

Northwest Austin News

SERVING THE NORTHWEST AUSTIN CIVIC ASSOCIATION COMMUNITY

Volume 15, Issue 10

September 2024

School is Back and Fall is Around the Corner

By NORTHWEST AUSTIN
CIVIC ASSOCIATION BOARD

ceeds, we'll keep you posted.

Because we omitted the link in the August newsletter, the deadline for completing the survey about our July 4th events has been extended to September 15. To participate please use this link: www.surveymonkey.com/r/6KFBQTH

NWACA, 3



School is back in session, and the new parking arrangement on Far West Boulevard should be getting a good test. See the details about what was installed in the article inside this issue; it includes an email address where comments can be directed to City of Austin employees. As evaluation of this solution pro-

Anderson Trojan Band Annual “Flamingoing” Raises \$86,000



The Anderson Trojan Band and Dance Guard raised nearly \$86,000 during its annual door-to-door Flamingo-ing.

After flamingo flocks landed in resident's yards, flamingo wranglers recovered them for a donation.

“We are grateful for a community that has allowed band and guard to run this unique fundraiser for almost 30 years,” the band's Facebook page posted. The event takes place in early August.

The money helps the Trojan band supplement its budget, travel, uniforms, and helps provide the best experience possible for the students in the AHS band program.



How can you say No to these faces?? And those bucket hats - so cool! We are 80 percent to our goal so help our band reach it by donating to the fundraiser.

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Parking Pockets on Far West

By JOYCE STATZ
Northwest Austin Civic Association

Drivers are noticing changes made along Far West Boulevard in July. To enable legal parking while attending athletic events at the Murchison fields, the south side of the street was restriped to incorporate a parking lane, alongside the bike lane that was already present. To make this happen, one traffic lane was removed.

Residents had for years been illegally parking in the bike lane that was posted “No Parking” with no consequences. However, in recent months police began ticketing the illegally parked cars. The solution provided by the City of Austin has inspired many comments – some puzzled about the solution, some distracted while driving past, some worried about safety for those exiting their

parked cars with traffic passing by very close, and some upset because the solution eliminated parking spaces in lieu of “parking pockets,” the bump-outs that are inserted in five places in the new parking lane.

In response to queries by the NWACA Board, Austin Transportation and Public Works (ATPW) says that the “parking pockets” are a novel item for Austin, used here first because the long distance of the parking area is not broken up by intersections or crosswalks as in other parking areas in the City.

The City of Austin recently installed on-street parking pockets serving the intramural fields fronting Far West Boulevard between Northledge Drive and Hart Lane. The changes were made as a result of high parking demand resulting in habitual parking in the bike lane along this segment of Far

West Boulevard. Parking in bike lanes causes safety issues for everyone as they lead to unpredictable behaviors, including darting out to avoid a parked car, causing conflicts between oncoming vehicles and bicycles. The changes provide separation for people on bicycles, protection for pedestrians along the sidewalk and space for people to park along Far West Boulevard where they could not legally do so before. The configuration includes several parking breaks along the 1,000 foot-long stretch of frontage, which are designed to offer visual cues to drivers that this is a parking lane, not a second travel lane. The Transportation and Public Works Department is currently monitoring the new installation and welcomes feedback from the community via email to bicycle@austintexas.gov.



ets, see this KXAN coverage: tinyurl.com/FW-pockets

NWACA Board members will continue the discussion with ATPW once school has been in session for several weeks and this parking solution is well-tested.

For more information about the parking pocket-

Prepare for the Upcoming Election

By DANA WINER
Northwest Austin Civic Association

You're probably aware of the upcoming election for US President, but did you know there are many other races on the ballot, including Austin Mayor and City Council?

Here are the key dates for the upcoming election:

- October 7 - Deadline to register to vote: vrapp.sos.state.tx.us/index.asp

- October 7 - Deadline to update your address if you've moved: www.votetexas.gov/register-to-vote/
- October 9 - Mayor and District 10 Election forum for West and Northwest Austin neighborhoods - (details below): tinyurl.com/oct9forum
- October 25 - Deadline for ballot by mail. Applications can be found here: elections.traviscountytx.gov/voter-information/ballot-by-mail/
- October 21 – November 1 Early voting

- November 5 - Election Day

For more election information: votetravis.com

Election Forum with Candidates for Austin Mayor and City Council

NWACA is presenting a non-partisan election forum in collaboration with over a dozen other West and Northwest Austin neighborhood associations on Wednesday, October 9 at 6:30 p.m. at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, 4121 Steck Ave.. There will be an optional meet and greet with the

candidates beforehand at 6 p.m. and afterward at 8 p.m.. For those unable to attend in person, an online option is provided.

The forum will be moderated by award-winning journalist Tony Plohetski and will include candidates for both Austin Mayor and District 10 City Council Representative.

For more information, including link to register and submit questions in advance, visit tinyurl.com/oct9forum

National Night Out in NWACA

By NWACA Events Committee

As summer ends, autumn activities are planned, including events such as National Night Out. This year, rather than hosting a large community event as in the past, NWACA is facilitating block parties throughout the NWACA area. A block party provides an opportunity for neighbors to spend a few hours with each other developing friendships, and in the process, a safer street.

NWACA has created party host bags with suggestions for organizing a block party, creating an invitation, and creating a street directory. There are even \$50 gift cards for the first 20 residents who register their party.

While the target date for NNO parties is Sunday, September 15th, the actual date for your party is up to you. We understand this date may not work for everyone, so any date you choose is



fine! The more parties that are held, the stronger the neighborhood connections, and the more everyone looks out for each other.

If you haven't yet registered but are interested in hosting a party, please contact Carol Dochen at CarolBDochen@gmail.com to register.

When you hold your party, please send photos to info@nwaca.org, and we'll print some of them in the next issue of the newsletter.

NWACA, FROM 1

Some items to note in your calendar, each with more details inside this issue:

- September 15 – National Night Out block parties throughout the neighborhood
- September 30 – Last day to submit applications to the Special Project Fund
- October 5 – NWACA Neighborhood Garage Sales for NWACA members, with promotion and yard signs provided by NWACA
- October 9 – Multi-neighborhood Election Forum for Mayor and District 10 Councilmember races
- October 19 – Annual Electronics Recycling event for NWACA members

Renovation at the Old Quarry Library is underway, as you can see from the street. The librarians provided several photos so you can see what's happening inside, too. It should be an exciting reopening in 2025 for the whole neighborhood!



Rise Against Hunger Volunteer Opportunity

Join Northwest Hills United Methodist Church in a Rise Against Hunger Meal Packaging Event, Sunday, September 29. This is a fun, educational way to literally lend a hand to those facing hunger across the

globe. Call NW Hills UMC at 512-345-1743 for details or contact coordinator at 512-626-1360 lpPhillips5@austin.rr.com or register at events.riseagainsthunger.org/NorthwestHill92924

Council OKs raising property tax in new \$5.9 billion budget

By JO CLIFTON
Austin Monitor

Austin taxpayers will see an increase in their property tax bills next year, but not so much that it will require their approval.

Taxpayers will be charged \$0.4776 per \$100 taxable value, with a homestead exemption of \$154,000 for homeowners 65 years of age and older. Child care facilities will also be exempt from city property taxes. According to a city news release, “The typical Austin homeowner will see an increase of \$15.67 per month, or \$188.02 per year, in the City’s portion of their annual property tax bill. The City’s rates and fees, including for electricity, trash service, water, drainage, and the transportation user fee, will rise in response to escalating operations costs, as well as increasing service demands from a growing population. The increase for the typical Austin tax- and ratepayer is \$30.16 per month, or \$361.92 per year.”

Under state law, the city may not raise property taxes by more than 3.5 percent per year. This budget hit that mark. Both the Travis County Commissioners Court and the Austin ISD Board of Trustees have scheduled tax rate elections (see page 11) in order to fund their needs. Some, but not many, of those addressing City Council on August 14 said they wished that they could vote to raise taxes. Most simply offered their advice on how to spend the city’s tax dollars. A few asked that Council not raise taxes at all.

