



Message from the NWACA President - Joyce Statz

Welcome, Everyone, to the New NWACA Newsletter!

With this issue, we're moving to a format that has both the rich content readers are used to, as well as advertising that enables us to have the newsletter delivered to everyone's home in the NWACA area. While we've been able to send postcards to the whole area (like the one a few weeks ago that highlighted the NWACA Annual Meeting), we haven't been able to send out the newsletter so broadly. We hope you find helpful information here, and we look forward to your feedback and suggestions. For those who haven't seen our newsletter before, you may be wondering "What is NWACA?" The Northwest Austin Civic Association (NWACA) serves a neighborhood of about 4150 homes, covering the area bounded by Spicewood Springs Road on the north, RM 2222 on the south, Mopac on the east, and Loop 360 on the west. NWACA was formed 46 years ago, responding to a request from the City Planning Department to have a group to act as a voice for the neighborhood for City issues. Unlike homeowner's associations, a civic association does not enforce deed restrictions or monitor landscaping at individual homes, but it deals with broad concerns that span the whole neighborhood, such as crime prevention, traffic safety, wildfire prevention, and zoning matters.

NWACA has a focused mission: to preserve, promote, and enhance the exceptional and unique character of the neighborhood. That mission is carried out through a wide range of activities and services that are performed by an elected volunteer board and a dozen committees of volunteers:

- monitoring key municipal and county issues and advocating for the neighborhood
- addressing fire safety, transportation, crime prevention, oak wilt and other environmental concerns, wildlife management, zoning and planning, and other matters as they arise
- keeping residents informed of relevant news and happenings
- sponsoring neighborhood events and working to build a strong sense of community,

In this issue, you'll find articles that cover key areas in the list above, as well as others:

The annual 4th of July Parade – just around the corner! Read about how to get involved.

Preventing Oak Wilt – basic facts about this awful tree disease, very expensive to treat and control, but very simple to prevent; part of our

neighborhood have spent tens of thousands of dollars on oak wilt treatment over the years, and we're starting to see it erupt again.

Recognizing Coyotes – how to tell a coyote from a dog; parts of NWACA are seeing a resurgence of coyotes in the last year, and this is the fifth in a series of educational articles about living with coyotes in urban areas like ours

Myths about Wildfire – facing some fact, dispelling some myths, this is 17th in a series of tips about preventing wildfire, a significant issue to our neighborhood in the continuing drought

Update on the Austin Oaks PUD – a summary of what's been happening with this significant zoning case in our neighborhood

Our committees are the secret to keeping the NWACA neighborhood vibrant, and we welcome involvement from everyone! We're very pleased that Julie DePalma has stepped up to be our 4th of July Parade Chair, and she's doing a fabulous job of gathering a team to make the parade a great success! In this issue we highlight the opportunities available with our Membership Committee. See if that suits your interests. That committee and others are described in more detail on our web site www.nwaca.org, where you'll also find recent issues of the newsletter, and previous articles in our series about coyotes and wildfire prevention. Some of these are in the Resource Library files; some in the Blog area – explore!

While many enjoy reading a newsletter in print format, some would rather have the newsletter delivered only electronically. To do so, go to this link: <http://www.peelinc.com/residents.php> and click "Receive Your Newsletter." You'll see a set of options to manage your subscription. iPhone and iPad users can also download the Peel Inc app from the App Store and subscribe to receive it on your phone.

The activities and services described above are made possible by the neighbors who join as members of NWACA and by our wonderful business sponsors. You'll find information on page 2 about major business sponsors, and there's information at the back of the newsletter about how you can become a member. Your modest \$25/year helps make big things happen – like our 4th of July Parade!

If you have any questions or comments, or want to know more about some aspect of NWACA, please contact us at nwacainfo@gmail.com or at our postal address: P.O. Box 26654, Austin, TX 78755.

Enjoy the issue!



IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Austin Citywide Information Center.....512-974-2000 or 311
Emergency, Police..... 911
Non-emergency (coyote sightings, compliance issues) 311
APD District Representative, Officer Gary Griffin 512-974-8392

2015 NWACA Board of Directors

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Each of the Board members can be reached at: nwacainfo@gmail.com

The NWACA Board meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month, except December. Please visit our calendar at www.nwaca.org to see the specific time and location. If you wish to speak at a Board meeting, please send email a week before the meeting, so that we can get you on the agenda.

