



FROM THE BOARD - HAPPY HOLIDAYS, EVERYONE!

By now, the memories of Thanksgiving gatherings and their blessings are starting to fade, and the December holidays are upon us. With our fingers crossed, we're hoping this newsletter gets to your mailbox before December 12th, because that's when a team from the NWACA Board will be judging festooned homes for our annual holiday decorating contest. You've probably seen bedecked homes that you admire – entertaining ones, extravagant ones, sentimental ones – whatever suits your fancy. If time still allows, nominate your favorite by sending the street address of that home to info@nwaca.org, and we'll include it in the homes to be reviewed. What are the prizes you ask? Bragging rights! And a photo that will appear in the January issue of the newsletter. So, please check out the displays and let us know where we need to look.

Apropos to the season, this issue includes an article on hot chocolate. You've probably not tasted all of the alternatives that our Student Scoop author, Kayla Winer-Winkler introduces to us. As you read, say a gentle thank you to Kayla for writing this column for a whole year! And, if you know of another student who'd like to do something similar next year, contact at info@nwaca.org.

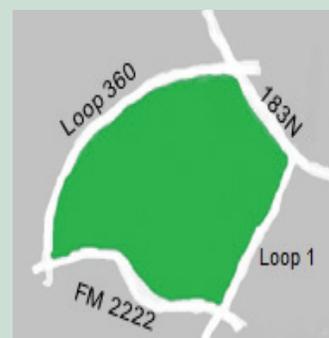
You may also notice that this issue has another article on recycling from Merriessa Anton. She plans to write monthly about some aspect of recycling. As a Zero Waste Block Leader, she's learned a lot about reducing waste and she's eager to share that knowledge. If you have a topic you'd like to see addressed, please let us know. If Merriessa doesn't yet know about the subject, she has a direct connection to people at Austin Resource Recovery and will do the research.

Two articles in this issue describe projects that have recently been completed in the neighborhood, courtesy of Special Project Fund

grants from NWACA. One grant paid for the materials used to create the charming new murals on the walls of Doss Elementary School. Another funded the purchase of picnic tables for use by Anderson High School students during their lunch period - which they turned into something of an art project as well!

NWACA will solicit special project ideas twice in 2023, so be thinking about ideas you have for improvements that can be made in the NWACA area. In addition to those mentioned above, past grants have funded projects that include the placement of recycling bins in our local parks and fixit stations for bikes at local elementary schools, as well as improvements at Murchison Pool. Be creative!

From the NWACA Board to all our neighbors – have a terrific holiday season!



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.



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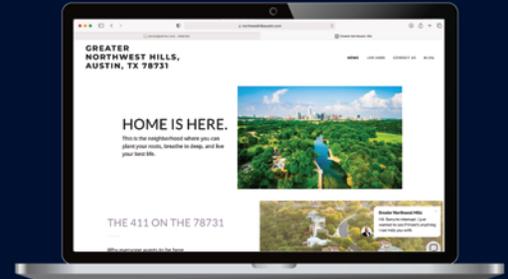
CURRENT BUYERS NEEDS

First floor, single story condo under \$350k in NW Hills

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Help me find the unicorn: 7,000+SQFT super private home, 6+bedrooms, up to \$20M

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REBUILDING TOGETHER AUSTIN SPOTLIGHT



I'd like to spotlight a few recent Rebuilding Together Austin projects for neighbors in need who live on very limited income. We just finished repairing a home for a veteran and

his wife, installing a new walkway to prevent falls, a new HVAC system, flooring, plumbing, electrical, and drywall repairs. We also worked on a home for Mr. H., who has lived in this home for 47 years. We installed a new HVAC, flooring, front door, exterior paint, a garage ceiling, drywall repairs, and interior paint. It takes much coordination and effort to pull off these projects and we couldn't do it without the support from our funders Texas Veterans Commission, the City of Austin Housing and Planning Department,

our contractors, our amazing private donors, and our incredible volunteers! Our repairs directly improve the lives of neighbors in need by allowing homeowners to age in place and use their limited resources for other necessities such as food and healthcare. Please consider making a donation today. No donation is too small. Thank you!

