



Courtyard Caller

OFFICIAL COURTYARD NEWSLETTER

Courtyard Homeowners Association, Inc.

April 2012

Volume 8, Number 4

BOARD MESSAGE

Several events are coming up this month that we hope you all can attend – our annual Spring celebration // Easter Egg Hunt in the Community Park on April 7 and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) public meeting on Monday, April 16, regarding the agency's proposal to eliminate left turns in and out of our neighborhood entrance on Highway 360. Look for further information about times and places in this newsletter or on our website, www.courtyardhoa.org.

We have been told that the TxDOT meeting will include a review of the current and projected congestion on 360, a discussion of alternatives considered to address the congestion, explanations and illustrations of different “innovative-type” intersections in operation, and computer model animations showing how the proposed changes will work. The best thing we can do at this meeting is to make it clear to the TxDOT officials and, especially, the state and local representatives that will be attending, that this is a VERY VERY SERIOUS issue to us. One of the best ways to do this is to be there. Besides the inconvenience and lost time suffered by not being able to turn left into our neighborhood, consider the adverse impact on our property values should this project go forward as planned. We cannot emphasize enough how important this issue is to all of us as home owners in the Courtyard so PLEASE MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO ATTEND THE APRIL 16 MEETING at 6:00 p.m. in the Anderson High School cafeteria.

Finally, we are happy to announce that our Park Committee has not one, but two, new co-chairmen: Eddie Zamora and Zoli Kovac! Eddie and Zoli have already begun work to spruce up the Park after this winter and the long hot summer of 2011, and will continue work to clear woods areas still torn up by the September 2010 flood. Plans for the Park's “facelift” include adding a few new native drought tolerant trees in the field area and bushes along the drive near the gate. Please keep an eye out for notices of clean-up days and try to come out and help, if only for a few hours. We need you. Contact Eddie and Zoli if you have questions. Resident volunteers are so important to keeping the Park in shape for all our enjoyment and help defray costs of having to hire outside assistance.

Drive safely in the Courtyard!

Keep up to Date on LOOP 360 CHANGES

The blog listing is <http://keep-360moving.blogspot.com>.

The address that links to it is keep-360-moving.org

Watch here for the latest news and information, important dates, sample letters to public officials and more. Participate in the discussion. Be an active, involved part of our community and other 360 neighborhoods. The currently proposed 360 traffic changes could negatively impact our community! Keep informed and let your voice be heard. Most importantly, demonstrate to TxDOT officials, as well as our state and local representatives, how seriously we take this issue by attending the April 16th meeting at 6:00 p.m. in the Anderson High School Cafeteria!

EASTER EGG HUNT!

Saturday, April 7th, 11:00 – 1:00

Don't miss the fun! Plan to attend the 2012 Courtyard Easter Egg Hunt! Bunnies of all ages bring your baskets and hop on down for some Easter fun! In addition to our annual Easter Egg Hunt we will have a Pinata, and great prizes! Easter bonnets optional.

If you think you will be able to attend, please email or call to let us know how many egg hunters will be in your family/group:

Joany Price – 775-8942 joanyprice@hotmail.com

Dana Ivers – 497-0642 dana.ivers1@yahoo.com

Looking forward to seeing you there!



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BOARD MEETING NOTICE

If you would like to receive an email notice of the monthly board meetings, please sign up at BoardMeetingNotices.com. After signing up, you will automatically receive notice of the upcoming board meeting and Agenda.

SEND US YOUR

Event Pictures!!

Do you have a picture of an event that you would like to run in this newsletter? Send it to us and we will publish it in the next issue. Email the picture to cathleenbarrett@hotmail.com. Be sure to include the text that you would like to have as the caption. Pictures will appear in color online at www.PEELinc.com.



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Courtyard Neighborhood Garage Sale



Here is your reminder to 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. Please contact Joany Price – 775-8942 joanyprice@hotmail.com or Dana Ivers – 497-0642, dana.ivers1@yahoo.com 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 item;
- 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. Email annbcham@gmail.com if you want to schedule this helpful service.

