

# Northwest Austin News

SERVING THE NORTHWEST AUSTIN CIVIC ASSOCIATION COMMUNITY

Volume 16, Issue 9

October 2025

## Celebrate Fall in the Northwest Austin Civic Association Area

By NWACA BOARD

Northwest Austin Civic Association

Retail store displays have alerted us for some time - it's Halloween season! Here in the NWACA neighborhood, that's true as well. Neighbors are starting to put up their decorations, and voting for the winners in our annual Halloween Decorating Contest will be

done during the week of October 13th. To be able to get photos of those winners in next month's newsletter, winners will be selected by October 19th. We look forward to seeing dramatic displays!

Other things for your October calendar include:

- Put together a block party for your near-

by neighbors, to celebrate National Night Out - you can pick any day, and there's a financial incentive for you! See the article about block parties in this issue for details.

October 16th, 7:00 - 8:15 p.m. Join neighbors from NWACA and surrounding neighborhoods for a virtual forum on



NWACA BOARD, 2

## Teacher Extraordinaire Betty Wood Helped Open AHS

By PJ Pierce, 80+ Historical Project

Betty Wood had lived in ten countries before she and her family moved to Austin and into their chosen neighborhood of Northwest Hills. That was 53 years ago. Their first home in the neighborhood was on North Hills Drive, a short walk to Doss Elementary and Murchison where her children, Monica and Ron, went to school. Later Betty and her second husband moved to Paint Rock Drive, where she has lived for 36 years.

During her nine decades and two years on the planet, she has traveled to 82 countries. But she's adamant that "Northwest Hills is home!" It's where she raised her children, buried two husbands, and taught Business and then English at Anderson High School. She was part of the first faculty when the new school opened in 1973.

Betty was honored as "Teacher of the Year" more than once at Anderson High School. To top that off, she was runner-up for the honor in Austin ISD one year. She retired in 1991 and still gets together regularly with a group of former Anderson teachers. "We have decided that I must be the oldest Anderson High School faculty member still living!" Betty said.

One wall in her kitchen features framed works by well-known artist Amado Pena. "Amado and I were on the faculty together at Anderson. He was the art teacher," Betty said. She began collecting his original work then, in the 1980s, before he became famous. "Other teachers and I would buy his creations for \$10 apiece, and he would donate the money to the art department so he could buy supplies for his students."

When she retired, Betty and her second husband spent three weeks every summer volunteering with "Global Volunteers," where she taught ESL (English as a Second Language) in countries such as Ghana, Brazil, Italy, Poland and

## Doss Kindergarten Fun



Doss Elementary kindergarteners had a memorable time making gingerbread cookies in August. Yes seems a little early in the season but the gingerbread "came to life" and the kids had fun playing "catch me if you can!"

BETTY WOOD, 12

DOSS KINDER, 13



Betty Wood knows most of her neighbors on Paint Rock Drive. She has pencil markings up and down a doorframe in her kitchen where she has measured the growth of neighborhood kids when they drop by. Gesturing toward one mark, she said, "I've measured this kid since he was six years old. He's graduating high school this year."

Photo by 80+ Historical Project Photos by Summer Weinstein

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# Travis County Signs Off on Central Health’s New Budget — with a Tax Rate Increase

By OLIVIA ALDRIDGE, KUT

Travis County commissioners approved an \$875 million annual budget for local public hospital district Central Health, along with an increased tax rate that local officials said was influenced by federal funding changes.

Around 5% of a Travis County homeowner’s property tax bill goes to Central Health. Those taxes must support health care for low-income and indigent residents. Central Health’s new annual tax rate is 11.8 cents per \$100 of valuation — an effective increase of more than 9% from last year. That means the average homeowner will pay around \$64 more to Central Health on their next bill.

At a meeting last week, Central Health board of managers treasurer Maram Museitif said the tax increase was needed to make up for federal budget cuts affecting Central Health and local partners the agency helps to support.

“We are left without a choice,” Museitif said. “Some of the federal policies have really impacted some of the services that are currently provided. In order for us really to sustain those services, we had to make a difficult choice of raising the taxes.”

County commissioners also voted to increase the general Travis County tax rate on September 16 to help recover the costs of cleanup for catastrophic flooding in July.

## The ‘year of access’

Over the past year, Central Health has gone through considerable negotiation with its partner organization, CommUnityCare, which oversees most of the clinical care funded by Central Health. After a drawn-out conflict over the role of the CommUnityCare CEO, the organization’s former chief medical officer, Dr. Nicholas Yagoda, was named to the position.

Now, Central Health and CommUnityCare — along with the marketplace health insurance provider Sendero Health Plans — are making an effort to put forth a unified image, emphasizing the three organizations as a single Central Health “system.”

As part of that effort, Central Health submitted a system-wide budget for county commissioners’ approval for the first time, a total of more than \$1.1 billion for the three combined organizations. In the next year, Central Health anticipates its system will serve 209,000 people and oversee more than 1.2 million clinical visits.

Central Health branded the 2026 budget proposal as “the year of access,” with goals of expanding its clinical offerings and closing gaps in care.

Included in the budget is nearly \$434 million in expenses for health care delivered directly by Central Health, a more than \$80 million increase from last year. The increase aligns with the agency’s ongoing plan to bring more health care services under Central Health’s umbrella rather than exclusively partnering with outside organizations. The agency also has a “moonshot” goal of decreasing appointment wait times to no more than two weeks.

Central Health also committed funds to partner organizations that have lost federal grants this year, such as Austin Public Health and Foundation Communities, which helps local residents navigate through Medicaid and Affordable Care Act marketplace insurance enrollment. Central Health set aside \$1.2 million for Foundation Communities following its loss of a \$2.4 million federal grant.

“I just think it’s important for the community to understand the impact that these budget cuts at the federal level are having on our community and how we are stepping up and trying to provide essential care to people,” said Travis County Precinct 2 Commissioner Brigid Shea.

Additionally, Central Health committed funding to a new pilot to help local food industry employees navigate health insurance enrollment.

## Dell Medical School payment remains a sticking point

In an echo of budget conversations from the previous few years, members of the board of managers were not unanimous in their decision to continue supporting the University of Texas at Austin’s Dell Medical School with an annual \$35 million payment, which was approved by Travis County voters in 2012.

Some commissioners expressed that they wanted to see a more thorough accounting of how the medical school had used the annual investment to pay for health care to poor residents. That full picture is complicated to compile due to Dell Med’s relationships with partner organizations who sometimes deliver the care; Central Health CEO Pat Lee told commissioners that updated data would be available at a quarterly update in December.

Others said they were uncomfortable supporting the university at a time when it was rolling back diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives.

While a majority of the board voted to approve the payment, manager Shannon Jones said the split vote should send a message to UT Austin.

“The board is divided on [the medical school’s] success and what they’re doing,” Jones said last week. “We’re willing to work with them, but they’ve got to produce.”

Central Health board chair Ann Kitchen, however, gave commissioners a positive report of Dell Medical School’s relationship with the board.

“We are pleased to have that communication occurring, and we are working on continued communication and collaboration,” she said.

## NWACA BOARD, FROM 1

the City of Austin Tax Rate Election. See the notice in this issue for more details and a registration link.

- October 18th, noon to 2 p.m. - Gather old electronics, Styrofoam® and more for the fall recycling event. It will be held in the parking lot of St. Matthew’s Episcopal Church, 8134 Mesa Drive. This is a membership benefit for NWACA members. If not a current member, you can join or renew at the event or by using the green Membership button at [www.nwaca.org](http://www.nwaca.org). See the article in this issue for more details.
- October 25, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Clean out the medicine cabinet for Drug Takeback Day. Travis County Precinct 2 will be collecting materials at their offices at 10409 Burnet Road.

Have a very Happy Halloween!



## Warning: Bank Juggling Case

### Karen F. from North Cat Mountain shared on Nextdoor on September 5:

“I had heard of bank juggling, but never experienced it. Unfortunately, a good friend of mine drove to the Wells Fargo on Far West at 11:30 am this past Wednesday to withdraw cash for an upcoming trip. He went into the bank (not the ATM) and, not even thinking, came out carrying an envelope, which he proceeded to put into his car console.

He then drove to St David’s on MoPac to run a quick errand. He said he was gone for about 15 minutes. When he returned, someone had smashed his front passenger side window, gotten into the console, and stolen the money. They took nothing else from his car. No other vehicles around him were hit. He is convinced he was targeted and they followed him from the bank.

In reporting this to Wells Fargo, they were not surprised at all and said that juggers sit in their parking lot just watching people walk out of the bank. They are reviewing their cameras for any clues and all of this was reported to the police.

