

The HPWBANA News

Volume 7, Number 7

July 2011

www.hpwbana.org



GET READY TO CELEBRATE INDEPENDENCE DAY HPWBANA –STYLE!

Please join us to celebrate Independence Day, on Monday, July 4 at 9 a.m.

We'll parade around the block, enjoy snow cones and hotdogs, and celebrate how wonderful it is to be an America living in the finest neighborhood in Austin, Texas! As always, awards will be given to the best decorated bike trike, scooter, stroller/wagon, and pet!



Block Parties Bring a Neighborhood Together

By Whitney Hyde

A block party is a great way to get to know your neighbors and for those of us who have children, acts as a large scale play date. The key to making sure a block party happens is to pick a date and not worry about the small stuff. One afternoon in mid-May, three houses on the corner of Crestway and Ridge Oak Drives did just that.

When we met to discuss the logistics for the party we decided less was more. Simple, fun and not too expensive were the goals. Our plan was to throw a low-key front yard party: games, bounce house, food and drink spread across three yards. With an Evite and an invitation for neighbors we were missing email addresses for, we were all set.

A major concern was safety for the children on a busy street. To encourage drivers to slow down, signs were created that said SLOW CHILDREN CROSSING on large, orange poster board. We placed our cars slightly away from the curb at each end of the street and put the signs on the backs of the cars, as well as on barricades slightly ahead of the cars. This gave drivers plenty of time to slow down and gave the children a large space to cross. The area in front of our three houses was open so we could easily see between the yards.

On the day of the party we coordinated and set up chairs, tables, table cloths, etc. so we had similar looking arrangements. With toys cleaned, games and tables set up, bounce house delivered, grill going and people arriving; the block party was under way. The children had a great time running from yard to yard engaging in the games and activities while the adults enjoyed hot dogs/burgers/snacks and chatting with neighbors they hadn't seen lately or had yet to meet.

Since lots of new families have moved into the neighborhood the past several years, one long-time resident asked for and updated names, addresses and emails, so that we have a larger email distribution list for our next neighborhood event.

Although there are plenty of articles online that provide themes, games and decorating ideas for block parties, we decided to keep it simple and relaxed for all. If you'd like to meet or reconnect with your neighbors, pick a date and get the ball rolling yourself. Your neighbors will help and most important it provides a wonderful connecting point for all the busy people you hardly get a chance to say hello to during the week.

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IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Austin Citywide Information Center 974-20	000 or 311
Emergency Police	
Non-emergency Police (coyote sighting, etc	
Social Services (during work hours)	
SPO David J. Knutson	
	07/ 5017

Central West District APD Rep......974-5917 Wildlife Rescue 24 Hour Hot Line 210-698-1709

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The HPWBANA Board meets on the 3rd Monday of each month except December at the Yarbrough Library on Hancock. Meetings are held from 7:00 – 8:45 p.m. All neighbors are invited to attend. www.hpwbana.org

HWPBANA is bordered on the north by 2222, on the south by 35th St., on the west by Mt. Bonnell Rd., and on the east by MoPac and by Bull Creek Rd. between Hancock Dr. and 45th St. Mail your membership dues to HPWBANA, P.O. Box 26101, Austin, Texas 78755

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Mayfield Loses Another Peacock

Mid May was a very sad time for those at Mayfield who just love the peafowl as a male peacock was hit and killed by a car on 35th St. This is the season when the peacocks are courting. They have a full grown set of beautiful tail feathers which makes them a very large bird. And they wander the area freely. Can you believe that this is the third peacock killed by a car in that area within the last year?

The area around Mayfield Park and Preserve, Laguna Gloria and Westwood Country Club is getting busier and busier as years pass. And everyone seems to be in a hurry these days. We really do need to all slow down though as hitting these beautiful birds with cars is just plain sad.

Austin Police Department has requested more radar patrols in the area along with arranging for the traffic wagon that display speeds to be positioned there. Traffic calming is also being discussed.

An ecumenical church... everybody matters





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2011 SUMMER READING PROGRAMS AT THE AUSTIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

June through August the Austin Public Library (APL) is sponsoring two Summer Reading Programs, Summer Reading, Some Aren't for adults and Dig Up a Good Book! for Youth. It doesn't matter if you're 1 or 101 years old, you can promote the love of reading by joining the 2011 Summer Reading Program. The instructions are simple:

- Sign up at the Library or online(www.austinsummerreading.org/)
- Read, read, read.
- Record the books you read and your opinions in your reading log
- Return completed log/form to any library location by August 31st.

After reading 5 books, youth can choose a book to keep! Adults receive a chance to win amazing prizes, from coffee shop and book store gift certificates to e-book readers. A drawing will be held August 31 and winners will be notified on September 1 and 2. The more you read, the more chances you have to win.

