

Northwest Austin News

SERVING THE NORTHWEST AUSTIN CIVIC ASSOCIATION COMMUNITY

Volume 14, Issue 9

September 2023



It's a Busy Fall!

By NWACA BOARD

Although it is September, we are still experiencing triple digit temperatures. It will soon break and we're all looking back to being more comfortable when taking a walk around the neighborhood!

As you plan your calendar, set aside Saturday evening, September 30, from 6 – 8 PM, to join neighbors for our Neighborhood National Night Out. We'll gather with neighbors and friends for food, music from School of Rock, and a chance to meet our first responders. There will be a bouncy house and games for the kids, so families should have a great time!

First responders keep us safe throughout the year, and here you can thank them and introduce yourself. Austin Fire Department will have a firetruck for the kids to explore. There will be displays from EMS, Travis County Constable



BUSY FALL, 2

Anderson shuts out McCallum 42-0 in Taco Shack Bowl win



The Anderson High School Trojans scored early and often in the 42-0 win in the 22nd Taco Shack Bowl over McCallum on August 24 at House Park.

It's the Trojans' 12th Taco Shack Bowl victory and their second consecutive blowout win after taking the game 49-3 last year, according to KXAN.

More photos by Phil Swann Photography on pages 8, 14 and 18.

Art + Community: "Enter the Dragonfly"

By JANICE GREEN

Something very unusual has happened in the quiet cul-de-sac of Tumbling Circle, off Highland Hills Drive: A magical exhibition of soaring, illuminated dragonflies! This art installation has a story beyond the beauty of its colorful and intriguing subject matter. It begins with Jennifer and Jake Rodgers making so much noise in their garage that neighbors had to investigate.

Jennifer Rodgers is a jewelry designer and Jake Rodgers is a gaming

DRAGONFLY, 2



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Stay Safe During Wildfire Season

AUSTIN FIRE DEPARTMENT

Welcome to Texas wildfire season, where drought conditions, extreme heat, and gusty winds can be a recipe for disaster. In fact, embers from a wildfire can travel up to a mile from their source. July was the hottest July Austin has had in 125 years according to the National Weather Service, with only a sprinkling of rain.

Unfortunately, our last significant rainfall was in mid-June, which means our drought levels waver between “severe” and “extreme”. Given that 90 percent of all wildfires are caused by people—and the effects can be devastating for years to come—we wanted

BUSY FALL, FROM 1

Precinct 2, Austin Police Department, and Austin Code Compliance. Many NWACA Business Members will be there with booths – some with food, some with information; please stop by and thank them for supporting this event and others throughout the year. To show off your NWACA pride, wear a 2023 NWACA t-shirt! They’re kelly green, so they work all year long. If you didn’t get yours for 4th of July, you can get yours now – go to www.nwaca.org and use the green Donate/Shop button.

Throughout September, we’re gathering registrations for this year’s NWACA Neighborhood Garage Sales. The sales will be October 7, but registrations must be in by September

DRAGONFLY, FROM 1

designer – usually solo, quiet professions. But in 2022 they decided to create an outdoor art display of four dragonflies (configured as perched, in flight, laying eggs, at rest) and applied for entry in the Waterloo Greenway’s Creek Show held in Waller Creek. Their concept, which echoed the restoration of the creek’s ecological and native environment, was accepted into the show.

Back to the Rodger’s garage. These four dragonflies are huge, made with a steel skeleton, covered in a durable fabric to withstand outdoor elements, and wired for ever-changing LED light coloration. The construction of them became a daunting and monumental task, creating substantial noise at all hours, leaving the Rodgers to fear the project would not be completed in time. When curious neighbors began showing up at the garage workshop, the anxious Rodgers were certain complaints would follow. But that is not what happened. One by one the cul-de-sac residents meandered into the garage, learned about the project, and unannouncedly offered to help – not just once, but almost every day and night! Jake described the hard “grunt work” they were assigned and tackled, e.g.,



FIREWISE USA™ Residents reducing wildfire risks

to pass along some safety tips from the Austin Fire Department’s Wildfire Division that could make the difference between fighting a wildfire and preventing one. You can also find the day’s wildfire danger rating on the National Fire Danger Rating Sign (NFDRS),

30 to be included in NWACA promotion. Each home does its own sale and keeps all the proceeds while NWACA provides advertising on the NWACA web site, through Facebook, on Craigslist, and in the Austin American Statesman. This event is for NWACA members, so if a garage sale is in your plans and your NWACA membership isn’t current, go to www.nwaca.org and use the green Membership button to join or renew.

We had a terrific turnout for our first-ever paper shredding event on August 19. We plan to do that again next year (but maybe not in the heat of August!). Our next Household Recycling event is a gathering of old electronics, batteries, Styrofoam, and bathroom supplies - toothbrushes, empty toothpaste tubes, used

sanding steel. They, too, became invested in the project. When these large creatures were installed in Waller Creek, neighbors were there to help.

“We are so grateful for our neighbors because this exhibition would never have happened without them! They were never asked to help but went above and beyond. We are forever indebted to them for their contribution. Talk about a bonding experience!”

When the Waller Creek exhibition closed last December, Jake and Jennifer were looking for a place to store the dragonflies, but their neighbors had another idea. The Rodgers never intended to install the art in their mini-hood, but their neighbors insisted on doing so especially since the holiday season was in full sway. Gradually Northwest Austinites from outside the cul-de-sac noticed the sculptures and paused in awe to gaze at the colorful night time display; plus, no one complained about the traffic.

The saga of Tumbling Circle becoming a place to enjoy beautiful art is inspirational. It’s another example of the bonding possible within our mini-

located in front of every AFD fire station.

Here are some tips and information that can help you stay safe during the wildfire season.

- Never park a car on the grass; those dry fuels combined with the heat from the engine and/or the exhaust could start a fire.
- When pulling a trailer, ensure the chains are connected and do not drag. Those fires you see in the medians on the road are most likely caused by dragging chains.
- Dispose of cigarettes properly. Improperly discarded smoking materials are one of the top three causes of fires in Austin.

razors, and dental floss containers. It will be on Saturday, October 21, from 9 – 11 AM. Like our other household recycling events, this is for NWACA members only.

