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For people just starting a new business, the Internal Revenue Service offers a free, three-hour Small Business Tax Workshop.

Topics include: keeping adequate records; identifying sole proprietorships, partnerships, and corporations; determining net profit or loss for your business; a review of federal tax deposit requirements and the IRS functions and how these activities relate to you, the business taxpayer. There is no pre-registration. Anyone interested may just show up.

The San Antonio workshop will be held in Summit Tower, 5885 Callaghan Road, August 14 at 9 a.m. and August 20 at 6 p.m.



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LCRA to appeal water commission ruling

The Lower Colorado River Authority said it will appeal a July 29 ruling by the Texas Water Commission which would cut LCRA's water rights nearly in half.

"The ruling is unrealistic, unfair and short-sighted," said Bill West, LCRA director of water resources. "It seriously jeopardizes LCRA's ability to meet the water needs of residents throughout our 10-county statutory district."

"In fact, if the ruling were to go into effect today, LCRA probably could not meet its present-day water commitments to its customers."

West said LCRA will continue to accept water-sales contracts while the ruling is being appealed. "It's our obligation under our Enabling Act to make water available to anyone LCRA's water rights from roughly 1.5 million acre-feet to 781,000 acre-feet per year — a figure TWC estimates is the "firm yield" of LCRA's major reservoirs, Lakes Buchanan and Travis.

The TWC ruling — part of a statewide process of water-rights adjudication — would cut LCRA's water rights from roughly 1.5 million acre-feet to 781,000 acre-feet per year — a figure TWC estimates is the "firm yield" of LCRA's major reservoirs, Lakes Buchanan and Travis.

In the same ruling TWC increased the water rights of the City of Austin to 164,254 acre-feet per year, which TWC determined would meet Austin's needs through 2020.

(An acre-foot of water, the amount needed to fill an acre with standing water one foot deep, is 325,851 gallons.)

Once TWC publishes the ruling, LCRA may appeal it to the Commission within 30 days. If TWC rejects the appeal, LCRA may fight the decision through the courts, West said — a process he estimated could take 3-5 years.

"The 'firm yield' figure supposedly calculates how much water may be available during the worst possible drought. West explained. "It's a figure used by accountants to determine how much water is in a dam and reservoir. It looks great on paper, but it's not how a river behaves in real life."

In reality the Colorado River provides more than the "firm yield" amount each year. West pointed out — and that water is collected in LCRA lakes to help serve the 10-county lower Colorado River basin during dry years.

"LCRA hadn't build its dams, where would that water be now?" West said. "What would the river valley have done for water last year, when we had our worst dry spell in 20 years?"

TWC supposed that runoff into the Highland Lakes is sufficient to meet downstream needs. In fact we're currently having to use stored water, along with runoff, to meet everybody's needs, including Austin's.

"And if TWC presumes that Austin and others can call on LCRA reservoirs for water without paying for it, what's to stop LCRA from calling on upstream reservoirs — including Spence, Fisher, J.B. Thomas and Stacy — when we need water? That's the premise TWC has laid down in its ruling," said West.

In remarks before TWC commissioners, LCRA counsel Larry Smith notes TWC's own figures that LCRA had 681,000 acre-feet per year in contractual commitments as of March 1984; and earlier this year, LCRA had transferred 113,000 acre-feet per year to the Colorado River Municipal Water District for construction of Stacy Dam and Reservoir in West Texas.

The 2 figures total 784,000 acre-feet — 3,000 more than the 781,000 acre-feet per year to which TWC would limit LCRA — and recently LCRA has signed contracts to an additional 30,000 acre-feet per year, Smith said.

"I don't know how LCRA is going to operate," Smith told the commissioners.

Another issue is whether the cut in water rights will allow LCRA to continue to pay for its operations of the dams and lakes, West said. "Those dams and lakes cost money to operate and maintain, and LCRA doesn't have a subsidy to pay for that. Each of our programs has to pay its own way."