For more information call 512-974-7400 or visit www.austinsummerreading.org.

It is Time to Review Fire Safety!

South Austin experienced a fire recently that surprised many people. And we are experiencing extreme drought conditions. We should all review fire safety for our homes and our families to be prepared for this type of emergency. The Austin Fire Department website has lots of tips for being prepared:

www.ci.austin.tx.us/fire/safetytips.htm

This is especially true for those who live on greenbelts. Take a minute to think about these questions:

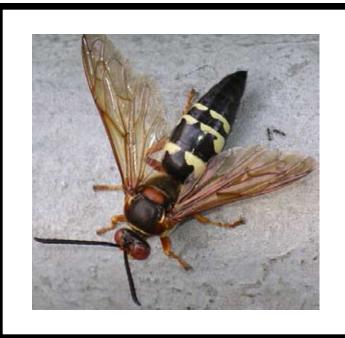
• If a fire occurred in or near your home what would you do?

- What about all members of your family, including pets?
- Does everyone know the plan?
- Can you make preparations to protect your property?
- Are smoke detectors working properly and well placed?
- If you live near a greenbelt, what would you do if a brush fire started there?

Let's all be safe out there.



CICADA KILLERS



Many people panic when they see large wasps flying low over their yard during the summer. It can be a common sight and if one looks, the will often find holes in the yard or flower beds that are surrounded by small piles of dirt. The wasps are cicada killers and can be considered a beneficial insect.

Cicada killers are about 1 ½ inches long with a reddish-brown head and thorax and an abdomen that is black with yellow markings. Wings have a rusty color. Males can be aggressive and buzz near people, but they are unable to sting. Females are capable of stinging but are rarely aggressive towards humans or animals.

Females dig burrows in the ground for nesting areas. Females sting cicadas to paralyze them, take the cicada back to the burrow and then lay an egg upon it. When the egg hatches, the larvae feed upon the cicadas provided.

Cicada killers usually do not warrant any control methods. They are actually beneficial insects that help to reduce populations of cicadas. If you feel that you must do something to manage them, you can sprinkle insecticidal dust around the opening of the burrow.

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600.

Check out my blog at www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com





Get To Know Your Irrigation Controller By Jacob Johnson

Many residents put a lot of effort into maintaining their irrigation system, which is a necessary step towards efficient watering. However, people then often overlook an equally important aspect of irrigation—scheduling. An essential element of proper scheduling is knowing how to operate the controller. Not knowing that can cost you.

A normal flow rate for a residential irrigation system is around 14 gallons per minute. Compare that with your shower of 2 to 3 gallons per minute or a dishwasher that uses less than 10 gallons per load and you can see just how quickly minutes on the irrigation controller can add up. So if you see your usage dramatically rise in the summer months, check your irrigation settings before chastising your teenagers for their long showers. Well, I guess doing both would work.

Common features on an irrigation controller

1) Multiple Program Capability: Controllers give you the option of setting multiple programs, usually labeled A, B, C, etc. These programs let you fine tune your watering. For example, you could set up your turf stations to

water twice per week in the summer while keeping shrubs on a once per week schedule. The important thing to remember is that no matter what program you leave the controller on, it will run all programs that are present! Even if two programs coincide with each other, the controller finishes the first program and stacks the next program to run directly afterwards. 2) Multiple Start Times: You can also set multiple start times for your program(s). Start times represent what time the program will begin and most controllers offer the option between 3 and 16 start times. There are verv few controllers that require start times for each individual zone. The benefit of using multiple start times is to allow for absorption in the landscape because many sprinkler heads can apply water faster than our soils can absorb it. Find the stations times you are happy with and then cut them in half. Instead of the program coming on at only 4:00 a.m., you could have the program (now with reduced station times) come on at 3:30 a.m. and 4:30 a.m. Remember, if using multiple start times, every minute you add or delete really equals 2 or 3 minutes depending on the number of start times present.

3) Seasonal Percentage Adjustment: Another handy feature, the seasonal adjust, allows you to increase or decrease all of your stations times in 5 to 10 percent increments. This is useful if your entire landscape needs more water, but often stress will only occur in certain areas. It's a good idea at that point to only add time to the stations that need more water and an even better idea to inspect those stations to make sure the stressed area isn't getting water due to a clogged nozzle or misaligned head. When setting station times, it's recommended to have the seasonal adjust at 100% because the seasonal adjust button uses 100% as the reference point and makes changes relative to what that number is. Some controllers will show the increased or decreased times while others will continue to show the original times, but are actually running something different.

4) Memory Back Up: Most controllers now come with a nonvolatile memory built into the control panel. This helps retain your settings during brief power outages, but will usually clear itself out after long periods with no power. Other controllers will revert to a default program to run everyday for ten minutes per station after a loss of power. If you have a controller that does this, remember to change out the 9 volt battery every spring when you turn your controller back on and just to be safe, check the settings after thunderstorms.