NWACA is bordered on the north by Spicewood Springs Road, on the west by Loop 360, on the south by RM 2222, and on the east by Mopac (Loop 1).

NWACA PLATINUM BUSINESS SPONSORS 2014 – 2015

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For more details, see www.nwaca.org and visit our Business Sponsor page

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ADVERTISING INFO

Please support the advertisers that make the NWACA News possible. If you are interested in advertising, please contact our sales office at 512-263-9181 or advertising@peelinc.com. The advertising deadline is the 8th of the month prior to the issue.

ARTICLE INFO

The NWACA News is mailed monthly to all NWACA-area residents. Input for newsletter articles is welcome at any time. Please submit your ideas and suggestions to us at nwacainfo@gmail.com or send it to our U.S. mail address: NWACA, P.O. Box 26654, Austin, TX 78755. The deadline for input is the 10th of the month, so that we can get it to the printer by the 15th of the month.

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NWACA AND NEIGHBORHOOD EVENTS

JUNE 1, NOON

Mangia Pizza

NWACA Zoning Committee

JUNE 2, 7 PM

5305 Valburn Circle

Wildlife Committee Bi-monthly Meeting

JUNE 3, 8 AM

Kneaded Pleasures

NWACA Communications Committee

JUNE 4, 8 AM

Kneaded Pleasures

Membership and Sponsorship Committee

JUNE 6, 8-11 AM

Stillhouse Hollow Preserve

Nature hikes and scavenger hunt as part of National Trails Day; the Preserve is at 7810 Sterling Drive, just off Burney Dr.

JUNE 7, 2 PM

Kneaded Pleasures

NWACA Parks Committee

JUNE 10, 6:30 – 8:30 PM

Mangia Pizza

NWACA Monthly Board Meeting

JUNE 20, 5:30 – CLOSE

Murchison Pool Park

Fundraising Celebration and Awards

JULY 4, 9 - 11:30 AM

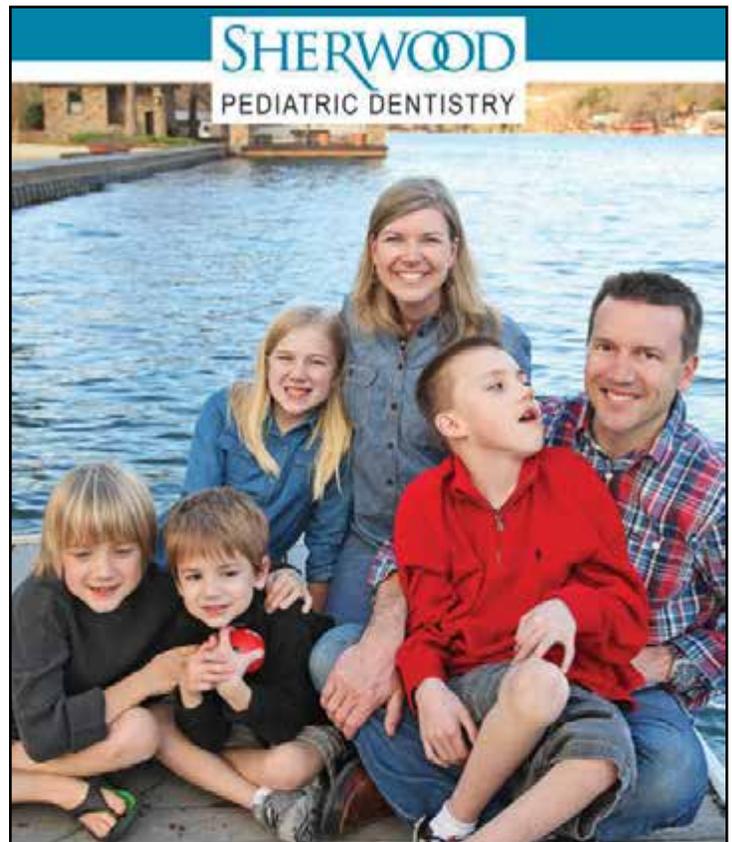
Far West Blvd/ Doss Elementary

43rd Annual 4th of July Parade

JULY 7 - 6:30 - 8 PM

Cornerstone Church, 1101 Reinli St.

