

**Courtyard Homeowners Association, Inc.** 

November 2009

Volume 5, Number 11

## **BOARD MESSAGE**

Times really does fly. Doesn't it? Otherwise, it wouldn't seem like just a month or so ago that we were starting our campaign to remind members of the importance of sending in their voting proxy for the Courtyard's annual meeting in January. For the benefit of new homeowners and as a reminder to those who have lived here longer, here's what we're talking about. It is a requirement of our Association Declaration that a quorum be present to hold an official meeting, and we want to avoid having to hold a second annual meeting. Over the years, we have found that it really helps if homeowners sign and mail in their proxy form as soon as it arrives. This way, it doesn't get forgotten in the midst of all the other activities we have going on through December and January. If for some reason you can't make the meeting, your vote will be counted. If you sent in a proxy but later are able to attend the annual meeting, you can simply pick-up your proxy at the meeting and vote in person. Further reminders and more information about our next annual meeting will appear in future newsletters and on the Courtyard's website: www.courtyardhoa.org. If you have any questions, please contact any Board member or our management company representative, Marilyn Childress.

In this month that focuses on recognizing the many good things in our lives, the Board thanks all our neighbors in the Courtyard who, together, help make this such a special place. Special appreciation goes to those who give their time to organize and put on Easter egg hunts, Fourth of July picnics and canoe rides; to the walkers who stop to pick up trash from our streets and yards; to the thoughtful neighbors who - whether or not they are asked to - bring in the next door neighbor's newspaper, mail, or trash can if that neighbor is gone; to our wonderful "green thumbs" who help with Park clean ups, contribute and plant new trees, bushes and flowers, and maintain the drip watering systems that helps keep those plants alive to grow and enrich the beauty of our common areas and Park; to our mechanical types who help monitor common area sprinkers and see that our lighted entrances remain on so that we get the maximize benefit for the costs of that water and energy service; and to those who interact with other neighborhood groups and keep us aware of the activities of state and local governments that can impact our neighborhood. Understand that these are examples only and do not cover all the many contributions of individual residents without which the Courtyard Community would not be the great place it is to live.

Finally, to every individual who makes the effort to drive the speed limit and encourages others to do so as they travel through our neighborhood streets -- keep up your good efforts.

Best wishes to all for a happy and safe Thanksgiving! Your Courtyard Homeowners Association Board of Directors

## Courtyard Book Club

The Book Club will meet at the Courtyard Tennis Club on November 10 at 1 p.m. to discuss a book that should give everyone a reason to think and be thankful! Meticulously researched, *The Worst Hard Time* by Timothy Egan carefully lays out the various causes, both economic and ecological, of the Dust Bowl and chronicles the lives of the people who stayed behind and endured the "black blizzards" and the personal and economic losses compounded by the Depression.

These settlers had come to the plains, anxious to have a piece of land of their own to farm and to put down roots for a family. Developers promised arable land that could be cleared and plowed to make way for fields of wheat and other grains. When the drought dried out the land and dust storms covered everything and everyone in their path, many went further west. Familiar to many, John Steinbeck's The Grapes of Wrath made us aware of the difficulties of those who were pushed west in these years. In our November selection, Egan's story of those who stayed behind may be even more tragic as mothers saw

(Continued on Page 3)

## CHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## **Sub-HOA CONTACTS**

Center Court: Ryan Duffin	626-5905
Travis County Courtyard (aka	"Backcourt")
Allan Nilsson	346-8432
•••••	arnilsson@earthlink.net
Villas at Courtyard:	
Thomas Hoy	231-1270
-	Thomas. Hoy@freescale.com
Wolf Court:	2 0
Tim Sullivan	346-3146
	tsullivan@austin.rr.com

Board Message - (Continued from Cover Page)

children die of "dust pneumonia" and fathers were lost attempting only a brief walk from their front door.

Timothy Egan, a journalist for the New York Times won the National Book Award for nonfiction in 2006 for this book: *The Worst Hard Time; the Untold Story of Those Who Survived the Great American Dust Bowl.* In 2001, he won the Pulitzer Prize as part of a team of reporters who wrote the series How Race Is Lived in America.

Looking ahead to December, the Book Group will meet on Tuesday, December 8, for lunch and a book exchange at the Heath's house, 5909 Tom Wooten. Call Jean at 512-231-9412 for details.