## Boat and Vehicle Break-ins

### Camille L. from The Courtyard shared on Nextdoor on September 5

“This is a warning to people living on Bull Creek. The thieves are out robbing boats and boat docks on Bull Creek. It happened to us this last week. They climbed to the second story of our boat dock and stole some expensive floats, etc. If you see something, try to grab a number from the dock itself and either inform the owner or the Lake Patrol.

### Dawn J. from Upper Northwest Hills East replied

“Thanks for the heads up. I did notice all the broken car window glass again at the Lookout near Pennybacker Bridge and Bull Creek Park. I’ve been leaving my windows down when I go to the park.”





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## Loop 360 at Westlake Drive/Cedar Street Updates

Texas Department of Transportation reports that concrete work will take place closing the roads nightly September 21-26:

- Southbound Loop 360 between Pennybacker Bridge and Shell Refuel market right lane
  - Eastbound Westlake Drive at southbound Loop 360 right turn lane
  - Westbound Westlake Drive at northbound Loop 360 right turn lane and northbound Loop 360 between Westlake Drive and Davenport Village driveway right lane
- All lanes are expected to reopen by 5 a.m.,

each morning, weather permitting.

Eastbound and westbound Cedar Street at southbound Loop 360 right lane closed daily for concrete work.

TxDOT asks drivers to be patient. Pay attention to flaggers and traffic control, plan ahead and expect delays. Neighbors and businesses may experience an increase in noise, vibration, dust and lighting during night work.

Fun Fact: Each night at Cedar Street, 30 trucks haul away 4,500 tons of material, about the weight of 300 longhorn steers.



## Road Construction Report

By RUVEN BROOKS, Northwest Austin Civic Association

This quarter, no new major highway projects have been announced for our area and none have been completed. Construction is underway on a number of existing projects, though, and people living in Northwest Austin now face the possibility of encountering construction on many major highways, including Spicewood Springs Road, Loop 360, Highway 183, and I-35. All these projects have their own websites which provide frequent updates on project activities. Links to these websites have been placed on the NWACA home page.

### Spicewood Springs Road

Unchanged. Construction is still anticipated to be completed in Winter, 2026-2027. The completion of construction will

have little impact on congestion since vehicles must still go through a light on Loop 360.

### TxDOT Loop 360 projects

Texas Department of Transportation has a number of projects planned along Loop 360 which will result in construction at some point along Loop 360 through 2031.

The Loop 360 project which is currently under construction is a TxDOT project to remove traffic signals at Westlake Drive and Cedar Street by constructing an underpass on the Loop 360 mainlines. This work is expected to be completed mid-2026.

Another future TxDOT Loop 360 project will be at Courtyard Drive/RM222 and will replace the traffic light with a Diverging Diamond Interchange. Construction is expected to start in 2026.

The TxDOT project to add an overpass at Spicewood Springs Road and Loop 360 now shows a 2029 date for the

beginning of construction, which will last 2-3 years. Even if the Spicewood Springs widening project is completed in 2026/2027 as is now scheduled, congestion will not decrease until this project is completed.

A major question in any TxDOT projects for which construction has not yet begun is the availability of federal Department of Transportation funding.

### 183 North Mobility

Construction is still underway on the CTRMA 183 North Mobility Project with completion still forecast for 2026.

### Burnet Road

Surprisingly, these projects are being funded by the 2016 Mobility Bond but have finally reached the construction bid stage. They are primarily smaller improvements to streets and intersections rather than adding additional lanes.

They run from White Horse Trail in the south all the way up to where Burnet meets with Mopac in the North and crosses 183. The construction work is expected to begin in the 2025-2026 timeframe.



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# Tree Trimming: Reduces Power Outages, Improve Neighborhood Safety

By KEVIN KOTT, CRIME AND SAFETY COMMITTEE  
Northwest Austin Civic Association

At the Northwest Austin Civic Association Annual Meeting in March, Craig Brooks, Austin Energy (AE) Electric Systems Field Operations Director of Support Services, gave a detailed description of the City’s activities to keep the community safe by trimming trees around neighborhood power lines. It was a great presentation. Since then, we have received many requests from NWACA members to provide similar information in this newsletter.

The purpose of tree trimming around power lines is safety – to prevent accidental power outages, fires, and personal injury. AE lists the following causes of unplanned power outages:

- Squirrels, snakes, and birds that damage transmission equipment
- Tree branches that fall against power lines
- Car crashes into power poles
- Flying objects (metallic balloons, drones, patio furniture)
- Inclement weather including wind, lightning strikes, and ice accumulation

- Construction site accidents
- Austin Energy plans to trim trees on a 7-year cycle, which provides safety for slow-growing trees like oaks. The organization also needs to check many power line areas in the middle of that cycle due to faster-growing trees.

Austin Energy has a wealth of information about power outages, tree trimming standards, and scheduling of tree trimming on their website – which I highly recommend perusing. Do a web search for **Austin Energy** and select **Residential** in the search results. Then select **Austin Energy Residential Services**. This section contains information that includes locating underground utility lines, outage maps, tips on saving energy and money, explanations of electric rates, and more. To focus on Tree Trimming, select **Tree Trimming** from the left side menu. That link brings you to information about how often trees are trimmed, clearances that are needed around power lines, factors considered in deciding when to trim, benefits of proper trimming, an exhaustive set of FAQs, and more.

This is how the AE website describes their process: “Austin Energy established a seven-year trimming sustainability plan. In 2019, Austin City Council increased trimming line clearances. In 2021, Council doubled our budget,

and we added a third contracting company. We are working diligently to get caught up from the past several years of tree growth and trimming backlog.

To improve the customer experience, we have also streamlined our customer notification process for scheduled trimming. See the Notification Process FAQs for more information.

We primarily aim to trim oak trees outside of oak wilt season (August - January). Our tree experts continue to prepare work plans, so crews are ready to begin trimming oaks as soon as oak wilt season has closed. In areas dense with oak trees, however, we conduct limited trimming during oak wilt season. We consider all factors of tree health when doing so. Austin Energy conducts ongoing collaborative meetings with neighborhoods and residents to discuss work plans and timelines for utility tree trimming” (source: <https://austinelectric.com/residential/residential-services/tree-trimming/faqs>)

It’s important that we all support such trimming. As we’ve seen during the recent significant storms, untrimmed trees can cause enormous havoc.

