

## From the Sidelines



**Eric Schroder**  
Editorial Director

[eschroder@specialtyim.com](mailto:eschroder@specialtyim.com)

717-805-4197

### Spots to seek out in San Antonio

**A**S A PUBLIC SERVICE to readers considering or most assuredly attending the STMA Conference next January in San Antonio, here are some hot spots to check out during your free time, courtesy of *Current*, San Antonio's "alternative" newsweekly:

**Live Music**—Nighthrocker Live, 605 San Pedro, (210) 265-3573. Nighthrocker Live has been showcasing metal, rock, hip-hop, and even reggae regularly since opening in 2009. Stand-up comedy and a sexy tattoo ladies' night help round out the weekly schedule. The last time we visited, it was for the annual Ram Jam, a fitting place to host the tribute to dearly departed Ram Ayala since the venue, founded by Roland "Nighthrocker" Fuentes, sticks to Ayala's Taco Land formula pretty well: cheap tequila, loud, local music, and an utter disgust for pretension of any kind. Just the way a rock club should be.

**Romantic Dinner**—Grey Moss Inn, 19010 Scenic Loop, Helotes, (210) 695-8301, [grey-moss-inn.com](http://grey-moss-inn.com). There's always been a romantic element to "getting away from it all." Why else do newlyweds honeymoon? Grey Moss offers escapism about half an hour outside of downtown, under the shade of giant Oaks and twinkling lights on the edge of the Hill Country. They know better than to interfere with intimate dinners by throwing a complicated menu into the mix. Grey Moss proposes familiar, impressive choices like escargot, filets, lobster, and lamb, and a wine selection wide enough to turn even the most awkward first date into a relaxing evening. Top it off with a sweet treat, and try to keep your knickers on until you've signed the bill.

Two other choices that might be closer: Bliss, 926 S Presa, (210) 225-2547, [foodisbliss.com](http://foodisbliss.com); and Biga on the Banks, 203 S St. Mary's, (210) 225-0722, [biga.com](http://biga.com).

**Off the Beaten Path**—Two Step Restaurant and Cantina, 9840 W Loop 1604 N, (210) 688-2686, [twosteprestaurant.com](http://twosteprestaurant.com). Two Step Restaurant and Cantina, housed in the renovated historic Ruempel homestead, takes pride in its rustic roots. Vintage Texana decor adorns the walls, and the menu offers traditional comfort food favorites like chicken fried steak, prime rib, catfish, and barbecue. The noteworthy bread pudding and pecan pie with ice cream satiate the sweet tooth, while an El Jefe margarita whets the whistle. With reasonable prices at both lunch and dinner, patio seating, and live music in the evenings, this family friendly restaurant can persuade even the most discriminating Downtowner to make the trek.

**BBQ**—Rudy's, multiple locations, [Rudysbbq.com](http://Rudysbbq.com). Also, Two Bros. BBQ Market, 12656 West Avenue, (210) 496-022, [twobrosbbqmarket.com](http://twobrosbbqmarket.com); or, Augie's Barbed Wire Smokehouse BBQ, 3709 N St. Mary's St, (210) 735-0088, [augiesbs.com](http://augiesbs.com).

**Watch Sports**—The Ticket Sports Pub, 420 E Houston, (210) 222-9722, [ticketsportspub.com](http://ticketsportspub.com); or Fretail Brewing Company, 4035 N Loop 1604 W, (210) 395-4974, [fretailbrewing.com](http://fretailbrewing.com).

**Craft Beers**—The Friendly Spot, 943 S Alamo, (210) 224-BEER, [thefriendlyspot.com](http://thefriendlyspot.com). You'd be forgiven for mistaking this Southtown ice house for a dog park. Above the din of the crowd or the occasional Spurs game, you'll hear pooches barking next to their boozed-up owners. The laid-back, outdoor setting makes it a perfect place for four-legged friends and, with recent renovations, we expect to see even more dog owners pick The Friendly Spot as their favorite watering hole. With a monster new bar in the back, The Friendly Spot's tap count jumped from 20 to 76, almost all are craft beers, many of them Texas brews. Their micheladas are no slouch, either. ■

## SportsTurf

1030 W. Higgins Road  
Suite 230  
Park Ridge, IL 60068  
Phone 847-720-5600  
Fax 847-720-5601

The Official Publication Of The Sports Turf  
Managers Association

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**STMA Office**  
805 New Hampshire Suite E  
Lawrence, Ks 66044  
Phone 800-323-3875 Fax 800-366-0391  
Email [STMAinfo@STMA.org](mailto:STMAinfo@STMA.org)  
[www.STMA.org](http://www.STMA.org)

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SportsTurf (ISSN 1061-687X) (USPS 000-292) (Reg. U.S. Pat. & T.M. Off.) is published monthly by Specialty Information Media at 1030 W. Higgins Road, Suite 230, Park Ridge, IL 60068. **POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Sportsturf, PO Box 4290, Port Jervis, NY 12771.** For subscription information and requests, call Subscription Services at (845) 856-2229. Subscription rates: 1 year, \$40 US & Poss.; 2 years, \$65 US & Poss.; 1 year, \$65 Canada/Foreign Surface, 1 year, \$130 Airmail. All subscriptions are payable in advance in US funds. Send payments to Sportsturf, PO Box 4290, Port Jervis, NY 12771. Phone: (845) 856-2229. Fax: (845) 856-5822. Single copies or back issues, \$8 each US/Canada; \$12 Foreign. Periodicals postage paid at Park Ridge, IL and additional mailing offices. COPYRIGHT 2013, SportsTurf. Material may not be reproduced or photocopied in any form without the written permission of the publisher.