## **Northwest Austin News** SERVING THE NORTHWEST AUSTIN CIVIC ASSOCIATION COMMUNITY

### Volume 15, Issue 2

## February 2024



## Do you Have Any **Extra Time?**

### **By NORTHWEST AUSTIN CIVIC ASSOCIATION BOARD**

If you have extra time, we have some suggestions for ways to spend a lot, or a little, of it.

A new NWACA Board of Directors is elected in even-numbered years; one can be on the Board for up to three consecutive two-year terms. We can have as many as 25 members on the Board, but at this point there are only 18, and several of those are rolling off

because their terms are expiring. So, there's room for more! We are seeking candidates who are interested in serving with individuals who advocate for the neighborhood and work together to organize the many events that occur throughout the



year. If you are interested or know someone who is a candidate, please let us know, and we'll be in contact. See the article inside for more details.

Last year, we held our first Earth Day event. It was great fun, and we'll be doing it again in April this year. We need some people to help plan the event, so please check out the article about Earth Day. Soon after, we'll

EXTRA TIME, 3

## Economic Forecasters: 2024 'strong, but uncertain'

**By CHAD SWIATECKI Austin Monitor** 

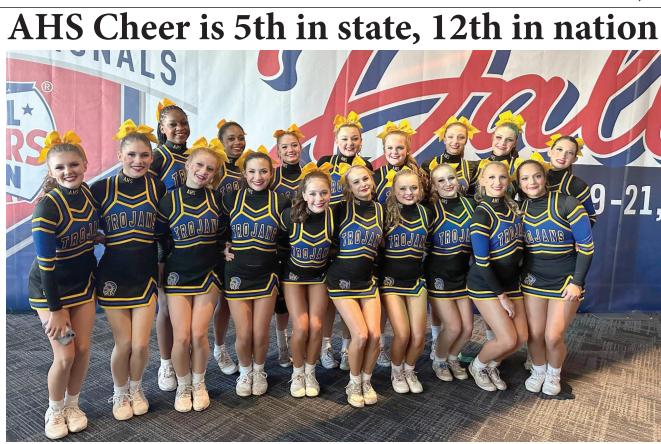
After years of financial shocks and ongoing government spending to offset the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, financial ana-

somewhat uncertain for the nation and state. The good news for the Austin area is strong growth trends and the state's unexpected budget surpluses in recent years will provide a cushion for local municipal budgets, even if

lysts expect 2024 to be less volatile but still a small recession takes place late in the year.

Those were some of the forecasts offered last month at the Austin Chamber of Commerce's economic outlook event, which put

**ECONOMIC, 10** 



"Anderson got 5th at National Cheerleaders Association State and 12th at NCA High School Nationals - we are very proud," shared Head Coach Gayla Stuart. Page 22 for more details.

The Anderson HS Competition Cheer Team traveled to Dallas for state competition in December and national compein its gameday division. "Anderson got 5th at National Cheer-

tition in January. The team had 35 teams leaders Association State and 12th at NCA High School Nationals - we are very

CHEER. 22



## The Austin market is heating back up! Considering a sale this spring? February is a great time to prepare.

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## **Comanche Peak Historical Marker at the Oasis**

#### By RICHARD DENNEY

While most Austinites take Comanche Trail (the road) to get to The Oasis on Lake Travis ("Sunset Capitalof Texas"), few realize those fantastic views over the lake are due to its location next to Comanche Peak. Just over five miles northwest of our neighborhood, it is the only peak in Travis County named after an American Indian tribe. Today's FM 2222 (historically known as Bull Creek Road) that forms our neighborhood's southern boundary was part of a trail-become-road connecting Austin to Hamilton Creek in Burnet, a favorite campsite of the Penateka, our Central Texas division of the Comanche.

I wrote about Comanche Peak for the January 2022 NWACA newsletter, citing Travis County Historical Commission's plans for a historical marker. In November 2023 we finally got the marker installed at the Oasis. The marker sits at the intersection of Comanche Trail and Monte Castillo Parkway, on the right side, just before you reach the Oasis. Comanche Peak's high point is about a third of a mile southwest of the marker on Travis County property.

So, on your next trip to the Oasis, please stop and admire the marker; this is the only official State of Texas historical marker in Travis County dedicated to Native American geography. Here's the marker text:

#### **Comanche Peak**

At Austin's founding in 1839, Native American groups Numunuung here included Apache, Waco (a branch of the Wichita) and Tonkawa. The dominant tribe was called Comanche; they called themselves N m n ("the people"). They controlled much of Cen-



**EXTRA TIME, FROM 1** 

begin organizing the 4th of July activities – please contact us at info@nwaca.org to be part of either team.

At the end of February, we'll be issuing our annual neighborhood interest survey. Details will be available at www.nwaca.org and in the weekly NWACA Notes email. The survey will run through the first part of March, so we'll have a link to it in the March newsletter as well.

You've probably noticed that we list events occurring at the Old Quarry Library each month; there's an amazing variety of interesting programs being offered, including an African Cultural program on February 3rd and the Austin History Center presentation scheduled for February 6th. There are also two new nature-themed programs that will River watershed from its headwaters through the hill country and into Central Texas.

Rising more than 500 feet above the historic river level, Comanche Peak was part of an intricate network for transportation, communication and resources. Trails from here connected to other trails and geographical features of importance to the Comanche: fords at Santa Monica Springs and Shoal Creek; the pass at Mount Bonnell, and springs such as Seiders, Barton, Manchaca and Hamilton Pool. Segments of these historic trails at the base of Comanche Peak align with local roads such as Comanche Trail and Old Burnet Road that connected Austin to Burnet's Hamilton Creek, a favored Comanche campsite. Peaks such as Comanche Peak were utilized by the Comanche for navigation, surveillance and signaling.

The Comanche continued to travel their extensive trail network regionally and locally as Austin began to grow in population. Just south of the peak, a canyon named Defeat Hollow recalls a circa 1870 skirmish between about a dozen Comanche and Joel Arthur Harris, an early Hudson Bend settler. As the

be hosted by Master Naturalist, David Cook. The first meeting of the Naturalist book club, hosted by Mr. Cook, will be Thursday, February 15th. This book club will meet every other month; a book of interest to nature enthusiasts will be discussed. On Saturday, February 17th, Mr. Cook will present a discussion on the Flora & Fauna of the Bull Creek area.

Each of these suggestions has an added



Peaks such as Comanche Peak were utilized by the Comanche for navigation, surveillance and signaling. It is the only Peak in Travis County named for an American Indian group. Google Maps

> only Peak in Travis County named for an American Indian group, Comanche Peak's location helps us better understand the Comanche geography of Travis County and their trail system into Austin along the Colorado river.

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

> benefit - opportunities to get to know more of your neighbors and get involved with the community, so come join us!

> Finally, a reminder: if you have an idea for a project that benefits the community but need some financial help to bring the plan to fruition, see the Special Projects Fund article. Applications are due by March 15.

## **Consider Being on the NWACA Board**

#### NWACA Nominations Committee

Would you be willing to volunteer your time and talents to serve on the 2024-2026 NWACA Board of Directors? If so, the association's 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.

The maximum number of Board members is 25. Nominees should reside within NWACA boundaries and 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 at least three months. NWACA Board 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; Parks; Transportation; Tree, Wildlife, and Environment; Wildfire Prevention; and Zoning. See nwaca.org/committees/ for more details. The full Board currently meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 6:30 pm.

Please see nwaca.org/mission-vision/ to learn more about NWACA.

