

### NWACA Platinum Business Sponsors of the Month

**Thank you to our sponsors for supporting the annual 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade and helping us to promote the interests of Northwest Austin!**

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### MESSAGE FROM THE NWACA BOARD PRESIDENT

- Joyce Statz

It's Spring!!! So many opportunities, so little time! It's a refrain for many, as we take advantage of all the great things to do in NWACA. This newsletter is full of notices about upcoming events and service opportunities, and I hope you find something that suits you well! The 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade, our best-attended event each year, takes a small army to run. If you can spare a few hours to help on this year's parade, let us know – see the article below about the Events Committee for the details.

You may remember a rebranding effort our Communications Committee undertook last year to give NWACA communications a new look and feel. One of the results is the new logo you see at the top of the newsletter and on Facebook. The next pieces are coming out in the next several months:

- A new web site is almost ready to launch; final developer checks are being done now, and then we'll review and finalize the content. We think you'll like the fresh look and feel!
- We'll be using a new email service called iContact, which gives us much more flexibility in the way we lay out messages than is possible with our current Yahoo Group. As we launch the web site, we'll also let you know how to get onto that new email service.
- Our newsletter will also be going through some big changes, as we arrange with a publishing specialist to produce our newsletter with paid advertising, so that we can provide paper copies to households throughout the neighborhood.

Finally, something on everyone’s mind – when will we see the PUD survey results? We had a tremendous number of responses to the survey, and a small team from your volunteer NWACA Board is still validating the responses to be sure they are from residents of NWACA. We’ll get the results out just as soon as we can.

**NWACA EVENTS and NEIGHBORHOOD EVENTS FOR YOUR CALENDAR**

Date	Location	Event (items in italics are organized by external groups)
Mar. 31, 8 AM	Kneaded Pleasures	NWACA Communications Committee
<i>April 1, 6:30 PM</i>	<i>Dougherty Arts Center</i>	<i>Imagine Austin Speaker Series: Creating Vibrant Green Cities [see article below]</i>
<i>April 1, 6:30 PM</i>	<i>3M Innovation Center, 6801 River Place</i>	<i>District 10 Town Hall Meeting on Affordable Housing (see article below for more details)</i>
Apr. 1, 7 PM	5305 Valburn Circle	NWACA Wildlife Management Committee
Apr. 2, 8 AM	Kneaded Pleasures	Membership and Sponsorship Committee
Apr. 6, Noon	Mangia Pizza	NWACA Zoning Committee
Apr. 7, 8 AM	Kneaded Pleasures	NWACA Parks Committee
Apr. 7, 6:30 - 8 PM	McCallum H.S., 5600 Sunshine Dr.	Region 1 APD Commander’s Forum for second quarter
Apr. 8, 6:30 – 8:30 PM	Mangia Pizza	NWACA Monthly Board Meeting
<i>Apr. 10 6:30 PM – 9 PM</i>	<i>Murchison Middle School</i>	<i>Murchison Matador Spring Fest (see more in the Schools News column below)</i>
<i>Apr. 11, 9-11 AM</i>	<i>Locations all over Austin</i>	<i>Clean Sweep Austin – sponsored by Keep Austin Beautiful; more info at <a href="http://www.KeepAustinBeautiful.org/cleansweep">http://www.KeepAustinBeautiful.org/cleansweep</a> (see Article below about cleanup at St. Edwards Park)</i>
<i>May 2, 9 AM - 3 PM</i>	<i>JJ Pickle Research Campus</i>	<i>City-wide Wildfire Survival Symposium – National Wildfire Community Preparedness Day</i>
<i>May 2, 10 AM – 4PM</i>	<i>North Austin locations</i>	<i>NxNA Garden Tour (see announcement below for more information)</i>

**DISTRICT 10 TOWN HALL MEETING – April 1 - Public Service Notice**

<p>Topic: <b>Affordable Housing</b>          When: Wednesday, <b>April 1</b> at 6:30pm          Where: 3M Innovation Center - 6801 River Place Blvd</p>	<p>Speaker Panel:          Francie Ferguson, HousingWorks Austin          Janine Sisak, The DMA Companies          Walter Moreau, Foundation Communities</p>
<p><i>Hosted by Council Member Sheri Gallo’s office</i></p>	

**ZONING UPDATE ON OVERLOOK - Joyce Statz**

The rezoning case for the Overlook at Spicewood Springs (4920 Spicewood Springs Road) is one that we’ve been reporting on since last year. The second version of the case went to its first reading before City Council on December 16, 2014, and the request was denied at that time. The developer has made some changes to the proposed site plan, now showing a 14,000 square-foot building. Diagrams that show those changes can be found in a news item on the home page of our web site [www.nwaca.org](http://www.nwaca.org)

This rezoning case will go before City Council for its 2nd and 3rd readings on **April 2, 2015**. This item is currently the first on the agenda for Zoning Cases, starting at 2:00 PM.