Saturday, May 5TH (Rain Day - May 12TH)



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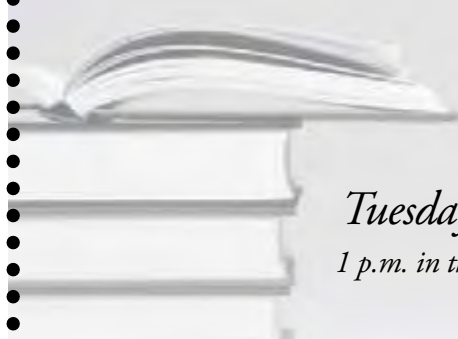
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Courtyard Book Club



*Tuesday, April 10th,
1 p.m. in the Courtyard Club*

For Jack, an 11x11 foot room, a shed, is his entire world. He was born there, eats there, sleeps and plays there. Here, his Mother has created a world for him where he feels safe and cared for. For her, however, the room is a prison. She has been kept there since being kidnapped at the age of 19. The story Emma Donoghue tells in *Room* is one that is reminiscent of the Jaycee Dugard story.

The reader's attention is drawn away from the horrific circumstances through the voice of Jack who tells the story. The language and point of view of his telling is remarkably consistent with that of a five-year-old child, allowing the reader to smile even in this grim setting. With great ingenuity and determination, "Ma" has created a satisfying life for Jack. In her strength, one is reminded of the power of a mother's love.

The author, Emma Donoghue, an Irish Canadian, won the Canadian Commonwealth Prize for Fiction for *Room* in 2011. The New York Times named *Room* to its 10 Best Books of 2010 list.

In April, the Book Club will read, *Scottsboro*, a Novel by Ellen Feldman which is a dramatization of the infamous "Scottsboro Boys" case.

For information about the Courtyard Book Club, contact Jean Heath, c.jeanheath@gmail.com or 512-231-9412.

CITIZEN ALERT

from the Austin Police Department

APD seeking public's assistance locating elderly victims of tree trimming scams.

The Austin Police Department is seeking the public's assistance in locating elderly victims of tree trimming scams. A company has been approaching elderly individuals at their homes to offer tree trimming services or other lawn care services.

The subjects are returning to the victims' homes multiple times for payment while doing minimal work. It is estimated that the victims are overpaying for this work by 3 to 5 times what is normally charged for these services.

APD is asking anybody that might be a victim, or have neighbors who might have been victims of this scam to please call 3-1-1 or (512) 974-5750 to make a report. If you have any information about these scams please call the Region II Detectives at (512) 974-5779.



TORNADOS

Home Athletic Events Schedule April 2012

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
4/5 - Thu.	Schreiner	7 p.m.
4/6 - Fri.	Schreiner (DH)	1 p.m.
4/6 - Fri.	Sul Ross State (DH)	5 p.m.
4/7 - Sat.	Sul Ross State (DH)	12 p.m.
4/20 - Fri.	Schreiner (DH)	5 p.m.
4/20 - Fri.	Texas Lutheran	7 p.m.
4/21 - Sat.	Texas Lutheran (DH)	1 p.m.
4/21 - Sat.	Schreiner (DH)	1 p.m.

*Baseball games are in white.
Softball games are in gold.*

***All baseball games are played at
Tornado Field
11400 Concordia University Drive
Austin, TX 78726***

***All softball games are played at
Old Settlers Park
3300 E Palm Valley Blvd
Round Rock, TX 78665***

***For complete schedule information
please check out our website at:***

athletics.concordia.edu

SPONSOR A TREE

Join in our Park Renewal Efforts & Name That Tree

Courtyard Residents – a few good trees are looking for a home in our Community Park and need your help to make that possible. As part of our Park renewal work this spring, we hope to plant three trees – bur, chinquapin, and monterrey oaks – all drought tolerant, and resistant to oak wilt. As these trees grow, they will increase the beauty, variety of greenery, enjoyment (shade), and value of our Park and will continue to do so long after we're gone.

To help speed this process along, we want to plant the largest trees possible. Note that while they will not be the only "green" additions to the Park during spring renewal, these oaks will be more expensive due to the type and size we hope to get and because their cost includes charges for delivery, planting, and a replacement guarantee.