Although the majority of Council members offered amendments to pay for new

items or to make improvements to current programs, most of the budget was as proposed by the city’s financial staff. The only issue that Council members disagreed about was how much the city should keep in its reserve fund for a rainy day. Council Member Ryan Alter proposed lowering the city’s reserve level to 16.7 percent, or about \$4 million on a budget of \$5.9 billion. The policy is to keep that reserve at 17 percent.

After approving the base budget, Alter proposed adding a variety of programs that will cost the city \$4 million. That includes a cadet class of firefighters at a cost of \$875,000; increasing funds for homelessness prevention by \$1 million; another \$300,000 for families experiencing homelessness; \$400,000 to provide logistical support for women seeking abortions, which Council Member Vanessa Fuentes sponsored; funding for José Velásquez’s substance abuse continuum of care proposal at \$140,000; and close to \$200,000 for early childhood social service contract adjustments as proposed by Fuentes. Alter also proposed expanding the mobile crisis outreach team to 24/7 at a cost of \$1.46 million, and \$105,000 for a communications specialist for EMS as proposed by Velásquez.

Mayor Pro Tem Leslie Pool moved to amend Ryan Alter’s motion to increase the reserve to 17 percent, but Alter said the motion was not appropriate under Robert’s Rules of Order. Mayor Kirk Watson ruled in his favor. Council Member Alison Alter then made a motion to divide the question. But Fuentes asked whether they should vote on dividing the question, which they did.

There were only four votes in favor of the motion to consider dividing the question, which was effectively a vote against considering Ryan Alter’s proposal to reduce the reserve funding separately from the items he proposed to add to the budget. Those in favor of the motion to divide were Pool, Watson, and Council members Alison Alter and Paige Ellis. The amendments were ultimately approved by the rest of Council.

Council Member Mackenzie Kelly voted against adoption of the budget, but did not object to Ryan Alter’s amendments. She had proposed many reductions to the city’s budget to keep the tax rate the same as it has been this year. However, she thanked Watson for supporting a budget amendment to add funding for cemetery upkeep.

Although a variety of Council members expressed their satisfaction with the budget, Pool and Alison Alter each said they were concerned about spending the \$4 million that could have gone into the reserve fund.

Alison Alter said, “I have no problem with all the things people want to invest in,” but warned her colleagues that proponents of all the things that they funded this year will come back next year and ask for more money. She also cautioned that sales taxes are much lower than the city had earlier anticipated and that could cause problems later. She said all of the items being funded were “worthy elements, but it is a slippery slope here and we have to be mindful of that.”

Ellis expressed concern about not having dollars in reserve to tap into when the city needs them. She said she worries about wildfire risks, flooding and weather events like the ice storm of 2023. She said the Federal Emergency Management Agency will help with some expenses but not all. She said she was also worried about the budget becoming “out of balance, which affects our ability to issue bonds.”

Pool said, “I too am very concerned about where we’re heading,” warning that the 3.5 percent revenue cap will be even more difficult to deal with in the future.

“I pray we get back to respecting our fiscal policy,” said Pool.

Pool and Alison Alter will be leaving the dais at the end of the year.

Fuentes told her colleagues she was not concerned about the slight reduction in the reserve.

“It was just a little over a year ago when we had a 14 percent reserve,” she said. She praised her colleagues, saying that they had done a good job. She said she was proud of the cost-of-living increase for city employees, for adding to the budgets of the Fire Department and EMS. She closed by noting that they were not changing the policy of keeping 17 percent of funds in reserve.

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

Imagine Austin Update

By BEN LUCKENS
Northwest Austin Civic Association

Imagine Austin, the city’s comprehensive plan, was adopted by City Council in 2012 and is intended to guide Austin’s future growth and development. Austin is in the process of updating the plan; doing so is a big deal. Unlike some cities’ comprehensive plans, the Imagine Austin comprehensive plan is not merely aspirational in nature. Article X of the City Charter states:

...no public or private development shall be permitted, except in conformity with such adopted comprehensive plan or element or portion thereof, prepared and adopted in con-

formity with the provisions of this article.

Comprehensive plans, including ours, need to be regularly updated to reflect changing circumstances. For instance, since its initial approval in 2012, Austin has:

- added nearly 150,000 new residents and their cars,
- begun electing City Council members by single-member districts,
- initiated a new light rail program (Project Connect),
- changed the Land Development to allow for more density, and
- seen an increase in acceptance of the scale of development/redevelopment.

Because comprehensive planning exercises are overseen by a wide range of stakeholders, all of whose views must be accommodated, there’s a tendency for plans to include policies that appear to be ambiguous or even contradictory in nature. A plan update is an opportunity to review those policies. A critical part of a plan update is reassessing the plan’s future land use and transportation maps. In the NWACA area our challenge will be reconciling increased density/infill while retaining those aspects of our neighborhood that we value the most.

The Imagine Austin update will feature multiple phases of community outreach and engagement through 2026. The first phase

(community outreach) began this summer and will continue until the end of the year. At this point no community outreach activities have been planned for northwest Austin. It’s critical that this neighborhood be involved with the plan update. If we’re not at the table, we’ll be on the menu. NWACA intends to be an active participant in the plan update.

The City has published a new web page at <https://speakupaustin.org/imagineaustin> where you can learn more about Imagine Austin and the process to update the comprehensive plan.

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Meet NWACA Board President: Joyce Statz

By KEVIN KOTT
Northwest Austin Civic Association

This month our spotlight is on Joyce Statz, NWACA's president since 2020.

Kevin: Joyce, I'm aware that you are a long time Northwest Hills resident but, I'm curious about your earlier years.

Joyce: I'm originally from Minnesota, the eldest of 12 children, brought up on our dairy farm. We are a large family now totaling one hundred eight siblings plus spouses, children, grandchildren and great-grandsons. We meet twice annually in Minnesota - I am the only sibling living outside of Minnesota.

Kevin: What is your favorite memory from your days on the farm?

Joyce: I fondly remember the 12-foot long family dinner table with a bench on one side for the smaller kids. It was the centerpiece for daily meals as well as Christmas celebrations where Santa would magically leave piles of presents where each of us would usually sit.

Kevin: How did you find your way from the farm to being an IT professional?

Joyce: My major interests coming out of high school were mathematics and physics. I obtained a scholarship to a small Minnesota women's school, the College of St. Benedict, where I earned a BA in Mathematics with additional studies in physics and computer science. I followed that by attending Syracuse University which offered an integrated Systems and Information Science program with psychology, biology, math, and engineering combined into the degree. After my PhD from Syracuse and a five-year teaching job at Bowling Green State University in Ohio, I took a position at Texas Instruments in Austin, where I worked for 15 years as a Project Manager.

In the mid-90s TI moved its Austin software group to Plano. I wanted to stay in Austin, so with two partners we formed an independent software consulting company, TeraQuest Metrics. We spent the next 12 years working with US and foreign companies to establish operating standards for developing quality software products. We had 40 employees being sent around the world to work with our customers.

We eventually sold TeraQuest, leaving me with a two-year transition commitment with the buyer.

Kevin: I understand that you spent several years in both teaching and consulting assignments before retiring from paid work. However, you are certainly highly employed in your volunteer jobs which include NWACA, St Matthew's, The Food Pantry, Firewise evaluations, and others. How do you keep your energy up to meet all of these commitments?

Joyce: My energy rechargers include walking, when weather cooperates, and yoga, but my most special retreat is gardening. I really value Saturday mornings when I can play in the dirt! That's my fun thing!

Kevin: What are your goals for NWACA in the next few years?

