



Courtyard Caller

OFFICIAL COURTYARD NEWSLETTER

Courtyard Homeowners Association, Inc.

March 2009

Volume 8, Number 3

Message to Members

Thank you to all residents that took the time to sign and send in their proxies and/or attended the Courtyard's annual meeting on January 25. We achieved a quorum and were able to conduct all necessary business, including approval of a new budget. If you have any questions about the meeting, please contact any Board member. This is easy to do if you visit our website and click on "Contact Us."

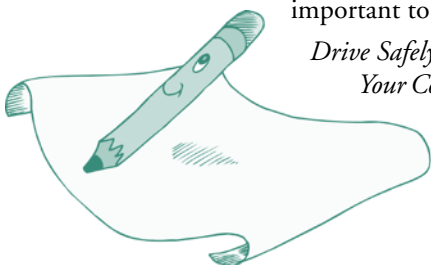
In case you haven't heard, we are fortunate to have two new directors to serve on the Board. Waneen Spirduso and Karen Johnson were elected to replace outgoing directors Michael Castanon and Reese McCrea. Mitch Ortego volunteered and was approved to fill the remaining term of David Tait. See www.courtyardhoa.org to learn more about your new directors. As our committees begin their work this year, please keep them in mind if you have any spare time. Check out the Caller and website for notices of planned activities throughout the year.

Read in this issue of the Caller about the problems and dangers of oak wilt at this time of the year and please DO NOT do any tree pruning now through June.

Keep in mind that "blue trash" collection days this month are Friday, March 6 and 20. For more information, contact the City's Solid Waste Services Department.

And last, but not least, thank you all for watching the speed limit while driving in our neighborhood. It is everyone's responsibility to help keep our community safe and as the weather gets warmer and more residents get out to enjoy some time outside, it is especially important to continue our efforts.

*Drive Safely in the Courtyard
Your Courtyard Homeowner's Association
Board of Directors*



Book Club

At our meeting on March 10, 1 p.m., the Courtyard Book Club will be discussing a book on an especially timely topic in March -- the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Please join us at the the Courtyard Tennis and Swim Club, to review the ***THE LEMON TREE: an Arab, a Jew and the Heart of the Middle East***.

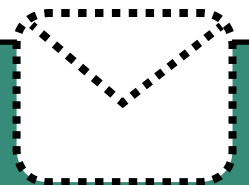
Sandy Tolan, the book's author, uses the friendship of an Israeli woman and a Palestinian man to frame the history and roots of the conflict in the Middle East. Currently, Tolan directs the UC-Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism's Project on International Reporting. *The Lemon Tree* was on every reputable list of the best nonfiction for 2006. About writing the book, Tolan says, "My assignment came on the eve of the 50th anniversary of the first Arab-Israeli war — known as the War of Independence to Israelis, and the Nakba, or Catastrophe, to Palestinians. I wanted to explore how this event, and the history that followed it, was understood by ordinary Arabs and Jews in the Holy Land. I needed to find two families linked by history in a tangible way."

In a book group where both Jews and Palestinians were represented, each thought the book slanted to the opposing side. The history and timeline of the conflict should create an excellent background for discussion and opinion. Come and join us!

Looking ahead to April, the focus turns to China as the group reads, ***ORACLE BONES: a Journey Through Time in China*** by Peter Hessler. China is no longer the sleeping giant of its past, and this selection provides us much about its new booming economy.

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Newcomers' Club – Not Just for Newcomers Anymore

The Austin Newcomers Club is a non-profit social, recreational, and civic group designed to acquaint its members with Austin and other newcomers to the city. It boasts 600 member households and is celebrating its 59th year. Although originally intended for people new to Austin, the club proved so popular that it now includes anyone who is interested. Only those residents who made this city their home within the last five years are allowed to serve as officers, but this doesn't preclude others from becoming members.

Criteria for membership is relatively simple. You must have a "787" zip code address and abide by the rules of the club. It costs \$40 for the first year and \$35 per year after that. The Newcomers Club contains many different interest groups such as: antiques, ARTreks, book clubs, bridge groups, dining groups, garden group, golf buddies, hiking, kayaking, Mah Jongg, poker, opera, languages, walking, wine socials, and a monthly meeting-luncheon with guest speakers.

For more information, check out the Newcomers' website at www.austinnewcomers.com. Here you will be introduced to the present officers, see a complete list of interest groups, peruse the by-laws, check out this month's calendar, and obtain the forms necessary to join the club or reserve a place at this month's luncheon.

For those of you who do not have access to a computer, contact Pauline Stockbauer at 236-8326 or Bonnie Mehok at 433-6861. We hope to see you there before too long.

REMEMBER, PLEASE:

Austin leash laws require all dogs to be on a leash when off the owner's premises.



Advertising Information

Please support the businesses that advertise in the Courtyard Neighborhood Association Newsletter. Their advertising dollars make it possible for all residents to receive a newsletter at no charge. No homeowners association funds are used to produce or mail the newsletters. If you would like to support the newsletter by advertising, please contact Peel, Inc. Sales Office, 512-263-9181 or advertising@PEELinc.com for ad information and pricing.

