

MERIDIAN *Community Monitor*

NEWS FOR THE RESIDENTS OF MERIDIAN



LETTUCE RECYCLE

by Dena Houston



SAVE PAPER! Receive this newsletter electronically on the first day of each month. Go to: <https://peelinc.com/index.php/resident-subscriptions>.

HOLIDAY TIME – A CORNUCOPIA OF STUFF!

Life during the holidays is filled with abundance. It is a time of getting together with family and friends to celebrate the season with lots of food, gift getting and giving, parties, and general merrymaking. All this celebrating generates STUFF. I would never suggest we give up all the wonderful things the holidays bring. Instead, in this month's Lettuce Recycle, I hope to help everyone deal with some of the impact of this glorious bounty. In several months, "all this stuff" will become the focus of our de-cluttering mission for spring-cleaning.

HOW TO RECYCLE SOME OF THIS STUFF

- **BATTERIES** – Household batteries, including rechargeable, can be recycled at most Austin public libraries. Here is a complete list of the battery drop off locations in Austin: <http://austintexas.gov/page/battery-drop-locations>
- **GIFT BAGS** – Gift bags cannot go into the blue recycling cart. They can be reused, donated to the Austin Creative Reuse Center <https://www.austincreativereuse.org/>, or thrown into the trash cart.
- **GIFT WRAP PAPER** – Wrapping paper and tissue paper (no glitter or foil) is recyclable and can be placed directly into the blue recycling cart. This can even include paper with tape still on it.
- **HOLIDAY CARDS** – Plain cards can go into the blue recycling cart if there is no glitter or other embellishments (like bows or googly eyes). The embellished ones go into the trash cart. Photo cards cannot be recycled. They must go into the trash cart.

- **HOLIDAY LIGHTS AND OLD LIGHT BULBS** – Strands of broken holiday lights can be taken to the Recycle & Reuse Drop-Off Center. This center will also take old LED light bulbs. Incandescent bulbs must be thrown into the trash cart.
- **STYROFOAM and BUBBLE WRAP** – Styrofoam peanuts and bubble wrap that are clean and in good condition will be accepted at mail box stores like Pak Mail and UPS. They will happily reuse them. Chunks of Styrofoam and other Styrofoam pieces are accepted only at the Recycle & Reuse Drop-Off Center. The recycling center no longer accepts Styrofoam peanuts.
- **TINSEL AND BROKEN DECORATIONS** – Tinsel and any broken decorations must go into the trash cart. They are not recyclable.

EXCESS WASTE

- **CARDBOARD BOXES THAT WILL NOT FIT INTO THE BLUE CART** – Flatten the boxes and set them next to your blue bin on collection day. They will be picked up that day by either the recycling truck or another City truck.
- **HOLIDAY PARTY WASTE** – With curbside composting, we can now put our party-generated paper plates, napkins, and food product into the green bin to be composted rather than going to the landfill. If you don't have curbside composting, consider using recyclable plasticware (cups, plates, bowls, and cutlery) for parties. After a quick rinse to remove food product, these can be placed in your blue recycling bin. TIP: I set out small bins for recycling and compost collection at my holiday parties.
- **HOUSEHOLD CLUTTER** - Holiday time is a great time to get rid of the toys and clothing everyone has outgrown in order to make room for new items. Please consider donating your gently

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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.

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NOT AVAILABLE ONLINE

(Continued from Cover Page)

used goods to the many wonderful organizations in Austin that will happily accept them. Here is a link to the Austin Reuse directory to help find a home for your used items:

<https://austineconetwork.com/austin-reuse-directory/>

• **TRASH OVERFLOW** – Extra bags of trash that do not fit into your trash cart with the lid closed must be placed next to the trash cart and tagged with an Extra Trash Sticker. These stickers can be purchased at most local grocery stores for \$4.00 + tax. Extra bags without a sticker will be charged \$9.60 + tax per bag by the City. If you have curbside compost collection, you can save room in your trash cart by sending all your turkey bones and leftovers to be composted rather than thrown into the trash cart.

QUESTIONS AND IDEAS FROM OUR READERS:

ARE TETRA PAKS RECYCLABLE?

No, they are not recyclable in Austin. Tetra paks, as well as cardboard milk and juice containers, must be placed in the trash carts. They are made of multiple layers of materials that cannot be separated for recycling.

ARE TOILET TISSUE AND PAPER TOWEL ROLLS RECYCLABLE AND DO THEY NEED TO BE FLATTENED?

Yes, both can go into the blue recycling bin and do not need to be flattened. The toilet tissue roll can even have a little tissue left on it.

