

VOLUME 9, NUMBER 3
MARCH 2020

MERIDIAN *Community Monitor*

NEWS FOR THE RESIDENTS OF MERIDIAN

**READ MORE
ABOUT
BABY SQUIRREL
SEASON
ON PAGE 2**



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)

BABY SQUIRREL SEASON

What you need to know

By Cheryl Conley, TWRC Wildlife Center

And so it begins. Baby season 2020 and it all begins with baby squirrels. There are a number of reasons why baby squirrels get separated from mom. Homeowners cut down trees that have nests, high winds can blow nests down or can knock babies out of the nest or sometimes they just fall out. Whatever the reason, you can help.

The first thing you want to do is make sure the baby is safe and warm. Put it in a box or other small container with a soft towel or t-shirt. You can microwave a sock filled with rice for one minute and place it in the box with the baby or set 1/2 of the box on top of a heating pad set to low. **DO NOT TRY TO FEED IT.** If you do not see any blood on the baby and there are no ants crawling on it, you can try to reunite it with mom. A squirrel's real mom is the best mom.

1. Place the box with the baby squirrel in it near where you found the baby. You can also attach string or twine to the box and securely hang it from a low branch. Just remember to keep an eye on it from a distance so it's safe from dogs, cats and other predators.

2. Getting the baby to call for its mom can help. Sometimes gently picking up the baby will cause it to call her. You can also try holding one foot and applying gentle pressure. **DO NOT SQUEEZE HARD.** This is a tiny, fragile baby.

3. If it's raining lightly, cover half the box and put the baby on the dry half. If it's pouring, keep the baby inside until the rain lets up. Remember to **KEEP IT WARM.**

4. Be patient. It can take up to four hours for mom to come and get her little one. If she doesn't, you'll need the help of a rehabilitator. Bring the baby to us. If it's after hours, keep the baby in a quiet, dark room and keep it warm until we open. Do not attempt to feed it.

If you notice injuries, keep the baby safe and warm in a dark room until you can get it to us. Do not handle it.

If you'd like to help care for the baby squirrels that are brought to us, we have opportunities available to care for them at our Center or in your home. We will train you. For more information, email berry.moffett@twrcwildlifecenter.org or call 713.468.8972.

HOST FAMILIES NEEDED



Want to bring a little culture into your life and the lives of your children? Why not try hosting a high school foreign exchange student? It's a great way to learn about a new culture all from the comfort of your home.

STS Foundation is currently looking for host families for the 2020/2021 school year. Hosting is such a rewarding experience and it benefits all of those involved.

STS Foundation accepts all types of host families – from single parents, newly marrieds, empty nesters and same sex couples. In order to host, you would need to meet the following qualifications:

- **Host must be 25 years or older**
- **Pass a background check**
- **Provide food for 3 meals daily**
- **Ensure reliable transportation to and from school (bus is ok)**
- **A bed for your student**
- **A safe and loving home**

STS Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization that places foreign exchange students with American host families. For more information about hosting, please contact me at 832-455-7881 PM me or email at vicki.stsfoundation@yahoo.com.

INDIANMEAL MOTHS



Probably the most encountered pantry pest by homeowners is the Indianmeal moth. These moths can be found in pet food, birdseed, cereals, dried fruit, nuts, powdered milk, candy, and more. Food can become

infested while in fields, warehouses, or stores and then brought into the home with infested products.

Indianmeal moth adults are small with grayish wings tipped in copper. Larvae are creamy-yellow to yellowish-green to pinkish in color with a dark brown head. Larvae tend to feed on the top of infested items and may produce silk that binds the food together. When larvae are preparing to pupate, they leave the item where they were feeding and crawl to corners or edges of walls, shelves, containers, or other items to spin a silken cocoon.

To eliminate a pantry pest problem, the first step is to locate and remove all infested items. Begin with oldest food items, usually in the back of the pantry, and inspect everything, including unopened food items since these may also be a source. When you find an infested item, do not stop your inspection, multiple items can be infested. Not all pantry pest infestations come from the pantry. Check rooms for items such as dried, decorative peppers, dried flowers, potpourri, natural supplements, make-up, or rice heating packs.