## SpotCrimes Northwest Austin Area Include DWI, Burglary, Assault

|                                                                |                                                                        |                                                                     |                                                                        |                                                                          |                                                                             |                                                                          |                                                                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 08/21/2025 1:46 PM<br>BURGLARY<br>36XX NORTH HILLS             | 08/29/2025 9:22 AM<br>HARASSMENT<br>68XX BURNET RD                     | 81XX MOPAC EXPY                                                     | 67XX LAKEWOOD                                                          | 09/04/2025 3:44 PM<br>FRAUD<br>70XX NORTHLEDGE                           | UNLAWFUL<br>CARRYING WEAPON<br>57XX MOPAC EXPY                              | 09/09/2025 5:17 PM<br>FAMILY DISTURBANCE/<br>PARENTAL<br>66XX VALLEYSIDE | 35XX FAR WEST BD                                                           |
| 08/25/2025 10:44 AM<br>CRIMINAL MISCHIEF<br>XX FM 2222 RD      | 08/29/2025 2:52 PM<br>THEFT<br>36XX FAR WEST BVD                       | 08/31/2025 8:57 PM<br>ASSAULT W/INJURY<br>59XX HIGHLAND PASS        | 09/03/2025 2:08 AM<br>FAMILY<br>DISTURBANCE<br>85XX CAPITAL OF TX      | 09/04/2025 6:20 PM<br>THEFT/SHOPLIFTING<br>58XX BURNET RD                | 09/07/2025 3:08 AM<br>DWI<br>XX WOOD HOLLOW                                 | 09/10/2025 12:45 AM<br>BURGLARY/VEHICLE<br>52XX CAPITAL OF TX            | 09/14/2025 6:57 PM<br>AUTO THEFT<br>65XX EAST HILL DR                      |
| 08/26/2025 10:11 AM<br>BURGLARY/UNIT<br>38XX FM 2222 RD        | 08/29/2025 9:30 PM<br>AUTO THEFT<br>30XX ANDERSON LN                   | 08/31/2025 10:36 PM<br>BURGLARY/VEHICLE<br>93XX RESEARCH            | 09/03/2025 11:34 AM<br>CRIMINAL MISCHIEF<br>68XX AUSTIN<br>CENTER BLVD | 09/04/2025 6:39 PM<br>ARSON<br>84XX BENT TREE RD                         | 09/07/2025 1:42 PM<br>FAMILY DISTURBANCE/<br>PARENTAL<br>41XX PAINT ROCK    | 09/10/2025 3:55 PM<br>THEFT/SHOPLIFTING<br>96XX RESEARCH BD              | 09/14/2025 11:07 PM<br>TERRORISTIC THREAT<br>MASS CASLT<br>81XX MOPAC EXPY |
| 08/26/2025 11:16 AM<br>BURGLARY/VEHICLE<br>85XX CAPITAL OF TX  | 08/29/2025 4:45 PM<br>THEFT/BICYCLE<br>70XX NORTHLEDGE                 | 09/01/2025 4:33 AM<br>FAMILY DISTURBANCE<br>69XX THORNCLIFFE        | 09/03/2025 11:59 AM<br>CRIMINAL MISCHIEF<br>68XX AUSTIN<br>CENTER BLVD | 09/05/2025 9:50 AM<br>FRAUD<br>56XX PALISADE CT                          | 09/07/2025 2:43 AM<br>UNLAWFUL CARRYING<br>WEAPON<br>57XX MOPAC EXPY        | 09/10/2025 9:23 PM<br>FAMILY DISTURBANCE/<br>PARENTAL<br>36XX STECK AVE  | 09/16/2025 11:06 AM<br>DWI<br>81XX CAPITAL OF TX                           |
| 08/26/2025 3:51 PM<br>SUSPICIOUS<br>PERSON<br>69XX THORNCLIFFE | 08/30/2025 10:40 AM<br>CRIMINAL MISCHIEF<br>36XX STECK AVE             | 09/01/2025 1:33 PM<br>BURGLARY/VEHICLE<br>66XX LAKEWOOD             | 09/03/2025 10:21 PM<br>FAMILY<br>DISTURBANCE<br>34XX NORTH HILLS DR    | 09/05/2025 9:57 AM<br>HARASSMENT<br>36XX GREYSTONE                       | 09/08/2025 4:46 AM<br>DRIVING WHILE INTOX /<br>FELONY<br>95XX CAPITAL OF TX | 09/11/2025 3:45 PM<br>THEFT<br>76XX VALBURN DR                           | 09/16/2025 11:08 AM<br>THEFT OF SERVICE<br>48XX SPICEWOOD<br>SPRINGS RD    |
| 08/26/2025 7:30 PM<br>BURGLARY/VEHICLE<br>53XX CAPITAL OF TX   | 08/30/2025 12:12 AM<br>FAMILY<br>DISTURBANCE<br>78XX VALBURN DR        | 09/01/2025 2:43 PM<br>CRIMINAL MISCHIEF<br>79XX CAPITAL OF TX       | 09/03/2025 10:32 AM<br>FAMILY<br>DISTURBANCE<br>85XX CAPITAL OF TX     | 09/05/2025 11:52 AM<br>HARASSMENT<br>68XX AUSTIN<br>CENTER BLVD          | 09/08/2025 1:04 PM<br>AGGRAVATED ASSAULT<br>89XX BUSINESS PARK<br>DR        | 09/12/2025 8:24 AM<br>BURGLARY<br>76XX WOOD<br>HOLLOW DR                 | 09/17/2025 8:49 AM<br>FRAUD<br>38XX SPICEWOOD SPG                          |
| 08/26/2025 8:16 PM<br>ASSAULT W INJURY<br>63XX SHADOW VALLEY   | 08/30/2025 4:51 PM<br>BURGLARY/VEHICLE<br>53XX SPICEWOOD<br>SPRINGS RD | 09/01/2025 8:58 PM<br>THEFT. THEFT<br>36XX EXECUTIVE CEN-<br>TER DR | 09/02/2025 8:19 PM<br>THEFT<br>96XX RESEARCH BD                        | 09/06/2025 12:22 PM<br>SUSPICIOUS<br>PERSON<br>48XX PALISADE DR          | 09/08/2025 12:51 PM<br>THEFT. THEFT BY SHOP-<br>LIFTING<br>96XX RESEARCH BD | 09/12/2025 9:08 PM<br>HARASSMENT<br>34XX EXECUTIVE CEN-<br>TER DR        | 09/17/2025 1:06 PM<br>THEFT/SHOPLIFTING<br>55XX BALCONES DR                |
| 08/27/2025 8:35 AM<br>BURGLARY/HOME<br>38XX HYRIDGE DR         | 08/30/2025 7:48 PM<br>DWI<br>78XX MOPAC EXPY                           | 09/01/2025 11:49 PM<br>DOC DISCHARGE GUN<br>76XX WOOD<br>HOLLOW DR  | 09/03/2025 7:40 PM<br>AUTO THEFT<br>68XX WOOD<br>HOLLOW DR             | 09/06/2025 1:08 PM<br>BURGLARY/VEHICLE<br>60XX CAPITAL OF TX             | 09/09/2025 1:49 AM<br>AUTO THEFT<br>57XX MESA DR                            | 09/13/2025 4:16 PM<br>BURGLARY/VEHICLE<br>76XX LONG POINT                | 09/18/2025 7:04 AM<br>THEFT/AUTO PARTS<br>44XX SPICEWOOD SPG               |
| 08/27/2025 1:48 PM<br>TERRORISTIC THREAT<br>34XX GREYSTONE     | 08/30/2025 9:30 PM<br>FAMILY<br>DISTURBANCE<br>78XX VALBURN DR         | 09/02/2025 9:50 AM<br>CRIMINAL MISCHIEF<br>72XX HART LN             | 09/03/2025 11:54 PM<br>FAMILY<br>DISTURBANCE<br>76XX WOOD<br>HOLLOW DR | 09/06/2025 11:36 PM<br>ASSAULT ON<br>PEACE OFFICER<br>92XX JOLLYVILLE RD | 09/09/2025 11:11 AM<br>DEBIT CARD ABUSE<br>77XX CAPITAL OF TX               | 09/14/2025 9:04 AM<br>THEFT. THEFT<br>53XX SCOUT ISLAND                  | 09/18/2025 3:21 PM<br>HARASSMENT<br>68XX CAPITAL OF TX                     |
| 08/27/2025 4:58 PM<br>BURGLARY/VEHICLE<br>42XX GREYSTONE       | 08/31/2025 1:57 PM<br>BURGLARY<br>88XX MOPAC EXPY                      | 09/02/2025 10:16 AM<br>BURGLARY/VEHICLE<br>88XX TALLWOOD DR         | 09/04/2025 8:14 AM<br>THEFT of METAL<br>80XX HILLRISE DR               | 09/06/2025 12:22 PM<br>SUSPICIOUS<br>PERSON<br>48XX PALISADE DR          | 09/09/2025 4:48 PM<br>BURGLARY<br>52XX OLD SPICEWOOD<br>SPRINGS RD          | 09/14/2025 10:43 AM<br>ASSAULT W/INJURY<br>81XX MOPAC EXPY               | 09/19/2025 12:43 PM<br>HARASSMENT<br>46XX SPICEWOOD<br>SPRINGS RD          |
| 08/27/2025 8:38 PM<br>SUSPICIOUS<br>PERSON<br>48XX PALISADE DR | 08/31/2025 2:00 PM<br>FAMILY<br>DISTURBANCE                            | 09/02/2025 2:19 PM<br>BURGLARY/VEHICLE                              |                                                                        | 09/07/2025 2:43 AM                                                       |                                                                             | 09/14/2025 12:18 AM<br>BURGLARY/VEHICLE                                  | <b>SpotCrime.com</b>                                                       |



# Firefighters, City at Loggerheads Over Contract

By Jo Clifton, Austin Monitor

Negotiators for the Austin Firefighters Association (AFA) and city management appear to have reached an impasse. AFA President Bob Nicks called the city's current offer "disrespectful to those who risk their lives daily."

Nicks noted that he told the city manager and City Council in January that firefighters want a work week reduction and the same kind of wage offer EMS and Austin Police have achieved.

Basically, Nicks said, while police and EMS employees received wage increases close to 6 percent, 5 percent and 4 percent, the city is offering most firefighters no general wage increase in the first, second, third and fourth years of the contract. The city is proposing to give one half of firefighters, a 4 percent raise the first year.

Nicks wrote, "The City stated that they will use the savings from not paying a general wage increase over a 4-year period to hire more firefighters for the work week reduction." In

addition, Nicks said firefighters would actually be required to work more hours under the city's proposal.

Finally, Nicks said the city team has "totally disregarded the 2 years of productive AFA labor/management subcommittee work on the work week reduction. Instead, they are proposing their own ideas, which INCREASE the work week, making the new schedule unworkable."

A spokesperson for the city of Austin told the Austin Monitor via email: "The City presented a proposal on September 10 based on market rate studies of comparable fire departments. The City's proposal served as a starting point for discussion and included a plan to achieve the union's desired modified schedule and reduced work week. Rather than offer a counterproposal, the AFA walked away from negotiations. The City values all of our employees and first responders, including our firefighters, and would like the AFA to return to the table and resume negotiations.