Joyce: I'd like to see more involvement of community members in our activities. Attend our celebratory events - like Fourth of July and Earth Day Festival. Help organize National Night Out block parties. Get involved with our committees. Identify and tell us about activi-

ties we could be doing to benefit members. For example, we were not doing what has become an annual shredding event until residents suggested it. Volunteer involvement will make the NWACA neighborhood even more vibrant and satisfying.

Readers can see Joyce Statz bio details on the NWACA website by navigating to nwaca.org/board-of-directors/.



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Writer's Corner - A Prayer for Peace by Blue Lapis Light

By Idee Kwak



Austin has a symphony, a ballet, and an opera, the trifecta of performing arts which fewer than fifteen U.S. cities enjoy. These organizations offer excellent performances, but one of them has yet to rank in the nation's top 10. Austin however, has two performing arts organizations that set it apart in national ranking: Conspirare and Blue Lapis Light.

Austin's Blue Lapis Light, a site-specific dance company specializing in aerial arts, connects with our neighbors in a few ways: through dancer Sunny Shen, through benefactors and donors, and through the woman who served as the company's first board president.

Throughout the year Blue Lapis Light is commissioned to



perform on sites both in and outside of Austin, but in late summer/early fall, they create a performance for us here at home. These are enormously varied; each work is informed by the location for which it's designed. They've taken place down the face of the Bob Bullock Museum, across the steps and Great Walk of the State Capitol, over and through the ring outside the Long Center, down the sides and above the plaza of the Homer Thornberry and J.J. Pickle Federal Buildings, out of the waters of Town Lake and onto the Intake Building, around and across the stacks at Seaholm District Plaza, down two sides of the IBC Bank, and many other locations.

While Blue Lapis Light founder and director, Sally Jacques, has prepared performers for Cirque du Soleil, she considers dance to be her form of non-denominational prayer. Her work always imparts a heartfelt message. Do you remember the shell of the Intel Building? Blue Lapis Light wound through, across, up, and down the haunting abandonment of steel and cement in Requiem, a remembrance of the 230,000 people who died in the 2004 tsunami. By popular demand, the work was repeated twenty more times. It garnered Blue

Lapis Light's first of several rave reviews from The New York Times.

Blue Lapis Light's next performance will be September 18-22 and September 26-29 at a site that's very convenient for us: 5508 Parkcrest Drive, behind Chez Zee. The work is called A Prayer for Peace, which Sally Jacques describes as a poem in movement. "As our world lives in the shadow of chaos, we offer as dancers an experience of beauty, transcendence, and compassion."

A family-friendly event accompanied by live music, it starts at 8:30 PM and lasts about an hour. The first night, Wednesday, September 18, is community night with all tickets costing \$25. Tickets for the other eight nights are \$25-\$65.

Blue Lapis Light's A Prayer for Peace takes place at 8:30pm on September 18-22 & 26-29 at 5508 Parkcrest Drive.

For more information and tickets: <https://www.bluelapislight.org/a-prayer-for-peace/#tickets>

NWACA Special Projects Fund Inviting Applications

The Special Projects Fund was established by the NWACA Board to help fund projects that benefit the community and are open to the public. Any group or individual can apply for Special Projects funds, which are available because of the careful management of NWACA dues and donations.

Applications for a new round of project proposals will be accepted until September 30, 2024, and selected applicants will be encouraged to present their proposals at the October NWACA Board meeting. Ask questions or 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.



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\$404
MEDIAN SALE PRICE/SF



\$1,175,000
MEDIAN LIST PRICE



64
AVERAGE DAYS ON MARKET



28
CLOSED SALES

NORTHWEST
HILLS
AND
WESTOVER
HILLS



SOURCE: ABOR MLS INCLUDING DATA FROM JULY 1 - AUGUST 26, 2024 FOR SINGLE FAMILY HOMES. BASED ON NWACA BOUNDARIES: MOPAC/HWY360/2222/HWY 183

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Lisa Davis shares vision as new head of Austin Police Department

By **ANDREW WEBER**
KUT

City Council approved the nomination of the nearly 32-year law enforcement veteran, who comes to Austin from Cincinnati, to take the helm at APD.

Davis’ approval comes after a monthslong, national search. Davis worked her way up in her hometown police department over her career. She was named the sole finalist last week by City Manager T.C. Broadnax, and, on August 6, Council voted unanimously in support of her, with Council Member Mackenzie Kelly absent.

Davis takes the reins from retiring interim Chief Robin Henderson. Henderson served as chief for nearly a year after Chief Joseph Chacon retired last August. Broadnax thanked Henderson for her time leading the department.

Broadnax said Davis was the standout candidate who made a career out of using “evidence-based policing.”

Following the vote, Davis thanked Council members and the city manager for the chance to lead the department.

“Austin is now my home, and I feel very lucky to be here,” she said.

Davis comes to an understaffed department. For years, APD has had a staffing shortage in patrol positions: 371 as of June 30. APD is also in the middle of negotiations for a long-term labor contract with the city of Austin. Talks on that deal screeched to a halt last year after the city reached a tentative agreement and then balked. After that, the city’s police union walked away from the bargaining table.

Talks resumed this spring, and the union’s

president, Michael Bullock, told KUT at the first of August that both parties are circling a deal ahead of the city’s expected budget vote this month. So far, Bullock said he’s had good, albeit preliminary, talks with Davis on those crucial issues.

Davis said on August 6 she wanted officers to know she’d be available in the weeks and months to come, but also suggested winds may be changing at City Hall. In her meetings with the union and city officials, she said both parties seemed to be on the same page – and they both want to get a contract signed after years of back and forth.

“If the desire is there, it’s just about bringing them together. It’s doable. I think it’s just about looking at where we are and just coming together,” Davis said. “So, again, they’re both desiring that and when both of them want that, we can make it happen.”



City and union representatives told KUT they hope to get a deal done by the end of this month. Davis will next be sworn in and officially start in early September.