# **Security Warnings**

GPS - We've been cautioned many times before about leaving things out in our vehicles in plain view for thieves. Here is, yet, another reason to think twice about what we leave out in our cars that makes it easier for thieves to succeed. Reports indicate that thieves have been breaking into cars and stealing GPSs and remote control garage door openers. In these cases, the thieves carefully selected cars in places such as a movie theatre or football stadium parking lot, where owners will likely be away from home long enough for the thieves to use the GPS to locate the victim's home and the remote control garage door opener to gain entry into the house. Sure enough, after dealing with the initial break-in of their vehicle, by the time the owners get home, they find their home has been thoroughly ransacked and its contents gone. Suggestion: do not put your home address in your GPS. Instead, use the address of a nearby gas station or store. You can still find our way home from the nearby location, but thieves do not get specific directions to your empty house.

MOBILE PHONES - You may have already received similar warnings many times, but here is comes again. Be careful how you describe the relationship between you and people in your contact list. Avoid the use of names such as: Home, Sis, Dad, Mom, Sweetheart, etc. When a woman's purse was stolen, she lost the usual valuable and sensitive items we carry with us such as cell phone, credit cards, driver's license, and information about where we bank. Unfortunately, in this situation, by the time she called her husband to tell him what had happened, his first words to her were to reassure her that he had gotten her text message asking what their PIN number was and he had already replied. After rushing to the bank, they found all their money had been withdrawn. The thief had used the woman's contact list to call "Hubby" to get the PIN number and in just minutes had cleaned out their bank account. Since it was done with texting, the husband never considered that he wasn't communicating with his wife. Along these lines, pay extra attention to what you are being asked to do in a phone text message. Do not hesitate to CONFIRM things with a direct call and conversation with the message "sender."

Do not live in fear – just be alert and do not let unscrupulous thieves take advantage of the many everyday distractions we all face!

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Stephen Sherwood, DDS - Brad Singleton, DDS



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## **Area Developments**

# THREE INTERRELATED AREA PROJECTS ARE SCHEDULED TO START DURING THE FOURTH QUARTER OF THIS YEAR:

- Replacement of the low-water roadway in Bull Creek District Park with a low-water motor vehicle and pedestrian bridge;
- · Closure of Bull Creek District Park for restoration, and
- Replacement of the low water bridge over Bull Creek at 2222 and Lakewood Drive with a significantly higher bridge that does not rely on low water to stay open.

# NEW BRIDGE OVER BULL CREEK IN THE BULL CREEK DISTRICT PARK

This is a project of the City of Austin's (City) Watershed Protection Department and is being built primarily to improve both vehicle and pedestrian safety and the water quality in Bull Creek, which contributes to our drinking water supply. The ancillary benefit of this new bridge is that it will keep the crossing open during many more high water events. Between 2004 and 2007, this low-water crossing was closed seventy times due to high water. While the typical closing lasted three days, the longest closure lasted sixteen days.

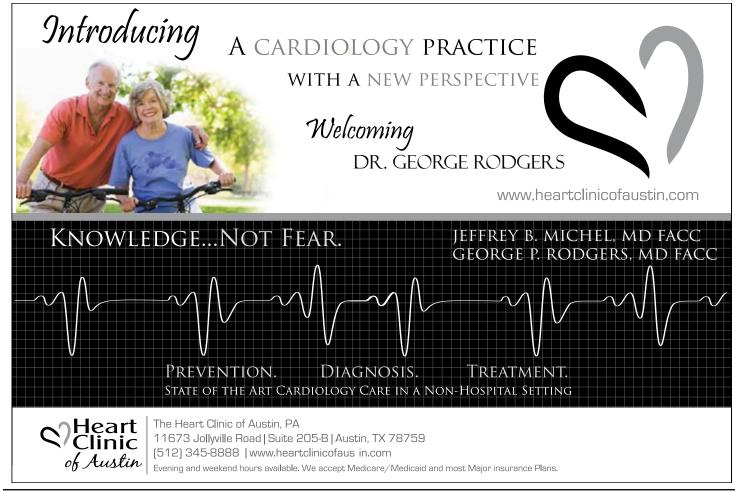
Although a bridge, it will still be subject to low water, meaning that high water will sometimes overtop the roadway and close it. However, since the new bridge will be approximately five feet (5') higher than the existing roadway, it will stay open much more often than is currently the case. Further, when it is closed due to high water, the bridge will reopen faster as water recedes.

