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Catch Austin Family magazine live on "Good Day Austin" every Thursday morning.

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Celebrating the Austin Way - That's Weird, Right?



Ethan is 5 years old and loves soccer and ninja classes. He is currently learning Spanish and French and is a big fan of the Hulk and Godzilla.

Photo taken by Jordan Ashley Photography.



View the magazine online

View the magazine online at www.austinfamily.com

PUBLISHER
Kaye Kemper Lowak

EDITOR
Celeste Dianne Wade
editor2003@austinfamily.com

COPY EDITOR
Barb Matijevich

ADVISING EDITORS
Dr. Betty Richardson, Barb Matijevich

SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER
Susie Forbes

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Alison Bogle, Eric Frans, Catherine Michalk, Pam Moore, Dr. Betty Richardson

MEDIA RELATIONS
Alison Bogle

GRAPHIC DESIGN
Layout and Ads: Susie Forbes

STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Jordan Ashley Photography

ADVERTISING SALES
Kaye Kemper Lowak:
kaye2003@austinfamily.com

BUSINESS MANAGER
Greg Lowak

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Editor's Note



CELESTE DIANNE WADE

Wade is a writer, public speaker, and a popular health coach in Austin. The eldest of seven kids and an only child, she loves travel adventures with family.

Holiday traditions can foster some of the best family memories. When the kids were in elementary school, the Thanksgiving table was adorned with school projects. They are made of construction paper and served as conversation starters for family, we'd only get to see during the holiday season.

The kids are older now, and some of the childhood art occasionally makes a sentimental appearance on the Thanksgiving table. However, it is time to find a new Thanksgiving tradition! With that in mind, this month our feature article is all about celebrating the Austin way—a must read for Austinites.

This month Alison Bogle writes about ways to intentionally enjoy the holiday months even more with family, and our own Dr. Betty Richardson, provides strategies for transforming holiday disasters into fun events. For five ways to give thanks, that do not require food, check out Catherine Michalk's article for a new spin on holiday celebrations.

Don't forget to read through our calendar for all kinds of fun events popping up around our city this fall. There is so much fun to be had in our great capital city. Be sure to celebrate the Austin way. That's weird, right?

Celeste

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Austin IN ACTION

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By The Numbers

November 5th

Election Day and Vote by Mail ballot receipt deadline
Source: www.lwvtexas.org

April 30, 1598

First Thanksgiving celebration near modern-day El Paso
Source: www.thetexas.news

4 States

Texas, Virginia, Florida & Maine held Thanksgiving feasts before Plymouth, Massachusetts.
Source: www.thetexas.news

Promise Scholarships and Tuition Grants

The Foundation, in cooperation with the Comptroller's office, encourages Texas families to save for college by offering scholarships and tuition grants to eligible third through ninth graders who are beneficiaries of a contract in the Texas Tuition Promise Fund® (TTPF) — the state's prepaid college tuition plan.

The Foundation is expanding family income eligibility in the 2024-25 application period to offer scholarship opportunities to even more students. Eligible students whose families have an adjusted gross income of \$120,000 or less may now apply for

a scholarship. The previous adjusted gross income limit was \$100,000 or less so the new limit will allow more individuals to apply.

Applicants may apply through Dec. 31, 2024, by using the online application system or downloading an application form to mail. Families also may enroll in TTPF during this time if they haven't already done so.

Complete details can be found at www.matchthepromise.org.



Photos provided by Harmony Public Schools

Students Publish in Worldwide Poetry Anthology

Harmony Science Academy-Cedar Park (HSA-CP) had 49 students selected for publication from in the prestigious Poetry Towers competition, an international contest hosted by YoungWriters for authors ages 7-11. The students' poems will be featured in a global anthology.

In total, 57 students from the school entered the competition. Out of those entries, 49 students were selected for publication—an impressive feat, considering the global scale of the competition.

The worldwide competition allowed for various styles of poetry, and students embraced the opportunity to explore free verse, haiku, narrative, and traditional forms.

The published anthology will be a global compilation of poems written by students worldwide, showcasing the talent of young writers, including those at HSA-CP.

To learn more about Harmony Public Schools and read more about the competition and upcoming publication, please visit www.harmonytx.org.



Photos provided by Harmony Public Schools



Christmas is in Bloom

The Junior League of Austin (JLA), the city's largest women's service organization and the fourth largest Junior League chapter in the world, is celebrating its 49th annual A Christmas Affair, presented by Nyle Maxwell

Family of Dealerships. The beloved Austin tradition, which has celebrated the holiday season for nearly five decades, will feature a four-day market showcasing over 200 businesses from across the United States. JLA will also host a series of themed parties and children's events.

Event Details:

Children's Events and Photos with Santa. November 15-17, Community Impact Center.

Themed Parties:

November 20-24, Palmer Events Center.

Market Days:

November 21-24, Palmer Events Center.

Thursday, Nov. 21, 12-8 p.m.
 Friday, Nov. 22, 9 a.m.-7 p.m.
 Saturday, Nov. 23, 10 a.m.-7 p.m.
 Sunday, Nov. 24, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

All proceeds benefit community partners & JLA's signature programs; Kids In Cool Shoes (KICS), Coats for Kids (CFK), and Food In Tummies (FIT).

Tickets:

All events require a ticket. Market tickets available now at www.jlaustin.org/a-christmas-affair/

For event updates, visit the ACA website and Instagram @JLA_ACHRISTMASAFFAIR.

Students from Killeen High School attend a performance of Broadway smash hit SIX. photo by Robert Silver.



Texas Performing Arts Expands Education and Engagement Programs

Texas Performing Arts (TPA), recently announced an expansion of its education and engagement programs for K-12 students. Beginning with the 2024-2025 school year, TPA will quadruple the number of students it reaches annually to more than 16,000 through programs including its first-ever daytime school performance of a nationally touring Broadway show, a special theater performance for every fifth grader in the Austin Independent School District (AISD), and additional school-day performances of acclaimed touring artists.

