



# CIRCLE C RANCH NEWSLETTER

Volume 3, Number 1

January 2006

[www.circlecranch.info](http://www.circlecranch.info)

## President's Letter

Dear Neighbors,

I hope you all had a great holiday season. I attended the Circle C kids party last weekend and it looked like everyone had a great time. Unfortunately some of you may have missed the party, as I stated the wrong date for the party in my December article. I apologize for any kids or families who were disappointed at missing the party—this was entirely my fault.

Last year the Association amended our bylaws to allow electronic voting. Steve Urban has been working with a group of volunteers on a project to implement electronic voting for this year. We hope that this will increase participation in our CCHOA elections. We intend this to also decrease the cost of holding elections for CCHOA, as long as we can provide complete access to the process for members who may choose to vote traditionally (early and often) and those who may choose to vote electronically. Thanks to VP Steve Urban, Ernie Schroeder, Richard Relph and Neva Fernandez for working on this.

As I write this you can see evidence of significant work ongoing at the Circle C Swim Center. The pool is being re-plastered, the tiled lane lines are being replaced, we're adding more tiles for additional short-course lanes, and we're having all the underwater lights replaced. Our intention is to have the pool in good shape well before spring.

The CCHOA Board is working actively to hire a new pool manager/aquatics director. I hope that by the time you read this we will have that position filled. We've been fortunate to be able to interview several good candidates. Last month I reported that we were negotiating a new contract with UT/Longhorn Aquatics for the rental of our pool. The target date for signing the contract has been extended to 1 February, so we don't have a deal in place, yet. Thanks to Matt Cano, AE Martin and Carolyn Merritt for working on these two projects, and thanks to the Pool Committee (Sean Tarrant, Kerri Thompson, Annegret Pfeiffer, Jeannie Irwin, Clay Merritt, Jere Fisher and Mike Craig) for providing valuable feedback on this process.

Last month I reported that the **construction for the Kiker expansion was delayed until February 2006**. This problem is not yet resolved. The delay is due to impervious cover issues. The delay increases the risk that the new classrooms may not be completed in time for the 2006-2007 school year. Please email [trustees@austinsd.org](mailto:trustees@austinsd.org) and let them know that we voted for this expansion, we will pay for it, and our kids need it. Thanks for Marian Wallace, Bob Skrobarczyk and Jeff Walker for representing Circle C and southwest Austin for AISD issues.

The official grand opening of the Circle C Fire Station took place on 19 November. Mayor Will Wynn spoke briefly, and the fire station was open for tours. I saw lots of kids having a good time. I believe the station is attractively designed – so not only does it make our neighborhood safer, it complements our homes and landscaping to keep the 'hood lookin' good.

Ed Scruggs has been working hard coordinating efforts by our land use planners including two neighborhood meetings (held on 19 November in Wildflower Park and Vintage Place). He will schedule more meetings in early 2006 to ensure we can plan for neighborhood improvements using as much constructive input as possible.



*Circle C Fire Station Official Grand Opening  
November 19<sup>th</sup>*

The IronKids Triathlon held within Circle C on 20 November (it was a busy weekend!) was a big success also. We've learned that this was the biggest event on the IronKids national tour, with 289 kids competing including athletes from California, Virginia and Veracruz, Mexico!

I'm glad to report that we have again contracted with Terri Giles for financial management services. Steve Urban and Denise Nordstrom solicited competing bids for this service and once again we found that Terri provides the best value and the best price for her services to CCHOA.

I'll describe a few of the things that Terri does for the Association. She prepares statements for all homeowners, and tracks Travis County property assessments. She collects assessments and manages delinquent accounts. She prepares liens as necessary. She manages our bank accounts and disburses funds as directed. She reconciles our accounts

*(Continued on Page 2)*

## IMPORTANT NUMBERS

HOA Mgmt Office .....info@circlecranch.info or 288-8663  
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 Newsletter Publisher  
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### Circle C Amenities

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 Circle C Swim Center.....288-6057  
 Circle C Tennis Club.....Circle\_CTennis@msn.com, 301-8685  
 Golf Course at Circle C Ranch .....288-4297

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 Carolyn Merritt ..... Director  
 Contact Information..... Email: directors@circlecranch.info

### President's Letter - (Continued from Page 1)

regularly. She distributes a financial report to the board every month. She coordinates with the board on prudent investment of our funds. She works with the board in annual budget development. She works with a CPA to ensure we are paying appropriate taxes. She handles questions from individual homeowners. She works with title companies to provide smooth property transfers. And finally she manages Association financial records. Terri does all this with a smile.

The CCHOA Board of Directors comprises seven Circle C homeowners who have volunteered their time to run the association. Two positions on the board will be open for election or re-election this year (Steve Urban and I). The election will be held at our annual meeting in March. If you are interested in volunteering for the neighborhood and serving as a director, please review the article from the nominating committee inside the newsletter.

Your Neighbor,  
 Quentin Fennessy

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## CCHOA Announcements

### Access to Sport Court at Pool

*Submitted by Denise Nordstrom*

In the past month we have had to ask several groups of children that were playing basketball to leave the swim center facility. The Swim Center is currently closed for renovations and therefore not open to residents. Kids are climbing over the wrought iron fence and this is an obvious safety concern. There is also machinery and cords, etc. due to the work being done so it is not a very safe environment for anyone especially children.

### Nominating Committee Announcement

*Submitted by Nominating Committee*

The Nominating Committee is made up of resident volunteers and one board member and their charge is to facilitate the election of directors to the board. The 2006 Committee members are A.E. Martin (Board Secretary) and residents Grady Bible and Carol de Solla.


#### Board Election Process

The Nominating Committee is taking nominations for two open board positions that will be up for election at the March 22 Annual Meeting of the CCHOA. You can submit names by one of the following ways:

- Phone: 288-8663
- Email: [info@circlecranch.info](mailto:info@circlecranch.info)
- Fax: 288-6488

The **deadline** for submitting nominations is **February 20, 2005.**

Please let the Committee know if you have any questions regarding this process at [elections@circlecranch.com](mailto:elections@circlecranch.com)



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## CCHOA Announcements *Continued*

### BFI Trash and Recycling Schedule

*Submitted by Denise Nordstrom*

BFI will pick up trash and recycling on your scheduled day since the Christmas and New Year Holiday's fall on the weekend. They will pick up your Christmas tree for two weeks after Christmas IF they are cut into 4 foot lengths and placed at the curb. Trees that are not in 4 foot lengths WILL NOT be picked up. If you have questions regarding your trash or recycling, please contact BFI at 247-5647.