"We were recently successful in protecting our firefighters' pension, implementing a 2 % increase to their hourly rate,

and reducing their work hours. The City is committed to negotiating in good faith and we are confident that we can reach a reasonable agreement with all parties at the table."

Ron DeLord, who is the attorney for the firefighters, wrote that the city is trying to force them into binding arbitration and not have to pay competitive wages or offer an appropriate work week. DeLord urged members to educate those firefighters who are not vested to look at jobs in other cities. In addition, he wrote that current firefighters should inform prospective Austin Fire Department employees that they will not be able to get a raise for the next four years. Finally, DeLord proposed that firefighters vote on whether to support, oppose or remain neutral on the November 4 tax rate election since they will not be receiving any of the additional funding if the ballot measure passes.

Although negotiations are scheduled to continue through next week and must be concluded by September 28, Nicks said he and DeLord do not expect the city to change its position and therefore a meeting next week is unlikely.

By GREG BONDY, Northwest Austin Civic Association

Wildfire has always been a risk in the wildland and grasslands around Austin. Those risks led to the city of Austin adopting a set of building codes based on the International Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) code. More details at: [www.austintexas.gov/department/wildland-urban-interface-code](http://www.austintexas.gov/department/wildland-urban-interface-code)

The code applies to all homes considered to be in the WUI which was recently expanded to include nearly all the homes in Northwest Austin. The code defines three Proximity Zones which include building requirements based on a structure's proximity to the wildlands. Zone A includes structures within 50 feet of wildlands, Zone B is within 150 feet, and Zone C is within half a mile. Zone A has the highest level of requirements, Zone C the lowest. The best way to see where your home lies is to use the Interactive Map that can be accessed from the WUI code website.

So, what does that mean for homeowners in NWACA? New

## Wildfire Risk Affects Building Code

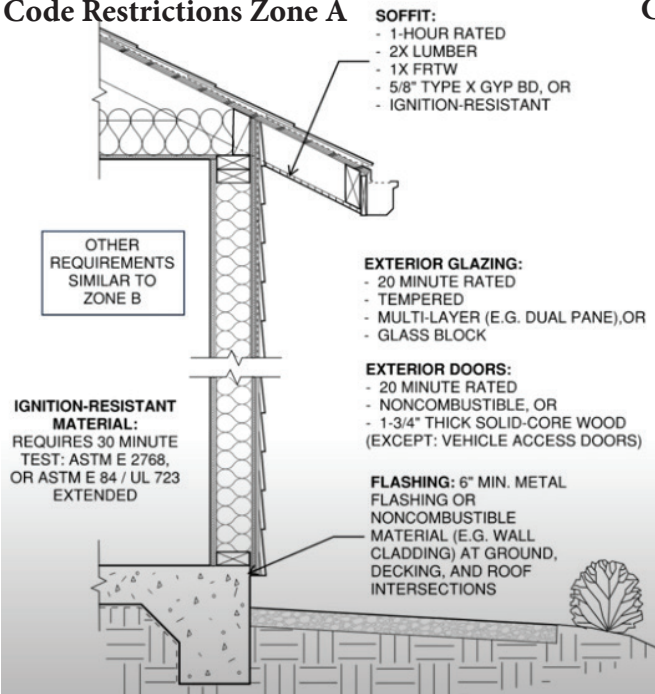
requirements for use of nonflammable building materials and vegetation management apply for all new construction and replacement projects within the Proximity Zones. Existing structures are granted an exception but are encouraged to update to the code over time. The best source for understanding how the code will impact you is a video that can be accessed from the Training Presentation section in the link above. The entire presentation is good but the most pertinent information for homeowners starts at the 27-minute mark.

The code defines an area called the Ember Ignition Zone (EIZ) which is a perimeter of 5 feet around any structure. The EIZ can contain only nonflammable materials and should be clear of all weeds, grass, plants, shrubs, trees, branches, mulch, and other vegetative debris. Combustible materials such as lawn furniture, door mats, combustible planter boxes, and small storage cabinets should not be stored in the EIZ. Ideally the EIZ should contain only gravel, rock, pavers, or other non-flammable material. See the three images for de-

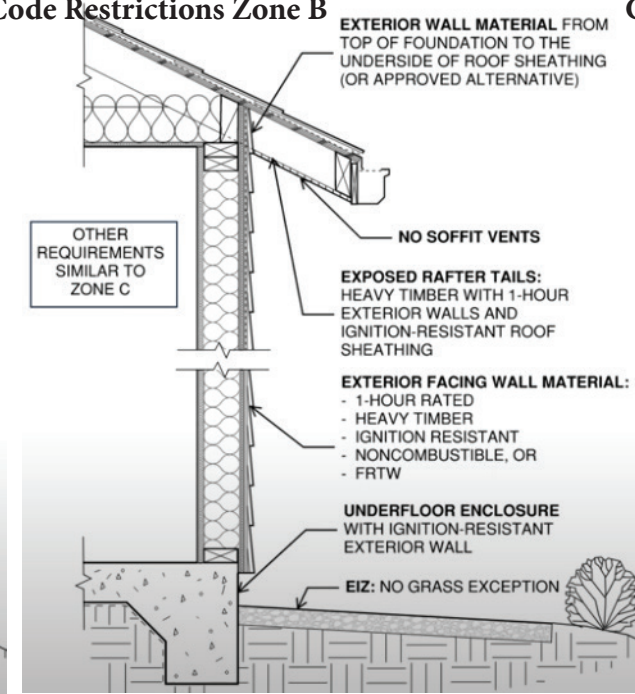
tails of restrictions for each Proximity Zone. Attachments such as decks must be constructed entirely with approved non-combustible materials. The website above provides a link with Approved Materials.

The code also defines a Defensible Space which extends outward from the structure from 30 to 100 feet depending on the Proximity Zone. In the Defensible Space, trees should be trimmed at least 6 feet away from structures. Tree limbs should be removed between the ground and 6 feet up the trunk. Also, dense vegetation and shrubs should be thinned to prevent fire from spreading along the ground. There are many more details in the code that apply to siding, roofs, vents, skylights, gutters, soffits, fences, etc. that can best be understood by watching the Training Presentation or reading the code itself. The important thing to know is that the code exists for our protection against wildfire and as more homeowners adopt the guidance of the code, the better protected our entire community will be.

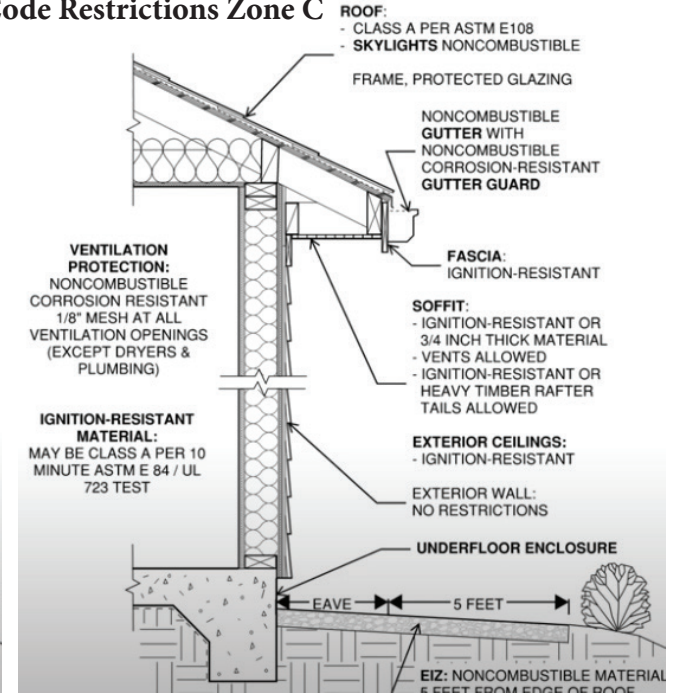
### Wildland Urban Interface Code Restrictions Zone A



### Wildland Urban Interface Code Restrictions Zone B



### Wildland Urban Interface Code Restrictions Zone C





# Austin ISD Talks Closures as 12 More Schools are Failing

By KATY McAFEE, KUT News

A dozen schools in the Austin Independent School District will need to close or make significant changes after receiving three consecutive failing grades from the state.

The Texas Education Agency ratings were released last month. Austin ISD saw some improvements from last year, but roughly one third of the district's 116 campuses still had unacceptable ratings.

In a letter sent to Austin ISD officials, the TEA said dozens of schools will need to submit plans to the state detailing how they will improve student outcomes. Twelve schools are required to submit plans by mid-November and implement them as soon as they are approved. Those plans could include major staffing changes and an infusion of new programs. The

12 schools are Winn Montessori School, Barrington, Dawson, Linder, Oak Springs, Pecan Springs, Sanchez, Widen and Wooldridge elementary schools and Bedichek, Martin and Paredes middle schools.