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

Multiple DWI, Theft , Harassment 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.	07/29/2024 2:37 PM 57XX BALCONES DR THEFT	08/06/2024 8:26 AM 38XX MOUNT BONNELL THEFT	08/08/2024 6:32 PM 71XX HART LN DWI	08/11/2024 5:16 PM 36XX NORTH HILLS FAMILY DISTURBANCE	08/16/2024 1:45 AM 72XX HART LN DWI	08/20/2024 12:16 PM 68XX WOOD HOLLOW HARASSMENT
07/13/2024 5:19 AM 53XX CAPITAL OF TEXAS HWY THEFT	07/29/2024 3:57 PM 68XX AUSTIN CENTER SEXUAL ASSAULT	08/06/2024 10:28 AM 66XX CAT CREEK TRL POSS OF DRUG PARAPHER- NALIA	08/09/2024 1:52 PM 53XX WESTERN HILLS CRIMINAL MISCHIEF	08/11/2024 6:33 PM 88XX TALLWOOD THEFT	08/16/2024 5:34 AM 80XX MESA DR THEFT	08/20/2024 5:50 PM 67XX LAKEWOOD DR THEFT
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07/26/2024 9:10 PM 67XX LAKEWOOD DR THEFT	07/31/2024 8:44 PM 35XX GREYSTONE DR FAMILY DISTURBANCE	08/07/2024 9:31 AM 35XX NORTH HILLS AUTO THEFT	08/10/2024 2:18 PM 71XX WOOD HOLLOW HARASSMENT	08/12/2024 4:19 PM 42XX FAR WEST BLVD THEFT	08/18/2024 6:15 PM 35XX FAR WEST BLVD THEFT OF LICENSE PLATE	08/23/2024 12:55 AM 68XX AUSTIN CENTER FAMILY DISTURBANCE
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07/28/2024 8:23 AM 58XX WESTSLOPE DR AUTO THEFT	08/01/2024 3:38 AM 35XX GREYSTONE FAMILY DISTURBANCE	08/07/2024 2:59 PM 67XX LAKEWOOD DR THEFT	08/10/2024 6:16 PM 88XX TALLWOOD HARASSMENT	08/13/2024 6:17 PM 52XX CAPITAL OF TEXAS HWY THEFT	08/19/2024 12:50 PM 79XX CAPITAL OF TEXAS HWY THEFT	08/23/2024 12:47 PM 88XX TALLWOOD HARASSMENT
07/29/2024 6:55 AM 34XX NORTH HILLS AUTO THEFT	08/01/2024 4:07 AM 62XX CAPITAL OF TEXAS HWY CRIMINAL MISCHIEF	08/07/2024 5:13 PM 68XX AUSTIN CENTER BLVD ASSAULT BY THREAT	08/11/2024 6:25 AM 81XX CAPITAL OF TEXAS HWY THEFT	08/13/2024 9:05 PM 35XX FAR WEST BLVD DWI	08/19/2024 6:46 PM 84XX CAPITAL OF TEXAS HWY ASSAULT	08/23/2024 9:55 PM 34XX NORTH HILLS FAMILY DISTURBANCE
07/29/2024 11:02 AM 53XX OLD SPICEWOOD SPRINGS AUTO THEFT	08/01/2024 2:43 PM 55XX BALCONES DR SHOPLIFTING	08/07/2024 10:32 PM 80XX MESA DR AUTO THEFT	08/11/2024 9:52 AM 44XX SPICEWOOD SPRINGS THEFT	08/14/2024 2:53 PM 54XX SPICEWOOD SPRINGS HARASSMENT	08/19/2024 10:00 PM 72XX HART LN HARASSMENT	<i>Madison Pharis compiled this report mostly from SpotCrime at www.spotcrime.com and also from CrimeReports.</i>
07/29/2024 2:26 PM 78XX CAPITAL OF TEXAS HWY THEFT	08/02/2024 1:39 PM 54XX BALCONES THEFT OF SERVICE	08/08/2024 9:53 AM 57XX BALCONES DR BURGLARY	08/11/2024 8:59 AM 58XX MESA DR BURGLARY	08/14/2024 3:08 PM 94XX RESEARCH BLVD CRIMINAL MISCHIEF	08/19/2024 10:43 PM 72XX WOOD HOLLOW DR FAMILY DISTURBANCE	
	08/03/2024 3:56 PM 67XX LAKEWOOD THEFT	08/08/2024 2:21 PM 39XX PETRA PATH TERRORISTIC THREAT	08/11/2024 2:54 PM 38XX MOUNT BONNELL THEFT	08/15/2024 11:39 AM 39XX SIDEHILL PATH THEFT OF LICENSE PLATE	08/20/2024 11:39 AM 41XX FAR WEST BLVD DEBIT CARD ABUSE	

Saving Bull Creek's Pleasant Valley School

By RICHARD DENNEY
Northwest Austin Civic Association

In the 19th and early 20th century two schools served the residents of the valley of Bull Creek. One, Oak Grove School, started ca. 1864, was located on what is today Old Lampasas Trail, then relocated near today's Oak Grove Cemetery. That building is gone. Another, Bull Creek School, later renamed Pleasant Valley School, was at what is today the intersection of FM 2222 and Loop 360.

The Defender 1936, a book about Travis County rural schools published in 1936 for the Texas' centennial, provides some history of the school; brackets are mine:

"The first school at Pleasant Valley was established sixty-nine years ago [1867]. It was a private school in a log house on the old Walden place. This was during the time when Indians were prevalent ... Three years later there was a public school built on what is known [in 1936] as the School Flat. The land, about one and one-half acres, was given by Ewan Williams. The first trustees were Hugh Walden [of Walden's mill], Ewan Williams and Fendrick Smith. This school burned in 1885. After some dispute over land titles, the building was rebuilt, but it [too] burned in 1931. It was re-built the following year [1932] ... It was during that year that the school was standardized."

Pleasant Valley was a two-room school. The school would later



be closed as part of the consolidation of the community into Austin ISD. When the school district closed the building, the location reverted to Mrs. C.C. Champion (see various NWACA articles about the Champion and Walden families) as provided for in the original deed for the school. Fast forward to the late 1960s / 1970s and Loop 360 was being constructed. Rather than demolish the school building, it was moved east about 1000 feet

along the west bank of Bull Creek, largely hidden from sight, but close to Austin Fire Station 31 and County Line on the Lake. The Champion family rented the building to a gentleman who has resided there for several decades.

This year, that location bounded by Loop 360, 2222 and Bull Creek has been zoned for development of a hotel / resort; the Champion family has already sold the property to the developer. As this is the last of the "Cedar Chopper" aka "mountain schools" in this part of Travis County, the Travis County Historical Commission (TCHC) has been working with both the Champion family and the developer to preserve the building.

Travis County Commissioner Ann Howard, who has a special interest in old schools, expressed interest in helping preserve the building. In March of this year TCHC and Lucy Oglesby, Director of Constituent Services and Communications for Commissioner Howard, met with the developer at the school to discuss several options for preserving the school. That is where it currently stands; the developer seems willing to help with preservation, but the wheels of decision-making move slowly. Stay tuned.

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

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Austin ISD asks voters to approve a new tax rate for pay raises, deficit reduction

By BECKY FOGEL
KUT

The Austin ISD school board is asking voters to approve a higher property tax rate in November that would increase the district's revenue by tens of millions of dollars. That money would be used to give more than 60 percent of employees a raise and reduce the district's budget deficit to \$78 million. Austin ISD officials have said the main reason the district has a deficit is because state funding for public schools has not kept up with inflation.

Trustees voted 8-1 on August 19 to call what's officially known as a voter approval tax rate election (VATRE) to get permission from voters to raise the tax rate beyond what the state says it should be.

School Board Vice President Kevin Foster was the lone dissenter. He said Texas has a budget surplus but "systematically starves public education."

Foster pointed out that a successful VATRE would generate about \$171 million in new revenue for Austin ISD, but the district would keep only \$41 million. The rest would be subject to recapture, also known as the Robin Hood program, which was set up to send what the state considers excess revenue from property-wealthy districts to those with low property values.

"When we vote for this tax rate election, what we are voting to do is to fill the coffers of the state to do things that don't serve us," Foster said.

Other trustees said while they understood Foster's stance, Austin ISD needs financial help and fast. The district is currently staring down a \$119 million deficit without a tax rate increase or other budget cuts officials plan on making.

"I'll be voting in favor of (the VATRE) for a lot of the same reasons you're voting against it – that we have a state that is choosing to starve our public schools in a city that deeply values our public schools," Board Secretary Lynn Boswell told Foster.

Trustee David Kauffman said he also supports the tax rate increase but thinks it is important that the public ultimately decides whether to approve it.

"What I'm voting for today is an election to allow our voters in Austin to make that decision," he said. "I've heard from enough people who oppose and I've heard from enough people who are in favor, to tell me that this is something that is, thankfully, a direct vote of our community."

How large is the tax rate increase?

The Austin ISD school board is asking voters to increase the tax rate by 9.1 cents, from nearly \$0.86 to \$0.95 per \$100 of a home's taxable value. District officials said this would mean that the owner of a home worth \$553,493 would see their property taxes increase by an additional \$34 per month.

According to the district, homeowners who have property tax exemptions because they're 65 and older or have disabilities will not be affected by the tax rate increase.

Average Value Home in Austin ISD

	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25	FY 2024-25 with VATRE
Average Home Taxable Value	\$518,021	\$553,493	\$553,493
Homestead Exemption	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
AISD Tax Rate per \$100 value	\$0.8595	\$0.8595	\$0.9505
Estimated Taxes to AISD	\$3,593	\$3,898	\$4,310
Change from prior year		\$305	\$717
Change between VATRE			\$412

School Board President Arati Singh underscored that Austin ISD will also make budget cuts and not just rely on property owners to shoulder the burden of the deficit. She said if the VATRE is successful, the district plans to cut \$2 from the budget for every \$1 it gets in revenue from the higher tax rate.