**IMAGINE AUSTIN SPEAKER SERIES – APRIL 1 – CREATING VIBRANT GREEN CITIES - City of Austin**

Join us for a panel discussion with Matthew Lewis, Assistant Director of Planning and Development Review, and Thomas Hardy, Ph.D. on the lessons learned from two great green infrastructure projects, one of them located an ocean away. Dr. Hardy is one of the principal designers of the Cheonggyecheon River Project in Seoul, South Korea.

The Cheonggyecheon was an all but forgotten river under the shadow of an elevated highway in the heart of Seoul, which was transformed as a metropolitan-scale green infrastructure park through an unprecedented effort of urban planning and design. Completed in 2005, the project re-made the river as the centerpiece of a 3.5-mile-long public park and the core of a multifaceted ecological, cultural, and economic redevelopment.

Matthew Lewis, the former Planning Director of the City of San Marcos will also discuss how they are using the local watershed to inform development decisions, promote sustainable design, and green-up that city.

**Wednesday, April 1, 6:30 PM**  
**Dougherty Arts Center, 1110 Barton Springs Road**

*Parking is very limited at the Dougherty Arts Center so please use alternative transportation, or park at One Texas Center (505 Barton Springs Road) and walk.*

**FREE YOUTH BASKETBALL CLINIC –Sign up by April 4 - Public Service Announcement for APD**

The Austin Police Department's **Police Activities League (PAL)** invites boys and girls 10 - 18 years of age to join us for a day of fun. Improve your skills as part of a team learning from some of the best players in Austin: APD Officers, Kealing Men Program, High School Coaches, Players, and College Athletes. **Register by April 4, 2015.** Call Dee Gonzales, Kealing Parent Support Specialist at (512)414-6700 or email [dee.gonzales@austinsd.org](mailto:dee.gonzales@austinsd.org)

**When:** April 18th, 2015  
**Time:** 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM  
**Where:** Kealing Middle School Gym, 1607 Pennsylvania Avenue, Austin, TX 78702  
Breakfast, Lunch & Snack Provided

**NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS NEWS - Jen Despina**

**Donations for Schools**

Want to provide a little love to an AISD school? If you are cleaning out closets, moving offices, or doing some extra shopping, you can donate your new or old items to a school. Schools are in need of all kinds of items such as: clothing, athletic shoes, bus passes, and even pencils and paper. Just go to the Austin Partners in Education website, [www.austinpartners.org/partner](http://www.austinpartners.org/partner) to see over 400 needs posted by AISD schools. Your support will make a huge difference.

**Murchison Fundraiser April 10th**

Murchison's Matador Spring Fest is coming soon - Friday April 10th! This is Murchison's big fair fundraiser, and there are many fun booths and activities for everybody. The event is held Friday from 6:30-9:00 PM. Proceeds fund classroom supplies, books for the library, special curriculum enhancements, teacher training, and so much more!

**COMMITTEE SPOTLIGHT – NWACA EVENTS COMMITTEE**

**- Rebecca Leightman**



Enjoy seeing people have fun? Like planning a big party? We have just the spot for you! The NWACA Events Committee coordinates our various neighborhood events, including the City's best 4th of July Parade and family-friendly events like summertime movies at the pool. We're looking for interested players to join us right now to put together this year's 4<sup>th</sup> of July event, and we're always looking for creative people who want to develop new adventures for our neighborhood.

Many hands make light work, so we want to build a large committee where each participant can be in charge of a small piece, so no one individual is overwhelmed. Send us a note at [nwacainfo@gmail.com](mailto:nwacainfo@gmail.com) or to [rebeccaleightman@hotmail.com](mailto:rebeccaleightman@hotmail.com) and let's talk!

**NWACA CRIME AND SAFETY UPDATE**

**- Cuatro Groos**

We had a great turnout at the March 3<sup>rd</sup> forum on Crime Prevention. Fifty residents came to hear tips on making their homes and blocks less attractive to thieves.

Four new Block Captains have volunteered to establish Neighborhood Watches on their block. The NWACA Facebook Group has also been a tremendous communication tool to raise awareness.

Last year in 78731 we had eight home burglaries and two attempted home burglaries between February 19th and March 19th, including four burglaries in a single day during Spring Break. This year we had just one burglary in that same time period.


We know criminals are still out there. Burglary of vehicles has been an issue lately in the neighborhood, and the Scofield Farms neighborhood northeast of us has had nine burglaries in the last month (4 during Spring Break).

Neighborhood Watch and the increased communication/awareness among residents have made a significant impact- keep up the good work, neighbors!

For information and resources on NWACA Neighborhood Watch, visit our web site at this link: <https://sites.google.com/site/nwaca2org/committee-overview/crime-and-safety/neighborhood-watch-info>.