Region 1 APD Commander's Forum for third quarter



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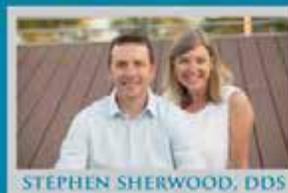
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NWACA News

Nature Hike

at Stillhouse Hollow Preserve
By Stephannie Behrens
7810 Sterling Drive, Austin, TX
June 6, 2015 at 8:00 AM

The NWACA Parks Committee, along with the Austin Parks Foundation is hosting a birding and nature walk through Stillhouse Hollow Preserve on National Trails Day - June 6, 2015. Jane Tillman will guide a group through the preserve that morning starting at 8 AM. This is a wonderful opportunity to learn about the flora and fauna as well as the endangered species that live throughout the preserve. Stillhouse Hollow is an important recharge zone for the wildlife in this area of Austin.

This is the second year for this nature walk. Please wear sturdy shoes, and bring water and binoculars to get better views of critters and plants that are off the trail.

Sign up now at <http://austinparks.org/ntd.html> - Click the button on the upper right to Volunteer for National Trails Day, and search down the list for Stillhouse Hollow. This walk is limited to 20 people, so sign up soon!

Neighborhood Schools News

By Jen Despins

The end of the school year is quickly approaching; and believe it or not, that means it's time to order school supplies for next year: the 2015-2016 school year!

If you have a Doss Owl, the PTA has partnered with Innisbrook to make ordering school supplies easier than ever. Order online at www.ordermypack.com (school #116480) between May 4 and July 31, 2015, and the supplies will be ready for pickup at Meet the Teacher Day in August. Please make sure to order the next year's grade level! If you choose not to participate in the School Supply Sale, class supply lists can be found on the PTA website: <http://www.dosspta.org/doss-school-supply-sale-for-2015-2016/>.

If you have a Highland Park Scottie, the PTA it set up at www.shopttkits.com (school # 92923). Again, make sure to order next year's grade level. The deadline for Scotties is June 5th, which is quickly approaching! All school supplies will be at your child's desk waiting on Rally Day in August. If you choose not to order through the website, supply lists will be available on the HPPTA website shortly.

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UPDATE ON THE AUSTIN OAKS PUD

By Joyce Statz

For those unfamiliar with the Austin Oaks PUD, please go to the NWACA web site www.nwac.org and review the Blog posts about the topic. To get deep information, review the materials that have the latest dates in the Austin Oaks Library under the Resources tab. Included there is a Comparison Chart that shows how the proposed PUD differs from what is currently on that property. For those unfamiliar with a PUD, see the informative article "What is a PUD?" in the Zoning Library under Resources.

To clarify for everyone what the NWACA Board and the Ad Hoc PUD Committee have been and are doing with respect to the Austin Oaks PUD, the Committee has put together the key points below. We are asking Council Member Gallo to create a forum for deep communication on the topic, where all neighbors can hear and ask questions about redevelopment of Austin Oaks.

Let me reiterate that contrary to what's been said and implied on Facebook, no NWACA entity – Board or Committee or Board Member – has been in negotiations with the developer. We have been playing a communication role between our community, the developer, and other parties, in line with the points below.

1. The Northwest Austin Civic Association (NWACA) Board is an elected volunteer board made up of your neighbors who live throughout the community. Board members work on behalf of all of our neighbors in many areas, including the 4th of July Parade, Murchison Pool Project, wildfire prevention, oak wilt prevention, and transportation Issues, to name a few.

2. The Ad Hoc Committee is made up of a diverse group of existing and prior NWACA board members who are willing to meet more frequently than the full Board. The Ad Hoc Committee has already put in hundreds of hours on this issue, in addition to their other NWACA related services for our community. The Ad Hoc Committee reports to and takes express direction from the full NWACA Board.

3. The mission of NWACA is to preserve, promote, and enhance the exceptional and unique character of our neighborhood. Thus NWACA will continue to oppose any redevelopment efforts that fail to meet these requirements.

4. Based on the NWACA neighborhood survey in September 2014, the NWACA Board voted unanimously to oppose the Austin Oaks PUD (AO PUD) application in a NWACA Board Resolution.

