



nwaca NEWS

NORTHWEST AUSTIN CIVIC ASSOCIATION

MARCH 2022

VOLUME 13, ISSUE 3

Spring, Safety, and Service

Spring in Austin is upon us. Across the NWACA area, trees, grass, and flowers are emerging bright and cheerful. The days stretch longer, and children of all ages ditch their puffy coats and winter caps as they walk, ride, scoot, and otherwise explore the neighborhood in the warming March sun. Spring always brings with it a sense of renewal, and after an unusual last couple of years, here's hoping this Spring will feel even more vital than any in quite a while.

In the spirit of renewal, the NWACA Board announces both upcoming Board elections and a very popular recycling event for members. In this issue of NWACA News, Nominations Chair Louri O'Leary outlines the particulars about how you can get involved and help enhance our neighborhood through service on the board. Bottom line: as we all begin to get back to a more normal rhythm of life, there is a lot to do, and we need your fresh ideas and energy.

The very popular BOPA plus Styrofoam recycling event will be held April 2nd. Look inside this issue for details about that.

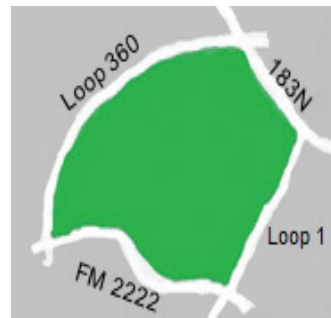
Student writer Kayla Winer-Winkler shares some great ideas about things to do during spring break, from museums, to hikes, to food truck parks, to SXSW.

And, as part of our commitment to improving safety on neighborhood streets and sidewalks, we feature a very compelling story from Jonathan Kaplan that will remind all of us to give our full attention to driving (and avoid distractions) when behind the wheel. Also, we remind you that you can help remind drivers to exercise good judgement by requesting your Vision Zero yard sign from the City of Austin. Vision Zero is the City's long-term commitment to eventually reduce to zero the number of crash fatalities and serious injuries on our roads and highways. To order a sign, go to: <https://www.austintexas.gov/page/vision-zero-yard-sign>

A quick reminder about using 311. We believe City departments tend to prioritize things they hear about. We know this from our experience with reporting coyote sightings. So, see a pothole? Notice missing signs? Pavement issues? Abandoned cars? Drainage issues? Try calling 311. You may not always see action immediately but having the issue on record matters.

To learn more about NWACA or to become a member check us out at www.nwaca.org.

New to the Neighborhood? *Welcome to NWACA!*



If this is your first copy of our newsletter, welcome to the NWACA neighborhood! The map shows our boundaries – Mopac, RM 2222, Loop 360, and US Highway 183 (Research Boulevard). There are about 13,500 households who are your neighbors and are happy you're here!

This newsletter is one way to know what's happening in NWACA, but there's much more. Check out the quick link For New Neighbors on the home page at www.nwaca.org and visit our public Facebook page. Use the Membership button on the home page, or use the form at the end of this newsletter to become a member of NWACA. Members have access to the weekly NWACA Notes and the ability to join the NWACA closed Facebook group, to keep in touch with each other and with the latest news about NWACA.



ARE YOU A NWACA MEMBER?

Receiving the newsletter does not guarantee membership.
Not sure? Visit nwaca.org to confirm!

Here are 5 great reasons to join today!

GREAT NEIGHBORS = GREAT NEIGHBORHOOD

Together, we can continue to do great things for our neighborhood!

STAY INFORMED ABOUT ISSUES THAT AFFECT YOU

We are actively involved in our community and advocate for our residents.

GET TO KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORS

We encourage friendships among residents through our events - July 4th parade, National Night Out, Recycling Collection, Garage Sales, and more!

PROTECT AND IMPROVE OUR COMMUNITY

Learn about fire safety, crime prevention, oak wilt, environmental concerns, park development, wildlife management, zoning/planning, and more!

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL BUSINESS COMMUNITY

We are deeply invested in building strong relationships within our business network to positively impact our neighborhood.

Together we can make a difference!

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Emergency, Police..... 911
Non-emergency (coyote sightings, compliance issues) 311
To check status, go to: <http://www.austintexas.gov/departments/myaustincodestatus>
APD District Representative,
Officer Darrell Grayson...512-974-5242
District 10 Councilmember, Alison Alter.....512-978-2110
Enroll in the District 10 monthly newsletter:
.....district10@austintexas.gov
.....www.district10austin.com

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**Each of the Board Members can be reached at
info@nwaca.org, or by phone at 512-920-2973**

The NWACA Board meets on the 3rd 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 put you on the agenda.

NWACA is bordered on the north by US Highway 183 (Research Boulevard), on the west by Loop 360, on the south by RM 2222, and on the east by Mopac (Loop 1)

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Mark Your Calendars

These events are as planned as of February 15. As you consider participating in one of the events listed, please check first with the organizer.