**REMINDER - DO NOT PRUNE OAKS – FEBRUARY THROUGH JUNE**

**Prevent Oak Wilt**  
**DO NOT PRUNE OAKS**  
**FEB thru JUNE**  
Oak Wilt Carrier Beetle Peak Season



[www.nwaca.org](http://www.nwaca.org)  
 NWACA northwest austin civic association

Tree Trimming companies are busy soliciting business in NWACA neighborhoods. Don't let them prune your live oaks or red oaks until July. Until then, sap beetles are attracted to fresh tree wounds and can transmit the oak wilt fungus to a healthy oak tree during pruning. The heat of July-August is believed to suppress the beetles and reduce the risk of infection. However, all trees are under the normal stress of summer, depending on soil moisture, and some trees are still in the latter part of their growing season. So if you haven't completed pruning, it's best to wait until fall.

## TRANSPORTATION UPDATE - LOOP 360 CONGESTION RELIEF STUDY

- Robert Thomas

According to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), "In 2014, Loop 360 was the 98th most congested road in Texas with over 155,000 annual hours of delay per mile. It is particularly congested during 'rush hour,' taking over 60 percent longer to travel during peak travel periods than during normal, free-flow conditions."

TxDOT is currently conducting another corridor improvement study for Loop 360 from US 290/SH 71 to North MoPac (Loop 1). This study seeks to engage stakeholders throughout the community to identify needs and gather feedback and ideas on **potential short- and long-term mobility and safety improvements** for the corridor. The goal of the study is to identify potential improvements that will maximize safety and mobility while balancing competing stakeholder interests. It will initially look at intersection and operational improvements throughout six sections of Loop 360, and will then analyze the cumulative impact on corridor congestion as if all these individual improvements could be funded and constructed. Lastly, the study will examine the potential impacts of major corridor-wide solutions such as removing traffic signals on through traffic.

The study seeks input from neighborhoods, businesses, property owners, commuters, bicyclists, pedestrians, and others who use Loop 360. The process involves four main steps:

1. Identify – Engage stakeholders in identifying problems and defining goals for improvements.
2. Evaluate – Form stakeholder working groups to evaluate potential solutions.
3. Refine – Refine potential solutions, disseminate them to stakeholders, and solicit feedback.
4. Present – Present study results and identify next steps.

Please go to [www.Loop360Study.com](http://www.Loop360Study.com) and take the survey!

Are you interested in helping with traffic and congestion issues confronting our community? NWACA can always use your help. If interested on serving on the NWACA Transportation Committee, please email [nwacainfo@gmail.com](mailto:nwacainfo@gmail.com)

## GREAT RESPONSE TO IT'S MY PARK DAY – THANK YOU!

- Caroline Alexander



A big "Thank you!" to the volunteers who came to Stillhouse Hollow Nature Preserve and Murchison Pool on March 7 for It's My Park Day. The events were huge successes!

At Stillhouse Hollow, the 18 volunteers painted the gate, cleared out brush, and collected tons of garbage and recycling from the south side of the preserve.

At Murchison Pool, the 21 volunteers mulched all of the trees both inside the fence and outside, raked and bagged more than 20 bags of leaves, and began the large task of removing the wild grapevine.

Our parks look much more beautiful and cared-for thanks to these dedicated neighbors and volunteers.



## CodeNEXT: EVOLUTION OF OUR LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE - David Whitworth, Zoning Committee

### Upcoming Public Meeting – April 6

6 PM – 8 PM

Pleasant Hill Branch Library, 211 E. William Cannon Drive, 78745



The next meeting of the CodeNEXT Community Advisory Group (CAG) is focused on hearing public comments on CodeNEXT. Citizens with comments about any aspect of CodeNEXT are invited to attend.

### CodeNEXT Background

The last city council adopted "Imagine Austin" unanimously as our city's comprehensive plan in 2012. City Charter requires our land development code to facilitate the goals of our comprehensive plan, and that is why CodeNEXT is being developed. The last council approved a general approach to the code rewrite known as "The Deep Clean and Reset." The CAG recently split up into three workgroups focusing on 1) affordability; 2) infill, compatibility, and missing middle; and 3) obstacles for small business. To see the workgroup findings or to sign up for CAG meeting notifications, use this link:

<https://www.austintexas.gov/codenext>

The next major milestone will be a draft of our new code, to be delivered in the next six months by Opticos, the consultant to the City on CodeNEXT. This draft will go through public review, then for approval by City Council.

