



# THE TALON

## Community Calendar JANUARY

2012

- 1 ..... Happy New Year!
- 13 ..... Scrapbook Club Meets  
12 – 10p.m. / Clubhouse
- 10 ..... Book Club Meets  
8 – 10p.m. / Clubhouse
- 12 ..... ESCA Board Meeting  
4 – 6p.m. / Clubhouse
- 16 ..... Sports Field Committee Meets  
7 – 8:30p.m. / Clubhouse
- 17 ..... Pool Committee Meets  
8 – 10p.m. / Clubhouse
- 21 ..... CompuCycle Recycling Event  
12 - 4p.m. / Sports Complex Parking Lot
- 23 ..... Landscape Committee Meets  
7 – 8:30p.m. / Clubhouse
- 26 ..... Safety Advisory Committee Meets  
7 – 8:30p.m. / Clubhouse

### ESCA On-Site Management Hours

- Monday & Wednesday ..... 1pm – 6pm
- Saturday ..... 9am – 1pm
- TUESDAYS ..... Trash & Recycle
- FRIDAYS ..... Trash Only

## EAGLE SPRINGS RECYCLES!

### CompuCycle

January 21st | 12pm – 4pm  
Sports Complex Parking Lot  
See page 9 for Details



## WISHING EAGLE SPRINGS A VERY



2012

## COMMUNITY CONTACT INFORMATION

### EAGLE SPRINGS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

**Crest Management Co** ..... 281-579-0761  
 Community Manager..... Bill@Crest-Management.com  
 Clubhouse Rental..... Terri.George@InsideEagleSprings.com  
 Board of Directors..... AsktheBoard@InsideEagleSprings.com  
 Activities ..... Activities@InsideEagleSprings.com  
 Website Administrator.... Terri.George@InsideEagleSprings.com  
 Newsletter ..... ESNewsletter@InsideEaglesprings.com

### EAGLE SPRINGS COMMITTEES

Landscape ... Landscape.Committee@InsideEagleSprings.com  
 Pool..... Pool.Committee@InsideEagleSprings.com  
 Safety Advisory..... SAC@SafetyAdvisoryCommittee.com  
 (*Neighborhood Watch*)  
 Sports Fields..... SportsFieldCommittee@gmail.com

### EMERGENCY INFORMATION

**Fire, Medical or Life Threatening Emergency** ..... 9-1-1  
 P-4 Constable Dispatch..... 281-376-3472  
 Humble ISD Police (Schools)..... 281-641-7900  
 Atascocita Volunteer Fire Dept (AVFD)  
*Non-Emergency Number* ..... 281-852-2181  
 Harris County Animal Control ..... 281-999-3191  
 Texas Poison Control Center ..... 800-222-1222

### UTILITIES

Electric, (multiple providers) ..... www.powertochoose.org  
*Power Outages* ..... 713-207-7777  
*Street Light Outages* ..... 713-207-2222  
 Gas, Centerpoint Energy..... 713-659-2111  
*Gas Leaks* ..... 713-659-2111  
 Water, Severn Trent ..... 281-579-4500  
*24 Hour Emergency Number* ..... 281-209-2100  
 Telephone, Centurylink..... 877-290-5458  
 T.V./Internet (*multiple providers*) ..... www.allconnect.com  
 Trash, Best Trash ..... 281-313-2378  
 Recycling, Residential Recycling of Texas ..... 866-516-9805  
 Humble Post Office..... 281-540-1775

### SCHOOLS

Humble ISD ..... 281-641-1000  
*Website* ..... www.humble.k12.tx.us  
 Eagle Springs Elementary ..... 281-641-3100  
 Atascocita Springs Elementary..... 281-641-3600  
 Timberwood Middle School..... 281-641-3803  
 Atascocita High School ..... 281-641-7500

### NEWSLETTER PUBLISHER

Peel, Inc. .... 888-687-6444  
 Advertising..... advertising@PEELinc.com



# EAGLE

# SPRINGS

*Crime Statistics*

*November 2011*

Burglary of a Habitation .....	1
Burglary of a Motor Vehicle (BMV) .....	1
Theft from a Habitation.....	1
Theft of Motor Vehicle.....	1
Theft Other .....	1
Robbery.....	0
Assault .....	0
Sexual Assault .....	0
Criminal Mischief .....	3
Disturbance Family.....	6
Disturbance Juvenile.....	2
Disturbance Other.....	12
Alarms .....	39
Suspicious Vehicles .....	26
Suspicious Persons .....	16
Runaways .....	1
Telephone Harassment.....	0
Other Calls.....	63

A detailed version of Crime Stats for Eagle Springs can be viewed at: [www.INSIDEEAGLESprings.com](http://www.INSIDEEAGLESprings.com); click on the Groups Tab; then Safety Advisory Committee, they are located under the Files Menu. They are also available under the Neighborhood Watch tab. You must be logged in as a registered user to access this information.