5. Since June 2014, NWACA surveyed the community three times (at the August 2014 community meeting, in September 2014, and in March 2015)

- communicated the Board Resolution and survey results to Council Member Gallo, the other council members, the developer, the City staff and the Zoning and Platting Commission (ZAP)
- met with City staff and maintained contact, to monitor the status of the PUD application and to register NWACA's opposition.
- met with two ZAP Commissioners individually to communicate the community's opposition to the PUD application.
- has spoken at one of the ZAP Commission meetings to publicly state our community's opposition to the PUD application.
- has offered to meet with each of the ZAP Commissioners to answer any questions that they might have.
- was successful in having ZAP impose status update deadlines on the staff and the developer.
- has attended most of the ZAP meetings in which AO PUD was on the agenda in order to monitor the status.

6. At their requests, NWACA and other neighborhood associations have met with Council Member Gallo, City staff, Zoning Commissioner McDaniel, and the developer. NWACA has also met with Zoning Commissioner Goodman. NWACA has reiterated the survey results and the community's opposition to the PUD at every meeting it has been invited to, and will continue to do so.

7. Council Member Sheri Gallo has clearly communicated her desire that NWACA meet with the developer and seek resolution, and to work to educate the community on PUDS. NWACA respectfully requests that Council Member Gallo establish a community dialog and bring the City experts to get our community's many questions answered regarding redevelopment of the AO property.

8. NWACA urges the developer to follow the collaborative and inclusive model of community engagement and input used successfully by other developers of properties in other parts of Austin.



4th of July Parade is Just Around the Corner

By Erin Brooks

Get ready to celebrate Independence Day with your neighbors at the 43rd Annual July 4th Parade - July 4, 2015 at 9am! School will be out soon and before you know it the parade will be here, so be thinking about how to decorate those wagons, trucks, bikes, kids and pets. If you're more of the observer type, then start scoping out the best viewing spots as you drive down Far West!

Like trophies? Like prize money? Then be sure you design an awesome float for our second annual float contest. The winner will take home prize money, bragging rights, and the right to keep and display the sure-to-be-coveted NWACA Float Trophy for one year. It's guaranteed to be a conversation starter, sitting over your mantle. A small entry fee will be required to participate in the contest, so start gathering your group and planning your winning designs now!

And who can forget the crazy parade post-party in the Doss parking lot where you can sample snacks and games, pet the rabbits and listen to music from the School of Rock! Stay and rock out with your community and celebrate this great holiday! If you love our parade tradition and want to help by volunteering or sponsoring, please email nwacainfo@gmail.org to get in touch with Parade Chair, Julie DePalma.

See how your time and talents can help pull off this wonderful event! Many volunteers are needed to make this time honored tradition a reality every year; and no contribution of time, talent, or money is too small.

Additional detailed information about the parade, t-shirts, float contest and more coming soon to a mailbox (snail and virtual), website (www.nwaca.org) and Facebook page (NWACA - Northwest Austin Civic Association) near you!



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WAS THAT A COYOTE?

How to Tell a Coyote from a Dog

By Jennifer Hopper

Both coyotes and dogs belong to the dog family, but while dogs and coyotes are quite different animals, they share some characteristics, like behavior and appearance. A typical coyote resembles a small, lanky German shepherd or border collie, but there are a few easy to spot characteristics that distinguish it from a dog.

Most coyotes weigh between 20 and 35 lbs. Coyotes look sleeker than dogs, they tend to be more slender and have wide set, pointed ears; a long, tapered muzzle; yellow eyes; slender legs; small feet; and a straight, bushy tail which is carried low to the ground. Coyotes are usually a grayish brown with reddish tinges behind the ears and around the face, but coloration can vary from a silver-gray to black.

A coyote's build gives the impression of having longer legs than a dog, but actually its 'elbow' is lower than its line of sternum, while most dogs have an "elbow" joint which is higher than its sternum. The lower elbow joint gives the coyote a leggier appearance.

Next time you think you see a coyote, try to get a good view of the ears, the snout, and the front legs. If you see wide set, pointed ears; a narrow snout; and elbow joints below the chest line, you can confidently say that you have spotted a coyote.



