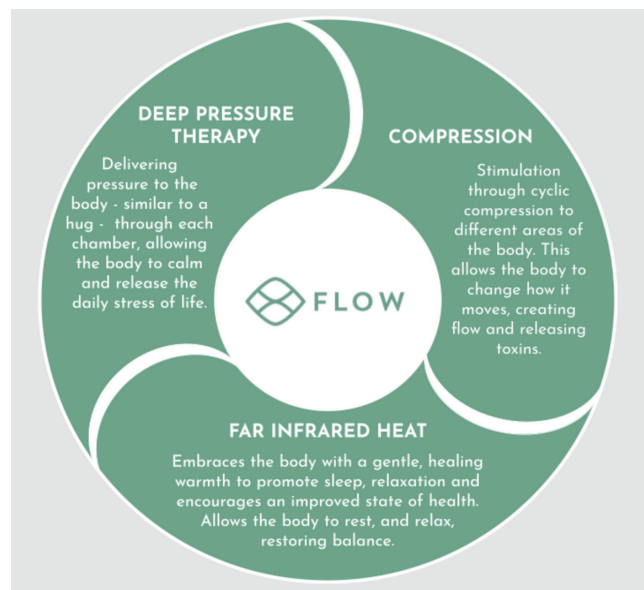


Julie encourages people to come every week for 3-6 sessions, as the Flowpresso treatment is very cumulative because the nervous system has operated a certain way for so long. For most people after 3 sessions, will notice a significant shift – especially in the quality of sleep. “In our clinical trials with first responders, 3 was a pretty magic number, it took 6 sessions for some, but they get to a base line. Everything starts to roll off your back and you start to glide through life. I have a friend that runs pretty amped up and she is not really even the same after 3 sessions, she just handles her life differently. So after someone has done that initial 3 or 6 sessions, I say maybe come every 2 weeks or every month. On going is great if somebody will give themselves to that.

“This is all about the autonomic nervous system, we’re definitely working on its ability to regulate in a new way. When it’s taking somebody into such a deep rest and restore state, parts of the body are coming online and the connections are happening and healing is happening where maybe it wasn’t happening before because the limbic system is coming online.

“IT’S HARD TO FIND RELIEF SOMETIMES.

Because I work with people to help them heal from trauma and other emotional conditions, I offer packages if they want to work even deeper. Havening technique is one of my main modalities for emotional healing. I think this can always help anybody. If someone is concerned they are going to feel claustrophobic, you can leave the arms out or one arm out, you can do a session without the arms and then full body the next time. Everyone is really different, for psychiatric this kind of thing could be really helpful.



“I CAN’T THINK OF WHAT THE FLOWPRESSO WOULDN’T BE REALLY GOOD FOR

I had a client who said she has never felt so safe – that’s pretty profound for someone who lives with anxiety. The treatment carries with you. My friend who was really amped up has always wanted to meditate but just couldn’t sit still and now after her 3 sessions she can. Now, on her own, she can sit down and her mind and body will calm down.

“If you can get the body to that state, you can create a map to get it back there. It reminds me on a busy day that stress isn’t necessary anymore – it’s almost like this little nudge and I’m instantly in that homeostatic place. It’s hard for me to get riled up now when my nervous system is kicking in too much.

“People can do their best with their tools and techniques but when the body on its own learns how to stay calm, then that makes all the rest of the healing part easier – the mental and emotional part – because the body is already there. So often we come at it like, let me heal this fear, but then the body takes time to adapt to that. When the body comes first the rest comes easier. Your brain says I’m calm but your body is not acting that way.”

You can combine the Flowpresso and an emotional release technique Julie also offers called Havening if you desire an even deeper treatment. First, a Flowpresso treatment and then a Havening session, “because they’re going to be way open and in this incredibly calm space to do the emotional work. It’s quite a great combination.”

For Flowpresso sessions it’s \$120 for your first session, \$100 a session after that. To learn more or book online, visit TolmaoWellness.com or call Julie at 512 517 3682 to schedule a treatment.

Help your puppy through fear

by Diana Ozimek



Did you know your puppy will go through fear periods? These are major developmental stages and the outcome can stick with the puppy the rest of its life. The first fear period comes around 8-10 weeks old. This also happens to be the time when puppies may be coming to their new home.

