

MERIDIAN *Community Monitor*

NEWS FOR THE RESIDENTS OF MERIDIAN

Meridian HOA Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Submitted by: Jacquelyn Waldrop, Austin Real Estate Partners & HOA Advisory Board member

The Meridian HOA Advisory committee met on February 17, 2016 to discuss neighborhood business. Among the topics were:

- Lighting of the flagpole at the entrance of the neighborhood
- Crime/Car break-ins and Neighborhood Watch program
- Speed Control in the neighborhood
- Playground improvements
- Landscaping and Common Area improvements
- Pool staffing, furniture and maintenance for this upcoming 2016 swim season

The HOA advisory board consists of residents from each section of the neighborhood, a representative from Stratus-the neighborhood developer, and a representative from Goodwin Management. The HOA advisory boards meets monthly, with few exceptions. If you have a pressing issue you'd like to have discussed, contact Jacquelyn. Waldrop@gmail.com.

Keeping our Neighborhood Safe

Submitted by: Jacquelyn Waldrop, Austin Real Estate Partners, HOA Advisory Board member

One of the most pressing issues for Meridian in recent months is parked car break-ins. Officer Visi, the APD officer zoned to our neighborhood, reminds us to please park cars in the safety of our garages and if that isn't possible, lock your car doors to keep yourself from being a target. If you see any suspicious activity in the neighborhood, dial 911 to report it and then call Officer Visi @ 512-974-4260. Due to the multiple reports of the break ins and suspicious behaviors noted recently in the area, Officer Visi has requested more frequent patrol cars to monitor the neighborhood in the evenings.

HOA at work for YOU

Submitted by: Jacquelyn Waldrop, Austin Real Estate Partners, Meridian HOA Advisory Board

In respect for our national and state flag, the flag pole at the front of the neighborhood is now lit each evening with a solar paneled device. After much discussion and logistical work, we determined that the solar panel solution would be the best bet, allowing us to keep costs down with the added bonus of harvesting our Texas sunshine and putting it to good use.

Also, you may have noticed the re-stripping of our neighborhood crosswalks near the school, the repainting of the Fire Lanes, increased visibility markers at the entrance of the neighborhood and improvements to the playscape and land surrounding the pavilion. These were all things that were brought to the attention of the HOA board and have been done in response to your requests.

Calculating Value of Home Renovations

Submitted by Jacquelyn Waldrop, Austin Real Estate Partners

Home renovation reality shows have inspired many homeowners to consider costly upgrades for their own homes. While many home improvement projects are worthwhile, it's important to know which ones are worth it from an investment standpoint.

Here are a few key considerations to keep in mind when you're deciding on a renovation project:

Value Added (or Subtracted) for Future Buyers

Think of your renovation project in terms of what will appeal most to potential buyers, even if you're not considering selling anytime soon. Converting a garage into a living space or eliminating a bedroom or a closet may cause future buyers to cross your home off the list; these spaces are among the most important to potential homeowners.

(Continued on Page 3)

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**Based on 2014 residential home sales through Austin Board of REALTORS.*

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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(Continued from Cover)

Many buyers won't even look at homes that lack the right number of bedrooms, and a garage ranks as one of the most popular amenities in newly built homes.

Project Payoff

Be cautious when undertaking large-scale renovation projects. While smaller DIY touch-ups and proper home staging can yield big dividends for sellers, large projects may not always pay off.

Remodeling magazine's 2016 Cost vs. Value Report showed that replacement projects, like changing a front or garage door, offer serious gains.

Which large projects pack the most punch when it comes to adding value? Two-story additions, master suite upgrades and major kitchen remodels top the list.

Your Neighborhood's Market Conditions

Consider the resale market in your neighborhood before deciding on a renovation project. This is particularly important if you're considering large-scale projects, like a full kitchen renovation or converting an attic space into an extra bedroom.

Every neighborhood has a price threshold of what buyers are willing to pay, so a \$75,000 kitchen remodel may not be worth it in a neighborhood where home values top out at \$200,000.

