

DROWNING IS FAST AND SILENT

KEEP KIDS IN ARM'S REACH

It's May. And in Texas, May means backyard barbeques, pool parties and summer just around the corner. May also means National Water Safety Month and an opportunity to tell parents that drowning is the number 1 cause of accidental death for children under 5, yet it is PREVENTABLE! Last year, more than 82 Texas children lost their lives to a fatal drowning while many more survived a non-fatal drowning incident.

I am the Executive Director of Colin's Hope, a Texas water safety and drowning prevention nonprofit organization. 6 years ago, when my daughter Ella was 3, I didn't worry about drowning. She took swim lessons. We loved the pool, the lake and the beach. We spent long hot summer days keeping cool in the water. I worried about bike accidents and car accidents and falls from the monkey bars. Then, 4 year old Colin Holst drowned in a busy public pool with lifeguards on duty and family and friends close by. My daughter went to preschool with Colin. This was a wake up call that drowning could happen to my family too but I knew nothing about water safety. Thankfully, Colin's family turned their tragedy into triumph and formed Colin's Hope to raise water safety awareness to prevent children from drowning. Colin's Hope has accomplished so much already but the work is far from being done because children are still drowning quickly and silently in bath tubs, pools, open water, toilets and even buckets..

Water is NOT safe. Water will never be completely safe BUT there are simple things you can do and small behavior changes you can make that can help your family to be safer around water. Read on and invest a few minutes of your time. Think about it--we take 20 seconds every time we get in the car to buckle our babies into car seats to keep them safer. We spend countless minutes reminding our kid to put a helmet on before they pedal off to keep them safer on bikes and scooters. We do these small behaviors over and over

because we know they can help prevent tragedies. Why wouldn't you also add layers of protection to prevent a water related accident?

Below are 10 simple things you can do NOW that will add water safety tools to your parenting toolbox (and to your pool bag) and help prevent your children from drowning.

- Take and share the Colin's Hope water safety quiz (<http://www.colinshope.org/quiz>), it could save a life!
- Talk to your kids about water safety and tell them to NEVER get in water without an adult Water Guardian (that's YOU or another adult).
- Understand that DROWNING is FAST and SILENT.
- Be a Water Guardian. Keep Kids in Arm's Reach when near, in and around water.
- Enroll in formal swim lessons and learn to swim.
- Ensure that your pool and your neighbors pools are fenced and have self latching/ locking gates.
- Weak and non-swimmers should wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved and properly fitted life jacket NOT water wings or floaties.
- Teach kids to stay away from pool drains to avoid entrapment.
- Learn CPR
- Visit www.colinshope.org and learn more water safety tips, volunteer or donate.

Please share this life saving water safety information with your friends and family as we prepare for another long, hot Texas summer. Together, we can achieve the vision of a world where children do not drown!

In the words of Colin Holst--Have the Best Day Ever!

*Alissa Magrum
Mom, Colin's Hope Executive Director,
Lover of Water, Water Safety Advocate*

THE MONITOR

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!

ADVERTISING INFO

Please support the advertisers that make The Monitor possible. If you would like to support the newsletter by advertising, please contact our sales office at 512-263-9181 or advertising@PEELinc.com. The advertising deadline is the 9th of the month prior to the issue.

NEWSLETTER INFO

PUBLISHER

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Teenage Job Seekers

Name	Age	Baby Sit	Pet Sit	House Sit	Yard Work	Phone
Altai, Rand.....	19.....	•.....	•.....	•.....		394-9690
Krueger, Ana	13.....	•.....	•.....			907-522-0052

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Attention Teenagers

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Go Mitch Go Announces New Keep Fighting Run Festival 10k

Join the Go Mitch Go Foundation in the fight against childhood blood cancer by participating in the first annual Keep Fighting Run Festival 10k presented by Storm Guard of Austin, Saturday, May 3. All proceeds from the festival will go to the Go Mitch Go Foundation to support lifesaving cancer research.

Formally known as the Fighting Blood Cancers 5k, the Keep Fighting Run Festival is one of four annual events in Austin to offer a 10k distance race. The race will take place at John Gupton Stadium in Cedar Park, Texas, at 7 a.m. on Saturday, May 3, and will also feature a 5k and Kids K, and offer registration for both teams and individual runners.

Unlike the Fighting Blood Cancers 5k, which took place along the trail at Decker Lake, the Keep Fighting Run Festival will take place on a predominantly paved route making races accessible to runners of all ages and experience levels. The flat course also promises athletes the opportunity to set new personal records.

Once registered, all runners have the opportunity to fundraise for Go Mitch Go through a personal fundraising page provided by the foundation. All funds raised via these fundraising portals will support cancer research at the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, the MIT David H. Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research and other partner organizations.