## REMINDER! - NO PETS

Pets are not allowed at community events, on the baseball fields, or inside the tennis courts, with the exception of guide dogs or pets that are actual participants of an event. This is to ensure the safety and enjoyment of all residents in our community. As a courtesy to your neighbors and fellow residents, please remember to pick up after your pet!

*Your cooperation is appreciated!*



## Rachael's



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## To Eagle Springs...

### Happy New Year Atascocita!

In 2012 we are looking forward to another successful year serving the Atascocita Communities including Eagle Springs where I've been a resident for 7 years. I love the Atascocita area where I live, work, and do community service. January starts what is known as the spring buying season as prospective homebuyers get out of leases, sellers look to sell their home and move once the kids get out of school, or experience a job transfer. Now is a great time to give me a call to schedule a time to meet and review your options. Homes are taking longer to sell than they used to, but they are selling. The holidays are over and all the decorations are down, time now to spruce up that winter curb appeal to entice the prospective buyers that are in the market. It will be my pleasure to represent you in the sale of your home, as I have represented so many in this community and other local neighborhoods in the sale of their home. I welcome the opportunity to discuss with you the services I provide, like professional staging of your home for sale, free local move after closing for my Clients (Restrictions Apply! Call for Details), internet marketing that includes Showcased listings on Realtor.com, Zillow.com, Yahoo.com, Homes.com, along with Century21.com and 100's of other websites, professional photographer, virtual tours, text message marketing and social media exposure on Facebook, YouTube and much more. My marketing is cutting edge, high powered, and designed to get your home the most exposure possible. I spend the time, effort, marketing and money to sell your home. Call me today for a complimentary consultation and marketing analysis!

Not ready to move? Considering the option of refinancing your current mortgage? Visit our website to obtain a list of lenders that can assist you with refinancing. Rates are low and now may be a great time to take the steps to refinance. As your trusted Real Estate Advisor, we will look at all your options to see what makes sense for your long term plans.

Giving back to the community is something very important to me. As high school graduation draws near, we have a small college grant available. If you have a high school senior that would like to apply for the grant, have them visit our website [www.majorleaguehomes.com](http://www.majorleaguehomes.com) to get details so they can apply.

In closing, if you have a topic you would like me to discuss in future issues, please send me an email to [rsnipp@century21.com](mailto:rsnipp@century21.com). We look forward to hearing from you! Referrals are the bloodline of my business so I appreciate you keeping me in mind when you have family, friends and co-workers looking for a trusted Real Estate Advisor. We realize that you have a choice, so we appreciate the opportunity to earn your business.

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**Respectfully,**  
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**Realtor**

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*Eagle Springs Resident*



# Happy New Year to All!

## Eagle Hatchlings

*Congratulations on our newest arrivals!*

### BOAZ JOE BROWN

Born: October 1, 2011 | Proud Parents: C.J. & Sarah Brown  
Big Brothers: Reef & Levi | Neighborhood: Hunters Grove

### TRINITY GREY WEIKEL

Born: October 21, 2011 | Proud Parents: Randee & Cris Weikel  
Big Brothers: Sabastian & Gabriel | Neighborhood: Logan Ridge

### NICOLAS BIAGGIO OLIVERIE

Born: November 25, 2011 | Proud Parents: Nicolas & Sonya Oliverie  
Big Brother: Zachary | Neighborhood: Caliterra Chase

### LUKE EDWARD PUSTEJOVSKY

Born: December 8, 2011 | Proud Parents: Laura & Dave Pustejovsky  
Big Sisters: Claire & Paige | Neighborhood: Meridian Cove