## **NORTHWEST AUSTIN NEWS**

## Arson, Theft, Disturbance in Police and Sheriff's Report

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

12/26/2023 12:47 PM 78XX MOPAC EXPY THEFT

12/31/2023 9:31 AM 35XX GREYSTONE AUTO THEFT

12/31/2023 3:04 PM 91XX MOUNTAIN RIDGE BURGLARY

12/31/2023 5:05 PM 38XX DRY CREEK HARASSMENT

01/01/2024 12:14 AM 67XX LAKEWOOD DISTURBANCE

01/01/2024 8:48 AM 76XX WOOD HOLLOW HARASSMENT

01/01/2024 10:27 AM 39XX FAR WEST THEFT

01/02/2024 10:09 AM 64XX MESA DR THEFT

01/02/2024 10:53 AM 48XX SPICEWOOD SPRINGS DISTURBANCE

01/02/2024 11:43 AM 36XX STECK AVE THEFT

01/02/2024 7:34 PM 91XX JOLLYVILLE ASSAULT

01/04/2024 10:04 AM 37XX FAR WEST BLVD THEFT

01/04/2024 9:11 PM 40XX DRY CREEK PUBLIC INTOXICATION 01/06/2024 6:52 AM 85XX CAPITAL OF TEXAS HWY ASSAULT W/ INJURY

01/06/2024 8:28 PM 71XX WOOD HOLLOW ASSAULT BY THREAT

01/07/2024 1:04 AM 70XX VILLAGE CENTER BURGLARY

01/07/2024 8:16 AM 70XX VILLAGE CENTER THEFT

01/07/2024 6:30 PM 35XX GREYSTONE THEFT

01/07/2024 7:41 PM 76XX WOOD HOLLOW THEFT

01/07/2024 10:00 PM 58XX MESA DR DISTURBANCE

01/07/2024 10:21 PM 52XX SPICEWOOD SPRINGS FAMILY DISTURBANCE

01/08/2024 3:35 PM 68XX MESA DR BURGLARY

01/08/2024 3:37 PM 89XX BUSINESS PARK FORGERY & PASSING

01/08/2024 5:58 PM 49XX SPICEWOOD SPRINGS THEFT

01/08/2024 6:24 PM 83XX MOPAC EXPY THEFT

01/10/2024 6:06 PM 95XX JOLLYVILLE FAMILY DISTURBANCE

01/10/2024 11:58 PM 68XX AUSTIN CENTER HARASSMENT 01/11/2024 1:21 AM 71XX WOOD HOLLOW TERRORISTIC THREAT

01/11/2024 7:32 AM 81XX MOPAC EXPY THEFT

01/12/2024 3:11 AM 85XX CAPITAL OF TEXAS HWY DATING DISTURBANCE

01/12/2024 7:23 AM 35XX GREYSTONE ARSON

01/12/2024 5:30 PM 35XX GREYSTONE THEFT

01/12/2024 9:26 PM 80XX GREENSLOPE FRAUD

01/13/2024 2:41 AM 64XX HART LN ASSAULT

01/13/2024 7:13 AM 55XX COURTYARD AUTO THEFT

01/13/2024 8:55 AM 71XX WOOD HOLLOW FAMILY DISTURBANCE

01/13/2024 8:50 PM 35XX GREYSTONE AGG ASSAULT

01/14/2024 7:19 AM 50XX ARAX CV THEFT

01/14/2024 11:07 AM 52XX SPICEWOOD SPRINGS THEFT

01/14/2024 1:51 PM 55XX BALCONES SHOPLIFTING 01/14/2024 3:05 PM 44XX SPICEWOOD SPRINGS THEFT CATALYTIC CONVERTER

01/15/2024 8:25 AM 68XX AUSTIN CENTER BURGLARY

01/15/2024 10:49 AM 51XX FAIRVIEW FRAUD

01/15/2024 2:59 PM 68XX AUSTIN CENTER BURGLARY

01/15/2024 8:18 PM 81XX MOPAC EXPY BURGLARY

01/16/2024 7:22 AM 79XX HAVENWOOD THEFT

01/16/2024 8:08 AM 80XX HILLRISE DR DEBIT CARD ABUSE

01/16/2024 4:31 PM 80XX MESA DR ASSAULT

01/19/2024 10:55 AM 71XX WOOD HOLLOW DATING DISTURBANCE

01/21/2024 3:37 PM 76XX VALLEY DALE FORGERY & PASSING 01/22/2024 5:55 PM 34XX GREYSTONE THEFT

01/22/2024 11:00 PM 86XX ALVERSTONE INJURY TO ELDERLY

01/23/2024 10:48 PM 76XX WOOD HOLLOW FAMILY DISTURBANCE

01/24/2024 12:00 AM 77XX CAPITAL OF TEXAS HWY THEFT

01/24/2024 4:24 PM 67XX LAKEWOOD THEFT

01/24/2024 11:02 PM 80XX MESA DR HARASSMENT

01/25/2024 1:27 PM 73XX WOOD HOLLOW FAMILY DISTURBANCE

01/25/2024 2:43 PM 71XX HART LN AUTO THEFT

01/26/2024 7:39 AM 35XX GREYSTONE DR ASSAULT W/INJURY

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



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## Writer's Corner: Pieces by Diane Owens Prettyman

#### By IDEE KWAK Northwest Austin Civic Association

Our neighbor, Diane Owens Prettyman, is a retired physical therapist and author of two published novels with a third soon to be released. Since the publication of her second book, she's been writing articles for the Austin American-Statesman.

On July 19, 2019, the Statesman gave us Diane's folksy piece, 'Welcome to Austin Critter Limits." Amongst her charming anecdotes, she tells of trying to safely maneuver through three lanes of bumperto-bumper traffic to squeeze into the express lane. "A red-tailed hawk swoops over the hood of my Volvo with a featherless, newborn grackle in its talons. A flock of adult grackles chases behind him, but they are no match for the hawk's speed. Hawks are Porsche Carreras and grackles are, well, let's face it, Volvos."

October 11, 2022, saw the publication of Diane's article "Faith: Be More Like a Dog When It Comes to Finding the Spiritual." Diane considers the devotion, hope, and joy in the message to love one another that is taught in many reli-



gions. Then she goes a step further: "Unconditional love, communion with Mother Earth, faithfulness and gratitude are just a few of the spiritual traits of dogs. Paying attention to the behaviors of dogs is a good reminder of the lessons they can teach me."

Diane's next article appeared in the Statesman on June 6, 2023, "Faith: Embrace the Beauty of Now." Exploring the changes in Austin many of us find distressing, she takes the spiritual view that to be with God, we must live in the present. "With the demands of life, and our thoughts of the past or future constantly vying for attention, living in the present is not easy. Even though living in the present is an ancient concept, and even though most belief systems teach the importance of this habit, our busy lives compete with this practice."

Diane's most recent article, "Faith: Sounds of the Faithful Resonate in the Live Music Capital of the World" appeared in the Statesman's September 12, 2023 issue. Visiting many of the city's religious institutions, she reports on a jazz mass with a tribute to Coltrane and a service in Spanish where a guitarist was accompanied by a percussionist playing the congas and the shakers. She listened to a bell choir and to Haydn's "Little Organ Mass" performed by a choir and a chamber orchestra.

At Shoreline Church North "lights flashed on stage as an octet of blue-jeaned singers sang accompanied by a drummer, guitarist and keyboardist...in a pop-rock style," while at United Methodist Church, the music pulled her "back into the gospel tent at the New Orleans Jazz Fest."

At Jewish Shabbat at Congregation Beth Israel, Diane listened to a mix of contemporary and traditional music and learned that except for Orthodox Jews, most synagogues use instruments in their services.

Though the prayer service at North Austin Muslim Community Center was silent, Diane had the opportunity to hear a recording of the melodic chanting, Tajweed. Meanwhile, at the Baha'i Center, she was shown a video, some of the



Diane Owens Prettyman is the author of two novels: "Thin Places" and "Redesigning Emma". The local Northwest Austin resident also writes for the Austin American-Statesman.

songs sounding like those of Seals and Crofts.

"My research included only a fraction of the music played in local worship venues. However, I'm confident more research will confirm that whether it is folk, rock, classical, contemporary, Gospel, Tajweed, or Baha'i music, Austin has something for every believer."

To read the full articles, please visit the Austin American-Statesman online.

## **NWACA Special Projects Fund Inviting Applications**

#### NWACA Board

The Special Projects Fund was established by the NWACA Board to help fund projects that benefit the community/ neighborhood residents and are open to the public.

During recent years, NWACA contributed funds for recycling containers used at our local parks, development of a new soccer field behind Doss Elementary School, refurbishing the Anderson High School Gym, a pilot constable patrol project, bike repair stations at Doss and Hill Elementary Schools, outdoor tables that Anderson High Schools students use during their lunch period as well as contributions to the Loewy Playground, the Community Garden and Murchison Middle

School Common Space improvements, the Anderson High School Trojan Band equipment trailer, and outdoor musical instruments at Highland Park Elementary School.

Any group or individual can apply for Special Projects funds; just download an application online at www.nwaca.org using the

link in the Hot Topics list on the home page.

Applications for a new round of project proposals will be accepted until March 15, 2024, and selected applicants will be encour-



aged to present their proposals at the next 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, Aus-

tin, 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

Some applicants may choose to submit an idea in concert with the City of Austin Neighborhood Partnering Program (see details at www.austintexas.gov/neighborhoodpartnering). Such applications must be submitted by June 1st or October 1st for their cost-sharing funding cycle. Other applicants may choose to team with the Austin Parks Foundation (see details at austinparks.org/tag/grants/). Applications for different types of grants have different deadlines.