March 5, 9-noon

It's My Park Day – Cleanup activity in Stillhouse Hollow Preserve. Register online after Feb. 3 at austinparks.givepulse.com/group/9012-Its-My-Park-Day-Spring
Stillhouse Hollow Nature Preserve, 7810 Sterling Drive

March 15, 7pm

Parks Committee
virtual

March 16, 6:30 – 8:30 PM

NWACA Board Meeting
virtual

March 19, 9AM to noon

Monthly cleanup at Bull Creek District Park
Sign up at <https://givepul.se/lqpd6p>

Bull Creek District Park

March 20, 2pm

Tree, Environment, and Wildlife Committee
virtual

March 22, 5 PM

NWACA Zoning and Transportation Committees Joint Meeting
virtual

April 2, 10 am-noon

Spring Recycling Event – Batteries, Oil, Paint, Antifreeze,
Styrofoam, bathroom supplies
Mesa Parking Lot, St. Matthew's Episcopal Church

April 16, 9 AM – noon

Monthly cleanup at Bull Creek District Park
Sign up at <https://givepul.se/lqpd6p>

Bull Creek District Park

April 19, 7 PM

Parks Committee
virtual

April 20, 6:30 – 8:30 PM

NWACA Board Meeting
virtual

April 26, 5 PM

NWACA Zoning and Transportation Committees Joint Meeting
virtual



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Appetizers & Answers Thursday, March 17th • 2:00pm

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and supportive services offered
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BOPA-Plus Collection Event – April 2, 10 AM to Noon



Start gathering those leftover cans of paint, used oil and oil filters, and dead batteries. On Saturday, April 2nd from 10 AM to noon, NWACA will be hosting a BOPA Collection Event for NWACA members at the Mesa Drive parking lot of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, 8134 Mesa Drive. If you're not a NWACA member, you can join at the event. Just roll up in your car or truck, and volunteers will unload for you.

For BOPA, we will accept only: batteries, oil, latex paint, and antifreeze. We cannot accept other household hazardous wastes including these: oil-based paint, paint thinner or stripper, cleaning chemicals, pool chemicals, pesticides, or light bulbs.

For the Plus portion of our collection, we will accept only:

Clean Styrofoam® blocks, egg cartons, cups, and clean food containers. This is the type of foam made of tiny beads that can easily crumble.

Used toothpaste tubes, toothbrushes, and floss containers,

Used disposable razors, replaceable-blade cartridge units, and razor plastic packaging.

We cannot accept dirty Styrofoam food or drink containers, packing peanuts, or plastic foam. Foam like the soft foam in pillows is not acceptable. It must be the easily tearable and crumbly type of foam.

We will close at noon to be able to get the materials to the City's Resource Recycling and Reuse Center and unload there at our afternoon appointment.

Want to help out? We always need volunteers for our collection events. We need folks to corral the cars, unload vehicles, load the collection truck, and assist with separating the collected materials. If you're looking for a great opportunity to help serve your

Continued on Page 5

Continued from page 4

neighborhood, meet your neighbors, and protect the environment, come join us! Any questions or volunteer sign-up can be sent to info@nwaca.org.

Got more than just BOPA? Austin's Recycle and Reuse Drop-off Center will accept other hazardous wastes like lawn chemicals, fluorescent bulbs and tubes, cleaners, solvents, insecticides, and electronics.

The Drop-off Center mixes paint that has been recycled into three colors (light beige, dark beige, and dark green), which are free to anyone who wishes to pick it up.

The Drop-off Center is in South Austin is open again, but only by appointment. More details and location info can be found at: tinyurl.com/Recycle-Reuse-Center.

Consider Being on the Board

— Louri O'Leary, Nominations Chair

Do you love living in the NWACA neighborhood? Would you be willing to volunteer your time and talents to serve on the 2022-2024 Board of Directors? If so, the NWACA Nominations Committee would like to hear from you! Please email your contact information (name, email, street address, and phone number), and your neighborhood interests to info@nwaca.org by March 20th.

Once we hear from you, the Nomination Committee may interview you and then nominate you for the Board of Directors. The maximum number of Board members is 25. Nominations must be made from among household and business members who reside within NWACA boundaries who either (a) have been members of the Association for at least one year prior to the nomination or (b) have served on a NWACA committee for three months.

The NWACA Board of Directors Elections are held bi-annually in even-numbered years during the month of April. Each Board member attends the monthly Board meetings and serves on one or more of our committees: Business Membership ;Civic Engagement; Communications; Crime and Safety; Events; Finance; History; Nominations; Parks; Transportation; Tree, Wildlife, and Environment; Wildfire Prevention; and Zoning. See <https://nwaca.org/committees/> for more details. The full Board currently meets by Zoom on the third Wednesday of each month at 6:30 pm.

Please see <https://nwaca.org/mission-vision/> to learn more about NWACA.