A non-event note: Those who get Council Member Alison Alter’s newsletter saw that a note about renovation coming to the Old Quarry Library. The Branch Manager notes that renovation is currently scheduled for the fourth quarter of 2024, though it may be delayed since it’s the last of five branches scheduled for work next year. The Old Quarry renovations will involve replacement of furniture, fixtures, equipment, and interior finishes (paint, carpet, etc.). Our local library is a really vibrant space; take a look at the

hoods and the capacity for neighborly collaboration that fosters forever friendships.

By the end of September the dragonflies will be moved and displayed in Pease Park for a six-month exhibition. Don’t delay checking out this incredible sight and neighborly feat before it van-

- Don’t throw them out of a car window or put them out in a combustible container (e.g., flower pots, wooden decks, etc.)
- Postpone outdoor activities that could start a wildfire such as mowing the lawn or using charcoal in a grill.
- If you see or suspect a fire, call 911 immediately. Never assume someone else has made that call or that you’re going to be bothering someone.

Wildfire is everyone’s fight because it’s not a matter of if the next wildfire occurs, but when. You can do your part by following these safety tips and preparing your home and your family now for such an event. Learn more at www.ATXFire.com

schedule of events for this month – an awesome collection!

A reminder: If you have an idea for a NWACA Special Project, applications are due September 30th. Selected applicants will be encouraged to present their proposals at the October NWACA Board meeting. Submit applications, drawings, pictures, and estimated project costs to info@nwaca.org or by U.S. mail to: NWACA, P.O. Box 26654, Austin, TX 78755. The number of projects funded is at the discretion of the Board. If you have questions about the program, email info@nwaca.org

Enjoy the cool fall!

ishes!

CONTACT INFO: Jake Rodgers: jake.rodgers@gmail.com; Jennifer Rodgers: jennkrodgers@gmail.com





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-Donna & Phil S.

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HELPING INJURED TEXANS

DWI, Theft, Disturbance in Police and Sheriff’s Report

Recent Travis County Sheriff’s Office and Austin Police Department reports in the Northwest Austin area include a variety of cases.

08/07/2023 3:43 PM
83XX MOPAC EXPY
THEFT

08/08/2023 2:20 PM
68XX MARBYS RIDGE
TERRORISTIC THREAT

08/09/2023 10:12 AM
52XX OLD SPICEWOOD SPRINGS
CRIMINAL MISCHIEF

08/09/2023 7:03 PM
41XX RIDGELINE
THEFT

08/09/2023 7:34 PM
52XX SPICEWOOD
HARASSMENT

08/09/2023 8:22 PM
36XX GREYSTONE
DATING DISTURBANCE

08/11/2023 4:52 PM
51XX LUCAS LN
TERRORISTIC THREAT

08/12/2023 12:11 AM
43XX WILDRIDGE
HARASSMENT

08/12/2023 11:36 AM
55XX SCOUT ISLAND CIR
HARASSMENT

08/12/2023 11:39 PM
66XX CAPITAL OF TEXAS HWY
DWI

08/13/2023 12:23 PM
95XX JOLLYVILLE
THEFT OF BICYCLE

08/13/2023 1:25 PM
52XX SPICEWOOD
CRIMINAL MISCHIEF

08/14/2023 6:49 PM
72XX WOOD HOLLOW
THEFT

08/14/2023 6:49 PM
72XX WOOD HOLLOW
THEFT

08/15/2023 12:59 PM
41XX SPICEWOOD SPRINGS
ASSAULT W/INJURY

08/16/2023 11:55 AM
58XX BACK CT
BURGLARY

08/16/2023 12:41 PM
44XX WALHILL LN
THEFT

08/16/2023 8:31 PM
65XX CHAMPION GRANDVIEW
FAMILY DISTURBANCE

08/17/2023 9:48 AM
59XX COURTYARD
THEFT

08/17/2023 6:44 PM
67XX LAKEWOOD
AUTO THEFT

08/17/2023 11:04 PM
85XX CAPITAL OF TEXAS HWY
FAMILY DISTURBANCE

08/18/2023 12:29 AM
85XX CAPITAL OF TEXAS HWY
HARASSMENT

08/18/2023 12:40 AM
85XX CAPITAL OF TEXAS HWY
DATING DISTURBANCE

08/18/2023 12:00 PM
53XX BALCONES
SHOPLIFTING

08/19/2023 4:20 AM
66XX HART LN
SUSPICIOUS PERSON

08/19/2023 10:28 PM
68XX AUSTIN CENTER
FAMILY DISTURBANCE

08/21/2023 11:10 AM
35XX NORTH HILLS
HARASSMENT

08/21/2023 11:41 AM
82XX NEELY DR
CRIMINAL MISCHIEF

08/21/2023 11:56 AM
70XX VILLAGE CENTER
HARASSMENT

08/21/2023 2:00 PM
70XX MOPAC EXPY
BURGLARY OF VEHICLE

08/22/2023 9:08 PM
59XX COURTYARD
THEFT

08/23/2023 11:01 AM
95XX JOLLYVILLE
HARASSMENT

08/23/2023 2:10 PM
36XX GREYSTONE
ASSAULT BY THREAT

08/24/2023 9:35 AM
62XX CAPITAL OF TEXAS
HWY
THEFT

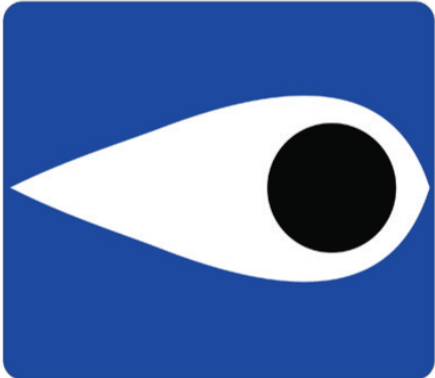
08/24/2023 2:34 PM
65XX MOPAC EXPY
FORGERY & PASSING

