



New to the Neighborhood?

If this is the first time you're seeing our newsletter, welcome to the NWACA neighborhood! This map shows our boundaries – Mopac, RM 2222, Loop 360, and Spicewood Springs Road. There are about 4100 other households who are your neighbors and are happy you're here!

This newsletter is one way to keep up with what's happening here, but there's a lot more available, too. Check out the quick link For New Neighbors on our web site at www.nwaca.org. Then, please join us as a dues-paying member; there's a form you can use at the end of the newsletter, or you can join online.

A Message from the NWACA President

– Chris Hajdu

As we move into 2017, I would like to reflect on 2016 and all that has happened in NWACA this past year.

The biggest story for NWACA in 2016 is the Austin Oaks PUD. We experienced a flurry of activity about Austin Oaks this year as it continued to dominate the local news, our Facebook pages, and local elections. The weeklong design session with the developer in January kicked off a new phase as neighbors, city staff, designers, the developer, and many more got together at the JCC and worked to hammer out a better solution to the Austin Oaks property. While not everyone has been thrilled with the resulting progress, there is no denying that the current solution is a far better solution than previous proposals (17 Story and 10 Story plans).

This plan was refined in the months that followed, as the designers and developers worked to implement the Charrette outcome. I am proud of the work done by members of our board and the Zoning and Transportation Committee and sub-committee. This is an amazing group to work alongside on a very complicated and contentious issue. Other neighborhood groups have also worked with the developer and city staff as the plan has progressed through the city process.

We held an Austin Oaks town hall meeting on December 12th, to share with neighbors the final submission to City Council and allow for neighbors to ask questions. We also introduced the 4th NWACA survey regarding the Austin Oaks PUD. If you're not aware of the survey, please read the article about Austin Oaks Feedback in this issue and act quickly. The survey is open to all residents of the NWACA area and runs through January 9th. We will hold another Town Hall Meeting in January to go over the results of the survey and discuss the progress of the developer's submission at City Council.

In addition to the Austin Oaks PUD, we also worked on these things in 2016.

- We worked on issues with the city regarding the coyote management policy. We helped ensure that data reported via the 311 system gets to the appropriate city department,

(Continued on Page 3)

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Austin Citywide Information Center.....512-974-2000 or 311
Emergency, Police..... 911
Non-emergency (coyote sightings, compliance issues) 311
To check status, go to: <http://www.austintexas.gov/departments/myaustincodestatus>
APD District Representative, Office Darrell Grayson...512-974-5242
District 10 Councilmember, Sheri Gallo.....512-978-2110
Contact to enroll in the District 10 weekly newsletter:
.....district10@austintexas.gov
.....www.district10austin.com

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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).

ADVERTISING INFO

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JAN 4, 8:30AM

Kneaded Pleasures

Crime and Safety Committee

JAN 5, 8AM

Kneaded Pleasures

Sponsorship Committee

JAN 8, 2PM

Kneaded Pleasures

Parks Committee

JAN 10, 8AM

Kneaded Pleasures

Communications Committee

JAN 11, 6:30-8:30PM

Mangia Pizza

NWACA Board Meeting

JAN 22, 2PM

Huffman Hall, St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, 8134 Mesa Drive