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### Circle C To Pilot

#### New City Water Quality Program

*Submitted by Kathy Shea*

The City of Austin has created a new education program called the Green Neighbor that offers Austinites a comprehensive list of things each of us can do to help protect water quality.

Green Neighbor includes a booklet with a Clean Creek Challenge — a "game" that allows you to get points for your earth-wise behavior. When you receive 50 points, individuals and families get t-shirts and passes to Barton Springs pool. There is also a component that allows an entire neighborhood to qualify. Awards for neighborhoods include potential beautification grants, recognition before Council, Scoop the Poop boxes, etc. Most importantly though, you become a steward of the environment.

Your board has agreed to let us pilot the program in Circle C. We will be one of three pilot projects throughout the city to test out the concept and to provide us comments on its effectiveness. We'll be mailing Green Neighbor packets to you in the near future and then after six weeks we'll ask you to fill out a brief postcard survey on the effectiveness of the program.

We hope you will participate in the pilot. With your help we can protect our waterways — an essential ingredient in preserving our quality of life in Austin. For more information log onto: [http://www.cityofaustin.org/watershed/greenneighbor/gn\\_main.htm](http://www.cityofaustin.org/watershed/greenneighbor/gn_main.htm) or call 974-2446.



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## CCHOA Announcements *Continued*

### Circle C Landscape Update

*Submitted by Susan Hoover*

The following is an excerpt from an article that was prepared to explain the revised landscape model for Circle C Ranch. I thought it would be informative for homeowners. You can access more information on the landscape model and resources for homeowners on the Circle C Ranch website at [www.circlecranch.info](http://www.circlecranch.info) in the landscape and architecture section.

Since its inception in the mid-1980s, extensive landscaping on the major boulevards has been a focal point of the Circle C Ranch community. Due to its strategic location on the Edwards Aquifer, Circle C Ranch was a battleground between environmentalists and landowners over development rights for a decade. As settlement agreements were reached between landowners and the City of Austin, the Circle C Homeowners Association evaluated its role as an environmental steward for the community. In 2000, the Association



**Circle C Ranch Green Community  
Landscape Model**

made a commitment to develop and promote the best environmental landscape practices on the commons areas and throughout the Circle C Ranch.

Circle C Landscape LLC, as landscape services provider for the Association,

developed a new landscape model that put environmental, conservation and water quality issues first. The Association requires that all new areas coming into the Association follow the model, and devotes significant annual funds to restoration of existing commons areas to meet its environmental goals.

#### **Goals and Implementation:**

##### **1) Provide Maximum Water Conservation for the Commons Areas.**

Implementation: Review and upgrade irrigation systems (30 controllers, 450 valves, and over 7,000 heads) to ensure maximum efficiency. Utilize evapo-transpiration data, targeted spray heads, drip irrigation, accurate rain sensors, and effective monitoring for leaks.

##### **2) Reduce Turf Areas; Utilize Drought Tolerant Turf.**

*(Continued on Page 7)*



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## CCHOA Announcements *Continued*

### **Landscape - (Continued from Page 6)**

- Implementation: Require turf reduction in new areas, allowing only a small strip of turf between the curb and the sidewalk on major boulevards. Restored areas must have a turf reduction component. Turf must be zoysia or buffalo sod.
- 3) Utilize Drought Tolerant Native, Sustainable, and Diversified Plantings with Environmentally Beneficial Planting Methods.  
Implementation: Require installed plant species to comply with appropriate species list generated by the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center and the City of Austin Grow Green program. Prohibit plants from the Texas Department of Agriculture invasive plant list. Mulch to a 3" depth with recycled materials; encourage soil recycling. Adopt a wildflower planting program throughout.
- 4) Adopt an Integrated Pest Management Plan.  
Implementation: Through the City of Austin an IPM was developed and adopted and required on all commons areas and for all builders and developers.
- 5) Reduce Nitrogen Use.  
Implementation: Require soils tests annually and adjust fertilization to provide minimum amounts of nitrogen. Leave lawn clippings to assist in nitrogen re-use.

### 6) Plant Diversified Trees.

Implementation: Devote funds on an annual basis to increase tree diversity. Require builders to plant diversified trees, and provide information to homeowners of appropriate species.

### 7) Limit Native Vegetation Removal by New Builders.

Implementation: Require compliance with adopted lot clearing policy allowing only hand clearing of selected brush on new lots. Require on-site chipping and recycling of materials.

### 8) Work with Non-residential Developers on Environmentally Beneficial Landscape.

Implementation: The Association supports commercial development within the community and has worked with Stratus Properties (owner) and the City of Austin on adoption of strict building standards including a green building covenant, with appropriate landscape requirements, for non-residential development.

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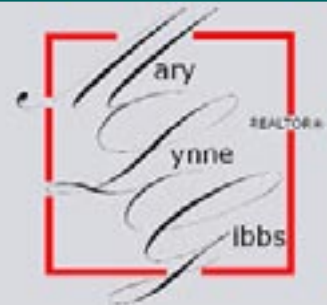
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## CCHOA Announcements *Continued*

### Wireless Network Security

*Submitted by Chris Compton*

From my home, I detect three unsecured wireless networks. I've commented on this to neighbors, and it's clear my experience is no exception. In the material that follows, I will provide you a high level review of wireless networking security. With it, I hope to encourage everyone to sufficiently lock down their wireless home network.

An unsecured network places home owners at risk. First, anyone in close proximity can use the network's internet access, and if something illegal is done (e.g. cyber stalking, spam, transmitting viruses), it will trace back to the homeowner. Second, the network can be monitored. Unfortunately many ubiquitous internet applications do not transmit data encrypted. So user IDs and Passwords are easily grabbed through monitoring.