Prices vary slightly around town, but, in general, one of these 35 gallon oaks, delivered, planted, and guaranteed for a year to 18 months will run around \$395. It is for this reason that we are looking for resident sponsors for these special trees. To keep your sponsorship contribution to a minimum and to help encourage and build community spirit, consider sponsoring it with others – perhaps another family or neighbors along your street.

Courtyard residents who are interested in improving our Park and leaving a lasting legacy – with your name on it -- please give this serious thought and get in touch with a member of the Board or Park Committee. We hope to hear from you soon.

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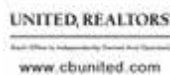


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Coyotes in Towns and Suburbs

Historically, coyotes were most commonly found on the Great Plains of North America. Their range now extends from Central America to the Arctic. Except for Hawaii, coyotes live in all of the United States, Canada, and Mexico. ***More coyotes exist today than when the U.S. Constitution was signed.***

Almost no animal in America is more adaptable to changing conditions than the coyote. ***Coyotes can live just about anywhere, including suburbs and cities.*** One of the keys to the coyote's success is its varied behavior and diet. It is an opportunistic feeder and will eat almost anything. ***In suburban areas coyotes prey on cats and dogs.***

Coyotes are most active at night and early morning, but can be seen any time during the day. Most sightings of coyotes occur during the hours close to sunrise and sunset.

Adult coyotes weigh between 20 and 45 pounds and look much like collies. They are less than 2 feet tall and have erect, pointed ears, a slender muzzle and a bushy tail. Most coyotes are brownish gray in color with a light gray to cream-colored belly. Most coyotes have dark or black hairs over their back and tail.

Coyotes breed in January and February and have a gestation period of approximately 63 days. ***The young are usually born in March, April, or May. During this time of pup rearing, the amount of food that coyotes hunt and eat increase significantly. Coyotes adapting to an urban environment can become bolder because they are less likely to be harmed and more likely to associate people with an easy and dependable food source.***

AVOIDING PROBLEMS WITH COYOTES:

- Do not put feed or water out for coyotes or for other wild animals that are prey for coyotes (e.g., deer, rabbits, etc.).
- Eliminate water sources, particularly in dry climates
- Construct and/or position bird feeders so that coyotes and their prey (squirrels and rodents) cannot get to the feed.
- Secure garbage containers and eliminate garbage odors.
- Make sure garbage containers are firmly fixed and have tight-fitting lids.
- Feed pets indoors whenever possible. Pick up any leftovers when feeding outdoors. Store pet food where wildlife cannot reach it.
- Trim shrubbery that provides hiding cover for wildlife.
- **Don't leave small children unattended outside if coyotes have been frequenting the area.**
- Don't allow pets to run free. Provide secure nighttime housing for them. Walk your dog on a leash and accompany your pet outside, especially at night.
- Discourage coyotes from coming to your area. If you start seeing coyotes around your home or community, chase them away by shouting, making loud noises, and throwing sticks or rocks.

Making your neighborhood less welcoming to coyotes can greatly reduce the possibility of human/coyote encounters by encouraging coyotes to stay in their natural habitat, away from residential streets, yards, and parks.



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RECIPE OF THE MONTH

CARROTS AU GRATIN

Ingredients

- 2 lbs. carrot, sliced
- 1/8 tsp. pepper
- 1/2 Cup chopped onions
- 1 1/2 C milk
- 1/4 Cup oleo, divided
- 4 oz. processed
- 3 T. flour
- American cheese, cubed
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 T. dried parsley

Cook carrots until tender crisp. Drain. In saucepan saute onions in 3 T butter. Stir in flour, salt, & pepper. Gradually add milk and bring to boil. Cook for 1 minute or until thickened. Stir in cheese until melted. Add carrots and parsley. Pour in greased 2 quart baking dish. Melt remaining butter and pour over carrots. Bake at 350° 20-25 minutes or until bubbly. (8-10 servings)