### Ongoing Efforts

Some interesting ongoing efforts of note:

- Council is considering a resolution to appoint additional members to the CAG. The CAG is set to expire this summer, possibly before the draft code is complete, so we expect action because of that, as well.
- Another resolution is in the works for revised language within Imagine Austin that would "preserve" existing zoning within neighborhood plans. In some cases, this may be considered backtracking on making updates to the code to meet Imagine Austin community goals. (NWACA has no neighborhood plan and would not be affected.)
- The Residential Design and Compatibility Commission is being dissolved, but it has been suggested that a new commission be created to "protect neighborhoods from CodeNEXT." The Imagine Austin comprehensive plan was unanimously adopted by council after years of stakeholder input through an extensive public process. It is unclear how a commission with such a focus supports the comprehensive plan and the code to facilitate the plan.

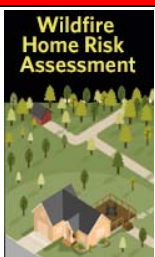
To monitor the ongoing activity with the Land Development Code, see this City web site:

<http://www.austintexas.gov/codenext>

The Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan that underpins these efforts can be found online here:

<http://www.austintexas.gov/department/our-plan-future>

## IS YOUR HOME FIRE-HARDENED? SIGN UP FOR YOUR FREE WILDFIRE RISK ASSESSMENT



The NWACA Wildfire Prevention Committee can help you minimize the risk to your home from wildfire. Certified assessors are ready to do a free assessment of your home with you, so you know how to harden your home.

To arrange an assessment or to get more information about preventing wildfire, go to [www.nwaca.org](http://www.nwaca.org) and click on the [Firewise Request](#) link at the left side of the home page. If you do not have internet access, please mail us at: NWACA, P.O. Box 26654, Austin, TX 78755

## COYOTE PUP REARING SEASON IS HERE

- Carolyn Abernathy

Throughout this year, the NWACA Wildlife Committee will provide education about how to minimize conflict with and damage from coyotes in our neighborhood. Each article will be archived on the NWACA web site for quick and easy access, in the Coyote References files.

Now is the time to be aware of coyote pup rearing season. Here are some valuable facts:

- Coyotes breed in February and March; pups are born about 60 days later.
- During this time, territorial male coyotes do not tolerate other canines in their territory; many conflicts between coyotes and domestic dogs result from this territorial behavior.
- An average coyote litter contains 4 or 5 pups, born in dens. In urban environments, dens can be in storm drains, under storage drains, in holes dug in vacant lots, parks, golf courses or any other dark, dry place.
- Coyote pups are cared for, fed, and protected by both parents. The pups mature quickly and can eat meat and move about well by the time they are a month old.
- Food requirements of the nursing females and the growing young remain high until late summer. As people and their pets spend more time outdoors during this time, the possibility of a coyote encounter increases.
- It is not unusual to observe a family of coyotes traveling through urbanized areas.
- If food is deliberately or inadvertently provided by people, the pups quickly learn not to fear humans and develop a dependency on easy food sources.



As a reminder, evaluate what food attractants you may be inadvertently providing. Pick ripe fruit from trees and off the ground, secure garbage and compost bins, don't feed pets outdoors, don't throw food scraps for wildlife, keep bird feeders from overflowing, eliminate artificial water sources. Additionally, close off crawl spaces under porches, decks, and sheds! Thank you for sharing this information with your neighbors!

Sources: *Wildlife Services, Factsheet, December 2011, "Coyotes in Towns and Suburbs". Colorado Parks & Wildlife, "Your Guide to Avoiding Human-Coyote Conflicts"*

## KEEP THE INVASIVE PLANTS UNDER CONTROL

- John Warden

With perhaps the deepest soil moisture we've seen in several springs, your favorite trees probably have a good growth season ahead. But so do the invasive trees, shrubs, and vines that might have a foothold in your yard, like certain varieties of ligustrum, chinaberry, pyracantha, nandina, and japonica. In just a few years these can change the visual character of your neighborhood, the wildlife habitat around your home, and the competition for scarce moisture through the summer. To identify common invasive species and decide what can stay and what must go, see the **AustinTop 24 Invasives** list at <http://www.austintexas.gov/invasive>

## WATER HEATER REQUIREMENTS CHANGING – ARE YOU AFFECTED?

- Public Service Notice

New water heater requirements take effect April 16<sup>th</sup> that homeowners need to understand. New efficiency rules dictate that some heaters become larger; thus replacement water heaters made after that date may not fit in the same spaces as the current water heaters in some homes. These new water heaters are more efficient, and will save billions of dollars in energy savings over the coming years. However, if your water heater is in a tight space, and you expect to replace it soon, you may want to consider doing so before April 15. See these links for more background information: <http://www.appliance-standards.org/product/water-heaters> and <http://www.consumerreports.org/cro/news/2015/03/read-this-before-replacing-your-water-heater.html>

## FIREWISE TIP OF THE MONTH – HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU HAVE?

- Al Simmons

Last month's "Firewise Tip of the Month" concentrated on preparing to escape a wildfire well before it occurred. It talked about preplanning for a place "away from home" to stay in the event of a wildfire, getting your "escape bags" ready and in a easily accessible place, taking care of your whole family with particular attention to your children and pets, and getting in the car and going!! What it didn't talk about was how much time you have from the time you know about the fire until it is "knocking on your door!" Nobody really knows! It depends on lots of things...so, keep reading.