It's very tempting to have the neighborhood come out and meet the new pup but you will want to be very thoughtful in your actions during this time. Your goal is to properly expose, socialize, and support your puppy to build confidence and positive experiences. Be careful of overwhelming your puppy – taking them to the playground to meet a group of overexcited children is probably a bad idea. Letting them observe sights and sounds from a comfortable distance while being rewarded with treats is a much better idea. Deliberately setting up meet and greets with a couple of people or a new dog who will give the puppy a calm, positive experiences will help them build confidence during this time.

The second fear period comes during adolescence. It can start anywhere from 8-14 months (on average). Your outgoing puppy may start retreating, huffing, barking, or growling at things they were fine with before. A random fire hydrant or trash can is suddenly something to worry about. You may see them become leeri-

er of strangers. If you've set up a training foundation with your puppy, you will be able to use these skills and your communication system to support them and work them through the process. They will be more willing to trust your lead and default to things they know bring a positive outcome. Never pressure your puppy to go into a situation they aren't ready for. Instead, look at the situation and decide how you can improve it on the spot or next time it's encountered. All of our puppy programs include confidence building and exposure exercises to help raise a balanced dog.

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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Diana Ozimek
Owner/Trainer

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good_dog_in_the_making



Company Wide Over All Sales and Commercial Agent of the Year

Scott Daves of Stanberry Realtors has again achieved company wide overall Sales and was awarded the Commercial Agent of the Year award at the 41st Stanberry Realtors Awards ceremony last month.

Daves, shown here with his son Tanner, has joined forces to continue the real estate tradition that has been ongoing in the Dripping Springs and surrounding area for the past 25 years.



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Markets move in tandem

by Steve Mallett



Facts are funny things. There are facts that are undisputed and then there are beliefs that have the weight of being repeated. Remember when people thought asbestos was a fantastic building material, two weeks would stop the spread, and Prince Harry and Meghan wanted to live private lives? History is littered with *truths* that the masses believed but later discovered were only considered fact because enough people repeated the myth.

A myth repeated often enough starts to gain the weight of fact. There are many myths in real estate. Here are 3 common ones:

1. Falling home prices means that you have lost money. Most people don't realize that the real estate market moves in tandem. This means when the house you are selling goes down in value, the house you are buying also goes down in value. Your \$500,000 house may now only be worth \$400,000 but the \$700,000 house you are drooling over is now only \$560,000. You only lose money if you cash out in a down market and don't buy anything else.

2. Anyone can sell real estate and all agents are created equal. While it's true that all agents possess the same licenses not all agents have the same skillset as the next. There is a reason that 5% of licensed agents do 90% of the business. The sad fact is that 9 out of 10 agents give up before they get two years of experience. There is an industry built on agent churn and the percentage of failed agents rivals that of restaurant failure rates. Talent does make a difference.

3. Dollar per square foot of a home is how value is determined. This one has driven more people crazy than telemarketers and people who yell while on their cell phones. The fact that a house down the street sold for \$250 a square foot does not mean that yours will sell for \$250 a square foot. There are many factors to consider in pricing including size, age, condition, trees, yard, location, upgrades, and on and on. Make sure you hire an agent who knows the facts on pricing so you can get every penny possible when you sell.

When you are told something is fact always be skeptical. Information is cheap and plentiful. Be careful when assuming something you've heard is true. Your financial future is too important to depend on the opinion of a TikTok star with 132 followers.

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.



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DS Chamber of Commerce focus on Business: Write the next chapter for the Dripping Springs Community Library

by Sarah Rose, Dripping Springs Community Library Capital Campaign Manager

The Dripping Springs Community Library (DSCL) is a cornerstone of lifelong learning, catering to the diverse needs of our community. Over the years, DSCL has witnessed a remarkable surge in library usage, paralleling the exponential growth of our community. From its humble beginnings in 1986 with fewer than 1,000 cardholders, the library now welcomes nearly 100,000 visitors yearly.

Every inch of the current building is in use. There's not enough space for everyone or for every resource. The current book collection can't grow without removing other books. The building's condition and space hinder our goal of serving the community.

The *Beyond Books, Building Community* capital campaign will give the library greater capacity to help even more individuals. Our vision is to cre-



photo courtesy of Kristen Hafner Photography

ate a dynamic hub that promotes innovation and lifelong learning for all, from toddlers to seniors.