NWACA Town Hall Meeting on the Austin Oaks PUD

JAN 24, 5PM

Temple Beth Shalom, 7300 Hart Lane

NWACA Zoning and Transportation Committee

FEB 1

Throughout NWACA

Oak Wilt Season Starts

Do Not Prune Oaks Until After June 30

FEB 1, 8:30AM

Kneaded Pleasures

Crime and Safety Committee

FEB 2, 8:30AM

Kneaded Pleasures

Sponsorship Committee

FEB 5, 2PM

Kneaded Pleasures

Parks Committee

FEB 7, 8AM

Kneaded Pleasures

Communications Committee

FEB 8, 6:30-8:30PM

Mangia Pizza

NWACA Board Meeting

FEB 19, 2PM

Kneaded Pleasures

Tree and Environment Committee

FEB 28, 5PM

Temple Beth Shalom, 7300 Hart Lane

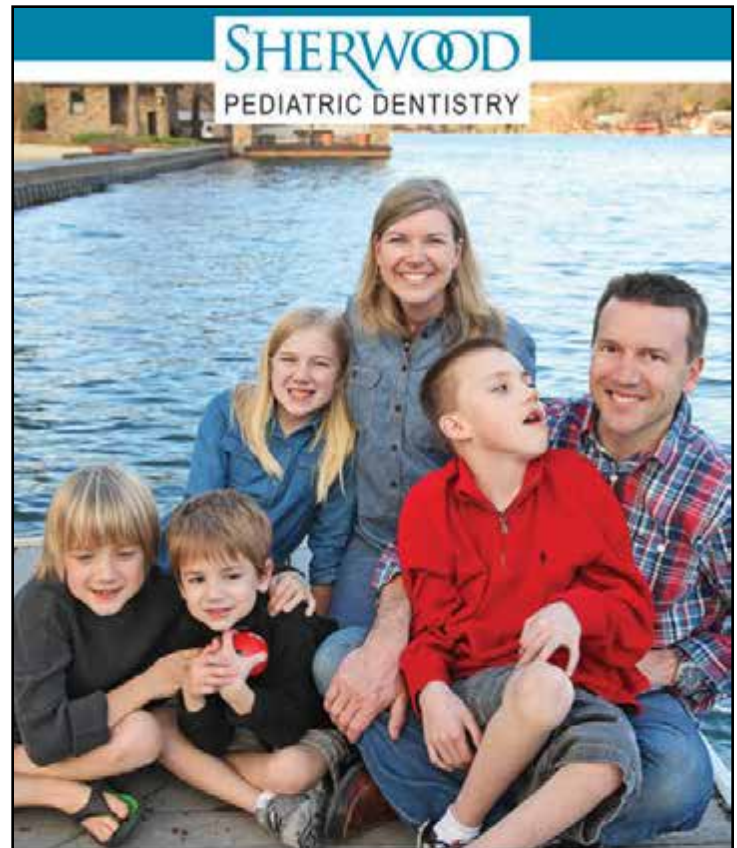
NWACA Zoning and Transportation Committee

(Continued from Cover)

and we advocated that the city keep its agreement with Texas Wildlife Services to provide support with problem coyotes.

- We continued our awareness campaigns on Oak Wilt, and we helped pay for a resident's oak wilt treatment out of our restricted Oak Wilt funds. We thank all of you who donate to the Oak Wilt fund.
- We continued to implement our Firewise program in order to harden homes against the effects of wildfire, especially those homes near our greenbelts.
- We ran our inaugural electronic recycling event, hauling off a full 24-foot rental van worth of TVs, printers, cell phones, and more. The sheer volume was amazing!
- We held a Battery, Oil, Paint and Antifreeze (BOPA) event and our annual garage sale events during the fall.
- We ran our amazing parade again on July 4th, even though proposed construction work forced us to change our route to North Hills Drive. It wasn't great that the construction actually started much later than July 4th, but I was glad our team rallied together to work around this potential issue.
- We replaced bottled water at our after-parade party this year with hydration stations, saving a lot of plastic waste.
- We continued to advocate for improvements at Bull Creek District Park and for changes to park rules to make that park safer and cleaner.
- We assisted with improvements at Stillhouse Hollow Preserve, including 3 new benches and a new information kiosk. We hosted a grand opening to showcase these items and the work that was done on the restored deck as well.
- We finished the beatification project at Murchison Pool, eliminating the decrepit old shade structure and installing new shade structures and picnic benches.
- We held "It's My Park Days" to do park maintenance at Murchison Pool, Bull Creek District Park, Stillhouse Hollow Preserve, and Allen Park throughout the year.
- We launched a program to fund innovative small projects in the neighborhood and have already had paid out our first grant to put recycling bins in at Bull Creek District Park.
- We continued to provide information about crime and safety and started several more Neighborhood Watch groups.
- We worked with other parties to help secure a pedestrian crossing beacon at Far West and Northledge Drive.
- We continued to monitor transportation issues in our area including the transportation bond, Mopac construction project, and impending changes to Cap Metro routes.
- We ran a candidate forum for the District 10 Council election.