The contract has been signed and funding is approved. The bridge and related improvements will be built by Chasco Construction of Round Rock at a cost of \$716,000. Construction is estimated to begin in November, which will close that portion of Lakewood Drive to all through traffic for approximately 6 months. The project is estimated to be completed and that portion of Lakewood Drive reopened in May 2010, weather permitting. Lakewood Drive at 2222 will remain open during the life of this project.

#### CLOSURE OF BULL CREEK DISTRICT PARK FOR RESTORATION

Bull Creek District Park will be closed during the construction of the bridge. The City's Parks and Recreation Department is using this opportunity to restore the park, which has suffered extensive soil and water quality damage from the recent drought and its overuse as an off leash exercise area for dogs. Much of the soil can no longer sustain life and Bull Creek is badly polluted. See, the City's website. http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/parks/bullcreekola.htm .

(Continued on Page 5)



**Area Developments** - (Continued from page 4)

# REPLACEMENT OF THE LOW-WATER BRIDGE OVER BULL CREEK AT 2222 AND LAKEWOOD

The purpose of this Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) project is to replace the existing low-water bridge with a new safer structure that will not be dependent on low water to stay open. On average, high water in Bull Creek overtops the roadway twice a year and causes eastbound and westbound traffic on 2222 to divert to other routes. The roadway of the new bridge will be approximately nineteen feet (19') higher than the lowest point of the existing roadway and this bridge is designed to remain operational during a 100-year flood event.

The contract has been signed and funding is in place. The bridge and related improvements will be built by Capital Excavation Company of Austin at a cost of \$5.8 million. Construction will be done in phases to keep 2222 open and will start in November of this year, if not sooner. Construction is scheduled to last twenty-five months, weather permitting. Eastbound 2222 will, however, be reduced to one lane for approximately 18 of these 25 months, so plan your trips and drive times accordingly.

## **OVERALL PROJECT SUMMARY:**

- Widen 2222 to make the following improvements at the intersection of 2222 with 360
  - Add a second right turn lane from eastbound 2222 to southbound 360;
  - Lengthen the existing left turn lanes for eastbound 2222 to northbound 360 and westbound 2222 to southbound 360; and
  - Add a second left turn lane for eastbound 2222 to northbound 360.
- Widen and reconstruct 2222 east of 360 to make the following improvements
  - Replace the existing bridge structure at Bull Creek;
  - Add a center left turn for access to Lakewood Drive and the City's Fire Station; and
  - Install a traffic signal at the intersection of 2222 and Lakewood Drive.

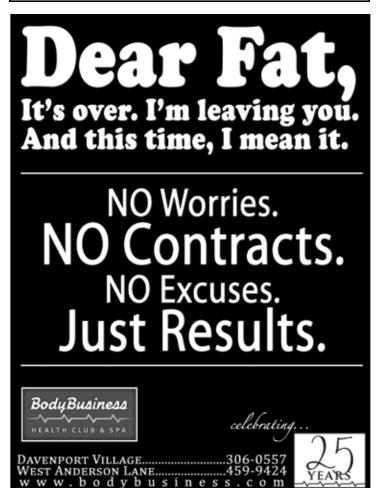
Since the new bridge will be significantly higher than the old one, it is necessary to ramp up Lakewood Drive to properly intersect with 2222. As a result, during this phase of construction, this intersection will be closed to all but emergency vehicles for approximately 6 months. During this time, local traffic will only be able to access Lakewood Drive at the traffic light on northbound 360. This phase can not start until the City's new bridge in Bull Creek Park is open to traffic.

