

The RANCH REVIEW

May 2018 Volume 12, Issue 5

News for the Residents of Legends Ranch

BECOMING A THERAPEUTIC FOSTER PARENT WITH BENCHMARK FAMILY SERVICES

There are Foster Parents, and then there are Professional Therapeutic Foster Parents. Professional Therapeutic Foster Parents understand that a child with a traumatic past needs consistency, nurturing, and above all, someone who will focus on the good and help work through the child's difficulties.

Teenage foster children are among the most underserved population in the foster care system, and Benchmark Family Services needs your help to change that. Fostering a teen is an opportunity that is unique, and can be truly rewarding if you are willing to accept the challenge. There is such great opportunity to instill character and values in their lives that they will be able to take with them as they are becoming an adult. They are in need of something stable in their life, and your home could be just what they need. Are you ready to accept the challenge?

In one month, our agency as a whole received 6,919 referrals for children in foster care who need a home. We were not able to accept and place 4,054 of those referrals because there wasn't a Benchmark home available for them. We currently serve over 2,300 youth across four states, and that number is growing. If you have what it takes to become a Professional Therapeutic Foster Parent, we need you! All that is required is the desire to help those in need, the tenacity to persevere, and to remember that it isn't about you... it's about the children. Help them work through their past and influence strong

core values and other aspects of becoming a thriving member of the adult community; help make a difference!

Benchmark's mission is to work alongside referring agencies to provide stable and caring placements for youth in need of out-of-home care. We advocate for children by ensuring reasonable opportunities for healthy physical, psychological and emotional growth and development in the most normal and least restrictive setting possible. To this end, Benchmark will provide and coordinate programs and services in cooperation with referring child welfare agencies. Benchmark is committed to the highest standards of childcare and professionalism.

At Benchmark Family Services, we pride ourselves on our customer service. We provide state of the art training to all of our foster families to prepare them to properly care for the children that will be in their home. We never want our families to feel like they are going through this alone; we understand how tough of a job this can be, and endless support is provided to all of our families 24/7. With Benchmark, you will have the support of a team of professional, caring staff who are working with your family and the children in your home every step of the way. By doing this, they will have the opportunity to understand not only the children and their needs, but your needs as a parent as well.

Our Houston office is located at 9800 Northwest Freeway, Suite 615. If you are interested in becoming a therapeutic foster parent or would like more information, please call our local office at (713) 995-5118.

Our other Texas locations include Austin, Corpus Christi, Dallas, League City, Longview, Lubbock, McAllen, and San Antonio. If you would like to contact any of our other offices, you can reach us at 855-5FOSTER (855-536-7837), or visit our website at www.benchmarkfamilyservices.org for more information.



IMPORTANT NUMBERS

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Montgomery County Tax 936-539-7897
Conroe ISD 936-709-7751
Montgomery MUD #89 713-932-9011

Police & Fire

Emergency 911
Montgomery Sheriff 936-760-5800
Pct. 3 Constable Office 281-364-4211
S. Montgomery Co. Fire Dept. Non-Emergency 281-363-3473
Montgomery County EMS Non-Emergency 936-441-6243
Crime Stoppers 713-222-TIPS
Poison Control 800-222-1222
Texas DPS 713-681-1761

Utilities

Electricity (TXU) 800-368-1398
Electricity (TXU New Service) 281-441-3928
Electricity (Centerpoint) 713-207-2222
Gas (Centerpoint) 713-659-2111
Water/Municipal Oper. & Consulting 281-367-5511
Best Trash 281-313-2378
Street Light Outages 713-207-2222
Cable/Internet/Phone...COMCAST 713-341-1000

Public Services

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Toll Road EZ Tag 281-875-3279
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Vehicle Registration 281-292-3325
Drivers License Information 936-442-2810
Montgomery County Animal Control 936-442-7738
Montgomery Chamber 281-367-5777

Conroe ISD 936-709-7751
Birnam Woods Elementary 281-863-4200
Cox Intermediate 281-465-3200
York Junior High 832-592-8600
Oak Ridge High 832-592-5300

NEWSLETTER INFO

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THE HISTORY OF MEMORIAL DAY

Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, is a day of remembrance for those who have died in service of the United States of America. Over two dozen cities and towns claim to be the birthplace of Memorial Day. While Waterloo N.Y. was officially declared the birthplace of Memorial Day by President Lyndon Johnson in May 1966, it's difficult to prove conclusively the origins of the day.

Regardless of the exact date or location of its origins, one thing is clear – Memorial Day was borne out of the Civil War and a desire to honor our dead. It was officially proclaimed on 5 May 1868 by General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, in his General Order No. 11. "The 30th of May, 1868, is designated for the purpose of strewing with flowers, or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village and hamlet churchyard in the land," he proclaimed. The date of Decoration Day, as he called it, was chosen because it wasn't the anniversary of any particular battle.

