

Succeed as an Effective HOA Leader

Conference & Expo Will Teach Best Practices to Help You Become the Best Volunteer Community Leader You Can Be

Community association volunteer leaders almost without exception look to preserve the value of their residents' homes and maintain the quality of life their homeowners have come to expect through their homeowner association (HOA) or similar community governing body. But we don't always have the requisite knowledge and experience to do the best job possible. The school of hard knocks, trial-and-error, may get us there eventually, but it can be a long and arduous journey.

Join us at Austin Community Associations Institute's (CAI) 2013 Conference & Expo on Friday, September 27th, at the University of Texas Alumni Center for an afternoon learning best practices. Hear what others have discovered is working to help build better neighborhoods. And admission is free!

"Hear industry leaders speak on a range of topics from 'The 7 Deadly Sins of New Board Members' to 'Where Will The Water Come From?' to 'It's Not My Problem – Right?', just to name three of the twelve lectures to choose from in this year's Conference Lecture Series" notes Katie Uhler, Chair of CAI Austin's Conference & Expo.

Visit with more than 65 exhibitors - experts delivering solutions to the problems keeping you and your board awake at night. Energize your HOA board and your residents with new, imaginative ideas. Enhance your community's spirit, gain recognition for your community as one of the best places to live in Central Texas, attract new residents. Come celebrate "what's good" about common interest community living.



Full details on our website at <http://www.caiaustinevents.org/2013conf&expo>.

With more than 32,000 members dedicated to building better communities, Community Associations Institute (CAI) works in partnership with 60 domestic chapters, a chapter in South Africa and housing leaders in a number of other countries, including Australia, Canada, the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom. Texas chapters include Austin, Dallas/Ft. Worth, Houston and San Antonio. CAI provides information, education and resources to community associations and the professionals who support them. For information on the Austin Chapter, visit our website at www.caiaustin.org, or call 512-858-5228. Or visit CAI's National website at www.caionline.org, or call 888-224-4321 for more information.

WELCOME

A Newsletter for Meridian residents

The Monitor is a monthly newsletter mailed to all Meridian residents. Each newsletter is filled with valuable information about the community, local area activities, school information and more.

If you are involved with a school group, play group, scouts, sports activity, social group, etc. and would like to submit an article for the newsletter you can do so online at www.PEELinc.com or you can email it meridian@peelinc.com. Personal news for the Stork Report, Teenage Job Seekers, special celebrations, birthday announcements and military service are also welcome.

Our goal is to keep you informed!

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PUBLISHER

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It Really is a Small World After All

By Vicki Milana

This past school year has been an eventful one for twenty-two Houston area Ayusa families. In Aug. 2012, these families opened their hearts and their homes to foreign exchange students from around the world. During the 2012-13 school year, we had eleven countries represented in our area, some of the countries included were Germany, Brazil, Italy, Lebanon, China, Japan and Tunisia. The Ayusa foreign exchange student program is a great way to enrich not only the lives of your family members, but that of the folks in your community and the student themselves. "Both my wife and I have been hosting for the past five years and have enjoyed every minute of it!" says Theodore Odom of Pearland, Texas. "My wife and I have no children, so we are able to bring the students in for the full year and be their Host Parents. We believe it's a way of giving back."

"We welcome host families of all shapes and sizes – families with young children, families with no children, empty nesters whose children have left home, single parents and non-traditional families," says Connie Coutu, Regional Manager of Ayusa, a 501(c)(3) not for profit organization. "The key requirements for a host family are to provide a safe and nurturing home environment, genuinely love children, and have a desire to learn more about a different culture."

"Our students really love giving back to the community", says Heather Wells, the Houston area Senior Regional Director. "One of our students, Nesrine Mbarek of Tunisia, participated in over 300 hours of community service. She was actually one of three students who won a trip for her community service and also attended a US Department of State *Teaching English as a Second Language* conference in April for her hard work."