In general, there are two security standards for securing wireless networks. The original standard is called WEP, but it has been found to be deficient. (i.e. there are lots of hacker tools to break it) Fortunately another standard emerged with the acronym WPA. Using a key (think secret phrase), it encrypts wireless network traffic. The version used in home networks uses one universal key for all computers. A version used in large businesses assigns a different key for each computer for each connection.

To step away from geek speak, my best analogy is that of car keys. An unsecured wireless network is like a brand new car with the keys in the ignition and the windows rolled down. A secured WEP network is that same car with the windows rolled up. A WPA secured network would be that same car with the keys in your pocket.

Here's a short list of WEP security measures.

1) Encryption

Always good.

2) MAC Address filtering

Every network card, wired or wireless, has a unique ID called the MAC address. With this feature, you recognize which of these IDs you allow.

3) Stop SSID transmission

Your network has a name, and out of the box, your wireless network router will probably broadcast this. Stop this.

4) Change your network name

Out of the box, your wireless network router has a default network name. (e.g. "default", "dlink"..) All but hackers will need that name to connect. If you're not transmitting that name,

*(Continued on Page 9)*

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## CCHOA Announcements *Continued*

### **Wireless Network - (Continued from Page 8)**

Remember, WEP security is considered weak. None of these measures are truly effective. Unless one of your neighbors is a hacker, it will be sufficient deterrent to using your wireless network.

As for WPA security, your options are more straightforward. You can specify a key (again, think pass phrase), and with this, access is only possible knowing the key. The best passwords are long and random. As with passwords, don't use anything commonplace, like passages from books or poems. And change it from time to time.

Regardless of what security you implement, alter your administrator password on your wireless router or access point. Failure to do so will allow others to control your network. (possibly even excluding your computers from your network – OUCH!)

To keep apprised of recent security trends and discoveries, I recommend podcasts and web pages from Steve Gibson. He has been the common man's security advocate on many issues. For good WPA keys, he has provided the following web page: <http://www.grc.com/pass>

He also has weekly podcasts with Leo LaPorte, and many episodes have been spent elaborating how to secure wireless networks.

With these tools, you have the basics for securing your wireless network from unwanted use or monitoring. For more details, see the documentation of your wireless router or access point. Encryption

of any sort will require modification to both access points and the computers using wireless networking. So review the capabilities of all devices before implementing anything new.

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## Help Plan Our New Pool / Amenities Center

January marks the beginning of the home stretch in our amenities planning. The most high profile event will be the Circle C Town Hall Meeting to help plan the new Swim Center and Amenities Complex. The meeting – open to all Circle C residents – is scheduled at Kiker from **7-9 PM on January 19, 2006**.

Our amenities committee will present examples of what neighboring communities have done with their pools and amenities centers and explore our available options. A critical element of this meeting will be to collect your thoughts and ideas on the new facility. The data we collect will be used by our planning firm, RVI, in the creation of the conceptual plan. The plan, to include a variety of conceptual sketches, will be presented at the annual neighborhood meeting in March. We invite anyone who has even a passing interest in pool issues to attend. Even if you've never used our current facility but have an interest in shaping what will undoubtedly be our most ambitious project – your input will be valued.



In November, RVI architects Barbara Austin and Deanne Williams met with more than 50 residents of Wildflower Park and Vintage Place to discuss the park and playscape plans for those individual neighborhoods. Ms. Austin reports the input received was just what they were looking for and will play a major role in shaping the planning effort. If you live in either Wildflower Park or Vintage Place and still wish to share your views on these projects, you may e-mail Ms. Austin at [\*\*baustin@rviplanning.com\*\*](mailto:baustin@rviplanning.com).

In the meantime, a number of other locations have been identified as possible sites for pocket parks or smaller playscapes. These include the corner of Aden Lane and Escarpment and land near the mail kiosk in Park Place. Other possible sites are near mail kiosks along South Bay, Quincy Cove and Magenta. Final decisions on whether these areas will be included in the conceptual plan are pending – as RVI examines their suitability for development. RVI is also looking at ways to open up our current swim center to make the green space and the basketball court more accessible to residents not necessarily

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## CCHOA Clubs & Announcements

### Jack's Friends

*Submitted by Amy Turner*

My name is Amy Turner and I am the founder of Jack's Friends Foundation. My love for animals began the day I was born. There are family photos of me with a dog and cat beside me before I could walk. My love for animals grew with me through the years, as well my sense of responsibility in keeping them safe, happy and healthy. I started Jack's Friends Foundation to assist families who need help finding their beloved pets by offering rewards to those who find them. Our goal is to help our pets return home safely.

I started this Foundation after a chance meeting with Robin and Paul Cohen. The Cohens told my husband and me about the brutal killing of their dog Jack. He was killed in the greenbelt behind our homes in Circle C Ranch. Both my husband and I were mortified by their story and further shocked that it had taken place in our community. I went out to the site where Jack was killed, and once again the next day. It was on my second trip that I made the decision I had to act personally and do something in response to this heinous crime. I began by building a reward and would offer the money to anyone who would come forward and give me information leading to the arrest and conviction of the individual responsible.

Tragically, I hear story after story of the inhuman treatment and

senseless killing of animals. These stories always leave me with a great sense of sadness, mixed with an immense feeling of helplessness. But never before had I heard of such an evil act being committed in my own neighborhood. Because this crime was committed within the community where I live, I'm not only concerned for the safety of our beloved pets in Circle C, but also for the families that live here. I spent many days talking to as many people as possible about the seriousness of this crime and the mentality of the individual that could do such a thing. I have faced some resistance, and that resistance concerns me. The lack of concern is why these kinds of things are allowed to happen. However, I'm not one to stand on the side and let this situation pass by without affecting me. I will continue to bring awareness through this website and my voice. The person responsible for killing Jack has no idea what they have unleashed in me. I, with others in my community who share my concern, are ready for the challenge of finding the individual lurking in our neighborhood, looking for another victim. It is just a matter of time until the kind of individual capable of committing animal abuse and executions will escalate to harming a human being. This perpetrator must be caught.