Whew! It's been a full year! Thank you so much for your ongoing support and we look forward to serving the community in 2017.



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Austin Oaks Feedback Opportunities

– Joyce Statz and Chris Hajdu

A Survey

Spire Realty, the owner of Austin Oaks, finalized its submissions to the City regarding the Austin Oaks Planned Unit Development (PUD) on December 7, 2016. NWACA is surveying NWACA residents for feedback on the alternatives that are now before City Council – redevelopment under current zoning and redevelopment under the PUD. You can find the survey at this link: <http://tinyurl.com/AustinOaks>

Only one response is allowed per household. To help with validation of the responses, we are requiring that you enter the 4-digit card code on the Q4 NWACA postcard that came to you on or about December 10. The code is located next to the words “current resident” on the first address line. If you have tossed out your card or can't find it, email us at nwacainfo@gmail.com with your street address, and we'll provide you the code. Please respond to the survey on or before January 9, 2017.

A Town Hall Meeting

On January 22, 2017, NWACA Board members will host a town hall meeting to discuss the status of the PUD proposal and to answer questions from the audience. We held such a meeting in December, and it was well-received. Many good questions and issues were raised,

and we encouraged neighbors to make their concerns known to City Council, which is now going through the process of public hearings and decision-making. If you were unable to make the December meeting, we encourage you to attend this one on January 22.

Meeting details: 2PM, Huffman Hall, St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, 8134 Mesa Drive.

Background

After the neighborhood survey conducted in March 2015, NWACA requested that the developer create an open process for neighbors to provide input about the proposed Austin Oaks Development. In January 2016, a week-long charrette was held during which more than 200 neighbors participated. The outcome of the successive refinement of 3 initial designs was called the "Preferred Plan." Since the completion of the charrette, representatives from NWACA have been working to ensure that the developer's application for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) designation is reflective of the charrette outcome, and that the associated proposed ordinance is specific enough to ensure that it is binding and consistent with the Preferred Plan. Information about the charrette, the Preferred Plan,

(Continued on Page 5)



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(Continued from Page 4)

and the evolution of the developer's application can be found at this web page: <http://nwaca.org/austin-oaks-charrette/>

The City Council will now decide whether or not to approve the application for the Austin Oaks site to be designated as a Planned Unit Development (PUD). Spire Realty has indicated that if the application is not approved, they will redevelop the site under current zoning.

AISD Update: The Facility Master Plan and the FABPAC

– Kristin Ashy

As with any neighborhood, the schools are often the cornerstone of the community and that is certainly the case in our area. We all love and value our wonderful schools! In recent months, AISD has been working hard on updating their Facility Master Plan with the hopes of working toward a bond election in November of 2017. The board of trustees has asked the Facility and Bond Planning Advisory Committee (FABPAC) to take an extensive and detailed look at all of the 130 district buildings and develop recommendations to update the Facility Master Plan with a 20 - 25 year outlook in mind.

As you may have read in the paper or seen on television, AISD's facilities are in need of a lot of attention. The district as a whole faces unique issues in that some schools are overcrowded and others are under-enrolled. In addition, state funding for education, commonly called recapture or Robin Hood, has further squeezed the district, resulting in deferred maintenance on the buildings themselves.

On November 30, the first set of options was released. These options were created by the consulting company, Brailsford and Dunlavy, and represent a starting point by which the FABPAC will begin its challenging work of deciding on recommendations. An integral part of their process includes community feedback. AISD and the FABPAC will host a third round of community engagement as follows:

- **Tuesday, January 24 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at McCallum HS - Cafeteria**

This meeting will focus on the McCallum Vertical Team and Special Campuses.

- **Wednesday, January 25 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Crockett HS - Cafeteria**

This meeting will focus on the Akins and Crockett Vertical Teams.

- **Thursday, January 26 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Garcia YMLA - Cafeteria**

This meeting will focus on the LBJ and Reagan Vertical Teams.

- **Tuesday, January 31 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Martin MS - Cafeteria**

This meeting will focus on the Eastside Memorial and Travis Vertical Teams.