*Send Information about your New Arrival to:*

*ESNewsletter@InsideEagleSprings.com*



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### SECURITY TIPS

The holidays are here and with the hectic bustle of activity and planning one of the worries most people do not think about is the safety and security of their homes while you are away at the store or out of town visiting family. During this time of year the number of home burglaries increases and most of the home burglaries are crimes of opportunity, meaning the homeowner has given the burglar an easy target. There are many security precautions you can take to minimize the risk of your home becoming a statistic. The following briefly address some weaknesses in home security:



- **Landscaping** - An ideal target for intruders is a home surrounded by large hedges and shrubs. Trees and shrubbery should be trimmed so doors and windows are visible and lighting is unobstructed.
- **Lighting (exterior)** - Burglars hate light. Outside lighting is important near doors and the rear of your home. Motion activated lighting works best and is fairly inexpensive.
- **Lighting (interior)** - When you leave your home do not leave on what is known as a "burglar beacon" which is a small light left on so you don't walk into a dark house. Place timers on a few of your lights and vary the time every few days so a pattern is not realized. If you are going to be away for an extended period of time, it is also a good idea to put a radio and/or your TV on a timer.
- **Locks** - All exterior doors should have some type of a deadbolt lock. Use a double cylinder deadbolt that utilizes a key on both sides but do not leave the key where it can be seen from the outside.
- **Sliding Glass Doors** - These doors should have some type of pin lock installed to prevent burglars from lifting the door out of its track from the outside.
- **Home Inventory List**—it is a good idea to keep a personal property inventory list in a safe place. This list may include jewelry, electronics, appliances, computers, etc. the list may help to establish your loss with your insurance company. Also take pictures of the items on your list and keep everything in a fireproof safe.
- **Garage Doors** - Cut the cord off your electric garage door openers. It's easy to push the top of your garage door in enough to put a wire hanger in and hook the release handle. By pulling the handle, the burglar will be able to override the garage door opener. Leave just enough cord so you can use it if needed.

### OTHER SAFETY TIPS

1. Always be observant of your surroundings.
2. When returning home, or to your car, have your keys in hand so you can let yourself in without delay.
3. If you think you are being followed, don't go home. Go to a neighbor's house or the closest business and call the police.

## Top Reasons to Sell Your Home in the Winter

*Aside from less competition, low borrowing costs give buyers incentive*

We're getting close to the end of the year, which begs the question of whether it's worthwhile trying to sell your home now. Is it a waste of time? Will it sit on the market and become shopworn? Should I take my house off the market for the holidays? Will the home-sale market be better for sellers in 2012?

The first question you need to ask yourself is: Are you emotionally prepared to sell? Selling is a challenge for most sellers, although some markets are better than others. Unless you bought more than eight to 10 years ago and preserved your equity, you may not be able to sell for enough to pay off the mortgages secured against the property and the other costs of selling.

For sellers who have no additional assets, a short sale or foreclosure may be the only option. If so, first look into government programs that might help you out financially. Also, talk to your attorney and tax adviser.

Sellers who have the resources to make up the difference between the sale price and the amount they owe need to ask themselves if they are willing to pay the additional cash in order to sell and move on.

There are two reasons why you might prefer bringing cash to closing. One is that your credit will not be negatively

impacted, as would be the case with a short sale or foreclosure. The second is that many buyers shy away from short sales because of the lengthy and uncertain process involved.

The next thing to consider is the condition of your home. Is it ready for the market? The most salable homes are those that are in move-in condition.

Before racing to the hardware store, ask your Realtor about how much competition there would be for your home if you put it on the market before the holidays. Some areas are shy on inventory of good homes on the market. If so, now could be a good time to sell.

**HOUSE HUNTING TIP:** The supply/demand ratio plays a significant role in the health of a local real estate market. No matter what is said about the housing market nationally, it's the local picture that tells the tale in terms of the possibility of selling your home at any given time.

Most sellers don't put their homes on the market during the last or first couple of months of the year. The inventory of homes for sale tends to dwindle during the winter months. Interest rates are low. So, if there are buyers in your local market, you may be at an advantage selling when most sellers are waiting.



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## 2011 WINTER FESTIVAL

**WHAT A GREAT TIME AT THE WINTER FESTIVAL ON DECEMBER 10TH!**

We had lots of people come out to enjoy the afternoon. Some of the attractions included; a petting zoo, trackless train, and two horse drawn carriages! Santa was there too, along with his elves for the kids to have their photo taken with. There was cookie decorating, crafts, games and a Gingerbread House Contest!