The old State Board of Water Engineers recognized this, which is why LCRA was granted its current holdings of 1.5 million acre-feet per year in water rights. It's state water, no doubt about it — but the state transferred the water to LCRA to pay for construction and operation of the dams."

West also criticized the curtailment of LCRA's water rights, even as TWC increased Austin's.

"We all realize the rapid growth that Austin is dealing with, and Austin needs help. West said, "but not at the expense of the rest of the Lower Colorado River valley."

"The Colorado River is supposed to serve all the residents of our 10-county statutory district, not just Austin — and our statutory district is dealing with growth problems at least as critical as what Austin faces."

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Growing concern on children abusing toxic inhalants

Most parents worry about their children using drugs, but of growing concern lately is the abuse of toxic inhalants, many of which are cheap, easy to buy, easy to use and easy to hide.

Although "sniffing" solvents and aerosols to get high is not new, authorities report the number of inhalant abusers has increased dramatically over the last few years.

"There are at least 60,000 chronic sniffers in Houston, El Paso and San Antonio alone," said Nancy Neff, M.D., assistant professor of community medicine at Baylor College of Medicine. Neff studied 97 adolescents who abused toxic substances.

To help families counter the problem, Baylor College of Medicine has developed a brochure entitled "Preventing Inhalant Abuse."

Sniffers inhale fumes from products such as gasoline, glue, paint, shoe polish and other chemicals to produce a brief, light-headed and sometimes lethal high.

Chronic sniffers typically suffer from organic brain syndrome, Neff said. "This results in a loss of memory, an inability to reason or solve problems, and sometimes a drastic personality change."

Certain inhalants can even cause death if sniffed too much, she said.

"One other form of substance abuse, inhalant abuse is a symptom," Neff said. "The abuser is probably unhappy, alienated from his or her family and has only a few friends who don't sniff."

For a free brochure on inhalant abuse, its dangers and how to stop it, call 1-800-392-4444 or write: Preventing Inhalant Abuse, We Care for You, P.O. Box 13567, Houston, Texas 77219. The brochure is printed in both English and Spanish.

Cancer Society free cancer risk assessment August 10 in Columbus

The Colorado County Unit of the American Cancer Society, in conjunction with Radio Shack/Century Electronics will use computer technology to prepare free cancer risk assessments for adults.

A cancer awareness booth will be located at the Radio Shack at 2101-D Main near Wal-Mart on Saturday, August 10 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Free computerized cancer risk assessments, free sun screen samples and various brochures on cancer will be available.

The computer program designed by the American Cancer Society asks individuals a series of questions concerning such things as family history, age and habits which relate to the most common types of cancer. A printout of the assessment highlights the areas of risk and how to combat this risk. The assessment takes only five minutes for men and twelve minutes for women due to extra questions involving breast and uterine cancer.

Attending the cancer booth is especially important considering 450,000 Americans died of cancer last year and about 150,000 of these could have been saved with early detection and prompt treatment.

Homemaker's Reflections

By Peggy Kalina

County Extension Agent

Protecting consumers from dietary fraud

When it comes to the extravagant, misleading and sometimes dangerous claims from manufacturers of dietary products, government consumer protection goes only so far.

Three federal agencies have some jurisdiction over all advertising and labeling, and the merchandising of mail-order products. They are the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the U.S. Postal Service. All three agencies handle complaints on a case by case basis.

The FDA can block interstate commerce of unproven drug products. It can also seize products which are hazardous or misbranded with false health claims. But the FDA has been stopped by Congress and the courts from requiring that high-dosage vitamin supplements be labeled and regulated as drugs.

Although the FDA is empowered to prosecute when false claims occur on product labels, it has no power to prevent the making of false claims through broadcasts and publications. These claims are protected by the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment provision for freedom of speech and expression.