Infested items can be thrown away or treated with heat or cold. If you don't want to throw away food, either place infested food in a zip-top plastic bag and place it in the freezer for about 5-7 days or spread infested food in a thin layer on a baking sheet and bake at 250 degrees for 4-6 hours to kill any insects. Once all insects are dead, you can sift the food or pick out the insects. Another option would be to leave the insects in the food and get a little more protein with your meal!

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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TIPS FOR SAFE NIGHTTIME DRIVING

Driving at night can be tricky—especially through neighborhoods or dimly lit landscapes—so it's important to keep in mind a few basic guidelines to make sure you and your vehicle both are well-prepared for the trip. Consider the following suggestions to help get you to your destination safely.

Ensure headlights are aimed properly. If you think your headlights are casting light too far above or below your line of vision on the road, you may need to adjust their aim. You can do this either by following instructions in your vehicle owner's manual or seeking help from a vehicle maintenance professional.

Dim dashboard lights. Most vehicle makes and models come with a dimmer for the instrument panel. Make sure it's set to the lowest brightness to limit distraction. Also remember to turn off overhead or visor lights while driving, which also can limit visibility at night.

Don't wear tinted glasses. Yellow lenses sold to enhance nighttime driving could actually decrease visibility instead of amplify colors and objects. If you wear prescription lenses, opt for an anti-reflective coating, and clean them thoroughly and frequently to optimize effectiveness at night.

Learn how to spot animals and objects. While driving at night, be on the lookout for wildlife creatures' eyes, which can easily be spotted as pairs of glowing retinas. Any animals' eyes—like raccoons or deer—typically will reflect the light from your headlights long before their true shapes come into view.

Don't focus on headlights in oncoming traffic. Keep your eyes on the road in front of you and avoid looking into the headlights of oncoming traffic—especially if you notice a car using the high-beam headlight setting. If the headlights on the car behind you cause a glare in your rearview mirror, adjust the mirror.

Clean your windshield. Use a clean microfiber cloth or newspaper to clean the windshield—inside and out. Make sure the windshield is streak- and smudge-free before driving at night, and try to avoid wiping window condensation with your hands. Fingerprints and oils from your skin can cause streaks that limit visibility in the dark.

Know when to use your fog lights. Many vehicles come equipped with fog lights, which typically are located underneath the front headlights and are aimed low, where fog usually appears on the road. Fog lights also can be useful on a particularly dark road to further illuminate your path.

Adjust your exterior mirrors. Pointing your side-view mirrors down slightly can help reduce glare from other drivers' headlights and still allow you to see by tipping your head forward a few inches.

Have your eyes checked. Your eyes' ability to keep moving and scan the landscape rather than solely focus on one spot is imperative for successful nighttime driving. Visit your eye doctor for regular checkups to determine whether prescription lenses could help you see better at night.





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For more information, contact Leslie Schulze at
512-329-5757 x320 or leslie@wondersandworries.org

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.

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Lettuce Recycle!

by Dena Houston

HILARIOUS RECYCLING!

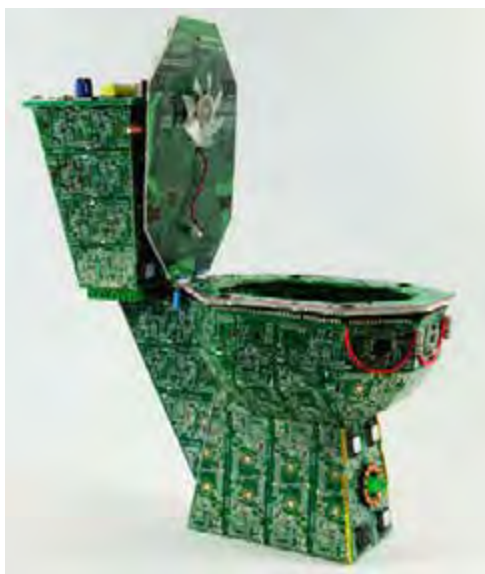
Recycling can be confusing and frustrating but it can also be hilarious and give us all a good laugh. Some people have really used their imaginations to take recycling to a wonderful “laugh producing” level.