*Thank you to all our volunteers who helped with this event! Please enjoy the photos...*





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## FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### ANNOUNCING THE NEWLY ELECTED NEIGHBORHOOD VOTING REPRESENTATIVES FOR 2012!

NVR's play an important role in the governance of the Association. Their primary role is to cast all votes attributable to Units in the Neighborhood for election of directors, amending the Declaration or By-Laws, and all other matters provided for in the Declaration and By-Laws that would require a vote of the membership. Additionally, NVR's liaise with residents in their respective Neighborhoods to bring issues to the attention of the Board. More information on the roles and responsibilities of NVR's can be found on our website: [www.INSIDEEAGLESprings.com](http://www.INSIDEEAGLESprings.com) under the Homeowners Association tab.

In 2012, Eagle Springs will be electing two new Resident Directors to the Board. In order to do this, a quorum must be met by the NVR's. Currently, there remain three neighborhoods without NVR representation: Cades Crossing, Laurel Ridge, and Valley Creek. Several neighborhoods are also in need an Alternate NVR. Alternate NVR's vote in place of the Primary NVR, should the Primary NVR be unavailable or absent and help to ensure that a quorum is met. If you live in one of these neighborhoods, you are encouraged to consider one of these open positions.

*For questions or more information about this, please contact Bill Higgins at: [bill@crest-management.com](mailto:bill@crest-management.com) or 281-945-4625.*

#### ARBOR HEIGHTS

NVR ..... Chad Kneseck.....chad\_kneseck@yahoo.com  
Alternate ..... Charles Blake ..... blakecc@usa.redcross.org

#### ARLINGTON PARK

NVR ..... Debbie West ..... funnegirl44@gmail.com  
Alternate ..... Tod Springer ..... todspringer@yahoo.com

#### BARTON RIDGE

NVR ..... Shelly Kanneberg ..... skanneberg@gmail.com  
Alternate ..... Vince Feleccia ..... v.feleccia@comcast.net

#### BERINGER PLACE

NVR ..... Fernando Mattos ..... ftmattos@gmail.com  
Alternate .....

#### BISCAYNE BEND

NVR ..... Sam Poe ..... sampoe2003@yahoo.com  
Alternate ..... Jeremiah Carter.. jeremiahcarter1@yahoo.com

#### CADES CROSSING

NVR .....  
Alternate .....

#### CEDAR MEADOWS

NVR ..... Marco A. Benavidesmarco.benavides@ymail.com  
Alternate .....

#### CHANDLER CROSSING

NVR ..... Lewis White ..... lewis@lewiswhitelaw.com  
Alternate .....

#### COTTAGE GROVE

NVR ..... Jonette Hayes ..... jhayes1326@yahoo.com  
Alternate ... Jeffrey Furth ..... jfurth@nfhfundai.com

#### CRESCENT RIDGE

NVR ..... Ken Auenson ..... ken.auenson@gmail.com  
Alternate ..... Melanie Hosey .....

#### CROSS CREEK

NVR ..... Sara Burkhalter ..... poofyvi@yahoo.com  
Alternate ..... Hollis Whiteside . hollis.whiteside@gmail.com

#### LAUREL RIDGE

NVR ..... Gwen McKee ..... gmckee01@comcast.net  
Alternate .....

#### MEADOW LAKE

NVR ..... James Metoyer ..... jaymetoyer66@gmail.com  
Alternate .....

#### PRESTON VILLAGE

NVR ..... Lucas E. Smith ..... lucsmith2002@yahoo.com  
Alternate .....

#### PRINCETON PARK

NVR ..... Michelle Button ..... mbuttontx@gmail.com  
Alternate ..... Sara Veillon ..... scevillon@gmail.com

#### SIERRA BRIDGE

NVR ..... Lonnie Kimball lonnie\_kimball@hotmail.com  
Alternate ..... Laverne Christian ..... lilvernie@earthlink.net

#### STERLING CREEK

NVR ..... Tory Western ..... b5weste@yahoo.com  
Alternate ..... Harold "Gene" Garner.. garnerag@yahoo.com

#### VALLEY CREEK

NVR .....  
Alternate .....