The Special Projects Fund is just one of many ways that NWACA serves our community. Funding is available because of the careful management of your dues and donations. Please help us to continue our work by maintaining your NWACA membership.

## Austin is 10th Best Performing Among Top 50 Metros

By BEVERLY KERR Opportunity Austin

- Austin is the 10th best performing among the top 50 metros, adding 36,800 jobs (2.8% growth) in the year ending in November.
- The fastest job growth over the last 12 months occurred in Austin's construction and natural resources (10.3%) and education and healthcare (6.0%) industries.
- Austin's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate decreased to 3.4% in November from 3.6% in October.

Best performing among the top 50 metros

			-		
	Nonfarm payroll jobs		Nov. 2022-Nov. 2023		D I
	Nov. 2022	Nov. 2023	Difference	Percent change	Rank
Miami MDiv	1,282,900	1,332,700	49,800	3.9%	1
Las Vegas MSA	1,118,200	1,161,100	42,900	3.8	2
Jacksonville MSA	791,200	821,400	30,200	3.8	3
Raleigh MSA	718,100	745,300	27,200	3.8	4
Dallas MDiv	3,024,500	3,128,000	103,500	3.4	5
Fort Lauderdale MDiv	904,600	932,700	28,100	3.1	6
Montgomery Co. MDiv	1,123,200	1,157,800	34,600	3.1	7
Fort Worth MDiv	1,194,500	1,230,700	36,200	3.0	8
Boston NECTADiv	1,932,700	1,988,600	55,900	2.9	9
Austin MSA	1,311,500	1,348,300	36,800	2.8	10

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, CES.

Austin's year-over-year increase of 2.8% makes it the 10th best performing among the 50 largest metro areas. Faster growing Dallas (3.4%) and Fort Worth (3.0%) also place in the top 10, while San Antonio (2.6%) and Houston (2.3%) rank 13th and 17th. For the year ending in November, private sector job growth in the Austin MSA is 2.7%, or 29,900 jobs, with gains across seven of the 11 major private industry sectors. Customarily, slower job creation in the government sector drives overall job growth lower than private sector job growth in Austin. That has not been the case over the last few months. Government year-over-year job growth is uncommonly strong in November (3.7% or 6,900 jobs).

In Austin, seven of the 11 major private industry sectors added jobs over the last 12 months, most notably construction and natural resources (10.3% or 8,100 jobs) and education and health services (6.0% or 8,700). Professional and business services added the most jobs, 13,400 (4.7%). Wholesale trade (-4.5% or -2,600 jobs), leisure and hospitality (-2.3% or -3,400), manufacturing (-2.1% or -1,500), and information (-1.5% or -800) saw negative year-over-year growth.

Statewide, over the last 12 months, all private industries added jobs. The industries with the most significant growth are construction and natural resources (5.1%) and education and health services (4.8%).

Nationally, all private industries, but two, added jobs over the 12 months ending in November, led by education and health services (up 4.2%) and leisure and hospitality (3.2%). Information (-3.1%) and transportation, warehousing and utilities (-0.6%) lost jobs.



Valentine's at



Our team is dreaming up some extra lovely menu additions for Valentine's Day this year. Offered February 9th through Feb 14th

### 1st course

Seafood Tray Seared Ahi Tuna, Shrimp Cocktail & Salmon Mousse and Caviar

## 2nd course

Caesar Salad Romaine Lettuce with a true Caesar Dressing topped with parmesan cheese & house baked croutons

### 3rd course

Entrée Selection 7 oz Filet Mignon 14 oz New York Strip upgrade to a 14 oz Ribeye for \$10 Blackened Salmon Florentine Shrimp and Scallops Scampi over Linguini Steak items are served with mashed potatoes and vegetable of the day, Salmon is served with creamy sun-dried tomato orzo and vegetable of the day

4th course

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> Feature 1 4 course meal \$79 per person

Feature 2 4 course meal \$99 per person and a dozen roses per couple

Feature 3 4 course meal \$125 per person and a dozen roses per couple and Champagne



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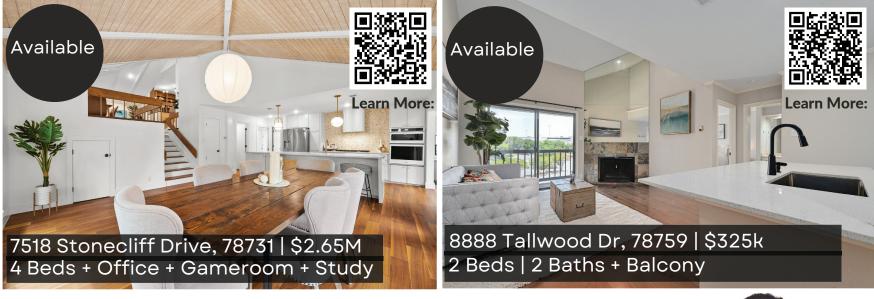
Every day, I strive to exceed expectations for my clients. Teaming up with Realty Austin and Compass unlocks an array of exclusive programs, taking your dreams to new heights.

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## NORTHWEST AUSTIN NEWS Spotlight: Sit Still Kids – Mesa

#### By JANICE GREEN Northwest Austin Civic Association

"Cuts for Kids, Chill for Parents, Fun for All" accurately describes Lauren Munoz's business venture, Sit Still Kids–Mesa – a unique hair salon just for kids.

Several years ago, Lauren became enamored with the Sit Still concept while visiting Austin's first Sit Still salon with her daughter; Later she explored franchise opportunities with the original founders in Portland, Oregon. It was a perfect fit. Being a native Austinite, Lauren chose her Mesa location with purpose: the fact that our Northwest Austin neighborhood retains a special Austin ambiance of community, its central location, and its proximity to her children's schools.

Sit Still's bright, open, and colorful space offers an experience designed for the 0-18 child with a dose of parental pampering. The hair styling stations are a creative variety of "vehicle" chairs with individual game tablets to entertain the child. While parents peruse the retail section's hair accessories, toys, and games (maybe to buy a last-minute birthday gift), they can relax with a cold brew or rose'. There is a dedicated room with a lighted counter at one end for small



Lauren Munoz opened Sit Still Kids Salon Mesa in the fall. "The support from the community already has been so positive," she posted on Facebook.

parties and gatherings, which also serves as a secluded online work area while your child is occupied.

The stylists at Sit Still are trained to work with all types of hair and know how to capture a child's personality, whether the request is for a short or long or curly cut, bobs of all lengths and shapes, braids, or a buzz cut. Plus, there are the special services: sparkle strands, temporary or semi-permanent coloring, rooster feather extensions, mini-mani's, glitter tattoos, and even photo keepsakes to memorialize the occasion.

Sit Still also hosts uniquely themed private birthday parties, nail classes, and a "Teach Me How to Braid" class (including a special one for dads who find braiding a challenge). For adults, there is meeting space for wine clubs or book clubs in off hours. Bookings for hair styling appointments and special events are conveniently made online.

Lauren "walks the talk" about giving back to her community. Sit Still has partnered with Beautifully Loved at a local children's hospital to provide on-site hair styling for hospitalized children and/or families while they deal with pediatric illnesses. If you want to make a Wigs for Kids hair donation, that can be arranged, too. Inclusivity is a Sit Still goal, and children with special challenges are welcomed.

While I was on site, I was amazed at how relaxed the children were, and I observed one family with a young boy and girl who pranced around proudly modelling their new hair styles. Lauren exudes enthusiasm, tempered with business acumen. She has taken the dread out of a child's haircut scenario and turned it into a memorable experience for both parent and child.

**CONTACT INFO:** 8127 Mesa Drive, Suite 201; mesa.sitstillkids. com; email: mesa@sitstillkids.com; 512.894.8882; Instagram: @ sitsillkidsmesa

## **Seeking NWACA Business Members**

#### By JULIE WAIDELICH Northwest Austin Civic Association

As we embark on a new year, the Northwest Austin Civic Association (NWACA) extends a heartfelt thank you to our residents for their incredible support. Our association, serving more than 6,200 households, has thrived thanks to your engagement and commitment. *Interested in joining NWACA as a 2024 Business Member?* 

We are now renewing our business memberships for 2024, and we want to ensure that every local business gets the opportunity to participate. We're eager to continue current partnerships and gain new ones. Why become a Business Member?