IS ALL ALUMINUM FOIL RECYCLABLE?

No, aluminum foil must be totally clean and dry (no paint or food product) in order to be recyclable. It needs to be wadded up into at least a 2-inch ball. Foil tops on cream cheese, sour cream, and yogurt can be recycled if clean and dry. Some wrappers and toppers look like foil but are not. If you wad it up and it stays wadded up, it is foil. If it does not stay wadded up, it has a plastic coating on it and is not recyclable.

IDEA – CRAYOLA COLORCYCLE IS A WAY FOR SCHOOLS TO RECYCLE CRAYOLA MARKERS. Please visit this website for more information <<https://www.crayola.com/colorcycle.aspx>>.

Please remember:

WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!

AND



Here is a very informative City of Austin recycling website called What Do I Do With. It is a guide to recycling, reusing, composting and more for City of Austin residential curbside customers. Just type in the name of an unwanted item and you will find out what to do with it. <<http://www.austintexas.gov/what-do-i-do>>

Stay tuned for future tips that will include creative ways to recycle or reuse. If you have any questions or recycling ideas, please send them to: recycling@hpwbana.org.



Still on the Fence About Hosting an Exchange Student?

You don't have any kids? Are you a single parent? Same sex couple? An empty nester? This is not a problem, we place our students in all kinds of families!

You're not rich? Neither am I! Your exchange student comes with their own spending money and health insurance. All you provide is room/board and three meals a day. Oh and TLC... but that's free.

Live in the middle of no where? Small town? Not a big deal. Some kids prefer to get away from the hustle and bustle of big cities. The exchange students also do pretty well in small schools, as they usually get to be the center of attention and make friends rather quickly. Our students also get chances to travel to New York, Washington DC, Hawaii and California... so they can get their fill of the city life and return back to the peaceful sounds of nature.

Do you consider yourself a boring person? More than likely this is not true, and you should quit being so hard on yourself. Your student will make friends. Your student will meet other exchange students. Your student will attend activities offered by our program. Your student will get involved in sports and school clubs. Your purpose is not to entertain them. But you

might find that you bring a little adventure to each others lives.

Kids are too young? Great! Lots of students love young kids, and your kids will love them. It's beneficial to introduce your kids to new cultures at a very young age. You're preparing them to accept people no matter what the religion, color of their skin, or language they speak. That my friend, is good parenting.

Don't hold back! This is a gret experience for both parties. You get the opportunity to change a child's life. You get the satisfaction of seeing them grow, even after they leave your home into becoming a doctor, a lawyer, a diplomat, artist, teacher... the list goes on. And you contributed to that success! And the best part of it all, is you gain another family member for life. We need people like you to give these kids a chance.

STS Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to place exchange students in our area. If you are interest in hosting, please contact me at 832-455-7881 or at vicki.stsfoundation@yahoo.com. I'll be happy to answer any question you might have and get you started on hosting your very own student!

SWING Networking Group

Promote your business with local independent business owners. SWING (South west Austin Inclusive Networking Group) has been meeting every Thursday morning from 8AM to 9:30AM at the Waterloo Ice House on Escarpment for 14 years.

We have no dues, no initiation fees, we don't take attendance. Just pay for your own breakfast. The more often you show up the better we get to know you. We are an inclusive group, we will enjoy competition. So, bring your business cards and a good attitude and let's get to know you.

If you want more information, contact Liz Jensen at 512-301-6966 or lizleej@gmail.com or Peter Berardino (The King of SWING) at 512-695-2334 or peterberardino@gmail.com.

Water Conservation in the Winter Saves Money Year Round

Jacob Johnson, Austin Water

Conserving water during late fall and winter saves you money on two fronts. First, you get a break from those landscape-induced higher summer water bills. Second, and just as important, conserving water during this time can keep your wastewater bills lower for the next 12 months.

There is no meter on your home's wastewater line, so to determine residential wastewater volume Austin Water uses a process called wastewater averaging. Austin Water averages your water use during your three monthly billing periods between mid-November and mid-March. This average sets a cap on the wastewater volume you will be billed for the next 12 month period.

In late fall/winter, the typical landscape rarely needs supplemental water, pools don't usually need to be topped off and slip and slides have been packed away. Without all that outdoor water demand, this timeframe typically gives a good indication of how much water is being used indoors, going down the drain, and ultimately to a wastewater treatment plant. The lower that average water use is, the lower your wastewater charges can be.

