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# MERIDIAN *Community Monitor*

NEWS FOR THE RESIDENTS OF MERIDIAN

## ***FEATURED STORY:***

### ***The Power of Volunteerism***



***Read more on Page 2!***

# 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](http://www.PEELinc.com) or you can email it [meridian@peelinc.com](mailto: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)*

## The Power of Volunteerism

*By Cheryl Conley, TWRC Wildlife Center*



I often say that I'm working harder now as a volunteer president of a board of directors than I ever did as a paid employee. The hours are long, the work can be frustrating, and worrying about keeping our doors open is very stressful. But all it takes is for me to hold a tiny, helpless little opossum in my hand or witness the release of an animal back to the wild and I know why I do it. A sense of calm and purpose takes over and I feel great about what I'm doing.

People volunteer for a number of reasons. Some are retired and are looking for something meaningful to do. Some are students wanting to learn more about their chosen field of study. Some feel it's a way to pay it forward and some don't have a choice. They have to complete court-ordered community service.

I think we would all agree that helping others makes a person feel good but did you know that studies show there are health benefits from volunteering? According to Rodlescia Sneed, a public health research associate at Michigan State University who has studied the impacts of volunteering, "In my own work I've shown it's linked to improvements in factors like depressive symptoms, purpose in life, and feelings of optimism." It's also been shown to lower blood pressure and reduces the feelings of depression.

**Here's a list of all the benefits of volunteering according to Non-Profit Hub:**

- Boosts self-esteem
- Expands your connections - some people are just born with the "gift of gab" and have no trouble talking to others. For those that tend to be shy, it's the perfect opportunity to make new friends with people who share the same interests.

*(Continued on Page 3)*

(Continued from Page 2)

- Makes you feel good
  - Contributes to a longer life - volunteers encounter greater longevity and less frequency of heart disease. It can also slow the progress of Alzheimer's and other memory loss diseases.
  - Gives purpose – as we age, we sometimes feel isolated but no matter who we are or what our age is, volunteering can give our lives new meaning.
  - Combats stress – studies actually show the more you volunteer, the happier you become. Your body releases dopamine in the brain when you help others. This has a positive effect on how you feel.
  - Sets a good example – as parents, our greatest hope is that our children grow up to be caring, giving adults. What better way to make that happen than to set a good example?
  - Teaches new skills – we see it all the time. Volunteers are afraid to pick up a bird, a squirrel or opossum. With encouragement and instruction, they gain confidence and learn not only to pick them up but to feed them. You can see the pride on their faces!
- Don't let fear stop you from volunteering. It's very much like starting a new job and for those of you who work, you know how stressful that can be. Every non-profit knows how valuable volunteers are. Volunteers provide their time, energies and talents




to help non-profits fulfill their missions. Most non-profits have limited budgets and volunteers are the reason many non-profits are able to operate and keep the bills paid.

The most important thing to remember is to do what interests you. Do you like working with senior citizens? The homeless? Dogs and cats? If you volunteer somewhere and find it's not for you, keep looking until you find your passion.

If caring for injured, orphaned or displaced wildlife is of interest to you, please contact us. Maybe you don't want to handle animals but would like to recruit fellow volunteers, work in fundraising or design brochures. We have many different areas where you can offer your time and talents. Give Berri a call at 713.468.8972.

Make a New Year's resolution to volunteer. You'll be pleasantly surprised how this will add to your life!




WONDERS & WORRIES

PRESENTED BY  
TEXAS ONCOLOGY

Friday, February 7, 2020 | 6:30 PM

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## *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](mailto:lizleej@gmail.com) or Peter Berardino (The King of SWING) at 512-695-2334 or [peterberardino@gmail.com](mailto:peterberardino@gmail.com).

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## FRUIT FLIES - Wizzie Brown



Fruit flies can become a nuisance problem at any time of year. They can enter homes from ripe fruits or vegetables picked from the garden or purchased at the grocery store. Fruit fly adults may also fly into homes from outdoors.

Adult fruit flies are small (about 1/8 of an inch) and often have red eyes. The front portion of the body is tan while the back portion is dark brown to black. If given the opportunity, females can lay up to 500 eggs. Larvae are surface feeders on fermenting foods or other organic matter, which means that you can cut off the overripe parts of the fruit or vegetable and eat the rest.