08/25/2023 12:12 AM
72XX CHIMNEY CORNERS
BURGLARY

08/25/2023 3:36 PM
00XX CAPITAL OF TEXAS HWY
THEFT

Madison Pharis compiled this report mostly from SpotCrime at www.spotcrime.com and also from CrimeReports.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH



WE LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER

More information at NWACA.org

Austin Police Department Chief’s Monthly Report for July, 2023

City-Wide

Crimes Against Persons

	July 2023	July 2022	% Change	
Murder	5	8	-38%	
Aggravated Assault	317	331	-4%	
Simple Assault	890	935	-5%	

Crimes Against Property

	July 2023	July 2022	% Change	
Robbery	73	97	-25%	
Burglary	346	388	-11%	
Burglary of Vehicle	729	768	-5%	
Auto Theft	641	928	-31%	
Vandalism	557	508	-10%	

Crimes Against Society

	July 2023	July 2022	% Change	
Drug Violations	277	241	-15%	
Weapons	92	87	6%	

Baker Sector

Crimes Against Persons

	July 2023	July 2022	% Change	
Murder	1	0	-	
Aggravated Assault	20	8	150%	
Simple Assault	57	98	-42%	

Crimes Against Property

	July 2023	July 2022	% Change	
Robbery	2	2	0%	
Burglary	51	44	16%	
Burglary of Vehicle	130	228	-43%	
Auto Theft	50	40	25%	
Vandalism	62	42	48%	

Crimes Against Society

	July 2023	July 2022	% Change	
Drug Violations	14	10	40%	
Weapons	3	6	-50%	

Austin Police Chief Joseph Chacon Leaves Post After Two Years

By LUZ MORENO-LOZANO
KUT

Chief Joseph Chacon will leave the Austin Police Department this month. Chacon told interim City Manager Jesús Garza of his plans to retire and he officially gave his notice on August 21. He has served in law enforcement for 31 years.

Chacon said he had been considering retirement for the last several weeks, adding that “this (decision) was a little bit out of the blue.”

“And the more I (thought about it), the more I knew the time was right for me,” he said. “Because when you know, you just know.”

Chacon’s departure is the latest in a string of city leadership changes since Mayor Kirk Watson took office. But Chacon, 55, said the decision was his own, and did not come from city leadership.

“There were some conversations ... about, ‘Chief, please don’t leave. We need this stability right now, and we need this support coming from City Hall and coming from the city manager’s office, and I’m very grateful for that. Again, just a very personal decision about where I am with me and my family.’”

A YEAR OF CHANGES TO CITY LEADERSHIP

Chacon’s departure follows that of former Austin Energy General Manager Jackie Sargent, who retired in March. There have been several other departures, including former Assistant City Manager Rey Arellano, who hired Chacon. And former City Manager Spencer Cronk was fired in February. The chief said on August 21 he hopes “people don’t take my departure as a sign of instability, because it’s not.” But Chacon acknowledged that APD, like many other police departments across the country, has faced a number of challenges.

Chacon became chief in 2021, at a time when the department faced allegations of racism among its staff. The city also had a record number of murders that year. In recent years, Chacon has tackled issues with staffing in the police department.

The Austin Police Department is 330 officers short – many of those patrol officers – and Chacon said that has been frustrating, because it limits what officers can respond to. “Where we sit in staffing today, I’m disappointed,” he said. “I want us to get back to a place where we have more Austin police officers out there.”

CHACON DEFENDS APD COLLABORATION WITH DPS

The outgoing chief also backed up the city’s initiative to bring Texas Department of Public Safety troopers in to help patrol. It’s a decision he still supports.



After serving 31 years in law enforcement for 31 years, Austin Police Department chief Joseph Chacon is retiring. He has been with APD for 25 years and its chief since 2021. Photo by Michael Minasi/KUT.

“The DPS situation was one in which we were able to bring more officers into the community in order to help keep the community safer, and we saw the fruits of that labor,” Chacon said. “I would encourage, if there is a way to get back to it, that we do that again – that we have that strong collaboration.”

Chacon is also leaving amid a looming contract negotiation. The police contract expired on March 31. Cronk attempted to push through a four-year contract before he was fired in February. But that contract was declined as the city waited for voters to weigh in on a police oversight measure that received overwhelming support.

“I know how important it is to have stability in this department, and the way we need to do that is with a contract,” Chacon said. “I’m still encouraging the president (of the police union) to go back to the table, because I know in the end that is going to be better for public safety and better for the department.”

ROBIN HENDERSON NAMED INTERIM CHIEF OF POLICE

Chacon has spent 25 years with Austin Police Department and served as assistant chief for about five years.

While the city searches for a new permanent chief, Garza appointed Austin Police Department Chief of Staff Robin Henderson as the interim chief of police.

Chacon will stay on to assist with the transition during and step down during the first week of September, according to the city.

“Working at APD has been the privilege of my life,” Chacon said in a news release. “Being the Chief of Police is something that I never thought would have been possible, and it has been the pinnacle of my career.”

Chacon said he doesn’t have a job lined up but believes he will stay in Austin.

Watson said Chacon led the department with “integrity and a deep commitment” to the community.

“It’s one of those situations where anytime you lose a stable leader like that, there is a level of disappointment,” Watson said on August 21. “But the truth of the matter is he’s been at it 25 years and two years as chief. He deserves a retirement, and I wish him well.”

City Council Member Mackenzie Kelly celebrated Chacon’s retirement in a tweet on August 21. “Chief Chacon’s departure leaves big shoes to fill, but he’s prepared a strong leadership team, including his Chief of Staff, Robin Henderson,” Kelly wrote. “Excited to see Chief Henderson step in as Interim after her ratification on 8/31 at our Council (meeting).” The Austin Police Association, the city’s police union, also thanked Chacon for his years of service as chief and for his time on the union’s board of directors.

RACIAL JUSTICE ADVOCATES PUSH FOR CHANGES AT APD

Chris Harris, director of policy at the Austin Justice Coalition, said he hopes the next police chief will embrace “necessary reforms” to improve public safety.