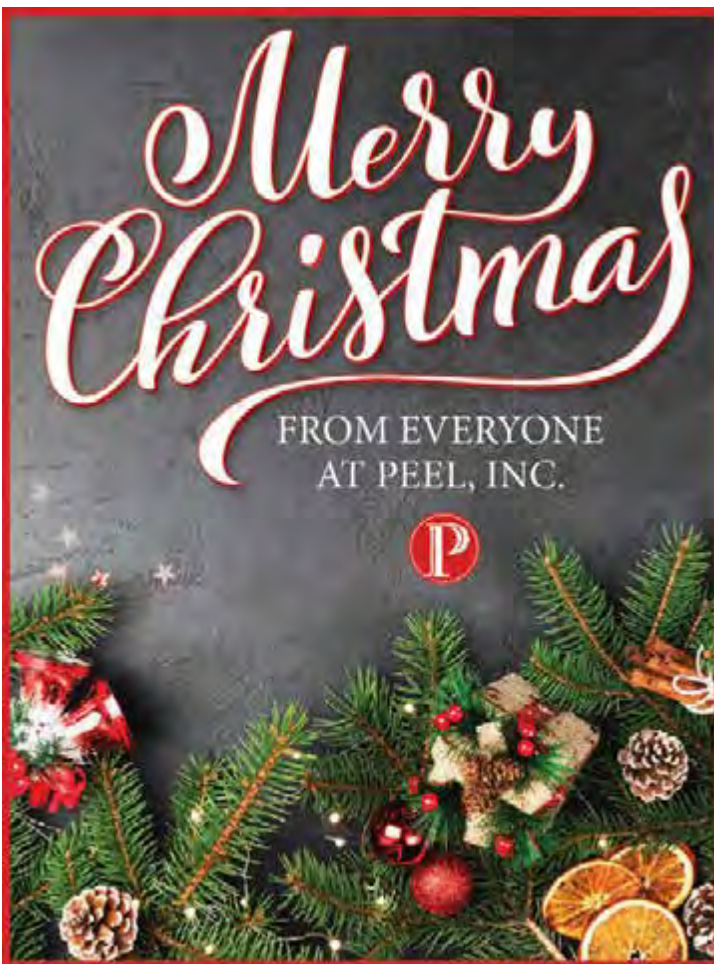
Let's say a family of four averages 6,000 gallons of water use monthly during their wastewater averaging period. As summer comes along, and their outdoor water use increases, they use 12,000 gallons per month. The family will be charged for 12,000 gallons of water, but because of their wastewater average, they will continue to only be charged for the 6,000 gallons of wastewater average cap.

Even after the wastewater average is set, wastewater charges can be lowered by using less water than the wastewater average cap. If the family with the 6,000 wastewater average uses 5,000 gallons of water one month, they will only be charged 5,000 gallons for wastewater volume. Wastewater volume is billed at the wastewater average cap or at the same volume as the monthly water usage, whichever is lower.

A higher wastewater average will result when irrigation systems are left on or leaks are present during the 3 month wastewater average period, and can be very costly. Turn off automatic irrigation systems and identify and repair leaks early.

To find your specific waste water averaging period, check out the Utility News section on your utility billing statement. Customers must have at least 60 days of billed water usage during the wastewater averaging period to have a calculated wastewater average. Visit www.austintexas.gov/wastewateraveraging for additional information.

This winter, practice good water conservation behaviors, turn off your irrigation system, and see how low you can go!



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What's Happening in Meridian? December

3 ~ HOA Board Meeting

14 ~ Holiday Lights / Snow Spectacular

** All dates subject to change and new events may be added.*

*For more information, the Meridian HOA Board can be reached at:
MeridianHOABOD@gmail.com*


*Celebrate
Christmas With Us!*

December 17 - "Blue Christmas" Service (7 p.m.)

December 24 - Christmas Eve Family Service (3 p.m.)

December 24 - Christmas Eve Traditional Candlelight Service (6 p.m.)

December 24 - Christmas Eve Traditional Candlelight Service (8 p.m.)

December 24 - Christmas Eve Candlelight with Communion Service (10 p.m.)



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FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
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FINISH STRONG

The holiday season is in full swing, and we know your calendar is packed. But with a wide array of state-of-the-art fitness equipment, numerous exercise classes offered daily, the Y is here to help you finish the year strong. Keep the commitment to your health through the holidays and burn off your seasonal stress at a Y near you.

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Help Keep Our Neighborhood Beautiful!



Whether you're huddled around the fireplace, gathered at the table or strolling through a winter wonderland, the holidays are all about enjoying pure and memorable moments with family and friends. With all of the seasonal gatherings, you can certainly expect that almost any host or guest will attempt to provide a classic holiday treat for everyone to enjoy.