Pay increases for staff

If voters approve a new tax rate on Nov. 5, Austin ISD plans to use more than \$17 million of that new revenue to increase pay for about 6,500 employees. If the VATRE fails, Austin ISD staff will get one-time incentive payments of \$500 for full-time employees and \$250 for part-time ones.

Members of Education Austin, a union representing Austin ISD employees, attended Monday's meeting to show support for the VATRE. The group's president, Ken Zarifis, said the Texas Legislature's inaction on increasing funding for public schools has forced Austin ISD into this position.

"We must, regardless of what this state does or doesn't do in this (upcoming) legislative session, we as a community must come together and say we love our schools, we love our kids," he said.

AISD special education teacher Karen Reyes, who is part of Education Austin, said it was important to her to attend the meeting and advocate for the VATRE.

"At the core of this is: 'Do we trust our communities to take care of us like we take care of their students?' I do," Reyes said. "Because I firmly believe that the people of Austin, who have

always had our back, know that this isn't just us asking for money for frivolous things."

Austin ISD parent Margarita Acuña Mintzer has two children in elementary school and said teachers are counting on voters to support the VATRE.

"Go home, ask your children, 'How much do you think your teacher deserves as a raise?' And I'm telling you they will give you the biggest number they can possibly find," she said. "It's time for the adults to do the right thing for our children."

Other districts are in the same boat

Manor ISD trustees also voted to put a VATRE on the Nov. 5 ballot. That district is facing a nearly \$21 million budget deficit. Last year, Pflugerville ISD and Lockhart ISD asked voters to approve new tax rates to help fund employee raises and cover costs. According to the Texas Association of Schools Boards, more than 50 school districts statewide called a VATRE in 2023.

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



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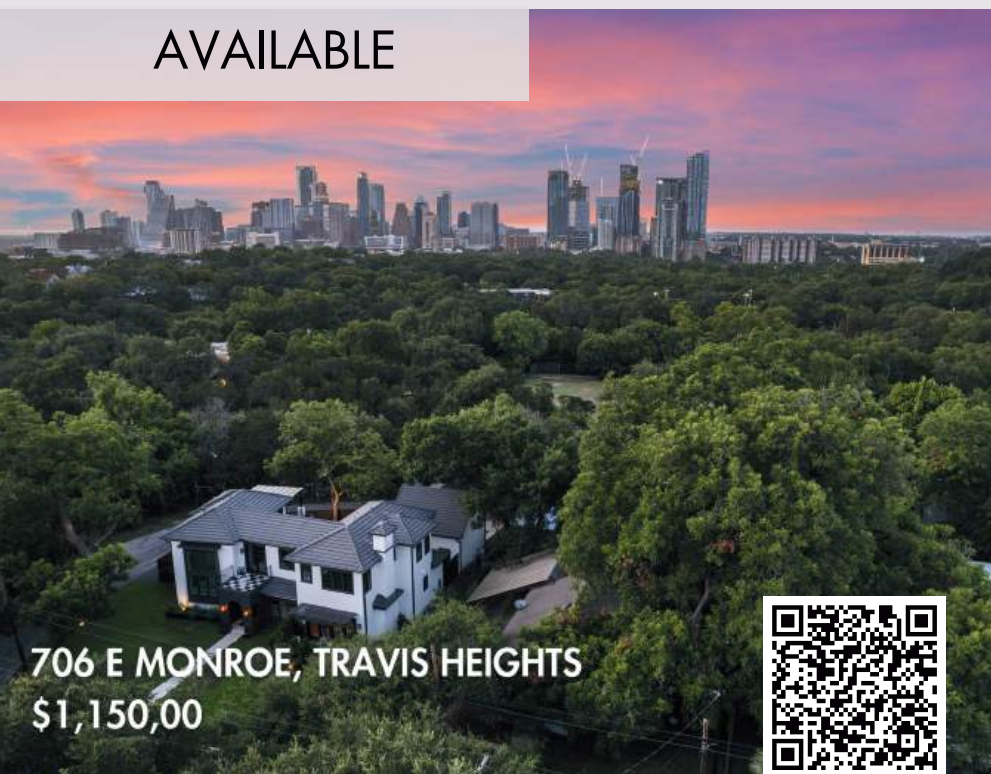
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Proprietor Shares About Inspiration Behind Gracia Mediterranean

Proprietor Cameron Lockley was inspired to open Gracia Mediterranean after he traveled the world. Now he and his team bring a sampling of big flavors and coastal European vibes to this quaint neighborhood restaurant.



1) What was the inspiration behind Gracia Mediterranean and when did it open?

After graduating from UT McCombs, Cameron Lockley spent the summer before starting work at Deloitte & Touche traveling the Mediterranean, backpacking through Greece, Italy, France, and Spain. Later, Cameron got his start in the hospitality industry working at his cousin's restaurant Catalan Food & Wine Bar in Houston when Chris Sheppard, future James Beard award winning chef, was spearheading the kitchen. His travels around the Mediterranean and his experience working with Spanish cuisine both inspired the concept of Gràcia, which is Catalan for "grace" – simple elegance. The tapas style menu is both Spanish and seafood forward while embracing ingredients and flavors from around the Mediterranean.

2) How did you pick the location and what's the vibe?

The location picked us! Cameron had been interested in the location previously when the owner of former tenant Apothecary approached him about taking over when he moved to New York. While the timing wasn't right then, he jumped on the location in 2022 when it became available again. Cameron engaged longtime confidant and architect-designer Robert Smith who incorporated hand made textiles and an earthen and oceanic color palette reminiscent of cities from Barcelona to Tel Aviv.

3) What is the best part of running a restaurant?

Running a restaurant brings so many joys – from celebrating special occasions with our patrons to facilitating neighborly dinners on

any given night of the week. We hire and promote within a concept of genuine hospitality. Our team members get excited about the food, wine, cocktails, and experiences that our guests get to enjoy.

4) What are the crowd favorites on the menu?

Everything that Executive Chef Jason Talent and Chef de Cuisine Austin Ward prepares is done so with a great deal of thoughtfulness and intention. Our rotating selection of fresh oysters with signature mignonette are a must to start with. Regulars love the fresh chickpea hummus and house made flatbread, crispy potatoes with bravas sauce, jumbo scallops with truffle butter, lamb chops with salmoriglio, and the chocolate budino with espresso whip. The fun of tapas style dining is getting to try many different things and sharing at the table. Service Manager Cody Vacante's cocktail program is as creative and tasty as anywhere in town.

5) What are your goals at Gracia?

We want to be a place for our neighbors in

Northwest Austin and the surrounding area to enjoy great food, great wine, great cocktails, and feel welcomed and taken care of while with us.



Cameron Lockley



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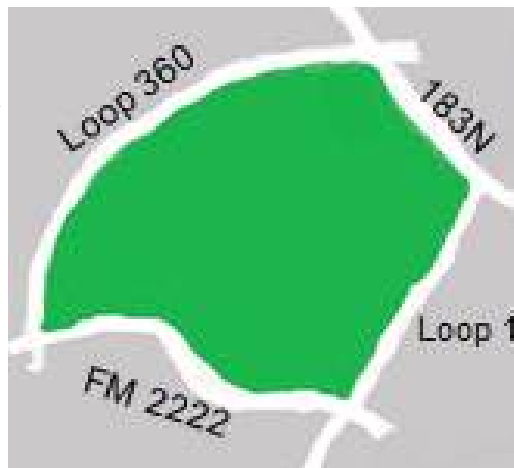
Key Contacts

Austin Citywide Information Center	512-974-2000 or 311
Emergency, Police	911
Non-emergency (coyote sightings, compliance issues)	311
APD District Representative Officer, Phillip Sparkman	phillip.sparkman@austintexas.gov
Austin Police Department Crime Report, internet search	APD Chief's Monthly Reports
District 10 Councilmember, Alison Alter	512-974-2110
To get the District 10 monthly newsletter	bit.ly/d10newsletters
Northwest Austin News Publisher	512-483-1708
	Lynette@FourPointsNews.com
Northwest Austin News Co-Editors	Joyce Statz and Dana Winer

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.