“Chacon rarely held officers accountable for wrongdoing, resisted important reforms from the district attorney and at the police academy and welcomed and directed the disastrous first months of DPS patrols that saw extreme racial disparities in all their activities,” Harris said.

He urged Council not to allow the interim city manager to select the next permanent chief. “(Garza’s) opposition to oversight and unwillingness to implement voter-approved police reform should give everyone pause about whom he would pick,” Harris said.

SEARCH FOR A CHIEF

Watson said that the city will begin a search for a new chief. That will be a task for Garza.

“The manager will be the one that looks to make the appointment, and that will be confirmed by the mayor and Council,” Watson said. “We have a lot of confidence in Jesús Garza.”

It is not clear how soon a permanent chief will be named. But Assistant City Manager Bruce Mills said there is “no urgency in that endeavor.”

This story was produced as part of the Austin Monitor’s reporting partnership with KUT.

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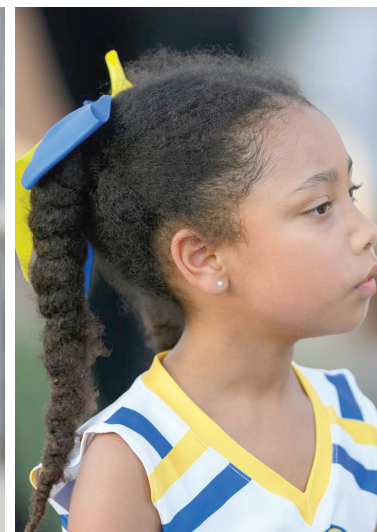
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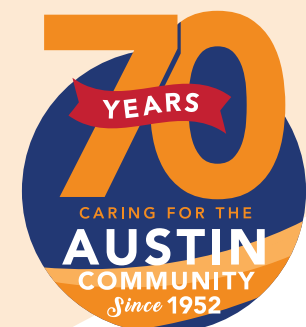
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Photos of the 22nd Taco Shack Bowl on August 24 by Phil Swann Photography.



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\$4.5 billion I-35 expansion through Austin gets final green light

By NATHAN BERNIER
KUT

The state's contentious plan to make the biggest road in Central Texas even bigger has cleared a major bureaucratic hurdle, paving the way for the historic expansion of Interstate 35 from Ben White Boulevard to U.S. Highway 290 East.

The Texas Department of Transportation issued a final environmental impact statement and record of decision on August 21. The documents detail the \$4.5 billion highway project and outline TxDOT's efforts to lessen its sweeping effects on the densely populated areas next to the interstate.

"This is a major milestone for us," Tucker Ferguson, TxDOT Austin District engineer, said. "This sets the road map for getting our final designs put together and ultimately going to construction."

The newly released documents reveal small changes TxDOT made to highway plans and mitigation efforts, with more changes possible in the coming months.

The final designs won't be nailed down until major construction contracts go to bid, which is expected to start early next year.

Some of the tweaks include:

- A new elevated bicycle and pedestrian bridge at 15th Street,
- \$100 million on "aesthetic enhancement," with an emphasis on east-west bridges over the interstate,
- \$9.4 million in funding for Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority to maintain bus service during construction,
- A new app to notify the public about construction closures,
- A community advisory committee for project updates and feedback, and
- A new noise barrier between I-35 and community gardens near Festival Beach.

Many of the changes had already been revealed in a letter by Mayor Kirk Watson that some Council members publicized earlier in August.

But the mitigation measures aren't much more than window dressing to

opponents concerned about widening a freeway through the center of the city.

"I'm surprised it took so long to get all that together," said Sinclair Black, co-founder of Reconnect Austin, a campaign trying to convince TxDOT to bury the highway. "We've all known what it was going to say: 'We're golden. We're going for it. Here's some dates. Get out the bulldozers.'"

Among TxDOT's first orders of business will be starting to expropriate property in the footprint of the highway expansion. Dozens of homes and businesses will be razed.

Contracts will go to bid early next year. Work is expected to start mid-2024.

According to TxDOT, the main feature of the project will be two lanes in each direction from Ben White to U.S. 290 East that will be reserved for vehicles with two or more passengers. The upper decks north of downtown, which opened in 1975, will be torn down.

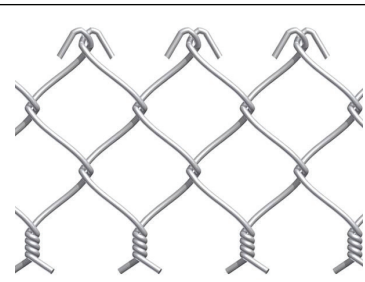
The main lanes will be lowered for much of the distance from Oltorf Street



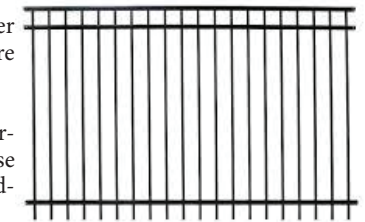
An illustration of what the Sixth Street crossing at Interstate 35 might look like if the highway is capped after being lowered. Source: Texas Department of Transportation.

to Airport Boulevard. According to TxDOT, the recessed highway could be covered with giant decks, but the city and the University of Texas would have to pay for them.

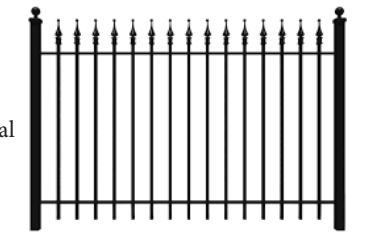
This story was produced as part of the Austin Monitor's reporting partnership with KUT.



Chain link fence with knuckle selvage



Flat-top metal fence



Metal fence with spiked pickets



Chain link fence with twist selvage

New Safe Fencing Regulations

By VICKI DeWEESE

Effective July 31, 2023, there are new safe fencing regulations in the City of Austin. These regulations were implemented to reduce features that can make fences more dangerous for children and wildlife. They apply to both residential and commercial/multi-family properties.

If more than 50 percent of the total linear distance of an existing fence is replaced, the entire fence must follow the safe fencing code requirements.