On the first Decoration Day, General James Garfield made a speech at Arlington National Cemetery, and 5,000 participants decorated the graves of the 20,000 Union and Confederate soldiers buried there.

The first state to officially recognize the holiday was New York in 1873. By 1890 it was recognized by all of the northern states. The South refused to acknowledge the day, honoring their dead on separate days until after World War I (when the holiday changed from honoring just those who died fighting in the Civil War to honoring Americans who died fighting in any war).

It is now observed in almost every state on the last Monday in May with Congressional passage of the National Holiday Act of 1971. This helped ensure a three day weekend for Federal holidays, though several southern states have an additional separate day for honoring the Confederate war dead: January 19th in Texas; April 26th in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and Mississippi; May 10th in South Carolina; and June 3rd (Jefferson Davis' birthday) in Louisiana and Tennessee.

In 1915, inspired by the poem "In Flanders Fields," Moina Michael replied with her own poem:

*We cherish too, the Poppy red
That grows on fields where valor led,
It seems to signal to the skies
That blood of heroes never dies.*

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WHEN IS A RABBIT NOT A RABBIT?

By Cheryl Conley, TWRC Wildlife Center

Life is pretty tough for rabbits. It seems like everything wants to eat them. Bobcats, coyotes, raptors and even snakes. The Eastern Cottontail, which is the most common in our area, is lucky if it lives two years in the wild. Thank goodness they are prolific reproducers. Cottontails begin breeding as early as two months old and can have up to seven litters in one year, although they usually have three or four.

There are three native wild rabbits in Texas and one hare: the eastern cottontail, swamp rabbit, desert cottontail and the black-tailed jackrabbit. The jackrabbit is actually a hare. However, they all belong to the Lagomorpha order of mammals. Hares are larger animals and have longer ears. A hare's pregnancy lasts 42 days. Newborn hares are called leverets and are fully developed at birth, born with fur and eyes open. Mom doesn't build a nest but can deliver her young in something as simple as a depression in the ground. Babies are able to hop around shortly after birth. Female rabbits give birth after about 30 days. They build a nest three to four inches deep and about eight inches across. They line the nest and cover it with soft dead grass and some of her own fur. Newborn rabbits are called kits or kittens and are born with eyes closed and no fur.

Compassionate people with good intentions will sometimes "kidnap" baby rabbits thinking they have been abandoned or that something has happened to mama rabbit. Mom only feeds her young at dusk and dawn so chances are, you probably won't see her. If the babies are warm and appear to be well fed, she's taking care of them. Just to be sure, here are a few things you can try. Place string or yarn in the shape of an "X" on top of the nest in the late afternoon. You can also encircle the nest with flour. In the morning, check the nest. If the string or flour has been disturbed, Mom has been there taking care of her kits.

With spring comes lawn-mowing. A WORD OF CAUTION: if you see small "dead" sections of grass in your lawn, check it out before mowing. It may be a nest of baby rabbits. If it is a nest, you can simply lift the top layer of dead grass to reveal sleeping babies. Please leave them alone! They will be gone in a couple of weeks. Please be sure to protect nests from your dogs, too. If your dog discovers a nest, you can cover it with a wheelbarrow or fencing making sure there is an entrance point just large enough for Mom to go in and out and strong enough so the dog can't tear it down. There are other options, too. Just do a little research on the internet.

TWRC Wildlife Center is here to help. If you have questions about wildlife or find an injured or orphaned animal, please call us: 713-468-TWRC. You can also find helpful information on our website at www.twrcwildlifecenter.org. You'll also find cute photos and good information on our Facebook page. Please "Like" us!

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She then conceived of an idea to wear red poppies on Memorial day in honor of those who died serving the nation during war. She was the first to wear one, and sold poppies to her friends and co-workers with the money going to benefit servicemen in need. Later a Madam Guerin from France was visiting the United States and learned of this new custom started by Ms. Michael. When she returned to France she made artificial red poppies to raise money for war orphaned children and widowed women. This tradition spread to other countries. In 1921, the Franco-American Children's League sold poppies nationally to benefit war orphans of France and Belgium. The League disbanded a year later and Madam Guerin approached the VFW for help.

Shortly before Memorial Day in 1922 the VFW became the first veterans' organization to nationally sell poppies. Two years later their "Buddy" Poppy program was selling artificial poppies made by disabled veterans. In 1948 the US Post Office honored Ms. Michael for her role in founding the National Poppy movement by issuing a red 3 cent postage stamp with her likeness on it.



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