This year, Ayusa is sponsoring over 900 students from 60 different countries in the United States. Volunteer host families are needed in our area to house these students for the 2013-14 school year. The families need only provide foreign exchange students a nurturing environment, three meals a day and a bedroom (either private or shared with a host sibling of the same gender). Each host family and student is supported by a professionally trained community representative who works with the family and student for the entire program. If you are interested in hosting an exchange student, please visit the Ayusa website at www.ayusa.org and complete the on-line application. You can view the students that are available for placement by clicking on the View Student Profiles on the home page. Help make this a memorable year for both your children and the prospective students. You'll be glad you did!

Nutrition Know-How Helps Prevent 'Freshmen 15'

Brushing up on nutrition basics can help college-bound freshmen avoid extra pounds while pursuing their higher education.

College students are often under stress and respond by eating, said Dr. Karen Cullen, a behavioral nutrition researcher at the USDA/ARS

Children's Nutrition Research Center at Baylor College of Medicine. What's more, a smorgasbord of foods is available almost around the clock.

To help freshmen get a healthy start on the academic year, Cullen offers these tips:

- Deal with stress in a positive manner, like playing or listening to music or exercising.
- Keep fat-calories in check by choosing low-fat cafeteria fare like grilled or baked fish and fruits and vegetables. Limit high-fat and high-sugar treats to once a day.
- Choose beverages wisely. Good daily choices include fat-free milk, a glass or two of fruit juice and plenty of water.
- Keep dorm-room snacks healthy.
- Make time to be physically active every day.
- Don't skip meals, especially breakfast. Meal-skippers rarely reduce their actual caloric tally, and often shortchange themselves nutritionally.

If weight gain begins to exceed three to five pounds, consider starting a food diary and physical activity diary to help identify problems. Many campus health centers have nutrition professionals who can help students struggling with weight problems, Cullen noted.



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TENNIS TIPS

By USPTA/PTR Master Professional
Fernando Velasco



How To Execute The Two-Handed High Backhand Volley Approach Shot

In previous newsletters, I offered tips on how to hit a forehand groundstroke, a two-handed backhand, one-handed backhand, forehand volley, the two handed backhand volley, the serve, the forehand half-volley, the one-handed backhand volley, the overhead “smash”, the forehand service return, the backhand service return, and the forehand high volley approach shot.

In this issue, I will offer you instructions on how to execute the two-handed backhand high approach shot. This shot is used when a player is caught in “no-person’s land” (around the service line area) and receives a high ball to volley. The important part of this shot is to be able to hit a deep volley to the feet of the opponents and/or to hit a deep volley close to the baseline, so the opponent is put in a defensive mode and hits a softer ball so the player can now move closer to the net for the “killer or placement volley”. In the illustrations, Linda Henson, a player at the Grey Rock Tennis Club, shows the proper technique to execute this stroke.

Step 1: The Ready Position and Split Step: When Linda realizes that she is caught in “no-person’s land”, she takes the split step by bending the knees and staying on her toes. Her racket is in the volley position and her feet are angled toward the path of the incoming ball.

Step 2: The Back Swing: Once Linda realizes that the ball has been directed to her backhand, she will turn her upper body and will take the racket slightly back. Notice that the left hand next to the right

hand to allow her to keep her center of gravity in the center. She has loaded her weight on her left foot and will be ready to step forward to meet the ball. She will make a slight change toward the continental grip on both hands.

Step 3: The Point of Contact: Linda now is ready to step into the ball. She has kept her eye on the ball and her center of gravity now is shifted toward the point of contact. Notice the right toe pointing to the ball meeting the racket. The face of the racket is open to allow her to hit behind the ball and allow maximum net height and allow her to hit the ball deep. The control of the ball will be made with the left hand, which is holding the racket tighter. The right hand is more relaxed and helps keep the face of the racket in a 45 degree angle at the point of contact.

Step 4: The Follow Through: Once Linda has made contact with the ball, she finishes the follow through with her wrist laid back. Her right arm is next to her body and her eyes have shifted toward her target.