"The data reflects that the district's current approach is not working, and urgent transformational change is necessary to improve outcomes for all Austin ISD students," TEA Commissioner Mike Morath said in the letter.

Three Austin ISD schools — Webb, Dobie and Burnet — are already on improvement plans after receiving a fourth consecutive "F" from the state. Those plans cost the district \$1.7 million per campus. If the schools receive another failing grade next year, the entire district could be taken over by the state.

In a letter to parents, Austin ISD Superintendent Matias

Segura said the district could choose to close some of the 12 schools the TEA said need to go on improvement plans or turn them over to a charter operator. The district is already in the process of deciding which schools need to be closed or consolidated to fix its nearly \$20 million budget deficit.

The TEA ratings were not initially factored into Austin ISD's rubric for which schools should close. But Segura said the new state requirements are changing that.

"I want to be clear that these are by no means the only schools that are being considered in the process," he said in the letter, "we just must begin having these conversations with these schools first."

The district will release its plan for which schools will close or be consolidated on Oct. 9.



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# NWACA Encourages National Night Out Block Parties

By KEVIN KOTT, Northwest Austin Civic Association

Last Fall, despite blistering hot weather, about 16 residents hosted National Night Out block parties under Northwest Austin Civic Association sponsorship in their neighborhoods. All told, over 500 individuals participated. Overwhelmingly, participants enjoyed the events so much that they wanted more.

NWACA is therefore encouraging and supporting party hosts (both past as well as new ones) to hold block parties again this fall, on dates that are convenient to hosts and their neighbors – and hopefully in milder weather. These block parties stimulate neighborhood comradery and caring for our neighbors which in turn helps to keep our neighborhoods safer.

If you are interested in being a host, here are the specifics:

1. Parties are to be organized by volunteer party hosts. Suggested venues are neighborhood lawns, cul de sacs, or nearby parks if available.
2. Dates are determined by the hosts, to be most convenient to their block residents – but before November 15, 2025
3. Entertainment, snacks, drinks, and logistics are all at the discretion of the block party hosts. Some past parties have featured BYO snacks to share, host-supplied drinks and

- snacks (pizzas, tacos, etc.), sidewalk chalk for entertaining children, bouncy houses, etc.
4. While hand-written invitations are fine, electronic invitation apps can help to keep the information organized: invitations, RSVPs, event info, volunteered plates-to-share, etc.
5. In return for organizing the events branded as a “NWACA National Night Out Block Party,” NWACA will provide each registered party host a \$100 cash gift card (to offset expenses) after the event, upon receipt of event photos and a completed party feedback survey.

6. To register as a 2025 party host, or for more information, please contact Kevin Kott at [info@nwaca.org](mailto:info@nwaca.org) as soon as possible. Be sure to specify:

- Planned date and time of your party
- Location of your party
- Organizer/Host Name
- Organizer/Host email and or phone number (indicate preference for email or text)

Block Party background information was published in the November 2024 edition of Northwest Austin News on page 16. These past newsletters are available on the NWACA web site (enter <https://nwaca.org/newsletter/>)

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## Neighbor Tip:

**Please Walk Facing Traffic**

**WALK ON LEFT FACING TRAFFIC**

By NORTHWEST AUSTIN CIVIC ASSOCIATION BOARD

This information has been published before, but it bears repeating. Many neighbors are walking at all times of the day, using both sides of the street. However, walking in the streets can be dangerous. Pedestrians may or may not hear traffic around them; some electric vehicles are very quiet, so they may not be very noticeable. In addition, some pedestrians wear earbuds. So, pedestrians can’t always count on sounds to alert them to traffic.

The best approach when walking on the street is to walk on the LEFT side of the street facing oncoming traffic. In addition to making good sense, it is actually written in the Texas Transportation Code. If you walk on the right side, oncoming traffic is behind you, and you cannot see (or often hear) that traffic.

Bicycles, on the other hand, need to flow with the traffic when operated on the street.

In addition, when out for a walk before the sun rises or after it sets, wear something light-colored or reflective and/or carry a light. It can be hard for a driver to distinguish you from the street or surroundings if you’re wearing dark clothing.



# History: Nichols School – a “Mountain School” – Once at RM 2222 and River Place

By RICHARD DENNEY, Northwest Austin Civic Association

Recent issues of NWACA Notes have noted “Big Changes Ahead for the Former 3M Campus.” This won’t be the first big change that location has seen. It was once part of the Nichols School District, so it’s fitting to recall some history about the old school that sat on the south side of RM 2222 across from 3M.

In 1936, Travis County celebrated the Texas Centennial by publishing The Defender 1936, a yearbook of Travis County rural public schools. One of those was Nichols School, one of the “Mountain Schools” like nearby Oak Grove (gone) and Pleasant Valley School (extant), sitting on east and west Bull Creek.

## From the 1936 Defender:

“In 1900 an acre of land was given for the Nichols School by Mr. Sam Nichols. The men

of the community hauled cedar and traded it for lumber with which to construct a building. It was completed Christmas day. Prior to this time the children of this district attended Oak Grove School. The first trustees of the new school were Mr. Dick Preece and Mr. Sam Nichols. Miss Florence Harvey was the first teacher. In January 1929 this school building burned. Much of the furniture was saved, and the building was re-built in September 1931. It was placed on Joe Gilman’s land, as this was nearer the center of the community ... This building was destroyed by fire near the close of the 1932 term. None of the furnishings were saved. The district was without a school until the 1934-1935 term. The school was held on the “old Preece place” in a little log cabin. Old-fashioned board benches and boxes were used for seats for the children as there were no funds available to buy desks. This building proved too small. This current term [1936] Mr. A.F. Maechel kindly consented to the use of his house on the old Mabry place. This building is fifty years old [1886] and unsuitable, but is the only one available. Several unsuccessful efforts have been made to re-build Nichols school on the original site, but so far funds are insufficient.”

While the school had hard times, the building of Marshall Ford Dam (Mansfield) gave it a new lease on life. The news in 1937 reported a population boom for the Nichols School District due to construction of the dam. Contractors for the dam provided funds to rebuild Nichols School to serve children of the workmen. The “Old Nichols Schoolhouse” was standing for a good while, serving as a voting place as late as 1959. That building was not at the original spot but believed to be close by.

Of note, Sam Nichols was a Confederate Soldier in the Civil War. Trustee Dick Preece was son of Texas Ranger Richard Lincoln Preece, early settler to what is now River Place and Steiner Ranch, who mounted guerrilla resistance in Travis County against the Confederacy. His papers are archived at the University of Texas Briscoe Center for American History. The Preece Cemetery sits off RM 2222 south of the 3M campus. A later trustee was Tom B. Hughes, namesake of Tom Hughes Park on Lake Travis; his uncle was Texas Ranger John R. Hughes, said to be the inspiration for Zane Grey’s novel The Lone Star Ranger. He is buried in the Texas State Cemetery.

Richard Denney is a history steward with the Texas Historic Commission. For more on this topic and other local history, visit <https://traviscountyhistorical.blogspot.com/>

## History

### NICHOLS SCHOOL

IN 1900 AN ACRE OF LAND WAS GIVEN FOR THE NICHOLS SCHOOL BY MR. SAM NICHOLS. THE MEN OF THE COMMUNITY HAULED CEDAR AND TRADED IT FOR LUMBER WITH WHICH TO CONSTRUCT A BUILDING. IT WAS COMPLETED CHRISTMAS DAY. PRIOR TO THIS TIME THE CHILDREN OF THIS DISTRICT ATTENDED THE OAK GROVE SCHOOL. THE FIRST TRUSTEES OF THE NEW SCHOOL WERE MR. DICK PREECE, AND MR. SAM NICHOLS. MISS FLORENCE HARVEY WAS THE FIRST TEACHER.

IN JANUARY 1929 THIS SCHOOL BUILDING BURNED. MUCH OF THE FURNITURE WAS SAVED AND THE BUILDING WAS RE-BUILT IN SEPT. 1931. IT WAS PLACED ON JOE GILMAN’S LAND, AS THIS WAS NEARER THE CENTER OF THE COMMUNITY. THE MATERIAL FOR THE BUILDING WAS DONATED BY FRANK CLAWSON AND TOM GILLMAN. THIS BUILDING WAS DESTROYED BY FIRE NEAR THE CLOSE OF THE 1932 TERM. NONE OF THE FURNISHINGS WERE SAVED. THE DISTRICT WAS WITHOUT A SCHOOL UNTIL THE 1934-1935 TERM. THE SCHOOL WAS HELD ON THE “OLD PREECE PLACE” IN A LITTLE LOG CABIN. OLD FASHIONED BOARD BENCHES AND BOXES WERE USED FOR SEATS FOR THE CHILDREN AS THERE WERE NO FUNDS AVAILABLE TO BUY DESKS. THIS BUILDING PROVED TOO SMALL. THIS CURRENT TERM MR. A. F. MAECHEL KINDLY CONSENTED TO THE USE OF HIS HOUSE ON THE OLD “MABRY PLACE”. THIS BUILDING IS FIFTY YEARS OLD AND UNSUITABLE, BUT IS THE ONLY ONE AVAILABLE.