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Spotlight: Old Quarry Library Branch – Janice Green



Consider, for a moment, why is there a public library sitting atop a former 100-acre, 30-foot-deep limestone quarry. Northwest Hills' own Old Quarry Library Branch (Old Quarry) opened in 1976, but its roots reach back centuries. As early as 1447 the first public library appeared in Italy; and in the mid-1800's the concept swept west to Britain and then America, gaining a foothold in the young U.S. democracy. Because, for a democracy to flourish, publicly funded libraries are necessary elements. They democratize the availability of literacy, organize knowledge, and make it accessible for all classes, free of charge.

Ann Minner, Managing Librarian at Old Quarry, reacquainted me with the awesome array of services offered there—services shaped by the demographics of our neighborhood. Yes, Covid-19 has been a force to contend with – modified hours, limited seating capacity, plexiglass partitions, mask requirements – requiring a temporary pause in some services. But Ann is ebullient about the future new and resumed programs at Old Quarry. Her demeanor evokes the characteristics of every library staff person I've ever encountered: special people motivated by a higher purpose, compassionate about what they do, eager to help, and who are the most important asset of a library.

If you think that Google has replaced librarians, think again. "A trained librarian is a powerful search engine with a heart." (Sarah McIntyre). "Google can bring you back 100,000 answers; a librarian can bring you back the right one." (Neil Gaiman)

Most of us know about the book-lending conveniences of Old Quarry: free library

cards; online check-out; self-check-out station inside; book-drops outside; and collections of books, eBooks, eAudiobooks, music, and movies. But there's so much more! Here are some highlights of their services:

LEARNING

- Storytimes for children of all ages, including "lap-sit" (from age 0 to 1); some became available virtually during the pandemic. There was even a popular Chinese immersion storytime. And a yoga-storytime is in the works.
- After-school activities involving the creative, musical, or visual. Youth librarians are a wellspring for educational and activity ideas beyond reading. Feel free to pick their brains.
- Staff who help you find similar authors, make personalized recommendations, and guide students toward books and research materials for their class assignments.
- Access to genealogy and job search databases.
- Movie times.
- Chrome book check-out for those without access to the devices necessary for at-home learning.
- A newly revised summer learning program, "Austin Completely Booked," will provide links for all ages with opportunities to read, explore, and create in the Austin area, on your own and/or out in the community – a godsend for parents and grandparents scheduling children and teens' summer learning experiences (the busiest times for Old Quarry).

COLLABORATION

- A free meeting hub for a variety of themed clubs centered around books, graphic books, coin collections, scale modelers, quilting, art, you name it. Because of demand, be sure to call Old Quarry for calendaring.
- Stacks with donated books for sale, like a mini-Recycled Reads, from \$0.50 to \$2.00. All proceeds benefit the library branch directly and help fund programs, speakers, and extra items needed for the branch.
- Programs with area schools, including one that puts library cards in the hands of children.

- Recycle bins for used batteries – one of their all-time favorite services.
- A convenient voting site when selected by Travis County.

INNOVATION

- "Tech Time" is a one-on-one service with patient, tech-savvy staff who will walk you with the operation of your phones, notebooks, and iPads.
- Free wi-fi and computers for use on site; also, convenient mobile and on-site printing.
- Seed collections for seasonal plantings. Check out their shelf of free, labeled, packaged garden plant seeds, including edibles. If your plants in turn produce seeds, you can share them, as this is a self-perpetuating service.
- Gift-wrapping – a new December holiday service that was another big hit. There were wrap-it-yourself tables with all the supplies and materials you'd need for your gift packages.

"The only thing you absolutely have to know is the location of the library," quipped Albert Einstein. And Ann reminded me of the axiom, "Libraries will see you through times of no money better than money will get you through times of no libraries."

How can YOU contribute to Old Quarry? Donate books, CDs, DVDs, gift-wrapping, gardening seeds – and feel free to chat with them about your project/program ideas! Go in and ask for a tour so you can see first-hand what a goldmine this place is. And call, stop by, or check online so you can keep an eye out for updated operations information, as well as events. Just remember, it is a busy branch, and they do have required safety protocols.

Finally, pay attention to the politics of budgets for the Austin Public Library system and remember Texan Walter Cronkite's wisdom: "Whatever the cost of our libraries, the cost is cheap compared to that of an ignorant nation."

CONTACT INFO: 7051 Village Center Drive; 512-974-8860; library.austintexas.gov for updated hours and services.

MARKET UPDATE

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AND
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HILLS



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MEDIAN LIST PRICE/SQFT



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MEDIAN SALE PRICE/SQFT



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AVERAGE LIST PRICE



15 DAYS
DAYS ON MARKET



8
CLOSED SALES



SOURCE: ABOR MLS INCLUDING DATA FROM JANUARY - FEBRUARY 8, 2022 FOR SINGLE FAMILY HOMES BASED ON NWACA BOUNDARIES: MOPAC/HWY360/2222/HWY 183

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Student Scoop: What to do this Spring Break - Kayla Winer-Winkler

Spring break is finally here! While the weather is nice - not too hot, not too cold - being outside is wonderful. Here are a few fun ideas for this spring break.