Step 5: The Move for the Kill Volley: As the ball is headed toward her opponent and Linda realizes that her shot is deep, now she moves close to the net for the put away volley. If her shot was not deep, Linda will decide to stay close to the service line to protect the lob over her head. By the look in her eyes and her smile, she is ready to go for the “kill volley”.

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BE LICE FREE FOR BACK TO SCHOOL

Back-to-school means lots of new things: new clothes, new backpacks and new supplies. It's a time to navigate a new class schedule and meet new teachers. Yet, it needn't be a time to worry about head lice. We often hear about lice during back-to-school season because kids return to a tighter environment after a summer of being outdoors. Lice are transmitted via direct head-to-head contact 95% of the time. The ideal scenario for lice transmission is when kids talk, hug or sit with heads touching. Keep in mind that lice don't jump or fly. They also die relatively quickly (24-36 hours) if they're not directly on your scalp. Lice are easier to avoid and get rid of than you might imagine. Since lice do not carry or spread disease, there is no formal exclusion policy in Texas schools. Head lice doesn't mean a child is dirty or should be shunned. Mostly, lice are inconvenient due to the time necessary to eliminate them. Here are some easy tips to stay lice-free this school year:

1. Each child should have his/her own set of brushes and combs. Store them in separate drawers or baskets at home. Label them accordingly and make sure each child knows whose is whose and keep your own separate.

2. Use lice deterrent spray every day. There are a few varieties of combination detangler/lice repellent sprays on the market. These sprays contain scents that lice find offensive, such as mint or tea tree oil. When used daily, these scents repel a louse and cause it to nest elsewhere (in another scalp). It can be most effective when applied every day, including before

sleepovers, play dates and school.

3. This is a biggie: teach your kids to avoid direct head-to-head contact when playing with friends. Show your little ones a photo of children using the iPad or reading books in very close proximity. Help them learn how to play with other kids elbow-to-elbow, not head-to-head!

4. If school reports a lice outbreak – though they are not required to – or you suspect your child has lice, do not panic! Instead, make sure you have a good quality nit comb (normal combs do not trap lice or nits). Most parents say that it is hard to see evidence of lice. Use the comb as your eyes via daily comb-outs. Catching lice early can often prevent a household contraction. If you're not sure how to do a proper comb-out, look online where many 'how to' videos exist.

5. Finally remember the rule of "once a week, take a peek." While your kids are de-compressing after a long day of learning, run your nit comb through their hair at the base of their necks and behind their ears. Nits can be many colors from a cream color to amber. They glisten in dry hair and are the shape of a sesame seed that clings to one side of the hair shaft, often close to the scalp.

If you think you see lice and want to outsource removal, there are several options who will come to your home for treatment. At the end of the (school) day, you'll be happy to have these tips in your back pocket.



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- Kids Stuff -



You're very excited — your mom and dad promised to take you on a fun camping trip this year. Or maybe your scout group is gearing up for an awesome canoe trip. Enjoying the beauty and nature of the woods is fun — if you are careful. Here are some tips to keep you safe.

PACKING BASICS

Before you leave, pack these few important things to make your trip more comfortable and safe:

- map of the area
- compass or GPS (learn how to use it beforehand)
- cell phone (though you can't be sure it will work in remote areas)
- whistle
- bottled water and food
- sleeping bag
- flashlight with extra batteries
- sunscreen and sunglasses
- waterproof matches (for an adult to bring)
- first-aid kit with gauze pads, adhesive bandages, tape, tweezers, and antiseptic
- waterproof tent (set it up beforehand to practice)
- warm clothing, clean socks, and rain gear

INTO THE WOODS

Staying safe in the woods means using common sense. That means being aware of your surroundings and always camping with an adult. Never go into the woods by yourself. Some things you need to be careful of while you're camping are insects, poison ivy, extreme hot or cold temperatures, rain or snow, and areas where you could trip or fall.