- Albert Allen - Board President
Rebuilding Together Austin
www.RebuildingTogetherAustin.org

WWW.NORTHWESTHILLSAUSTIN.COM

Key Contacts

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/department/myaustincodestatus>
APD District Representative,
Officer James Hyatt..... 512-974-6894
District 10 Councilmember, Alison Alter 512-978-2110
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Each of the Board Members can be reached at
info@nwaca.org, or by phone at 737-235-7325

The NWACA Board meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month except July and 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)

Peel Advertising

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

Mark Your Calendars

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

Dec 20, 7 PM

Parks Committee • virtual

Jan 15, 2 PM

Tree, Environment, and Wildlife Committee • virtual

Jan 17, 7 PM

Parks Committee • virtual

Jan 24, 5 PM

NWACA Zoning and Transportation Committees Joint Meeting
virtual

Jan 25, 6:30 – 8:30 PM

NWACA Board Meeting
St. Matthew's Episcopal Church and virtual



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Help each other out!

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The graphic features a blue sky with a white lightning bolt, a green hill with colorful houses, and a line of blue silhouettes of people holding hands. A circular logo with the text 'NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH' and a stylized eye is in the top right corner.

Prevent Oak Wilt

PLAN AHEAD - PRUNE

NOV thru JAN

- **Beetles Inactive**
- **Dormant Season**
- **Coldest Months**

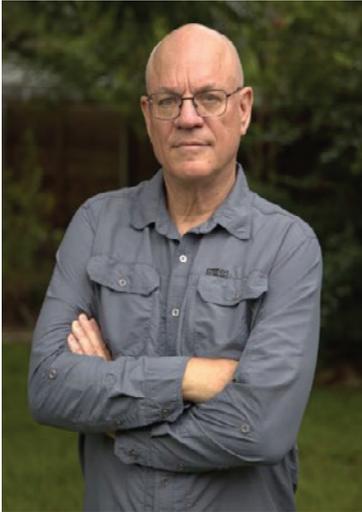
NWACA News

IDEE KWAK'S

Jeff Kerr – Idee Kwak

Writers CORNER

When we last checked in on Jeff Kerr, his film *Writer's Block* had just been named Best Texas Film by the Lake Travis Film Festival as well as the Best International Feature by the Varco Film Fund and Screenplay Awards.



Looking back, we see Jeff wasn't a newcomer to awards and accolades. His first book, *Austin, Texas Then and Now*, was published by Pavilion Books in 2004 and was a finalist for the Violet Crown Award the same year. (Will he perhaps give us a sequel, *Austin, Texas Then and Then and Now?*)

Waterloo Press published his next book in 2010. *Seat of the Empire* depicts the founding of Austin as the capital of Texas, a hard-fought decision. The book met with acclaim, Luci Baines Johnson calling it "a page-turner."

The author next turned his attention to his documentary, *The Last of the Moonlight Towers*. Released in 2016, the film looks at towers built worldwide in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as a source of public carbon-arc lighting. Jeff explores their history and cultural impact on Austin. Gradually replaced with incandescent and mercury vapor lamps, the last 15 towers in existence are all in Austin, recognized as Texas State Landmarks, and listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The Zilker Christmas tree is built on one of them.

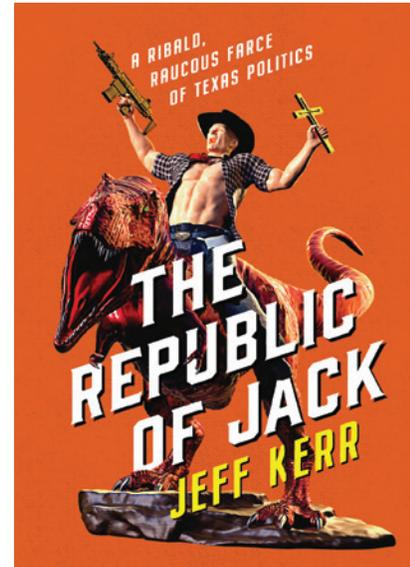
2017 brought Jeff's first fictional work, *Lamar's Folly*. A fascinating story based on the founding of Texas; we reviewed it here shortly after its release by Texas Tech University Press.

After his success with his first fictional book, Jeff turned to a fictional film, *Writer's Block*, a psychological thriller produced by Sharp Town Productions in 2019. As the film garnered the mentioned prizes, Jeff dove into a fictional farce about state politics. *Republic of Jack*, short and raucous, shows Texas seceding from the Union so that its governor could win an election. Published by Promised Land Books in 2020, the book is as cynically entertaining now as it was then.

A short story, *Death Train*, is coming, and then hopefully Jeff's next book, *Refuge*, now being shopped to publishers. To give us a taste of what this thriller has in store for us, Jeff is offering a prequel, *Into the Fire*, free of charge. To receive a copy, sign up for his newsletter at his website, <https://www.jeffreykerrauthor.com/>

Always thinking about what to write next, Jeff recently retired from his career as a Pediatric Neurologist allowing him more time for writing. In mind is a mystery series about Adam Cash, the sheriff of a small, fictional town in Blanco County.