*(Continued on Page 11)*

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## CCHOA Clubs & Announcements *Continued*

### Jack's Friends - (Continued from Page 10)

I need help in finding Jack's killer. As a resident of the Circle C community, I'm asking everyone who lives here to gather up their courage and channel it into action. I ask that you use the forum to report pet disappearances in your neighborhood. You may also post information on other criminal behavior. With your help, we can find the person who is responsible for this senseless crime on an innocent, friendly dog. You can give your information anonymously to the Cohens, or to me, but we created Jack's Friends website for the community's benefit and to share what we know openly and publicly. We hope to never have to hear another tragic story of our pets being found dead. If the unfortunate happens, then the Foundation will offer rewards for information leading to convictions of those responsible.

Jack's Friends Foundation is a non-profit organization that was created for the purposes of working together to keep our community and families safe. And we fondly acknowledge that our pets are part of our families... like Jack was. I will personally persevere through all obstacles until I find who killed Jack. My courage is in full force.

Sincerely,

Amy Turner

Founder - Jack's Friends Foundation

<http://www.Jacks-Friends.org>

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## Protect Your *Family*

As we start the New Year, now is an excellent time to take a moment and check your records for the following documents:

- A Will
- Durable Statutory Power of Attorney
- Medical Power of Attorney
- A Living Will
- HIPAA Release

Even if you have these documents, it may be time to update to reflect your current family situation. I encourage you to contact me to schedule a review of your estate plan. As an added convenience, we can either meet in my office or your home.

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## CCHOA Clubs & Announcements *Continued*

### Park West HOA News

*Submitted by Kathy Jedrzejewicz*

Happy New Year! We hope that all of you had a joyful holiday season and are energized to get going with the New Year! We are proud to say that Park West accomplished much in 2005, and we look forward to continued success in 2006.

Twenty of our residents got a fantastic start to the holiday season as the Park West Theater Group attended Zachary Scott Theater's hit Christmas spectacular *Rockin' Christmas Party* on December 11<sup>th</sup>. Later that day, over 50 neighbors visited with each other at the Park West Holiday Celebration! We gathered beside the (empty!) Circle C swimming pool for hot chocolate, hot spiced cider, coffee and yummy home-baked pastries. We thank the Bowie High School Show Choir for filling the air with the wonderful sounds of holiday music. Our chilly evening concluded with a visit from Santa Claus, who brought a sack full of gifts!

Did you know that Park West has at least two families who are home-schooling their children? Be aware that we do have children in the neighborhood throughout the day, and please drive no more than 25 mph on our streets.

Our Landscape Committee is to be congratulated on meeting their objective for 2005: we've signed a new landscape contract with

Greener Texas, Inc., which will go into effect on January 1, 2006! A letter will be mailed to you soon with the details.

The Park West annual homeowner's meeting will be held Tuesday, February 7<sup>th</sup> at Kiker Elementary School. Sign-in starts at 6:30 PM, with the meeting starting promptly at 7:00 PM. Agenda items will include street parking, yard art, speeding, animals, landscaping and monthly fees. We will review expenses for 2005 and the accomplishments we've made as well as our plans for this year with approval of the 2006 budget.

This is an important meeting as we will be voting on three open Board of Director positions, bringing the total number of board members to five. The Nominating Committee is interviewing applicants for these positions and will make their recommendations, and nominations will be taken from the floor at the meeting. Homeowners who are up-to-date on their HOA dues are eligible to vote.

You will receive two mailings this month that will include: official notice of the annual meeting, the meeting agenda, 2005 expenses and proposed 2006 budget, minutes of the February 2005 HOA

*(Continued on Page 15)*

# Resolved.

This is the year to *get your investments* in order.

If you keep only one new year's resolution, make it one that's designed to last a lifetime. Resolve to create and implement an investment strategy to help you achieve your long-term financial goals. Then review and revise it on at least an annual basis.

Do something positive for yourself this January. Call me today for a no cost, no obligation portfolio review. Together we can create the plan that's right for you based on your current situation, objectives and risk tolerance.



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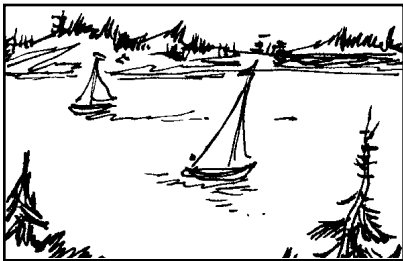


## CCHOA Clubs & Announcements *Continued*

### Park West HOW - (Continued from Page 14)

meeting, a homeowner information update form, and landscape information. Please be on the lookout for these mailings and make sure to read everything carefully. We look forward to seeing you at the meeting!

Please be aware of the following HOA rules that apply to all Circle C and Park West residents. As noted in recent Circle C Newsletters, all residents must store trash containers out of sight from the street. All residents walking dogs are required to clean up after their pets per City of Austin ordinances; the west end of Tasajillo Trail has several messy lawns. Austin police are giving tickets to dog-walking residents ignoring this law.



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"The analysis Kitty prepared helped us understand the value of our house and our neighborhood. She walked us through all the details and was very knowledgeable and professional about the entire process."

"Kitty made the best use of my time. She had the knowledge, resources and kindness to walk me through what could have been a harrowing experience"

"My wife and I wanted to tell you that you are a pleasure to work with...you are pleasant, friendly, knowledgeable...willing to find the answer...not too pushy...thanks."

*I'm a long-time Circle C resident who has aggressively helped hundreds of people throughout Austin buy and sell their homes. In this competitive market you need an experienced professional who can help you sell your Circle C home in minimum time for the best price. Contact me for a market analysis and my strategy to sell your home quickly.*

Mobile: (512) 825-9109 Fax: (512) 301-6636

E-mail: [kittyfowler@austin.rr.com](mailto:kittyfowler@austin.rr.com)

## CCHOA Clubs & Announcements *Continued*

### Circle C Area Professionals Business Referral Group

*Submitted by Bob McKenna, Circle C Resident*

**BNI, Business Network International**, is a business and professional networking organization that offers its members the opportunity to share ideas, contacts and most importantly referrals. There are more than 20 active chapters in Central Texas and 3,600 worldwide. Last year alone, BNI generated **3.6 Million referrals** resulting in over **\$1.5 Billion** dollars worth of business for its members.