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ENGEL & VÖLKERS

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- **Wednesday, February 1 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Burnet MS - Cafeteria**

This meeting will focus on the Anderson and Lanier Vertical Teams.

- **Thursday, February 2 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Gorzycki MS - Cafeteria**

This meeting will focus on the Austin and Bowie Vertical Teams.

The format for these meetings will be different than those hosted this fall. This series of engagement will be a more focused discussion with attendees. As a result, those who plan to attend can expect to be there for the full two hours. FABPAC members and AISD staff will be present to lead the discussions and take notes.

If you are unable to attend any of these meetings, not to worry! There are still many ways you can be a part of this process. Please visit <https://www.austinisd.org/fmp> for more information and to be added to the e-mail updates.

If you have any questions or comments, you are welcome to contact either Kristin Ashy (kristinashy@mac.com) or Jodi Leach (jodi.leach@gmail.com) as they are the trustee-appointed representatives on the FABPAC from District 4.

WHY JOIN NWACA?

The Northwest Austin Civic Association is your neighborhood association. NWACA represents you on issues like crime prevention, transportation congestion and excessive speeds, zoning concerns, and wildfire prevention. NWACA plans the annual 4th of July Parade, organizes election forums, sponsors an annual neighborhood garage sale, recycles household waste, publishes this newsletter, and much more! Your support makes it all happen! Join us.



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George Washington Davis

– Rich Denney

In 1841 George Washington Davis received a land grant of 3,154 acres from the Republic of Texas for service in the Texas War for Independence at the Battle of San Jacinto. His grant straddled today's MoPac, and a good chunk of our Northwest Hills neighborhood lies in this old Republic of Texas land grant.

Familiar spots today – HEB, Doss, Murchison, Dell Jewish Community Center – are located within that old grant. So too, Austin Oaks. Last month I described the abduction of the Simpson children in 1844 and Jane Simpson's death at Spicewood Springs. When her remains were found in 1845, there's reason to believe they were found on Davis' property. Austin Oaks fits the bill of a location close to the springs where she was said to have been killed, and still on Davis' property. More on this shortly. Perhaps not coincidentally, archeologists tell us of a prehistoric campsite at Austin Oaks. Perhaps a long-favored campsite known to Indians, including those that abducted the Simpson children?

The map shown outlines the old grant in terms of today's roads [1]. In our neighborhood, it ran west to Mesa Drive, and south to North Hills Drive. From the northern boundary that includes Austin Oaks, Davis' grant extends east across MoPac along today's Foster Lane, formerly a continuation of Spicewood Springs Road. This is where Spicewood Springs Creek emerges from under MoPac flowing into Shoal Creek.

Further south on Shoal Creek is Northwest Park, the site of an old limestone quarry, part of Davis' grant. A historical marker there reads: "Old Quarry Site. Limestone quarried at this site was hauled to Congress Avenue by oxen and used in constructing the 1853 Texas Capitol Building..."

Near here Davis built his home. A book at the Austin History Center, Davis Cemetery, by descendant Douglas R. Davis, says "In the period between 1841 and 1844 a log house was built at the location of the present day intersection of Pegram and Vine Streets ... on a small hill overlooking Shoal Creek. Stories have it that [at that time] Shoal Creek was full of fish and there were swimming holes as well." If you've ever driven this area, you know it is even today a beautiful location. The house was lived in continuously until about 1944 when it burned.

Further south on Vine you'll find the Davis Cemetery, a Texas Historic Cemetery. Here too is a history marker; it says the earliest dated grave is from 1851, "but the burial ground may have been in use as early as 1845." In a conversation with the author of the book, Davis Cemetery, he said family history has it that about 100 people from the community are thought to be buried there, but the identity of only about 40 are known. He confirmed family history places the first burial at 1845, but who that was has been lost to memory.