I'm sure we have a whole lot to look forward to! As Jeff says, "I will write until I die and might not quit even then."



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Student Scoop: Hot Chocolate – Kayla Winer-Winkler

As the weather gets colder, we start wanting warmer things, such as coats and sweaters, as well as heated blankets. However, my personal favorite, and probably one of the sweeter ones, is hot chocolate. Since I was young, I always referred to it as hot cocoa, but my parents always said hot chocolate. So, what is the difference? Are they actually the same thing?

Hot cocoa is different from hot chocolate; however, there is only a subtle difference in ingredients. Hot chocolate is made by melting chocolate into boiling milk or water. On the other hand, hot cocoa is made with cocoa powder, sugar, and boiled water or milk, and is typically thinner.

Even between the two, there are still many different types of this warm treat. For instance, Mexican hot chocolate is often grainier than what we usually have in the U.S., and it includes spices such as cinnamon. Colombian hot chocolate is also made with a lot of spices, but it also includes a pinch of salt, as well as cheese, which makes it creamier. Italian hot chocolate, or *cioccolata calda* has cornstarch in it to make it thicker. If you think that hot chocolate is too sweet, then you might try the European-style made of unsweetened cocoa powder, bittersweet chocolate, or dark chocolate. If you enjoy sweeter foods, then you would probably like Unicorn Hot Chocolate. It is made with a white chocolate base, mixed with sprinkles, and topped with your favorite sweet treats.

With hot chocolate, there are endless possibilities. Some have already been covered, but here is another: water or milk? Personally, I prefer the creaminess of the milk. Some people would argue that water is the better liquid to add, since it keeps the drink from being too sweet, as it dilutes the chocolate.

Whatever your preference, most will agree that hot chocolate is the winter-warm-up classic. Since we started the Student Scoop series with ice cream, a cold treat, we decided to end with hot chocolate, a warm treat.



New Luxury Home For Sale in 78731

exp
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Hidden away in the hills of 78731, this newly constructed, custom home built by Stone Acorn Builders captures breathtaking scenic views from multiple directions. High-end designer finishes enhance the beauty of its construction featuring an 18' foot steel glass front door, 12' foot high ceilings, and sleek wide plank, white oak flooring. Enjoy all the luxuries of modern living with a full-size butler's pantry, large, quartz countertops, and Thermador appliances. The backyard features a covered outdoor living area including a built-in kitchen, stone fireplace, automatic shades, and heated pool with a designated pool bath. For more information, visit:

www.beverlyskyline.com

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NWACA News

New Picnic Tables at Anderson High School

— Lauren Ward

Heightened security left Anderson High School with a challenge - how do you provide on-campus seating for 1800 students during lunch period when your cafeteria only seats 450? NWACA special project funds and money raised by the Anderson High School PTSA allowed for the purchase of picnic tables - to help alleviate crowding in the cafeteria and give students a chance to sit at a table instead of on the ground. Students held a workday in October to paint the tables and brighten the lunch spaces (photo). Next, Anderson will refurbish the sign on Mesa Drive with fresh paint and new signage to reflect the school's partnership with NWACA and its designation as an International Baccalaureate School.



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39
DAYS ON MARKET



14
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HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

We are incredibly grateful for the privilege of serving our clients, for the ability to provide you with an unparalleled real estate experience, and for the opportunity to continue supporting the Northwest Hills community we know and love. You put JOY in what we do!

Wishing you a beautiful holiday season and a joyous year's end!

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Walk Audits – Where Next?