The Circle C area BNI chapter (The Live Oak Network) is a non-competitive referral organization that admits one member per professional category – therefore, once you’ve joined a chapter you’ve essentially eliminated your competition!

The Circle C area chapter is growing again! A variety of professional categories are open including those in residential home services, personal health care, marketing & branding, event planning and business support sectors. Our chapter membership should cover it all from Plumbers and Electricians to Doctors and Lawyers. **We are looking for one enthusiastic, hard working and honest individual from every profession to join our “lively” group!**

If you, a friend, family member or neighbor is interested in learning more about building their business by referral, check us out – there

is no obligation to join.

The Live Oak Network

Wednesday – 8:00 to 9:30am

The Golf Club at Circle C Ranch

7401 Highway 45, Austin, Texas 78739

The \$10.00 meeting fee is tax deductible and includes a healthy breakfast.

Bring at least 30 business cards to hand out to our members. For more information email [Bob@AustinReps.com](mailto:Bob@AustinReps.com), or call 288-8088.

### ***Classified Ads***

**Personal classifieds** (one time sell items, such as a used bike...) run at no charge to Circle C Ranch residents, limit 30 words, please e-mail to [info@circlecranch.info](mailto:info@circlecranch.info).

**Business classifieds** (offering a service or product line for profit) are \$45, limit 40 words, please contact Peel, Inc. Sales Office @ 512-989-8905 or [advertising@PEELinc.com](mailto:advertising@PEELinc.com).

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Tony Ragan  
Owner/Circle C Resident



## Circle C Amenities

### The Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

The Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center's 2006 Docent Training program starts on January 19, 2006. Deadline for registration is Friday, January 6, 2006.

Wildflower Center docents are a special group of volunteers who choose to expand their knowledge of the Wildflower Center's mission and the natural heritage of Central Texas to better represent the Center and serve the public. They answer questions in the Visitors Gallery, give tours, work with children's groups, and generally serve as the Center's "ambassadors" to visitors from all over the world. Docent training consists of eight weeks (48 hours) of classroom and field study followed by 24 hours of experiential learning. Core components of the program include: Natural History of Central Texas, Restoration Ecology, The Center's History and Mission, Mrs. Johnson's Legacy, Botany, Native Plant Horticulture, Landscaping and Gardening. The first eight-week portion of classroom portion of training, which covers a range of topics including basic botany, plant conservation, and the legacy of Lady Bird Johnson, is held Thursdays, 9am - 3:30 pm, beginning January 19, through March 9. Part II, the self-scheduled experiential training, follows Part I and concludes with graduation in mid-May.

There is a materials fee of \$65 for members and \$100 for non-members. The non-member's fee includes a one-year individual membership to the Center.

For more information, visit the Docent Training Page under "Volunteer With Us" at [www.wildflower.org](http://www.wildflower.org), call 292-4200 ext. 102 or email [megan@wildflower.org](mailto:megan@wildflower.org).

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# CIRCLE C RANCH

## Circle C Amenities *Continued*

### The Golf Club at Circle C Ranch

*Submitted by Denise Fisher*

**Membership opportunities available** – Our membership program is your chance to experience The Golf Club at Circle C in a whole new way! Annual memberships are available in several categories including single memberships, family memberships, range memberships and corporate memberships. Limited opportunities are available until March 2006 so call now to learn more about what we have to offer you, your family and your business in 2006.

**Follow Me to Circle C for improved course conditions in 2006!** We are excited to announce that the irrigation renovation project is in full swing! The process will involve the replacement of the existing system with a more efficient system that requires less water and less man power and will result in improved course conditions. One hole will be down each week with no other interruption in play. Renovation rate is in effect during the process which is expected to be complete by March 15, 2006. Call the Pro Shop at 288.4297 for more information or visit [www.thegolfclubatcirclec.com](http://www.thegolfclubatcirclec.com)

**Facility Closed Monday, January 2<sup>nd</sup>-Friday, January 6<sup>th</sup>** – We've got lots of other improvements happening at the club in January including a new property entrance, redesigned parking lot with bag drop and renovations and remodeling to the clubhouse, grill and pro shop. Come see our new and improved look!



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## Recipe of the Month

### Chicken Enchilada Soup

Sauté in large pan:

1 small onion, chopped 1 clove garlic, crushed  
2 Tbs. vegetable oil

Add & simmer 1 hour:

1 - 4 oz. can chopped chilis, undrained  
1 - 14 ½ oz. can beef broth  
1 - 14 ½ oz. can chicken broth  
1 - 10 ¾ oz. cream chicken soup  
1 - 6 ¾ oz. can chicken  
1 ½ cup water  
1 Tbs. steak sauce  
2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce  
1 tsp. cumin  
1 tsp. chili powder  
1/8 tsp. pepper

Then add and simmer for 10 more minutes:

3 cups shredded cheese  
paprika  
6 corn tortillas, cut in 1/2" strips

Serve with tortilla chips.



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## Texas Events - January

**1—FREDERICKSBURG: Hill Country Regional Lighting Trail** (Began Dec. 1.) [www.tex-fest.com](http://www.tex-fest.com) 830/997-8515 or 866/839-3378

**1—JOHNSON CITY: Lights Spectacular** [www.lbjcountry.com](http://www.lbjcountry.com) 830/868-5700 or 830/868-7684

**1—KYLE: Polar Bear Swim** Hours are 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Kyle Pool. [www.cityofkyle.com/parks](http://www.cityofkyle.com/parks) 512/268-5341

**1—TAYLOR: Lights of the Blackland** (Began Dec. 1.) [www.taylorchamber.org](http://www.taylorchamber.org) 512/352-6364

**1—WIMBERLEY: Bullockville Lighting Display** RR 2325 at Bullockville. (Began Dec. 1.) [www.wimberley.org/creeksidechristmas](http://www.wimberley.org/creeksidechristmas) 512/847-2201