### 2012 ELECTED NEIGHBORHOOD VOTING REPRESENTATIVES

## Safety Advisory Committee Updates

**NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH**  
*Have you noticed the Neighborhood Watch tab on the homepage of our Eagle Springs' Website?*

Check it out! This is the official Neighborhood Watch source for information in our community. Please note that you will need to be logged in as a registered user to fully access this information.

### COMMITTEE GOALS FOR 2012

We will be setting our goals and what we would like to accomplish for the New Year during our upcoming January 26th meeting. ALL RESIDENTS ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE. It is the committee's goal to do our best to meet the needs of Eagle Springs' residents, but we cannot accomplish that without YOUR help! Please mark your calendar and plan to attend!

SAC meets in the Clubhouse from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. on the 4th Thursday of the month. Our Constable Patrol Supervisor is in attendance to go over current crime trends and answer any resident's questions or concerns. Note: SAC does NOT meet in November & December due to the holidays, however please feel free to email any questions or concerns to us at: [SAC@SafetyAdvisoryCommittee.com](mailto:SAC@SafetyAdvisoryCommittee.com)

## HAVE YOU HEARD? Eagle Springs is Goin' Green!

We're already on the right track; we are a community that recycles our trash and have been doing so for a while now thanks to our M.U.D.'s, but in 2012 we are committed to working at becoming a much "greener" community through education and our Recycling Events. Watch for an article each month on a different topic, both in our newsletter and on our website. Do you have a special interest or expertise in something that could help us in becoming a greener community? Or is there a particular "green" topic you'd like us to report on? *Please share! We'd love to hear from you!*

To start off the New Year Eagle Springs has partnered with CompuCycle and will be holding an Electronic Recycling Event on January 21st. This is the perfect time to get rid of all your old stuff as you welcome all the new items received as gifts during the holidays!

**COMPUCYCLE IS AN R2 CERTIFIED COMPANY THAT OFFERS FREE RESIDENTIAL ELECTRONIC RECYCLING.**

*All data is destroyed responsibly, securely & safely!*

### ITEMS ACCEPTED FOR RESPONSIBLE E-CYCLING ARE:

- PC's & Servers
- Switches
- Monitors & Laptops
- Memory Chips
- Printers & Copiers
- Projectors
- Keyboards & Mice
- Game Consoles
- Small Kitchen Appliances
- Hubs & Routers
- Fax Machines,
- Rechargeable Batteries
- Cameras, Cords & Cables
- Hard Drives, Tape Drives
- PDA's
- Telephones & Cell Phones



**DROP OFF YOUR RETIRED ELECTRONICS ...  
YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE TO GET OUT OF YOUR CAR!**

Saturday - January 21, 2012  
12 Noon to 4:00 p.m.  
Eagle Springs Sports Complex Parking Lot  
17931 Eagle Springs Pkwy.

*For Questions: Help@InsideEagleSprings.com*

Not Available Online

## Clint Sells Eagle Springs

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## From the Board of Directors 2012 ASSESSMENTS

2012 Assessment Statements have been mailed and should have been received by all homeowners in November. Assessments are billed annually, are due on January 1st, and become delinquent on January 31, 2012. Your statement includes two payment options. You may mail your payment in using the payment coupon provided with your statement or you may pay your Assessments online from the Eagle Springs website. Look for the tab to pay online under Homeowner Association.

Assessments did not increase for 2012; they have remained the same as in 2010 and 2011 - \$825. The 2012 Operating Budget is posted online and available to view at: [www.INSIDEEAGLESprings.com](http://www.INSIDEEAGLESprings.com) under the Documents & Forms tab. If you have any questions or have not received your statement, please contact the management company, Crest Management at: 281-579-0761.

## ATTENTION ALL LADIES!

Lake Houston Ladies Club (formerly Atascocita Hi Neighbor) is a social club that extends a warm "hello" to all area ladies, especially newcomers to the area. If you have moved to the Atascocita area and do not know many people, Lake Houston Ladies Club offers a chance to make new friends and keep you posted on "happenings" around the area. Meetings are held the third Tuesday of each month, September through May at Walden Country Club, 18100 Walden Forest Dr., Humble, TX 77346.

We have a program followed by lunch every month. In addition, there are several interest groups, such as Bridge, Lunch 'N Look Movie Group, Reader's Choice, Bus Trips, an Annual Mystery Trip, a Kentucky Derby party and a Wine & Cheese party. For more information, please contact Carol Dandeneau at: 832-671-4475.