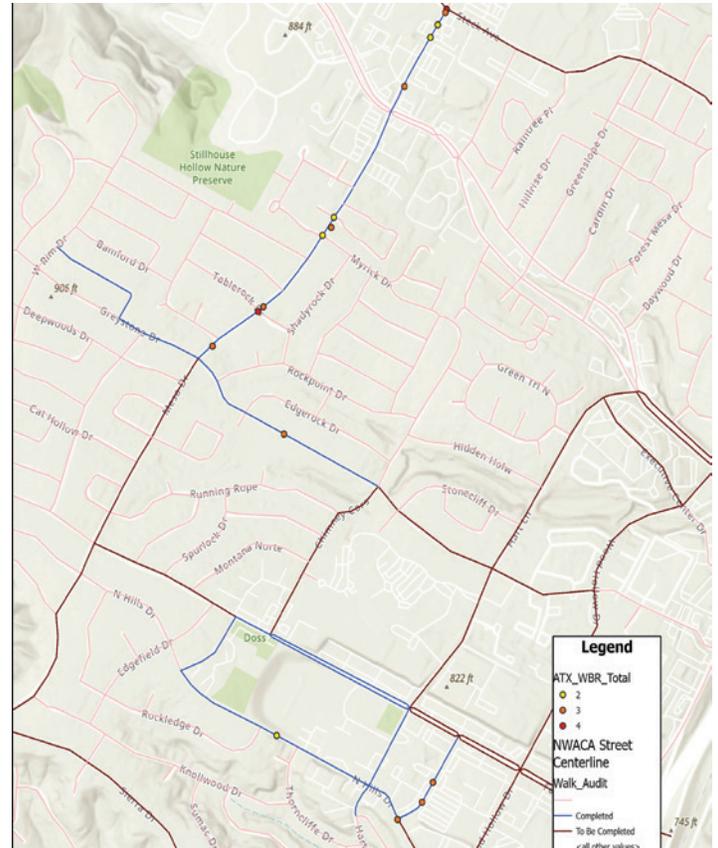
– Joe Hutchinson, Transportation Committee

The NWACA Transportation Committee has completed walk audits of many streets throughout the neighborhood using the AARP Walk Audit Toolkit as a guide. (See <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/getting-around/aarp-walk-audit-tool-kit.html>.) Missing or broken sidewalks, lack of crosswalks, and other potential issues in the walking network have been identified, and areas of improvement are being developed in accordance with the Austin Walk, Bike, and Roll Priorities. (See <https://www.austintexas.gov/ATXWBR-about>.)

Now, we want to hear from you! What streets do you often walk, and what kind of improvement do you wish to see? Please take some time to fill out this form: <https://tinyurl.com/walkinput>. Add the street, closest cross street, a photo of the spot where you would love to see an improvement, and any comments you have.

The 2022 Annual Mobility Plan calls for bikeway improvements on North Hills Drive, Far West Boulevard, and Hart Lane, plus improvements along sidewalks at Steck Avenue near Hill Elementary! (See details at <https://tinyurl.com/MobilityAustin>.) The City's Walk Bike Roll program will provide many opportunities to improve the walking and cycling network in our community in the next several years, so we'd love to know the community's priorities when discussing improvements with the city.

Thanks for your input!





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Chief's Monthly Report for September 2022

City-Wide

Baker Sector

Crimes Against Persons

Crimes Against Persons

	Sept 2022	Sept 2021	% Change	All 2022		Sept 2022	Sept 2021	% Change	All 2022
Murder	3	9	-67%	52	Murder	0	0	-	1
Aggravated Assault	268	275	-3%	2,840	Aggravated Assault	12	13	-8	128
Simple Assault	819	868	-6%	7,548	Simple Assault	62	91	-32%	753

Crimes Against Property

Crimes Against Property

	Sept 2022	Sept 2021	% Change	All 2022		Sept 2022	Sept 2021	% Change	All 2022
Robbery	90	97	-7%	727	Robbery	5	5	0%	41
Burglary	334	362	-8%	3,393	Burglary	40	54	26%	378
Burglary of Vehicle	841	719	17%	7,612	Burglary of Vehicle	164	151	9%	1,593
Auto Theft	439	407	8%	6,506	Auto Theft	48	50	-4%	413
Vandalism	488	489	0%	4,587	Vandalism	50	51	-2%	436

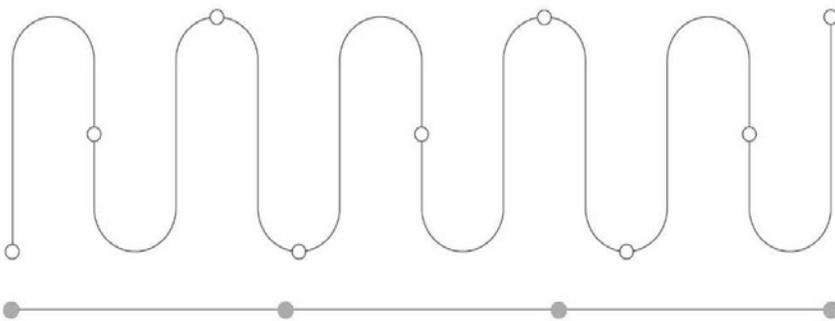
Crimes Against Society

Crimes Against Society

	Sept 2022	Sept 2021	% Change	All 2022		Sept 2022	Sept 2021	% Change	All 2022
Drug Violations	247	201	23%	2,369	Drugs	15	13	15%	118
Weapons	77	77	0%	818	Weapons	2	0	-	9