Classified Ads

Personal classifieds (one time sell items, such as a used bike...) run at no charge to Courtyard residents, limit 30 words, please e-mail LouBetty@aol.com.

Business classifieds (offering a service or product line for profit) are \$50, limit 40 words, please contact Peel, Inc. Sales at 512-263-9181 or advertising@PEELinc.com.

WARNING:
PEAK OAK WILT
CARRIER BEETLE SEASON

DO NOT PRUNE OAKS from Now through June

Oak wilt is a tree disease caused by fungus and transmitted by traveling insects. Oak wilt has killed an estimated 10,000 oak trees in Austin, and it is very costly to combat – fighting to save the infected tree and to stop it from spreading to other trees. The City of Austin (Austin) recommends not trimming Live Oak and Red Oak trees during the months of March, April and May. The Northwest Austin Civic Association (NWACA) takes a more conservative position and recommends not trimming oak trees between February through June, which is considered to be the peak carrier beetle activity season. The best months for pruning oaks are the cold months (November through January) when growth is dormant and the carrier beetles are inactive. The hot summer months are also safe, but the trees are still growing and unwanted sucker growth may develop. Plan ahead.

Experts caution that most oak trees require only infrequent pruning. Healthy oaks might be pruned every five to ten (5-10) years. Pruning should target dead limbs, limbs growing into building or utility lines, self-inflicted wounds (limbs rubbing together) and poor structural pattern growth. Cosmetic pruning to strip small limbs from major branches is normally unnecessary. Further, trees need internal limbs on major branches to insure proper growth and taper of the branch which helps the branch to withstand the whipping action from winds during storms. Never remove more than 25% of the canopy. Absent a true emergency, it is best to forego any non-essential trim work during the carrier beetle peak season.

If you cannot avoid trimming your oaks between now and June, it is essential that pruners comply with the oak wilt prevention “Best Practices” which include such precautionary activities as sterilizing equipment and immediately painting all open cuts. For this reason, NWACA strongly recommends that you employ only certified arborists to prune your valuable oaks, particularly if you cannot closely supervise their work. Avoid the uncertified tree service vendors who will cut trees anytime of the year with no guarantee that they will use safety precautions against oak wilt. Whatever “bargain” such services may appear to be at the time will likely disappear should your trees become infected with oak wilt, resulting in their death and the contamination of your neighbors’ trees throughout the neighborhood.

Please distribute and discuss this alert with your neighbors and friends. It is also extremely important to help educate new residents who may not know about this terrible disease. Although oak wilt is being suppressed in the northwest area, outbreaks continue to happen annually. Note that over \$500,000 has already been spent on previous NWACA trenching projects. We must work vigilantly to protect our treasured oaks and use our locally certified tree experts. Besides their beauty and the much needed shade they provide against the summer heat, oak trees add substantial value to your property

(Continued on page 5)

Future Stars of the



March & April Home Games

Mar. 10	Toros vs. Ft. Wayne	7:30pm
Apr. 01	Toros vs. Tulsa	7:30pm
Apr. 04	Toros vs. Iowa	7:30pm
Apr. 07	Toros vs. Reno	7:30pm
Apr. 08	Toros vs. Rio Grande Valley	7:30pm
Apr. 10	Toros vs. Rio Grande Valley	8:30pm

All home games played at the Austin Convention Center at 4th and Red River.



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Courtyard Neighborhood Garage Sale

Here is your early reminder so you can start gathering up items for sale during spring cleaning. If you haven't participated before, it's simple. You collect the stuff, and the Homeowners Association provides advertising in the Austin American Statesman and will put out signs in the neighborhood. Call Mary Lou Nilsson (346-8432) or Judy Daffer 231-0817 to reserve a sign or if you have any questions.

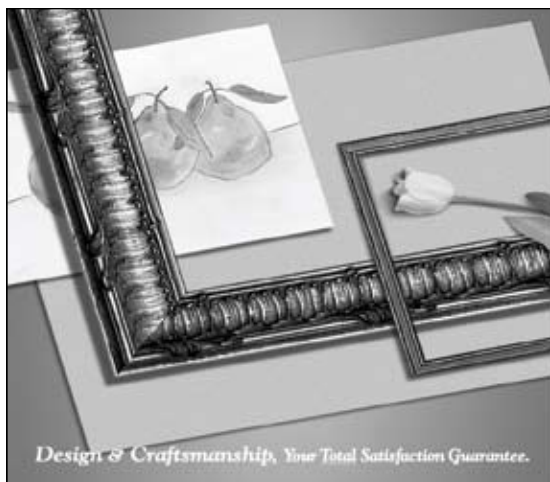
HINTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL SALE:

- You can add your own signs if you feel it will help. Home Depot and others have them. Just be sure they come down when the sale is over;
- Feel free to open earlier or later that day;
- It is advisable to have prices on every;
- Children's items are especially popular;
- Multi-family sales tend to be more successful, so you might want to join with your neighbors to pool sale items at one location and take turns running the sale.

Please note that Settlement House will come by and pick-up any "leftovers" from the sale that day. Contact Ann Cunningham (345-2044) if you want to schedule this helpful service.