Many of us in NWACA are immediately adjacent to a valley that is full of trees and underbrush and almost ALL of us are within one mile of such a valley. Our valleys are beautiful and make us feel like we live in the country, but they can also be a dangerous source for urban wildfires. My family and I live on the rim of one of these valleys - the north rim, and we look south right into the valley, right into the wind coming from the southwest almost every day. Because of our orientation toward Lake Austin and the bridge over the lake, our valley normally has wind ranging from 5 MPH to 25 MPH blowing over our house; late in the afternoon, 35 to 40 MPH is fairly common. It's really cool and comfortable; but put a fire in the middle of that valley, and it could be HOT REALLY FAST! And fires create additional heat, which enhances the wind; that is, the wind blows harder and the embers and fire move faster, and that reduces the time for you to get out of your house and to a place of safety.

Our subdivision has a single two-way street with 45 residences trying to leave all at once, and fire trucks and other equipment might be trying to get into our area at the same time. The estimate among our folks is that, depending on the conditions, we could have as little as 5 minutes to escape. The termination of our street is a turn-around cul-de-sac at a dead-end of about 150 yards. There is just one way in, and one way out; this is fairly common among subdivisions of NWACA.

In addition to the congestion of outgoing and incoming traffic on the street, another major factor in how much time you have to escape is how quickly you find out about a potentially dangerous fire. The Emergency Notification System (also known as Reverse 911) operated by the Capital Area Council of Governments provides simultaneous official notifications to everyone in a given emergency area. You can register both land line and cell phones to be contacted by voice mail and/or text at this link: <http://alertregistration.com/capcog/> Everyone in your local neighborhood should be signed up, so all can be notified.

To help prepare your HOA or (if you don't have an HOA) the local neighborhood along your street, consider having your group become a Firewise Community. By doing so, you can work with the neighbors in your community to get everyone familiar with

- Facts about wildfire and the level of threat to your Community
- How to minimize the risk to the people and homes in your Community
- How to harden your home and landscape to be as resilient as possible in case of fire
- How to work together as a group to eliminate the wildfire fuel in common areas, and help each other minimize the risk to homes in your community

If you don't have enough time to evacuate, is your home well-hardened so that it could potentially survive and be your sheltering place? For most of us that takes a bit of work to our homes and our landscapes. If you haven't done so, identify your current risks and what you might do about them. NWACA offers **free** wildfire risk assessments done by trained teams of volunteer assessors. They review the exterior of your home and your landscape with you and suggest hardening techniques being implemented around the country. Visit the NWACA web site [www.nwaca.org](http://www.nwaca.org) to learn more or to sign up for a Firewise Assessment; use the Firewise Request link.



## A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR MEMBERS

- Membership and Sponsorship Committee

NWACA would like to thank our members who have so generously contributed to the Oak Wilt Fund, the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade Fund, or the Park Fund, between February 19, 2015 and March 26, 2015.

Donations to the Oak Wilt Fund provide financial assistance to property owners dealing with oak wilt. With this assistance, NWACA can reimburse forty percent of a pre-approved homeowner's expenses, up to a maximum \$1,000 reimbursement. NWACA policy requires that a property owner obtain an assessment of oak wilt infection, or risk of infection in healthy oaks, from an arborist with ASI oak wilt certification.

Donations to the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade Fund help NWACA to host the best 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade in Austin! In 2015, we will be celebrating our 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual parade on July 4<sup>th</sup>.

The Park Fund helps us revitalize parks in NWACA with projects such as the improvements planned at Murchison Pool Park and cleanup days at several of our parks.

**This month, we owe a special thanks to the member who provided more than \$1500 this month to defray costs from last year's Murchison Pool improvements – we are amazed and blessed! Thank you so much!!**

• Anonymous	• Sylvia and Arch Bell
• Zarine Gautam	• Nancy Jane and Tom Griffith
• Ed and Elizabeth Horne	• Debra Judd
• Pamela and Jim Lodwick	• Myrtle and Tom McGaha Sr.
• Dorothy and John Strance	

## CONVERSATION CORPS ANNOUNCEMENT

- City of Austin

The City of Austin, in partnership with Capital Metro, AISD, and Leadership Austin, has launched a new initiative called Conversation Corps, and we want your neighborhood to be involved!

Conversations began Friday, March 20. This first round had 12 conversations over the course of two weeks, at varied times of day, all around town. The topic was "How can Conversation Corps add value to our community?" These sessions gathered input from participants about the value of this program and the issues they'd like to see as future conversation topics. The partnering organizations are using this feedback to map out monthly topics based on both their needs and the community's desires.