Fences (new or replaced) that follow historic design standards are first required to comply with safe fencing standards, then to comply with the remaining applicable historic design standards to the greatest extent

possible while fulfilling safety goals.

Here is a link to the City of Austin website: <https://tinyurl.com/COASafeFencing>

Do's

Options to meet the new requirements include:

- Flat-top fences
- Vertical pickets that are not spiked above the top rail (must be separated by less than 2 inches or more than 9 inches)
- Chain link fences using knuckle selvage tops, which are bent into a loop with no pointed ends

Don'ts

A fence may not include the following:

- Spiked pickets, spiked bars, or other spiked decorative elements above the top horizontal backer

rail

- Vertical pickets above the top horizontal backer rail if the vertical pickets are separated by more than 2 inches and less than 9 inches
- Razor-like wire
- Barbed wire unless the fence is enclosing an airport or other landing area for aircraft, and the use of barbed wire is required by Federal Aviation Administration regulation.

*City Code Section 9-4-41

(Restriction on Use of Barbed Wire Fences) is repealed effective July 31, 2023. A person may not use barbed wire at the top of or above a fence that is at least six feet high.

- Any fence design or feature that creates substantial risk for entrapment or impalement

What is a Zero Waste Block Leader?

By MERRIESSA ANTON

Zero Waste Block Leaders or ZWBLs, are Austin residents who care about sustainability and the environment and want to help Austin achieve its goal of zero waste by 2040. ZWBLs are passionate about preserving Austin for future generations and are compelled to share knowledge about recycling, composting, repurposing, and repairing.

Zero Waste Block Leader training begins with an orientation program from Austin Resource Recovery (ARR) during which the role of the ZWBL, recycling, composting, and the various Austin Resource Re-

covery services and programs are explained. ZWBLs have access to speakers and tours of ARR centers and other locations. We also have monthly meetups where we exchange information and get to know other ZWBLs. As a volunteer, a ZWBL decides how they want to contribute.

There are currently 310 Zero Waste Block Leaders in Austin, three live in the 78731-zip code and six live in 78759. That is a very low number of people volunteering in our neighborhood. A neighborhood ZWBL can provide advice about the correct way to compost or recycle. They might offer to collect Styrofoam® egg cartons or paint cans and chemicals and

deliver them to ARR in South Austin (or suggest you attend the next NWACA household recycling event). A ZWBL can make sure that neighborhood gatherings have composting containers and other similar items as giveaways, and they know who to contact to get answers to your questions.

ZWBLs can also have an impact at work or school; for instance, some have created office collection bins for food or paper waste. If you would like to sign up to be a Zero Waste Block Leader or find out more about this volunteer opportunity, please go to www.austintexas.gov/zwbl.

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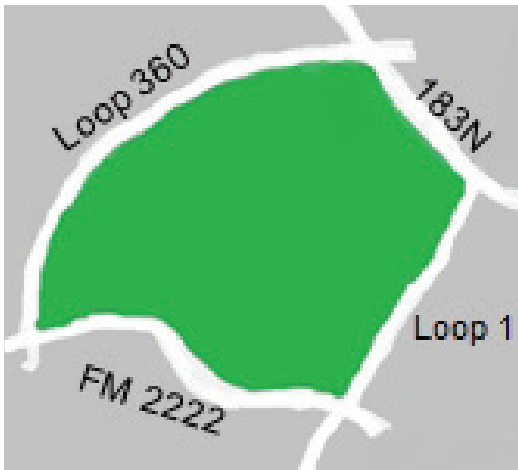
Key Contacts

Austin Citywide Information Center	512-974-2000 or 311
Emergency, Police	311
Non-emergency (coyote sightings, compliance issues)	311
APD District Representative Officer, Phillip Sparkman	phillip.sparkman@austintexas.gov
District 10 Councilmember, Alison Alter	512-974-2110
To get the District 10 monthly newsletter	district10@austintexas.gov
Northwest Austin News Publisher	512-483-1708
\	Lynette@FourPointsNews.com
Northwest Austin News Co-Editors	Joyce Statz and Julie Rawlings

New to the Neighborhood?

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. Use the Membership button on the home page or use the form in this newsletter to become a NWACA member. Members have access to the weekly email 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.



2022 – 2024 NWACA Board of Directors

Joyce Statz, President
Julie Rawlings, Vice President
Mick Koffend, Treasurer
Julie Waidelich and Bridget Keating, Co-Secretaries

- | | | |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|
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| • Carol Dochen | • Mae Levitan | |
| • Jessica Forrest | • Ben Luckens | |

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 the 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 to info@nwaca.org, so that we can put you on the agenda.

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

Spacing Out Bins Helps Workers

I made friends recently with a sanitation worker, and he told me that the biggest frustration they face is people putting their bins too close together, because they have to stop the truck and space them out, sometimes adding an extra hour to their already stressful schedules. We can make a surprisingly huge difference in their lives by just being aware of how far apart our bins are. So, please give them at least five feet between each pair of bins. Obviously, a lot of you can't, due to cars on the street, but if you

can, please do! And until the message gets thoroughly spread, I'm using my Wednesday night dog walk to space out any in my neighborhood that are too tight and encourage any of my other night dog walking peeps to do the same.

Gathered from Nextdoor
For more about this, see the City's web page
<https://www.austintexas.gov/setout>.



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!
JOIN TODAY @ NWACA.ORG/MEMBERS

Get to Know Your NWACA Board Members

By KEVIN KOTT

This month we feature Julie Waidelich, Co-Secretary of the Board.

Kevin: Julie, please fill us in about your earlier life, before settling in Northwest Austin.

Julie: I'm originally from Houston and attended Memorial High School. My dad was a radiologist; my mom was an avid volunteer and served as PTA president. I have a twin brother, Alan, and we share wonderful childhood memories. Upon graduation, we both went out of state for college and transferred back to Texas.

After graduating from UT Austin, I worked in Chicago as a recruiter for a technology firm. In 1999, I moved back to Austin and have been here ever since. I remember in those early days, driving the streets of Northwest Hills and thinking how much I would love to one day live on one of these beautiful tree-lined streets. In 2016, we bought a home here where we love our life!

