

I&PS's Quick Blips

See I&PS Committee's February article on avoiding tax identity theft at trta.org.

New Year Adventures

Life Coach **Dr. Jodi Walker**

encourages her clients never to make "resolutions," which focus on what you fail to accomplish. Focus on what can be accomplished--adventures. Work on a 3-month schedule: health, positive people, and definite boundaries when you find yourself in a toxic situation, and forgive.

Kate Freeman, organization specialist, says to start with small projects, create 3 piles: keep, donate, and trash. The donate and trash piles should be larger than the "keep" pile. Label, label, label. Labeling trains other

people in your home to be organized, whether they know it or not. Have SMART goals: specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-based.

Lauren Koski, writes, "from fitness to getting organized, goals need to be shorter and more attainable." [Amarillo Globe-News. Jan. 9, 2017, p. A9.]

Night Walkers: invest in small motion-activated night lights (see your hardware store) to avoid possible falls on your night journeys. ["Dear Heloise." Rpt. in *Amarillo Globe-News*. Jan. 10, 2017, p. A8.]

Due Vigilance

Defined benefits is under attack again from large investment services. They are bombarding legislators with the message that TRS is inefficient and is costing the state more money than other systems would. These groups are highly influential because of the large campaign contributions they make.

Continue to contact your legislators, especially the new ones. We must educate them.

[Treasure Brasher. Dist. XVI Legislative Chair. Letter. 11.14.15]



Dangerous Chemicals

In Amarillo, four children died, and their parents and four other siblings were hospitalized after their dad tried to wash away Weevil-Cide he had applied under their home. In addition, 2 police officers, 7 firefighters, and one person from American Medical Response were taken to the hospital. AFD's HazMat team is leading the investigation into the incident.

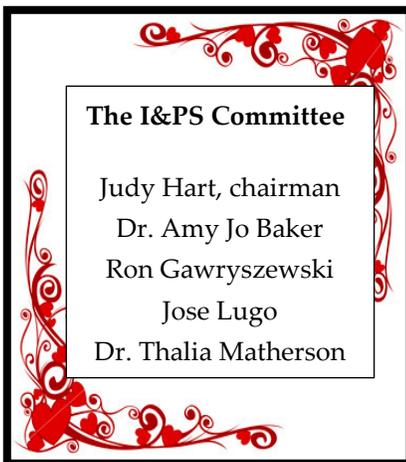
Never mix bleach and vinegar, bleach and ammonia, bleach and alcohols, bleach and acid toilet bowl cleaner, disinfectants and quaternary ammonia found in certain detergents, two different brands of one product, and strong acidic or alkaline products.

Other hazardous chemicals are found in air fresheners, ammonia, bleach, drain cleaners, antifreeze, mothballs, motor oil, oven cleaner, rat poison, and windshield wiper fluid. [chemistry.about.com] and Lauren Koski. *Amarillo Globe-News*, Jan 3, 2017, A7]

Amazon's Alexa Echo

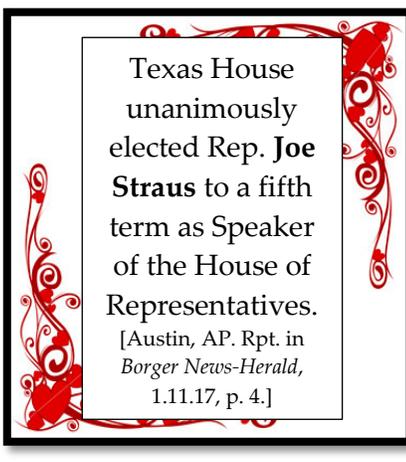
What can be more exciting than telling the Alexa voice-activated Echo Dot speaker to turn on the washer, heat the oven to 400 degrees, and order a doll house and cookies? That last order is exactly what six-year-old Brooke Neitzel did. The Sparkle Mansion dollhouse cost \$160 and the 40 pounds of cookies, the family ate. It's a good idea to install the parental controls immediately. [Jennifer Earl, CBS News, Dallas, online. Jan. 5, 2017]