NWACA is more than just an association; it's a platform to connect with approximately 30,000 Austinites. With events like our 4th of July parade, National Night Out event, Earth Day celebration, and our annual meeting, a business member gains unparallelled exposure to the local community. Gold and platinum members can

- host a booth at our major events,
- promote their business on our active social media pages,
- and be featured on the NWA-CA website with their business logo and contact information.

We want to hear from you – if you have a business to feature, or if you know of a business that might benefit from being a NWACA business member, please contact Julie Waidelich at julieswaidelich@ gmail.com. Your participation and suggestions are vital to ensure we have a diverse and robust business network for 2024.

Let's build a strong community together. Thank you once again for your support. Here's to a prosperous and connected 2024!

### Page 10 • Northwest Austin News, Febuary 2024

#### ECONOMIC, FROM 1

banking and municipal finance leaders in front of the area's biggest business leaders. Marc Dizard, senior vice president and chief investment strategist at PNC Bank, said at the federal level efforts to reduce inflation have been largely successful and may even result in a rare "soft landing" that brings price and wage growth to 2 percent without causing the economy to contract. What's most likely, he said, is a total loss of around 1 percent of national gross domestic product into 2025.

"When it comes to GDP and output ... it's actually still positive for 2024, but it is declining and heading into 2025. A result of that, what we forecast to be a result of that is unemployment is going to be ticking higher. There is case scenario in which we don't get a recession, but that doesn't mean robust dynamic growth. That just means spurting by a little bit and still having positive growth."

Dizard said questions on possible slowdowns in Europe and a return of energy prices – both of which are impacted by wars in Ukraine and Israel – are two variables causing ongoing uncertainty for the U.S. economy.

Closer to Austin, historic state surpluses and federal stimulus money that can be held for another year or more mean local budgets are flush.

Tom Schuette, senior vice president and research



Photo of the skyline of Austin, Texas made available through a Creative Commons license.

analyst at PIMCO Municipals, said the state's financial picture is healthy, though it's unlikely to see more "absurd" revenue growth of nearly 20 percent as was the case in recent years. He said to expect flat revenue growth for the state this year after "unsustainable sugar highs that we saw in 2021 and 2022."

While local financials are strong – Austin ended last year with a \$68 million budget surplus, and total reserves of about \$340 million – Schuette said inflation's effects on labor costs will continue to eat into the budgets of capital projects such as Austin's Project Connect transit system.

"Certainly in Austin, we've seen this with mass transit planning or some of the other bigger-ticket projects in the area," he said. "Getting cost certainty is very tough right now."

Away from municipal projects, private industry expectations for the Austin area have been robust.

The real estate technology company Zillow said the local property market, which drives a substantial part of the local economy, is one of the most healthy in the country and likely to rebound from an "ice cold" state in 2023.

Schuette said population growth and the overall performance of the local economy make Austin the goal of most state or local government planners who came into 2024 with much more uncertainty.

"Almost everybody nationwide would probably trade places with Texas in general and Austin metro in particular. In terms of the challenges and problems that we face ... I think you look at the problems that confront this region and state with a high degree of envy," he said. "Growth certainly creates problems and challenges, without a doubt. It also obviously helps a lot. Texas, the latest numbers I saw, has added over one and a half million peo-

ple just into 2020 census.

"This population growth has been an amazing tailwind for a state and its local governments that are heavily dependent on property taxes and sales taxes. And that growth in that tailwind helps these revenue sources."

Austin Monitor, an online, nonpartisan, 501(c)3 nonprofit publication that covers local government and politics in and around Austin.

## City Council Approves 2024 Heritage Preservation Grants

By KALI BRAMBLE Austin Monitor

City Council approved a list of Heritage Preservation Grants on January 18 funded by \$3.59 million in Hotel Occupancy Tax dollars.

The 23 applicants will receive anywhere from \$15,000 to \$250,000 to fund their proposals, which range from concrete repair projects to more abstract endeavors like educational programming and planning processes.

Highlights include awards to the Austin Theatre Alliance, who will see exterior renovations to the Paramount Theatre as well as funding to replace the iconic neon Stateside Theatre sign with a less costly, LED-powered replica. Other sites on the short list for capital repairs include the Broken Spoke, the Alamo Drafthouse-owned Baker School, Pete's Dueling Piano Bar, Huston-Tillotson University's Evans Hall and the Millett Opera House.

The Rosewood Courts redevelopment project breaking ground in East Austin will see funding



Austin's historic and iconic Broken Spoke dance hall. Photo by Angi English Photo made available through a Creative Commons license.

for cultural programming at the historic site of Emancipation Park. The project, slated to bring 184 affordable housing units to market sometime this year, plans to implement mixed-media storytelling and interactive tours illustrating its journey from Black community gathering place to New Deal-era housing project.

Similarly, the Pease Park Conservancy will see funding for its Black History Interpretive Plan, which outlines a number of exhibits, markers and event programming exploring issues of slavery and segregation attached to its namesake while also celebrating the history of Austin's many freedman communities. Those interested can check out the full Pease Park Vision Plan for more details.

A grant will also be coming for Waterloo Greenway Conservancy, which is eyeing phase three of its ambitious plan for 1.5 miles of connected green spaces through Downtown Austin. If approved, the grant will fund the planning process to redevelop the long-neglected Sir Swante Palm Park.

Art enthusiasts can look forward to expanded programming at Umlauf Sculpture Gardens and Laguna Gloria, while history buffs can celebrate much-needed repairs to some of Austin's 19th century relics like Madison Log Cabin at Rosewood Park and the Dodson Farmhouse at Pioneer Farms.

Austin Monitor, an online, nonpartisan, 501(c)3 nonprofit publication that covers local government and politics in and around Austin.

## TxDOT to Fight Lawsuit Against I-35 Safety and Mobility Improvements Through Downtown Austin

In response to a lawsuit brought by Rethink35 and other opponents of the I-35 Capital Express Central project, Texas Department of Transportation Executive Director Marc Williams signaled the agency plans to vigorously defend the much-needed project.

"This is a project designed with the community and for the community," said Williams. "We have carefully followed and even exceeded the environmental and legal requirements to advance this project. We don't believe that the actions of these opponents have merit. TxDOT intends to continue to press forward to deliver the I-35 Capital Express Central project." Extensive collaboration with citizens, community groups, and elected officials over many years and comments from more than 18,000 community members were incorporated in the project's design.

- Adding non-tolled high-occupancy vehicle managed lanes to encourage carpooling and accommodate mass transit.
- Creating boulevard-like frontage roads from Cesar Chavez Street to Dean Keeton Street.
- Designing the project to accommodate and incorporate deck plazas, should they be funded by our partners.
- Removing upper decks and lowering the mainlanes between Holly Street and Airport

Boulevard.

- Widening east-west bridges to include 30 feet on each side for safety buffer and shared-use paths. Adding shared-use paths on both sides of I-35 throughout the corridor.
- Constructing new bicycle and pedestrian crossings at 3rd Street, 4th Street, 15th Street, Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and 51st Street.

"TxDOT design and environmental teams undertook the most rigorous environmental process to ensure we put forward the best plan that meets safety and mobility needs while keeping community values a priority," added Williams. "The selected alternative is the result of hard work and a painstaking effort to reduce adverse impacts."

The Austin area is expected to see more than \$10 billion in economic development over the next three decades. Improvements to I-35 are critical for the local, regional, and national economy.

"The traffic demand is here and will continue to grow as more people move to the Austin area to take advantage of the booming job market and quality of life that Central Texas offers," said Williams. "It's our duty to mitigate congestion and work to advance these needed safety and mobility improvements on this critical corridor."

## Panelists Discuss Size, Shape of Downtown Caps Proposed for I-35 Expansion

By CHAD SWIATECKI Austin Monitor

Planners expect the series of multi-acre caps that will eventually cover portions of a reconstructed Interstate 35 to feature compact two- and three-story buildings that could support retail, arts spaces or limited amounts of housing to serve the downtown area. Those lower profiles could make the projects less attractive for potential developers who prefer height and density downtown, but the engineering considerations of building on top of a major freeway present some challenges that require shorter buildings.

At the recent breakfast panel held by Urban Land Institute Austin, discussion focused on the so-called cap-and-stitch components of the I-35 reconstruction, which will see the city likely commit to more than \$500 million in construction of the caps as well as additional smaller east-west stitches over the roadway.