On a whim, I started in real estate in 2001 and now own a bou-



tique real estate brokerage, Nest Properties Austin, with seven licensed agents. Our core values are integrity, honesty, and humility. I am passionate about giving back to the communities I serve and creating a great experience for my clients. Particularly meaningful is the opportunity to serve referrals, repeat clients, and generations of families who have placed their trust in me. Real estate has been a great career match for me and rewarding at many levels.

Kevin: Please tell us about your family.

Julie: My husband Scott and I have a blended family of 4: Andrew (20) Jake (19), Sarah (18), and Tristan (17). They get along great and have their own personalities and friend groups. We enjoy family vacations and meals together as much as time allows with busy teenagers! Andrew attends Texas A&M, Jake attends TCU, Sarah is a senior and Tristan is a junior at Anderson High School. Go Trojans!

Kevin: What do you do in your personal time?

Julie: Scott and I enjoy long walks in the neighborhood, an occasional run around Town Lake and being involved with our church, Northwest Community Church. I've played tennis forever, and we recently started playing pickleball. Occasionally, we try out a new restaurant or watch a show downtown. We enjoy a simple life - usually with our family, or with close friends.

Kevin: What motivated you to join the NWACA board?

Julie: I have a heart for giving back to the community. In my younger

years I knew that this is where I really wanted to end up, to make a home here. I just wanted to pour into the community, get to know the neighbors, and serve our neighborhood in some respect. I love being involved with what's going on behind the scenes. I think it's a really special place and feel very fortunate to raise our kids here. The schools have been wonderful, and I value the diversity they offer.

Kevin: What concerns do you have about the future?

Julie: I think the housing affordability issue is huge. Not too long ago, over a hundred people were moving here daily. Despite the recent slowdown, there's still a real crisis in affordability. On a personal level, if my kids wanted to come back to Austin, where would they go? Not only are property values through the roof, but property taxes have gone so high that landlords have had to raise rents to break even. Restaurants are charging higher prices due to their rent inflation. You know, if people who have lived their entire life here can't afford to stay - there's something wrong.

Kevin: It looks like you may be an empty nester in a couple of years. What are your plans for that chapter?

Julie: We're just planning. A close friend invited us to go on a sailing trip to the British Virgin Islands next year - he will captain the boat! We're super excited about that. This will be our first little couples-only adventure - kind of a bucket list item. Now that the kids are driving and more independent, we're trying to carve out more time to think about our future.

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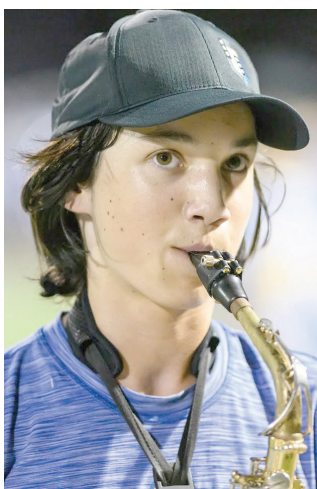
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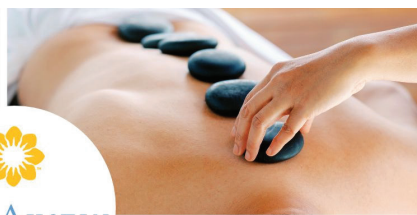
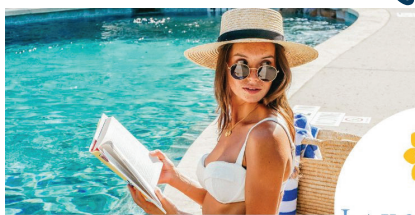
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The 22nd Taco Shack Bowl pitted the Anderson Trojans vs the McCallum Knights on August 24 and brought the community together. Phil Swann Photography captured these amazing photos.

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Mark Your Calendars

These events are as planned as of August 24. As you consider participating in one of the events listed, please check first with the organizer.

September 1

Signup begins for NWACA Neighborhood Garage Sales
(This is for NWACA Members only. Sales happen on October 7.)

September 16, 8 AM to 11 AM

Monthly cleanup at Bull Creek District Park – sign up at
<https://www.givepulse.com/event/336685>

September 19, 7pm

Parks Committee – virtual

September 26, 5 PM

NWACA Zoning and Transportation Committees – virtual

September 27, 6:30 – 8:30 PM

NWACA Board Meeting – 5280 Burger

September 30, 6:00 – 8:00 PM

NWACA Neighborhood National Night Out
Mesa Plaza - Randall's Parking Lot; all are welcome!

September 30 – 11:45 PM

Registration closes for NWACA Neighborhood Garage Sales
(for those wanting publicity through external media)

September 30

Project Proposals due for Special Projects for Fall, 2023

October 7, 8 AM to Noon

NWACA area Neighborhood Garage Sales
(hosted by individual NWACA members)

October 16, 8 PM

Judging of the Halloween Yard Decorating Contest

October 17, 7pm

Parks Committee – virtual

October 21, 9 AM to noon

Monthly cleanup at Bull Creek District Park – sign up at
<https://www.givepulse.com/event/336685>

October 21, 9 AM – 11 AM

Electronics Recycling Event – for NWACA Members Only
St. Matthew's Episcopal Church Parking Lot, 8134 Mesa Drive

October 24, 5 PM

NWACA Zoning and Transportation Committees – virtual

October 25, 6:30 – 8:30 PM

NWACA Board Meeting – 5280 Burger

NWACA's Fourth Annual Neighborhood National Night Out

By CONNIE LUNDGREN

NWACA will hold its fourth annual Neighborhood National Night Out on Saturday, September 30th in the Randalls parking lot. School of Rock will provide music, and NWACA sponsors will provide shopping, games, and prizes. Please join us on this special night to honor our First Responders who serve our community every day.

Come and meet our new Austin Police Department District Representative, Phillip Sparkman. Officer Sparkman marched in our July 4th parade, so this will be a second opportunity to meet and welcome him to our community. Sam Lindsay, the Travis County Constable who patrols our neighborhood, and several other Constables will be on hand to answer any questions. The Austin Fire Department and EMS will bring their trucks for the kids to explore. It's a fun night of music, food, relaxing, and reconnecting with friends. Please plan to join us.