2024 – 2026 NWACA Board of Directors

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Vice President – Vicki DeWeese

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Co-Secretaries – Julie Waidelich, Dana Winer

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| • Jessica Forrest | • Mae Levitan | • Emmy Ward |
| • Mike Harrell | • 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 third 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 May 16 and August 19, 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.

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| • Johanna Brown | • Pam Reznick |
| • Ingrid Schmidt-Hennigan | • Patricia Bush Tippie |
| • Gayle and Terry Hight | • (and, apologies to anyone whose donation we might have missed!) |
| • Atis and Diane Jurbergs | |

MEMBERSHIP FORM

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



Annual dues \$25

Optional Contributions:

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

To join:

go to www.nwaca.org and pay online via credit card
or send this form and payment to:
NWACA P.O. Box 26654, Austin, TX 78755

Volunteer!

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

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

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

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



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

Mark Your Calendars

These events are as planned as of August 22. As you consider participating in one of the events listed, please check first with the organizer.

September 1

Registration opens for October 5th Neighborhood Garage Sales
(for NWACA Members)

September 15, afternoon or evening

NWACA Neighborhood National Night Out Parties
Throughout the neighborhood

September 17, 7 PM

Parks Committee – virtual

September 18, 6:30 - 8:30 PM

NWACA Board Meeting – Dell Jewish Community Center
Friedel Board Room

September 21, 8 to 11 AM

Monthly cleanup at Bull Creek District Park
Sign up at <https://www.givepulse.com/event/dates/429602>

September 24, 5 PM

NWACA Zoning and Transportation Committees – virtual

September 30

Registration Closes for October 5th Neighborhood Garage Sales

September 30

Applications due for Special Projects Funding

October 5, 8 AM to Noon

NWACA Neighborhood Garage Sales
(hosted by NWACA Members)
Throughout the neighborhood

October 9, 6:00 – 8:30 PM

Election Forum for Mayor and City Council District 10
ST. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Huffman Hall
Parking at 4121 Steck Avenue

October 15, 7 PM

Parks Committee – virtual

October 16, 6:30 - 8:30 PM

NWACA Board Meeting – Dell Jewish Community Center
Friedel Board Room

October 19, 8-11 AM

Monthly cleanup at Bull Creek District Park
Sign up at <https://www.givepulse.com/event/dates/429602>

October 19, Noon to 2 PM

Electronics Recycling Event for NWACA members
St. Matthew's Episcopal Church Parking Lot
8134 Mesa Drive

October 22, 5 PM

NWACA Zoning and Transportation Committees – virtual

NWACA Sponsored Garage Sales October 5

NWACA Board

This year's NWACA-sponsored neighborhood garage sales will be held on Saturday, October 5 from 8 am to 12 noon. The event is for sellers who are NWACA members only, so if you're not a member and want to hold a sale promoted by NWACA, please go to www.nwaca.org to join today! Participation is easy: you sell things in your garage and keep all the proceeds; NWACA

does 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. Neighborhood sales locations will be posted on the NWACA web site; notices will appear in NWACA Notes, on Craigslist, on the NWACA Facebook page, on NextDoor, and on

Instagram. NWACA provides participants with yard signs, as well as deploying signs around the neighborhood saying that the sales are underway. In past years, as many as 50 homes have held sales; the more underway, the more customers will come to the neighborhood.

Good luck as you clean out your closets! The old adage "one person's junk is another person's treasure" definitely applies.

Collection Event October 19: Electronics, Styrofoam, Etc.

By JOANIE ARROTT
Northwest Austin Civic Association

Gather up your outdated computer monitors, old microwaves, iPhone3s, and blown-out stereo equipment. On Saturday, October 19 from 2 to 4 p.m., the St. Matthew's Episcopal Church Mesa Drive parking lot will be the site of the Northwest Austin Civic Association's (NWACA) Electronics Collection event. We'll be collecting old electronics, Styrofoam, bathroom supplies - toothbrushes, empty toothpaste tubes, used razors, and dental floss containers.

Collected electronics and Styrofoam will be taken to the City's Reuse and Recycle Drop-Off Center. Bathroom supplies will go to TerraCycle. This event is open to NWACA members

only. If you're not a member, you can join at the event for \$25.

We will accept:

- Used electronics such as computers and related supplies, printers, batteries, cameras, phones, LCD televisions, routers, stereo equipment, microwave ovens, and small refrigerators; all consumer electronic devices and appliances
- Clean Styrofoam blocks, egg cartons, cups, and containers
- Used toothpaste tubes and floss containers
- Used disposable razors, replaceable-blade cartridge units, and razor plastic packaging

We will not accept:

- Rear-projection TVs or those with wood-

- en frames
- Dirty Styrofoam food or drink containers – please put those in the regular trash
- Packing peanuts or plastic foam
- Household hazardous wastes including used oil, paint, light bulbs, or chemicals; keep the oil and paint for our spring recycling collection

We're always looking for volunteers for our collection events. We need people to corral the cars, unload vehicles, load the collection truck, and assist with separating the collected materials. If you're looking for a great opportunity to help serve your neighborhood, meet your neighbors, and protect the environment, come join us! Any questions or volunteer sign-up can be sent to info@nwaca.org.

What Happens to Plastic Bags

By MERRIESSA ANTON
Northwest Austin Civic Association

Many wonder what happens to the plastic bags they drop in the recycle bin at the H-E-B entrance. Since that was an interesting question, while I was shopping, I stopped and asked a manager. He sent me to someone at the corporate office who answered my question. They said the plastic collected at the front of the store is combined with plastic collected throughout the store and recycled. Customers can place clean plastic bags, such as retail shopping bags, produce bags, bread bags, dry cleaning bags, newspaper bags, and plastic overwrap for items such as paper towels and toilet paper in the recycle bin. Last year H-E-B collected 2.3 million pounds of plastic from customers using these bins.

H-E-B sells all the plastic from its operations to a company that turns the plastic into composite decking and railing material. I understand that Central Market North used this decking material for its outdoor deck. In addition, H-E-B has created a new product, Field and Future trash bags. These bags are made from up to 65 percent post-consumer recycled plastic collected from H-E-B stores and facilities.

Why bring our (clean) plastic bags with us when we shop and dispose of them in the plastic collection bin? Placing your plastic bags in your regular recycling container (blue bin) creates big problems for the machinery used at Austin Resource Recovery. It is the primary source of contamination, and it often gets caught in the machinery, causing it to shut down. Please do not bag your recyclables in plastic bags, and do not throw plastic bags of any type into the

recycle bin. Take clean plastic bags you don't need to the grocery store, or to the dry-cleaning shops in Austin which collect clean plastic. If the plastic bags are soiled, put them into your regular trash container. Consider reusing plastic bags. If your child has a sandwich in their lunch box in a zip lock bag, can you clean and use that bag again for another sandwich or perhaps for sandwiches all week?

Single use produce bags are easy to recycle, but they require energy to produce. Paper bags are biodegradable, but they take even more energy to produce and use more water to manufacture. The most eco-friendly produce bags are mesh bags that you can purchase and bring with you when you shop. They do cost more money to produce and purchase, but they can last 5 to 10 years. Watch for events where Austin Resource Recovery hands out free ones, too!

Don't Feed the Wildlife

By NWACA Tree, Wildlife, and Environment Committee

Recently, neighbors reported seeing a young boy holding out food to a deer in his yard, attempting to get the animal to eat out of his hand. This is a rather dangerous practice for both the boy and the deer. An animal may seem tame, but it can easily be spooked by quick movements or noise, so its behavior is unpredictable. The safety of the animal is

at risk, too. If the deer becomes too tame, it's more vulnerable to traffic and predators in our neighborhood.