Out-of-Season Pruning of Oaks

By John Warden

If you notice a neighbor pruning live oak or red oak trees before July, they could be exposing their trees and yours to dangerous oak wilt. NWACA has provided some Talking Points for you to have a polite conversation to help them understand this risk. See the file titled "Out of Season Pruning" in the Resources/Library collection for Tree Health at www.nwaca.org

Special Thanks to Members

By Membership Committee

NWACA would like to thank our members who have so generously contributed to the Oak Wilt Fund, the 4th of July Parade Fund, or the Park Fund, between April 27, 2015 and May 11, 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 4th of July Parade Fund help NWACA to host the best 4th of July parade in Austin! In 2015, we will be celebrating our 43rd Annual Parade on July 4th.

The Park Fund helps us revitalize parks in NWACA with projects such as cleanup days at several of our parks.

C. Morris Davis III and Paul Rogers

Sam and Mary Sutherland

Ron Kampa

Susan and Kelvin Thompson

A Little Bit Of "Affordability" Help

By Parker Blevins and Jim Lodwick

Observant neighbors in NWACA investigated the water utility charges on their monthly bills and found one that can be removed for citizens who are 65 and older. The Transportation User Fee doesn't apply to senior citizens, and the exemption also applies if for some reason you no longer drive a car. More information can be found at this link: <http://www.city-data.com/forum/austin/1013434-electric-bill-what-transportation-user-fee.html>

If you meet the qualifications, merely call 311, and talk with the representative, to get this \$8.25 per month removed from your homeowner water utility bill.

Committee Spotlight - Membership

By Chris Hajdu, Membership Committee Chair

Keeping NWACA vibrant depends on each committee being adequately staffed by people with a passion for its focus. At this point, the NWACA Membership Committee is looking for several pairs of hands to help with membership: devising membership campaigns, maintaining our lists, doing renewal reminders, and helping with the Membership Committee table at NWACA events. If any of that fits you, please let us know at nwacainfo@gmail.com Thanks very much!

WILDFIRE PREVENTION TIP

Don't Believe the Myths!

By Al Simmons

A myth is defined as “a widely held but false belief or idea, a misrepresentation of the truth, an exaggerated or idealized conception of a person or thing.” With the ever-increasing wildfire events around the United States and local fires at Bastrop, Steiner Ranch, and elsewhere, the public’s awareness of the dangers of these events have become significant neighborhood topics of conversations and actions. These conversations have uncovered myths regarding wildfires and what we can and can’t do to protect ourselves. Key myths are outlined in the 2014 City of Austin and Travis County Community Wildfire Protection Plan. We paraphrase and discuss them below.

Myth 1: “I am helpless to protect my home and property from the raging beast of wildfire.” Fact: Reducing fuel around the home can reduce or prevent home ignitions in more than 50 percent of homes impacted by wildfire. The home itself and the Home Ignition Zone within the property lines are under the control of the homeowner. We have provided a lot of information through the newsletter, all now on the NWACA web site, guiding NWACA neighbors on actions to take to reduce the fuels around their homes and actions to harden their homes to significantly reduce the spread of wildfire.

Myth 2: “Wildfire is like a flood or tsunami, engulfing everything in its path.” Fact: Fire burns only where there is fuel to sustain it; brush and other fuels can be eliminated or significantly reduced to help in protecting your property and home.

Myth 3: “The fire department will protect my home.” Fact: Fire departments lack the resources to protect every home when a fast-moving wildfire and associated spot fires simultaneously threaten dozens of homes. As many of you are probably aware, the Austin Fire Department and affiliated agencies have been directly involved with NWACA and its members for some years in helping us to understand wildfires and what we can and what

we cannot do to strengthen and protect our neighborhoods from this danger. And the AFD has been very active in successful fighting residential fires in our neighborhoods over the past several years, keeping these fires under control...BUT, their resources are limited and we must do what we can with our own properties to help the fire department be successful.

Myth 4: “Insurance will take care of it.” Fact: Insurance won’t compensate for lost family mementos, time spent rebuilding the home and replacing possessions, stress of temporary relocation, and so forth. It is strongly recommended that you read very carefully your home and property insurance policies and your life insurance and know what IS covered and what is NOT covered. Once the fire has occurred, it is too late to make adjustments. Be aware that unprotected live ammo in a home can default your insurance policy; have a fire-rated gun safe and put ALL OF YOUR AMMO into that gun safe or keep it somewhere outside of the house. Take photographs/video of your home and all of your valuable, cherished belongings, and keep the photographs/videos updated and in a safety-deposit box in a bank! Be sure your appraisals are current to document the true values of your belonging that will have to be replaced or accounted for, and be sure the appraisals are also in the bank’s safety deposit box.