Picnics are a great way to spend time with family and nature; some of the best places to do so are at grassy parks. Nice Austin-area spots to have a picnic (or just have fun) include Zilker Park, Mayfield Park, and Doug Sahm Hill. One of the benefits of picnicking is breathing fresh air, which can help with stress and improve mental health. Going out on a picnic will be fun - try it!

As you most likely know, food trailers are a big thing here in Austin. Food trailer parks are a great way to experience different cuisines. Italian breadsticks, Spanish empanadas, Thai mango sticky rice, and so many more options, for one mix and match meal. A few of these multicultural outdoor restaurants

include The Picnic - Food Truck Park at 1720 Barton Springs Road, 5000 Burnet at 5000 Burnet Road, and Four Points Outdoor Eatery at 6901 Ranch Road. The Domain is also full of food trucks.

There are multiple places to take a good hike around the neighborhood. But if you're looking to hike somewhere else, you can try out either another part of the neighborhood, an entirely new neighborhood, or Mount Bonnell. This spot features a short hike (or a climb up 102 steps) and a scenic view overlooking Lake Austin. Near Central Market on North Lamar, after a delicious meal and fun at the playground, you can enjoy the trail behind the playground (known as "Central Park.") It's very peaceful and spread out, so no need to worry about bumping into someone every minute.

Art has always been a part of Austin culture: music, theater, literature, and visual arts. The Blanton Museum of Art is a marvelous place to experience some of this art. From paintings to sculptures, pretty much every style of visual art can be found there. However, if you're more of the outdoorsy type, Laguna Gloria has wonderful sculptures on display. Before going, you should check out their website for any events you may want to join! Finally, this would not be a complete list without South by Southwest. SXSW will be returning in-person this year, after two years of virtual events due to Covid-19. Founded in 1987, they will celebrate their 34th in-person year.

I wish you happy spring break, and if you would like to write the next article, email me at nwaca.studentscoop@gmail.com.



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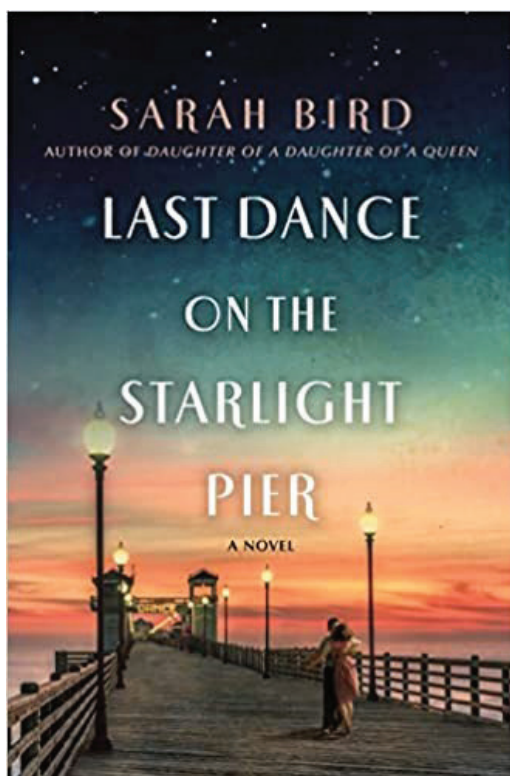
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NWACA News



Even if you haven't met our neighbor Sarah Bird swimming at Barton Springs, walking her Corgi puppy, or checking out books at the Old Quarry library, you've probably seen her. Sarah, a nine-time winner of the Austin Best Fiction Writer award, was chosen in 2017 to represent the Austin Public Library as the hologram/greeter.

A bestselling novelist, screenwriter, essayist, and journalist, Sarah has been an NPR Moth Radio Hour storyteller; a writer for Oprah Magazine, New York Times Sunday Magazine and op-ed columns, Chicago Tribune, Real Simple, Mademoiselle, Glamour, Salon, Daily Beast, Ladies Home Journal, Good Housekeeping, MS, Texas Observer, Alcalde, and, for years, a columnist for Texas Monthly. As a screenwriter, she worked on projects for Warner Bros., Paramount, CBS, National Geographic, Hallmark, ABC, TNT, as well as several independent producers.

We enthusiastically await the release of Sarah's eleventh novel, Last Dance on the Starlight Pier, on April 12th. Set in the world of both dance marathons and the family-run empire of vice that was Galveston, Alan Brennert says: "Last Dance on the Starlight Pier is like a rediscovered movie from the 1930s, starring a colorful cast of indelible characters from the indomitable heroine Evie Grace Drake to the low-rent showbiz types grabbing for the brass ring and the menacing wise guys who controlled the real-life Boardwalk Empire of Galveston, Texas in 1932. It's a poignant, beautifully written story of troubled times and troubled hearts."