BUGS

If insects bug you, ask an adult to set up camp away from the water and build a small fire. The water attracts bugs, and the smoke from the fire will keep most of the bugs away. Another thing you can do is to remember to keep the tent door zipped at all times, even if you're just going in or out for a minute. Also, turn off your flashlight

before you enter your tent because insects such as moths are attracted to the light and will follow you.

Always check for ticks at the end of the day when you've been in the woods. Ticks can carry disease and germs. Some ticks are tiny, like the size of the head of a pin! You'll want an adult to help you inspect your body for ticks. Check behind your knees and ears, under your arms, and in your groin — that's where your legs meet your abdomen, or belly area. If you're camping with a pet, have an adult check your pet for ticks, too — dogs and cats can pick up ticks in their fur even more easily than humans. If you do find a tick, it needs to be removed. Get an adult to help you.

POISON IVY

Poison ivy is a plant that can cause an itchy skin rash in some people. Its leaves grow in groups of three, but the plant can still be hard to spot. If you accidentally touch poison ivy, wash the area with soap and water as soon as possible. The oil from the poison ivy plant can spread on clothes or even your dog. To try to prevent a poison ivy rash, there are products you can apply to your skin before going into the woods. Stores that sell outdoor equipment and sporting goods may carry them.

STAYING SAFE OUTDOORS

Your Campsite

Roasting marshmallows and singing songs by an open fire are favorite camping activities. Adults, not kids, should start campfires. Adults also need to watch the fires and make sure they are out when you're done. Never leave a fire without anyone to watch it. Don't forget to put out your fire by dumping water or shoveling dirt on it when you sleep or leave your campsite. Feel the ground around the area where the fire was to make sure it isn't warm.

Your Food and Water

When you're exploring outdoors, eat or drink something only if an adult says it is

safe. Even if streams or lakes look crystal clear, they could contain germs and the water may not be safe to drink. Bring bottled water to drink. Likewise, never eat wild berries. Some are poisonous and it may be tough to know which are safe. Good snacks for the outdoors include fruit, trail mix, crackers, granola bars, bread, and peanut butter.

Your Clothing

Wearing layers is a good idea when you're outdoors. That way, you can take off a layer or two if you get too warm. Wear comfortable boots when hiking so your ankles are supported and you don't get blisters. Keep your arms and legs covered while hiking to avoid ticks and insect bites and wear knee-high boots and long pants when you are in an area with snakes. Make sure to take rain gear, such as ponchos and waterproof jackets, to keep you dry if an unexpected shower occurs.

Watch Out for Wildlife

Although animals are cute to look at, wild animals are best enjoyed from far away. Don't go near or try to feed a strange animal. It's better to enjoy these animals at the zoo, in books, or on the Internet. To keep animals such as bears or wolves away from your campsite, keep it clean. Food and anything else an animal might smell must be packed away. In fact some campers put all their food, even candy bars, in a bag (called a "Bear Bag") and hang it from a tree branch away from the campsite. If they can smell it, the animals will be led away from where the campers are.

What if You Get Lost?

Stick with your group when you're in the woods. Carry a whistle and blow it if you get separated from the group. If you have a cell phone and it's working, use it to make contact with your group. If you do get lost, wait in a safe, sheltered place for an adult to find you. The sooner you're found, the sooner you can go back to having fun in the great outdoors!

Reviewed by: Steven Dowshen, MD Date reviewed: June 2011

This information was provided by KidsHealth, one of the largest resources online for medically reviewed health information written for parents, kids, and teens. For more articles like this one, visit www.KidsHealth.org or www.TeensHealth.org. ©1995-2006. The Nemours Foundation