Both the FDA and FTC also have difficulty in regulating printed matter because manufacturers are careful in their claims. They know the loopholes in the regulations and consumers don't. In addition, for the FTC to follow up on a complaint the agency must deem it "with the public interest."

The Postal Service investigates mail fraud and mail-order complaints on an individual basis. They have been successful in halting some diet products, such as the grapefruit pill diet, while the regulators and the manufacturers go to court. But their authority extends only to dietary products sold by mail.

Texas, California and New York lead the nation in the number of advertisements for fraudulent health items carried in publications, according to a recent Food and Drug (FDA) study.

As a result of a survey of the nation's newspapers and magazines, the FDA identified advertising for fraudulent items in publications ranging from the small weekly newspapers to multimillion circulation magazines.

According to the FDA, weight-loss products are the most popular items being promoted by fraud artists. Body wraps, sauna suits, waist wraps and vibrating belts are among the items heavily advertised.

Yet, there is no scientific or clinical evidence to support the use of these devices for controlling weight. There is also no data to back up promoters' claims that these products will eliminate cellulite and bulging fat, make spot reduction possible or control appetite.

Diet pills are another widely advertised health fraud. The "grapefruit pill" diet accounted for almost half of the weight loss ads surveyed in the FDA study.

Hair restoration schemes for restorers or clinics are next in popularity to diet boxes the study shows. However, the FDA has advised consumers that no product has been approved as safe and effective for preventing baldness or restoring hair.

Other advertisements include those for wrinkle removers, hypnosis plans and offers of quick ways to treat heart disease, arthritis, alcoholism, depression and high blood pressure. In addition to wasting millions of dollars on these products, consumers may not be receiving the legitimate health care they need.

The FDA is now listing product recalls, seizures and other regulatory actions in its weekly "Enforcement Report." In addition to taking regulatory or legal actions against the promoters of these products, they hope to do a little educating of their own to warn consumers about health frauds.

The government can help some, but for the consumer, the motto "let the buyer beware" still applies to all diet products. Before starting any new diet, consult your physician or a registered dietitian. Protect yourself from fraudulent diet schemes.

Local school personnel attend discipline program



Left to right are SWT course coordinator Mac Hewlett, Eagle Lake Middle School teachers Raymond J. Sykowski and Blanche C. Fowler, vice principal Larry Varley and teachers Jeanette Woods and Delores Ann Grammer.

Local school personnel attend discipline program

Five Rice Independent School District officials were among teachers and administrators from 13 Texas public school districts who attended the final of four summer training sessions in the Classroom Discipline Management and Strategy Program at Southwest Texas State University July 22-26.

The program, now in its third year, is designed to help school officials prevent such problems as disruption, truancy, drug and alcohol abuse, juvenile delinquency and other behaviors detrimental to education. Funded by the Criminal Justice Division of the Governor's Office, the program was developed and implemented by the Texas Juvenile Justice Center, a part of SWT's Institute of Criminal Justice Studies.

During the training session, each school team — which includes teachers and at least one administrator — devises a plan to improve school discipline and provide alternatives to school suspension. In the first two years, 359 representatives from 89 districts participated in the program. The teams have implemented 91 action plans in their schools. Follow-up technical assistance is provided schools that participate in the program.

Attending from the Rice CISD were Eagle Lake Middle School teachers Blanche C. Fowler and Raymond J. Sykowski, vice principal Larry Varley and teachers Jeanette Woods and Delores Ann Grammer.

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Heritage House News

BY PATRICIA A. HORNST

Worship services were conducted by Rev. Charles Runk this past Sunday at Heritage House. Residents attending were thankful for the wonderful sermon given by Rev. Runk and we want to thank him for the festivities with us. It will be fun!

So, if you want to make plans to visit us on these dates, please come by and celebrate the festivities with us. It will be fun!