Sarah's last novel, Daughter of a Daughter of a Queen, was named an All-time Best Book about Texas by the Austin American-Statesman; Best Fiction of 2018 by Christian Science Monitor; Favorite Books of 2018 by Texas Observer; a One City, One Book choice of seven cities; and a Lit Lovers Book Club Favorite. Last Dance on the Starlight Pier is likely to garner similar honors.

The story delves into quack medicines of the era, and Lauren Larsen asked about them in her interview with Sarah that appears in the March 2022 issue of Texas Monthly. Still more stories of Sarah are available online. Always entertaining, when asked if she dances, Sarah answered yes. She was a go-go girl in Tokyo!

<https://themoth.org/storytellers/sarah-bird>

<http://sarahbirdbooks.com/bio/>

<https://www.listennotes.com/top-episodes/sarah-bird/> Jan 18, 2021

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/episode-4-sarah-bird/id1419716120?i=1000431670475>

<https://www.tribtalk.org/2017/01/11/texas-lawmakers-retracted-my-award-but-i-wrote-an-acceptance-speech-anyway/>



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Do Little or Nothing to Support the Lights Out Texas Campaign!

— Maura Powers



Photo courtesy of Gardengatemagazine.com

Don't turn on your homes' exterior lights during migration!

Billions of birds attempt to migrate through Texas twice a year. But the journey is made more difficult by excessive light from our cities. As one scientist put it, for birds "...it's like driving into high beam headlights," blinding them to both the night sky navigational star map and terrestrial buildings. Even worse, some species are attracted to artificial lights. This light sensitivity leads to confusion, exhaustion, and deadly building collisions.

To mitigate bird fatalities, the Austin City Council recently passed a resolution joining other Texas cities in the Lights Out Texas campaign. This means that lights in city buildings will be turned off, dimmed, or shielded during the spring and fall bird migration seasons: March 1 – June 15 and August 15 – November from 11 pm to 6 am. Travis County is also participating.

For suggestions on how to keep your home secure while managing your lights, go to www.DarkSky.org. If you've had problems with bird strikes on your windows, see the national Audubon website <https://www.audubon.org/lights-out-program> for simple solutions. And, if you'd like to provide a little direct assistance to birds, put out a saucer of water.

For more information on the fast-propagating Lights Out Texas initiative, visit Texan By Nature at <https://texanbynature.org/projects/lights-out-texas/>. Also, our local chapter of Audubon, Travis Audubon, is deeply involved in this effort and distributes yard signs to remind everyone of the migratory periods. <https://travisaudubon.org/what-you-can-do>.

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Driving Safely - A Pedestrian's Perspective - Jonathan Kaplan

Life Goes Bye Fast



On a bitterly cold February evening eight years ago, I was walking home along Far West Boulevard after my usual bus commute from The University of Texas where I work. I did not make it home that night.

I awoke the next morning in a room in the ICU at the old Brackenridge Hospital and couldn't recall what happened. I was informed that the driver of a Chevrolet Impala, distracted while changing radio stations, had run up on the sidewalk and hit me from behind. It was a random accident by a local neighbor. The driver had been distracted at precisely the moment that a curve in the road meets the sidewalk at the intersection of Sungate Drive and Far West.

I had been bundled up with extra layers to shield me from the freezing temperatures. Those extra layers of clothing protected my skin from lacerations and provided some padding. Yet the injuries

were extensive. As I learned, through a haze of pain medication, I had a concussion; a broken ankle, which would require surgery; a fracture in part of my back, which would heal; and a fracture around my right eye, which might require surgery (they would only know after the swelling went down). Thankfully, as I later learned from a friend who was a criminal attorney and who had read many accident reports, I was lucky to be alive. If the driver had hit me head on, instead of sideswiping me, or was driving any faster (they were apparently observing the 30-mph speed limit), I would have likely been killed.

I spent five nights in Brackenridge. My recovery took well over a year and included an additional surgery to remove the hardware that held my ankle together while it healed, and months of physical therapy to help me learn how to walk again. My wife and young daughters experienced the trauma of nearly losing their husband and father and going through the recovery process with me. Friends, family, and the Northwest Hills community, including the Sunshine Committee at Doss Elementary, rallied around us to support us during that time. We are forever grateful for their support.

The next month as I lay in bed recovering from my injuries, I saw horrific news reports of a driver who killed four people and injured more than 20 others on a crowded street during SXSW. This accident was extreme in comparison to mine, but it highlighted for me the reality of how many people are killed or injured in Austin every year in traffic-related accidents, many of them pedestrians. In 2021 alone, according to the Vision Zero website, 117 people lost their lives and 518 experienced serious injuries in traffic-related accidents. These facts increase my worry for my daughters who walk home along local busy streets and intersections from their respective schools each day.