Unlike municipal libraries funded by the city or county, our library relies on your generosity to make this vision a reality by raising \$5 million. Located adjacent to the existing property, the new facility will have community meeting rooms and study spaces, an entire floor dedicated to children, a makerspace, an expansive outdoor space for events, a story walk, and a children's play area. The new library will be four times the size of the current facility.

To contribute or learn more, visit DSCL.org/future. Follow us on social media @DSBeyondBooks. Let's build a brighter future for our community through the power of knowledge and lifelong learning.



Time to think about your water supply?

by Randy Lawrence

With another Texas summer just a few months away, thoughts are turning to alternative water sources and more efficient treatment techniques. Even with forecasts predicting less than average rainfall, more homeowners are looking to the sky in hopes of preventing interruptions to their water supply. Rainwater collection systems are designed and built into many new homes. Although it can be tricky, it

is usually possible to incorporate rain collection into an existing structure. When used in conjunction with treated groundwater, the stored rainwater can ease the burden on our aquifers.

One downside to rainwater collection systems, besides a potentially limited supply, is the cost of installation. Once the system is designed by a professional, you will need gutters, downspouts, collection lines, storage tanks, a booster pump, and pressure tank, as well as proper filtration and disinfection equipment. For many homeowners, their budget requires them to consider other means of conserving water. Often, this includes replacing appliances and fixtures with more water-efficient models. One of the most commonly overlooked, household appliances is the water softener. Without an understanding of how this equipment works, it can be difficult to know whether it is operating at maximum efficiency.

Recently, there has been a flurry of advertising aimed at those who have had a traditional salt-based water softener. Many of

these products have existed for years, and are simply repackaged and heavily marketed. Unfortunately, the results produced by these *alternatives* typically fall far short of the claims made by their distributors. This often leaves homeowners with no choice but to scrap their investment and start from scratch. The only proven method of removing calcium and other hardness minerals is traditional ion exchange softening.

Ensure that your equipment is up to date and that the settings accurately reflect your particular water conditions. An experienced technician can test your water quality, check the condition and performance of your system, and make adjustments or upgrades.

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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HOME IMPROVEMENTS: WHERE TO SAVE AND WHERE TO SPLURGE

By Cody Johnson



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When it comes to increasing home value through improvements, strategic allocation of your budget is crucial. Knowing where to save and where to splurge can make a significant difference in maximizing your return on investment. Let's explore some key areas where it's wise to save and where it's beneficial to splurge:

Where to Save:

- **Cosmetic Fixes:** Simple cosmetic updates such as painting, replacing hardware, or updating light fixtures can often be done affordably. Look for budget-friendly options that provide a fresh, modern look without breaking the bank.
- **Minor Repairs:** Addressing minor issues like leaky faucets, squeaky doors, or cracked tiles is essential for maintaining your home's condition but doesn't necessarily require a large investment. Tackling these repairs early can prevent more significant problems down the line.
- **DIY Projects:** If you have the skills and time, consider tackling certain projects yourself to save on labor costs. Tasks like painting, landscaping, or installing shelving can often be done with some research and effort, allowing you to stretch your budget further.
- **Basic Upgrades:** Opt for mid-range or budget-friendly options when it comes to basic upgrades like flooring or countertops. You can still achieve a stylish look without splurging on high-end materials.

Where to Splurge:

- **Kitchen Renovations:** The kitchen is one of the most important rooms in the house and a key selling point for potential buyers. Investing in high-quality appliances, durable countertops, and custom cabinetry can significantly increase your home's value. Splurging on premium materials and finishes in the kitchen is often worthwhile.
- **Bathroom Remodels:** Similar to the kitchen, bathrooms are a focal point for buyers. Splurging on luxurious features like a spa-like shower, high-end fixtures, or a stylish vanity can elevate the space and increase its appeal. Consider investing in quality materials that will stand the test of time.
- **Energy-Efficient Upgrades:** While the initial cost may be higher, investing in energy-efficient upgrades such as solar panels, insulation, or HVAC systems can yield long-term savings and increase your home's value. Buyers are increasingly prioritizing energy efficiency, making these investments attractive selling points.
- **Curb Appeal:** First impressions matter, and splurging on landscaping, outdoor lighting, or a new front door can enhance your home's curb appeal. Investing in professional landscaping or hardscaping can create an inviting exterior that draws buyers in.
- **Structural Improvements:** If your home requires significant structural repairs or updates, it's essential not to cut corners. Splurging on quality materials and skilled labor ensures that the work is done properly and adds value to your home rather than becoming a liability.

