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FOUR POINTS NEWS

SERVING STEINER RANCH, RIVER PLACE, GRANDVIEW HILLS, WESTMINSTER GLEN AND COMANCHE TRAIL

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Take a peek at what's Inside

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Upcoming Articles

•New medical building in River Place
•Ready, Set, Teach prepares future teachers
•AVID class at FPMS

Lake Travis Level

Full at.....681.5 ft.
Current level.....631.17 ft.
Percentage full.....40%

Source: LCRA Updated: Jan. 8, 2013

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Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
LISD Holiday Jan. 21

Traffic - a Steiner family's reason to move

By RICH KEITH
Four Points News

Four Points mom Andrea Schleich finally decided when school started in September that she had had enough. Because of terrible traffic, she and her family opted to move from a home they loved in Steiner Ranch to a home in River Place. With four children in four local schools, she felt as if she spent her day in her SUV. Her family time was fractured, the kids were grumpy and she was tired.

"Layton attends Vandegrift High School, our twins Trevor and Brennen are at Canyon Ridge Middle School, and my youngest Hollynn is at Steiner Ranch Elementary," Schleich said. With Layton in band, the twins in athletics, the final straw for her was when Hollynn began attending dance lessons at the Dance Institute in River Place after school.

"Traffic is worse this year than last year," Schleich said, referring to the congested intersection at RM 620 and FM 2222. While Texas Department of Transportation



Andrea Schleich

The Schleich family are among Four Points families who have moved away from Steiner Ranch because of the traffic congestion around 620/2222. Pictured in their new River Place home are Layton, Brennen, Andrea, Hollyn, John and Trevor Schleich.

has made some plans for improving the traffic flow, it won't come soon enough for her and her friends.

"Two of my friends have already moved from Steiner Ranch to River Place, and two more are talking seriously about moving soon," Schleich said. The draw to River Place is its location, and that there are more younger families there now than a few years ago, Schleich said.

To prepare for the move, they had to give up the

dream of living in their custom home in Steiner Ranch with its great views and nice lot.

Even though house hunting was a long process, the kids are adjusting really well, she said. The family celebrated Christmas in their new home.

To ease the transition, her daughter Hollynn opted to leave CRMS and attend Four Points Middle School now.

"She wants to develop

TRAFFIC, 5

Traffic accidents along 2222 close out 2012

By LESLEE BASSMAN
Four Points News

The recent surge in traffic collisions along a popular stretch of FM 2222 continued during the recent New Year's Eve holiday.

At 10:21 a.m. on Dec. 31 (photo), two vehicles collided in the 10100 block of FM 2222, stated Austin Police Department Senior Public Information Specialist Lisa Cortinas. A maroon Chevrolet Tahoe swerved into oncoming traffic, hitting a black Honda sedan. Austin EMS was called to the scene with a possible injury transport to

ACCIDENTS, 6



Leslee Bassman

FM 2222 was shut down to only one northbound lane following an early evening traffic accident on December 31. On the same stretch of roadway, isolated between RM 620 and Loop 360, TxDOT reported that 367 persons have been involved in traffic accidents in 2011 and 2012 combined.

Local Irish dancer qualifies for nationals

By VAL OLIVAS
Four Points News

A Four Points resident from the Inishfree School of Irish Dance has qualified to compete at national levels following her performance at the 2012 Southern Regional Oireachtas Competition in New Orleans.

In her first attempt at a major Irish dancing event, Claudia Goss, 11, of Steiner Ranch, placed 26th out of 79 dancers competing in her age group. This placement yielded Goss a qualifying spot to compete in the Nationals competition in Anaheim, Calif. this summer.

Also competing in Oireachtas were sisters Ava and Isabel Lea of River Place.

Ava, 9, danced her first championship to gain experience and danced very well. Her sister, Isabel, 11, who has only been dancing for a few months, competed in two team dances. Both teams finished in the



Austin dancers competed at the 2012 Southern Regional Oireachtas Competition in New Orleans. Back row: Patrick McCarthy, Hollis Horton, Caroline DeWree, Mairead Mooney, Isabel Lea Front row: Maggie Neuberger, Gavan Mooney, Ava Lea, Claudia Goss

top ten; one in the top five," stated Patrick McCarthy, the school's director.

Goss initially became interested in clogging after viewing a PBS segment which highlighted a group

of East Coast-based girls clogging competitively. Soon after, Goss attended an Irish dance performance at Busch Gardens. Upon understanding Irish dance to be a derivative

of clogging, Goss' interest in this style of dance was born.

When asked what advice she would give to other young dancers consid-

DANCER, 2

Stage 2 drought condition continues

Watering still limited to 2 days per week

By RICH KEITH
Four Points News

With no rain in sight, the level of Lake Travis continues to drop affecting Water Control and Improvement District 17 watering schedule.

Lake Travis has now dropped well below the

trigger points of 636 feet sea level and well below the 900,000 acre feet combined storage volume of Lake Travis and Lake Buchanan.

"These two conditions continue to cause Stage 2 water restriction for outdoor use," states a notice from Travis County WCID 17.

The district delivers water to a large area of Four Points residents and businesses, including Steiner

WATERING, 6

Veteran entrepreneurs open Resolute Fitness

Grand Opening events this weekend

By LYNETTE HAALAND
Four Points News

Resolute Fitness, the new cycling and yoga studio at Quinlan Crossing, is unique and the first of several planned for Texas.

Owned by Chris Shonk and Sara-Mai Conway, Resolute is celebrating its Grand Opening starting Friday with a party from 6

to 10 p.m. Classes are free at the Open House on Saturday and Sunday.

"We chose Steiner because we were thrilled about the opportunity presented by the new Quinlan Crossing shopping center," said Conway, a veteran in the fitness industry as an athlete, coach, administrator, consultant and entrepreneur.

"It's a great community, very fitness oriented, and

RESOLUTE, 6

Four Points Visitor Center to open soon

By LYNETTE HAALAND
Four Points News

Four Points is really getting on the map now. A new Four Points Chamber of Commerce Visitors Center is set to open soon, housed in the Bartlett Real Estate Group office.