SEVERAL UNSUCCESSFUL EFFORTS HAVE BEEN MADE TO RE-BUILD NICHOLS SCHOOL ON THE ORIGINAL SITE, BUT SO FAR FUNDS ARE INSUFFICIENT.



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KATHERINE WARD  
ARLENE COWAN  
BARBARA COWAN

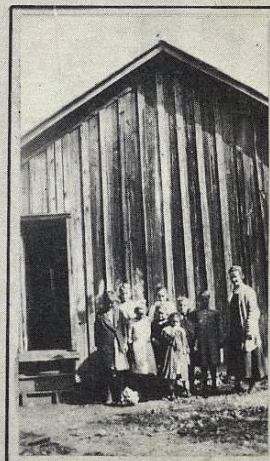
2ND ROW  
CHESTER WARD  
EDWARD FREUND  
ERNEST COWAN  
FOREST WARD  
LONIE SANDLIN  
MYRTLE COWAN  
LORAYNE FOSTER



BALL TEAM

1ST ROW  
CHESTER WARD  
MARY MYRTLE FAGLIE  
EDWARD FREUND  
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Mexico. One of her three-week ESL stints took place in Montana where she taught Native American adults.

She became well-versed in other cultures during the decade abroad she spent with her husband and children. He taught history in the American school as an employee of the Department of Defense. When their children were old enough to go to school, Betty volunteered as a substitute teacher. She was even the school “nurse” one year.

The DoD stationed the young family in France, Germany, Ethiopia, Japan, and the Philippines. While living in France in 1962, they adopted their son, Ron, in next-door Luxembourg. They had adopted their daughter, Monica, in the United States in 1960. “When the kids were 3 and 5, we climbed Mount Vesuvius together,” Betty said. In Japan, it was Mt. Fuji. By then the children were 5 and 7. “We camped one night on the mountain because that was a two-day hike.”

Before becoming a world traveler, Betty spent her childhood on a farm outside the Texas Panhandle town of Pampa. “I was a Dust Bowl kid,” she said. She was born in 1933 during the now infamous decade of severe drought and blowing dust that hit the plains states, causing devastation and poverty. Pampa sits in one of the hardest hit regions. Woody Guthrie, then a young man, was living in Pampa during the Dust Bowl years as well. Many of his songs about that disaster-filled era came from his years living there when Betty was a little girl. As Woody became more and more well-known, Betty and her family and other Pampa residents became prouder and

prouder to claim Woody as their “hometown boy.”

Betty recalled the harsh weather of those times. “Mother would put wet wash rags over our faces so we wouldn’t breathe the dust into our lungs,” Betty said. She remembered watching her mother washing layers of red dirt off the walls after each storm.

“They would close school for one or two days at a time during major dust storms,” she remembered. “It would get pitch dark in the middle

of the day. Sometimes it would rain during one of those storms and globs of mud would fall from the sky.”

The dramatic weather of the Texas Panhandle left Betty with other childhood memories as well, such as when she witnessed a tornado making its way across an open field near their house. She recalled that some neighbors stood on their porches, watching the funnel’s progression. Teenage Betty, however, shoved her little brother into the closet and joined him there until the storm passed. “He was mad at me because I made him miss all the action,” she said.

Betty and her husband would settle back home in Texas after their years abroad. But this time, instead of the Texas Panhandle, (or Luling, where her husband had grown up,) they chose Austin.

“This town suited me just fine!” she said. Lots has changed in her chosen neighborhood of Northwest Hills since they

got here. “In 1972, Mesa Drive ran from Cat Mountain Drive to Spicewood Springs Road,” she said. “The next year, when Anderson High School was built, they extended Mesa another couple of blocks to just past the school. “The land between Mesa and Hwy 2222 (where Mesa Drive now goes downhill) was just wild Hill Country,” she recalled.

“MoPac wasn’t built yet when we moved here,” she said. The first segment of MoPac, from Hwy. 2244 to Hwy 2222, was completed in 1975. It didn’t extend north of 2222 until 1981 when it opened from 2222 to Hwy. 183. Lots of other development was happening during the family’s early years in Northwest Hills. Both Northcross Mall and The Village Shopping Center celebrated their grand openings a few years after Betty and her family arrived.

Doss Elementary (1970) and Murchison Junior High (1967) had already been established. The two schools were two of the amenities drawing young families to the area, as well as the knowledge that the new Anderson High School was soon to open. H-E-B was in the space now occupied by the U.S. Post Office on Far West. The Chimney Corners Post Office was in a smaller space, located on Chimney Corners Street.

“Even though the neighborhood has grown a lot since we moved here, Northwest Hills still feels like a small community,” Betty said.

Living on a one-block street has lots of virtues, according to Betty who knows most Paint Rock Drive residents. “I love my neighbors. I can call them any time. Someone is always bringing me baked goods. I’m happy when young families move in. We have many parents with children—families from Romania, Armenia, India, Israel, the Philippines, and Mexico—neighbors of all religions and nationalities. I like that!”

She pointed out pencil markings up and down a doorframe in her kitchen where she has measured the growth of neighborhood kids when they have dropped by to see her. Gesturing toward one mark, she said, “I’ve measured this kid since he was six years old. He’s graduating high school this year.” Over the years, the former English teacher has made a habit of writing individual birthday poems for some of those Paint Rock Drive kids.

Not one content with a sedentary life, the lithe 92-year-old stays fit by doing water aerobics six days a week at Crenshaw Athletic Club. “I’m the oldest one in the pool, but I don’t care!” Every Sunday morning she’s the official greeter at the First Unitarian Universalist Church where she has attended since 1988.

As part of their regular walk, Betty and her partner like to visit Stillhouse Canyon Park, off Burney Drive, several mornings a week. She advised, “If you haven’t walked down the path to the overlook, you need to.” Betty offered one more tip for the younger generation: “A glass of wine every day helps you stay young when you’re as old as I am!”

 **s u m m e r p i e r c e**  
*Photography*

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682.551.6226

srpp1976@gmail.com





## Gingerbread at Doss

Doss Elementary kindergarteners made gingerbread cookies on August 29. “They read different versions of the classic story before they got to cut and bake Gingerbread Man cookies to end the week. Unfortunately those gingerbread men escaped the oven so they (kindergarteners) had to go on a chase around the school to find them!” Doss Elementary PTA



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# Spotlight: Create Floral Design

By JANICE GREEN, Northwest Austin Civic Association

Floral design is an art form that combines the personalities, shapes, and colors of nature's elements with architectural precision. Spending time with Rachel Blaies in her small neighborhood business, Create Floral Design, reminded me of the time when flower shops were ever present before the pandemic.

Rachel's fascination with all types of vegetation began during her childhood in Florida. Her family, who immigrated from Vietnam, nurtured a backyard garden where Rachel loved to plant seeds and small clippings and make little bundles of flowers and greenery to place throughout her family home.

Scrubbing buckets in a retail shop was the introductory job to her 20-year career, the last 12 in Austin. She worked at a major floral event center, and she free-lanced floral arranging and wedding design but missed the energy of a flower shop. Unexpectedly, she was laid off during the pandemic but found part-time employment at Parkcrest Floral, which left a lasting impression. Parkcrest Floral closed permanently in January 2025. But synchronicity was at work. This May she opened Create Floral Design in that same space on Hancock Drive.

Unlike floral shops with crowded spaces, Create's interior mirrors the beauty of simplicity in Rachel's floral style with each bloom showcased within levels and depth of design. The greenhouse in her shop houses plant materials from which she pulls berries, nuts, and unusual leaves to include in arrangements. There are also terrariums with innovative plantings. And then there are the unique kokedamas!

Kokedama is a Japanese art form in which the roots of the plant are bound in soil, bark, and an outer casing of moss, then wrapped in twine – restraining roots akin to bonsai. Reny Yesenia, Rachel's friend and florist working at Create, is the kokedama expert – also spelled kokodama because the plants were originally planted in coconut husks. They are most unusual and incredibly beautiful. Rachel introduced Reny as a “resurrectionist” – one with the talent of bringing back plants from the edge of demise.

