



The Power of Volunteerism

Read more on Page 2!

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

EMERGENCY	911
Fire.....	911
Ambulance	911
Sheriff – Non-Emergency	512-974-0845

SCHOOLS

Elementary	
Clayton.....	512-841-9200
Kiker.....	512-414-2584
Mills	512-841-2400
Patton	512-414-1780
Middle	
Bailey.....	512-414-4990
Small.....	512-841-6700
Gorzycki	512-841-8600
High School	
Austin	512-414-2505
Bowie.....	512-414-5247

UTILITIES

Water/Wastewater	
City of Austin.....	512-972-0101
City of Austin (billing)	512-494-9400
Emergency	512-972-1000
Texas State Gas	
Customer Service	1-800-700-2443
Gas related emergency.....	1-800-959-5325
Pedernales Electric Cooperative	
New service, billing	512-219-2602
Problems	512-219-2628
ATT/SBC Telephone	
New Service	1-800-288-2020
Repair	1-800-246-8464
Billing	1-800-288-2020
Allied Waste	512-247-5647
Time Warner Cable.....	512-485-5555

OTHER NUMBERS

Oak Hill Postal Station.....	1-800-275-8777
City of Austin	
Dead Animal Collection.....	512-494-9400
Abandoned/Disabled Vehicles	512-974-8119
Stop Sign Missing/Damaged	512-974-2000
Street Light Outage (report pole#).....	512-505-7617

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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.

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- 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!



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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

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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. 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.

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.

Photo courtesy of Getty Images #13139, Source: eLivingToday.com, Content downloaded from FamilyFeatures.com.

Let Trends Guide Your 2020 Travel

(Family Features) While there's plenty to be said for taking the proverbial road less traveled, fellow tourists can provide a wealth of knowledge to help shape a vacation filled with lifelong memories.

Whether you expect your travel plans for 2020 to take you near or far, having a pulse on how and where others enjoy spending their travel time may help narrow down your options. Start planning your next getaway armed with the findings of a trend report compiled by vacation rental app and website Vrbo, especially when it comes to selecting a destination and your accommodations.

Unique Accommodations

Traditional vacation home favorites like beach houses, cabins and condos still reign supreme, but adventurous American travelers are staying in some unusual options. In fact, 71% of millennial travelers said they would consider staying at a non-traditional vacation rental.

In addition to barns, castles and treehouses, properties on wheels and properties that float join the ranks of unusual accommodations travelers are booking. Travel demand for houseboats, yachts, RVs and travel trailers is up 30% year-over-year.

Surf's Up

Portugal's reputation for affordability, primo surfing and sunshine-filled climate make the country a desirable place to explore. That may explain why seaside locales in Portugal took three of the top five spots on the list of hottest international beach destinations for American travelers. Chania, Greece, took the top spot, followed by three Portuguese destinations: Vila Nova de Gaia, Porto and Lisbon. Catania, Italy, rounded out the top five.

For those seeking to stay stateside, four of Vrbo's top five United States destinations this year are beaches, including: Gulf Shores, Alabama; Miramar and Rosemary Beach, Florida; Panama City Beach, Florida; and Maui, Hawaii.

Same-City Stays

Rental demand data in Chicago, Philadelphia, Dallas, Atlanta and a number of other urban destinations showed the single largest traveler origin market for each city was that same city.

"Cele-cations," when people seek accommodations to host and spend time with groups of family and friends for milestone events like weddings, birthdays and anniversaries, may be fueling the trend of people booking vacation homes in the same cities where they live," said Melanie Fish, Vrbo travel expert.

Also high on the trend list: short-stay, drivable destinations located within 300 miles of home.

Up-and-Coming Destinations

Their names may not be familiar to the masses, but each of the top emerging domestic vacation destinations shares one thing in common: outdoor appeal. Places that appeal to families and other groups of travelers looking to explore the great outdoors are seeing a major surge over the past three years.

If an outdoor getaway is your ideal trip, consider destinations like Terlingua, Texas, located just a short distance from Big Bend National Park; Bella Vista, Arkansas, situated in the Ozarks near majestic lakes; Westport, Washington, surrounded by a bay to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west; Cherry Log, Georgia, which sits in the heart of Chattahoochee National Forest; and Edisto Island, South Carolina, a charming beachside retreat 1 hour from Charleston.

"This is the third year in a row travelers' desire to be outdoors has filled the up-and-coming

destinations list," Fish said. "Clearly, people want the comforts of a home away from home while soaking in scenery."

Find the trends and accommodations that match your 2020 travel dreams at vrbo.com.

Photo courtesy of Getty Images #14614, Source: Vrbo, Content Downloaded from FamilyFeatures.com

Homeowner's Corner

Ceilings Are the Perfect Blank Canvas



One of the many joys of homeownership is incorporating your signature style throughout your home. From furniture and rugs to artwork and paint colors, there are so many ways you can make a space all your own.