Part of the University of Texas at Austin, opportunities for students of all ages is central to TPA's mission. Since its founding in 1981, TPA's education and engagement programs have connected renowned artists to students and the broader community through workshops, discussions, and shows specifically designed for area schools and teachers. Each season, TPA offers free school-day performances by visiting artists that include bus transportation and curriculum guides aligned with State education standards.

In the year ahead, TPA will present its first-ever daytime school performance of the acclaimed Broadway musical Peter Pan. In addition, TPA will welcome every 5th grader in AISD to a special daytime performance of El Otro Oz, a bilingual, Mexican folk-infused musical inspired by The Wizard of Oz. Along with these two presentations, TPA will offer school day performances

with Kid Koala, Sweet Honey in the Rock, and Versa-Style Street Dance Company for a total of five this year.

Educators interested in learning more about connecting their students with TPA's educational programs may contact education@texasperformingarts.org for additional information.

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Things To Do In November

2

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3

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28

Thundercloud Subs
Turkey Trot
The Long Center

Austin Fun Facts

Austin and its surrounding communities took second in population growth between 2022 and 2023, according to new estimates released by the U.S. Census Bureau, breaking a 12-year streak as the fastest growing metro area. The Austin-Round Rock-San Marcos Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) added more than 50,000 residents between 2022 and 2023, growing at a rate of 2.1 percent. The Austin

MSA is the 26th most populous metro area in the country and saw the seventh-largest numeric increase in population.

Although migration continues to be a major driver of growth in the Austin region, migration from other states and other parts of Texas made up a smaller share in 2023.

County-level Population Estimates

Six of the 10 fastest-growing counties and eight of the top 10 counties that led the nation by total numeric change in 2023 were in Texas. None of those include any of the Austin MSA counties, except for Williamson, which made both lists. The remaining fastest-growing and largest-gaining counties were found in the Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio metro areas.

migrants from other parts of Texas and about 20 percent from out of state.

Data from the Census also play a central role in redrawing boundaries for representative districts for the U.S. Congress, Texas Legislature, and Austin City Council districts.

For more information visit www.austintexas.gov/demographics.

Historically, the Austin metro area receives about 50 percent of domestic

Paragon Prep School in Austin Opens Brand-New, State-of-the-Art Campus

Paragon Prep opened a brand-new state-of-the-art campus to serve ages 3 through middle school students and features innovative learning environments that provide ample space for enhanced learning.

The new building provides space to serve more families and enhance the educational experience for students, with dedicated spaces for technology, art, and music.

Paragon prep encourages students to be engaged and challenged every day to learn to think logically and independently, value honesty, self-reliance and respect for others, and apply their learning to real-world situations.

The private school is known for excellent academics, small class sizes, personal attention for each student, and strong partnerships between parents, teachers, students, and staff.

Beyond the classroom, Paragon Prep students encourages students to build on their success in sports, the arts, clubs, and community service.

Founded in 1997, Paragon Prep School is a private, nonsectarian, coeducational day school that provides an enriched, one-year advanced, and highly challenging education for students.

Check out their website to learn more about their new state-of-the-art campus at www.paragonprep.com/.



Photos provided by Paragon Prep

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Celebrating the Austin Way - That's Weird, Right?



ERIC FRANS

Frans is a native Texan who has traveled around the world spreading the gospel of Texas across 5 continents. Regardless of location, he watches UT football. And he personally taught a Mursi tribe in Ethiopia to "Hook'em" in photographs.

I don't know about you, but it's been a while since "the holidays" really felt like the holidays to me. I mean, sure life is always changing, but when it came to that wonderful season, it always started with Halloween and gluttonous amounts of candy, slid seamlessly into Thanksgiving with copious amounts of food, and finally landed on Christmas with glorious amounts of presents. And for the most part, those things have remained the same. Now I brag less about the number of peanut butter cups I can fit into my mouth, I am the one snoring on the couch while the Cowboys play, and the cost of those presents is now a part of my reality. Mostly, it's the same.

Still though, I will acknowledge that something has seemed off for a while now. It wasn't until this year that I could really put my finger on it. Thanksgiving was the issue. It's not that I haven't been thankful, it's that there has been something I WANTED to be thankful for and couldn't be: the annual Longhorn football game against the Aggies. It's been missing since 2011, and the world just wasn't right. This year, oh this year, it's back!

The Longhorns and Aggies have met 120 times on the gridiron with 72 of those games taking place on Thanksgiving Day. This year—once again—all's right with the world; they are playing Thanksgiving weekend. What a year for it to start back up. Now, we will be thankful for football, BEVO, and proving once again which team reigns supreme. There is nothing more Austin than that.

Once that is settled, we can get back to the things that really matter – like all the places to go and things to do during the holidays (while wearing the jersey of your beloved and victorious team).

So, what does it mean to celebrate "the Austin way"? When almost everyone is celebrating something everywhere

during the holiday season, what's so special about the celebrations in Austin? This is a very good, and important question to ask. There are some things that are truly unique to Austin, and there are some things that might be done everywhere, but are just done better in Austin. This article is simply too limited in space to be truly comprehensive because everything is bigger in Texas, including lists of everything we do over the holidays.

In the spirit of the holidays and giving, allow this to serve as a good start for your planning.

With Thanksgiving coming, there are no shortages of races happening in and around Austin. Whether you want to run the Turkey Trails, get your Gobble-Wobble on, or do the Turkey Shuffle, there is a half-marathon, 10k, 5k, 1mi, Kids Dash or virtual run available for you and the family. If you want some extra Austin incentive, the ThunderCloud Subs Turkey Trot is having its 34th anniversary event and supports the fight against homelessness in Austin. So, you can engage in fun, fitness and philanthropy before you eat your weight in turkey and gravy.

If you want to bring back the old-time spirit of Christmas, you can relive the glory days of the traditional Christmas Tree Hunt. Conveniently, the Elgin and Evergreen Tree Farms provide you the chance to cut down your own Texas-grown Christmas tree (or pick a pre-cut tree to take home if you aren't comfortable felling the tree yourself). Once you capture your tree, there are lots of games and rides for the children to enjoy while you brag about your tree conquest with other victorious tree hunters at the farms.