**1—WIMBERLEY: Creekside Christmas Hill Country Trail of Lights** (Began Dec. 1.) [www.wimberley.org](http://www.wimberley.org) 512/847-2201

**1—WIMBERLEY: EmilyAnn Tree Lighting & Trail of Lights** EmilyAnn Theatre. (Began Dec. 1.) [www.emilyann.org](http://www.emilyann.org) 512/847-6969

**1—YORKTOWN: Majestic Lights Over Coletto Creek** (Began Dec. 1.) [www.yorktowntx.com](http://www.yorktowntx.com) 361/564-2661

**1-5—WIMBERLEY: Cowboy Christmas at Pioneer Town** (Began Dec. 1.) 512/847-3909

**1-10—HONDO: Parkway Christmas Cards Along US 90** 830/426-3037

**5—ROUND ROCK: Main Street Artisan Stroll** Talented artists, musicians and performers fill the sidewalks each month, displaying wares and entertaining strollers. Hours are 5 to 9 p.m. Historic Downtown. [www.mainstreetstroll.com](http://www.mainstreetstroll.com) 512/341-8788

**5-7—BANDERA: Bandera County Junior Livestock Show** Show features livestock raised by area 4-H and FFA students. Mansfield Park. E-mail: [bandera@hctc.net](mailto:bandera@hctc.net) • [www.banderacowboycapital.com](http://www.banderacowboycapital.com) 800/364-3833

**5-7—MASON: Mason County Junior Livestock Show** Fort Mason City Park. E-mail: [masoncoc@hctc.net](mailto:masoncoc@hctc.net) • [www.masontxcoc.com](http://www.masontxcoc.com) 325/347-5758

**6-8—ROUND ROCK: Seventh Annual Round Rock Invitational Softball Tournament** This is a high school girls softball tournament. Old Settlers Park. [www.eteamz.active.com/roundrocksoftball](http://www.eteamz.active.com/roundrocksoftball) 512/826-0859

**7—FREDERICKSBURG: Fredericksburg Peach Opry** This is Branson-style opry show with music, comedy entertainment and fun for the whole family. [www.texaspianoman.com](http://www.texaspianoman.com) 210/831-3272

**7-15—AUSTIN: Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk** Austin Lyric Opera's presentation follows a young bride, Katerina, who — caught between a loveless marriage and her manipulative lover — is driven to kill. She is then betrayed by the man for whom she sacrificed everything. Bass Concert Hall. [www.austinlyricopera.org](http://www.austinlyricopera.org) 512/472-5992

**10—KINGSLAND: Winter Texan Dinners** Kingsland Community Center. 325/388-6211

**13—AUSTIN: Larry Gatlin** Begins at 7 and 9:30 p.m. One World Theatre. 512/329-6753

**13-14—FREDERICKSBURG: Gillespie County Livestock Show** FFA and 4-H youth of the community exhibit and sell their projects. Grand Champion Run is Friday evening. Sale is Saturday. Gillespie County Fairgrounds. 830/997-3452

**13-14—OZONA: Crockett County 4-H Livestock Show** FFA and 4-H kids show rabbits, sheep, goats and pigs. Begins at 8 a.m. Crockett County Fair Park Convention Center. 325/392-2721

**14—HONDO: Ed Fisher Memorial Auto Show** Includes old, new, custom, low riders, street rods and restored cars. Downtown Old RR Loading Dock. E-mail: [hondochamber@ev1.net](mailto:hondochamber@ev1.net) • [www.hondochamber.com](http://www.hondochamber.com) 830/426-3037

**14-15—AUSTIN: Citywide Garage Sale** Palmer Events Center. E-mail: [info@cwgs.com](mailto:info@cwgs.com) • [www.cwgs.com](http://www.cwgs.com) 877/840-3829

**16—AUSTIN: Martin Luther King Jr. March & Festival** More than 10,000 march to the historic campus of Huston-Tillotson University for an outdoor festival in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on this national holiday. Festival features performances by some of the city's finest jazz, blues and gospel musicians. 900 Chicon St. [www.htu.edu](http://www.htu.edu) 512/505-3006

**18-21—KERRVILLE: Hill Country District Junior Livestock Show** FFA and 4-H members from Kerr and 31 surrounding counties compete. Hill Country Youth Exhibit Center, Hwy. 27 E. 830/792-6262 or 830/257-6568

**19-21—GOLDTHWAITE: Mills County Youth Fair** 325/648-3619

**19-Mar. 12—AUSTIN: Urinetown the Musical** Winner of three Tony Awards, this tale of greed, love and revolution is filled with surprises and laughs as the earth's water supply causes a government-enforced ban on private toilets. This musical pokes fun at and pays homage to Broadway. Zachary Scott Theatre. [www.zachscott.com](http://www.zachscott.com) 512/476-0541

**20-21—AUSTIN: The Austin Symphony** Includes Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, violinist, and Peter Bay, conductor. Part of the Shostakovich 100: Austin Celebrates festival. Begins at 8 p.m. Bass Concert Hall. [www.austinsymphony.org](http://www.austinsymphony.org) 888/462-3787 or 512/476-6064

**20-21—SAN SABA: Youth Livestock Show & Sale** Youth Stock Show Barn. E-mail: [civicntr@centex.net](mailto:civicntr@centex.net) • [www.sansabachamber.com](http://www.sansabachamber.com) 325/372-5141

**20-22—FREDERICKSBURG: Trade Days** Includes more than 300 vendors, five barns, acres of antiques and more, biergarten and music. Hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday. Hwy. 290 E. across from Wildseed Farms. [www.fbgtradedays.com](http://www.fbgtradedays.com) 830/990-4900 or 210/846-4094

**21—AUSTIN: Ana Vidovic** Performance is presented by the Austin Classical Guitar Society. Northwest Hills United Methodist Church. [www.austinclassicalguitar.org](http://www.austinclassicalguitar.org) 512/300-ACGS

**21—AUSTIN: Jumpin' Jive featuring the Austin Jazz Workshop** This program, dedicated to the great African-American stride pianist, is fun for all ages and includes audience participation. Begins at noon. One World Theatre, 7701 Bee Caves Road. 512/329-6753