Last month I wrote that despite the many times the story of Jane Simpson's death has been told, there is a mystery that remains: what happened to her remains; where was she buried? Oakwood, Austin's oldest cemetery, was begun at Austin's founding in 1839, but due no

(Continued on Page 10)

Cap Metro's Big Problem

– Ruven Brooks

Cap Metro has a big problem; it's losing ridership. According to an article by Ben Wear in the July 3, 2016 Austin American Statesman, it's lost over 20% of its riders in the past four years, including those in its high priority group: the elderly and those with low incomes. The article discusses some hypotheses as to why this has happened, but the big question is this: Is there anything Cap Metro can do to encourage people who drive cars to start using the bus instead? The answer is yes, but this means that Cap Metro must address issues with bus schedules and routes.

Most likely, the biggest problem is that the buses do not run often enough. Just as location is the big factor in real estate, frequency – how often the buses run – has the biggest impact on ridership. Route #19, which runs through our neighborhood, illustrates this problem. It runs only every 40 minutes during the week. Suppose you work downtown and want to take the #19. If you are just one minute late for the bus; you will be 40 minutes late arriving at work. When it is time to go home, you might have to stick around for up to 40 minutes until the bus arrives. Driving your own car, even if it means paying a high price for parking, is much more convenient and less risky to your ability to meet your schedule.

Experience from other cities shows that having buses come every 10 minutes maximizes ridership. At that frequency, bus riders don't need a time table; they just show up at the stop knowing that, worst case, a bus will be along within 10 minutes. Cap Metro is far from this goal with only a few routes running with even a 15-minute frequency.

A second problem is that the bus routes in Austin were laid out decades ago and are not particularly well aligned to the way Austin has grown. It is reasonably easy to get downtown by bus from anywhere in Austin, but going even a few miles east or west is difficult.

To tackle the biggest problem first, Cap Metro would need to add buses on each route to increase the frequencies. This costs about \$300K per bus per year. Again, the #19 bus is a good example. What people call the #19 "bus" is really four buses running along the route about 40 minutes apart. Suppose Cap Metro wanted to run the #19 route at the optimum 10-minute frequency. That would take sixteen buses at a cost of \$4.8 million per year! Cap Metro has a fixed budget, so the only way to increase frequency on some routes is to decrease frequency on or cancel others.

The problem of the bad route structure is somewhat easier to solve than the frequency problem, but it interacts with the frequency problem. If new east/west routes are added, more buses are needed, reducing the supply of buses for increasing route frequency. Also, making a bus route longer by adding more stops reduces the frequency. There's no easy win.

A future article will discuss the Connections 2025 plan and how it addresses the problems of increasing frequency and connectivity while still staying within its budget. The obvious result is that some areas will lose the current bus availability or frequency. There are some mitigating plans being considered.

(Continued on Page 10)

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NWACA News

(George Washington Davis, Continued from Page 8)

doubt to Austin's partial evacuation (including seat of government) from 1842 – 1845, the cemetery wasn't heavily utilized until later. And there seems to be no record of her burial there.

There is the possibility Jane Simpson lies in an unmarked grave in Oakwood, but I have a theory, and it's just my own personal theory. Recall her remains may have been found on Davis' property. The year was 1845. The very year that Davis family history recalls the first burial at the Davis Cemetery. I wonder ...

[1] Map generated using Travis County Appraisal District's map search tool.



(Cap Metro's Big Problem, Continued from Page 8)

(To learn more about optimizing public transit systems, a good place to start is Human Transit by Jarrett Walker, available for free download from the Austin Public Library.)

Prevent Oak Wilt

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How to Harass Coyotes Effectively

– Maggie Taylor



The photo accompanying this article shows a coyote crossing a stone walk 20 feet from the front of a home on a route between the house and garage at 10:22

AM. He shouldn't be comfortable this close to a home. Coyotes in a domestic yard need to be harassed to prevent a habituated pattern and reinforce their instinctive wariness of humans. This coyote was coming into the yard repeatedly from a nearby watershed easement. A few days before this daylight stroll, the homeowner wondered what the cat was yowling at from the windowsill at 9 PM. On looking out the open screened window, a coyote was observed 4 feet away on a walkway.