To go along with the new space at 6816 RM 620 N. will be a new glossy map showcasing the Four Points area streets, businesses and landmarks. These will be available in the Visitor Center and at area businesses in a few months.

"We are excited to offer these amenities to our growing community," said Ray Freer, Chairman of the Four Points Chamber.

VISITORS, 5



Tom Radack

Bartlett Real Estate Group and Four Points Chamber of Commerce are teaming up to open a Four Points Visitor Center at the Bartlett office.

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KELLER WILLIAMS

Girl Scouts help clean up 360

Local Girl Scout Brownies, Reagan Lamb (7) and Dylan Foust (7) enjoyed doing their part to "keep Austin beautiful" by helping clean up the leftover tree decorations along the hillside of Highway 360.

The girls helped un-decorate hundreds of trees and pick up the trash associated with the old tree decorations.

Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence and character that make the world a better place.



Mary Quinlan Park improved by Eagle project

Staff Reports

Local scouts spent part of their holiday break cleaning up Mary Quinlan Park.

Jonathan Fisher and several other volunteers recently cleared away extensive brush, weeds, and invasive and non-indigenous shrubs along the 200-foot shoreline of Mary Quinlan Park.

The Travis County park is located at the end of Quinlan Park Road past Steiner Ranch and has nearly 6 acres of rolling hills with shoreline access and a public boat ramp to Lake Austin. Travis County Parks reports that the park has 10,000 annual visitors.

Fisher, a sophomore at Vandegrift High School and Steiner Ranch resident, organized the event as part of his Eagle Scout project.



Jonathan Fisher (holding pizza box,) 10 other local boy scouts from Troops 208 and 2012, one Webelos scout from Pack 203, and several neighbors cleared the Mary Quinlan Park shoreline recently. Photo shows several of the scouts who worked together.

SCOUTS, 3

DANCER, FROM 1

Considering becoming involved with Irish dance, she said, "it's not the most popular style of dance. It's unique and interesting." That is what Goss was attracted to.

Goss experienced her first formal instruction at the age of six. Since then, she has performed in talent shows at Laura Welch Bush Elementary as well as shows and parades with her dance school. At a typical feis—a Gaelic-based dance competition—dancers will perform in front of just a few people and judges, but the regional competitions are performed in front of large audiences. Goss feels her talent shows and exhibitions prepared her for this experience.

Irish dancing is a year-round sport providing an opportunity to compete on a regular basis. Goss has formal practices twice a week and additional practices, including semi-private lessons and parent-organized practices—sans dance instructors—often scheduled to further prepare for a large competition.

Even though the dancers compete in routines lasting only one minute, the sport requires endurance and athletic ability. According to Claudia's mother, Amy Goss, it is a great cardiovascular workout and she is personally attracted to this style of dance because "it is an appropriate form of dance for both boys and girls."

Claudia Goss believes the most difficult part of Irish dance is keeping her stamina up. She improves stamina by jumping rope to the song accompanying her routine then increases the number of times she plays the song during subsequent practices.

Aside from the talent exhibited in competition, costuming is a prominent aspect of Irish dance culture.



Inishfree four-hand mixed reel team secured 5th place at the 2012 Southern Regional Oireachtas Competition in New Orleans. The team is made up of Maggie Neuberger, Gavan Mooney, Isabel Lea and Claudia Goss.



Claudia Goss, 11, of Steiner Ranch, placed 26th out of 79 dancers at a recent competition, qualifying her a spot to compete in the Nationals competition in California this summer.

The instructors like to see a costume that really stands out on stage. While the judges do not include costuming as part of the scoring and placement equation, the costume can make a difference when the talent is evenly exhibited amongst many dancers.

Girls and boys alike select costuming they feel represents them well, from adornment and embellishment on the dresses or vests, to the wigs that many girls choose to don. Goss prefers to wear a wig during competition, but admits they can be "heavy, painful and sometimes hard to get in to." Through Inishfree's Belfast-based connections, selecting new authentic Irish dance costuming is made easier. About 35 measurements are documented for each dancer and sent to the dressmaker. The costumes are mailed back to the dancers' homes where they may choose to further embellish with add-ons like

crystals, for example. Inishfree School of Irish Dance, named after an island off the Donegal coast, opened its doors 16 years ago by one of the first American world champion dancers, Neill Reagan. Reagan and McCarthy partnered to offer what is now an Irish dance school with locations in North Austin, San Antonio, San Marcos and Buda. The school also boasts four locations in Mexico with over 500 hundred students enrolled.

"With the introduction of Riverdance and the Lord of the Dance, Irish dance was thrust into the public spotlight and interest has definitely grown," McCarthy said. He receives emails from people across Texas requesting Inishfree to expand their services.

For now, McCarthy and team are focusing on preparing qualifying dancers for the upcoming national and world competitions and continuing to train stu-

dents. It should be noted that competition is not necessary to pursue Irish dance training. Anyone is welcome to attend the school. www.inishfreetx.com.



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LISD's priorities for 83rd Legislative Session



BRET CHAMPION
Leander ISD Superintendent

As I mentioned a couple of weeks ago in my column, the voices of concerned parents and community members united under a common message can make a positive difference for public schools. With the 83rd Legislative Session just days away, this week I would like to lay out for you what the district has discussed as priorities for lawmakers as they consider public education this spring.

While Leander ISD is for student, school and system accountability, I believe modifications to the current system will enhance student success. On Nov. 30, Texas Education Commissioner

Michael Williams signed a waiver to defer the "15 percent rule," the requirement that a State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) end-of-course exam is to count as 15 percent of a student's final course grade, until the 2013-2014 school year. This waiver means that end-of-course exams will not impact Leander ISD students' final course grades for this year. The 15 percent rule could result in students falling further and further behind, and the lack of uniform state implementation of the rule could result in disparity on transcripts for students and may have unintended negative effects on college admission for some students. Based on these reasons, we believe that the Legislature should completely remove the 15 percent rule from the state accountability system.