If a single tree in your home just doesn't light up your holiday spirit

quite enough, fret not, as Austin is here to help. Load up and head over to Zilker Park for the annual Tree Lighting Ceremony where you will see that you did not, in fact take, home the largest Christmas tree in Austin. Sure, maybe it's not a real tree per se, but it is 55 feet tall and has 3,309 lights on it. Since you're there anyway, the Austin Trail of Lights is celebrating 60 years in Zilker Park this year. It's 1.25 miles with more than 2 million lights, 90 lighted holiday trees and more than 70 other holiday displays and lighted tunnels.

Since there seems to be a theme that includes running and walking, why not plan a little holiday stroll? The Downtown Austin Alliance has its annual Holiday Sing Along and Stroll. There's the obvious singing and walking, but there's also a children's market, lots of artisans and while maybe not holiday specific, no less enjoyable food trucks.

Now, I realize that some of us may not want to do cardio over the holidays. Maybe this is where we skip leg day amiright? Enough with runs, trots, wobbles, and walks. For those of us who know that you don't have to exercise to have an experience, allow me to suggest the uniquely-Austin, North Pole Flyer steam train, for two hours of time with Santa, cookies from Mrs. Claus, coloring, singing, and balloon animals.

There are more than enough events and activities to do in, and around, Austin during the holidays. If you really want to know the secret to celebrating the Austin way, it's trying to do them all. (And it's perfectly acceptable to wear your UT jersey to any of them – just make sure to dress it up with slacks if it's an upscale event.)

Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas, y'all!

KEEP
AUSTIN
WEIRD

Family Matters



DR. BETTY RICHARDSON

Richardson, PhD, RN, CS, LPC, LMFT, is an Austin-based psychotherapist.



Family Holidays: Fun or Disaster?

Q I'm dreading the holidays. My husband, children, and I split the holidays between each of our families. To reduce the stress, I want to go late and leave early. Am I alone in feeling this way or do other people experience added tension during the holidays? What can I do to make family gatherings more fun?

A You aren't alone. Many people find family gatherings overwhelming and an assault on their mental health. I can relate to your situation. I eventually learned how to make family gatherings fun. Here are nine suggestions to help you put together a strategy for your family to try:

1. Talk to the family members hosting the events. Tell each host you want to make the event fun by adding games and activities. Enlist one or more relatives to help you with games.

2. Plan a white elephant drawing. Bring a few extra gifts for those who didn't bring one.
3. Do self-care. Work on looking and feeling good about yourself.
4. Practice meditation as it can help calm your mind.
5. Avoid negative self-talk. Tell yourself you can handle whatever situation arises. When stressed, try breathing through your nose and out your mouth to relax yourself.
6. Excuse yourself from upsetting situations. Minimize contact with difficult relatives and spend more time with relatives you enjoy.
7. Change the subject if potentially upsetting topics come up. Better yet, introduce the first topic. Set boundaries. Make a list of safer topics such as travel and sports.
8. Work with your children before family gatherings. Teach and reinforce manners that are

important to your family. Guide older children to offer to help during gatherings.

9. Ask your children, after the event, what they enjoyed most about the family gatherings. Choose what to do again, and decide what to try next year.

Hopefully these suggestions will help you transform disastrous family gatherings into fun events, where memories can be made that will last a lifetime, and create stories that will be told for generations to come.

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Jingle All the Way to New Year's Day

The Learning Curve



ALISON BOGLE

Bogle is a writer living in Austin with her husband and three children. A former fourth grade teacher, she now enjoys writing about children and education. You can also catch her talking about articles from Austin Family magazine each Thursday morning on FOX 7 Austin.



The word “holidays” conjures up thoughts of my favorite foods, nostalgic holiday movies and songs, time spent with family, cookie baking, decorating, gift wrapping, and... a heaping helping of heartburn. The dizzying pace of all I try to accomplish in a too-short amount of time can leave me feeling frazzled rather than centered and joyous. When you add in coordinating holiday plans with my similarly busy extended family, I can feel downright Grinchy!

How can we parents bring holiday magic to our children, while also finding time to connect with cousins, grandparents, and good ‘ol Uncle Joe? Turns out, with a little forethought, it’s possible to spend meaningful time with everyone and enjoy the holidays! This year, try these tips for a more peaceful holiday season.

Hold a family meeting. As adults, we can experience things very differently from our kids. After my twins’ first trip to Walt Disney World, I asked my daughter

to share her favorite part of the trip. I thought she might say it was when she met her idol, Minnie Mouse, or perhaps it would be the fun she had riding on Dumbo. Nope. It was the nonstop Mickey Mouse cartoons in the hotel room. Oof!

The same can be true for holiday activities. Find out which one activity is most important to each of your family members and make those the priority for the season. Next, here’s the harder part, let all the rest go. You could add some back in the next year if you truly missed them, but chances are, the relief you’ll feel by slowing your pace will more than make up for any twinge of regret. Your wallet might feel some relief, too.

Start early. Early as in today. Calendars in November and December fill up faster than my freezer after a Costco run. Think ahead about what you would like to do as a family and put those dates on your calendar. Then, figure out how your extended family will

connect over the holidays and calendar those dates as well. As opportunities arise, having your “must-dos” written or saved ahead of time will help you decide what else to say “yes,” or maybe even “no” to.

Schedule downtime. Think of the holidays as a marathon, not a sprint. If you try to keep a sprinter’s pace, you’re going to exhaust yourself. Instead, intentionally schedule times to slow down – both for yourself and for your family. Perhaps that looks like a family holiday movie marathon day where no one is allowed to leave their jammies and dinner is ordered in, or it could be as simple as slipping out the door by yourself for a peaceful nighttime stroll to look at Christmas lights with hot cocoa. Your downtime doesn’t have to be expensive or elaborate, it just needs to feel like downtime.