This year, you can give your traditional holiday bake a refreshing twist sure to spread all kinds of holiday cheer with this Enjoyment Peppermint Pie topped with Homemade Whipped Cream, which can be easily whipped up with less than 10 ingredients total.

From pumpkin pies to gingerbread cookies and everything in-between, an option like DairyPure Heavy Whipping Cream can be a must-have kitchen staple this season, one you can feel good about knowing it's sourced from trusted dairies.

For more recipes for the holidays and every day, visit DairyPure.com, and find DairyPure on Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest. Downloaded from FamilyFeatures.com.

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 20 minutes

- 1 envelope unflavored gelatin
- 1/4 cup cold water
- 2 1/2 cups DairyPure Heavy Whipping Cream, divided
- 8 ounces soft peppermint candy
- 1 chocolate cookie crust
- crushed peppermint candies, for garnish

Soften gelatin in water; set aside.

In small saucepan over low heat, cook 1/2 cup whipping cream with candy until candy melts.

Add gelatin; mix well.

Whip remaining whipping cream. Let gelatin mixture cool and fold in whipped cream, reserving 1/2 cup for garnish.

Pour into crust. Chill.

Before serving, top with reserved whipped cream and crushed peppermint candies.

Homemade Whipped Cream



2 tablespoons granulated or confectioners' sugar

2 cups DairyPure Heavy Whipping Cream

1 teaspoon vanilla extract or liqueur

In chilled glass bowl, add sugar to whipping cream. Using whisk or hand mixer, incorporate sugar into heavy whipping cream until it begins to thicken, leaving visible trails. Continue to whip until soft peaks start to form.

Fold in vanilla extract or liqueur. Serve immediately or refrigerate and remix 1-2 minutes before serving.



Photo courtesy of Getty Images

No matter who you're buying for this year, putting some extra thought into the personality and hobbies of your recipient can help brighten the holiday season. Whether your list is on the shorter side or long and complex, these gift ideas – ranging from a thoughtful card to a flavorful meal or a pretty piece of jewelry to tools for the outdoors or classroom – have you covered.

Check those names off your shopping list with even more gift ideas at eLivingtoday.com. Content downloaded from FamilyFeatures.com

Holiday Gifting Made Easy

Gift ideas for **everyone** on your list



A Gift Full of Flavor

If you're looking for a gift for your food-loving family and friends this holiday season, this is the perfect package. With a sampling of Omaha Steaks favorites – including top sirloins, pork chops, gourmet burgers and filet mignons – the Tasteful Gift combo is guaranteed to please nearly any foodie on your list. Add in potatoes au gratin, caramel apple tartlets and an exclusive seasoning packet and you have a gourmet gift for the holiday season. Find more gift ideas at omahasteaks.com.



A Sharp Gift Idea

Any knife is only as good as the sharpness of its blade. This holiday season, get the outdoorsman or chef in your life a helpful tool like the Wicked Edge Go knife sharpener. Made from high-quality, aircraft-grade aluminum and stainless steel and easy to use for both new and veteran knife sharpeners, it offers guided angle control while sharpening a variety of knives, giving the user choice and control over angle and edge geometry. Find more at wickededgeusa.com.



Share

Holiday Joy

Show friends and family how much they mean to you this holiday season with a Hallmark holiday card. Whether you want to share excitement with

those who go all out this time of year or just let someone know he or she is loved, sending a card is a perfect way to show your care. With a variety of cards to choose from, you can find one for everybody on your list. Discover all the ways you can make the holidays brighter at Hallmark.com/Cards.



Get Her a Gift that Wows

This holiday season, give her a gift that wows with these sparkling 3-Carat Total

Weight Diamond Tennis Bracelets from Helzberg Diamonds. Available in Rose Gold, White Gold and Yellow Gold, these stylish bracelets feature round brilliant-cut diamonds to help make your special someone feel like an MVP. Plus, for a limited time, you can save \$1,000 through Dec. 29. Find more holiday gift ideas at Helzberg.com/Holiday-Gift-Guide.



A Splash of Scholarly Style

Make math and science a bit more stylish for your student when he or she heads back to school from the holidays. Available in 10 bold colors,

the TI-84 Plus CE graphing calculator is super-slim, durable and can last up to one month on one charge. With a multitude of functions, students can use it from middle school math and science all the way through high school and into college – plus, it's accepted on college entrance exams. Find more at education.ti.com/84CE.



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from our family to yours!

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