Details about the program can be found at [atxtalks.org](http://atxtalks.org). You can follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) and share our posts with your network. Also, if you'd like to receive email updates directly, please subscribe to the official Conversation Corps email list [here](#), and encourage others to do the same.

### **What is Conversation Corps?**

Conversation Corps gives individuals the opportunity to participate in important conversations about issues affecting our community. Each month we'll bring a conversation to your area, led by a volunteer host who wants to hear your voice. We make the arrangements so all you have to do is show up, share your thoughts and listen to the thoughts of others.

Then, we'll deliver your feedback to the decision makers behind each issue and give you the resources you need to stay in the loop and hear how your input affected decisions. Come put your ideas on the table - We've saved a seat for you!

## COMMANDER'S FORUM DATES FOR 2015

Dates have been set for the quarterly Commanders Forum for our area of Austin, Region 1, Central West and North Central. Here are the upcoming dates and meeting places for the meeting which cover all of NWACA, plus more neighborhoods:

- Tuesday, April 7, 2015 - 6:30 - 8 PM - McCallum High School, 5600 Sunshine Dr.
- Tuesday, July 7, 2015 - 6:30 - 8 PM - Cornerstone Church, 1101 Reinli St.
- Tuesday, October 13, 2015 - 6:30 - 8 PM - McCallum High School, 5600 Sunshine Dr.

## CLEAN SWEEP OPPORTUNITY AT ST. EDWARDS PARK – APRIL 11

- Rick Brimer

The Keep Austin Beautiful Foundation is holding a City wide event on April 11 called **Clean Sweep**. The purpose of the event is to work on sections of the City's Parks that need litter pickup. I am putting together a list of folks interested in spending a several hours on April 11th (9-11) cleaning up St. Edwards Park. It is several miles west of Loop 360 on the south side of Spicewood Springs Road. The Bull Creek Foundation and Keep Austin Beautiful will provide trash bags and other supplies.

If you are interested or if you have any questions, please email me at [rickb921@aol.com](mailto:ricker921@aol.com) Additional details will follow. Thanks in advance for your participation.

Rick Brimer, President  
Bull Creek Foundation

## HAPPENING BEYOND THE NEIGHBORHOOD – NxNA GARDEN TOUR MAY 2

- Mary Rudig

*Here is an event that a group has asked us to publicize to our neighbors.*

Are you ready for the only event that is truly North Austin?  
The North x North Austin Garden Tour is May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 10 AM to 4 PM  
Tickets are available for a suggested donation of \$10.

What will ten dollars buy you?

**12 Private Gardens**  
**Access to a School Garden and Community Gardens**  
**Funding beautification and parks projects for North Austin**  
**Support for the *only* annual event that is for North Austin**  
**Support North Austin artists – yes, there will also be artists on the tour!**

Create. Connect. Grow. Love North Austin.

[www.lovenorthaustin.com](http://www.lovenorthaustin.com)  
contact us: [info@lovenorthAustin.com](mailto:info@lovenorthAustin.com)

Love North Austin is volunteer run and community supported.  
Thank you for supporting us and North Austin!



Each month we feature helpful information from the Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program, provided by Program Specialist Wizzie Brown.

First off, let me mention that a pest is all a matter of perspective. There are insects that are commonly thought of as pests that can also be considered beneficial when viewed through the proper lens. An easy example would be termites. People are very unhappy when they find termites eating the cellulose material in their home, but in a natural setting, termites help break down cellulose material when trees fall in the forest. Of course, this works both ways. A flipped example is ladybird beetles. They are often called beneficial insects because they help to consume aphids and other small, soft-bodied insects that attack desired plants. I have seen ladybird beetles by the thousands enter my parents' home to overwinter. These beetles are not the kind little helpers that ladybugs are made out to be- they dive bomb you, bite you and can stain fabrics with a fluid they exude. So keeping that in mind, let us proceed with a few "beneficials" you may find in the landscape.



#### Ladybird beetles a.k.a ladybugs

Ladybird beetle adults come in a variety of sizes and colors. Many of them are some shade of red and often have spots. Eggs are often laid in clusters near a food source, often aphids. The eggs are a yellowish-orange color and look like footballs sitting up on their end. Most larvae are elongated and a blackish-grey color with orange markings. Ladybird beetles pupate on the plant and pupae are non-moving. The adults and larvae are the stages that help to control soft-bodied pests such as aphids, whiteflies, mealybugs and scale insects.

#### Praying Mantises

Praying mantises are general predators in the nymphal and adult stages. They are also cannibalistic. Adults are fairly large insects with an elongated prothorax and front legs modified for capturing prey. Nymphs look similar to adults but are smaller and do not have fully developed wings. Adult females lay egg cases on small twigs and branches. At first the egg case looks like a frothy mass, but it soon hardens into an elongated, ridged case.