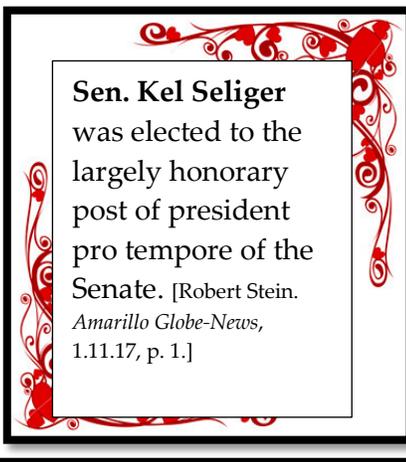
The I&PS Committee

Judy Hart, chairman
Dr. Amy Jo Baker
Ron Gawryszewski
Jose Lugo
Dr. Thalia Matherson



Texas House unanimously elected Rep. **Joe Straus** to a fifth term as Speaker of the House of Representatives.

[Austin, AP. Rpt. in *Borger News-Herald*, 1.11.17, p. 4.]



Sen. Kel Seliger was elected to the largely honorary post of president pro tempore of the Senate. [Robert Stein.

Amarillo Globe-News, 1.11.17, p. 1.]

Takata pled guilty to a single criminal charge and will pay \$1 billion in fines and restitution for a years-long scheme to conceal a deadly defect in its automotive air bag inflators. Executives falsified and altered test reports. The bags can spew shrapnel into drivers and passengers when they inflate.

[Detroit: AP. Rpt. in *Amarillo Globe-News*. Jan. 14, 2017. A5.]



Caregiver Boot Camp

Dr. Anne Fabiny, Chief of Staff for Geriatrics, at San Francisco VA Medical Center, writes that it is dangerous for the caregiver to go down because of the spiraling effect on the one needing care. Take equally good care of yourself by setting boundaries. (1) Set expectations. Decide yourself what you reasonably feel you can do. (2) Let your loved one know what other pressures you have, how much time you have available, and when you have reached your limit. (3) Bring multiple family members to visits with doctors, so you can all create an action plan together. (4) Banish guilt that creates a barrier in the hard decisions you need to make. Guilt is never useful. (5) Be okay with tension because your loved one will not be able to see things the way you do any more than a toddler understands why he or she must get in the car seat. Remember that you are doing the right thing. [Caregiver Boot Camp. "Spry Living." *Parade.com*. Jan. 2017.]

Dr. Ann Wallace of West Texas A&M University teaches a program to facilitate communication with Alzheimer patients. She focuses on nonverbal communication and signals the patient sends. [*Amarillo Globe-News*. 1.29.17.]



State Report Cites Terror Threat for Texas

The *Houston Chronicle* reported that all eight Mexican drug cartels operate in Texas and have partnered with gangs to support drug and human smuggling on both sides of the border. [Rpt. in *Amarillo Globe-News*. 1.22.17, p. A3].

Scientists Take First Step in Growing Human Organs in Pigs

The US Gov. suspended government taxpayer funding in 2015, but scientists are injecting pig embryos with human stem cells from the individuals who would get the transplanted organ, which will minimize rejection, says Salk researcher Jun Wu. The pigs would be euthanized before the organs were removed. [New York: AP. Rpt. in *Amarillo Globe-News*, Jan 29, 2017.]



Final Address of the President

Obama urged the public to embrace the work of "citizenship" in his final presidential radio and Internet address. The country's success depends on everyone participating as a good citizen. [Washington: AP. Rpt. in *Amarillo Globe-News*. 1.15.17, p. A6].

Is Texas the Next Dump?

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is reviewing a Dallas based company's application to expand its 14,000-acre facility in Andrews County to store up to 5,000 metric tons of uranium spent nuclear fuel from power plants across the country. They want to break ground in 2020. In 2014, the company gained state permission to double the dump's capacity. They want to store spent nuclear reactor fuel and other highly radioactive waste. Congress in 1987 named Yucca Mountain in Nevada as the nation's waste site, but Sen. Harry Reid has led a successful campaign to thwart that project.

Karen Hadden, of the Sustainable Energy & Economic Development Coalition, describes the material as "incredibly deadly." The project's best friend is **Rick Perry**, who has been picked to head the US Department of Energy. **Hadden** says, "Once the radioactive waste gets here, no one will want to move it." [Kiah Collier. *The Texas Tribune*. Online. Jan. 28, 2017.]