Our accountability system, which includes the STAAR tests and end-of-course exams, has grown to

be quite cumbersome for Texas public schools. Currently, our schoolchildren must sit for 29 required state exams between third grade and graduation. This impacts our most struggling students, who often must endure additional testing until they can pass a test that might be from a previous year's failure. In 2012-2013, districts have as many as 48 testing days on the calendar (68 are possible if summer testing opportunities are included). The number of testing days results in the loss of a significant amount of instructional time, further exacerbating the hardship struggling learners must endure. We support reducing the number of tests students are required to take over the course of their education, without reducing accountability to schools or districts.

Districts are tasked with focusing on the whole child with drastically reduced budgets. Academic concerns

for teachers and schools include teaching an increasingly rigorous curriculum, successfully preparing students for the standardized exams and ensuring that they are college- and career-ready. And so we challenge the Legislature to appropriately invest in our future by returning schools to previous funding levels through general revenue, without the "one-size-fits-all" restrictions wrought by targeted grants.

Additionally, we support the Legislature eliminating or modifying the 50-cent test, which unnecessarily discriminates against fast-growth districts, including LISD. The 50-cent test was designed in the early 1990s to provide some limitation for debt tax rates. Since that time, the State's population has grown 21 percent: in LISD, it has grown 132 percent. Our student density per single-family household increased from .53 to .65 and from .18 to .31 per multi-

family apartment between 2006 and 2012, meaning there is more demand for schools even without new residential construction. Fast-growth schools, as well as property-poor schools, are impeded from building with an artificial tax cap that does not recognize these important differences. The 50-cent test had the effect of reducing the limitation of debt issuance from 10 percent of taxable assessed valuation to 7 percent, according to an analysis conducted in 2011.

We also oppose directing public funds to schools that are not held to the same standards and mandates as public schools, including open enrollment, state accountability, teacher certification, etc. LISD has historically offered parents a great deal of choice in the campus they select for their children. In 2012 - 2013, for

example, there were 1,538 students (out of 34,000 students) who were approved by the district to voluntarily transfer to another school in LISD. Transfer requests that were not approved related to campuses where additional students would have necessitated hiring additional teachers.

Join LISD and express your support for these Legislative priorities to your elected officials who represent the district in the Texas Legislature. Again, I invite you to check out the LISD Legislative and Finance webpage for information about the important issues public schools face this legislative session. Stay informed of the issues, get engaged in the process and support the students of LISD.

Happy New Year!

Concordia, ACC team up for education degree

Concordia University Texas and Austin Community College have partnered to provide aspiring teachers with a seamless education pathway.

The program is designed for students who are seeking or who have completed an Associate of Arts in Teaching from ACC. Concordia will accept all credit hours from ACC's early childhood through 6th grade Associate of Arts in Teaching program toward a Bachelor of Arts through

Concordia's Accelerated Degree Program.

"We are proud to offer this program to Central Texas students eager to pursue a degree and career in education," said DeEadra Green, Austin Center Concordia Dean.

"The ease of transferring credits from ACC combined with the flexible class schedule at Concordia—classes meet one day a week—should allow almost anyone interested in pursuing an education degree

to be able to do so," Green said.

ACC's Associate of Arts in Teaching program is designed to provide students with the first two years of a four-year degree leading to teacher certification for those who are seeking certification in early childhood through sixth grade levels.

"ACC's Associate of Arts in Teaching program gives students a solid foundation and an affordable start toward a bachelor's degree," said Mike Midgley, vice

president of instruction for ACC. "This partnership with Concordia University Texas will allow our students pursuing a career in education to fully transfer their coursework and get the credentials they need to enter the workforce."

To learn more about the early childhood education program, visit <http://www.concordia.edu/teach>. For more information on ACC's Associate of Arts in Teaching, visit austincc.edu/educinst.

Care pkg sent to soldier

Canyon Ridge Middle School 7th Grader Rachel Campbell gathered over over 20 pounds of snacks and supplies to send to a soldier in Afghanistan.



SCOUTS, FROM 2

ect with the Boy Scouts of America for the purposes of beautification and erosion management for the local public park.

Fisher is currently a Life Scout in Troop 2012 and is seeking to advance to Eagle Scout where the planning and execution of an Eagle Scout project is one of the requirements. The event was coordinated through Travis County Parks.

Jim Tallent, Park Supervisor for Travis County Parks, expressed that he was deeply appreciative of the community service contributions by Eagle Scout candidates to the overall maintenance, beautification and upkeep of the Travis County park system. The system has budgetary and manpower limitations so the approved community service contributions by the Boy Scouts of America are welcomed for continued operations.

Besides Fisher and two staff members from Travis County Parks, ten other lo-



Jonathan Fisher and several other volunteers cleared away extensive brush, weeds, and invasive and non-indigenous shrubs along the 200 foot shoreline of Mary Quinlan Park over the holidays.

cal boy scouts from Troops 208 and 2012, one Webelos scout from Pack 203, and several other neighborhood residents assisted in the clearing of Mary Quinlan Park's shoreline.

The brush cleared from the park amounted to an exceptionally large debris pile of about 6-foot by 50-foot by 20-foot.

Papa John's Pizza and our neighborhood Randalls grocery store supported the event by providing lunch to the hardworking scouts and participants.

For more information on Travis County Parks visit www.traviscountyparks.org and for the Boy Scouts of America visit www.bsacac.org.

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PUBLISHER'S POINT OF VIEW



LYNETTE HAALAND

Four Points Visitor Center... we've come a long way

Four Points has been a destination long before the area was called "Four Points". Lake Travis, Hippie Hollow, Oasis and a few other spots have attracted people out here for decades.

Now the new Four Points Visitor Center will officially help welcome people here. The sign is being made this week.

The Visitor Center site located in the Bartlett Real Estate Group offices will neighbor the Boat House Grill near the main Four Points intersection. The Four Points Chamber of Commerce is launching this new center. Ray Freer, Chairman, got this idea rolling last fall and now it is only days away from opening.

In conjunction with the Visitor Center, our local Chamber is also creating a Four Points area map. This map will highlight various landmarks, streets and shopping centers.

Four Points really started getting traction when Mansfield Dam was finished in 1941 creating Lake Travis.