Also, consider getting the 2023 NWACA tee shirt! We sold them during the 4th of July season, but these are shirts you can wear the whole year around. They're green, with a map of the NWACA on the front, and a salute to our business members on the back. We have many shirts available in all sizes – just go to www.nwaca.org and use the green Donate/Shop button. We'd love to have a sea of green at the Neighborhood National Night Out!



NWACA Sponsored Garage Sales October 7

By NWACA BOARD

This year's NWACA-sponsored neighborhood garage sales will be held on Saturday, October 7 from 8 am to 12 noon. The event is for NWACA members only, so if you're not a member, please go to www.nwaca.org to join today! Participation is easy: you sell things in your garage and keep all the proceeds; we do the advertising for you, bringing customers to your garage.

Register on the NWACA web site from September 1 through September 30 using the link under "Hot Topics" on the home page at www.nwaca.org. We will post the



neighborhood sales locations on the NWACA web site, place notices on Craigslist, and promote them on the NWACA Facebook page and in the Austin American Statesman. NWACA provides participants with yard signs. We also deploy signs around the neighborhood saying that the sales are underway. Like past years, we anticipate supporting 40 to 60 garage sales. Good luck as you clean out your closets! The old adage "one person's junk is another person's treasure" definitely applies.

September Happenings at the Old Quarry Library

By MARTHA MILLER

Saturday, September 2 – All Ages Lego Lab (1:00-3:00 pm)

Monday, September 4 – Labor Day Holiday

Wednesday, September 6 –

For the Love of Books Club (2pm-3pm)

Saturday, September 9 –

Be Prepared with the Austin Fire Department

Monday, September 11 –

Teen After School Program (4pm-5:30pm)

Wednesday, September 13 –

Old Quarry Gardening Group (11am-12:30pm)

Wednesday, September 13 – The Crafty Adult DIY Wall Clocks

(2pm-3:30pm) Ages 18 and up Please Register for This Event:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/crafty-adult-diy-wall-clock-tickets-676343189687?aff=ebdssbdestsearch>

Thursday September 14 – Chair Yoga Adults (3pm – 4pm)

Monday, September 18 –

For the Love of Books Club (6:30pm-7:30pm)

Tuesday, September 19 – Fiber Arts Friends Group (6pm-7pm)

Friday, September 22 –

Medicare Information Session (10:30am-12:00noon)

Saturday September 23 –

Learn to Meditate (10:30am – 12:30pm)

Saturday, September 23 –

Put the Welcome Mat out for Backyard Birds (2pm-3:30pm)

Wednesday, September 27 –

Family Movie Night: Coco (6pm-7:30pm)

Thursday September 28 – Teen After School Program:

Dungeons and Dragons (4pm – 5:45pm)

Saturday, September 30 –

Baila: A Series of Dance Lessons (1pm – 3pm) Ages 18 and up
Registration will be required for this event. Check the library website for the Link.

Every Tuesday, Tech Time (1pm-3pm) Ages 18 and up

A Group of Japanese Snow Monkeys in South Texas?

By IDEE KWAK
Writer's Corner

Our neighbor, Sarah Bird, was featured here in Writers Corner when each of her two latest bestsellers came out: *Last Dance on the Starlight Pier* (2022) and *Daughter of the Daughter of a Queen* (2018). These two books along with her nine other bestsellers are what come to mind when we hear the author's name. However, Sarah Bird has also written multiple screenplays and contributed to dozens of newspapers and national magazines including *O*, *New York Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Texas Observer*, and *Texas Monthly*.

Her most recent publication was in the July 23, 2023 issue of *Texas Monthly*, a follow-up article to one she wrote in 1975 for *The Daily Texan*. A graduate student at the University of Texas, she'd traveled to the La Moca Ranch near Encinal, about thirty miles north of the Mexican border. She was carrying a drugged snow monkey from Japan in her lap as were



Feeding time for Japanese macaques at La Moca in 1975.

Sarah Bird

other volunteers. Sarah's monkey, Pelka, was ten years old and had recently had a baby.

The troop of 176 macaques had been captured outside Kyoto where their population had exploded, rogues raiding gardens, stealing laundry, and pooping in temples. Transported and now tranquilized, they were to be examined and vaccinated before their release into the 108-acre enclosure, their new home in sunny Texas.

Fast-forwarding to 1980, Sarah's life as a freelance journalist "was listing dangerously in the 'free' direction." She turned to writing romance novels under the nom Tory Cates. With fond memories of her graduate school experience, her first novel in this genre was *Different Dreams*, the story of a pretty, young primatologist studying a troop of Japanese macaques on a ranch near Laredo, a handsome rancher thrown in for romance.

Monkeys touched Sarah's writing again in her second novel, *The Boyfriend School*. Picked up by ABC, she adapted it to a screenplay, with primate research taking her to Borneo in the company of Isabella Rossellini.

In the recent *Texas Monthly* article Sarah takes us through



Pelka65 nurses her baby Pelka6575 while being groomed by a subordinate female.

Sarah Bird

many more experiences from poaching incidents and relocation, to advocacy and current success. And she takes us on her search for "her" monkey, Pelka.

For the entire story and more photos, visit <https://www.texasmonthly.com/travel/snow-monkeys-south-texas-japanese-macaques/>.

The Australian BBC interviewed Sarah about this snow monkey article. More photos available through ABC. NET. AU. can be seen at <https://www.facebook.com/sarahbirdauthor/>.

This truncated summary of Sarah Bird's exciting and poetic tale is done with her permission. I hope you'll read the entire story!



A male macaque at La Moca in 1975.

Sarah Bird

Preventing Window Strikes and the High Toll on Birds

By MAURA POWERS, JORJANNA PRICE

Ever heard the thud of a bird strike on a window? It's not enjoyable. It's also a major cause of the loss of 3 billion birds in North America over the past 50 years, according to sources.