"We anticipate those will be limited to two to three stories, and the reason for that is to go any taller like four stories, six stories or eight stories, the additional construction design ... you've got to build deeper columns, wider structures, a larger lid, you have to go deeper with the roadway," said Richard Mendoza, director of the city's Transportation and Public Works Department. "Those cost/benefits did not calculate out, and so for that reason, we stopped at the two to three stories."

Mendoza said the lower-profile buildings on the caps, especially for the one proposed at 11th and 12th streets, would be in line with the community's goals of removing the long-standing barrier to East Austin and residents who felt removed from the rest of the city.

"We are going through great expense and design to remove a barrier between downtown and the east side by taking down those elevated roadways. Why would we want to put something back that would create that additional physical barrier after all that investment?" he said.

The city is in the very beginning stages of planning and designing for the caps, some of which would not be constructed for almost a decade. Late last year, City Council approved \$15 million to pay for a portion of the state's engineering work for the caps and stitches.

Another \$19 million in design expenses will need to be paid by the end of the year, which is also when the city will need to identify how it would pay for the caps – planned for Cesar Chavez Street, 11th and 12th streets, 27th Street and 38th Street to Airport Boulevard – and a handful of additional stitches.

Celebrate Valentine's in the Charming Fredericksburg, Texas! Built in 1910, stay in this 3 bed/2 bath historical house with a full kitchen, two king beds, two twin beds, and plenty of seating on the porches or at the firepit. Call or Text 512-483-1708 for

\$150 OFF your 2-night stay!

of that could be covered by a federal grant for the Cesar Chavez cap, with city leaders expected to learn of the results of the relevant grant application in either February or March.

Roughly \$100 million

Emily Risinger, director of planning and design for the Downtown Austin Alliance, said the caps will be tailored to fit the character of the nearby commu-

nities while also fitting into the needs of other major ir

into the needs of other major infrastructure projects such as the rebuild of the Austin Convention Center, Project Connect and the enhancements of the Waterloo Greenway.

"We're working on a scale where we're going to have multiple caps with different flavors of amenities and different flavors of community programming that people are going to want to see, and we might even have a series of conservancies down the line to make it happen," Risinger said.

Tommy Abrego, Mobility35 program manager for Texas Department of Transportation, said the state is committed to making the engineering needs of



lored to fit the character The main lanes of I-35 will be lowered through downtown as the of the nearby commu-highway's footprint is widened. Nathan Bernier/KUT News

the city's caps and stitches fit with the \$4.5 billion reconstruction that will include all the necessary support and air quality infrastructure.

"There will continue to be a highway and live traffic underneath, so there's obviously some safety considerations that need to be kept in mind as we move forward," he said. "From an engineering perspective, the structural side of it, we have been and will continue to work with DAA in Austin on the loading capacity as part of the walls, the columns, the beams, the lid, that takes what's going on top."

Austin Monitor, an online, nonpartisan, 501(c)3 nonprofit publication that covers local government and politics in and around Austin.



## COMMUNITY STRONG: LET'S MAKE A DIFFERENCE

When you choose the Keenan Group, you're not just making a move; you're making a difference! Your patronage helps us continue our charitable giving and community support initiatives. We invite you to join us on this journey of compassion, kindness, and community strength.

Our mission goes beyond providing exceptional services; it's about giving back and making a difference where it matters. We are proud to support numerous local charities and organizations that are dedicated to improving and enhancing the lives of our children and neighbors.

Together, we create lasting, positive change. We are stronger when united to support the causes that matter. Your choice to do business with us is a choice to invest in the well-being of our community making it an even better place to live and thrive.

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**Donations**: A percentage of every sale goes directly to local charities and initiatives in our local community. Volunteer Efforts: Our team actively engages in volunteer work, investing our time to support local causes. Partnerships: We collaborate with local charities to raise awareness and funds for critical projects, creating a stronger community fabric.

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KEENAN COMPASS



## 30 New Texas Laws go into Effect Including Diversity Office Changes

By AYDEN RUNNELS The Texas Tribune

As Texas college students returned to their campuses after the winter break, their campuses' diversity offices will not be open.

That's because a new law that outlaws such work at the state's higher education institutions went into effect, January 1.

Another 29 laws also will go into effect this new year that aim to change the economy, tax codes and the criminal justice system.

Many of the new laws seek to streamline tax codes and update property appraisal processes, while others touch on more unique issues like e-cigarette usage in minors and commemorative state license plates. Here are some of the laws:

Dissolving diversity, equity and inclusion efforts at public universities: Senate Bill 17 requires public universities to end so-called diversity, equity and inclusion work. Universities will also be unable to offer training on diversity and inclusion for its faculty and staff, or require diversity statements in hiring processes. Universities must also confirm to the Legislature between legislative sessions that they are in full compliance.

Prior to January 1, many of Texas' public universities already began ramping down their DEI practices and programs after the governor's chief of staff sent a memo in February calling DEI hiring initiatives illegal. Since the law's passing in May, general counsels for the universities have released varying levels of guidance throughout the fall semester on how to continue to support a diverse student body while staying within the boundaries of the law.

In addition to the dissolution of DEI offices, universities have also shut down university-led student support programs as concern mounts as to whether they also violate the law.

The law's restrictions do not apply to class instruction, materials needed for federal grant applications or student organizations on campuses, but multiple university officials have said the law has made hiring new faculty more difficult.

Streamlining tax exemptions for elderly and inheritances: Several new laws loosen requirements on reappraisals for spouses and children who inherit property and switch certain appraisal processes. Senate Bill 1381 allows certain tax exemptions on homes to carry over to a person's spouse after they die if they are 65 years or older, and House Bill 4077 removes the need for seniors to apply for homestead exemptions, instead making it the responsibility of the local appraisal district. House Bill 2354 will make it so if a landowner leaves property to their spouse, the land will not be considered as having transferred ownership for tax purposes.

Diverting minors charged with Class C misdemeanors: House Bill 3186 creates an alternative to fines for minors charged with class C misdemeanors, such as petty theft or possession of alcohol, instead allowing them to be enrolled in "diversion plans" designed to support them. The law outlines several options for programs, ranging from community service to mandatory mental health treatment, and requires justices and municipal courts to adopt their own plan outlines. It also allows courts to hire a youth diversion coordinator to help track program participants. A child is only eligible for the programs once every 365 days, and is ineligible if the state attorney objects or the child has already unsuccessfully participated in a diversion program. A child can only be diverted from criminal prosecution with written consent from their parents.

**Expanding exemptions for charitable organizations:** Several laws went into effect that provide tax relief for charitable organizations, especially those that are investing in new low-income housing. House Bill 1058 gives tax credits to those that have investments in low-income housing, and House Bill 4645 allows organizations to receive tax exemptions on construction of low-income housing, even if they are leasing the land the construction takes place on. House Bill 456 also exempts charitable organizations from taxes on certain interests of minerals on properties they own.

Creating new standard for Homeowner Association fees: House Bill 614 requires homeowner association boards to adopt standardized enforcement policies that detail how they enforce fines including how much the fines are. It requires a list of potential violations that HOAs must have displayed on their website.

**Restricting advertising e-cigarettes to minors:** House Bill 4758 makes it a class B misdemeanor to sell e-cigarette products that use images of food, celebrities or cartoon characters on their packaging, in an effort to slow vaping use among minors. More than two million K-12 students use e-cigarette products nationwide, according to the Food and Drug Administration.

Helping doctors understand patient insurance plans: House Bill 4500 will require insurance providers to create internet portals health care providers can access to determine what kinds of insurance plans their patients have in order to streamline the insurance process. The secure portal would tell physicians whether the provider is covered by the patient's insurance and the patients' copay, deductible and coinsurance where applicable.

This article originally appeared in The Texas Tribune at https://www.texastribune.org/2023/12/28/ texas-new-laws-dei-ban-colleges-universities/. The Texas Tribune is a member-supported, nonpartisan newsroom informing and engaging Texans on state politics and policy. Learn more at texastribune.org.

By MERRIESSA ANTON Northwest Austin Civic Association Last month I told you about items that can be placed in your blue recycling container. This month I will discuss trash – things that need to be placed in



**Vhat is Trash?** items that can be itainer. This month your trash container that is collected weekly. Unlike recycling items, trash items must be bagged.

> Please be aware that some items can be dangerous. Wrap broken glass and ceramics in paper so workers don't get hurt. If you want to dispose of live ammunition, please call 311 or 512-974-2000; the Austin Police Department employees will advise you on how it should be properly handled.