One notable attraction through the decades has been Hippie Hollow Park at 7000 Comanche Trail. It has a long tradition of being the only clothing-optional public park in the State of Texas. (I've been trying to get a reporter to cover a story on the history of Hippie Hollow but no takers yet. I don't have the guts to do it myself.)

Much like Hippie Hollow, the Oasis Restaurant has become a destination.

Around 2005 when we knew we were moving to Austin, a friend of ours in Tulsa, Okla. said that their favorite restaurant with a view was

Oasis. Little did we know then that we would eventually live a couple of miles away from the Oasis.

Look at what has become of that area in the last 18 months. Oasis Texas Village was created, new shops and eateries have opened and, in some cases, closed in that time.

Just two decades ago, there were no shopping centers here at all. H-E-B and the Four Points Shopping Center, Shops at River Place and Vista Ridge Shopping Center were the first to go in. Smaller retail areas including the Home Depot shopping center and Shops at Steiner Ranch were added. Just in the past year, larger and more significant centers have opened - Quinlan Crossing and Trails at 620. They've added our first movie theater and are continuing to add stores, studios, doctor offices and eateries each month.

Schools have been added through the last few years including Grandview Hills and River Ridge elementaries, Four Points Middle School and Vandegrift High School.

The retail and school construction has mirrored the growth of the rooftops. River Place, Grandview Hills and Steiner Ranch are all in the final stages of development, with some of these communities having only a few lots left.

Now our new Four Points Visitor Center and map solidifies our area more than ever. I don't see guided tours just yet but maybe down the line we'll have a spot to watch a film on how our great Four Points got its start.

Flying unfriendly skies

A glimpse of holiday travels



LESLEE BASSMAN

Associate Editor

Each time I travel by way of Arduous Airways, I vow that I will never board another plane bestowed with a dramatic logo of our national bird again, no matter how much the corporation appeals to my sense of frugality. Now I really, really mean it.

Last weekend, my hubby, two daughters and I flew to New Jersey via LaGuardia Airport for a family reunion. Rob spent an entire evening researching airfares and East Coast destinations near the middle of the state. Hours after he entered his study, Rob emerged victorious, albeit \$1200-plus lighter in the wallet.

As seasoned travelers, we awaited the news, hoping the answer would not be Abysmal Air once again. We chatted about our years of flying the not-so-friendly skies of Aren't-We-There-Yet Airlines: the 12 hour flight to Colorado, being notified of the second-leg cancellation midair during the first leg of the trip, and my personal favorite, taxiing from the gate timely only to park for hours sans air conditioning in an obsolete section of the tarmac so as to make brownie points in the airline's "on-time average" stats.

Yep, despite our trip down memory lane, Rob was forced to sheepishly admit that he booked us on Adding-time Airways once again. Even though it fit our schedule and price, we knew one or all of us would pay in the end.

On Thursday, we cautiously headed to the airport, checked our flight's status, went through security, checked our flight's status, headed for the gate, checked our flight's

status, boarded with one carry-on apiece and took off on time. Could we have been wrong? Was this the new corporate customer service philosophy or creed - a way of "reorganizing" - a new "chapter?" Although we arrived without putting check marks in the complaint column, all of that was about to change.

On Sunday evening, we were told that our return flight through Dallas was full. However, when the airlines attendant brought out the carry-on luggage measurement bin, I could have sworn that it shrunk from our flight just a few days earlier. I wasn't afraid since our bags were "airlines approved," we had made it on our outbound flight just fine, the new plane was the same S-80 we had flown on the way out and we had even unloaded gifts in Jersey.

Unfortunately, Attila was asking for our boarding passes this time. She actually laughed when I handed her my pass and asked how I managed to "squeeze that one (bag) by." This was not a good sign. Ms. Hun then yelled to her partner in crime to measure my bag but "don't squeeze the sides." Instead of dropping it in, he placed the bag on an angle - of course it wouldn't fit. The bag was initially erroneously routed to a final destination of Dallas, as was my daughter's luggage. People just don't get how big Texas is - Austin is not a suburb of Dallas.

More and more passengers began to fail the Hun Test and soon near-riotous conditions ensued on the gateway. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw Rob and our younger daughter slip through behind the crowd. There is no justice.

Onboard, I quietly stepped over my husband to get to my seat. It seems we were going to be delayed due to "paperwork needing to be completed," as the captain said over the intercom. I buckled up and opened my book, Chicken Soup for the Soul's "Count Your Blessings." We made it home just fine.

FOUR POINTS OF VIEW

How do you keep the winter blues away?



Lisa Whitworth
Steiner Ranch

I try to reconnect with friends and family. In Texas, we have opportunities to be out in the sun so we don't have to get cabin fever. It's nice to be outside.



Christy Cochran
River Place

I don't get the winter blues. We have such a short period where we have cold weather that I enjoy every minute of it.



Eric Kron
Anderson Mill

By staying active, outside or in the gym.



Randy Mitchell
Hillside on 2222

I like cool weather better than heat. I keep exercising whether it's cold or not.

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GARDENING GAB

Start seeds now indoors to plant outdoors later

Wonderful World of Seeds event Jan. 17



MAGGIE TATE

Master Gardner

As I write this, the temperature is in the mid 30's and it's hard to believe its time to think about the Spring garden!

Our average last freeze date is March 8 and typically seeds need 6 to 8 weeks prior to transplanting, which means those seeds get started in January!

Growing from seed can have several advantages: early start for plant growth, amazing seed choices and inexpensive cost compared to buying individual plants. However, keep in mind as you select your seeds, not all varieties grow well in our area (like the heirloom tomatoes from Tennessee I attempted - delicious, but not very productive here.)

To start seeds:
• Use a seed starting mix or a 50/50 blend of sphagnum peat

moss and vermiculite and use a clean container like a seed starting tray.

- Wet the mix to be moist but not soggy.
- Follow directions on seed packets to determine planting depth.
- After the seeds are planted, spray the surface with a mister/spray bottle to settle in the seeds.
- Cover the tray with the included lid or some plastic wrap to hold in the moisture.