**21—KERRVILLE: Michel Lauziere** Lauziere is a combination of inventor, acrobatic, comedian, musician and juggler. Kathleen C. Cailloux Theater, 910 Main St. [www.kpas.org](http://www.kpas.org) 830/896-5727

**21—NEW BRAUNFELS: Manhattan Rhythm Kings** Three uniquely talented and versatile singers and dancers from Broadway will combine spectacular tap dancing, close harmony singing and virtuosic instrumental work in one explosive performance. Begins at 7:30 p.m. Brauntex Performing Arts Theatre, 290 W. San Antonio St. [www.brauntex.org](http://www.brauntex.org) 830/627-0808

**21-22—FREDERICKSBURG: 37th Annual Hill Country Gem & Mineral Show** Includes jewelry, gems, minerals, fossils, meteorites, exhibits and demonstrations. Hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday. Pioneer Pavilion at Lady Bird Johnson Park, Hwy. 16 S. 830/669-2639

**25—AUSTIN: Andrew Heller, Singer** This is part of the After Five series, which showcases people who balance extraordinary professional achievement with thriving musical careers. Begins at 8 p.m. McCullough Theatre. [www.utpac.org](http://www.utpac.org) 512/471-1444 or 800/687-6010

**26—AUSTIN: Delfos Contemporary Dance** Through great agility and dynamic movement, a Delfos performance is a laboratory of images that convey both the intimacy of dance and the world of invention that emerges

(Continued on Page 21)

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# CIRCLE C RANCH

## Texas Events - (Continued from Page 21)

from it. Begins at 8 p.m. B. Iden Payne Theatre. [www.utpac.org](http://www.utpac.org) 512/471-1444 or 800/687-6010

**26-27—HONDO: Medina County Junior Livestock Show** Medina County Fairgrounds. [www.hondochamber.com](http://www.hondochamber.com) 830/741-6180

**27—AUSTIN: A. Mozart Fest Presents: Mozart 250th Year Lecture by Paul Badura-Skoda** World-renowned Viennese pianist presents a lecture on Mozart. Gala reception follows. Begins at 7 p.m. The First Baptist Church of Austin, 901 Trinity St. [www.amozartfest.org](http://www.amozartfest.org) 866/468-7621

**27—AUSTIN: Stanley Jordon** His extensive use of tapping, playing the guitar like a piano, is a major technical breakthrough. Shows are 7 and 9:30 p.m. One World Theatre. 512/329-6753

**27-29—AUSTIN: Mozart Madness** Celebrates the 250th anniversary of Mozart's birth with an all-Mozart program. [www.austinchambermusic.org](http://www.austinchambermusic.org) 512/454-0026

**28—AUSTIN: Family Concert** Features Britten's *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*. Begins at 2 p.m. Bass Concert Hall. [www.austinsymphony.org](http://www.austinsymphony.org) 888/462-3787 or 512/476-6064

**28—BANDERA: Wild Game Dinner** Features all types of game, including white-tail deer, bear, elk and antelope. Food is served from 4 to 7 p.m. Grace Lutheran Church. E-mail: [bandera@hctc.net](mailto:bandera@hctc.net) • [www.banderacowboycapital.com](http://www.banderacowboycapital.com)

**28—NEW BRAUNFELS: The Huntsman's Ball** Benefits the Comal County Chapter of the American Cancer Society. Features Honorary Chairman Lance Berkman, live entertainment by Dysfunkshun Junkshun, auctions, The Tree of Hope and more. Begins at 7 p.m. Kay Harrison Auditorium. 830/625-3880

**29—AUSTIN: 3M Half Marathon & Relay** The 13.1-mile course winds north to south through an urban setting and is mostly downhill Includes a two-leg relay and a 50-yard non-competitive Kids Fun Run for children age 10 and younger. Gateway Shopping Center to House Park Field. [www.3M.com/races](http://www.3M.com/races) 512/984-RACE

**29—AUSTIN: A. Mozart Fest Presents: Mozart 250th Birthday Concert with Paul Badura-Skoda** World-renowned Viennese pianist performs Mozart's *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik* and concertos K.451 and K.365 with pianist Mary Robbins. Begins at 3 p.m. The First Baptist Church of Austin, 901 Trinity St. [www.amozartfest.org](http://www.amozartfest.org) 866/468-7621

*Texas Events has been published with the permission of the Texas Department of Transportation. All events are taken in part from the Texas Events Calendar. All dates for events were correct at the time of publication and are subject to change.*

## Teenage Job Seekers

Teenage Job Seekers  
not available online.

### Attention Teenagers

The **Teenage Job Seekers** listing service is offered free of charge to all Circle C Ranch teenagers seeking work. Submit your name and information to [info@circlecranch.info](mailto:info@circlecranch.info) by the 12<sup>th</sup> of the month!



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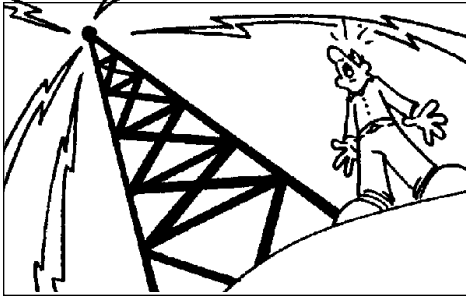
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# Fit Facts™

FROM THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EXERCISE®

## How To Choose The Right Personal Trainer

### **Certification is the first thing to look for**

A personal trainer should be certified because that's your assurance you're working with a trainer who has the knowledge to provide you with a safe and effective workout. Not just any certification will do. You want a personal trainer who has been certified by a nationally recognized certifying organization, like ACE, which happens to be the largest non-profit fitness-certifying organization in the world.

Certification is more than a piece of paper. For example, to qualify for ACE certification, a personal trainer has to pass an intensive three hour, 150-question exam and written simulation that covers exercise science and programming knowledge, including anatomy, kinesiology, health screening, basic nutrition and instructional methods.

After checking certification, there are a few other things you should take into consideration when hiring a personal trainer. Many require asking direct questions.