Charcoal and ash should be allowed to cool overnight or mixed with water, wrapped in aluminum foil, then put in a coffee tin (or something similar) before being placed in your plastic trash bag.

Oil-soaked rags should be spread outside to dry for at least 24 hours. Place them in a plastic bag and then into your trash bin. Paints, paint thinners, petroleum, and pool chemicals should never go in your trash container. You must dispose of them at the Recycle and Reuse Drop-Off Center; reserve a drop-off time by calling 311.

The following items can be placed in a bag in your trash bin:

- Diapers
- Animal waste, including kitty litter
- Straws
- Plastic utensils (unless they are recyclable or compostable)
- Broken plates and other ceramic items
- Broken glass Broken toys

- Empty bags that contained food items and animal food
- Empty bags that contained mulch and compost Cigarettes
- Coated cups, containers, and paper
- Snack bagsDirty Styro
  - Dirty Styrofoam cups and plates
- Hoses and rope
- Candy wrappers
- Dirty plastic bags
- Dirty food containers
- Needles and syringes placed in hard plastic or metal containers with the lid securely fastened.

Batteries, fluorescent light bulbs, Styrofoam<sup>®</sup> egg cartons, and clean plastic bags cannot go into your trash container. Batteries can be taken to any library, where there are disposal bins. Fluorescent light bulbs are collected by Lowe's and properly recycled. Clean plastic wrap and bags are collected in bins outside of grocery stores. Styrofoam<sup>®</sup> egg cartons are collected at the Resource and Recovery Center.

The Austin Recycles app will keep you up to date on your garbage day, as well as when your trash and compost will be picked up on weeks when there is a holiday.

There is also a tool on the Austin Resource Recovery website to find the best options for disposing of specific items. "What do I do with....." will answer many of your questions.

Northwest Austin Civic Association, February 2024 • Page 15

### Volunteer for the 2024 Earth Day Festival Planning Team

By DANA WINER Northwest Austin Civic Association

Based on the success of last year's inaugural NWACA Earth Day Festival, we will host another festival this April and are looking for volunteers to help plan family-friendly, earth-friendly, fun, and educational activities. Please email Dana at dana21@utexas. edu to join the planning team!



## PREVENT OAK WILT DON'T PRUNE FEB-JUNE

February Happenings at the Old Quarry Library

#### By MARTHA MILLER Northwest Austin Civic Association

All Austin Public Libraries will be closed on February 18th and 19th for President's Day.

Thursdays, February 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29 Dungeons & Dragons 8 Week Campaign (4pm – 6pm) Want to "level up" your Dungeons & Dragons skills? Join this eight-week D&D workshop to learn more about character building, teamwork, problem solving, and combat strategy. We'll grow together from Level 1 as we tackle missions of increasing difficulty... all in the name of fun, glory, and treasure! Email Leslie.Flynn@austintexas.gov to register. Please note that seating is very limited. All participants are expected to attend at least 7 of the 8 sessions or their spot will be given to someone on the waitlist. Teens 13-18 only

Saturday, February 3 – African Storyteller and Drum-

## **Mark Your Calendars**

These events are as planned as of January 23. As you consider participating in one of the events listed, please check first with the organizer.

> **February 20 - 7pm** Parks Committee – virtual

February 21 – 8:30pm NWACA Board Meeting – Location TBD

**February 27 - 5pm** NWACA Zoning and Transportation Committees – virtual

March 15 Applications due for Special Project Fund – see www.nwaca.org

> March 16 - 9am to Noon Monthly cleanup at Bull Creek District Park Sign up at www.givepulse.com/event/dates/429602

> > **March 19 - 7pm** Parks Committee – virtual

March 21 – 8:30pm NWACA Board Meeting – Location TBD

**March 23 – 1-3pm** Spring Recycling Event - Batteries, Oil, Paint, Antifreeze St. Matthew's, 8134 Mesa Drive

March 26 - 5pm NWACA Zoning and Transportation Committees – virtual

**mer: Elizabeth Kahura** (1pm – 2pm) Join us in celebration of Black History Month with Elizabeth Kahura, Kenyan born storyteller, drummer, dancer, and teacher of a diverse range of African traditions.

Tuesday, February 6 – East & West (Austin) Side Stories: Exploring the Dr. Sidney White and Helen Fields White Collection (1pm – 2pm) Join us for a presentation about the Dr. Sidney White and Helen Fields White Papers, a collection housed at the Austin History Center, the historic division of the Austin Public Library. Jacqueline Smith-Francis, the African American Community Archivist at the Austin History Center, will discuss Dr. White and Mrs. White's collection, including Dr. White's work as a notable African American dentist in East Austin, and the couple's mutual engagements and contributions to Austin's communities. Recommended for ages 18 and up

<u>Wednesday, February 7</u> - For the Love of Books Club (2pm-3pm) – Join fellow Book Lovers to discuss the

books you're already reading and learn about others you should add to your TBR list. Eat snacks, talk books - It's the easiest book club you will ever join! Ages 18 and up Please register for this event: https://www.eventbrite. com/e/for-the-love-of-books-cluba-no-homework-book-club-tickets-709505539167

Wednesday, February 7 - Talk Time (6:30pm - 7:30pm) improve your English conversation. ¡Mejore su conversación en inglés! Talk Time is a program for English conversation practice with other English language learners and English speaking volunteers. No registration is necessary. The program is open to any adult who speaks some English and wants an informal and safe place to practice with others. Participe en Talk Time: Hablemos Inglés, un programa gratis de La Biblioteca Pública de Austin, donde usted puede venir a conversar en inglés y así practicar y sentirse más seguro. No es necesario registrarse. Este programa se ofrece a cualquier adulto que hable algo de inglés y que quiera practicarlo con otros en un lugar informal y sin presiones. Recommended for ages 18 and up ADD Registration Link Currently Unavailable

Thursday, February 8 – Chair Yoga (2:45pm – 3:45pm) Enjoy yoga no matter your level of mobility. Instructor Katherine will go through basic yoga steps to help with flexibility and strength. The Library offers free programs and workshops to help you improve your health and well-being throughout the year. Recommended for ages 18 and up

NWACA.ORG

<u>Friday, February 9</u> - **Adult Morning Social** (10am – noon) Join neighbors and make new friends at this bi-monthly casual social. Games, puzzles, and simple craft activities will be available as well as snacks and hot drinks. Hungry for conversation? Drop in for open, public dialogue on a variety of topics and add to the diversity of perspectives Ages 18 and up Please Register for this event: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/adult-morning-social-tickets-763649545347

Saturday, February 10 - Valentine's Card Making (1pm - -3pm) Spread a little love for Valentine's Day by making custom greeting cards! Drop by the library and make a craft while you search for books, movies and music. We've got paper crafts, easy sewing and more fun projects for the whole family. We provide the supplies; you provide the creativity. Program length is approximately 1 hour. All ages welcome

<u>Monday, February 12</u> – **Teens Create: Tiny Paintings** (4pm – 5:30pm) Bring your imagination and create your own tiny masterpiece with our 3x3" canvases. Drop by the library and make a craft while you search for books, movies and music. We've got paper crafts, easy sewing and more fun projects for the whole family. We provide the supplies; you provide the creativity. Program length is approximately 1 hour. TEENS 13-18 ONLY!