The soil temperature will need to stay at a constant 70 to 75 degrees. My success at germination was greatly improved when I used a heat source under the tray and there are mats available for that specific purpose. A fluorescent light is also extremely helpful for plant growth.

Transplant seedlings into larger pots once the plants have two sets of true leaves (not including the first two leaves, which are called cotyledons.) Continue to make sure they receive plenty of light and adequate water.

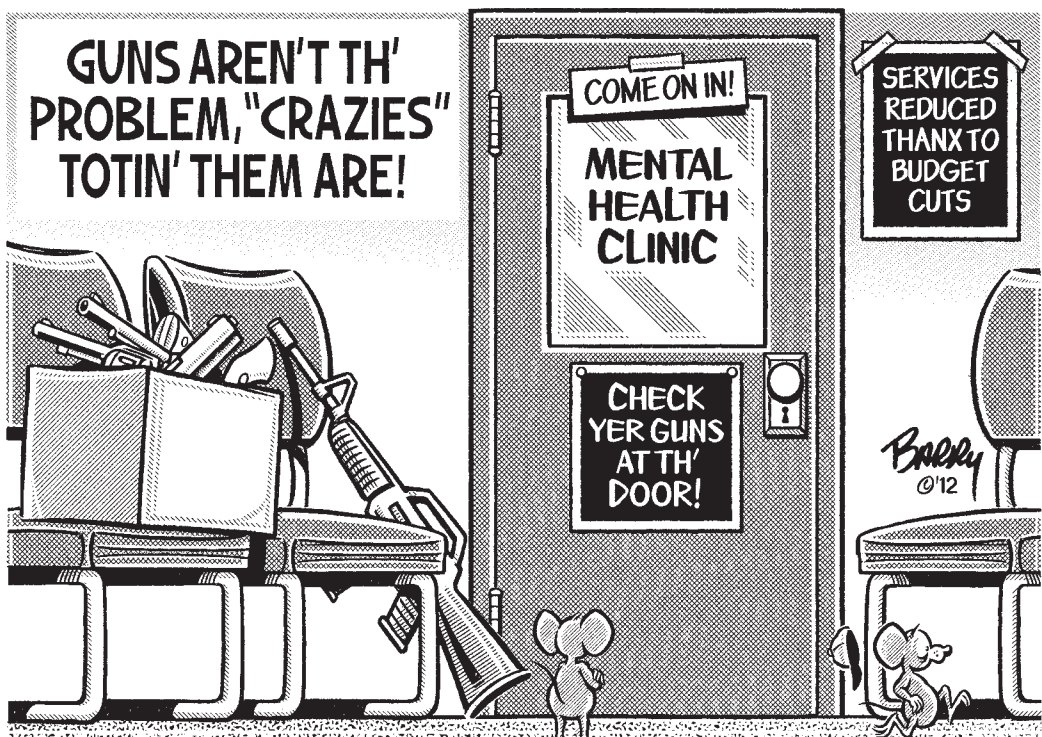
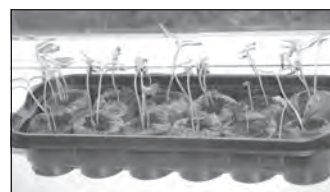
"Pot up" the plants one more

time. Begin to ready the plants to be outdoors by gradually increasing their time spent outside before setting them in the ground in the spring.

For more information register for the Wonderful World of Seeds Jan. 17 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at <https://agriliferegister.tamu.edu> with keyword: Seeds. Cost is \$20.

Growing plants from seed can be fun and gratifying. Anyone can do it with some simple tools, a little information and some determination. Happy Gardening!

Maggie Tate is a Master Gardener with the Texas AgriLife Extension Service in Travis County...For more information on this and other horticulture and gardening topics, please see our website, <http://travis.tx.tamu.edu/>, or contact our gardening hotline at 854-9600.



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LI-0007203

Saks Fifth Avenue closed Austin doors on Dec. 31

San Antonio location remains open

By LESLEE BASSMAN
Four Points News

After remodeling a Simon David grocery store 15 years ago, Saks Fifth Avenue pulled out of its Arboretum location and the Austin market on Dec. 31. Four Points area shoppers had mixed reactions, delighted with 40 to 50 percent discounts on the last day of operations but dismayed that the fashion icon would no longer be easily accessible.

"I love shopping here and I'm going to miss it," said Steiner Ranch's Barbara Phillips who was on-hand to enjoy the final day's savings.

College student Lauryn Cornish hit the racks for a New Year's Eve dress with two best friends but the experience was bittersweet.

"I'm really upset," said Cornish of Lakeway. "I've been shopping here since I was little and my mom used to take me in Connecticut."

Saks Fifth Avenue Incorporated spokesperson Julia Bentley encouraged the local store's loyal fans to shop online or visit another city with the store. The closest Saks Fifth Avenue location is in San Antonio's North Star Mall and the Saks Off Fifth shops are a different entity.

"Store closing decisions are never easy but are nec-



Leslee Bassman

Accompanied by their pet, "Pucci", local residents Dana and Ron Weltmann wouldn't miss the final day of operations at the Arboretum's Saks Fifth Avenue on December 31. "It's a sad day when Saks can't make it," said Ron. "Shame on all of us."



Leslee Bassman

Fashion icon Saks Fifth Avenue closed its Austin store on December 31 with no plans to return to the local market.

essary from time to time," Bentley said. "Saks Fifth Avenue has enjoyed serving the Austin community over the last fifteen years and we have developed many great relationships there. We are very appreciative of our

loyal Austin customers and the many associates that have served those customers over the years."

The company has no plans to return to the Austin market in the near future.

VISITORS, FROM 1

Over the past year, hardly a month has gone by without a new business opening in Four Points.

"We are ready to solidify our spot in Austin with an official map and Visitor Center," said Freer, owner of RF Insurance Masters.

The Bartlett Real Estate Group location near the intersection of RM 620 N and FM 2222 is a prime location. Bartlett was established in Four Points when there were a few hundred houses, no shopping centers and dirt roads. Now the group has a team of a dozen.