Keep it age appropriate. It’s likely that many of us can remember long, drawn out extended family dinners, complete

with our best table manners and itchy tights or too tight collars. These types of formal family gatherings seldom inspire best behavior or fond memory-making in our children.

If your child is old enough, ask him how he would most like to connect with family. Maybe he loves baking cookies with grandma or would rather see a holiday movie to connect with the cousins instead of having a "boring" sit-down meal with the whole family. Knowing specifically what will be fun for your child will help you to narrow your focus, more easily schedule your plans, and stand the best shot at everyone having a good time.



Calendars in November and December fill up faster than my freezer after a Costco run!"

If your child is younger, safeguard naptime when making your family plans and choose activities that allow for lots of movement. Having to sit for too long or becoming overtired is a recipe for disaster with little ones.

Expect the unexpected. When you're trying to coordinate with multiple family members during the busy holiday season, the only thing guaranteed is that your plans are not guaranteed. Inevitably, someone will get sick, or someone will need to cancel an event. Try to stay positive and flexible. Maybe it's easy enough to reschedule that activity or maybe it's best to carry on with the rest of the family and give the absent person a call to express your love. Either way, if you have an expectation that something will change about your plans, you'll be pleasantly surprised if nothing does, rather than thrown off course and possibly disappointed.

The bottom line is that the holidays don't have to be a chaotic whirlwind of stress and to-do lists. We do that to ourselves. Instead, by embracing the season early and intentionally minimizing, slowing down, and rolling with the punches when plans change, we can make this year's holidays an enjoyable time of peace, bonding, and fulfillment. Remember that, ultimately,

the true magic of the season won't be found in a perfect schedule of all the activities, but rather, in the simple moments of connection we will share with our cherished loved ones. Wishing everyone a more laid-back, joyful holiday season filled with laughter and love!



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Austin Then *and* Now

LAURA MCNABB

McNabb is a mom in north Austin who loves spending time in nature with her husband, three children, and learning about homesteading.

The Umlauf Sculpture Garden

Then

Charles Umlauf was an artist, University of Texas professor, philanthropist, and nature enthusiast. In 1944, he purchased eight acres on the top of a hill near Barton Creek. At the time, the property had an old carriage house that had fallen into disrepair. The land was overgrown and untended, with lots of wild Dewberry vines and thick brush. The grounds had been last used as a place for soldiers to practice fly casting in the latter half of 1930s and into the 1940s, but after the war, the spot was largely forgotten. He fixed up the carriage house and transformed it into a home for his family and an art studio. Charles taught for 40 years at the University of Texas, and his prolific art can be found all-around the world in both private and public galleries. His work is in prestigious collections such as the Smithsonian and displayed proudly at the main entrance of Dallas' Love Field. Yet, he still made time to develop his beloved sculpture garden at home.

The sculpture garden was a labor of love for the entire family. His wife, Angeline, took care in situating native flowering plants around all her husband's sculptures as he finished them. Their six children dug out the paths and carefully lined them with the stones removed when the flower beds were prepared.



Photo provided by Carla Umlauf

Now

In 1985, The Umlauf's donated their home and art studio, along with 168 sculptures, to the City of Austin for the community to enjoy. The gardens, gallery, terrace, and learning center have developed the location into a destination for both arts enthusiasts and families encouraging art curiosity in their children. The Umlauf is home to the highest number of sculptures on public view in Texas.

It's a great spot to introduce younger children to art appreciation, because the beautiful gardens of native Texas plants and well-kept green spaces offer a place for children to run and explore. The trees, waterfalls, and pleasant babbling streams keep kids engaged as they explore the grounds to find the next sculpture. The bronze sculptures found around the gardens have all been sealed with wax, which means that guests are welcome to lightly touch them. The stroller-friendly and wheelchair-friendly crushed stone paths are laid out into a giant peace sign. The sculptures are not all bronze. Umlauf also worked in mahogany, maple, alabaster, black Belgian marble, painted plaster, and terra cotta.

It's a serene place to enjoy the cooler weather, and a surprisingly natural experience considering its location in the middle of the city. Art appreciation begins with art exposure, so take your children to enjoy both the art exhibit and the picturesque natural setting where they are on display! Parking is limited, but it's a short walk from several Zilker lots, and it's also on the Zilker shuttle route.



@umlaufsculpture Instagram

5 Ways to Give Thanks Without Food

Lifelines

CATHERINE MICHALK

Michalk is a native Austinite, writer, and mom of three. You can follow her family's adventures at www.catherinemichalk.com



Thanksgiving week, when the children are home from school and (most of us) have a few days off from work, is a great time of year to soak up extra moments with your family. But, let's be real, as busy parents we can have a hard time carving out those moments in the middle of planning, cooking, hosting, and traveling.

Sometimes you just need a fun tradition that forces you to be intentional and spend quality time together as a family. No, I'm not talking about baking turkey-shaped loaves of bread or fighting traffic to run the Turkey Trot. The holiday doesn't need to be more stressful for busy parents. Rather, I'm here to share five fun ways to celebrate Thanksgiving with your family that are easy and don't include food (or fighting your way through crowds of runners). Read on to see which

tradition you'd like to incorporate into your week to help your family celebrate this year.

1. Thankfulness Tree

At the beginning of Thanksgiving week take a few pieces of brown construction paper and tape them to the wall in a prominent place. This will be your tree trunk. Feel free to leave it rectangular or make it as fancy and tree-like as you want. Next, cut out leaves in various shapes, sizes, and colors, and place them in a bowl nearby. Let your kids write down things they're thankful for and tape them to the tree throughout the week. Share a few examples of big and little things you're thankful for such as "Grandma coming to visit" and "Pumpkin pie" so they know they can be thankful for all sorts of things. Take a few moments every day to talk about the new additions. Your kids will love seeing their Thankfulness Tree fill up with leaves all week long!