By prioritizing where to save and where to splurge on home improvements, you can make the most of your budget and increase your home's value effectively. Remember to focus on areas that have the greatest impact on potential buyers while being mindful of your overall financial goals.

Litigation: It does matter

by Roland Brown



At 5:00 P.M. on a recent Monday, a seasoned district judge looked down from the bench and said to me, “You get to go home.” I had been called out of the jury panel on which I was serving as a prospective juror to be separately questioned by the lawyers about an opinion I had expressed. Over the years I have al-

ways answered each jury summons I received and appeared for duty, only to be excluded because attorneys are not generally selected as jurors. This case though was a highly emotional criminal case and these attorneys apparently felt that perhaps the general rule of bypassing attorneys as jurors might not apply. For that reason, I was still on their *short list* as the process was about to conclude. As it turned out though, my strongly held opinion, formed over a lifetime of experience with certain types of witnesses, was too concerning for one side’s lawyers to risk taking me as a juror and I headed for home.

Judge Gary Steel had done a masterful job of carefully explaining to the panel the importance of our laws, of the jury system, and of the process that would be followed that day. His respect for the law and the process was stirring, particularly in today’s climate

in which our judicial system is under attack from all sides. The lawyers for the Hays County District Attorney’s office and for the accused were excellent and asked probing questions of the panel. As panel members responded to those questions, I was struck by the fact that too many of the panel members obviously did not appear to recognize the value of such core constitutional principles as according to their fellow citizen a genuine presumption of innocence, of holding the powerful state to its burden to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt, and of not holding it against the accused if he exercised the Fifth Amendment privilege, which he held in common with every member of the panel, to refuse to testify if he so chose. The founders of our country certainly understood the need for such protections, but the more than two hundred years that separate us from their experiences seem to have dimmed our own perspective. In a day when there is a leaning towards authoritarianism in government, regaining that perspective is important. It is wisely said that *those who fail to learn from the lessons of history are doomed to repeat them.*

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.

Be careful when naming beneficiaries

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



Gavin J. Loftus

You might not have thought much about beneficiary designations – but they can play a big role in your estate planning. When you purchase insurance policies and open investment accounts, such as your IRA, you’ll be asked to name a beneficiary, and, in some cases, more than one.

This might seem easy, especially if you have a spouse and children, but a major life event, such as a divorce or a death in the family, may warrant

some changes – because beneficiary designations carry a lot of weight under the law. In fact, these designations can supersede the instructions you may have written in your will or living trust, so everyone in your family should know who is expected to get which assets. One significant benefit of having proper beneficiary designations in place is that they may enable beneficiaries to avoid the time-consuming – and possibly expensive – probate process.

The beneficiary issue can become complex because not everyone reacts the same way to events such as divorce – some people want their ex-spouses to still receive assets while others don’t. Furthermore, not all the states have the same rules about how beneficiary designations are treated after a divorce.

Here’s the big picture: If you’ve named your spouse as a beneficiary of an IRA, bank or brokerage account, insurance policy, will or trust, this beneficiary designation will automatically be

revoked upon divorce in about half the states. If you still want your ex-spouse to get these assets, you will need to name them as a non-spouse beneficiary after the divorce. But if you’ve named your spouse as beneficiary for a 401(k) plan or pension, the designation will remain intact until and unless you change it, regardless of where you live. However, in community property states, couples are generally required to split equally all assets they acquired during their marriage. If you were to stay in the same community property state throughout your marriage and divorce, the ownership issue is generally straightforward. If you were to move to or from one of these states, it may change the joint ownership picture.

If any beneficiary passes away, the assets will generally pass to a contingent beneficiary; it’s important that you name one at the same time you designate the primary beneficiary. It may be appropriate to name a special needs trust as beneficiary for a family member with special needs or disability; assets passing directly to them could affect their eligibility for certain programs.

You may need to work with a legal professional to sort out beneficiary designation issues and the rules that apply in your state. You may also want to do a beneficiary review with your financial advisor whenever you experience a major life event, such as a marriage, divorce, or the addition of a new child. Your investments, retirement accounts, and life insurance proceeds are valuable assets – and you want them to go where you intended.

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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