"We believe Estate Group and Four Points Chamber of Commerce," said Marissa Radack, co-

FOUR POINTS CHAMBER of COMMERCE Visitor Center

owner Bartlett Real Estate Group, Keller Williams Realty.

"As a founding member of the Four Points Chamber of Commerce, we are so appreciative of the work done by the Chamber and are pleased that we are able to offer some space for the new Visitor Center in our building," Radack said.

Now closing in on 100 strong and growing, the

Four Points Chamber of Commerce brings businesses together from Mansfield Dam to Anderson Mill and FM 2222 from Jester to Volente to support business growth in the community.

For more information about the benefits of joining or participating in these upcoming events visit www.fourpointschamber.com.

TRAFFIC, FROM 1

friends whom she will know well when she gets to high school," Schleich said. "The school did a fabulous job on her campus tour and they were very welcoming to us."

Schleich admits the next year will be challenging. But looking ahead, already she sees the benefit of moving.

"Trevor and Brennen will start football conditioning in the summer at VHS along with Layton in summer band camp there," she said.

The family already misses Steiner Ranch with its conveniences, amenities, and family atmosphere. But her family now has more time together and Schleich is spending a lot less time in her car.

African Children's Choir performed in Austin

Members of the African Children's Choir stayed with host families in River Place recently while they were in Austin to perform at New Year's Eve Rocks Rainey Street.

Denise Babb said that her family, especially her children, were "over-the-moon ecstatic" about having some of the children stay in their River Place home.

Patricia, 8, and Lillian, 10, stayed with the Babb household and they enjoyed

playing games with Kennedy and Chase Babb.

"We are not given the children's last names. They are both from Uganda, and are presently doing their 15 month tour for the African Children's Choir," Denise said.

Julia Barnett Tracy is the International Choir Operations Director, and she also lives in River Place.



Chase Babb, Patricia, Lillian, and Kennedy Babb in the Babb home



The Gemperle family in River Place hosted three girls from the African Children's Choir. Tracy and Jeff Gemperle and daughters are Avery and Amber hosted Resty, 8, Tracy, 8, and Peninah, 10.

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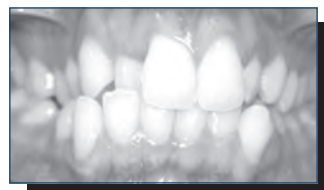
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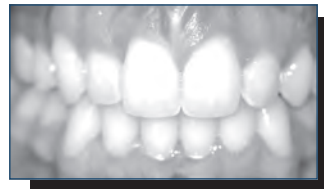
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Thyroid disease LRMC lecture Jan. 31

"The Hidden Health Problem"

Parkway in Lakeway. Light snacks and drinks will be provided.

Scumpia is an Associate Clinical Professor of Medicine, Austin Thyroid & Endocrinology and a fellow of the American College of Endocrinology.

During the presentation, Scumpia will give a synopsis of what hormones do for a person, what diseases are associated with hormone dysfunction, and how thyroid problems are diagnosed and treated.

Participants are encouraged to bring all of their questions to the lecture. Please RSVP by e-mailing RSVP@lakewayregional.com

More than 50 percent of the patients who have a thyroid problem never come to the attention of a physician. Thyroid problems can lead to fatigue, weight gain/weight loss/ hair loss, infertility and miscarriages, impotence, palpitations, dizziness and many other symptoms.

Dr. Simone Scumpia, MD, specializes in thyroid disease and will give a free presentation as part of Lakeway Regional Medical Center's Educational Series. The Jan. 31 event is 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. in the Lower Level 1 Lobby at 100 Medical



Dr. Simone Scumpia, MD FACE FRCP
Associate Clinical Professor of Medicine
Austin Thyroid & Endocrinology

The next educational series will be Feb. 12 from 6 to 8 p.m. for Heart Health month.

LRMC welcomes first baby of 2013

Lakeway Regional Medical Center's first baby of the New Year was 8 lbs, 14 ounce boy Wilson Kerfoot. He was born at LRMC Jan. 2 at 12:39 p.m.

Wilson measured 20.25 inches long and was delivered by Dr. Landwermeyer of Hill Country Ob/Gyn. He is the third child to his parents Cara and Kris Kerfoot of Horseshoe Bay.

"We are just thrilled that he showed up early. It is such a great way to start off the New Year for our family," Kris said. Cara added that both she and the newborn are in good health and he is eating and sleeping very well.

To help celebrate the new arrival, LRMC gave



Wilson Kerfoot is Lakeway Regional Medical Center's first Baby New Year! He and parents Cara and Kris from Horseshoe Bay were showered with gifts.

them a gift basket filled with gifts for both mom and baby including: spa gift certificates, concierge services from Whole Foods,

local restaurant gift cards, handmade baby quilt, newborn onesie, newborn crocheted hat, Visa gift card and more.

ACCIDENTS, FROM 1

Round Rock Hospital.

A few hours later, at 5:31 p.m., emergency personnel responded to a multi-vehicle collision in the 10300 block of FM 2222. One vehicle blocked the right side of the northbound portion of the road, causing traffic to be reduced to one lane. Injuries are currently unknown.

Over the past two years, traffic collisions and accidents on the stretch of FM 2222 between Loop 360 and RM 620 have involved 367 persons, according to Tim Jeffcoat of Texas Department of Transportation's

Traffic Operations division.

In 2012 on this section of the FM 2222 roadway, there was one fatality, three incapacitating injuries, 18 non-incapacitating injuries and 29 possible injuries. In 2011, this stretch resulted in slightly more injuries with one fatality, eight incapacitating injuries, 24 non-incapacitating injuries and 30 possible injuries.

Although final numbers cannot be tabulated until Jan. 31, APD preliminary reports show that there were 78 traffic fatalities in 2012 citywide.

WATERING, FROM 1

tion, all customers continue to be on a two-day per week watering schedule, with only one time period to water per day. Usually this time of year there are not watering restrictions.

Customers with automated irrigation systems may now only water once per day on their designated days between midnight and 10 a.m.

