



HIGHLAND PARK WEST BALCONES
AREA NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

THE HPWBANA NEWS

Volume 10, Number 6

June 2014

www.hpwbana.org

4th of JULY CELEBRATION

JOIN US FOR OUR ANNUAL HPWBANA INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION!

Walk in the parade and stay for the rest of the festivities.

Friday, July 4th
Festivities begin at 9:15
Parade steps off at 9:30
Highland Park Elementary
South Parking Lot

**Prizes for best decorated bike, dog,
wagon and stroller!**

HOT DOGS! SNOW CONES!

**If you would like to VOLUNTEER to help
out with this fun, family event, please
email us at volunteer@HPWBANA.org**

HPWBANA DUES REMINDER

Join or Renew Your Membership Today!

Don't forget to submit your dues for 2014! It's never too early (or too late) to join or renew your membership with HPWBANA, and with dues starting at just \$20 (\$25 per family), it truly is money well spent. We now have two ways to join.....renew or join online, by going to HPWBANA.org or download the form on the website and return with a check to PO BOX 26101, Austin TX 78755 . Additional donations are also welcome to help us increase the size and scope of our work. We have 1700 households in our NA boundary with less than 50% registered as current members! Our efforts depend on your membership. Please join or renew your membership today!

Property Tax Forum June 3rd

Travis County Tax Assessor Collector Bruce Elfant and Travis Central Appraisal District Chief Appraiser Marya Crigler will address the Highland Park West Balcones Area Neighborhood Association to help answer any of questions about property tax assessment, appraisal practices, money-saving exemptions, payment plans or any other questions you may have regarding property taxes or appraisals.

The meeting will take place on Tuesday, June 3rd at 7pm at Yarborough Library (2200 Hancock).

Highland Park West Balcones Area

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Austin Citywide Information Center. 974-2000 or 311
Emergency Police.....911
Non-emergency Police (coyote sighting, etc.).....311
Social Services (during work hours).....211
Wildlife Rescue 24 Hour Hot Line 210-698-1709
APD REP. - Officer Darrell Grayson 512-974-5242

'14 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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The HPWBANA Board meets on the third Monday of each month except December. Please go to HPWBANA.org for our current meeting location or contact president@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

ADVERTISING INFO

Please support the businesses that advertise in the HPWBANA Newsletter. Their advertising dollars make it possible for all residents to receive a newsletter at no charge. No neighborhood 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 at 512-263-9181 or advertising@PEELinc.com for ad information and pricing.

Mopac Improvement Project Q and A

Consultants from both CH2M Hill and the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority (CTRMA) will attend our next board meeting to address questions and concerns about the MOPAC IMPROVEMENT PROJECT. They will present information on the project and ongoing construction along the corridor. The meeting will be held on June 16th in the meeting room at Yarborough Library and will start at 7pm. HPWBA residents are encouraged to attend.



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JUNE 2014

Have you ever wondered what your home was worth? And have you ever checked Zillow and Trulia believing these sites would give you the right information? Are these the best sources for your home valuation?

Visit my blog at smartservicesold.blogspot.com and find out why these sites can often lead to false information. For the most reliable information regarding the value of your home, call me today at (512) 532-5550 for your free home value report!



Congratulations to Robin and Ken Moore at 3305 Big Bend Dr. for being nominated and winning the June Yard of the Month!! Check out their beautiful yard. Could your yard be the next YOM? Sure! Just nominate it by emailing jennifer@smartservicesold.com.

Don't miss these FREE June events!

- 6/2 Austin Symphony - Concerts in the Park at the Long Center
- 6/7 Zilker Pops Concert at Zilker Hillside Theater
- 6/8 Austin Symphony - Concerts in the Park at the Long Center
- 6/11 KGSR Blues on the Green at Zilker Park
- 6/12 Republic Square Movies in the Park
- 6/13 Republic of Texas Biker Rally Parade
- 6/15 Austin Symphony - Concerts in the Park at the Long Center
- 6/22 Austin Symphony - Concerts in the Park at the Long Center
- 6/25 KGSR Blues on the Green at Zilker Park

Want to know what's going on with real estate in our neighborhood? Check it out [here](#).



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Highland Park West and Balcones Park Area Neighborhood Residential Real Estate Prices on Steady Increase

By Rebecca Wolfe Spratlin

It is pretty common knowledge that home prices in our neighborhood have been increasing in over recent years, but a look back over the first four months of each of the past five years provides a clear picture of exactly what these increases have been, and when they occurred. Our home values have been steadily growing during four of the past five years, with a bit of a set-back in 2011.

One of the most interesting trends occurred in 2012, following a dip in the number of homes sold as well as decreases in the average and median prices per square foot in 2011. In 2011 only 18 homes sold during the first 4 months of the year, compared to 32 during that same time period in 2012. It is logical that the lower prices in 2011 provided incentive for buyers to get serious about purchasing. However, the increase in pent-up demand drove the prices up in 2012, as buyers were competing with other buyers for the limited inventory. That demand has

January 1 through April 30						
YEAR	AVG. NET SOLD PRICE PER SQ. FT.	CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR	MEDIAN NET SOLD PRICE PER SQ. FT.	CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR	AVG. DAYS ON MARKET	MEDIAN DAYS ON MARKET
2010	\$226	+8.7%	\$224	+25.8%	129	102
2011	\$219	-3.1%	\$202	-9.8%	92	90
2012	\$221	+0.9%	\$217	+7.4%	57	20
2013	\$260	+17.6%	\$245	+12.9%	90	54
2014	\$271	+4.2%	\$263	+7.3%	77	34

continued to increase each year since.