2. Make Kindness Bags

If your children are like mine, they comment on all the people they see on Austin's street corners holding signs. The Holiday season is a great time to remind your kids of the joy they can find by giving to others. This Thanksgiving week, show your kids how everyone can help someone less fortunate by making kindness bags to hand out when you stop at a stop-light. Have your kids help pick out items such as toiletries, warm socks, and non-perishable snacks. Fill resealable bags with your items and keep the bags in the car. Your kids will get to experience the warmth and joy of giving to others, and hopefully remember to be thankful for the things they have.

3. Watch A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving

Sometimes what your family needs is just to slow down and snuggle on the couch, and what better way

than with this Thanksgiving classic! A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving is short, around 30 minutes, but packed with the silliness your kids will love. I said these activities don't include food, but feel free to pop some popcorn to go along with your viewing party. Or, if you're feeling inspired, go the extra mile and make some buttered toast, popcorn, jellybeans, pretzels, and ice cream sundaes. Your kids will have a blast snacking on the same food as Charlie Brown's gang, even if it isn't a traditional Thanksgiving meal!

4. Take A Nature Walk and Make a Suncatcher

One of the highlights of living in Austin is the great weather we get in November. Take advantage of it by going for a nature walk around your neighborhood or in a local park. Bring a basket and let your kids collect leaves, flowers, and other small bits of nature to take home. Make a sun-catcher by first cutting out a circle in the middle of a paper plate. Lay out a piece of clear contact paper cut just wider than the circle you cut from the plate. Let your kids arrange their nature finds on the contact paper, then place another piece of contact paper on top to trap everything in between. Tape the contact paper to the plate and punch a hole near the top. Run a piece of string or yarn through the hole, then hang the suncatcher in a window and watch the light shine through onto your nature finds. If your children are extra crafty, let them decorate the plate around the contact paper with paints, markers, or stickers.

5. Make Gratitude Rocks

This activity is not only fun, but it allows your family to reflect on the things they're thankful for every time they pass by the rocks. Start by either buying rocks or going outside to collect them, try to get one to three rocks per

person. You'll need the rocks to be big and smooth enough to write on. Wash and dry your rocks if they're from outside, then grab some paints and permanent markers. Let your kids paint their rocks any way they want. After the paint dries each person should write something they are grateful for on their rocks. Much like the Thankfulness Tree

above, they can be big things or small things as long as they're genuine. When your rocks are finished, find a spot inside, such as in a bowl on your coffee table, or outside, such as along a garden path, to keep them. The best thing about this activity is that your family can keep adding to it and reflecting on it year after year.

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November 2024 calendar

Go to www.austinfamily.com for expanded listings.

Check our calendar online which is updated daily. Any family-friendly events can be posted at austinfamily.com and will be made live once approved. Certain restrictions apply.

Fri 1

City of Austin's 7th Annual Roots & Wings Festival. 8 a.m. This beloved annual FREE event invites the Austin community to come together to honor the rich tapestry of our urban nature—celebrating trees, bats, fungi, and more. Over 100 events all over Austin. FREE. www.rootsandwingsfest.com.

Día de los Muertos Festival & Parade. 5 to 10:30 p.m. Please join the costumed walking parade beginning at the library at 6:15, then sugar skull painting at the library and festival fun. Downtown Elgin, Main St. FREE. www.elgintexas.gov.

Día de los Muertos presented by Siete Family Foods. 6 p.m. A free evening celebration at Waterloo Park including community altars, cultural activations, live music, and dance performances. Waterloo Park Austin, 500 E 12th St. www.waterloogreenway.org

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (2001) - Community Cinema. 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Grab chairs and a blanket, bring family and friends, and enjoy this special screening. Come explore Community First! F9301 Hog Eye Rd. FREE. www.mlf.org.

James and the Giant Peach. 7:30 to 9 p.m. The play begins at the end of the story, when James and his friends are living in the giant peach stone in Central Park, New York. B. Iden Payne Theatre, 300 23rd St. \$15 - \$26. www.tadticketing.thundertix.com.

Sat 2

Harker Heights Parks & Recreation Día de Muertos Festival. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Enjoy traditional music and dance performances that bring the spirit of Día de Muertos to life. Art and Crafts: Engage in various crafts that reflect the customs and heritage of this special day. This festival is open to all ages, and admission is free. Vendors will be at the event for you to purchase items. Bring your family and friends to share in this beautiful celebration of life and remembrance. Carl Levin Park, 400 Miller's Crossing. FREE. www.harkerheights.gov.

SFC Farmers' Market at Sunset

Valley. 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. With over 35 local vendors to shop from you can find seasonal fruits and vegetables, pasture-raised meat, eggs, locally pastries, and more. Toney Burger Center, 3200 Jones Rd. FREE. www.sustainablefoodcenter.org.

Día de los Huesos. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Join Texas Science & Natural History Museum for a paleontological spin on Día de los Muertos! Texas Science & Natural History Museum, 2400 Trinity St, \$0 - \$10. www.sciencemuseum.utexas.edu.

22nd Annual Travis Heights Art Trail. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. The longest-running artist/studio tour in Austin, this is a grassroots art show created by and for the artists of Travis Heights in Austin. Travis Heights, between Riverside and Live Oak, and I35 and Congress, just south of the river. FREE. www.TravisHeightsArtTrail.org.

Austin Celtic Festival. 12 p.m. Austin's best festival of everything Celtic livens up our Sprinkle Corner village, with the International Highland Games, a super bonus, sponsored by Jourdan-Bachman Pioneer Farms, 10621 Pioneer Farms Drive. www.pioneerfarms.org.

ESB MACC: Dia De Los Muertos 2024. 4 to 9 p.m. Pan American Recreation Center, 2100 E 3rd St. www.austintexas.gov.

Audition for the National Children's Chorus. 5 p.m. Does Your Child Love to Sing? The Austin Chapter of the GRAMMY® Award-winning National Children's Chorus, based in Northwest Hills. www.nationalchildrenschorus.com.