Customers using hose end sprinkler are restricted to 10 hours on their watering day between the hours of midnight to 10 a.m. and/or 7 p.m. to 11:59 p.m. on Sunday and/or Wednesday

only.

Watering by hand-held hose, bubblers, drip irrigation, soaker hose or watering cans of five gallons or less may be done on all days, however, no watering may be done between the hours of 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Mandatory restrictions will continue until WCID 17 notifies all customers that the lake level conditions have sufficiently improved to return to Stage 1. The district urges residents to keep drought condition in mind when choosing Spring plantings.

Young at Heart offers a lot for 50+

The Young at Heart group in Steiner Ranch was started a couple of years ago and now has 200 to 300 people participating in various activities.

The group is geared for those 50 years and older. For more information go to SteinerRanchYoungAtHeart@gmail.com or contact Dottie Thoms at 531-9360.

Here are some of the many things the group offers: Concerts and Plays group, Dinner groups, Epicureans group, Exploring Austin group and Game Night, where members play board games. Other Young at Heart groups include:

Book Club Jan. 16
Author Amanda Eyre

Ward will be discussing her book *Close Your Eyes*.

Ladies Social Bridge Jan. 9 and 23

A friendly afternoon Bridge game and conversation.

Evening Bridge
Experienced Bridge players meets monthly with dessert.

Canasta
Canasta held at a mem-

ber's home.

Bunco Jan. 17
Group meets monthly with light refreshments.

Cinema Club Jan. 29
Meets monthly to discuss movies selected by the members and viewed before the meeting.

Movies being considered for January are *Les Miserables*, *Life of Pi* and *Lincoln*.

RESOLUTE, FROM 1

we wanted to bring a fun, new concept out to the suburbs! Why should downtown get all the action," Conway said.

She and Shonk plan to open other Resolute Fitness studios in Austin, Dallas and Houston.

Shonk is Managing Director of Austin based Liahona Ventures LLC. The boutique investment fund makes "hands-on investments with principals we respect in the consumer space and in areas that we have domain expertise."

Liahona is involved in a long list of companies including its 9th Massage Envy franchise, also at Quinlan Crossing. That makes Liahona the largest franchisee in the Massage Envy chain.

Additionally Shonk's firm is invested in other

local companies including: Deep Eddy Vodka, an Austin based distillery that produces both vodka and Sweet Tea vodka; and Greenling, which provides consumer delivery of organic and local produce and goods for the Central Texas region. Other interests include Sneaky Games, an experienced and successful team of innovative game developers focused on the social gaming market. In 2012 Sneaky Games was acquired by Zattikka, Inc.

Conway too has a long list of business experience.

A rower since the age of 12, she first competed on a National Championship high school team from Massachusetts, and was recruited to row for Tufts University. Upon graduation, she became a colle-

giate rowing coach at her alma mater.

In 2000, Conway relocated to California where she spent eight years coaching for the University of California and for Loyola Marymount University. She helped lead the LMU team to their one and only West Coast Conference Championship (2006) and coached the lightweight women's rowing program to its second ever National Championship in 2008.

Conway's first venture in business was as the founder and director of Lions Rowing Club in Marina del Rey, Calif. Under her direction, the 90 member club achieved five Masters National Championship titles, three top-ten finishes at the Head of the Charles Regatta, and many more regional and local medals in its first five years.

After relocating to Austin in 2008, Conway opened Flywheel Fitness, an Indoor Rowing and

Spinning Studio offering group classes. Flywheel has 30 classes a week and is another first of its kind in Austin.

She has also consulted with several rowing clubs and businesses. In 2010, Conway started the Rowbot Consultancy, LLC for the purpose of assisting rowing clubs and rowing club staff in improving business models, programming and coaching by sharing information across social media platforms.

Conway now combines her background along with her Masters Degree in Sport Management in her latest venture - Resolute.

The local studio combines entertaining, high energy, total-body classes and a specially choreographed power yoga class designed to strengthen and lengthen muscles while increasing flexibility. Resolute Fitness offers three levels of membership and a pay-per-class option.

Four Points Women In Business



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Austin Java & Chill - closed

Austin Java and Chill at Oasis Texas have been closed for several weeks now.

They were part of group that also owned Uncle Billy's Brew and Que at Oasis.

All were closed due to lack of business, said Glen Lerner in an earlier interview with Four Points News.

Lerner is based in Houston and one of the primary investors in the former eateries.

The owners are considering other concepts for the Oasis Texas space and hope to have new concept in by spring.

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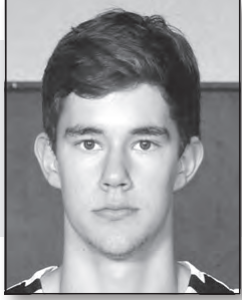
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BASKETBALL



Christian Holt- Junior #35 (Post)

Favorite part about being involved in Viper Basketball:
Basketball is a game I love being a part of at Vandegrift. Being on the team is such a blessing and I love the thrill of stepping on the court with the team.

BASKETBALL



Chloe Chappelle - Junior #22 (Guard)

Favorite part about being involved in Viper Basketball:
My favorite part of being involved in Viper Basketball is that I have made all my friends in basketball and we are like a huge family that always has each other's backs. I also love going to tournaments as a team because we always bond during tournaments and they are always fun.

WRESTLING



Jake Ellegard

What do you like about the sport of wrestling?
The intensity of the sport.
What is your goal this year? To make it to Regionals.
Favorite quote:
The only easy day was yesterday!

FCCLA



Nelishah Dhukka - Senior (FCCLA)

Favorite part about being involved in the Viper Family, Career and Community Leaders of America program:
Favorite part about being involved in the Viper Family, Career and Community Leaders of America program:
Because it gives us more opportunities for helping the community.

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Viper Boys Soccer takes on alumni

The Vandegrift High School Boys Soccer program welcomed back alumni from last year's first senior class to participate in the First Annual Alumni Game.

Under cold and wet conditions, this year's Viper varsity team competed against last year's senior class who finished as Regional Semi-Finalist in 4A state playoffs in a 60-minute friendly match.