I believe it is possible to live in an Austin where we don't see such unnecessary death and injury. It requires all of us, me included, to be vigilant about paying attention to our surroundings, observing speed limits, and avoiding common distractive behaviors, such as texting or talking while driving. Don't wait to start safe driving habits only after your family has been personally affected.

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Erin Arnold

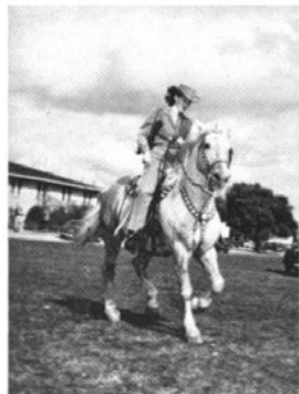
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and turn expanders
in her living room.



O'Neill Riding Stable, R.A. McElroy, and Riley Boy, Texas' Most Beautiful Horse – Richard Denney

R. A. McELROY presents
A Golden Beauty
... From the Heart of Texas

RILEY BOY



Any person would consider himself fortunate to own a Palomino that has been called the "most beautiful horse in Texas", especially a horse that need not depend on his beauty alone but which can perform and win in open all-color competition.

When Mr. McElroy bought Riley Boy he acquired a horse that can show and win in five-gaited events; an acclaimed rodeo performer good enough to place reserve to a seasoned calf-cutting champion the first time he was entered, and a horse so outstanding that he is to be starred in a forthcoming motion picture featuring the famed Texas Rangers.

Mr. McElroy's daughter, Madeline, the young lady who is up in these pictures and who has shown Riley Boy so successfully in Texas shows, will double for the feminine star of the motion picture.

You will see Riley Boy again and again either in the flesh or in pictures because his beauty, intelligence and personality are too potent to be fenced in even by the great State of Texas.



RILEY BOY
PHA 814 PHBA 2216

Palomino stallion of exquisite golden color. He is sired by Fort Concho and is out of Daisy Mae, a registered mare. Miss Madeline McElroy, who is up in this picture, has won numerous awards with Riley Boy in the stiffest competition Texas and the Southwest has to offer. They are to have an important part in the forthcoming motion picture, "The Texas Ranger."

Riley Boy and Madeline

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Just east of the neighborhood, surrounded by office complexes, near 8329 North MoPac Expressway, nestled against the railroad tracks, sits an old riding stable hidden from view. If you didn't know it was there you would never notice it.¹

We know it was a riding stable because it was serendipitously "rediscovered" by someone who, as a kid, rode there. On a Facebook history group, other people, who had spent their childhood taking riding lessons there, came forward. Others, local to the neighborhood who knew about the building, chimed in "We always wondered what that building was!"

Aerial photographs of the area showed the stable was part of a larger ranch/farm; the building dates to at least 1940. The first name we can put on the property with confidence is the O'Neill Riding Stable, 8500 Balcones Trail. That address predates MoPac, the construction of which, and later the renaming of Balcones Trail to Balcones Drive, threw street numbers off. So, we relied on properties on old Balcones Trail in

that area whose location we were confident of to confirm O'Neill Riding Stable at that address.

O'Neill Riding Stables shows up in newspaper advertisements in 1959, run-by Frank "Dutch" O'Neill and wife, Madeline O'Neill.

Here is where the story gets really interesting. Madeline was the daughter of Robert Allen (better known as R.A.) McElroy who raised palominos. One, named Riley Boy, is in several "who's who" of palominos, e.g., Official Stud Book and Registry, Palomino Horse Breeders of America. McElroy had three daughters, one, Pat, was a "model" who moved to New York. But Madeline was into horse riding and training.

In 1946 Austin's paper proclaimed: "McElroy's Riley Boy To Go on Tour Of Nation Soon .. often called 'Texas' most beautiful horse,' will leave his Travis County ranch home soon on an exhibition tour that will take him pretty well over the nation, and is expected to culminate in Madison Square Garden next winter ... McElroy for the past five years [i.e. 1941] has been

engaged in raising and training Palomino horses, and now has approximately 50 on his ranch northwest of Austin (italics mine). Miss McElroy is an expert rider and trainer. A picture of Miss McElroy riding the famous horse will adorn the cover of the National Palomino magazine next month."

In 1947 McElroy presented a framed picture of Riley Boy, with daughter Madeline riding him in a classic "Lone Ranger Hi-Ho Silver" pose, to then Governor of Texas, Beauford Jester.

So, was the stable at 8500 Balcones Trail part of the ranch cited in 1946 about McElroy? Another article from 1950 cites the ranch "at Fiskville;" the stable is less than 2 miles from Payton Gin Road, the home of Edward Zimmerman, one of the founders of Fiskville. The Balcones Trail location fits the criteria of being both northwest of Austin and near Fiskville.

We don't know if O'Neill Riding Stables was in business before 1959, but in 1960 Dutch and Madeline O'Neill sold the property (or business) and it was renamed Balcones Riding Stables.