To prevent bringing fruit flies into your home, do not purchase over ripened fruit and vegetables. Eat fresh produce in a timely manner and store items in the refrigerator or a paper bag that is clipped closed. All recyclables should be rinsed thoroughly before placing them into the recycling bin. Recycling and garbage bins should be cleaned on a regular basis with soapy water to eliminate any spilled material.

If your home already has fruit flies, locate all sources of infestation (where the larvae are living) and eliminate them. Insecticides only target adults and will not control the problem. While searching and eliminating breeding sources, a trap can be constructed to capture adult flies. Create a paper funnel by rolling paper and taping it closed. Place the funnel into a jar that has a small amount of apple cider vinegar in the bottom.

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600. Check out my blog at [www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com](http://www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com)

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## LETTUCE RECYCLE!

by Dena Houston



### WHAT'S IN YOUR TRASH CAN???????

Even though most of us try hard to compost and recycle, there are still items that need to go into our trash cans and ultimately into the landfill.

#### NEED YOUR INPUT!

Below is a list of some of the items that should go into the trash can. The items in this list cannot be recycled or composted in the

Austin market. If any of my readers have any suggestions on how to reuse, replace, or recycle anything in the list below, please email me your suggestions at [recycling@hpwbana.org](mailto:recycling@hpwbana.org). I will research your ideas and list them in a future newsletter.

- AC filters
- Aerosol containers (partially full)
- Animal waste
- Antibacterial wipes
- Broken glass
- Candy wrappers
- Cellophane
- CD jewel cases
- Chip bags
- Cooking oil and grease
- Dirty aluminum foil
- Dryer sheets
- Food pouches
- Garden hoses
- Guitar strings
- Ice cream cartons (paper)
- Incandescent light bulbs
- Juice boxes
- Paper coffee cups
- Pizza boxes (if you don't have curbside compost pickup)
- Plastic bags – Bags for certain products, such as dog food, soil, fertilizer, and compost, are designed to hold weight. They are not recyclable at the plastic bag collection bins at the grocery store. Frozen food and salad mix bags are treated with certain polymers to keep the food fresh. They also must go into the trash.
- Plastic deodorant bottles (without recycling symbol)
- Plastic straws
- Plastic wrap – Saran Wrap, Press and Seal
- Tetra paks – Cardboard milk or juice cartons
- Wire coat hangers (if in good condition, can be reused by dry cleaners)

### QUESTIONS AND IDEAS FROM OUR READERS:

**IS THERE ANY ADVANTAGE TO PUTTING FOOD INTO CURBSIDE COMPOSTING INSTEAD OF INTO THE GARBAGE DISPOSAL?** Not really. Everything that goes into your curbside compost becomes soil. Everything that goes into your garbage disposal goes into the wastewater stream. In Austin, the sludge from the wastewater treatment plant is processed into Dillo Dirt (a type of fertilizer unique to Austin).

**ARE PLASTIC ROLL-ON DEODORANT CONTAINERS RECYCLABLE?** Only completely empty plastic deodorant containers with the recycling symbol on the bottom are recyclable. Aerosol containers (any kind, including deodorant) are recyclable in the blue cart **ONLY** if they are completely empty. Partially full aerosol cans are a fire hazard at the recycling processing facility. They must go into the trash can or be taken to the Recycle & Reuse Drop-Off Center.

**I'M STILL CONFUSED ABOUT HOW TO RECYCLE JARS AND THEIR LIDS. PLEASE CLARIFY.** All glass bottles and jars need to have their lids removed. All plastic jars and bottles need to have their lids and caps left on.

**ARE DISPOSABLE PAPER VACUUM CLEANER BAGS ALLOWED IN THE GREEN CURBSIDE COMPOST BIN?** No, they are not. A vacuum cleaner bag could contain contaminated materials such as glass and cat litter. There is no way to open each bag to check the contents at the compost facility. Also, some bags have metal or plastic parts that make them non-compostable.

### 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](mailto:recycling@hpwbana.org).

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## Top Tips to Get Ready to Run



(Family Features) You've made the decision to get in shape, and whether your goal is a full marathon or simply a few laps around the neighborhood, there are a few steps to consider taking before you strap on those shoes and head toward the finish line.

Here are a few tips to help get you ready for the big race:

**Seek Quality Sneakers** - Feet come in a variety of widths and sizes, so visit a specialty running store to find perfect-fitting sneakers. These may come with a hefty price tag, but there are no shortcuts for comfort and support while running long distances.