Wildlife biologist Stefan Hunt was contacted and provided the following advice. Throw something at the coyote. Rocks, balls,

whatever you have nearby and yell loudly at it. Touch is more effective. Try to break their pattern of travel as quickly as possible. First option, if possible, would be to put out a motion detector sprinkler and see if that gets them to start moving around instead of cutting through there. They respond much better to actual touch (water) than they do lights, but a second option may be motion light near the garage. These are usually the least effective, but if you have not had a light installed before, doing so can help force the coyote to move away from your property. A last option would be some type of temporary fencing. You can find plastic orange or black fencing. Stretch it along the side where they are coming from and try to get them to take a long way around. A lot of times if it is too costly in effort for them (as long as there is not much reward available), they will simply go somewhere else. Walking around in the easement can also help. Any human activity or scent they find on trails or areas they are using can help to deter them.

Stefan Hunt, Wildlife Biologist, Texas Wildlife Services can be contacted at (512) 854-2994 or stefan.j.hunt@aphis.usda.gov

Report all coyote sightings and incidents to 311 for the purpose of evaluation, recording number of sightings by area, and mapping activity. Coyote-related calls to 311 are routed to Austin Animal Control.

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The Dangers of Wildfires

– Al Simmons

As a resident of the NWACA area, living in among the trees, and hearing that you can have your home and property evaluated for wildfire risk, you have an awareness of the dangers of wildfires. However, have you, or a relative, or a friend actually experienced the devastation from a wildfire that destroyed or severely damaged a home and property? Probably not. This piece is an attempt to describe the scope of wildfires in the United States during 2016.

As of December 14, there have been 103 wildfires in this country this year, with 5 major fires active in the past 24-hours: two in Tennessee of 803 acres and 17,006 acres; one in Georgia of 24,725 acres; one in Arizona (no acres noted); and one in South Carolina with 10,623 acres. Over the past six days, there have been over 20 active wildfires representing 184,392 acres, all in National Forests, which also involved several communities and homes within these areas. (This information came from “InciWeb – Incident Information System” on December 6th.)

A report about the wildfire in Gatlinburg and Pigeon Forge, Tennessee is a frightening example of how a fire reacts and the damage that can be done quickly. This fire started on Chimney Tops mountain in Great Smoky Mountains National Park and was wind-carried for several miles to Gatlinburg. It destroyed much of Gatlinburg and Pigeon Forge, killing 14 people, forcing as many as 14,000 to evacuate; and it damaged more than 1,700 structures. This part of the country is in Extreme Drought and Exceptional Drought (the two worst conditions). It was reported that these fires were started by two juveniles and scorched more than 1.4 million acres in the South so far this year. The National Park Service indicated that as many as 90 percent of these fires are ignited by humans!

We are not in such dry condition at this time, since we have had a great deal of rain this year and our lakes are full. However, as mentioned in our last report, this type of rain causes grasses and brush to really grow in these conditions and when the drought comes, which it surely will, it gets very dangerous. Just be aware and watchful and do what you can to protect your home, property and neighborhood! If you haven't yet signed up for your free wildfire risk evaluation, where you learn how to harden your home and landscape against wildfire, do it now. Go to www.nwaca.org and select Firewise Request under the Get Involved tab.

Help Keep our Wildlife Wild!

NWACA advises residents to NOT feed wildlife. Many well-intentioned individuals do so out of concern for the wildlife they are feeding. However, intentional and unintentional feeding of wildlife attracts predators to the wildlife being fed. Additionally, an association with humans and food contributes directly to habituated behaviors of animals like coyotes and feral hogs, which then become aggressive in pursuit of a food or prey attractant. Please eliminate food attractants from your yards for the safe enjoyment of our streets, parks and playgrounds for neighbors and pets.

Got Styrofoam Leftover from the Holidays?

– Joanie Arrott



The Austin Resource Recovery Recycle and Reuse Drop-Off Center now accepts many forms of plastic foam (also known as styrofoam) including: plastic foam made from polystyrene (commonly

found in egg cartons, food packaging, meat trays, to-go containers, disposable plates and coffee cups, foam ice chests and in shipping and packaging materials) and plastic foam made from polyethylene (commonly used in shipping and packing items such as electronics).