### **A checklist to help you hire the right personal trainer:**

- **Ask for references**

Ask the trainer for the names and phone numbers of other clients with goals similar to yours. Call to see if they were pleased with their workouts, if the trainer was punctual and prepared, and if they felt their individual needs were addressed. The best personal trainer to hire is the one others give high marks to.

- **Make sure the trainer has liability insurance and provides business policies in writing**



Many personal trainers operate as independent contractors and are not employees of a fitness facility. You should find out if the trainer you want to hire carries professional liability insurance.

A reputable personal trainer should also make sure you understand the cancellation policy and billing procedure. The best way to avoid confusion and to protect your rights is to have those policies in writing.

- **Look for a trainer who is able to assist you with your special needs**

A personal trainer should always have you fill out a health history questionnaire to determine your needs or limitations. If you have a medical condition or a past injury, a personal trainer should design a session that takes these into account. If you're under a doctor's care, a personal trainer should discuss any exercise concerns with your doctor, and should

ask for a health screening or release from your doctor.

- **Find out what the trainer charges**

Rates vary, depending on the trainer's experience, and the length and location of the workout session. For example, a personal trainer who works in a fitness club will probably charge less per hour than one who works independently and needs to come to your home or office.

- **Decide if this is someone you can work with**

Some people like to exercise in the morning, some in the evening. Will the personal trainer you're talking to accommodate your schedule? What about the trainer's gender? Some people do better working with a trainer of the same sex; others prefer the opposite sex.

The personal trainer you select should motivate you by positive, not negative, reinforcement. Even more important, that trainer should be someone you like.

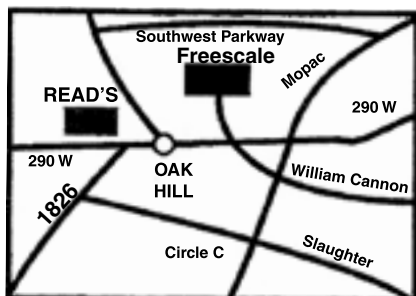
Ask yourself if you think you could get along well with the trainer. Ask yourself, too, if you think the trainer is genuinely interested in helping you.

The personal trainer who best measures up is the one to hire. Because that's the professional who will help you get the best results.



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## Newsletters 101: Connecting with Your Customers and Prospects

By Kaylee Kolditz

A newsletter can be an amazing tool for developing relationships with existing clients and building new business. Using a newsletter, you can establish your company as the expert in your given field. The goal is to provide enough information about relevant issues to spark your readers' interest so that prospects will contact you to find out if you can assist their company. For existing clients, the newsletter serves to reinforce that you are a valuable asset to their business and to remind them of the services or products you offer.

To determine content ask yourself these questions:

1. Who is my audience?
2. What are the needs of that audience?
3. Which of these needs can my company address through our products and/or services?

Then write about issues related to the needs you identified in question 3.

### Content Development

Your approach to content development is key to truly delivering value to your audience. Develop (or purchase) articles that *relate* to what you offer (make sure you can fill the need the article addresses) *but without delivering a sales pitch*. Make articles informative so that they are truly worth your readers' time, but don't make them so comprehensive that readers can effectively fulfill their needs without

using your company. And, don't share information that promotes your competitors.

Content can be gathered from a variety of resources. Keep in mind that unless your articles are completely original (researched and written by you, your staff or a contract writer/agency), you need to give credit to the source (and get permission to reprint, if required). If you are compiling information from various sources, include a list or footnote where appropriate. This sign of integrity will gain the respect of your readers.

Although information distribution is the goal, limited self-promotion is ok. In fact, you should include some self-promotion and be obvious about it. Your readers know you are doing it, so be honest with your approach. Include a section for a featured product or special offer. Make the offer available only to newsletter readers so that they have an additional incentive to get and read your newsletter.

### Alternative Approaches

If you just don't have the time or money right now to create a newsletter program there are alternatives. One approach is to co-sponsor a newsletter with a business that complements (not competes with) your business.

(Continued on page 27)

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### Newsletters - (Continued from Page 26)

Advertising in a newsletter can also get your business noticed and will involve less work on your end than developing your own publication. While your only responsibility will be the ad, the newsletter provides the valuable content readers are interested in.

Whichever approach you take, I believe that you'll find that newsletters are an effective tool for spreading the word about your business.

*Kaylee Kolditz is a marketing coach and copywriter specializing in helping small businesses create revenue-generating marketing programs. For more information, contact her at [Kaylee@kayleeskoaching.com](mailto:Kaylee@kayleeskoaching.com) or visit <http://www.kayleeskoaching.com>.*

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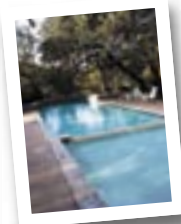
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The AustinReps' Circle C Ranch Market Report							
Circle C Ranch by Neighborhood	Sold History (June - November 2005)					Current Market	
	Average					Total	
	Homes Sold	Square Feet	Price / Sq. Feet	Year Built	Days On Market	Active	Pending
Circle C Central	58	2,745	\$ 94	1993	47	9	11
North	41	2,086	\$ 102	1996	55	7	2
Wildflower	19	2,226	\$ 105	2001	55	2	4
On The Park	6	3,405	\$ 104	1997	57	4	2
Vintage Place	5	3,456	\$ 90	2001	32	5	1
Hielscher	31	3,113	\$ 103	2003	67	6	14
West	5	3,601	\$ 103	2005	80	11	12
Park West	11	2,322	\$ 119	2002	78	3	3
Park Place	14	2,519	\$ 104	2005	121	2	18
Mainfield	6	3,545	\$ 120	2005	81	5	
Enclave / Lacrosse	8	2,412	\$ 111	2005	50	5	1
Circle C Ranch Total	204	2,650	\$ 102	1999	61	59	68



#### Corresponding Neighborhood Map on AustinReps.com

Market Report data was obtained from the Austin Multiple Listing Service (MLS) on 12/08/2005. In some cases new construction homes are not included in the MLS data and therefore are not represented. Data is deemed accurate but not guaranteed.



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