It’s nearing that time; my favorite of all seasons - spring. But, before the joy and breathtaking beauty of the season, comes a time of preparation. Plants that didn't survive the ice days and cold of winter need to be removed, the yard that will soon flourish green, needs to be scalped, and last, but far from least, certain trees & bushes need pruning.

Pruning: to cut superfluous or undesired twigs and branches (from a tree); trim; to get rid of anything undesirable; or to remove anything superfluous from a book, etc.

Now, this cutting back is always a difficult time for me. I know it needs to be done to cause the trees to explode with more lush vegetation than that of the previous blooming season, but nevertheless, it just seems counter intuitive, until you've experienced the new, more vibrant birth that results.

In my inability or procrastination to do the ‘dirty’ deed, I asked Brenda to engage some yard men in pruning the crepe myrtles with "light trimming and thinning of some of the inner branches." Nubs of lopped off crepe myrtle tree limbs drive me crazy, and doesn’t seem the right technique for trimming these type trees. On arriving home one afternoon, all four of our crepe myrtles had seemingly been attacked by an ax maniac! Horror and shock filled my soul. Even my inner vocabulary quickly took a turn for the worse. We now have our very own nub "trees!“ See adjacent picture – our statue of St. Francis won’t even see shade till mid-summer at best. It was very thoughtful of Brenda to get the job I failed to do, done; but, disappointment with our lawn experts’ handiwork was an understatement. Note to self: “do it yourself next year.”

Pruning, thinning, & refining, these are all important for each of us and our departmental and divisional leadership as well. Specifically, business processes, policies, and even service levels and specific services ought to continually be considered for opportunities to enhance efficiencies and effectiveness. And we get so complacent at times that we continue to provide the same service without considering whether that particular service is of high enough value and consistently meets strategic needs that it should remain in our portfolio.

No doubt PeopleSoft has dealt us a blow by our having to develop process workarounds that are inefficient. Regardless, these are necessary, but will end and the system will stabilize as we become familiar and adept at its use. But even in this ‘setback,’ and the busyness of our schedules, we cannot ever excuse away our responsibilities to continually seek opportunities to prune, trim, and refine our operations enabling us to be more efficient, effective, nimble, and responsive to our customers.

Pruning is a proven gardening technique to enhance growth and beauty, and it’s a business operational technique that will produce more vibrant services as well as individual professional growth. We should be careful, however, to practice the technique with the precision of a surgeon.

Happy gardening!

Kerry
Jeff Nichols began his career at UTSA in February 2009, with Facilities as a Groundskeeper I. September 2011, Jeff accepted his current position, Warehouse Worker II with the Department of Purchasing and Distribution Services. Jeff's professionalism, attention to detail, and outstanding customer service are on constant display.

In 1980, Jeff enlisted in the United States Air Force. He served for 22 years, 11 years on active duty and 11 years as a reservist. During his active duty years, Jeff served as a firefighter. Through commitment to hard work, he achieved the rank of Captain. Jeff used his time in the Air Force as a great opportunity to see the world. He was fortunate to serve abroad in the United Kingdom, Netherlands and Germany. While in Europe, he enjoyed traveling and has visited 13 countries. Jeff also spent time at Lackland Air Force Base where he served as a Basic Military Training Instructor.

While at Lackland Air Force Base, Jeff met his wife, Sarah, who was also participating in a Lutheran softball league. They married in 1990 and are proud parents of a beautiful daughter, Elizabeth. Jeff is probably the biggest Nebraska Cornhusker fan in San Antonio. He has a room dedicated to the Cornhuskers, wall-to-wall Big Red Football.

Jeff’s other passion is model railroading. He has enjoyed model railroading since he was a kid and his model takes up his entire garage.

Jeff and Sarah plan to retire in a couple of years. Upon retirement, they plan on moving to Sarah’s fathers’ ranch north of Fredericksburg, and opening a Quilt Retreat, providing groups a place to spend weekends or full weeks working on their quilting projects.

Jeff, on behalf of the University and Business Affairs, thank you for your service!