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# Don't Know What To Do with All Those Holiday Cards?

*Did you know over 2.5 billion Christmas cards are sent each year, most of which get tossed at the end of the season? Here are a few ideas on how you can reuse and recycle them!*

Any relatively plain holiday card can actually be recycled as long as it doesn't contain one of those music inserts, a plastic piece or layer or anything metallic. If it's just plain paper, it can be included along with other paper in your curbside pickup. Most cards fall into this category, so even if you end up tossing the other ones, it will at least be a smaller volume.

*Collages, Art Supplies, Post Cards, Gift Tags, Bookmarks, Picture Frames Who Knew?*

There are lots of creative projects you or your kids can do with used holiday cards. They can be used for craft projects, and the chilly months following Christmas and New Years are the perfect time to stay indoors doing creative or artistic activities. Many holiday cards have all sorts of non-holiday related images and pictures that can be fun for kids to collage with as well.

If your kids aren't into collaging (or you don't have children around), you can pass them on to someone who does or to a school or other group that may welcome them to use. Check with local teachers or others who work with children, as they are usually open to receiving supplies for art projects. And don't forget about friends or neighbors who homeschool their children!

Cards also make great bookmarks or gift tags for packages or makeshift frames for pictures on the fridge or bulletin board. Or if you remove the back of the card, it can be used again as a postcard.

"One teacher asks for donated holiday cards and uses them in her first grade classroom. She keeps the image and puts the written on portion in the recycle bin. Her students use them to make cards for family members, friends and pen pals. They even use them to decorate the class bulletin board. She says it's her own little way of helping to save trees and making the next generation mindful of the many ways to recycle our resources."

*Do you have a way to recycle something you'd like to share? We'd love to hear about it! Send your ideas to: [ESNewsletter@InsideEagleSprings.com](mailto:ESNewsletter@InsideEagleSprings.com)*

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## Yoga for Weight Loss?

We've all heard the formula for weight loss. Just "burn more calories than you take in." But if weight loss is so simple, how come so many of us have a hard time with it? If we all know what to do, how come we're not doing it? There are many factors to weight loss, and there's a big gap between knowledge and action. It's a lot more than calories in, calories out. In between the "I know what I should be doing," and "how come I'm not doing that?" is a pause (and sometimes frustration). This 'pause' is where yoga can help.

Being aware of your actions - what you're eating, when you're eating it and why, are keys to weight loss success. Tuning in to your inner voice and actually hearing your body's signals is difficult. Diets fail a great deal of the time. What if you were able to smooth out your brain waves, so that you could notice the moment of choice? Yoga for weight loss? Maybe you've thought in the

past that only heavy-duty cardio would do the trick, and the pounds would magically melt away. But if you are successful at this heavy-duty huffing and puffing, how come the pounds come back, and the change isn't permanent? It may surprise you to know that a recent study at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle found that an ongoing yoga practice correlates nicely with a healthy weight - and not only because of the calorie burn. (Excerpts from Natural Health, "The New Weight-Loss Math," by Hillari Dowdle). Yoga practitioners were found to be "more aware of what they were eating and better able to stop when they were full," characteristics that the study attributes to mindfulness.

In yoga, postures are practiced slowly, which is counter-intuitive to what the mind wants. We want to burn calories, and lose weight this instant, so we think we have to move fast. But, by practicing the postures



*(Continued on Page 13)*

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## Yoga for Weight Loss? - (Continued from Page 12)

slowly, we allow our minds to catch up with our bodies. We use the breath to actually feel what our muscles are doing. And this introspection, this reflection, will bring about an awareness. An awareness of choice. "Smoothing out the brain waves and calming down the nervous system give you an opportunity to notice the moment of choice," explains Ashley Turner, M.A. "You get to ask yourself, 'Do I really want to eat more?' Most of us never even encounter that moment," she adds.

Yoga can help you develop that awareness. And, it can also help you remove toxins from your body. New studies indicate that toxins in the body suppress thyroid function, slowing metabolism. "Scientists now believe that the obesity epidemic is going hand in hand with an increase in environmental toxins," says Gaetano Morello, N.D. from British Columbia. And fasting only slows your metabolism and causes more toxins to be released from your fat stores. Yoga can help remove these toxins.