CONTINUED: James and the Giant Peach, see Fri 2; **City of Austin's 7th Annual Roots & Wings Festival,** see Fri 2.

Sun 3

H-E-B Free First Sunday: Roots and Wings Festival. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Join the Bullock Museum for a pollinator-themed Bullock Texas State History Museum, 1800 N. Congress Ave. FREE. www.thestoryoftexas.com.

Sunday Matinee at the Library:

Coco. 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Bring some snacks, pillows, and blankets, and watch a family-friendly film on the 1st floor, in Meeting Room A&B. Round Rock Public Library, 200 E. Liberty Ave. www.roundrocktexas.gov.

Hideout Kids. 4 p.m. Spooky Halloween Journey: A Family-Friendly Improv Show For Fans Of Over The Garden Wall! Hideout Theatre, 617 Congress Ave. \$13 - \$20. www.hideouttheatre.com.

CONTINUED: James and the Giant Peach, see Fri 2; **City of Austin's 7th Annual Roots & Wings Festival,** see Fri 2; **Fossil Fest,** see Sat 2; **Austin Celtic Festival,** see Sat 2; **Travis Heights Art Trail,** see Sat 2.

Mon 4

Board With Books - Tabletop RPG Edition. 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Want to get into tabletop roleplaying games but don't know where to start? Or do you have the knowledge, but you need a group to play with? Central Library, 710 W. César Chávez St. Gallery. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

Wed 6

Playdates in the Park - Ponciana Neighborhood Park. 10 a.m. Come play in the park! Playdates in the Park is an inclusive, free community event series designed to activate families with young children. 5200 Freidrich Ln. www.austinparks.org

CONTINUED: James and the Giant Peach, see Fri 2.

Thu 7

CONTINUED: James and the Giant Peach, see Fri 2.

Fri 8

Fall Family Campout. 5 p.m. 1807 Waterfall Ave. www.leandertx.gov.

Rock the Park Concert Series. 6:30 to 8 p.m. KUTX 98.9, the Austin Music Experience, presents "Rock the Park," a family friendly concert series at the Mueller Lake Park Amphitheater. Mueller Lake Park Amphitheater, 4550 Mueller Blvd. FREE. www.kutx.org.

CONTINUED: James and the Giant Peach, see Fri 2.

Sat 9

Kyle Veteran's Day Parade and Market Days. 8 a.m. Join the City of Kyle in honoring our nation's veterans. Check out local vendors including food, drink, arts and crafts, and farm-to-market items while enjoying music, a playground for kids and areas to sit and visit with your friends and neighbors. Mary Kyle Hartson Park, 215 W Center St., Kyle. www.cityofkyle.com/recreation/page/2024-veterans-day-parade-market-days

Holiday Bazaar Arts and Crafts Show.

9 a.m. to 4 p.m. You are invited to the 20th Annual Rockin' Around the Holidays Bazaar. Clay Madsen Recreation Center, 1600 Gattis School Rd. www.roundrocktexas.gov.

Georgetown Market Days.

9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Experience historic downtown Georgetown with a vast selection of premier shopping and dining on Second Saturday Market Days. Georgetown Square, www.visitgeorgetown.com.

Zoo Stampede.

11 a.m. Run for the animals at Cameron Park Zoo in Waco. For guaranteed t-shirt size register by October 28. Cameron Park Zoo, 1701 N 4th St., Waco \$25 - \$55. www.runsignup.com.

Dark Skies at Shield Ranch Star Party.

5 to 9 p.m. Enjoy a Star Party at Shield Ranch, the first Urban Night Sky Place in Texas designated by DarkSky International. The Campsite at Shield Ranch, 10417 Crumley Ranch Rd. \$10 - \$18. www.shieldranch.com.

Jane Eyre.

7:30 to 11 p.m. The classic story of the trailblazing Jane is as inspiring as ever. Long Center, 701 W Riverside Dr. \$19. www.thelongcenter.org

CONTINUED: James and the Giant Peach, see Fri 2; **SFC Farmers' Market at Sunset Valley**, see Sat 2.

Sun 10

Family Day. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Join us for a fun-filled day in the garden with sculpture searches, crafts, and FREE admission for visitors of all ages. UMLAUF Sculpture Garden & Museum, 605 Azie Morton Rd. FREE. www.umlaufsculpture.org.

Encanto: The Sing-Along Film Concert.

3 p.m. Disney Concerts and AMP present a cross-national tour where Encanto lovers of all ages have

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the opportunity to experience this concert. Bass Concert Hall, 2350 Robert Dedman Dr. \$29.50 - \$74.50. www.texasperformingarts.org.

CONTINUED: James and the Giant Peach, see Fri 2; **Jane Eyre**, see Sat 9.

Mon 11

Austin Veterans Day Parade. 6 to 11:30 a.m. Congress Avenue starting at corner of Cesar Chavez. www.austintexas.gov.

Free Day. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. On select dates throughout the year, the Zilker Botanical Garden offers free days where no admission is charged. Zilker Botanical Garden, 2220 Barton Springs Rd. FREE. www.zilkerbotanicalgarden.org.

Veterans Day Ceremony. 10 to 11 a.m. Veterans Park, 1011 S Bagdad. www.leandertx.gov.

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Tue 12

Free Days – Blanton Museum of Art.

10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Blanton Museum of Art is free for all visitors on the 2nd Tuesday of every month. Open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Blanton Museum of Art, 200 E Martin Luther King Jr Blvd. FREE. www.blantonmuseum.org.

Thu 14

CONTINUED: Jane Eyre, see Sat 9.

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Fri 15

Blue Genie Art Bazaar Returns for its 24th Year. 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Come shop all things that make Austin Weird. Blue Genie Art Bazaar, 6100 Airport Blvd. FREE. www.bluegenieartbazaar.com.

The Addams Family School Edition. 7:30 p.m. The Addams Family, a comical feast that embraces the wackiness in every family, features an original story, and it's every father's nightmare. The Chambers Theater @ IMAC, 121 Main St., Buda

CONTINUED: Jane Eyre, see Sat 9.