SHOWER HEAD NEED
REPLACING?



NEED A
NEW BOAT?



HOW ABOUT A
CIRCUIT BOARD TOILET?



GAS CAN GUITAR
HOPE THE MUSIC
ISN'T TOO HOT!

Over the past four years of writing Lettuce Recycle, I have gotten some wonderful questions. I welcome these questions and always learn something new from each of them. Below is a “cheat sheet” for recycling. It doesn’t address all recycling questions but it helps provide a basic understanding of what can and cannot go into the blue curbside bin. I hope this helps.

RECYCLING CHEAT SHEET FOR THE BLUE BIN

1. Nothing smaller than a credit card.
2. No mixed materials (no plastic soap pump with metal spring, no candy wrappers, no orange juice cartons, no paper coffee cups).
3. No contaminated paper products (no wet paper (even if dried out), no pizza boxes, no food product on paper).
4. Nothing that can wrap around sorting machinery or that poses

a danger at the recycling facility (no plastic bags, wire coat hangers, rope, garden hoses, hypodermic needles, or aerosol cans with anything in them). Empty aerosol cans DO go into the blue bin.

5. Lid rules – All glass jars need to have their lids removed. Keep all plastic lids on plastic bottles and containers. All separate lids smaller than a credit card go into the trash. All separate lids larger than a credit card go into the blue bin.

NEIGHBOR RESPONSES TO “WHAT’S IN YOUR TRASH CAN”

I received some wonderful responses to my January article in Lettuce Recycle, “What’s in Your Trash Can”. Here they are:

1. Plastics without the numbered triangular symbol need to go into the trash can. Austin accepts plastics numbered 1-7 in the blue curbside bin. Although plastics numbered 1 and 2 are more readily recycled, our recycling facility (MRF) has a mill buyer for plastics 3-7.

2. Here is a reuse idea for guitar and other stringed instrument strings. One reader suggested the website below to recycle these strings. As a reminder, these strings cannot go into the blue bin. They wrap around the sorting equipment at the recycling facility. <https://www.secondstringsproject.org/>

3. Plastic utensils need to go into the trash can. Our local MRF used to take these, but they are too small to be properly sorted. Instead, you might use “BPI-certified compostable” cutlery that you can place into your green compost bin.

4. Instead of dryer sheets (which go into the trash can), use dryer balls that can be used over and over again.

5. Paper coffee cups are a huge recycling problem. Ask for a regular mug at your favorite coffee shop or, if you are “on the go”, use a reusable mug. Some coffee shops give a small discount for bringing in your own mug.

6. Partially filled aerosol cans are accepted at the Recycle & Reuse Drop-Off Center and do not have to go into the trash can.

AUSTIN CREATIVE REUSE CENTER IS MOVING

On March 4, 2020, this wonderful non-profit will be moving to 2005 Wheless Lane, just north of the Mueller development. Fans of this popular reuse organization are thrilled to see it grow into more space for donations, shopping, volunteering, community activities, and educational programming. Here is their website for more information:

<https://www.austincreativereuse.org/>

QUESTIONS FROM OUR READERS:

ARE PHOTOGRAPHS RECYCLABLE IN THE BLUE BINS?

Old photos are not recyclable because of the chemicals used in the photographic process. Newer digital photos are recyclable, much like magazines. To tell the difference, tear the photo. If it tears in layers, rather than cleanly ripping apart, you have an “old school” photo and need to put it into your trash can.

PLEASE REMEMBER – WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!!!

Here is a very informative City of Austin recycling website: <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.



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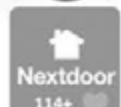


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