Big events for August
This month will be a month for big events. Here is a calendar of the events that will be happening at Heritage House this month: August 13, Family Council Meeting, 1 p.m.; August 18, "Crazy Legs" contest for residents and employees; August 20, covered dish luncheon; August 22, "Superior Party" for employees and families, barbecue; August 29, movie, "Shogun" 8:30 p.m.; August 30, residents' monthly birthday party.

So, if you want to make plans to visit us on these dates, please come by and celebrate the festivities with us. It will be fun!

Sutton family holds reunion

On July 28 in the New Town area of Eagle Lake, Mr. and Mrs. Tommie L. Sutton hosted the Sutton family reunion with approximately 200 relatives and friends attending.

A song was led by Katharine Wilson, scripture by Rev. W. Stevens, prayer by Rev. A. Jackson. Katie Gatlin welcomed everyone who came followed by a talk from Clara Jackson, tribute to the graduates of 1985 by Carol Nash and "We are the ones" sung by the little Sutton cousins.

A dinner consisting of barbecue and all the trimmings and cold drinks was served. Games played were dominoes, cards, horseshoes and horse riding.

After an afternoon of visiting, reminiscing and fun, everyone departed with hopes of seeing one another again next year.

County Agent's Notebook

By Leroy Hajdik
County Extension Agent

Construct a new patio

Stink bugs are invading gardeners tomato plants with a vengeance at this time. The stink bugs are effectively controlled by spraying the plants with a thiodan spray solution mixed according to label directions.

If tomatoes are ripening, pick the fruit closely prior to spraying. The sprayed fruit will be safe to eat 7 days after application of the thiodan.

Webworms in pecans
Pecan webworms are continuing to reinfect pecan trees in the towns of Colorado County. The second generation has just passed through the county and the third generation is starting. One can have as many as five generations per year. Each generation gets increasingly more severe.

Larvae stripped of foliage will not fill nut properly. Generally the tree will not bear pecans for several years after major attacks by webworms due to the reduction in carbohydrate level of the tree.

Webworms are easily controlled by directing a strong spray stream in a fashion to tear or penetrate the web.

Effective insecticides include malathion, wettable sevin, diazinon, and zoene. Follow general mixing instructions on the label.

Outdoor living room
With the summer season at hand — and the outdoors beckoning, now is the time for homeowners to consider adding an outdoor living room or patio to the abode, but before taking action, allow some time for planning.

Selecting the right materials to construct a new patio is an important decision. Consider use of the patio, if you plan to build it yourself or hire someone, the desired aesthetic effect, and the cost.

A patio should require little or no maintenance, be durable, permanent in nature and pleasing to live on. Concrete is durable and requires little care, but lacks beauty.

Concrete patio can be made more pleasant with a redwood grid or an exposed aggregate surface. Commonly a 3 or 4-foot square grid is constructed of 1 1/2-inch or 2 1/2-inch heart graded redwood lumber. The grid system makes construction easier, allowing you to pour and finish the concrete one square at a time.

Concrete with an exposed aggregate surface adds color and texture. The durability of concrete is retained without its cold and uninteresting look. Exposed aggregate patios are best constructed by an experienced concrete contractor.

Paving or "hard" brick laid on a sand bed also makes a practical and attractive patio surface. A brick patio is especially suited to brick house of design continuity.

To build a brick patio, excavate to a depth of 5 or 6 inches. Level and compact 3 to 4 inches of sand in the excavated area, then lay bricks as close together as possible on the compacted sand surface. Bricks can be laid in one of several patterns, but in all cases their upper surface should be at ground level.

Carefully level bricks as they are laid. When finished, sweep the fine sand into the cracks and sprinkle lightly with water. The brick-on-sand patio is usually the easiest to construct yourself and is a practical surface for informal entertaining.

Wood, slate and stone are other materials suited for a patio surface.

Remember, it's important to choose a patio material that blends with or repeats material used in the home or on the building site. It should be attractive as well as usable and durable.

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