Chief Steve Barrera

Jeff will be receiving a Roadrunner meal card to use for either breakfast, lunch or dinner at the Roadrunner Cafe, compliments of ARAMARK. Our thanks to ARAMARK for their support!
Hello Ms. (Jennette) Hughes,

I received the email attachment you have sent me. I just want to thank you for all your help. You have such a great dedication to your job and are always very helpful. Thank you very much. You always make my interaction with fiscal services a great one!

Thank you.
Have a great day,
Dounia Izem, Student

Elizabeth Ortiz,

I would like to take this time and thank you for all your help at payroll services.

Thank you for your patience and guidance with helping navigate my new role as an Administrative Associate II in the Art Department.

Truly appreciate you.
Victor Guerrero
Administrative Associate II
Art and Art History Department

Kerry (Kennedy),

I would like to recognize Dave Riker and David Oliver for their willingness to give up space currently assigned to Facilities for the purpose of support moving the art curator storage space back to the Main Campus, resulting in significant savings to UTSA. The savings could easily be $30,000/year or more, and that does not include any additional costs incurred by UTSAPD for providing security at this location, providing telephone services, or Facilities costs associated with providing housekeeping.

Pamela Bacon
AVP Administration

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Pamela Bacon
AVP Administration

Good morning, Shelley (Deats)!

I just wanted to drop a quick “thank you” and kudos to Kathy Valdez and Justin Hooter. Both Kathy and Justin were amazing on Saturday, January 25, 2014, for our Student Aid San Antonio event. We had requested directional signage to assist students and parents in finding our event in the business computer lab. The signage was supposed to have been completed on Friday, January 24th - our snow day. I was so appreciative that Kathy and Justin came in on Saturday before the event to put out the signage. We had given up hope of receiving the signs, but because they went above and beyond, our directional signs were in place prior to the event. What an awesome team to come in on their day off and make sure those signs were up for us! Additionally, they both reached out several times with phone calls to offer phone numbers if we needed anything else from them. Please share a huge “thank you” to them for their amazing customer service and dedication to our event.

Erin Keene
Financial Aid Outreach Coordinator
Student Financial Aid and Enrollment Services

Good morning Mr. Kennedy,

I would like to offer “kudos” to Captain Daniel Kiley.

My department faculty were having issues with a classroom door in the business building. The door would lock during normal business hours, preventing faculty from entering the classrooms. This became frustrating to my faculty and their students. I wasn’t sure what to do anymore. I called the police department and was told to email Captain Kiley. So I did.

Captain Kiley assisted with finding a solution and finding the source of the door issues. We are so thankful for his prompt response. In less than twenty-four hours, the door was fixed. He was very timely in responding to my phone call and email.

I am so thankful for his outstanding service.

Laura Earleywine
Department of Economics
New U.S. Citizen


Jean moved from England to San Antonio in 2002 and married her husband John (also from England) in 2004. She started work at UTSA HR Training & Development in the spring of 2008.

After much soul searching and consulting with family, Jean and John decided to apply for U.S. Citizenship in September 2013. Both passed the Naturalization interview with flying colors.

A special Naturalization Ceremony was held at Lackland Air Force Base and family, friends and coworkers, attended the Ceremony.

Jean and her husband John feel great pride in being U.S. citizens, with all the rights and responsibilities that accompany citizenship. They are thankful for everyone’s positive response, welcoming them as citizens and are looking forward to a bright future here in the United States.

Interested in testing yourself? Go to [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov), click on ‘citizenship’ and ‘naturalization test’.

UTSA Public Safety Notice

The UTSA Police Department would like to remind all members of our community “SAFETY”, is part of everyone’s job. According to statistics provided in a recently published news article, people killed and injured in motor vehicles and pedestrian accidents are occurring at an alarming rate (140 incidents in the past 34 months). Considering the continued rise in those avoidable situations, police are faced with taking immediate action to increase pedestrian safety and reduce motorist accidents. Let’s avoid being a part of these alarming statistics by utilizing safety features available to us and intended to increase our safety.