In the first half, each team held their own. However, the alumni players started to lose their edge in the second half and the 2013 squad's recent training paid off with a 3-1 victory.

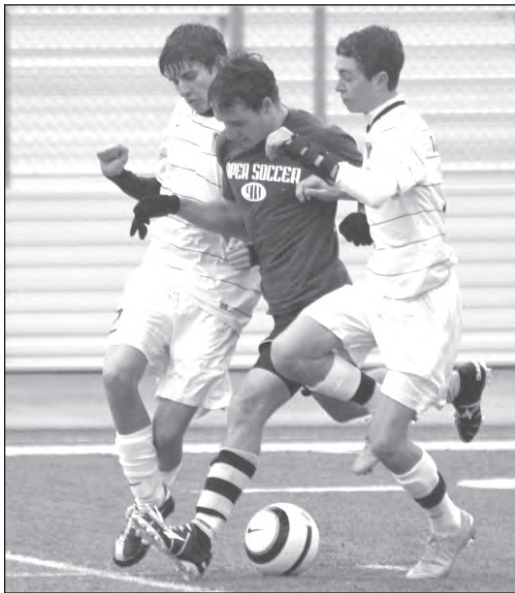
After the game, the alumni were able to speak with the 2013 Viper teams regarding unity within the program, representing VHS with pride, and working hard to accomplish team goals.

Crazy weather considered, good times

were had by all.
Up next for the VHS Boys Soccer:

Jan. 8 VHS vs. Anderson at Vandegrift's Monroe Stadium
JV - 6 p.m.
Varsity - 7:15 p.m.

Jan. 11 VHS at Hendrickson
JV - 6 p.m.
Varsity - 8 p.m.



Girls still looking for District "W"

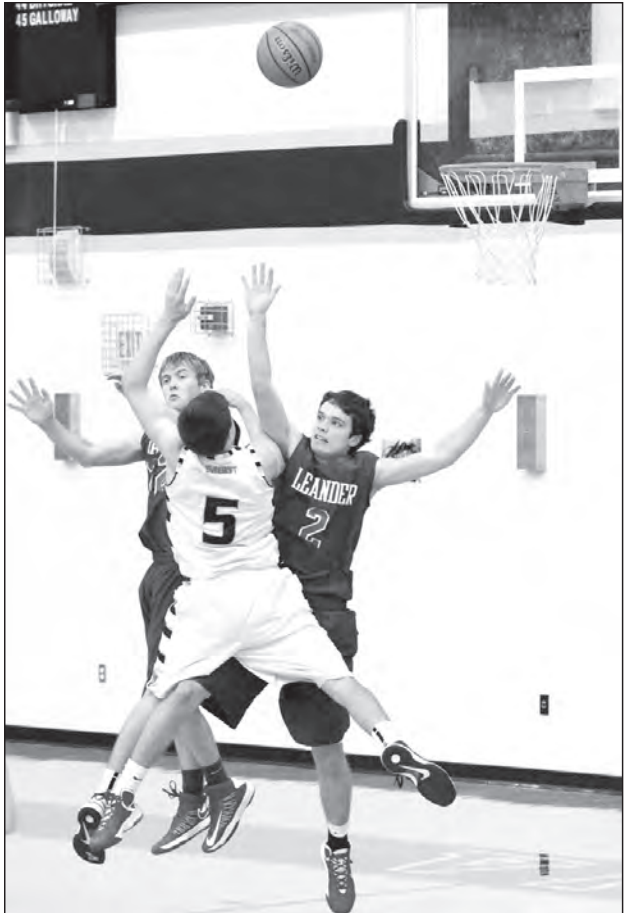
With losses to district rivals Rouse, Vista Ridge (pictured) and Dripping Springs, the Lady Vipers hope to rally on Friday evening, 7:00 p.m., at Cedar Park.



photos by Eric Morton

Viper boys - one basket short in Lions game

Following Saturday's narrow district loss to Leander (pictured), 53-51, the Viper Boys will challenge Cedar Park at home beginning at 7:00 p.m. on Friday night.



photos by Gwen Williams

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Visitor Center

Four Points Chamber of Commerce is opening a New Visitor Center to welcome people to Four Points. It will be housed at the Barlett Real Estate Group office located at 6816 RM 620 N.

Coming Soon!

FOUR POINTS MAP

Four Points Chamber of Commerce and Four Points News are teaming up to produce a Four Points Map. Chamber and non-members may advertise while spaces last. Call Lynette at 483-1708 for details on the full color, glossy 2013-2014 Four Points Map.

Coming in 2013! FOUR POINTS CHAMBER CHARITY 10K RUN

Four Points Chamber is looking for someone who has put together a 10k Run that meets runners expectations! We want to build a recognizable running event in Four Points and need expertise. If you can help, please call or email the Chamber office 551-0390 or charityrun@fourpointschamber.com



Upcoming Events:

CHAMBER LUNCHEON

January 17 • 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
at River Place Country Club

Open to members and non-members
RSVP at: www.FourPointsChamber.com

Featuring Keith Phillips



Phillips is a Senior Economist and Policy Advisor of Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, San Antonio Branch. He will give a brief economic update for 2012 and projections for 2013. Sounds like 2013 will be another year we will be glad to be in Texas!

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Vehicle theft on Sat. in Steiner

On Jan. 5, a vehicle theft was reported at 1:59 p.m. in Steiner Ranch in the 13900 block of Flat Top Ranch Rd. "It is believed that the vehicle was left unlocked and the suspect simply opened the door and took property from the vehicle," said Roger Wade, Senior Public Information Officer Travis County Sheriff's Office. "We need to remind people once again to not only lock their doors but remove any property they do not want stolen," Wade said.

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[a transmission from the year 2052]

Dear Great, Great Grandpa, You haven't met me, but if you're reading this in 2012 via time travel, your granddaughter is now six years old. She will grow up happy and healthy and have a son - That's me. I'm 18, and I bear a striking resemblance to you, from the pictures I have seen.

Anyway, just wanted to say thanks for hookin' me up with that sweet college fund. That was cool of you!

With love,
Your great, great grandson, Joseph

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