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## TRIVIA TEST

1As you may know, a group of fish is called a "school", a group of lions is called a "pride", and a group of seagulls is called a "flock". Some are a little more unusual. See if you can guess what animals belong to the following groups:

Crash , Exaltation , Mob , Murder , Parliament , Pod , Sounder (Answers on Page 11)

# A Business Referral Group Made Fun!

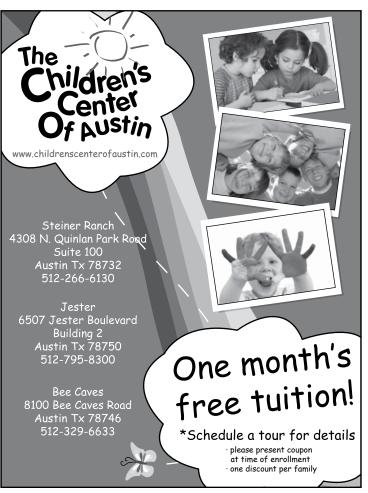
Networking Northwest Austin is expanding its member base of businesses in our area. NWNWA members build close business and personal relationships. We believe in business by referrals and having a limited member base (not duplicating professions), so you will not see your competitors here. We have a caring, positive, involved group of people who not only wish to build their business, but also want to build the strength of our networking group. NWNWA meets on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday at Waterloo Ice House, 360 & FM 2222 from 7 – 8:30 am. And a fun happy hour once per month at a beautiful location. Come to a breakfast or call Dorothy Scarborough – President dscarborough5@austin.rr.com, 512-589-3678.

# Did You Know ... About Austin Crickets?

Austinites expect and welcome autumn as overdue relief from the long hot summer. And just as surely as we expect the cool evenings and golden leaves of fall, we expect and brace ourselves for the annual autumnal Austin cricket invasion. For newcomers to Central Texas, no reason to panic. Just know that our crickets have been coming to Austin to make their winter homes for as long as anyone can remember. The invasion proper is always preceded for several days by scattered reconnaissance buzzlegs. Generally, the critters hop for the great canyons of downtown, their sidewalks and cavernous openings; but in good years they will visit you in your home, too.

Althought this author can't speak from personal experience at the time, one of the great invasions of all time was in 1915. Billions of crickets blanketed the city. Wagonloads of them were hauled away day after day. Austin became famous all over Texas and the immediate South as the fall resort for crickets. One observer noted further, "Had the cricket invasion been purposely advertised, it is probable that hundreds of tourists would have come to Austin to see the unusual sight and their trip to the state capital would not have been wasted."





# Wildflower Events

Submitted by Saralee Tiede

## LAST CHANCE—A LARRY J. SCHWEIGER READING

6:30 p.m. Sunday, November 8

The president of the National Wildlife Federation reads from his fascinating book about climate change and solutions we need to avert the consequences.

Free admission. In the auditorium.

### NATURE NIGHTS—ASTRONOMY

6 to 9 p.m. Friday, November 13

Tour the evening skies and wonder at the stars. Admission \$1.

### INTRODUCING THE 2010 WILDFLOWER DAYS™ ART PRINT

Saturday and Sunday, November 14 and 15
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#### HOLIDAY GIFTS PREVIEW

Saturday and Sunday, November 21 and 22
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### WILDFLOWER CENTER CLOSED

Thanksgiving, Thursday, November 26







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Nicolas Feuillate Champ			п
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The Cutrer Chard-Sonoma Cutrer	Was	\$32.99 / Now\$27.99	н
Miner Chardonnay	Was	\$31.99 / Now\$25.99	1
Stags Leap Chardonnay	Was	\$28.99 / Now\$19.99	н
Ferrari Carano Chardonnay			п
Sonoma Cutrer Chard Russian River			п
Cuvaison Chardonnay			100
Simi Russian River Chardonnay			6
Santa Margherita Pinot Grigio			100
Newton Chardonnay Red labe Frei Brothers Chard			100
Merryvale Chardonnay			16
La Crema Chardonnay			8
Kendall Jackson Grand Rsv Chard			- 8
Kim Crawford Sauvignon Blanc			3
Franciscan Chardonnay	Was	\$18.99 / Now\$13.59	3
Murphy Goode Chardonnay			32
Simi Chardonnay	Was	\$16.99 / Now\$13.99	8
Oyster Bay Sauv Blanc			
Kendall Jackson Chardonnay	Was	\$14.99 / Now\$11.99	K
Rodney Strong Chardonnay			8
Chateau St. Jean Chardonnay			- 69
Toad Hollow Chardonnay			3
Simi Sauvignon Blanc			100
Edna Valley Chardonnay			100
Clos du Bois Chardonnay			8
Murphy Goode Sauvignon Blanc	Was	\$12.99 / Now \$9.99	2
Red Wines			90,768
Far Niente Cabernet Sauvignon			8
Silver Oak Napa Cab Sauv			ě
Silver Oak Alexander Cab Sauv			100
Joseph Phelps Cabernet Sauvignon.			1
Flowers Pinot Noir			8
Stags Leap Merlot			2
Ferrari Carano Cab Sauv			1
Ferrari-Carano Merlot			18
Franciscan Cabernet / Merlot	Was	\$26.99 / Now\$19.99	8
		\$18.99	ŝ
Sterling Napa Merlot	Was	\$23.99 / Now\$18.99	ă.
Simi Cabernet / Merlot			- 83
			3
La Crema Pinot Noir			- 13
Markham Merlot			3
Sterling Cabernet Sauvignon			E
Wild Horse Cabernet / Merlot			13
wild Horse Cabernet / Menot			20.00
Murphy Goode Cab/Merlot			3
Twenty Bench Cabernet Sauv			100
Rodney Strong Cabernet / Merlot			19
Dynamite Cabernet / Merlot			8
		\$10.99	12
7 Deadly Zins Zinfandel			8
Cline Ancient Vines Zinfandel			10
Estancia Cabernet Sauvignon			- 9
Louis Martini Cabernet Sauv			8
J Lohr Cabernet / Merlot			12
Chateau St. Jean Cabernet / Merlot			1
337 Cabernet Sauvignon			8
Estancia Merlot			1
Liberty School Cab			8
Cline Zinfandel			8
Red Truck Red Blend			1
			7