#### Spiders

Spiders are not insects, but arachnids. They have two body regions and eight legs which differentiates them from insects. Spiders are a large group with many shapes, colors and sizes. They are general predators as immatures and adults. For more information on specific spiders, see the spider ID article from the May 2011 issue of the Compost Bin here:

<http://www.tcmastergardeners.org/newsletter/2011/News2011.05.pdf>

There are many more beneficial creatures that help keep pest populations in check. Before you decide to utilize a pesticide to manage a pest, take a closer look to see if nature is already controlling pests for you.

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

*The information given herein is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names is made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by Texas AgriLife Extension Service or the Texas AgriLife Research is implied. Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability, or national origin.*

## CONTACT INFORMATION FOR SHERI GALLO'S OFFICE

- Public Service Notice

**Office line:** 512-978-2110      **Web site:** <http://district10austin.com/>

### **Office Staff:**

Tina Cannon, Policy Aide for Audit & Finance, Austin Energy, Economic Opportunity, Health & Human Services, Public Safety and Public Utilities: [Tina.Cannon@austintexas.gov](mailto:Tina.Cannon@austintexas.gov)

Suzie Chase, Constituent Liaison: [Suzie.Chase@austintexas.gov](mailto:Suzie.Chase@austintexas.gov)

Taylor Smith, Policy Aide for Housing & Community Development, Mobility, Planning & Neighborhoods and Open Spaces: [Taylor.Smith@austintexas.gov](mailto:Taylor.Smith@austintexas.gov)

### **Council Meeting Dates**

Council Meetings: 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month

Council Work Sessions: 1st, 2nd and 3rd Tuesday of the month

Council Zoning Meetings: 2nd Thursday of the month

Austin Energy Council Committee Meetings: 4th Thursday of the month

**Council meetings schedule details:** <http://www.austintexas.gov/department/city-council/council-meetings>

## NWACA FACEBOOK PRESENCE – COMMUNICATING AND SHARING

Are you on Facebook? Join our Facebook group at <http://www.facebook.com/#!/groups/299472207877/> to be part of neighborhood conversations on everything from local events to lost dogs, reporting suspicious criminal activity, and exchanging referrals on residential services (as well as feedback on negative experiences). Get to know your neighbors online!

Due to the group's huge popularity NWACA now also has its own community Facebook page dedicated to NWACA events at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/NWACA-Northwest-Austin-Civic-Association/563320463775985>

There is also a special-purpose Facebook group for information about the Austin Oaks PUD at this link: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/213579268812724/>

## REMINDER ABOUT NOT FEEDING THE DEER

Some new neighbors may not be aware that feeding deer is prohibited in Austin. If you see someone feeding deer, let them know that it's bad for the deer, and it's a violation of a City ordinance. If the feeding persists, you can report it by calling 3-1-1. The Code Compliance Department will send someone to talk with the neighbor.

**CRIME AND SAFETY TIP – VEHICLE SAFETY**

**- Officer Darrell Grayson**

*One of the two most common crimes in the NWACA area is vehicle burglaries. Though we've published tips about this before, the fact that these crimes continue tells us it bears repeating!*

The last thing you need is to find your vehicle's window broken or items missing. We suggest taking these simple but important steps to maintain your car's safety:

Don't leave valuables in your car. That sounds like "common sense," but drivers/passengers do leave items of value in plain view every day. If you leave valuable items visible in your car, your car is automatically a target.

If you must leave valuable items in your car while out and about, place items out of sight before reaching your destination or move them inconspicuously. This includes packages, backpacks, gym bags, GPS units, MP3 players, and so forth. Someone may be watching when you put items under a seat or throw something over them. An opportunistic thief is on the lookout for trunk-packing, and can break into your car the minute you're out of sight.

If you can't take them with you, at least lock the items in your glove compartment (if capable of locking and large enough) or your trunk (if you have one).

One reason SUVs and pickups are common auto-burglary targets is because they don't have a "trunk" to hold valuables — the driver/passenger generally just "hides" their valuables "out of sight." Thieves know this, and they check glove compartments, behind seats, and under seats. It only takes a few seconds to check all the "usual" hiding places.

Unobtrusively locking everything valuable "in the trunk" (if you have one) may be difficult when you're combining errands at multiple destinations. Plan your shopping/errands so that you don't load your trunk until you are ready to drive to another destination. Never open a trunk, fill it full of valuables, close it, and then just walk away.

**CAN WE SEE YOU? CAN YOU SEE US?**

If you're walking or running in the street, are you able to catch the eye of the driver of the car or truck or motorcycle in your lane? Please remind your family and friends, as you are out walking and running in the street that you need to be facing the traffic. It's the law for a reason - it's the safe way!