Make sure plastic foam is clean and dry before dropping off. It may be necessary to rinse containers to eliminate any food contamination. Employees at the center can sort any foam you bring and help you determine what's acceptable. The center has a machine that shreds and then melts the plastic foam, condensing the foam and removing air so it's suitable for shipping.

Please do not put any recyclable plastic foam in your blue curbside recycling bin. The foam could easily break into very small pieces in the collection truck before it reaches the sorting facility. Once it is broken into small pieces, it's nearly impossible to contain and sort into recycling. The Drop-Off Center located at 2514 Business Center Drive is the best recycling option for this material.

The city does not accept packing peanuts or soft foam, such as the foam typically found in mattress pads or plastic foam that is attached or glued to other materials, like cardboard or plastic film. Some shipping businesses have committed to plastic foam reuse programs through the Plastic Loose Fill Council. You can search for local businesses at <http://www.loosefillpackaging.com/> or call the Peanut Hotline at 800-828-2214. Always call the listed business before planning to drop off any materials, to ensure they are still in business and as a courtesy.

NWACA's Tree and Environment Committee will also be hosting a spring collection event in April 2017 at Doss Elementary School and will be accepting used electronics, batteries, and the same types of plastic foam accepted by the Recycle and Reuse Center. This event will save NWACA members a trip the city facility.

Business Spotlight: Ready to Run

– Janice Green

Have you ever seen a pod of walkers or runners lumbering up and down our Northwest Hills? Pokey beginners, a few obvious marathoners, some leashed to a dog, all ages, all sizes ... all having a great time.

What you've seen is most likely a training group from Ready to Run – that corner store at Hart Lane and Far West whose business is to take our feet seriously.

Ready to Run (RTR) specializes in all things running, jogging and walking – the proper-fitting shoes, the moisture-wicking clothes, the equipment, the food one eats on the run, group training. RTR is known for its expertise in providing superb shoe fitting through gait analysis: Bill Stone is their resident Certified Pedorthist. These folks aren't just catering to the marathoners but also those former couch potatoes whose New Year's resolution is to start walking their dog for a little exercise. RTR emphasizes educating their customers and welcoming you into their store no matter your degree of fleet-footedness.

You may recall the prior occupant of their storefront – RunTex – an early fixture in Austin's running scene. RTR's three owners met at RunTex and took the baton for the next lap with their RTR entrepreneurial adventure: Ryan Hess, the store operations manager (pictured), is knowledgeable and experienced in the world of running; Scott Hippensteel (CEO), teaches and serves as a cross-country and track coach in Lockhart and has earned a number of state and regional championships; and Scott's wife, Karla Hippensteel (Financial Resource Manager), is a "social runner" and works at the Attorney General's office.

Why open a running store in Northwest Hills? Ryan's reply: The "suburban feel and hipness of Austin" represented in this neighborhood; just look around -- so many people on foot up here!

RTR sponsors all levels of training groups in the evenings and on weekends. These groups are for the beginner who wants to start moving or for the more advanced jogger or runner wanting to prepare for specific local, state, and national races. RTR's website offers information about participation.

Ryan, Scott and Karla place a premium on customer loyalty. There are discounts for those in the training groups and discounts when you donate shoes to the homeless. RTR definitely draws the runners from all over Austin into our 'hood, including those who choose to run with their dogs.

While interviewing Ryan for this column, an older gent sauntered into RTR – obviously for the first time. He was there on the recommendation of his physician following foot surgery, seeking a walking shoe to fit his special needs. That kind of professional attention is the norm at RTR. These folks devote the time and effort to find the most comfortable and best fitting for your feet.

We're lucky to host in Northwest Hills the second generation of an Austin running icon -- Ready to Run.

Check their website for hours and more details: <http://readytorun texas.com/>



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Next Steps for CodeNEXT

– David Whitworth

2016 was a rocky year for CodeNEXT.

The mayor hinted at a compromise with the Austin Neighborhoods Council (ANC) that would limit new zoning categories to corridors and a transition zone, intended to leave current zoning intact within the central areas of existing neighborhoods. What appeared to be a generous concession by the Mayor moved the ANC battle front to the corridors and transition zones.