**USE CROSSWALKS TO AVOID BEING ISSUED A CITATION!**

The San Antonio Police Department and the UTSA Police Department are enforcing pedestrian violations for failure to use crosswalks both on campus and adjacent roadways. This violation is also commonly known as “jaywalking.” Streets near the UTSA Downtown Campus have been identified as a prime area for violations of this type. Those who choose to cross the street at a location other than a marked crosswalk should be aware that a citation may be issued, which could result in a fine of up to $200.

Be a Rowdy responsible citizen. Make the right decision use crosswalks that can save your life and your wallet.

**Worth Remembering**

“There are no such things as limits to growth, because there are no limits to the human capacity for intelligence, imagination, and wonder.”

~Ronald Reagan

Frost Bank—New Location

A new Frost Bank was built over the recent winter break. The space is 458 square feet and is a new one-stop state of the art banking center housed at the corner of the HEB University Center building. Sabinal Group constructed the new suite within three short weeks collaborating on site with all of the interested stakeholders. The new space is a wonderful example of a cooperative work effort by many individuals from departments across campus working through the holidays to complete this project. As you enter through the beautiful wood double doors, there is a sleek tile floor with a granite greeter station where you are welcomed to Frost Bank. A sliding glass modular system divides the suite creating private office space, but still allowing natural light from exterior windows to fill the lobby area. The space is a perfect combination of steel panel displays and warm-earth tone flooring and millwork. A new ATM machine is on its way to the new location and will be located at the stainless exterior to complete the Frost Bank vision for the UTSA Main Campus.
**Partnership**

Facilities Operations and Management (O&M) in partnership with Facilities Work Control and Business Services are implementing new methods of accounting for the work being done for campus customers. Using the existing computerized maintenance management system, The Main Authority (TMA), along with the power of mini-iPad mobile devices, members of the Education and General (E&G), Preventative Maintenance (PM), Auxiliary, Utility Operations, and Research zones will use the new devices to improve customer service through efficiencies and elimination of duplication of efforts.

Rollout of the mini-iPad devices began in the PM Shop during the fall 2013 with members of the Research zone. Necessary training and fine-tuning of policies and procedures are well underway with the goal of full deployment of the devices in all shops and zones in O&M during 2014. When completed, improved customer service, more accurate billing, reduction of paperwork, increased efficiency and enhanced ability to estimate workload and workplace behaviors are but a few of the anticipated benefits of this system. This is a great example of collaboration between management in O&M and its workforce as well as cooperation between departments within Facilities including O&M, Business Services, Work Control, and the Executive Management Team.

**Construction Update - Sombrilla Fountain**

Recently the Sombrilla Fountain received much needed aesthetic and operational improvements. Since the fall of 2011, the 35-year old iconic fountain has been decommissioned due to water restrictions and a deteriorating pump system. With the assistance and collaboration of Alderson & Associates, Inc., Alpha Building Corporation, UTSA Facilities Engineering and Project Management, UTSA Facilities Planning and Development, and many others, the Sombrilla Fountain was restored in less than a month. The Sombrilla Fountain now boasts a vibrant UTSA blue pool bottom complimented with tile sidewalls. The brand new pump system will now be supplied with reclaimed condensation water from the nearby JPL HVAC system allowing for year-round operation regardless of drought restrictions. The Sombrilla Fountain received a LED light upgrade which can be programmed with different colors on demand. The Sombrilla Fountain also has programming capabilities which can be controlled via wireless connection. With upgrades like these, the Sombrilla Fountain can be enjoyed by students, faculty, and staff for many years to come.

**UTShare**

UTShare/PeopleSoft Training is here! Training began February 10, 2014 with classes being offered at both campuses (Main and Downtown). A special edition of the UTShare/PeopleSoft Training Newsletter & Schedule has been distributed this month to all employees. It describes UTShare/PeopleSoft courses and their recommended audiences. [Click here for more.](#)

**Business Affairs Promise**

We are committed to helping you achieve your goals through excellence in service -- every person, every day, every job.