The philosophy behind Create's venture is getting to know customers so the arrangements

reflect their personality as well as the flowers' personalities. When an arrangement is delivered to a recipient, they want the customer to be thrilled that they “nailed it.” Flowers bring joy to

people and are the perfect gift for many situations beyond events and celebrations. Recently Rachel and Reny prepared a gift for someone whose dog had passed; the arrangement became a living memorial in the form of a terrarium and a card with a sketch of the lost pet.

“Flowers are a lovely everyday gesture. They remind us to live in the moment,” says Rachel. No doubt that thoughtfulness is part of what Create Floral Design offers, too. In the fall Create will present a “Wine and Design Workshop” on making wreaths, as the first of a series of workshops being planned. Check their website for details.

Our Northwest Austin community can consider Create Floral Design as our floral concierge.

CONTACT: 3313 Hancock Drive; createfloraldesign.com; 727-253-5522 for quickest response please text); rachel@createfloraldesign.com; IG@createfloraldesign.



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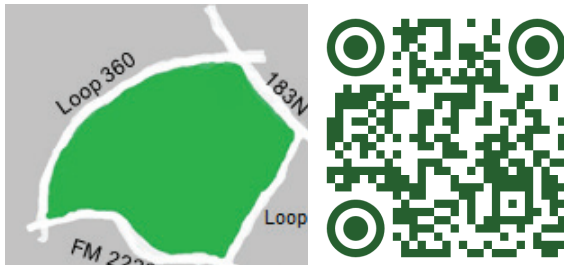
# NORTHWEST AUSTIN CIVIC ASSOCIATION NEWS

## 2024 – 2026 NWACA Board of Directors

President – Joyce Statz  
Vice President – Vicki DeWeese  
Treasurer – Joyce Statz  
Co-Secretaries – Julie Waidelich and Dana Winer

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- Chris Bove
- Carol Dochen
- Jonathan Friedman
- Mike Harreld
- Megan Helmbrecht
- Kevin Kott
- Naresh Kumar
- Mae Levitan
- Ben Luckens
- Teri Schock
- Lori Steinberg
- Emmy Ward

The NWACA Board meets on the third Tuesday of the month except July and December. Please visit our calendar at [www.nwaca.org](http://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](mailto:info@nwaca.org), so that we can put you on the agenda. Board Members can be reached at [info@nwaca.org](mailto:info@nwaca.org), or by phone at 737-235-7325



## Key Contacts

Austin Citywide Information Center

512-974-2000 or 311

Emergency, Austin Police Department  
911

Non-emergency (coyote sightings, compliance)  
311

APD District Rep Officer, Andrew Kabbah  
[andrew.kabbah@austintexas.gov](mailto:andrew.kabbah@austintexas.gov)

APD Crime Report:

internet search APD Chief's Monthly Reports  
District 10 Councilmember, Marc Duchen  
512-974-2110

To get the District 10 monthly newsletter  
[bit.ly/d10newsletters](http://bit.ly/d10newsletters)

Northwest Austin News Publisher

512-483-1708 [Lynette@FourPointsNews.com](mailto:Lynette@FourPointsNews.com)

Northwest Austin News Co-Editors

Joyce Statz, Megan Helmbrecht

## Prevent Oak Wilt

PLAN AHEAD - PRUNE

NOV thru JAN

- Beetles Inactive
- Dormant Season
- Coldest Months



## ARE YOU A NWACA MEMBER?

Receiving the newsletter does not guarantee membership.  
Not sure? Visit [nwaca.org](http://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 – Mick Koffend Earth Day Festival, July 4th parade, Block Parties, 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.

### JOIN TODAY @NWACA.ORG/MEMBERS

#### MEMBERSHIP FORM

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



#### Annual dues \$25

Optional Contributions:

|                             |      |      |       |
|-----------------------------|------|------|-------|
| Fourth of July Parade       | \$10 | \$20 | Other |
| Constable                   | \$10 | \$20 | Other |
| Parks Fund                  | \$10 | \$20 | Other |
| Mick Koffend Earth Day Fund | \$10 | \$20 | Other |

#### To join:

go to [www.nwaca.org](http://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"/> History            | <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](mailto:info@nwaca.org)

## Notice: Proposed Changes to Oak Wilt Fund

By Northwest Austin Civic Association Board

At its May 2025 meeting, the NWACA Board voted to put half of the Oak Wilt fund balance, as of the end of January 2026, into a fund for wildfire prevention. A program to use these funds is yet to be developed, after giving the neighborhood until the end of November 2025, to respond with any opposition.

As context: In 1997, Oak Wilt infected Rockledge Drive and several streets nearby. Neighbors in the area organized a fundraising effort to have trenches made around almost two blocks that were infected. In 1998, there was nearly \$30,000 in excess from what was given for the trenching (including \$5,000 from the City of Austin, since it was their contracted tree trimming crew that brought in the disease on unclean tools). That money was turned over to NWACA to act as custodian. Since that date, NWACA has managed an Oak Wilt account used to reimburse neighbors who need to treat oak wilt on their property. The Oak Wilt Fund has grown to \$38,187, as of June 1, 2025. In the decades since the fund was established, several thousand dollars have been paid out, but in recent years there have been very few requests for reimbursements.

This notice will be posted in the monthly NWACA Newsletter, NWACA Notes, and Facebook. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please email [info@nwaca.org](mailto:info@nwaca.org).

We 🍷 Northwest Austin news!  
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## NWACA 2025 Calendar of Events

These events are as planned as of September 17. As you consider participating, please check first with the organizer.

#### Throughout October

National Night Out Block Parties  
throughout the neighborhood

#### October 4, 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Steck Valley Greenbelt Cleanup

#### October 13 week

Voting for Halloween Decorating Contest  
Winner selected by October 19

#### October 16, 7-8:15 p.m.

Forum on City of Austin Tax Rate Election  
Virtual – multi-neighborhood

#### October 18, 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Bull Creek District Park Cleanup  
Sign up at <https://givepul.se/436xjo>

#### October 18, noon to 2 p.m.

Electronics, etc. Recycling Event  
St. Matthew's Episcopal Church  
8134 Mesa Drive Parking Lot

#### October 21, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

NWACA Board Meeting  
Dell Jewish Community Center Friedel Board Room

#### October 22, 7 p.m.

Parks Committee – virtual

#### October 25, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

National Drug Takeback Day  
Travis County Pct. 2 10409 Burnet Road

#### October 28, 5 p.m.

NWACA Zoning & Transportation Committees virtual

#### November 1, 9 a.m. to noon

It's My Park Day  
Steck Valley Greenbelt – Steck Entrance

#### November 18, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

NWACA Board Meeting  
Dell Jewish Community Center Friedel Board Room

#### November 19, 7 p.m.

Parks Committee – virtual

#### November 25, 5 p.m.

NWACA Zoning & Transportation Committees virtual

#### December

Holiday Decorating Contest





# Finding Ways to Donate Unused Items

By MERRIESSA ANTON, Northwest Austin Civic Association

Many of us have something we want to donate but don't know what organization might need our item. Heartening Austin solves this problem (<https://www.heartening.org>) Kelley Rytlewski, the person who started the website, is interested in reducing items sent to our landfill or shipped overseas.

The Heartening website provides an alphabetical list of local non-profits and the populations they serve by using the menu item Causes. There are more than 50 non-profits listed, including Recycled Reads, Prom Rack, PAWS of Central Texas, and Austin Diaper Bank. You can read about the needs of each non-profit and how and where to donate the items.

Another way to use the website is to click on Items on the home page. There is a prompt for you to indicate the item you want to donate and the website will list all the non-profits looking for that item. Donating to a good cause has never been so easy.

Heartening Austin is passionate about zero waste and promoting sustainability through all that they do. Our unused items don't know that there are new people who need them, so Heartening helps them find their way.

Recently, Heartening has enlarged their program by creating a physical location to collect clothing, shoes, and accessories. The mission is to put clothing back into the community. Donations must be brought inside the warehouse in no more than 2 large trash bags. The warehouse is full of donated items that sell for \$3.00 apiece. They also have a Free Clothing Stand. It is a good place to donate and a great place to shop. Right now, they have Halloween items on display.

Donating clothes can be done anytime the warehouse is open: Wednesday – Friday 11:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. The warehouse is located at 650 Canion Street, Austin, 78752. Volunteers are welcome 7 days a week for a 2-hour shift. Those younger than 16 can volunteer only if accompanied by a parent.

Heartening Austin is passionate about zero waste and promoting sustainability through all that they do. Our unused items don't know that new people need them, so Heartening helps them find their way.

For more information about Heartening Austin go to their Instagram @hearteningaustin or their website <https://www.heartening.org>.