Saturday, May 2nd (Rain Day - May 9)



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Warning - (Continued from page 3)

and our neighborhood. Please do what you can to protect them.
For more information and recommendations for protecting our trees, check out:

<http://www.nwaca.org/oakwilt/> (general summary)
<http://www.texasoakwilt.org/> (Oak wilt Q/A's)
<http://texasforestservice.tamu.edu/main/article.aspx?id=1173>
<http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/oakwilt>
<http://www.treesaregood.com/>
<http://www.isa-arbor.com/findArborist/findarborist.aspx> (area arborists)

Personal Classifieds

FOR SALE: Kayak Old Town - Guide 147 model. Wide body for better stability. \$550 OBO. Contact: rpu28@yahoo.com

FOR SALE: Silver Stemware - Twelve (12) each - matching sterling silver goblets - water, wine, & dessert. \$360 . Contact: Betty Marshall 343-8299

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ATFCU 68th Annual Meeting

Tuesday, March 24, 2009
The Crockett Center

For details, call 512.302.5555 ext. 7000.



14 Metro Locations

*Annual Percentage Rate. All rates are expressed "as low as". Actual rate may vary depending on credit qualifications. **Austin Telco will pay all standard closing costs on Home Equity loans below \$100k. Additional non-standard fees will be the responsibility of the member. ***Rate applies to 1st lien commercial real estate loans with a loan to value of 80% or less; construction/development loan rates/terms may be different. No Pre-payment penalty. ****Annual Percentage Yield. Penalties for early withdrawal may apply. ¹Regular - A minimum deposit of \$1000 is required. ²Jumbo - A minimum deposit of \$95000 is required. All APRs, APYs and terms are subject to change without notice. Please call for details. This credit union is federally insured by the National Credit Union Administration.

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March Events at the Wildflower Center

Artists & Artisans Festival

9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, March 21 and noon to 5 p.m. Sunday, March 22

Favorite artists return and new ones appear to exhibit their work in watercolors, metal, wood, ceramics and many other materials. Dalhart Windberg, introduces his annual print benefiting the Wildflower Center, noon to 5 p.m. Saturday. Shou Ping shows her watercolor sculptures and Mary Catherine Gardner, official Wildflower Days™ 2009 artist, signs her print, 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday.

Sign up for Go Native U

This is our popular series of how-to gardening classes plus—new this year -- five sustainability classes focused on ways to manage soil, water, plants and materials to improve sustainability. Register at www.wildflower.org

Texas Society of Sculptors Exhibit

March 3 through May 31.

Outdoor works by Texas sculptors on display throughout our gardens.

Nature Nights, Look to the Stars

6 to 9 p.m. Friday, March 6

Join Kyle Fricke of McDonald Observatory for an engaging look into the cosmos. Field telescope viewing. \$1 admission.

Wildflower Days™ Begin

The Center is open every day 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. until March 16 until May 31.

Artists Reception

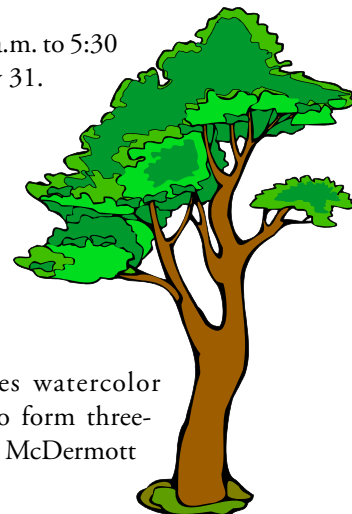
1 to 4 p.m. Sunday, March 15

Join us to meet the sculptors and members of the Texas Society of Sculptors.

Shou Ping Exhibit

March 14 through May 31

This renowned artist creates watercolor paintings of and cuts them to form three-dimensional sculptures. At the McDermott Center.





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A Day in the Sun

By Stephanie Rangel

As spring and summer approach, the warm weather of South Texas does as well, which means more days spent out of school and out of the house. If you're having trouble thinking of fun things to do with the family or worrying about spending too much money going out, try your local parks and recreational areas. There are so many different, low costing things to do – from picnicking at the park to barbecuing by the lake. My most recent excursion out in Austin was canoeing on Barton Creek at Zilker Park Boat Rentals. For \$10 an hour, with my coupon for a second hour free (which can be printed

from their website at zilkerboats.com), I was able to enjoy a nice day rowing on the lake with my husband. We saw other couples, families, and even a rowing class doing the same. The paddles were not hard to work at all and someone could even row by themselves. The nature and scenery to be seen on the creek is beautiful, as you can clearly see in the pictures below. Along with the beautifully green trees, it consisted of swimming fish, turtles, ducks, and swans. I would definitely recommend something like this to anyone looking for something fun and inexpensive to do out in Austin.



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There's no place like Austin.
There's no place like Austin.**



Austin home buyers have unique tastes.



Jo Carol Snowden Broker Assoc., ABR, CRS, GRI

And, your neighbor in the Courtyard

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If you are making a move anytime soon, I'm ready!

We get it.