<u>Monday, February 12</u> - **Barking Book Buddies: Read to Hanna! She loves to listen!** (4pm – 5pm) - Divine Canine's certified volunteers team with trained therapy dogs ready for kids to read to them! This program improves children's reading and communication skills by employing a powerful method: reading to a dog. Recommended for ages 5 and up

<u>Tuesday, February 13</u> – After School Lego Lab (3:30pm-5pm) – Spend an afternoon engaging your imagination - and maybe your silly side - with this open play session. With Legos, you can build anything you can imagine and tell any story you can dream up. Come to the Lego Lab to hear, see, make, and create. All ages welcome

Wednesday, February 14 - Quarry Gardening Group (11am - 12:30pm) Tree Care Workshop - Learn how to care for trees year-round during this workshop with City of Austin's Education Forester, Keith Bobberney. Intended for anyone interested in learning more about tree health and improving the wellness of our urban forest. Q&A will follow. Recommended for ages 18 and up

Wednesday, February 14- Crafty Adult: Valentine Gnomes (2 -4 pm) J Quick and easy sock gnomes add a touch of cuteness to any spot in your home. Are you a crafter? Do you wish you were a crafter? We'll focus on a different craft every month; we'll learn the basics, we'll learn the ins and outs, and then we'll let loose. Come learn with us! Recommended for ages 18 and up

Thursday, February 15 - Literature Live! presents: The Legend of Sally Ann Thunder And Whirlwind Crockett The story of Sally Ann Thunder Ann Whirlwind Crockett is brought to life with tabletop puppetry by Austin Public Library's own Literature Live puppet troupe. Bring your amazing lil' Texans to your neighborhood branch and celebrate this tall tale - Texas style! Recommended for ages 5 and up

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Thursday, February 15 – Naturalist Book Club (An Immense World) – Join Capital Area Master Naturalists for a bi-monthly Naturalist Book Club. We will meet every other month to discover, understand, and appreciate the natural world through fabulous and engaging books. The Book Club is open to all who are interested. And don't worry if you haven't finished the book, we'll have a great conservation about how topics in the book apply to the flora, fauna, and ecosystems of Central Texas. Recommended for ages 18 and up

Saturday, February 17 – Flora & Fauna of Bull Creek (presented by David Cook) (11am – noon) Explore the plants and animals of the nearby Bull Creek watershed including endangered species, edible plants, things that come out at night and many more. See why some have described Bull Creek as the Galapagos of Texas due to its biodiversity All ages welcome

<u>Tuesday, February 20</u> – **Fiber Arts Friends Group** (6pm -7:30pm) – Whether you are an expert or brand new, join fellow crafters to work on your projects and learn new skills. Ages 18 and up

<u>Friday, February 23 -</u> Adult Morning Social (10am – noon see details on February 9)

Saturday, February 24 - Crafternoon: Perler Beads (11:30 am – 2 pm) - Create fun Perler bead charms, magnets, and keychains using available patterns or completely from your imagination. Drop by the library and make a craft while you search for books, movies and music. We've got paper crafts, easy sewing and more fun projects for the whole family. We provide the supplies; you provide the creativity. All ages welcome

<u>Monday, February 26</u> - For the Love of Books Club (6:30pm-7:30pm see details on February 7)

<u>Every Tuesday</u>, **Tech Time** (1pm-3pm) Learn to download books and use digital Library resources. Bring in your tablet, smartphone or eReader for help navigating the Virtual Library Ages 18 and up

## **NORTHWEST AUSTIN CIVIC ASSOCATION**

Loop

## **Key Contacts**

Austin Citywide Information Center Emergency, Police Non-emergency (coyote sightings, compliance issues) APD District Representative Officer, Phillip Sparkman District 10 Councilmember, Alison Alter To get the District 10 monthly newsletter Northwest Austin News Publisher

512-974-2000 or 311 911 311 phillip.sparkman@austintexas.gov 512-974-2110 bit.lv/d10newsletters 512-483-1708 Lynette@FourPointsNews.com Joyce Statz and Julie Rawlings

Northwest Austin News Co-Editors

## New to the Neighborhood? .00P360

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 NWA-CA 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.



FM 2222

## 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

## 2022 - 2024 NWACA Board of Directors

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

- Ruven Brooks .
- Vicki DeWeese .
- Carol Dochen
  - . Jessica Forrest
- Richard Grayum Kevin Kott

- Mae Levitan

- 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).

## **Special Thanks to Members**

### NWACA Membership Committee

NWACA thanks members who generously contributed to the 4th of July Parade Fund, the Park Fund, and the Constable Fund, between January 1 and January 24, 2024.

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.

- Catherine Egan
- Jill Gentry

.

.

- . J. Edward Jones
- Brian and Ilene Novy
- Dottie Riley
- . (and, apologies to anyone whose donation we might have missed!)

MEMBERSHIP FORM							
Name:	Phone: ( )						
Address:	Zip:						
Email (confidential):							
JoinXWACA							
Annual dues \$25	Volunteer!						
Optional Contributions:	Please check a committee on which you would like to participate:						
Fourth of July Parade         \$10\$20Other           Constable         \$10\$20Other           Parks Fund         \$10\$20Other	<ul> <li>□ Communications</li> <li>□ Crime &amp; Safety</li> <li>□ Events</li> <li>□ Business Membership</li> <li>□ Tree, Environment, and Wildlife</li> </ul>						
Fourth of July Parade \$10\$20Other Constable \$10\$20Other	□ Communications □ Business Membership □ Crime & Safety □ Tree, Environment,						

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

- Connie Lundgren Teri Schock
- Dana Winer





## **DEST** PROPERTIES AUSTIN



YOUR NEIGHBOR. YOUR FRIEND. YOUR REALTOR.

## JULIE WAIDELICH –

## LOOKING TO FIND THE "ONE" THIS VALENTINE'S DAY?

We are anticipating a favorable market in the coming months for both buyers and sellers as 2024 has ushered in a wave of renewed optimism and heightened activity in the residential market.

If your plans for **2024** include buying or selling a home, please contact me. I would love to put my experience and the resources of Nest Properties Austin to work for you. Thank you for your trust, support and referrals!

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2023-2024 Team Photo





## Anderson Boys Win, Girls Place 4th at District Swim Meet

By LYNETTE HAALAND Northwest Austin News

The Anderson High School swim teams competed at district and the boys team won first and the girls team came in 4th place. Anderson competed at the



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Round Rock Aquatic Center on January 26, swimming against Bowie, Austin, Lake Travis, Westlake, Dripping and Johnson high schools.

"Boys – you did it! You're the District 26-6A Champions! It came down to the very last relay to secure



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the title, but you finished with a score of 137 over Westlake's 132! Congratulations," shared Brittany De-Valk, AHS head coach swimming & diving.

The Anderson girls earned 4th place overall with a strong finish. Only 10 points ended up separating 2nd place from 4th place. "I want to express how proud I am of you all," shared DeValk.

The Trojans kicked off the championships with both divers qualifying for the regional meet on January 25. Katherine Bernsten taking 6th place and Charles Lung taking 3rd place.

"6A competition is fierce and for us to compete the way we did (at district) made me a happy coach," DeValk shared.

The team had so many swimmers achieve season-best times and/or lifetime bests in their events, DeValk said. "It's exciting we'll be taking a team of over 20 swimmers & divers to Regionals in 2 weeks!"

The UIL 2024 Region VII Class 6-A Swimming and Diving Championships will be hosted Feb. 8 - 10 at

the Davis Natatorium at the North East ISD Aquatic

Center in San Antonio.

Trojan team records that were broken at district:

- 1:34.09 Boys 200 Medley Relay: Benjamin Jaggers, Andres Brooks, Kai Kawakami-Lynd, and Dylan England
- 1:32.31 Boys 200 IM Andres Brooks
- 50.09 Boys 100 Butterfly Andres Brooks
- 56.81 Girls 100 Backstroke Hadley Dodson

#### Top 6 District Finishes Regional Qualifiers

Jaggers, Amato, Taylor, Dodson

#### **Boys Team**

Boys 200 Medley Relay - 1st Place

Benjamin Jaggers, Andres Brooks, Kai Kawaka\ mi-Lynd, Dylan England

200 Freestyle: Kai Kawakami-Lynd - 4th Place 200 IM: Andres Brooks - 1st Place, Pierce Propst -4th Place 50 Freestyle:

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**Girls Team at Districts** 



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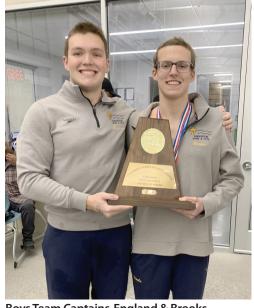
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**Boys Team Captains-England & Brooks** 

#### SWIM, FROM 18

Brandon Farrens - 2nd Place, Dyland England - 3rd Place, Max Bisang - 4th Place 11 Dives: Charles Lung - 3rd Place 100 Butterfly: Andres Brooks - 2nd Place 100 Freestyle: Dyland England - 3rd Place, Brandon Farrens - 5th Place 500 Freestyle: Kai Kawakami-Lynd - 3rd Place

#### Boys 200 Freestyle Relay - 1st Place

Max Bisang, Brandon Farrens, Tyler Farrens, Kai Kawakami-Lynd

100 Backstroke: Benjamin Jaggers - 1st Place 100 Breastroke: Augustus (Gus) Lott - 4th Place

#### Boys 400 Freestyle Relay - 1st Place

Dylan England, Brandon Farrens, Benjamin Jaggers, Andres Brooks

#### Girls Team

Girls 200 Medley Relay - 1st Place

Hadley Dodson, Abbey Amato, Kiersten Taylor, Phoebe Jaggers



100 Butterfly: Kiersten Taylor - 4th Place, Katherine 100 Freestyle: Phoebe Jaggers - 3rd Place, Abbey Amato - 5th Place 500 Freestyle: Kiersten Taylor - 6th Place