CodeNEXT is over schedule and over budget at a current price tag of \$4.6M. The City's Project Leader Matt Lewis resigned last year. Shortly thereafter, the City's second in command of CodeNEXT, Jim Robertson, left for a key planning job in Boulder, Colorado. The Planning and Zoning Director, Greg Guernsey, has resumed the helm.

A draft of the new code will be released by January 30th along with illustrative "example" maps. Once the draft is released there will be a public review period. In April "draft" maps will be released showing areas where the code might apply, as recommended by staff and their consultant. Then the code begins its path through boards and commissions, and ultimately to City Council in December 2017 where we will see final maps. Maps will not take into account private restrictive covenants and deed restrictions (only Future Land Use Maps for existing neighborhood plans, local geography, current zoning, and Imagine Austin). Final approval can happen as early as May of 2018 "if all goes perfectly," according to Greg Guernsey. Note: Things generally do not "go perfectly."

See a chart depicting the schedule for 2017 here:

<http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=266748>

Special Thanks to Members

– Membership Committee

NWACA thanks members who generously contributed to the Oak Wilt Fund, the 4th of July Parade Fund, and the Park Fund, between November 18 and December 15, 2016.

Donations to the Oak Wilt Fund provide financial assistance to property owners dealing with oak wilt. Donations to the 4th of July Parade Fund help NWACA to host the best 4th of July parade in Austin! The Park Fund helps us revitalize parks in NWACA with projects such as cleanup days.

- Antony and Katherine Berkeley
- John and Cindy Cantwell
- Kathryn F. Clark
- Don Lovering and Milt Clark
- Patricia Orlosky and Jerry Kilpatrick
- Jill Klucher
- Julie and bob Schriber
- Ross Martin and Faith Starnes
- Chris and Gail Sneden
- Charlise Underwood
- Scott Jones and Melanie Williams

Fungus Gnats

– Wizzie Brown

Fungus gnats often become a problem in homes due to an overwatering problem. Since this time of year can bring poinsettias or other plants into the home, fungus gnats are a pest to watch for.

Fungus gnat adults are small, black, long-legged flies with long antennae. Most adults are about 1/16 an inch but some can get up to 1/2 an inch. They are weak fliers and generally remain near potted plants, growing media, foliage or leaf litter.

Larvae, or immatures, have a black head capsule and long whitish body without legs. They feed on organic matter such as mulch, compost, grass clippings, plant roots, and fungi. When conditions are very moist, fungus gnat larvae can become abundant and may leave slime trails on media that looks similar to trails left by snails or slugs.

While these gnats are a nuisance they are fairly easy to manage. Indoors, it is a good idea to use yellow sticky cards as a monitoring tool. Potato pieces may also be used as a monitoring tool for fungus gnats. To do this, imbed a peeled potato cube into media and inspect the underside of the potato and the media directly below it twice a week for fungus gnat larvae.

To manage fungus gnat populations, work on reducing excessively moist conditions. Avoid overwatering and make sure that there is good drainage. The surface of container soil should be allowed to dry before watering again.

If using compost, make sure that items have been fully composted. Compost piles should be turned regularly and kept away from doors or windows. Inspect all doors, windows, vents and screens for a good seal to reduce the number of gnats that may enter a structure.

Bacillus thuringiensis var. israelensis or the nematode Steinernema feltiae can be applied in containers to control larvae. Either spray on the media or apply as a soil drench. Biologicals work best when they are applied early in an infestation. If a population is already large, they may not provide the control desired.

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

NWACA Window Decals

– Debra Danziger

NWACA window decals are now available for \$3. Show your neighborhood pride and spirit with an official NWACA membership window decal, perfect for your vehicle.

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NWACA MEMBERSHIP FORM

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

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Street Address: _____

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Email #2 (kept private; print): _____

Phone (with area code): _____

Date: _____

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(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 going to www.nwaca.org, selecting the Get Involved Tab, and choosing Join/Renew

Volunteers are always needed on our committees.
Please mark those on which you'd like to actively participate.

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



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