The Keep Fighting Run Festival is a USA Track and Field sanctioned event and will count toward all national runner rankings. Awards will be given for male and female overall winners, as well as male and female winners of first, second and third place in each age bracket. Corporate teams competing against each other will also be recognized for most money raised and most runners on a team. To learn more about the Go Mitch Go Foundation, visit www.gomitchgo.com. Find more information about the Keep Fighting Run Festival and register at www.gomitchgo.com/keep-fighting-run-festival.

ABOUT GO MITCH GO

The Go Mitch Go Foundation was founded in 2009 to honor the legacy of Mitchell Graham Whitaker, who lost his two-year battle with Acute Lymphocytic Leukemia at the age of 10 in 2007. Mitchell's last words, "Keep fighting," have become ingrained in the foundation which funds lifesaving cancer research by supporting endurance athletes as they train. Committed to finding a cure for childhood blood cancers, raising awareness and assisting families battling cancer, Go Mitch Go has raised almost \$900,000 since

2007 to fund cancer research through the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society and other partner organizations.



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THE MONITOR

Attention: SW Austin Business Owners, Marketing & Sales Professionals **WE ARE LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD... PROFESSIONALS!**

Submitted by Melinda McKenna

Quick Quiz:

Who do you know ... that is reliable and trustworthy? A professional (residential, commercial, health and beauty, financial services, trades, or event planning) who places their customer's needs first?

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If you answered "Yes", tell them BNI Referral Partners looking for more full-time, trustworthy, experienced professionals to join our growing network today! BNI Referral Partners is a non-competitive professional referral organization that admits one high quality individual or company per professional category to share ideas, contacts and most importantly referrals.

Are you curious? Do you want to learn how to build your business by referral? Visit us this week! We meet each Wednesday morning, and there is no obligation to join.

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PROPERTY TAX SEASON IS HERE

The history of property taxes dates back at least as far as ancient Egypt. Thousands of years later, property taxes were enacted in Texas in order to support the new republic. The property tax system that Texans know today is vastly different from what it was even a few decades ago. The modern Texas Property Tax Code is full of complex details, most of which have little bearing on the average homeowner. However, there are a few key details that every property owner should know.

The Travis Central Appraisal District will be sending out Notices of Appraised Value in mid to late April. This notice contains important information worthy of review. Perhaps most significant is the appraised property's value for 2014. This figure is the appraisal district's opinion of property value as of January 1, 2014.

The appraisal district arrives at the appraised value using mass appraisal techniques, which is why it is unlikely that you have ever seen an employee of the district physically inspecting your house. These mass appraisal techniques, while widely accepted, often result in values that do not represent true market value, or values that are higher than those of similar properties. Homeowners can

successfully protest and lower their appraised values in either of the aforementioned scenarios.

Property owners should be keenly aware of the protest deadline. This deadline is generally May 31, but can vary based on the timing of weekends and the date that the appraisal district sends out notices. The protest deadline should be clearly stated within the Noticed of Appraised Value. If this deadline is missed, the opportunity to lower your 2014 tax burden is greatly reduced.

One of your most important rights as a taxpayer and landowner is the right to protest your property's appraised value every year. The early Texans that founded our great state would be astonished to learn that today, less than 20% of property owners protest their appraised values. If you fall in the 80% of individuals that do not protest, you owe it to yourself and the fighting spirit of Texas' founding fathers to reevaluate that decision this year when you receive your 2014 Notice of Appraised Value in the mail.

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GOT STATS?

Meridian by Square Ft Range	6 Months Sold History (10/2013-03/2014)						Current Market	
	TOTAL	AVERAGE					TOTAL	
	Homes Sold	Square Feet	Price / Sq. Foot	Sold Price \$K	Year Built	Days On Market	Available	Pending Sale
<2500	1	2,119	\$ 141	\$ 299	2006	49	1	0
2500-2999	3	2,618	\$ 137	\$ 358	2008	26	0	3
3000-3499	6	3,288	\$ 130	\$ 428	2008	35	0	1
3500-3999	5	3,663	\$ 134	\$ 491	2008	107	5	1
4000-4500	4	4,223	\$ 176	\$ 744	2013	52	0	0
>4500	1	4,524	\$ 126	\$ 570	2006	182	0	0
Meridian Total	20	3,472	\$ 142	\$ 492	2009	63	6	5
% Change Mo/Mo	-9%	1%	1%	2%	0%	21%	20%	0%
% Change Yr / Yr	-17%	8%	9%	17%	0%	-6%	-14%	-38%

Market Report data was obtained from the Austin-Multiple Listing Service (MLS) on 04/09/2014. Texas License # 515586.

Some new construction and FSBO homes may not be included. Data is deemed accurate but not guaranteed.



Tara West

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