If you know anything about the history of these stables, we'd love to hear from you!

Richard Denney is Vice-Chair of the Travis County Historical Commission. For more on this topic and other local history, visit <https://traviscountyhistorical.blogspot.com/>

<1> Thanks to TCHC's Lanny Ottosen for his considerable assistance in researching this property. Read more at <https://traviscountyhistorical.blogspot.com/2022/02/oneill-riding-stable-ra-mcelroy-and.html>



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Chief's Monthly Report for December 2021

– Connie Lundgren

Continuing as we have for the last several months, here is the latest report available from the Austin Police Chief, the data for December, 2021.

Chief's Monthly Report for December 2021

City-Wide

Crimes Against Persons

	Dec 2021	All 2021	Dec 2020		Dec 2021	All 2021	Dec 2020
Murder	1	83	2	Murder	0	2	0
Aggravated Assault	290	3,382	284	Aggravated Assault	10	172	24
Simple Assault	845	10,396	779	Simple Assault	87	1,161	68

Baker Sector

Crimes Against Persons

	Dec 2021	All 2021	Dec 2020		Dec 2021	All 2021	Dec 2020
Robbery	68	1,008	97	Robbery	2	42	6
Burglary	467	4,580	475	Burglary	56	577	49
Burglary of Vehicle	866	9,621	852	Burglary of Vehicle	162	1,804	120
Auto Theft	424	4,434	344	Auto Theft	48	572	36
Vandalism	511	6,570	614	Vandalism	43	657	62

Crimes Against Property

Crimes Against Property

	Dec 2021	All 2021	Dec 2020		Dec 2021	All 2021	Dec 2020
Drug Violations	241	2,514	225	Drugs	7	157	27
Weapons	93	893	79	Weapons	1	35	4

Crimes Against Society

Crimes Against Society



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Homelessness and Crime – Terry Cole

Bad actors are out there. We see their aftereffect in vandalism, theft, litter, and destruction of both public and private property. We also see homelessness in our community. We see that without trash service where they stay, things accumulate and get junky. Without resources, our homeless neighbors tend to be creative and repurpose and reuse items. And with few places to store their possessions (there is one storage facility downtown now for those experiencing homelessness), their belongings are pretty visible in shopping carts, infrequently visited spots, makeshift camps, or makeshift storage areas. Bad actors and homeless people are different groups of people, but when the groups overlap, you get something that aggravates everyone: homeless people who are also criminals.

It is important to understand that almost all homeless people technically become criminals without necessarily acting badly. Camping is illegal in our city, so just being homeless outside overnight puts them at risk. They live their lives outside in public sight, so many things you or I might do in private are done outside. This can make them vulnerable to tickets, whether it's going to the bathroom in public, having too much to drink, intimate activity, or having a fight with a partner. I would urge us all to decriminalize as much of this type of thing as possible for our homeless neighbors. This isn't the sort of crime we need be concerned with as a top priority. Bad actors who are also homeless commit more serious crimes. We must adapt and work for community safety and public good, for the sake of those who are not bad actors.

Almost two decades ago, I founded Street Youth Ministry of Austin (SYMin.org) to work with young homeless people in the University of Texas Campus neighborhood, running it from my NWACA area home. I'm active in the campus neighborhood association as well as in NWACA. From time to time there has been an opportunity to investigate the crime rates with an eye toward looking at homeless crime in the area. Without fail, each time we do so, we find that bad actors include neighbors, residents, students, and the homeless. In fact, a very low percentage of the crimes in those studies were committed by the homeless. This is not meant to exonerate any bad actors; victims deserve better, and bad actors need suitable deterrence, opportunities, training, and education. Homeless crime is not always reported, although that has been changing in recent years. Regardless of whether anyone will be arrested, I do encourage you to call 311 or 911 to report all crime.

How to avoid unwanted property use by homeless people? Motion lights work well. Solar powered ones are very easy to install. Motion activated sound is also a proven deterrent. Signs help identify private property. Trash accumulation can be a signal that a place is visited infrequently, so keep things clean. Abandoned outbuildings provide much-needed shelter and storage, and thus they can become targets. Overgrown areas can give a sense of privacy; you may want to trim them up to send the signal they are tended and not abandoned. Note: during prolonged absences, have someone visit your house periodically. Bad actors, whether homeless, occasional criminals, or career criminals, may be waiting to take advantage of your absence. Take steps so that you are not an easy target for criminals while away on breaks or travel.