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NWACA News

Deer Rutting Season – Wildlife Management Committee

November through December is deer mating season in Texas, also known as “rutting season.” During this time, we all need to use extra caution; deer are paying attention to one another and not to humans and cars. You’ll probably see more mature male deer than usual, and at times females will be scurrying ahead of them. Be careful, as they may dart in front of walkers, runners, cyclists, and moving cars. Give them plenty of space. Keep dogs on a leash at a safe distance from the deer.

Given the frequency with which cars and deer collide, it would be prudent to check your auto insurance to ensure you have adequate “Collision – Other” coverage, which applies to such incidents. Recently, an encounter with a deer on Greystone Drive required more than \$3,000 in repairs, though the apparent damage was small!

If you’re a gardener with a medium or large agave plant within a deer’s reach, you might want to put a barrier around it during mating season. Male deer like to rub the velvet off their antlers using the agave spines, destroying the plant’s big wide leaves in the process.

To report an injured or dead deer, call 311. Be prepared to provide a precise address where the animal can be located.



*Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from
your local, family owned and operated
Shoal Creek Dental Doctors and Staff*

Helping Monarch Butterflies

– Maura Powers

Where have all the monarchs gone? And what you can do about it?

The epic monarch butterfly migration has nearly vanished but still, you may have seen a few in late October on their way to Mexico where they overwinter. They will begin their return to Texas in early March. Seeking emerging milkweeds, they move through Texas laying eggs on the young plants before dying. Their offspring consume the milkweeds and then continue to the eastern U.S. and southern Canada. See <https://tinyurl.com/MoreOnMonarchs> for more background information.

The most helpful thing a person can do to help these butterflies, is to plant milkweed. Unfortunately, many local nurseries sell tropical milkweed which is harmful to monarchs. Avoid this even if it's all that's available. Any other milkweed is safe, but some are especially well suited to our climate. The Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center lists several native Texas species at <https://tinyurl.com/LBJWCnatives>

If you would like to start from seed, and this is recommended because spring seedlings are in very high demand, December is a good time to begin. The Native American Seed website offers a Sustain the Migration Kit, which includes a variety of milkweeds with instructions and vermiculite. It also sells individual seed packets. See the catalog at <https://tinyurl.com/seedsourc>

Milkweeds can be uncooperative, but don't give up! The best result I ever had was by planting seeds in ½ gallon milk containers with potting soil and vermiculite. They were left out on the back porch for the entire winter and many seedlings emerged that spring. Next, transplant the seedlings where they will thrive. This may be a matter of trial and error. The plants do need some TLC when they are young. Not too much sun, and some water. Milkweeds are perennials, so once you get plants growing, leave them be so they can re-seed the area each year.

Another helpful thing is to grow “pollinator” plants that offer sustenance to adult butterflies. An easy, fast-growing plant is the Gregg mistflower, and there are many others. For a directory of suitable plants, refer to the City of Austin's Native and Adapted Landscape Plants available at many nurseries or online at <https://tinyurl.com/COAPlants>

Thank you for joining the efforts to sustain the monarchs and their millennia-old migration.



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THOSE WHO DREAM *Christmas Eve*
5pm ✦ 7pm ✦ 9pm



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 August 15, 2022, and November 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.

- Joyce and Wesley Campbell
- Arthur K. Cook
- Jean Miller and Bill Christensen
- Judy and Richard Greffe
- (and apologies to anyone whose donation we might have missed!)

What Happens to our Plastic When We Recycle

— Merriessa Anton

I am carefully recycling plastic in my blue recycle bin. So, what happens to these items after they are picked up?