**Make a Schedule** - Try to aim for at least 10 hours of training per week, including three days where you run and two or three days of other physical activity such as cycling or strength training. To avoid exhaustion, be sure to include at least 1-2 "rest" days per week.

**Stick with Water** - Avoid sports drinks that are loaded with preservatives and sugars. You can't go wrong with the hydrating power of water. As a rule, try to consume at least 6-8 ounces of water for every 20 minutes you run. Proper hydration after the run is also vital.

**Go Online** - Many websites have training guides for various skill levels or different types of races. If you have a smartphone, look for apps that can take you through day-by-day workouts to get you marathon-ready.

**Nutrition** - Filling your body with the proper amount of fuel can help ensure finish-line success. Load up on quality carbohydrates, such as beans, peas, whole-wheat pastas, whole-grain cereals, apples, brown rice and root vegetables. Protein also plays an important role in a runner's nutrition, so fill up on lean meats, fish, eggs, low-fat dairy, peanut butter and soy protein sources, as well.

By following these general rules, you'll be able to focus on achieving your goal and enjoy the thrill of finishing the race. Find more tips for a healthier lifestyle at [eLivingToday.com](http://eLivingToday.com).

Photo courtesy of Getty Images #13139, Source: [eLivingToday.com](http://eLivingToday.com), Content downloaded from [FamilyFeatures.com](http://FamilyFeatures.com).

## Make Your Weight Loss Goals *a Reality*



(Family Features) Losing weight is a highly personal journey as a wide range of factors can affect a person's ability to do so. There's no one approach to weight loss; rather, the best approach is the one that fits your life and body best.

Get motivated to reach your weight loss goals with these expert tips.

**Set realistic goals.** Most experts agree you shouldn't lose more than 1-2 pounds per week. More rapid loss may shock your system, and chances are you're depriving your body of important nutrients. More aggressive loss is also less likely to be permanent or sustainable; long-term results generally come with steady loss over a period of time.

**Eat well.** Regardless what eating plan you choose, recognize the importance of nutrition in your weight loss program. Weight loss occurs when you burn more calories than you consume, so build your menu around nutrient-rich foods that fill you up. Strive for a well-balanced diet that encompasses all the food groups and, if necessary, discuss your goals with a doctor or nutritionist who can help you identify the best foods to enjoy and those to avoid.

**Consider a supplement.** If managing cravings or your appetite hinders your weight loss, a supplement may be a good solution. For example, RiduZone is a patented supplement that gives your body more of a substance it already creates called Oleoylethanolamide (OEA). In essence, OEA tells your brain you are full and it's time to stop eating. Developed and endorsed by Dr. Jay Yepuri, a board-certified gastroenterologist, the supplement is a non-stimulant that may help you feel full faster to reduce caloric intake and boost metabolism to burn stored fat.

**Get active.** Creating a calorie deficit is necessary to lose weight, and increasing your physical activity helps ensure you're burning calories. However, getting active isn't just about playing the numbers game. Physical activity also promotes overall wellness with numerous physical and mental health benefits, including improving circulation and stimulating feel-good endorphins.

**Stay committed.** It's easy to fall off your weight loss plan when unexpected circumstances arise. Give yourself a little grace and

permission for occasional misses so you stay motivated to get back to your program. That may mean waiting for a cold to pass and doing less strenuous workouts at home or making extra healthy choices at mealtime in advance of an indulgent event. To help make keeping your commitments easier, consider an option like RiduZone to boost your body's natural appetite-curbing power.

*Find more information to help jump-start your weight management program at [TryRiduZone.com](http://TryRiduZone.com).*

### What is OEA?

Oleoylethanolamide (OEA) is a metabolite of oleic acid, a naturally produced substance that interacts with appetite-controlling receptors in the small intestine to signal the brain you are full. It also helps boost metabolism. However, as a result of food choices and excess body fat, naturally produced OEA may require supplementation to achieve the desired effect on appetite or body fat.

Created to mimic this naturally occurring metabolite, RiduZone is the only weight management supplement that contains OEA as an ingredient. Its production has been reviewed and is accepted as safe by the Food and Drug Administration.

### Less fat

A clinical study published in the "Journal of Lipid Research" shows higher blood levels of OEA, which is derived from oleic acid-rich olive oil, correlate to lower amounts of body fat. This means weight loss results may be more visible.

### Fewer calories

A prominent research study published in the journal "Food & Function" shows higher circulating levels of OEA can result in a significant reduction in calorie intake. Over time, OEA users become satisfied with smaller, healthier-sized portions.

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