Sat 16

29th Annual Texas Book Festival. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Downtown Austin, in and around the Texas Capitol and in nearby off-site venues, 701 W. Cesar Chavez St. FREE. www.texasbookfestival.org.

Round Rock PopUp Art Show. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Round Rock PopUp Art Shows are a chance to have a fun day of retail therapy, with the extra feel-good of shopping from and supporting local, artist-owned businesses. Prete Plaza, 221 E. Main St. www.roundrocktexas.gov.

Art in the Park – Wooten Neighborhood Park. 10 a.m. It's time to get crafty in the park! Art in the Park is Austin Parks Foundation's newest addition to the "In the Park Series". 1500 Dale Dr. www.austinparks.org/events/art-in-the-park-wooten.

Halo Fest 2024. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The festival will include a silent auction and raffle, a chili cookoff, and a soccer tournament. San Juan Diego Catholic High School, 2512 S. 1st St. FREE. www.sjdchs.org.

Umlauf Sculpture Garden Storytime. 12 to 1 p.m. Join our docent for an entertaining tour through the Garden while the kids join our team for Sculpture Garden Storytime! Umlauf Sculpture Garden & Museum, 605 Azie Morton Rd. \$1 - \$7. www.umlaufsculpture.org.

Building Exploration @ Westbank. 1 to 3 p.m. We'll have building materials for you to stack, create, and construct. What will you build? Westbank Community Library, 1309 Westbank Dr. www.westbanklibrary.com.

CONTINUED: SFC Farmers' Market at Sunset Valley, see Sat 2; **Jane Eyre**, see Sat 9; **Blue Genie Art Bazaar**, see Fri 15; **The Addams Family School Edition**, see Fri 15.

Sun 17

Sazon Latin Food Festival in Austin. 11 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Family Friendly. Join us for Latin Food, live music and a great time at the Last Sazon Latin Food Festival of the year! The Fieldhouse at the Crossover, 1717 Scottsdale Drive #Suite 160. FREE. www.eventbrite.com.

Sunday Matinee at the Library: The Garfield Movie. 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Bring some snacks, pillows, and blankets, and watch a family-friendly film on the 1st floor, in Meeting Room A&B. Round Rock Public Library, 200 E. Liberty Ave. www.roundrocktexas.gov.

Goodnight Moon & The Runaway Bunny. 2 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. Two beloved picture books; both stories feature endearing rabbit characters, and the soothing rhythms of bunny banter and dream-like imagery never fail to infuse young readers with a reassuring sense of security. Best for ages 3 and up. \$18 - \$35. Paramount Theatre, 713 Congress Ave. www.tickets.austintheatre.org/11438/11439a.

CONTINUED: Jane Eyre, see Sat 9; **Blue Genie Art Bazaar**, see Fri 15; **The Addams Family School Edition**, see Fri 15; **29th Annual Texas Book Festival**, see Sat 16.

Mon 18

CONTINUED: Blue Genie Art Bazaar, see Fri 15.

Tue 19

CONTINUED: Blue Genie Art Bazaar, see Fri 15.

Wed 20

Zine Night. 5:30 to 7 p.m. Learn how to make and craft a zine with the Austin Public Library! Central Library, 710 W. César Chávez St. Gallery. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

CONTINUED: Blue Genie Art Bazaar, see Fri 15.

Thu 21

Board with Books. 5 to 8 p.m. Explore the Central Library's board game collection at this monthly board game meetup. Central Library, 710 W. César Chávez St. Gallery. FREE. www.library.austintexas.gov.

CONTINUED: Jane Eyre, see Sat 9; **Blue Genie Art Bazaar**, see Fri 15.

Fri 22

Cirque Dreams Holiday. 7 p.m. Cirque Dreams Holiday dazzles with a brilliant and whimsical family holiday spectacular. Bass Concert Hall, 2350 Robert Dedman Dr. \$33 - \$113. www.texasperformingarts.org.

CONTINUED: Jane Eyre, see Sat 9; **Blue Genie Art Bazaar,** see Fri 15.

Sat 23

The 31st Annual Austin Powwow. 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. The Annual Austin Powwow is the largest one-day powwow in the country and one of Austin's biggest events. Travis County Expo Center, 7311 Decker Lane. \$7 - \$10. www.austinpowwow.net.

Playdates in the Park - Metz Neighborhood Park. 10 a.m. Come play in the park. Playdates in the Park is an inclusive, free community event series designed to activate families with young children. 2407 Canterbury St. www.facebook.com.

CONTINUED: SFC Farmers' Market at Sunset Valley, see Sat 2; **Jane Eyre,** see Sat 9; **Blue Genie Art Bazaar,** see Fri 15.

Sun 24

CONTINUED: Jane Eyre, see Sat 9; **Blue Genie Art Bazaar,** see Fri 15.

Mon 25

CONTINUED: Blue Genie Art Bazaar, see Fri 15.

Tue 26

CONTINUED: Blue Genie Art Bazaar, see Fri 15.

Wed 27

CONTINUED: Blue Genie Art Bazaar, see Fri 15.

Thu 28

THANKSGIVING

CONTINUED: Blue Genie Art Bazaar, see Fri 15.

Fri 29

CYT Austin presents Disney's Mary Poppins Jr. 2:30 to 4 p.m. and 7:30 to 9 p.m. All of London is shouting from the rooftops about this exciting stage adaptation of the classic tales of Mary Poppins. Brentwood Christian School: Worley-Barton Theater, 11908 N. Lamar Blvd. \$18. www.cytaustin.org.

Annual Holiday Lighting Ceremony of Georgetown's Historic Town Square.

5:30 p.m. Kick off this year's holiday season with Georgetown's annual Lighting of the Square. This free event will start at 5:30 p.m. Georgetown Historic Town Square, 808 Martin Luther King Jr St. FREE. www.visit.georgetown.org.

Wild Lights at Cameron Park Zoo.