Buildings with highly reflective glass windows and doors act as mirrors, reflecting trees or blue sky, the natural habitat of wildlife. Birds flying into these windows often die. Even those able to fly off may have head trauma or a broken beak, which prevents eating or drinking. Young birds who are inexperienced fliers are particularly vulnerable.

"Austin's location on the Central Flyway is why we see such a huge variety of birds in the spring and fall as many

migrating species stop here to rest and bulk up before resuming their journey," says Chris Gunter, president of the Travis Audubon. Fall migration always starts in late August.

How to make yards and homes safer for birds

National Audubon offers these suggestions to avert crashes:

- Paradoxical as it may feel, try placing your bird feeders close (1.5 feet or less) to your windows. Birds will slow down as they approach.
- Apply a thin film to the outside of windows (<https://www.collidescape.org>). The glass will become visible to birds but remain transparent for you. As a bonus, the film will cut down on incoming infrared radiation, so it lowers summer cooling costs.
- Keep curtains or shades drawn during the day to reduce

reflection.

- Place window decals, sun catchers, tape strips, ribbons, or anything of your choosing in a dense pattern in the "2x4" format (multiple markings 2 to 4 inches apart are recommended). A single decal will not work. Even painting windows with tempera paint, chalk markers, or marking them with soap will prevent collisions.
- Move indoor houseplants back from windows as they may attract birds.
- Install a screen or net a few inches outside of windows to lessen the impact.

The American Bird Conservancy has issued a comprehensive manual, "Bird-Friendly Building Design," which offers recommendations for bird-safe windows and other design features that could reduce bird mortality.

MARKET UPDATE

NORTHWEST HILLS AND WESTOVER HILLS



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MEDIAN SALES PRICE



\$22,550,000
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\$1,275,000
MEDIAN LIST PRICE



63
MEDIAN DAYS ON MARKET



18
CLOSED SALES



SOURCE: ABOR MLS INCLUDING DATA FROM AUGUST 1-27, 2023 FOR SINGLE FAMILY HOMES. BASED ON NWACA
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Photos of the 22nd Taco Shack Bowl on August 24 by Phil Swann Photography.



Austin

I want to spotlight an organization that is near and dear to my heart. We are **[Re]building Together Austin**. Our mission is to [re]pair homes, [re]vitalize communities and [re]build lives. Rebuilding Together Austin is proud to be

a partner in the solution to providing safe homes and communities. Thank you to all of our [Re]Builders for your generous support and we look forward to a healthy, impactful year ahead!

This year we celebrate our 10 year anniversary of serving Austin Area homeowners. Contact me if you'd like to become a home **SPONSOR**.

-Albert Allen - Board President, Rebuilding Together Austin

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2023 Anderson High School varsity football team, and cheerleaders, athletic trainers and coaches. Photo by Photo Texas Photography

Q&A

Donald Hatcher

Anderson HS Football

Head Coach

1) What do you expect to see in the district this season?

We play in one of the hardest districts in the state. You have 6 or 7 teams fighting for 4 spots. We have put the work in to be one of those teams.

2) What district team is the biggest rival this year?

Austin High. Kids all grew up together. Kids are excited to open district with a close neighborhood rival.

3) Where are your program strengths and what areas need most improvement?

We have a very talented group that has bought into the process. We need to continue to grow the program and improve our depth.

4) Do you have an interesting story to share about the team that most would not know about?

We have the best community in Texas. They support us better than any. The annual golf tournament raises funds that allow our kids to be successful.

5) How many years have you been coaching at AHS and what is your coaching record overall and at AHS?

This is my 2nd year at AHS, we were 4-6 last year. Looking to have a winning record this year.

Anderson Trojans 2023 Varsity Football Roster

Ben Hatcher
Tristan Waidelich
Grayson Lake
Max Gerlich
Colin Haines
Liam McMillan
Michael Rendon
Simon Burns
Adrian Pops
Mason Randolph
Trey Leach
Brady Gephart
Zayden Sharp
Jake Laibo
Austin Eckermann
Ed Small

Tomas Benitez
Jett Joseph
Dayden Williams
Rowan Ericsson
Dom Mays
Zach Poe
Joaquin Arguello
Alan Su
Ryan Ostboe
Noah Saldivar
Hodges Smith
Jesus Antonio Soto
Mark Heatley
Gage Webb
Brendan Bosworth
Hudson Case

River Anderson
Jayden Evans
Elias O'keefe
Ryan Jamail
Colton Pittman
Brandon Gonzales
Zak Abdelbaki
Sloan Keller
Luke Tillett
Marco Martz
Kristian Petersen
Charlie Despins
Calvin Ballinger
Jack Middleton
Zane Cooke
Luca Almedida Macena Da Silva

Trojan Football 2023 Schedule

8/24 @ McCallum
9/1 @ Rouse
9/8 vs Austin
9/15 @ Bowie
9/22 vs Johnson

9/28 @ Akins
10/5 vs Westlake
10/13 @ Lake Travis
10/19 vs Del Valle
11/3 @ Dripping Springs

Northwest Austin News

We love to share Community news!

Please share updates from your teams, groups and organizations.

We like to feature groups from all ages and stages.

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"I am writing in sincere appreciation for Dawn Lanier. She is a stellar Realtor and represented us so well during our recent condo sale in Austin. This is the second time Dawn has represented us and I wish I could clone her so we can have a Dawn in every city. She is incredibly attentive, responsible, and kind. She worked on a very quick turnaround time and gave us plenty of advice along the way. When it came to paperwork, she was super helpful and reminded us of what needed to be completed and when. Dawn is so great — thank you from the bottom of our hearts for making the transition so easy for us!"

— Corinne and RJ



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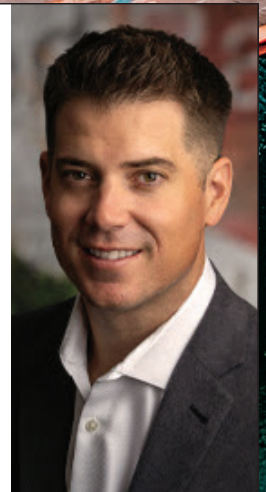
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