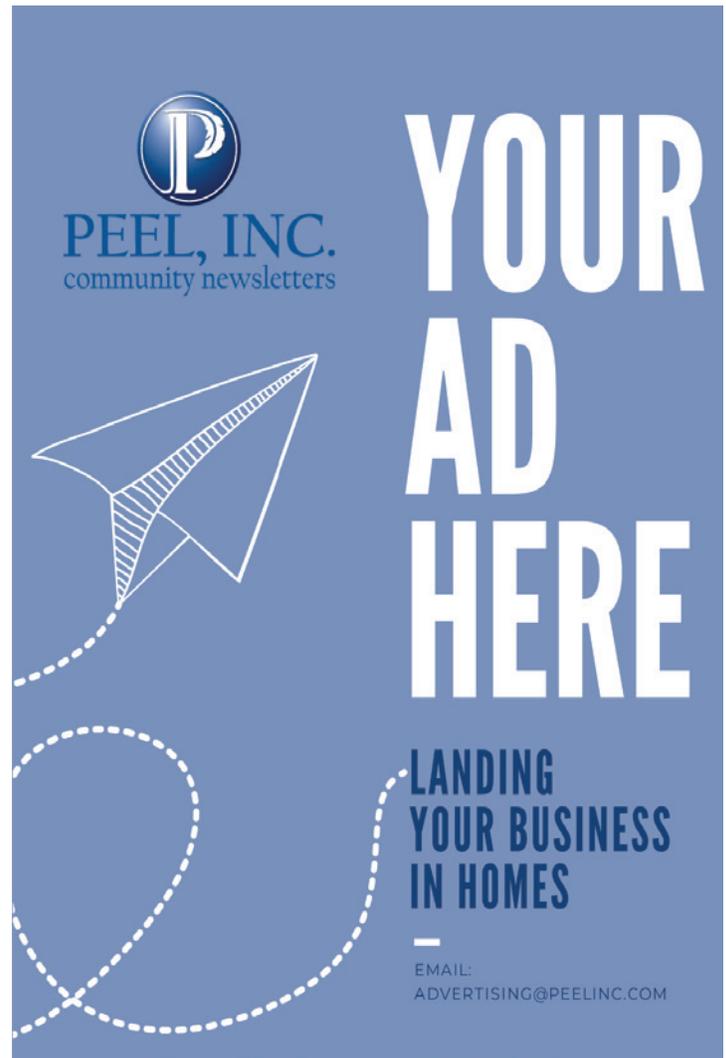
Our recycling is taken to the Material Recovery Center and the bin is dumped on a conveyor belt. The conveyor belt helps the workers sort the objects by different materials. Below is a short list of what might become of our plastic recyclables.

- Plastic water bottles are used to make other beverage bottles, polyester fabric, and carpet.
- Milk jugs are made into new bottles.
- Detergent bottles are used to make buckets, containers, or flowerpots.
- Shampoo bottles are made into flooring.
- Yogurt containers are used in bicycle racks and pots for plants.

Remember, not all plastic should be thrown into the blue recycle bin. Plastic zipper, bread, and produce bags, and plastic that is used to wrap grocery items can be recycled at store drop off boxes. Please do not place them in your recycling bin, as they cause harm to the machinery at the Resource Recovery Center, and when they get tangled in the machinery, workers can be injured. HEB, Walmart, and Target stores in Austin all have plastic bag recycling bins. This plastic is collected and might get recycled into synthetic lumber for decking or park benches. Some plastic might be recycled into another plastic bag. You can also take your plastic bags to the Recycle and Reuse Drop Off Center.

Compostable plastic bags, pre-washed salad bags, candy wrappers, and most pet food plastic bags should be placed in your trash bin, not in the recycle bin or in the drop-off recycling boxes at the grocery stores.

At the <https://www.austintexas.gov/whatdo> website you can ask the question “What Do I Do With.....” You can type the name of the waste item and this app will take you to information about how to recycle or dispose of the item.



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Forest Tent Caterpillars —Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service

Forest tent caterpillars cause damage in the larval, or caterpillar, stage. Caterpillars are a greyish- brown color with bright blue and yellow stripes running down the sides of their body. The back of the caterpillar has white shoeprint/ keyhole markings. Larvae also have fine white hairs over their body but are not a stinging caterpillar.

These caterpillars, although called tent caterpillars, do not make an actual tent like others in their group. Other tent caterpillars make a web between two branches where they join or split from each other. Forest tent caterpillars make a silken mat on the tree trunk or large branches where caterpillars gather in groups between feedings.

Forest tent caterpillars appear once a year, typically in April. In some years outbreak populations can occur and numerous caterpillars can be seen in certain areas. They chew foliage of trees, usually deciduous hardwoods. Even though the caterpillars eat foliage, many trees can withstand 20% loss of foliage without being harmed. Concern should be when other stressors are apparent along with the caterpillars, such as drought or disease.

If the need to manage forest tent caterpillars occurs, less toxic active ingredients that can be used to treat foliage are *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) *kurstaki* or spinosad. Another option would be to treat the silken mat with a pyrethroid product when the caterpillars are resting there.



For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600.



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