You will get more benefits from yoga than you could ever imagine. And over time, it gets easier and more fun. No, it will not be a quick "fix" overnight. But what if you could develop the awareness to be more mindful of what you were eating, and better able to stop when you were full? These are all characteristics of mindfulness, which is practiced in every yoga class.

*Submitted by Melinda Jennings*

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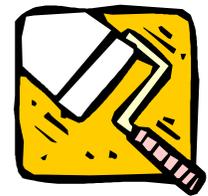
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### IT'S OKAY TO SKIP YOUR WORKOUT, IN SOME CASES

Although exercise should be a part of your daily routine, it's important to know when your body needs a break, according to an expert at Baylor College of Medicine. It's not ideal to work out when you're sick because you're stressing your system out, said Dr. David Green, assistant professor of orthopedic surgery at BCM.

The same thing is true after a recent surgery; your body is trying to recover from the surgery. If you still want to stay active, consider using simple things such as arm bands for gentle exercises, but stay away from heavy aerobic exercises, he said. If you're experiencing some joint or muscle pain, it's your body's way of telling you that you're overdoing it, so you should back off. Try using a heating pad or taking anti-inflammatory medication to help with the pain, said Green.

In general, be sure to have some type of snack about an hour before a workout; do not try to exercise on an empty stomach. If you're over the age of 40 and just starting heavy exercise for the first time, be sure to consult with your physician first. Also consult with a physician if you've had any respiratory, cardiac or joint issues in the past. Look out for hidden calories in holiday drinks.

While many people think twice before taking a second serving of a delicious holiday dessert, they may not do the same when it comes to that holiday beverage. But liquid calories can quickly add up, said a nutrition expert at Baylor College of Medicine.

### SOME TIPS TO REMEMBER INCLUDE:

- Combine alcohol with a diet mixer or low-calorie tonic
- Remember to pace yourself and alternate alcoholic beverages with a glass of water or club soda with lime
- When it comes to popular cocoa and coffee drinks, choose non-fat milk, skip the whipped cream
- Pay attention to portions; different beverages are served in different size glasses and cups so be aware of what you are drinking and how many servings you consume at one time. Remember that after drinking alcohol, the desire for salty foods is also enhanced, said Reeves.

### HECTIC HOLIDAYS CAN RAISE SPIRITS OF A CHRONICALLY ILL CHILD

The typical craziness of the holiday season can offer an emotional boost for a chronically ill child. The holidays usually are very hectic, but the benefit of seeing family and friends outweighs the hassles of travel and preparation, said Dr. Ernest Frugé, associate professor of pediatrics at Baylor College of Medicine and director of psychosocial programs at Texas Children's Cancer Center.

It's no different for a child in a chronic illness. Planning ahead is the key to travel success, whether it is allowing for extra breaks on a long road trip or reminding older relatives about childproofing needs. Parents should always consult with their child's physician before the trip, pack all medications in their original prescription containers and bring along a copy of appropriate medical information.

Involving the child in the planning and preparations for trips and gatherings reinforces the importance of reconnecting with family and friends, said Frugé. Keeping children away from the usual holiday traditions because they have been ill would separate them from what is a normal experience for the family, he said.

### GET THROUGH MENOPAUSE BY REEVALUATING YOUR HEALTH CARE NEEDS

Menopause is called "the change" for a reason. As hormone levels begin to change, so do health concerns, such as osteoporosis, said experts at Baylor College of Medicine. Decreasing estrogen levels can affect bone mass, making a woman more susceptible to osteoporosis, said Dr. Elizabeth Nelson, associate professor of medicine and director of the Women's Center for Comprehensive Care at BCM. Osteoporosis is a condition that can develop if bone is not replaced as quickly as it is worn away, leaving behind porous or weak bones.

Many factors can affect this condition such as heredity, age and nutritional intake. Modify your risk factors by limiting alcohol intake and not smoking, which can increase bone loss by 10 percent. Exercising three times a week and increasing calcium and vitamin D intake can also improve bone health. However, since each woman's health care needs differ as they enter menopause, it is important to talk to a doctor to be sure what course of action will be the most beneficial. Screening for osteoporosis should begin at age 65, but many times women will have a screening done at age 50 to use a baseline for future tests.



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