Girls 200 Freestyle Relay - 4th Place

Katherine Bernsten, Farrah Scott, Sydney Arce-• ment, Sarah Kester

100 Backstroke: Hadley Dodson - 1st Place 100 Breastroke: Abbey Amato - 2nd Place

#### Girls 400 Freestyle Relay - 3rd Place

Hadley Dodson, Kiersten Taylor, Abbey Amato, Phoebe Jaggers



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2024 Anderson High School girls soccer team. Photo by Phil Swann Photo

### AHS ANDERSON GIRLS SOCCER DISTRICT SCHEDULE 2024 AHS

Jan 17	Wed	AHS vs Johnson	Anderson	Varsity	5:00pm
Jan 19	Fri	Akins vs AHS	Burger Anx.	JVA/V	5:30 / 7:15pm
Jan 23	Tue	AHS vs Westlake	Anderson	JVB/JV/V	4:45/6:00/7:45pm
Jan 26	Fri	Lake Travis vs AHS	Lake Travis	JVB/JV/V	4:45/6:00/7:45pm
Jan 30	Tue	AHS vs Del Valle	Anderson	JVB/JV/V	4:45/6:00/7:45pm
Feb 6	Tue	Dripp Sp vs AHS	Dripping Sp	JVB/JV/V	4:45/6:00/7:45pm
Feb 9	Fri	Austin vs AHS	HousePark	JVB/JV/V	4:45/6:00/7:45pm
Feb 13	Tue	AHS vs Bowie	Anderson	JVB/JV/V	4:45/6:00/7:45pm
Feb 16	Fri	Johnson vs AHS	Johnson	JVB/JV/V	4:45/6:00/7:45pm
Feb 20	Tue	AHS vs Akins	Anderson	JVB/JV/V	4:45/6:00/7:45pm
Feb 23	Fri	Westlake vs AHS	Westlake	JVB/JV/V	4:45/6:00/7:45pm
Feb 27	Tue	AHS vs Lake Travis	Anderson	JVB/JV/V	4:45/6:00/7:45pm
Mar 1	Fri	Del Valle vs AHS	Del Valle	JVB/JV/V	4:45/6:00/7:45pm
Mar 8	Fri	AHS vs Dripp. Sp	Anderson	JVB/JV/V	4:45/6:00/7:45pm
Mar 19	Tue	AHS vs Austin *senior night	Anderson	JVB/JV/V	4:45/6:00/7:45pm
Mar 22	Fri	Bowie vs AHS	Nelson	JVB/JV/V	4:45/6:00/7:45pm



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## 2024 Anderson Girls Soccer Roster

2024 A	Inderson Giris	Socce	r Roster
00	Charlie McCreery	GK	11
0	Kendall Meachum	GK	12
1	Jada Navarro	GK	12
2	Abbey Ford	CM	12
3	Simone Fodo	FW	9
4	Jessica Greenway	СМ	12
5	Neve Chachanashvili	FW	12
6	Gracie Ruthven	FW	11
7	Paloma Lara	FW	12
8	Meesha Akbar	СМ	10
9	Megan Ford	СМ	12
10	Sarah Stephens	СМ	12
11	Stella Tatum	FW	12
12	Sydney Gaynor	FW	10
13	Julia Hirschman	FW	12
14	Asher Bagshaw	FW	10
15	Evelyn Grossman	D	11
16	Lilly Hutchison	D	11
17	Emily Tafolla-Acosta	CM	12
18	Gracie Huff	FW	12
19	Haley Zator	D	12
21	Claire Navarro	СМ	11
22	Mason Galligan	D	12
23	Allie Meachum	D	12

Q&A Emily Horvath Head Girls Soccer Coach Anderson High School

## Q: What do you expect to see in the district this season?

A: We expect to see a great deal of competition. We were in this District 26-6A last year and have learned a lot through our experience and exposure. We had a goal to make playoffs last year and I am so proud of our squad for accomplishing that, but the entire team was on the same page this year that we want to achieve even more. We have higher standards and bigger goals this year that I fully believe we are capable of reaching them. We compete against rosters filled with players from the top club level, combined intelligent and experienced coaches. It makes for exciting and challenging games... and we love to welcome a good challenge. We expect to see even more success as a program this season.

## Q: What does your team do extremely well, and what areas of your program need improvement?

A: We are extremely disciplined and hardworking. We hold the girls to high expectations, and they consistently meet and supersede them. On the more soccer specific side, our back line (defense) remains a force to be reckoned with. One of the largest areas of growth this year for us has been in our offense. We are finding the back of the net more often and in more creative ways this season. Junior forward, Gracie Ruthven, has already tallied 7 goals and 5 assists this year, which matches our total overall leading goal scorer from last season, and we are not even halfway through district play.

#### Q: Are there any seniors to mention who are stepping into leadership roles and/or who are some key impact players?

A: We have 19 seniors in the program this year, which

is incredible. Every single senior brings something to the table and has a role to fill that is needed for our team's success. Three of our four captains this year are seniors. Kendall Meachum (Goalkeeper), Jessica Greenway (center mid) and Sarah Stephens (center mid) do an incredible job leading our team and our program in addition to junior, Evelyn Grossman (center back). The four of them are the core of our team and we expect them to make major impacts on the field as well off of it.

## Q: Do you have an interesting story to share about the team that most would not know about?

A: We have a wide range of musical talent within the team. The girls often belt the national anthem before games when it is played in the stadiums, and they frequently have pre-game karaoke sessions. It's quite impressive.

## Q: How many years have you been coaching at AHS and what is making this season special to you?

A: This is my fourth year coaching at Anderson and my third year as the head coach. I played soccer for Trinity University, where I was a First Team All-American and First Team Academic All-American. I was given the opportunity to be an assistant coach for Trinity the year after I graduated, and both of those experiences (playing and coaching) helped prepare me to take over the program at Anderson (and I am so thankful I was given the opportunity to). It has brought me so much joy to continue to stay so involved in the sport and the culture. This group of seniors are the girls I came in with. They will be the first class I graduate all the way through. They are very special to me and we have developed a very trusting rapport. I know what they are capable of, especially with this talented group of underclassmen to play with.

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2023-2024 Anderson boys and girls golf teams. Photo by Eva Nichols Photography. Clarification: Northwest Austin News ran two incorrect photos from the 2022-23 team in the January edition.

### Anderson 2023-2024 - Boys & Girls Golf Roster Cade Cazin Thomas Ashy Girls Colf Roster

Boys Campbell Duncan Jun Lee Trent Mierl Jackson Kercheville Miles Manning Max Scheindlin Luke Wootan Cade Cazin Liam Doran Stephen Eidson Drew Gilley Andrew Halpern Cash Hernandez Elias O'Keefe Carter Ward Thomas Ashy Cash Blanton Jack Caffery Charles Helling Ben Meachum Samuel Woodberry

Girls Lauren Thompson Juliette Brutsche Olivia Andrus Vivian Dempsey Elle Elhert Lola Selberg Ariana Cruz Sopie Janicki

### **CHEER, FROM 1**

proud," shared Head Coach Gayla Stuart.

Tryouts for the team took place in August and the members have put in many hours of extra practice since that time including practicing and traveling over the holiday break.

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Competition Cheer Team 2023-2024 Wenzel, Marley Young, Caroline Mack Cardosa, Kensley Sophia Matthys, Kennedy Joy Owens, McClane Elizabeth (Laney) Highsmith, Macey Madelon Stern, Mia Alex Lovaas, Morgen Riley Barrera-Torres, Olivia Fitzwater, Lauren Avery Franks, Ava Marin Long, Dylan Alexa Sainsbury, Jaiya Cavazos-Johnson, Mila Coleman, Brooklyn Lovaas, Liv Naples, Emerson

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Dr. Robin Bethell is the founder of Blue Door Dental Design.

He graduated from the University of the Pacific in San Francisco in 2007 and has become an industry leading dentist, teacher, and award winner. He is Invisalign Faculty and a Top 1% Invisalign provider in Texas.

He has completed training in Kois Education, Digital Smile Design, and has been delivering full mouth reconstruction and diagnosis in Austin for the last 10 years.

He and his family call Central Texas home, and his aim is to bring the highest quality orofacial design, diagnosis, and treatment options to Texans.

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