The same advice applies to feeding of any wildlife. While well-intentioned individuals feed wildlife out of concern for the wildlife they are feeding, intentional and unintentional feeding attracts predators to the wildlife being fed. Additionally, an association with humans and food contributes directly to habituated behavior

of animals like raccoons, coyotes, and feral hogs, which then become aggressive in pursuit of a food or prey attractant. Please eliminate food attractants from your yards for the safe enjoyment of our streets, parks, and playgrounds for the benefit of neighbors and pets.

NWACA advises residents to NOT feed wildlife. Help Keep our Wildlife Wild!

September Happenings at Northwest Austin Public Libraries

By MARTHA MILLER

September 1 and 2, all Austin Public Library locations will be closed for Labor Day!

Some September events at locations near Northwest Hills:

Tuesday, September 3 Get Crafty! (Howson branch 6:15-7:45pm) Learn a new craft, ages 5+

Tuesday, September 3 Mystery Book Club (Spicewood branch 6:30 – 7:30pm) Dis-

cussing "The 6:20 Man"

Wednesdays Gentle Yoga and Sound Bath Meditation (Howson branch 4-5:30pm) Open to all fitness levels, ages 18+

Thursday September 12 Tech Savvy Seniors (North Village Branch 2-4pm) - Online resources tips like Libby and Hoopla

Friday, September 13 Adult Morning Social (Yarbrough branch 10am – 12pm) Join neighbors and make new friends

Sunday, September 15 Mending Circle (Spicewood Springs branch noon-2pm) Mending and repairing well-loved clothes and textiles, ages 18+

Tuesday, September 17 Café au Lit Book Club (North Village Branch 6-7:30pm) - Join fellow book lovers for coffee and conversation about what you're reading and what to add to your list, ages 18+

Wednesdays, September 18 & 25 Free ESL Classes (Spicewood Springs branch 6-7:30pm) Learn and improve your English language skills, ages 18+

Friday, September 20 Chair Yoga (Yarbrough branch 10:30 – 11:30am) ages 18+

Thursday, September 26 Howson Book Club (Howson branch, 6:30 – 7:45pm) This month's selection is "Still Life" by Louise Penny, ages 18+

Thursday, September 26 Yoga with Tracy (Spicewood Springs branch 9-10am) Bring a thin yoga mat or library will have a few to share, ages 18+

Saturday, September 28 Bullet Journal & Planner Social (Yarbrough branch 11am – noon) Bring your own planner or get started with one of our basic journals. Craft supplies, sample calendars, tracking sheets, and pens provided, teens and adults welcome

Guinea Paper Wasps are Beneficials

By WIZZIE BROWN

Texas AgriLife Extension Service

It is possible to see Guinea paper wasps year-round in Texas, depending on the temperatures. Although they may sting, they do provide some benefits.

Paper wasps make a nest out of chewed wood fiber collected from plant stems, fences, or other wooden structures. The nest is usually a single layer of cells, open faced, and hangs from a single filament. The nest is typically constructed under the eaves of homes, in shrubbery, mailboxes or on fences.

Colonies have three castes: queen, worker, and males. Workers typically live about 15 days while queens can live up to 3 months. Males are produced when needed for mating. There is little to distinguish between queen and worker, and workers can take over egg laying duties if the queen leaves to establish a satellite nest or dies. Satellite nests help to ensure colony survival if the original nest is parasitized or predated upon. Older workers may also establish satellite colonies as they have more developed ovaries, and once mated, can begin to lay eggs.

Paper wasps are beneficial not only as pollinators, but as predators. They hunt

caterpillars to feed their young.

While Guinea wasps are unaggressive away from the nest, they will defend their home and offspring. If the nest is in an area where a stinging incidence is unlikely, leave it alone to allow the wasps to benefit your garden. If the nest is built in an area where people or companion animals may get stung- in a mailbox, on playground equipment, etc.- then it is recommended to manage the wasps and then remove



the nest.

Early in the season, when nests are just being started by founding females, it may be possible to discourage paper wasps to nest in a certain area by knocking down the nest repeatedly. This is not recommended when the nest is larger and contains multiple wasps.

Aerosol formulations- both synthetic and naturally derived- are available for paper wasp management. The nest should be treated either in the early morning or late evening to ensure that wasps are not out foraging for food. Use caution when treating paper wasp nests. Not only are

you using pesticides, but you are dealing with insects that can sting repeatedly. After all wasps are gone, knock down the nest, squish it, and throw it away. You may want to clean the area where the nest was hanging to rid the area of any pheromones that could attract new wasps to the area.

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at ebrown@ag.tamu.edu.

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Anderson High School Trojan boys and girls tennis teams 2024-2025.

AHS TROJAN TENNIS Q&A ON PAGE 21

FALL
SCHEDULE

2024

Anderson Trojan Tennis Varsity Schedule

 Leander 8/16	 Dripping Springs 9/3
 Buda Johnson 8/23	 Vista Ridge 9/10
 Georgetown 8/27	 LASA 9/13
 McCallum 8/30	 Bastrop 9/20

GOLD  = HOME GAMES

ANDERSON
TROJAN TENNIS

2024-2025 VARSITY TENNIS ROSTER

Varsity Girls	Varsity Boys
Mia V.	Ian B.
Amelie K.	Keshav G.
Rachael P.	Thomas N.
Vivian F.	Avery A.
Gillian K.	Cole N.
Nelly K.	Josh H.
Sydney N.	Tyler S.
Lily S.	Ian P.
Emmy W.	Hudson T.
Emi B.	Morgan W.
	Ayden N.
	Liam K.
	Aviv C.



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- Anderson High School Tennis Booster
- Community First Village
- AusTIN CANs Anderson Robotics
- The SAFE Alliance
- Foundation Communities
- Austin Habitat for Humanity

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COMPASS



Anderson Trojan Volleyball Team 2024

AHS Varsity Volleyball Roster, Grade

Sylvan Block, Mgr. 12
Chloe Frizzell 9
Piper Poage 10
Bailey Santos 11
Kate Leakey 11
Brooklyn Vazquez 11
Izzy Orozco 11
Claire Nix 12

Marlee Whitford 12
Norah Crosier 12
Ava Pandya 12
Josie Ostryniec 12
Skye Stanford 12
Parker Duncan 12
Addison Richards 12
Lilly Hutchison 12



Anderson Trojan Volleyball Class of 2025. Photo by Stephanie Duncan



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**RIGHT: Parker Duncan made the
All Tournament Team as senior out-
side hitter.**

Volleyball Q&A

Shalanda Byers
Head Anderson
Volleyball Coach

1) What are your team's strengths and concerns as you head into the season?

This year the strengths for the team are that they are very supportive of each other and work very hard to be successful and compete.

2) Is a team already predicted to win district? How does your team stack up against them?

We are predicted to finish second in district our goal is to finish 1st. to finish 1st.

3) What are some key strategies for you this season?

We are focused and working on staying consistent in all aspects of the game.

4) Any up and coming stars that we should know about?

Anderson Lady Trojan volleyball program is a large group of STARS!! There do have an athlete that stands out in the crowd and that is Parker Duncan. She has already committed to play D1 volleyball at the University of Arkansa.

5) Tell us one thing many don't know about you as a coach and/or one thing about your team.

Anderson Lady Trojan Volleyball has and is a huge part of who I am and I enjoy every minute that I get to spend with the coaching staff as well as the Athletes.

Anderson Lady Trojan Volleyball 2024 - 2025

8/12 @ Round Rock	10/1 vs Bastrop
8/13 vs Stony Point	10/4 @ Navarro
8/15-17 AISD Tournament	10/8 @ LASA
8/21-24 @ Sinton Tournament	10/11 vs Crockett
8/27 vs Cedar Park	10/15 @ Cedar Creek
8/30 @ Bowie	10/18 @ McCallum
9/3 vs Buda Johnson	10/22 vs Ann Richards
9/6 vs San Marcos	10/25 @ Bastrop
9/10 @ Westlake	10/29 vs Navarro
9/13 vs Lasa	11/4-5 Bi -District
9/17 @ Crockett	11/7-9 Area
9/20 vs Cedar Creek	11/15-16 Regionals
9/24 vs McCallum	11/20-23 State
9/27 @ Ann Richards	

Tennis Q&A

Amy McCampbell
Head Anderson
Tennis Coach

1) What are your team's strengths and concerns as you head into the season?