Plant material, watering components, sun exposure, soil health, and how important each area of your landscape is to you all goes into the decision of how long you should run each station. An irrigation program with the same time on every station is usually a signal that there is room for improvement. This may involve taking time from some stations that are doing well and adding them to others that are showing signs of stress. Monitor your landscape and make changes as needed. Remember, automatic irrigation systems are great for carrying landscapes from one rain event to another, but a lack of rain will highlight deficiencies in the irrigation system.

If you need help with programming your controller and use over 25,000 gallons of water in the summer months, you may schedule a free irrigation evaluation from Austin Water either by calling 974-2199 or visiting our website: www.waterwiseaustin.org.

Highland Park West Balcones Area

TIPS FOR A HEALTHY SUMMER

Eat Smarter & Move More

Submitted by Sarah S. Jordan, MS

The 4th of July holiday is almost here, and along with it comes good food, parties, and great times with family and friends. These things pretty much go hand in hand with summer.

Summer is a very common time for people to fall off the "health wagon," but it doesn't have to be that way. Eating right and getting enough activity can certainly be a challenge, especially when holidays and travel are involved. But the keys are: being consistent, making good choices, eating in moderation, and purposely finding ways to move more. Here are some tips to make your summer a healthier one for your family and friends.

Small Changes = Big Results

Making small changes for your summer cookouts and potlucks can equal big nutritional improvements.

Traditional A More Healthy Summer Food Alternative

Hot dogs Turkey dogs
Hamburger Turkey burger
Potato saladFruit salad
Chips and high fat dipAssorted vegetables and hummus
Fried chickenGrilled chicken kabobs with veggies
PieFresh pineapple
Soda and sweet tea Iced tea with lemon
Using high-fatmayonnaise in dishes

Healthy Recipe Swap

You can even request that guests bring a healthy dish and include the recipe along with the dish. After the event, the party host types up all of the recipes and emails them to party guests. Just like that - everyone is equipped with healthy things to try on their own!

Get Movin'!

Instead of a party revolving solely around the food involved, why not create a "buffet of games" and activity to center the event around instead? Here are some ideas for fun backyard games to try this summer with your family and friends. Just be sure to let your guests know the "active" theme ahead of time so they can dress accordingly and be prepared to move.

Host a miniature version of the Olympics.

This can consist of things like wheelbarrow races, three legged races, running, water balloon tosses, and team relays. Have prizes for the teams.

Create an art contest using chalk.

Have three judges and give out prizes for the most creative pieces of art. And maybe even to the adult with the most "artfully challenged" piece of "art."

Play a classic game of "Kick the Can."

Make sure you have at least 3-4 people playing this game. One person is "it" and guards the "can." (Can needs to be in an open space.) Other players hide while the "it" person counts to 20 and then goes to find the other players. Captured (tagged) players go to "jail." Anyone not captured can kick the can, which sets all jailed players free. If the "it" person finds all players before the can is kicked, the "it" person wins the game.

Have a Hula-Hoop contest.

Crank up the fun music, and see who can twirl the longest!

Create a canvas.

Hang an old white sheet on your fence or clothesline and let the creativity flow while your guests create a beautiful work of art!

Send your guests on a scavenger hunt.

There are many ways to get creative with this, including giving the hunt a theme to match your party, having guests find things in nature and draw pictures of what they find, or having your guests do something (ex: 10 jumping jacks) every time they find something on the list.

Slip and Slide!

Give your party a water theme to beat the heat. Set up two identical slip and slides and see who slides the fastest and/or the farthest. Crown your champion. Test out other games like horseshoes, washers, Bocce ball, four-square, hopscotch, whiffle-ball, or kick ball.

Here's to a healthy and active summer ahead. Cheers!



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Technology

The Dino Pit is OPEN

Great News All!

Life Scout Andrew Hafermann completed his Eagle Scout project at Perry Park on Saturday, May 14th, which involved upgrading the sandbox to a discovery sandbox, complete with dinosaur bones and a whole assortment of great things for kids to explore. There are some really cool things fixed/buried in the sand and kids are going to love it. The dino pit, as we call it, is now open for all to enjoy! Andrew also installed a new bench near the sandbox for parents so they can watch the kids dig. Andrew will be providing the school pictures of what is buried in the sand and to identify what all the pieces are to add an educational component to his project. So, Spread the word to the teachers and kids - the dino pit is open!

Note to parents - Kids should only dig to explore what is there and not try to remove any of the pieces. Andrew did a great job and showed a lot of creativity in this project. The variety of items fixed/buried in the sand is just wonderful and the idea to include the bench in the project was completely his. And it is a perfect addition. It was a very well thought out and executed project. Thanks go out to Lowes who donated materials for Andrew's project. And thanks go out to the HPWBANA Board for funding the bench.