6 to 9 p.m. Stroll the zoo and enjoy over 3 million holiday lights. Cameron Park Zoo, 1701 N 4th St. \$10 - \$13. www.cameronparkzoo.com.

CONTINUED: Blue Genie Art Bazaar, see Fri 15.

Sat 30

Flight of the Butterflies. 11 a.m. Join millions of real butterflies on an amazing journey along with one scientist's 40-year search to unravel the mystery. Bullock Texas State History Museum, 1800 Congress Ave. \$9 - \$15. www.thestoryoftexas.com.

CONTINUED: SFC Farmers' Market at Sunset Valley, see Sat 2; **Blue Genie Art Bazaar,** see Fri 15; **CYT Austin presents Disney's Mary Poppins Jr.** see Fri 29. **Wild Lights at Cameron Park Zoo,** see Sat 30.

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PAM MOORE

This article was originally published on BonBon Break. Pam Moore is an award-winning freelance writer, intuitive eating coach, and host of the Real Fit podcast. Get her free guide to improving your body image at pam-moore.com.



The Life-Changing Magic of Purging Toys

Until recently, I was convinced my life would be better if only we had more space. Until we got a bigger house or remodeled, I thought a special organizing system for our burgeoning collection of toys and books would do the trick. I lived in constant fear of a painful Lego-meets-foot disaster. I felt suffocated by the sea of toys covering every surface of our house.

And then I purged.

Our lives changed for the better, overnight. It turned out, we didn't need more space, more labels, or more baskets. My kids certainly didn't need more "friendly reminders" to pick up toys. What we needed was less.

HERE'S WHY:

1. It's simple

Before the great purge, I had this awesome idea. I would rotate the toys every few months. I put a huge bin of toys on a shelf with extra diapers and good intentions. But organization is not my forte. Our plants are chronically thirsty, and my car typically gets an oil change a thousand miles too late. Not surprisingly, I never got around to rotating the toys. I just couldn't muster the energy to get the bin down, empty it, and fill it back up with different toys, all under the watchful eye of my opinionated

3-year-old. But collecting the books I was tired of reading and gathering the annoying, battery-operated toys (you know the type) and dropping them in a garbage bag instead of the toy basket? That was easy.

2. It's energizing

Once I got the urge to purge, I couldn't stop. I began to look at everything in my house with a fresh perspective. Instead of asking myself, "Where should I put this?" I asked myself "Do I really need it?" If the answer was no, into the bag it went. Along with the children's toys and books, I got rid of clothes I didn't love but was saving for just in case, socks without mates, half a dozen books I'd been meaning to read, a stack of expired coupons, and jewelry I'd forgotten I owned. Without the burden of extra stuff in my house, I felt lighter.

3. It's an opportunity for learning

My three-year-old learned it's important to share. I learned she's happy to share, if I give her the chance. Initially, I worried about how she would feel about letting go of her things. I thought about restricting my adventures in purging to after bedtime, but her bedroom is where most of her toys are, so that was not an option. I considered lying, but I feel it's important to be honest with my children (although I maintain

it's not hurting anyone if they think my chocolate is a spicy adult vitamin). So, I told the truth. I explained to my daughter that she and her baby sister are lucky to have lots of books and toys, but some children don't have any, so we need to share. I braced myself for tears and screams. They never came. Instead, my daughter nodded and helped me add toys to the give-away bag.

4. Everyone is happier

With less stuff, there is less mess. Less mess means I am not perpetually an inch away from tripping over a rogue block or a Frozen doll. While being asked to put her toys away used to elicit tears and cries of "It's just too much!" from my daughter, now she generally cleans up with minimal pushback. On the nights when the tidying falls to me, I get it done in under five minutes. Meanwhile, my kids don't seem to miss any of their old toys. If anything, they have more space to create forts out of blankets and end tables.

Having less means less to put away, less to think about and less chaos. Less time spent dealing with stuff leaves more time for the stuff that matters. I only wish I'd purged sooner.

KID ZONE

Make Your Own Puppet



Transform a cardboard tube into a puppet using scissors, tools, and your imagination! This maker activity requires limited materials that you probably have at home and offers open-ended exploration and play.

Materials you'll need:

- Cardboard Tubes
- Pipe Cleaners or Straws
- Bottle Caps (with holes drilled)
- Masking Tape
- Yarn
- Popsicle Sticks
- Googly Eyes or Eye Stickers
- Scissors
- Hole Puncher

Step One: Cut Your Tubes

Cut one cardboard tube in half to make the puppet's head. The other tube will stay whole as the body. Now you have the main pieces for your puppet.

Step Two: Punch the Holes

Punch two holes on either side of the head and the same for the body. These holes will be where you connect the head and body. You're ready to start building.

Step Three: Connect the Head and Body

Thread a pipe cleaner or straw through the holes to attach the head to the body. Twist or fold the ends to secure it. Your puppet is already starting to take shape.

Step Four: Add the Strings

Tie strings to a popsicle stick, then thread them through the head and body holes. This will let you control your puppet like a marionette! Test it out by making your puppet move.

Step Five: Make Leg Holes

Punch two holes at the bottom of the body for the legs. Make sure they are spaced evenly. The holes will be where you attach the legs.

Step Six: Create the Legs

Thread yarn through the leg holes and attach a bottle cap to each end for feet. Now your puppet has legs to stand on (or dance). Time to give it some fun moves.

Perform a Puppet Show

For more fun, make more puppets and tell a story with a puppet show. Write a play or story for your puppets to perform. The puppets can act out the story you write and bring the story to life in a whole new way.

Together, adults and children can write more stories, make more puppets, and perform more puppet shows for family fun for all ages this holiday season.

Thinkery, a nonprofit and Austin's children's museum, brings joy to learning through play-based, STEAM exploration for ALL children so they cultivate a lifelong love of learning and thrive. Learn more at thinkeryaustin.org.



Share your pictures of your puppets on the Austin Family Facebook or Instagram pages with the hashtag #AustinFamilyMemories.

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