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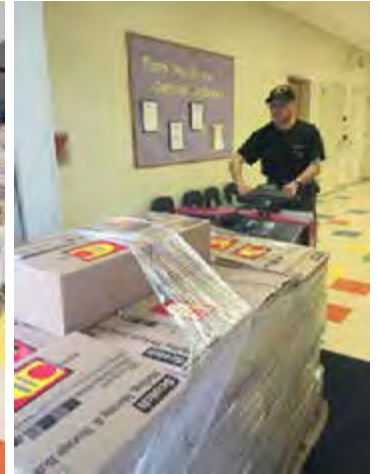
*Submitted by: Jacquelyn Waldrop, Austin Real Estate Partners and
Supply the Teachers Volunteer*



Supply the Teachers is a non-profit 501c3 organization with a mission to bridge the resource gaps for our Austin ISD teachers in their efforts to provide a high-quality learning environment. This past February, corporate sponsor, 3M, donated 80 pallets of supplies, equating to a \$1.4 million in-kind donation, created 6,000 supply care packages - one for every teacher in Austin ISD. And, teachers at Bowie High School, Gorzycki Middle School, and Baldwin Elementary School received their care packages on Friday, February 19th.

But the support didn't stop there. Over 100 University of Texas athletes and countless community volunteers, including a few Meridian residents, packed supply care packages over the span of two weekends. Supply the Teachers founder and board member, Melinda McKenna, of Austin Real Estate Partners and Circle C Ranch resident has been working with Austin ISD as a community volunteer for more than 15 years and saw the overwhelming need for teacher supplies. It was her dream to show the teachers of our community how much they are respected and appreciated in the form of providing much needed supplies for their classrooms. "I am thrilled to provide these classroom supplies for every teacher in our district. I want the teachers to know how much they are loved and respected for the gifts they give to our community's kids every single day. I am a firm believer that happy teachers, equal happy kids, which fosters a high-quality learning environment, something that both teachers and students deserve." Meridian resident and Baldwin parent, Jacquelyn Waldrop, also of Austin Real Estate Partners, has been supporting Supply The Teachers as a volunteer community outreach consultant.

To learn more or if you would like to help, visit SupplyTheTeachers.org to donate, volunteer or become a sponsor.



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Kindergarten Round-up Orientation at Baldwin

Thursday, April 7th from 8am-10am

Dr. Pena, Baldwin's principal, traditionally gives a short welcome message to students and parents at 8:15am and then parents of current Baldwin kindergarteners will be giving tours of the building and answering questions throughout the morning. This is a come and go event.

Prior to the Orientation, please complete your student's enrollment online. The office will be open during this time for you to present your required documentation for enrollment, including proof of address in the form of a utility bill, allowing you to complete the registration process.

Kindergarten Summer Playdates-TBD

Meet and mingle with future Bobcat cubs and parents at our summer playdates. Stay tuned for more details to come. There is traditionally early evening and mid-morning playdates scheduled in both June and July.

Kindergarten Kick-Off Celebration-Saturday, August 20 from 9:30-11am

This is a special playdate where your Bobcat cub will have the opportunity to meet children in his/her class on Baldwin's large playground. Snacks will be provided. Don't miss the celebration and the opportunity to meet new friends and classmates!

Please contact Jacquelyn Waldrop at jwaldrop@austinreps.com / 512-923-3099 with any questions.

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Save the Date

Our biggest spring PTA Event and Silent Auction Fundraiser

Friday Night, April 22nd
@ the Meridian Pavilion

Tickets are now on sale!

Enjoy fun, food and friends and for the first time this year, a live band, at this adult-only event.

The festivities include a fantastic silent auction filled with something for everyone: event tickets, birthday party packages, restaurant gift certificates, hotel accommodations, spa treatments and much, much more.

We are still accepting silent auction items and looking for sponsors. If you would like to see your business featured or to make a donation, contact us: fundraising@baldwinpta.org

Meridian Facebook

facebook.com/Meridian411

Like this page brought to you by Jacquelyn Waldrop & Austin Real Estate Partners and be the first to know about the good news and happenings in our great neighborhood.

Get the scoop on:

- Meridian neighborhood activities
- Baldwin Elementary PTA programs and Spirit nights
- Cool Community updates
- Special offers and freebies from local Circle C/ Meridian area businesses

Save up for Free Funds for Our School!

*Submitted by: Jacquelyn Waldrop, Austin Real Estate Partners,
Baldwin PTA member*

Please continue to collect your Box Tops and Labels for Education for free funds for our school! Go to www.boxtops4education.com and www.labelsforeducation.com for collection sheets. Or, simply snip them and drop them in the blue barrel in the Baldwin lobby. Look for labels on many of your grocery products: Betty Crocker, Campbell's soups, General Mills, Green Giant. Hefty, Pepperidge Farm, Pillsbury, Prego, Yoplait, Ziplock and many, many more.