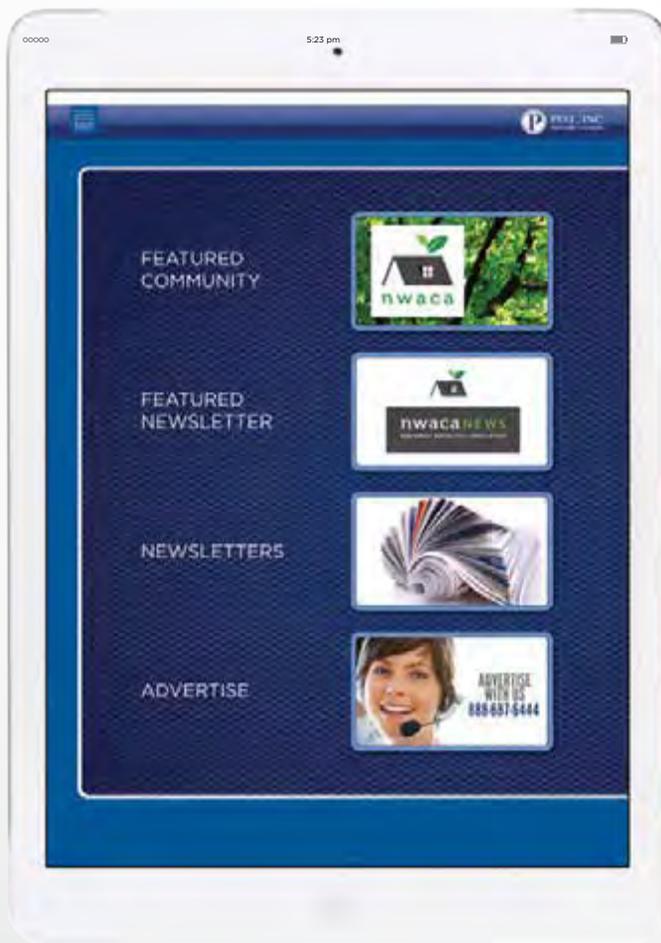
Myth 5: “A Firewise landscape consists entirely of rock and cacti.” Fact: A Firewise landscape can include trees and lush landscape plants, provided careful attention is paid to placement, spacing, and maintenance. NWACA has volunteer Wildfire Risk Assessors who can come to your homes, observe the outside of your home and the landscaping and make suggestions to make both as safe as is possible. Remember, the Home Ignition Zone within your property lines (generally 30 feet from the house) is the place where you have the control of protecting your own home. Assessments are free of charge and take less than an hour, walking with you around your property.



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Melanie Loftin-Smith, Communications Coordinator, Melanie.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 (Entire Council)

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

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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-p1csrprodwi.motorolasolutions.com/Home.mvc/Index>. The City also has a smartphone 311 app now. See this link for more information: <http://www.austintexas.gov/departments/311/smart-phone-app>

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.

Respect Your Neighbors



Traffic Awareness Program – TAP Your Brakes
NWACA.ORG

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.

NWACA MAILING LIST

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You can also read your newsletter on the Peel, Inc. iPhone and iPad app. Search the AppStore for 'Peel, Inc.' Download the App, then subscribe to this newsletter on the App.

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 or send us a message via U.S. mail.



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, congestion, etc.)
- Zoning concerns
- Wildfire Prevention (helping homeowners harden their homes against wildfire)

NWACA plans the annual 4th of July Parade (43rd Annual in 2015!), organizes election and issues forums, sponsors an annual neighborhood garage sale, publishes this 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: _____

ANNUAL DUES: \$25

(Optional) 4th 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!

- Civic Engagement
- Sponsorship
- Communications
- Transportation
- Crime and Safety/Neighborhood Watch
- Tree and Environment
- Events/ 4th of July
- Wildfire Prevention
- History
- Wildlife Management
- Membership
- Zoning



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