But there's one space in the home that's often left untouched — the ceiling. Though rarely considered, it's a vital part of your home's story.

Whatever your design style, there are plenty of ways to dress up your fifth wall. Check out these ceiling styles that designers and architects are raving about:

Go Modern Minimalist

If you like sleek and elegant design schemes, minimalism is for you. A minimalist home has clean lines in a defined color palette. Forego bright color schemes and add elaborate elements sparingly.



Paint, tile and paneling in black or grey add engaging contrast to ceilings without stealing the show.

Add Some Rustic Charm

If you'd prefer a more accessible look, then rustic style is the answer. It's comfortable, warm and inviting with neutral tones and natural textures like wood and stone.



Wood is the order of the day with a rustic ceiling motif. Rough-hewn panels, bold beams or reclaimed wood will add stunning character to your barnhouse decor.

Keep It Traditional

If you're looking for a style that's casual and understated, consider a classic look. It's a great option whether you enjoy muted tones or simple pops of color.



For traditional ceilings, bright white paint with recessed lighting is a tried-and-true choice. Your cool and classic fifth wall can be flat or vaulted with lavish details like crown molding or coffers.

Bring the Focal Point Down

If a crisp, white ceiling is your preferred style, you can dress up your fifth wall with a custom pendant or light fixture.



Are you ready to get rid of those old popcorn ceilings? Don't be afraid to do a little research or contact a local real estate agent to get some referrals to interior designers in your area. (Article provided by The Diane Bennett Team, RE/MAX Capital City)

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Chez Vous 512 was created and designed with the desire to bring new dining experiences directly to your home. Owner and Executive Chef Alex Grimsley began his formal culinary journey at Bowie High School where he completed the school's award-winning Culinary program. He continued his education at the Culinary Institute of America earning a degree in Culinary Science. Chef Alex was trained in the classic French tradition but has experience with a wide variety of styles and menu types. He refined his culinary skills in Austin's and San Antonio's great kitchens including Sway, Fleming's Steak House, Bob's Chop House, Ming's Noodle House, Wunder Pig, and Pearl Snap Cuisine. Forging longstanding relationships with local providers and markets, Chef Alex knows the best places to source seasonal, fare trade, and locally raised ingredients for your event. He works with each client to understand the event, the attendees, and what the client hopes to achieve. Intimate dinner parties, fun and distinctive happy hours, sophisticated corporate or holiday parties, and in-home cooking classes and demonstrations are all offered. Chez Vous 512 will plan your event to the smallest detail and can also provide TABC certified bartenders, servers, and other services to make your event a success. **Make your Super-Bowl catered meals and party reservations now!** FREE side of scalloped potatoes with a Pastrami order! website: <http://www.chezvous512.com>, email: chefalex@chezvous512.com, Alex's phone: **512-423-2389** Call him!

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(This is a Professional Profiles In Circle C Ranch ad provided **FREE** from John Squires to promote small businesses within the neighborhood. If you have a small business you would like to promote, call John. It's John's way of giving back to the neighborhood.)

Chef Alex whipping up another delicious creation for you!

Pastrami, Prime Rib, Poke, Sirloin tostados. YUM!!

6106 Tasajillo Trail is "Just Sold!" Over \$150,000. in upgrades in 1508 sq. ft. Was offered at \$425,000. or \$282.00 per square foot with 2 days on the market. This was a record-setting price-per-foot in Circle C Ranch. Call John to allow him to list and sell your valuable home for the maximum price-per-foot also! We may get multiple offers for you too.

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Happy New Year



"I've been a real estate broker for over 50 years and wanted to pick the best agent to represent me in the sale of my home in Circle C. I awoke at 3:30 in the morning one night after dreaming that John Squires had already sold my home! It was an epiphany that turned into reality, as we hired John to do just that. We received multiple offers and John made the entire transaction smooth and effortless, as I knew he would. Thanks John! Ruth and Keith Bolsen"



7017 Kalahari Drive in Avana is "Just Sold!" in 10 days. Brand new home, never lived in. Quartz counters throughout kitchen and baths, "wood tile" throughout much of home. Big game room and open family room with surround sound! Covered patio with house gas is ready for parties! Was listed at \$575,000.



Circle C Ranch-Avana

7017 Vicenza—John is helping his clients build this stunning new Lennar home backing to greenbelt. Only 29 lots are left! Allow John to help you build your new dream home and sell your current residence for top price.



Circle C Ranch



Circle C Ranch

11501 Alberta Drive is John's new listing and is "Just Listed!" Gorgeous David Weekley 1-story with 4-car garage. Call John to see it!

10900 Bexley Lane is John's new listing and is "Just Listed!" Stunning custom builder's model Highland Home. Loaded 4/2.5 right behind Kiker. Don't wait on this one!

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Circle C Ranch 7017 Kalahari