> Thanks Andrew! Nadene Morning HPWBANA Beautification and Parks Committee

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Re-married/Blended Families Ladies Only and Men's Only Classes

Starting Soon: Men's Anger Management, Boundaries, Women's Wounded Heart (survivors of sexual abuse)

WATCH LIVE services Sunday mornings or view any time at www.ghbc.org Sunday Morning Schedule | 10:00 Worship | 8:30 & 11:30 - Bible Life Groups (all ages) Great Hills Baptist Church | the radiant church 10500 Jollyville Road . Austin, Texas 78759 | 512.343.7763

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A Man After God's

Own Heart

Sunday Morning

Series

Highland Park West Balcones Area

WHAT CAUSES AUTISM? By Connie Ripley

Autism is diagnosed in one out of 110 children (1 in 70 boys). In 1975, autism effected 1 in 5,000. It is the fastest growing serious developmental disorder in the U.S., but is it a disorder or a disease?

The reasons for this huge increase, especially the 57% increase between 2002 and 2005, are being explored by parents, physicians and scientists. The means of diagnosing being essentially the same, what in our current world is causing the escalation of autism at alarming rates?

No totally supported cure exists. Early detection and intervention are the best treatments.

Many concerned parents are blaming childhood immunizations -due in part to a well-publicized study by Dr. Andrew Wakefield (founder the Austin-based Thoughtful House) linking the measlesmumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine to autism. Medical organizations and drug companies have spent millions combating what they call his "fraudulent research findings", yet Wakefield still holds his findings as factual. Who do you believe? The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) is finally citing studies showing that early exposure to mercury-based thimerosal is associated with motor and phonic tics in boys. Others are claiming the measles vaccine is a live virus that may continue to live in some children.

The age of parents, either mother or

father, has been shown to possibly have an impact on the diagnosis. According to the federal government's leading autism body, the Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee (IACC), "Recent studies suggest...that parental age...may confer environmental risk." The Dr. Oz television show had a large portion of one show on the causes. This was a well-accepted cause, but why?

In-Vitro fertilization appears to also be in question. A recognized physician and autism specialist states that 29% of her autism patients were conceived in-vitro. (It is important to note that this is only one physician's findings and is not a published study.) Could this also be linked to age of parents?

The federal government is also studying Toxins as a possible cause. The unusually high incidence of autism in children around Texas power plants is cited in some studies.



Mitochondrial DNA damage is finally getting a lot of attention from both physicians and the federal government.

Current scientific findings support the concept of a medical disease causing a dysregulated immune system to constrict the blood flow in some children's brains, primarily the temporal lobes affecting motor skills, social integration and speech. Some physicians claim that when "the villan" that causes the damage can be identified and

> removed from the child, autism symptoms diminish. Is this a vitamin deficiency, a virus, a fungus, sensitivities to toxins or certain food allergies?

The CDC now wants to do a 5 year study on the potential risk for post vaccine "neurological deterioration" and a study of mitochondrial dysfunction. This comes after the IACC announced a shift in research priorities toward environmental triggers, which could include toxins, biological agents and "adverse events following immunization."

Does a genetic predisposition to the disorder exist in some children? While each gene appears to affect only a small percentage of cases, groups of genes appear to account for a greater percentage of autism risk. When children are exposed to certain toxins, viruses, fungi or conditions, autism could be the result, but not in all siblings and not in all twins.

Why are four times as many boys as

girls affected with autism?

Something causes this early disruption in the development of the brain of one in 110 children (Some even say the number is more like one in 91. The U.S. military is stating 1 in 80 in ads on TV!), but what?

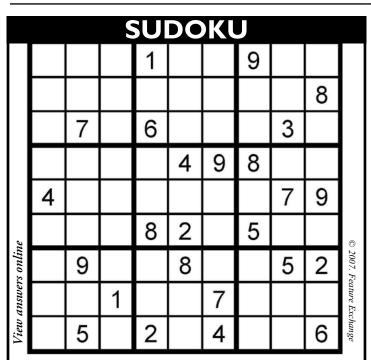
Autism Speaks is North America's largest autism science and advocacy organization. Autism Speaks is funded primarily by local walks. The Greater Austin Walk Now for Autism Speaks committees and teams are being formed for the 2011 Walk at Dell Diamond on September 24. Your help is needed! Please contact Walk Manager Traci Whitney at traci.whitney@autismspeaks.org or go to www. walknowforautismspeaks.org/austin

Every 15 minutes a parent is told his/her child has autism!



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The challenge is to fill every row across, every column down, and every 3x3 box with the digits 1 through 9. Each 1 through 9 digit must appear only once in each row across, each column down, and each 3x3 box.

Highland Park West Balcones Area

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