## Recycling Event October 18: Electronics, Styrofoam, and More

By TREE, ENVIRONMENT, AND WILDLIFE COMMITTEE  
Northwest Austin Civic Association

Gather up your outdated computer monitors, old microwaves, iPhones, and blown-out stereo equipment. On Saturday, October 18 from noon to 2 p.m. the St. Matthew's Episcopal Church Mesa Drive parking lot will be the site of the annual NWACA Electronics Recycling 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 wooden 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](mailto:info@nwaca.org).

# October Library Events in the NWACA Area

By MARTHA MILLER, Northwest Austin Civic Association

Saturday, October 25, 2025 (10am-1pm): Join us in the H-E-B deli area for a visit from the Pop-Up Library! Check out some books, pick up a craft kit and get help with the Virtual Library.

### Events at the Yarbrough branch

Wednesday, October 1 & 15 - Sound Bath Meditation (6:30-7:30pm) Enjoy this gentle yoga and sound bath meditation class open to all fitness levels. Adults (18+) only.

Saturday, October 4 - Cricut Inspired Crafts (10:30 – 11:30am)

Join us monthly to create crafts with pre-cut Cricut designs.

Fridays, October 10 & 24 – Adult Morning Social (10am – noon)

Join neighbors and make new friends at this casual social.

Tuesday, October 14 - Game Night at the Library (5:45 -7:45 pm)

Come enjoy any of our wide range of board games including large print games!

Saturday, October 18 - Crafty Adult: Votive Decorating and Candle Making (2-4pm) Do you enjoy crafting or wish to learn? Come and learn with us!

Wednesday, October 22 - Bilingual Chair Yoga with Sana Yoga (10 - 11 am) Enjoy a gentle form of yoga that can be done seated in a chair. Ages 18 and up

Saturday, October 25 - Seed Gathering (1-2pm) Join us to learn about our Seed Collection, gardening, and sustainable living while we process seed donations.

Monday, October 27 - Mending Circle at Yarbrough (6- 7:30 pm) Bring your favorite garments that need some tender loving care. Intended for ages 18 and up

### Events at the Spicewood Springs Branch

Sunday, October 5 - Choir Performance for Hispanic Latino Heritage Month (3:30-4:30pm) Join Mosaica for a moving program of choral music.

Monday, October 6 - Yarn and Yammer (6-7:30pm) Bring your latest project and join our social group while we all work on our projects and chat!

Wednesday, October 1,8,15, 22 & 29 – Free ESL Classes (6-7:30pm)

Sunday, October 12 - Mending Circle (noon-2pm) Bring your favorite garments that need some tender loving care.

Thursdays, October 9 & 23 - Yoga with Tracy (9:30 - 10:30 am) Please bring a thin yoga mat if you have one and wear comfortable clothes. Ages 18 and up.

Sunday, October 19 - The Crafty Adult: Diamond Art Garden Decor! (12:30 - 2 pm) Join us to learn to create décor for your garden! Ages 18 and up

### Events at the Howson Branch

Thursdays, October 2, 9,16, 23 & 30 - Tech Time (10-11am) Learn to download books and use digital Library resources. Bring your tablet, smartphone or eReader for help navigating the Virtual Library, downloading eBooks, audiobooks, digital magazines and more!

Tuesday, October 7 - Get Crafty with Rita Wang (6:15-7:45pm) Join us to make crafts!

Friday, October 3, 17 &24 – Prime Timers: Friday Morning Mah Jong! (10 am- noon) Join us for a fun and friendly gathering for older adults who enjoy games, conversation, and community! Come play, learn, and connect.

Tuesday, October 21 - Roots & Wings Festival: Dig It! The Home Food Forest (6-7:45pm) Join us for a hands-on gardening workshop.

Thursday, October 23 - Howson Book Club (6:30-7:45pm) Join us to discuss the book “Tell Me Everything”

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# MARKET UPDATE



**\$1,092,500**  
MEDIAN SALES PRICE



**\$29,515,830**  
SALES VOLUME



**\$436**  
MEDIAN LIST PRICE/SF



**\$413**  
MEDIAN SALE PRICE/SF



**\$1,100,000**  
MEDIAN LIST PRICE



**59**  
AVERAGE DAYS ON MARKET



**24**  
CLOSED SALES

**NORTHWEST  
HILLS  
AND  
WESTOVER  
HILLS**



SOURCE: ABOR MLS INCLUDING DATA FROM AUGUST 1 - SEPTEMBER 22, 2025 FOR SINGLE FAMILY HOMES. BASED ON NWACA BOUNDARIES: MOPAC/HWY 360/2222/HWY 183

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PROPERTIES AUSTIN



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*Julie Waidelich*

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## Trojan Band Marching 2025

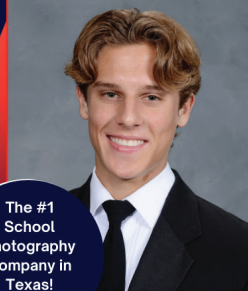


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# Anderson Trojan Volleyball Spotlight

## 2025 Schedule

8/11 vs Round Rock  
 8/12 at Stony Point  
 8/14-16  
 AISD Tournament  
 8/19 vs Westlake  
 8/21-23  
 Sinton Tournament  
 8/26 at Rouse  
 9/2 at Buda Johnson  
 9/4 & 9/6  
 Hays Tournament  
 9/5 at San Marcos  
 9/9 at LASA  
 9/12 vs Crockett  
 9/16 at Cedar Creek  
 9/19 at McCallum  
 9/23 vs Ann Richards  
 9/26 at Bastrop  
 9/30 vs Navarro  
 10/3 vs LASA  
 10/7 at Crockett  
 10/10 vs Cedar Creek  
 10/14 vs McCallum  
 10/17 at Ann Richards  
 10/21 vs Bastrop  
 10/24 at Navarro  
 10/30-11/1 Bi-District  
 11/3-4 Area  
 11/6-8 Regional Semi  
 11/10-11  
 Regional Finals  
 11/15  
 State Semi Finals  
 11/20-22 State



## Q&A Kayla Allen AHS Volleyball Head Coach

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

Our team is a very tight group and they play hard for each other. Our chemistry will be an on court advantage.

2) How do the Trojans stack up in district?

We are stressing with our team to focus on "our best". Every time we step on the floor, we are getting better and playing to our full potential.

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

We are strong offensively so it is important for us to spread the ball around and utilize all of our attackers.

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

Returning - Chloe Frizzle (MB), Kate Leakey (OH), Piper Poage (OH)  
 New - Elaine Harrison (S)

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

Half of our team is involved with the sports med program and when they're not on the gym they are on the football field!

6) Am I missing anything that would be interesting to share with the community?

Anderson High School is currently under construction and will have a new athletic facility in the next few years!

### Anderson - Trojans

| #   | First Name | Last Name    | Grade | Position |
|-----|------------|--------------|-------|----------|
| 1   | Chloe      | Frizzle      | 10    | MB/RS    |
| 2   | Bailey     | Santos       | 12    | S/DS     |
| 3   | Brooklyn   | Vazquez      | 12    | MB/RS    |
| 4   | Taylor     | Watts        | 11    | OH/DS    |
| 5   | Samantha   | Cortez       | 12    | DS/L     |
| 6   | Isabella   | Orozco       | 12    | DS/L     |
| 7   | Kate       | Leakey       | 12    | OH/RS    |
| 8   | Juliet     | Anderson     | 11    | OH/RS    |
| 9   | Julia      | Jedrzejewski | 12    | DS/L     |
| 10  | Bailey     | Johnson      | 12    | OH/DS    |
| 11  | Elaine     | Harrison     | 12    | S/RS     |
| 12  | Evelyn     | Holmes       | 11    | DS/L     |
| 13  | Piper      | Poage        | 11    | OH/RS    |
| 14  | Julyana    | Harris       | 11    | MB/RS    |
| 16  | Henley     | Magee        | 11    | S/DS     |
| Mgr | Lucy       | Doezema      | 10    |          |
| Mgr | Leah       | Rivera       | 10    |          |
| Mgr | Lance      | Hemphill     |       |          |

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**Even on the day of closing, she refused to allow me to sell myself short when we realized the AC was broken when we did a final walk through of the home. She could’ve taken the easy way out, but even then she looked out for her client and their well being. We extended the closing date until the seller got the AC fixed. Then, Dawn came to the closing. The mobile Notary Public was very impressed with her professionalism and he said he hasn’t seen many agents attending their client’s closing.**

**I trust Dawn implicitly. I trust her judgment and her ability to navigate this complex home buying process. I’m very lucky to have a Realtor like Dawn Lanier.” ~Dr. Anjana Philip**



**DAWN LANIER**  
**BBA, ABR, GRI REALTOR®**

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