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For Immediate Release

HILL COUNTRY ALLIANCE ANNOUNCES PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST WINNERS

*Captivating photos showcase the irreplaceable treasures of the Texas Hill Country;
HCA calendar offers inspiration for preserving its natural resources*

Austin, TX – June 30, 2012 – The fifth annual photography contest held by the Hill Country Alliance (HCA) received hundreds of beautiful entries that capture the unique places, lasting treasures and special qualities the Texas Hill Country is known for.

HCA announces four winning photographs, each capture the magical qualities of this region that need to be protected for future generations to enjoy and experience. “The 2012 HCA Hill Country Calendar will be a surprise to many. This year’s photo collection is spectacular and reveals more of an unexpected view of the region. Our amazing judges; singer-songwriter Eliza Gilkyson, designer Mike Reese and photographer Charles Kruvand were captivated by these artistic and breathtaking illustrations”, said Christy Muse, Executive Director of HCA.

Each of the four winners receives a cash prize and the honor of being included in the much-awaited HCA calendar.

The explicit beauty of Grand Prize winner Tammy Wren’s photograph, *Beautiful Yellow Butterfly Perched on a Peach Blossom in Spring*, shows the spirit of nature in the Hill Country’s everyday surroundings. Wren describes the spring season as a wonderful time to take photographs because, “everything is blooming beautifully.” Dedicated to taking at least a photo a day for 365 days, Wren went out to capture the beauty of her neighbor’s trees alive with butterflies and bees. She stumbled upon one particular beautiful butterfly drinking nectar from a peach tree, which resulted in this Grand Prize photo that will grace the cover of the 2012 HCA Hill Country Calendar.





First place winner and a true Austinite from Travis County, James Grandbury took, *Golden Sunset*, “standing from a friend’s boat at Lake Buchanan.” After fishing for three hours, Grandbury noticed the striking sunset and very still lake water which helped make this photo a winner. He remembers the moment perfectly. “With the blue colors of the sky coming through the breaks in the clouds, it was amazing!” When asked about the photo, Granbury states that he “could not be happier with the way the shot turned out.”

With a love for photography from an early age, Grandbury has been able to transform his life-long hobby into a profession of five years. “I love capturing the moments in time of our beautiful landscapes in Central Texas, my home.”

Like Wren’s butterfly image, second place winner, Allen Brandenburg’s winning shot exemplifies the simplistic beauty of everyday scenery of the Texas Hill Country. “My wife planted these hibiscuses with beautiful blooms. One day I decided to get some photos of the blooms, when I noticed this Anole lizard running around.” He was able to capture the almost human-like personality handsome lizard who has become a regular visitor of his backyard. Of the photo, Brandenburg states that “the color was pretty much perfect and was virtually ‘as shot’.”



Brandenburg supports trying to preserve the Hill Country as is and is, “always impressed with the beauty of the hills and cliffs... it’s a beautiful place.”



From growing up in Austin to now residing in Wimberley, the Hill Country and all its resources have been a part of third place winner Carl Griffin’s entire life. Griffin’s winning photo, *Jump!*, illustrates the fun and excitement that the younger generations share with the Hill Country region. Taken at Jacob’s Well just north of Wimberley, Griffin recalls that two brothers were daring one another to “go first” into the well far below. Griffin saw the chance of a potentially great photograph, and had his “finger on the shutter button ready to capture the action.” The result of the dare was the older

brother taking the first leap, but for Griffin, the result was a photo with a breath-taking view of one of the most beloved activities the Texas Hill Country has to offer.

Griffin has loved photography and being creative since a very young age but never thought of himself as a great artist. Instead, Griffin describes that he “decided to let light paint [his] pictures through the art of photography.”

The Calendar will be ready for sale in August. For more information and to place an advance order visit HillCountryAlliance.org.

About Hill Country Alliance (HCA)

The Hill Country Alliance is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to raise public awareness and build community support around the need to preserve the natural resources and heritage of the Central Texas Hill Country. To learn more about HCA initiatives, please visit (www.hillcountryalliance.org).