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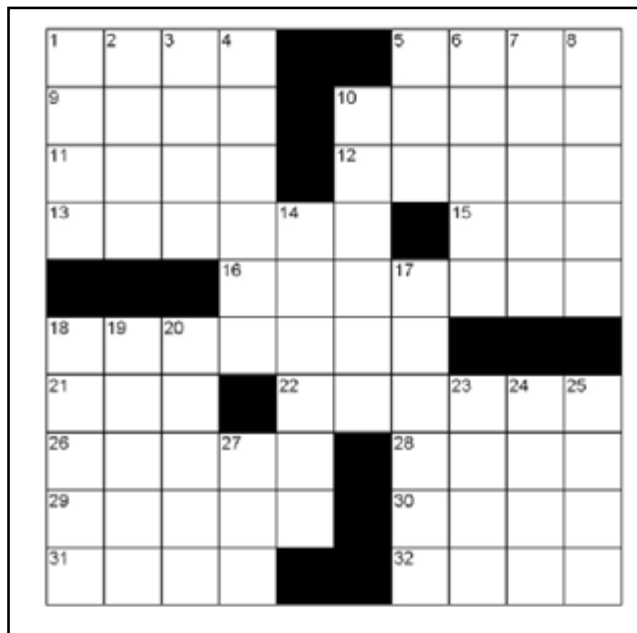


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9. Not there
10. Ask for legally
11. Smooth
12. Island nation
13. Fertilized cell
15. Ex-serviceman
16. Rovers
18. Covered in coarse hair
21. Single
22. Sacred songs
26. Scrimmage
28. Prophet who built the arc
29. Remove
30. Canal
31. Eye infection
32. Tear

DOWN

1. Virtuoso
2. Airy
3. "Ribbit" animal
4. Singing voices
5. Wing
6. Innocent
7. Meat curing ingredient
8. Gives off
10. Sharks
14. Man's wig
17. Less nice
18. Houses
19. Sluggish
20. Electrical device
23. Tenet
24. Water pipe
25. Cote
27. East southeast

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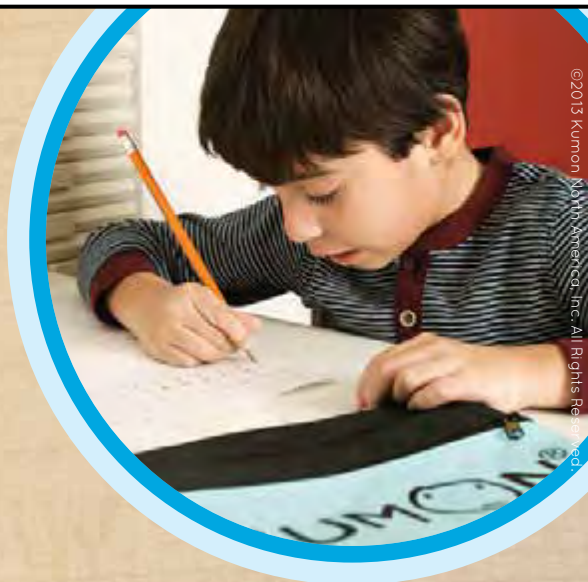
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	TOTAL	AVERAGE					TOTAL	
	Homes Sold	Square Feet	Price / Sq. Foot	Sold Price \$K	Year Built	Days On Market	Available	Pending Sale
<2500	7	2,136	\$ 142	\$ 303	2007	50	0	1
2500-2999	9	2,767	\$ 131	\$ 361	2008	26	2	3
3000-3499	8	3,270	\$ 120	\$ 393	2007	22	5	2
3500-3999	6	3,747	\$ 134	\$ 502	2010	61	6	1
4000-4500	7	4,327	\$ 138	\$ 599	2009	71	0	1
>4500	1	4,685	\$ 148	\$ 695	2011	5	0	1
Meridian Total	38	3,249	\$ 133	\$ 432	2008	43	13	9
% Change Mo/Mo	3%	0%	1%	1%	0%	-17%	86%	50%

Market Report data was obtained from the Austin-Multiple Listing Service (MLS) on 6/06/2013. Texas License # 515586.

In some cases new construction and FSBO homes are not included in the MLS data and therefore are not represented. Data is deemed accurate but not guaranteed.