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ACROSS

1. Abbreviate (abbr.)
5. Mom
9. Rubber cement, for example
10. Confuse
11. Snaky fish
12. To that time
13. Residential district
15. East southeast
16. Freedom
18. Firearms
21. Extra-sensory perception
22. Group of four
26. Ooze
28. Move gently
29. Singing voice
30. Level
31. Sulk
32. Marrow

DOWN

1. Gets older
2. Type of cheese
3. Flower start
4. Ensnare
5. Males
6. Not before
7. Slightly wet
8. Awry
10. What a gum chewer blows
14. Troublemaker
17. Believe
18. Vermin
19. Small island
20. China
23. Praise
24. Afloat
25. Indent
27. Cut grass

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NATUREWATCH BEAUTIFUL BUNTING

by Jim and Lynne Weber

One of the most unmistakably colorful birds to return to Texas in the spring is the Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*), whose species name, *ciris*, thought to mean 'lord', comes from the Greek myth of Scylla, a sea monster who was changed into a bird. This species breeds in two different populations in the US, the eastern one along the coast of the southeastern states and the western one in the south-central states, which includes Central Texas.

The male Painted Bunting is a small, bright finch, with a red chest, blue head, and lime green back. It has a red ring around each eye, and dark gray wings and tail. In comparison, the female's overall greenish-yellow coloring is much less gaudy, but serves her well as she needs to remain hidden when rearing young. Highly territorial, males announce their territory by singing from a conspicuous perch and warn other male intruders by performing a fluttering flight display. They can be quite aggressive toward each other, often engaging in fights that include pecking, grappling, and beating with their wings which can sometimes end in injury or even death.

Preferring natural grasslands, open brush lands, thickets, and scattered woodlands, painted buntings usually form monogamous pairs, with the female constructing a deep, neatly woven cup-shaped nest of plant fibers, lined with hair or fine grass, and placed low in dense shrubbery. She lays 3 to 4 eggs, bluish-white with gray or brown speckles concentrated near the large end, and the young hatchlings emerge 11 to 12 days later, helpless at first and covered in sparse down.

During the breeding season of spring and summer, painted buntings eat insects, insect larvae, and spiders, but switch to seeds in the fall and

Painted Bunting (male)



Painted Bunting (female)

winter. Although painted buntings are mainly ground foragers, they can pick insects from spider webs and will fly up from the ground to grab the seed heads of tall grasses to pull them to the ground to extract the seeds.

One of the main differences between the eastern and western populations of painted buntings includes the timing of their fall molt in reference to the migration to their wintering grounds in southern Mexico and Central America. The western population begins their migration first, stopping to molt in staging areas in northern Mexico, and then continuing south. This type of migration-molt pattern is common among waterfowl but not among songbirds. The eastern population, on the other hand, follows the more typical pattern of molting on its breeding grounds first, before beginning its migration.

Sadly, the overall population of painted buntings has showed a slow, steady decline since 1965. Because of this, the conservation status of this beautiful bunting is listed as 'near threatened,' and is thought to be due to several

factors, including the rapid urbanization of its preferred habitat, increased nest parasitism by the Brown-headed Cowbird, and ongoing effects of climate change.

Fittingly, when seen in a group, painted buntings are collectively known as a 'mural' or a 'palette', and are a visually striking sight. One can only marvel at the wonderfully vivid feather colors that nature has produced, all on the same bird!

*Send your nature-related questions to naturewatch@austin.rr.com and we'll do our best to answer them. If you enjoy reading these articles, look for our book, *Nature Watch Austin*, published by Texas A&M University Press.*

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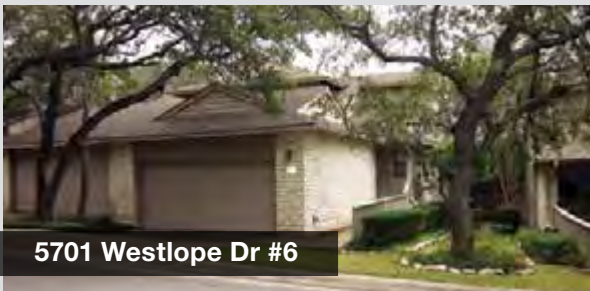
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