## **HEALTHY SNACK TIPS**

For Students

Students often eat lunch at school before noon, especially younger students, so by the time class is over in the afternoon, they are hungry for a snack. If planned properly, snacks are a good way to regulate hunger. Waiting too long to eat something (more than 3-4 hours) often results in overeating or eating too quickly. Choosing a healthy snack between meals helps keep youngsters' blood sugar and metabolism regulated, energy levels up, and hunger under control.

Snacks that include protein should be paired with a fruit, vegetable, or starch to keep kids feeling full longer than just eating one of those foods by itself. Some foods naturally fall into different groups and can be eaten by themselves as delicious, healthy snacks – such as nuts and seeds.

Portion sizes, however, are important. Snacks should contain roughly 100 to 200 calories and should be eaten 2 to 3 hours before the next meal. Feel free, however, to let your child eat unlimited amounts of non-starch vegetables at every snack.

## TRY SOME OF THESE SUGGESTIONS WITH YOUR LITTLE ONES – OR YOURSELF!

- 2 tablespoons peanut butter on celery sticks and ½ apple
- 1 ½ tablespoons cashew butter on celery sticks
- 1 string cheese and 1 small apple
- 1 tablespoon peanut butter with ½ small banana
- 1 mini bagel with 1 ounce turkey or lean ham
- 1 tortilla with 1 ounce melted cheese and 2 tablespoons salsa
- Raw vegetables with fat free salad dressing and string cheese

- 1/3 cup hummus with baby carrots, bell peppers, and broccoli
- 1 slice mozzarella cheese with 6 whole wheat crackers
- 1 slice turkey or cheese and ½ sliced mango
- 1/4 cup walnuts and 1/2 cup blueberries
- 1 string cheese and 2 cups low fat popcorn
- 1/2 sandwich with lean lunch meat
- 1 mini bagel with fat free cream cheese

- 1 slice Swiss cheese and 2 tablespoons raisins
- ½ cup nonfat cottage cheese with ½ cup fruit
- 1 cup cherries with 1 slice cheese
- 2 tablespoons hummus on a whole wheat pita or 1 ounce pretzels
- Granola bar with 6 ounces nonfat milk
- Baked tortilla chips with salsa or low fat bean dip

(Information provided by pediatric clinical dietitian Kim Bilger, MPH, RD, LD at Dell Children's Medical Center of Central Texas).



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Be sure to include the following so we can let you know!

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	(first name, last initial)	2	

Age:\_\_\_\_\_[This information will only be used to notify you or your parents if your artwork was selected.]



CY

## COURTYARD CALLER

## **Trivia Test Answers:**

Crash - Rhinoceros, Exaltation - Lark, Mob - Kangaroo, Murder - Crow, Parliament - Owl, Pod - Whale, Sounder - Pig/Hog

Courtyard
Stork Report
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