Facelift for Flooring

Submitted by: Jacquelyn Waldrop, Austin Real Estate Partners

Thinking about giving your floor a facelift? You've got several flooring options, including the following:

Hardwood -- Hardwood is a classic choice that works with any architectural style and can last for more than a century with the right care. Maintenance is a cinch and repairs are simple enough when normal wear occurs or pets leave their mark. That said, keep in mind that wooden floors can be cold and loud if they're not accessorized with rugs.

Carpet -- Carpet, whether natural or synthetic, is one of the more versatile flooring options. Wool carpeting is durable and resists moisture and stains better than synthetic fibers like nylon and acrylic. Easy cleaning and natural insulation properties for both sound and temperature are upsides, but carpet can also turn into a mildew nightmare if water damage occurs.

Cork -- Looking for a more sustainable flooring option? Cork flooring offers a warm look and spongy comfort underfoot, plus the irregular grain hides imperfections. Though it's easy to install, cork flooring can be damaged by pets' claws, heavy furniture and sharp items.

Laminate -- Good quality laminate floors are an economical alternative to hardwood. They resist scratches and discoloration and typically work well in moist environments like bathrooms and kitchens. Unlike true hardwood floors, laminate flooring can't be sanded and refinished though, and it may offer a lower resale value when it's time to sell a home.

Tile -- This versatile flooring option not only lasts a long time and is easy to clean, but it also offers serious design flexibility. Tile's resistance to scratches, stains and moisture is a major plus, but it doesn't offer any insulation properties and installation can be difficult.

Calling Meridian Mamas to Join Circle C Mom's Club

*Submitted by Jacquelyn Waldrop, Austin Real Estate Partners &
Circle C Mom's club member*

Circle C Mom's is a group of neighborhood moms that coordinate events for children, moms and families. Children's events include weekly age-specific playdates, holiday parties and field trips. Weekly moms' events are usually hosted at members' homes or nearby restaurants and include activities such as bunko nights, book club, craft night, movie nights, recipe/supper club, ladies-only lunches and much, much more! These activities are a great opportunity for moms to get out and enjoy a little "adult" time and meet new friends.

If you're interested in joining, please contact Kimberly De LaGarza @ delagarzakim@yahoo.com.

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APRIL GARDENING TIPS

Offered by WeekendGardener.Net

Use this list to help you figure out what gardening tasks you want to accomplish this month.

Planning

When purchasing bedding annuals this spring, choose properly grown plants with good color. Buy plants with well-developed root systems that are vigorous, but not too large for their pots. Plants that bloom in the pack are often root bound and can be set back for several weeks after being transplanted. Plants not yet in bloom will actually bloom sooner, be better established and grow faster.

For hot-weather color, select one of the following: Gloriosa Daisy, Madagascar Periwinkle, Ornamental Peppers, Mexican Zinnia or Amaranthus 'Joseph's Coat. Plan to attract hummingbirds to your garden this year by planting red or orange flowers. Monarda (common names: beebalm, horsemint, Oswego tea, and bergamot) is a good perennial plant that thrives in sun and provides nectar for these small birds.

Planting

Begin to plant seedlings of warm-season vegetables such as tomatoes, peppers, and eggplants. You can also start your pumpkin seeds now.

Sow beets, beans, cucumbers, carrots, lettuce, sweet corn and radishes

Plant herbs such as thyme, sage, parsley, chives and basil

Sod or sow new lawns, and over seed damaged older lawns

Start planting out warm season annuals such as impatiens, marigolds, petunias, sunflowers, zinnia, lobelia, alyssum

Finish planting summer-flowering bulbs like tuberose, gladiolus, dahlias, and callas

Plant chervil, coriander, dill, rosemary, and summer savory outside after the last spring frost date for your area. Your Extension agent should be able to give you the date.

Maintenance

Mulch soil to save water, smother weeds, keeps soil cooler. Spread 1-3 inches (2.5-7cm) of bark chips, compost, wood shavings, or other organic material under shrubs trees, annuals and vegetables. Thin vegetables that were sown too thickly, like basil, carrots, green onions, or lettuce. Prune spring-flowering shrubs and trees after bloom is over.

Fertilize everything right now, but do not feed spring-flowering shrubs like azaleas, camellias, and rhododendrons until after they have finished flowering. Use an acid based fertilizer. They also should be pruned after blooming.

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