We have an experienced team with 8 seniors paving the way for what is already starting to show as a promising season. It's certainly a huge loss to not have Coach Martin with the team after dedicating 12 years to the program, but we hope to continue making progress and growing in the sport and working together as a team.

2) Is a team already predicted to win district? How does your team stack up against them?

This year the Anderson Trojans moved from 6A to 5A so I do believe that gives us an opportunity to have a strong showing at district. We would love to bring home a district win, but we'll have to wait and see. There's lots of tough competition!

3) What are some key strategies for you this season?

We are approaching our practices with intention in everything we do, fitness, mental preparation, and on the court training. It's important that we eliminate going through any type of motion without a purpose. Having a high first serve percentage, returning deep and to corners, and playing to our strengths while minimizing the opportunity for our competitors to use theirs will be a consistent theme in our style of play.

4) Any up and coming stars that we should know about?

Ian Balachandran and Avery Allen are a powerhouse doubles team and so fun to watch compete. Ian is a very talented singles player. On the girls side we are deep in play all the

way through our singles line-up from Varsity to JV. I'm looking forward to seeing the girls elevate each other's play through healthy team competition.

5) Tell us about yourself and how you became the Anderson tennis coach.

I grew up playing tennis in Georgia. I played at a high school that has one the state title approximately two dozen times. I loved playing tennis competitively at the state, section, and national level through juniors and was fortunate to take tennis to the collegiate level at Louisiana State University. Immediately after college I put my sticks away for a decade and focused on my career. I worked at PepsiCo during that time and was provided incredible career opportunities. After having my two boys in my thirties I set off to do something with more meaning behind my work. Having been in Austin, working in technology seemed like the appropriate next step, specifically I worked in Education Technology. I also started playing tennis again and found myself competing back at the Intersectional and National level for fun. After experiencing so much joy teaching tennis to several kids in my community I knew I wanted to find an opportunity to work more with our youth. I explored substitute teaching and was quickly recruited to teach math at Murchison Middle School while going through my certification program to teach middle school and high school math. I've been teaching for the last 8 years, coaching tennis at Murchison for the last 3 years, and this is my first full year coaching tennis at Anderson.

6) Is there something about the team that would be interesting to share with the community?

It takes a village to coach a year-round sport like tennis. The Trojan tennis team never shies away from helping our program be the best it can be. One of my favorite characteristics of this team is our sportsmanship. They are supportive of one another, respectful of their opponents, humble with their successes, and very welcoming to their new coach. We would love for you to come out and support us and see for yourself!



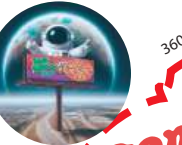
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Band Q&A

Frank Nedley
Anderson HS
Director of Bands

1) What is your history with Anderson Trojan Band?

This is my first year as Director of Bands at Anderson High School, I have been the Assistant Band Director and Percussion Director at Anderson since 2012.

2) What is the show of the Anderson marching band this season? Why was this show picked?

Our competitive show this year is "The Maze", with music by Pat Metheny, Imogen Heap, Ivan Trevino, and from the movies Pan's Labyrinth and Harry Potter. We decided on this show because it is a clear concept for our students to convey to our audience. The band plays the part of "The Maze" throughout the show, and the color guard does their best to

escape the maze.

3) How many Trojans are in the marching band this 2024 season? Give us a glimpse of what it takes to get everyone on their mark on the field while playing their instruments or twirling their flag?

We have 166 members in the Trojan Band and Color Guard. The work for this season began in May when we passed out the first pages of music for our show. We have been rehearsing as a full group since the last week of July.

4) Will you be implementing any big changes with the band this season or what can the community expect?

An exciting change for the Trojan Band, as well as our community is the new Pep Show that we will be playing at our first few football games. Our Pep Show features music from the movie musical "The Greatest Showman". It will be exciting for our halftime audience to hear music that they recognize and connect with, before unveiling our competitive show in September.

5) What are your goals for the band this season?

Our primary goal is for the Anderson Trojan Band to radiate positivity, our fundraising efforts this year have been focused on raising money to enhance our student's experience. We have planned more social events for our students, as well as potential future trips. All of this with the intention to grow our program in numbers, and success. We also have a fantastic show designed this year, and believe we can be competitive throughout the season.

6) What are some of your upcoming events so the community can come and support the Anderson HS band?

We will be unveiling "The Maze" to the public on September 17 at the AISD Band Jam-boree, at the Burger Center. Our first competition this year will be the Cap City Marching Festival on September 28, also at the Burger Center.

Photos are of Anderson Trojan band techs at band camp in mid August. They work with sections to hone their techniques and reinforce what the directors teach.



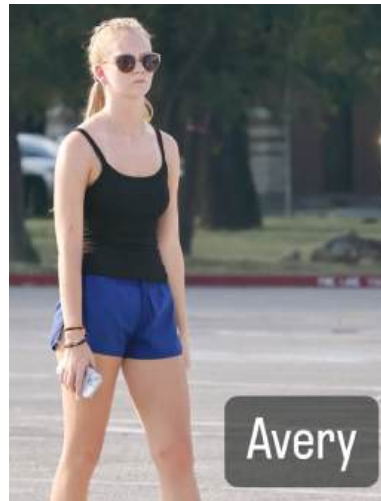
Brady



Ian



Luke



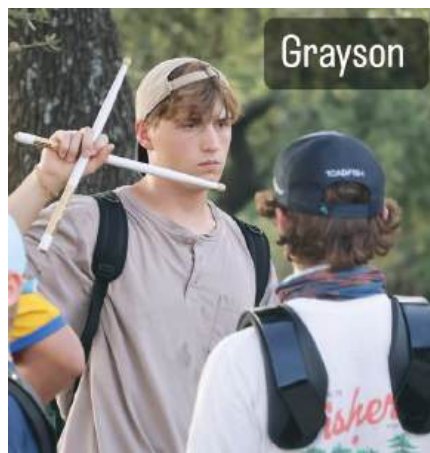
Avery



Mikey



Gabe



Grayson



Aubree Josh Ben



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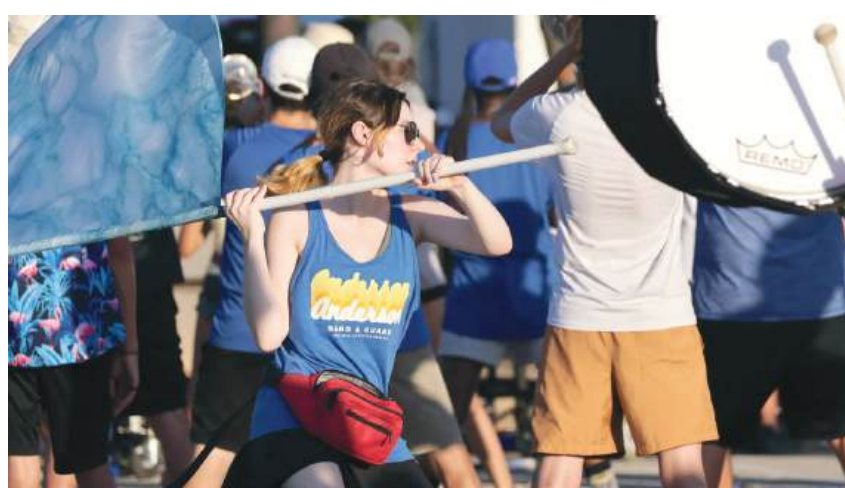
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