On some of our streets, the best place to be is the sidewalk – even if you're not facing the traffic. On streets that are marked for bicycles (perhaps also with a parking lane), there's too little space for walkers and bikes and cars; so use the sidewalk if one is available there.

When out at night on the street, please wear something reflective, to help drivers see you in the dark or dusk. Thanks!



## CITY OF AUSTIN "SCOOP THE POOP" SIGNS AVAILABLE



Some of our neighbors have expressed an interest in yard signs that remind dog-walkers to pick up after their dogs. The City of Austin has provided us small free yard signs that can be used to remind our friends to 'scoop the poop' as they walk their dogs.

We have a batch of those signs for distribution to anyone who'd like one. If you would like one, please let us know at [nwacainfo@gmail.com](mailto:nwacainfo@gmail.com) or send us a message via U.S. mail.

## TAP SIGNS AVAILABLE

The Traffic Awareness Program (TAP) signs are a very visible way for you to raise awareness about the excessive speeds on our residential streets, cautioning drivers to slow down. To show your support, place a free "Please Slow Down" sign in your front yard!

If you would like a sign, please contact us at [nwacainfo@gmail.com](mailto:nwacainfo@gmail.com)



## CALL 9-1-1 FOR EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

The 9-1-1 emergency number gets you a response for a wide variety of issues:

- Life-threatening issues – house on fire, person having a heart attack, burglary in progress, etc.
- Health-related crises – someone can't catch their breath, incapacitated person needs a lift out of the bathtub, and more.
- If you're unsure, err on the side of caution!

Call 9-1-1 and you will get a quick and kind response from EMS, APD, and Austin Fire Department personnel.

## CALL 3-1-1 FOR ASSISTANCE WITH ANY NON-EMERGENCY ACTION BY THE CITY OF AUSTIN

The City of Austin provides one number, 3-1-1, that citizens may call for things like the following:

- Coyote sightings or howling – provide an exact street address, so the trapper can locate them
- Reporting trees that have fallen and block roadways or sidewalks, or those that drag on power lines
- Reporting dead animals for pickup; they must be placed at the curb, though; City personnel are not allowed to enter our yards to gather them
- Problems with loose dogs or traffic signals not working
- Reporting instances of people feeding deer
- And more.

Call 3-1-1 or file a request at <http://austin-p1csrprodcwi.motorolasolutions.com/Home.mvc/Index>

The City also has a smartphone 311 app now. See this link for more information:

<http://www.austintexas.gov/department/311/smart-phone-app>

## NWACA MAILING LIST – IT'S FAST AND FRIENDLY!

If you're among the NWACA members getting this newsletter by U.S. mail, but you also have an email address, please let us know your email address and let us deliver the newsletter and other news to you that way. You can easily click on the many links in the newsletter to find more detailed information, and you'll get your news much sooner than if you wait for it from "snail mail!" When we sign you up for the email list, we'll give you a clear explanation of how to set up your options.

## WHY JOIN NWACA?

The Northwest Austin Civic Association is your neighborhood association! NWACA represents YOU on issues like:

- Crime (how to prevent car and home break-ins, interacting with APD on issues)
- Transportation (raising awareness about excessive vehicle speeds and tracking new traffic lights).
- Zoning concerns
- Wildfire Prevention (helping homeowners harden their homes against wildfire)

NWACA plans the annual 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade (42<sup>nd</sup> Annual in 2014!), organizes election and issues forums, sponsors an annual neighborhood garage sale, publishes a newsletter and much, much more!

## NWACA Membership Form

Send annual dues of **\$25** with this form to: NWACA, P.O. Box 26654, Austin, TX 78755

Homeowner Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email #1 (kept private; print): \_\_\_\_\_

Email #2 (kept private; print): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (*with area code*): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have school-age children in our local schools? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

*(Our monthly newsletter includes a schools column, which you might want to review.)*

Annual Dues: \$25

(Optional) 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade Contribution: \$10\_\_\_ \$20\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_

(Optional) Oak Wilt Fund Contribution: \$10\_\_\_ \$20\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_

(Optional) Parks Fund Contribution: \$10\_\_\_ \$20\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_

*(You can also pay via PayPal by following this link on our web site: [Join NWACA](#) )*

*(If you've already paid your dues for this year, please pass this on to a neighbor who is not yet a member.)*

### **Volunteers are always needed on our committees.**

*Please mark those you'd like to know more about, and a Committee Chair will contact you.*

*Thanks very much!*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Civic Engagement                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Parks                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crime and Safety/Neighborhood Watch | <input type="checkbox"/> Tree and Environment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Events                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Wildfire Prevention  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> History                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife Management  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership and Sponsorship          | <input type="checkbox"/> Zoning               |