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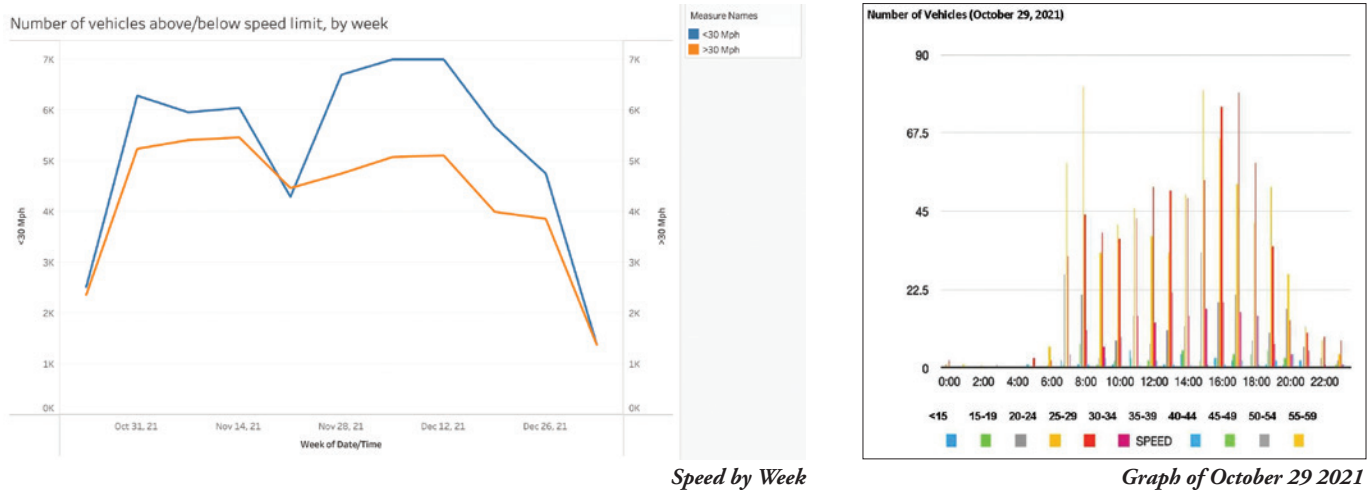
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Greystone Traffic Data – Transportation Committee



During the last quarter of 2021 the city placed traffic speed monitors on Greystone Drive between Mesa Drive and Chimney Corners. Part of the rotation of Dynamic Speed Display (DSDD) units around the city, they are typically left in place for several months. They may have been installed due to neighborhood requests for those signs, based on concerns about the traffic speed.

Our committee requested the data from the day when the DSDDs were installed to the start of 2022, and we analyzed the data.

The traffic volume and speed distribution indicate that the majority of the cars are traveling between 2:00 PM and 7:00 PM. Most vehicles are staying below the 30-mph speed limit, however, there are many that travel at 30 to 39 mph. There were a small number of

vehicles clocked at higher speeds; of 209,837 cars tracked, 852 were clocked at 40 to 44 mph, 27 at 50 to 54 mph.

Other graphs included here show that more people travel below than above the speed limit. Also consider that driving behavior, volume and speed, is impacted by outside factors such as holidays like Thanksgiving, weather, and day of the week

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name:	Phone: ()
Address:	Zip:
Email (confidential):	



Annual dues \$25

Optional Contributions:

Fourth of July Parade	\$10	\$20	Other
Constable	\$10	\$20	Other
Parks Fund	\$10	\$20	Other

To join:

go to **www.nwaca.org** and pay online via credit card
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Volunteer!

Please check a committee on which you would like to participate:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Business Membership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crime & Safety | <input type="checkbox"/> Tree, Environment, and Wildlife |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Events | <input type="checkbox"/> Wildfire Prevention |
| <input type="checkbox"/> History | <input type="checkbox"/> Zoning and Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood Watch | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parks | |

Members, please request to join our **Facebook Group** and sign up for **NWACA Notes**, our weekly email.

For more info email us at: **info@nwaca.org**

Special Thanks to Members -

Membership Committee

NWACA thanks members who generously contributed to the 4th of July Parade Fund, the Park Fund, and the Constable Fund, between January 15, 2022 and February 15, 2022.

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 do events in our parks and revitalize parks in the NWACA area. The Constable Fund helps us provide the patrol activities of the Travis County Constable.

- Kay and Jerry Ballard
- Mark and Andrea Bernett
- Tom and Paula Coopwood
- Deborah Dobbs
- Jill and Adrian Gentry
- Susan Gentz
- Don Grefe
- Nancy Jane and Tom Griffith
- Suzanne Huff
- Cassandra Knobloch
- J. Edward Jones
- Bob Kahn
- Linda Kisner
- Dorothy Layne
- Mitzi McGlone
- Bert McNelly
- Brian and Ilene Novy
- Tony and Alice Sessi
- Betty and Thomas Shaw
- Connie and Matt Sullivan
- Jim and Jan Thomas
- Elaine Thomson
- Henry Tippie
- Ann Trentin and Mike Keenan
- (and apologies to anyone whose donation we might have missed!)



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Thanks to Creek Residents!

– Maura Powers

Last October's newsletter highlighting the importance of maintaining healthy creeks in the neighborhood has paid off! We thank those residents who cleaned up around their property - not only for the improved appearance, but for the environmental benefit as well.

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