During this time, the days on the market trended down. From January 1 through April 30 of this year, the number of days on the market decreased an average of 14% and a median of 37% compared to the same period in 2013. Taking a closer look at the data, we find that houses priced at less than \$600,000 took a median of 14 days to sell, while homes \$600,000 and more took a median of 78 days to sell.

EARTH DAY IN HPWBA

Friends of Perry Park

Lots of fun tasks were accomplished for 2014 Earth Day/Week at Perry Park, particularly from the youth in the community. Here is recap:

On April 22nd Little Helping Hands came out for an after school birdhouse building workday. Volunteer Jerry Levenson created all the kits and predrilled the holes, but the kids did all of the hammering and assembly. After completing the build, the birdhouses were scattered in the forest at Perry Park.

The PARD Rangers also visited the workday to provide an educational component. They brought their collection of



animal skeletons and skins and was quite popular with the kids. Kids from Crenshaws were also invited so they joined in the fun.

On April 26th the HPE Green Team planted a variety of native trees and plants along the nature trail as part of the restoration there. The Green Team adopted these plants and will monitor and water them to help it get established. They are all marked with stakes to make the plants easier to find for watering. They even had time

to install a few more birdhouses.

It is just wonderful to see the kids help take care of Perry Park!

LAMAR FINE ARTS ACADEMY RECEIVES SPECIAL GIFT OF SCULPTURE



March 28th was a special day at Lamar Fine Arts Academy, as kids, teachers, parents and members of AISD celebrated the dedication of Charles Umlauf's sculpture, *The Birds*, in a previously neglected interior courtyard at the school. That courtyard has now come to life thanks to the Umlauf Family Partnership, and specifically Carla Umlauf, the sculptor's granddaughter who is a Board Member at the Umlauf Sculpture Garden and Museum, a local Realtor and proud parent to two girls at the Academy.

When Carla and her family adopted the courtyard 20 months ago, she did so with a desire to give back to the school where her two girls are getting a first-rate education and having the time of their lives. The sculpture is shared in the spirit of encouraging a lifelong habit of giving, and it serves as a visible reminder of the significant impact arts education has on our community and our future. "My family is making this gift in honor of the teachers and patrons of AISD, who make such an impact on our children and community every day," Carla said at the dedication. The area can be used for outdoor classrooms, after-school clubs, PTA meetings, teacher lunches or simple reflection.

Charles Umlauf was a prestigious American artist, Professor Emeritus at UT, and a proud Austin resident. He sculpted the series of cast bronze birds in 1960, for the Spirit of Flight fountain at Dallas' brand new Love Field Airport. The Love Field commission still stands today. It was among Umlauf's largest scale public installations, marking a critical period of his development.

To see a video of the dedication ceremony, go to <http://aisdtv.blogspot.com/2014/04/lamar-umlaufr-sculpture-dedication-2014.html>

To learn more about Charles Umlauf and his work, visit *The Umlauf Sculpture Garden and Museum* located at 605 Robert E. Lee Road. Or, go to <http://umlaufrsculpture.org/>
To learn more about Carla, go to <http://UmlaufProperties.com>

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Learning Circle in Perry Park Open to Families

On April 27, Girl Scout Troop 1510 dedicated the new Learning Circle at Perry Park to the neighborhood. Fellow neighbor and Mayor Lee Leffingwell and his wife Julie, topped the list of VIPs who attended the ribbon cutting along with Highland Park Principal, Tammie Workman, Vice Principle Liz McDaniel, and HPWBANA Vice President, Becca Cuddy.

The 10-year-olds from Highland Park Elementary, collaborated with Friends of Perry Park gardener-guru, Nadene Morning, HPWBANA and City of Austin parks department to design, prepare and install a permanent Learning Circle made of limestone boulders with gravel pathways into and out of the space that's sheltered beneath beautiful oak trees.

The area was designated as a gathering space years ago but had become overgrown with invasive plants and grasses. The Girl Scouts, along with their parents, removed the unwanted foliage and created a view from the upper track. The girls decided how many boulders would work for group seating, and the best arrangement and distance between the boulders. The girls also chose the size and shape of the boulders to compliment the aesthetics of the park and its early history as a quarry from 1942 to 1952.

"We wanted the girls to take ownership of a project that they could truly relate to and this park space is used by families and students at Highland Park, among other groups. The girls tackled the physical work and made decisions about everything from size and shape of the rock to who would speak at the ribbon cutting," said Sharon Nabhan, troop leader.

Special thanks go to the PARD team headed by Jeff Larsen



(CPRP) which provided a crew to lift and install the 800-2,200-lb boulders, and to Nadene Morning for advising the troop on logistics and landscape.

Thanks also to the Highland Park PTA and HPWBANA for donating money which was coupled with the troop's Girl Scout cookie money.

Next time you're looking for a shady and peaceful spot to host a picnic, birthday party, troop meeting, class activity, meditation session, nature lesson, book club, or anything else fun, please visit the new Learning Circle, located west of the school soccer field along the upper track.

Make a *colorful* impact.

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PERRY PARK FITNESS STATIONS COMPLETE!

By Nadene Morning

Come one, come all to Perry Park for a complete fitness experience! We all enjoy the open space, track and newly renovated nature trails. Now we have added first class fitness stations to complete the experience. The first chin up is the hardest but after a few times you can make great gains. Perhaps even discover those lost biceps? So come on down to Perry Park and give them a try!

The two fitness stations at Perry Parks were installed thanks to an Austin Parks Foundation grant, Friends of Perry Park, PARD and HPWBANA, and the hard work of many volunteers. Back in 2009, local fitness trainer Mark Harris (Evolution Fitness) contacted the HPWBANA to discuss the possibility of installing fitness stations in the park. The idea was to have something like the fitness stations at Auditoriums Shores, which are very popular with the fitness community. The spring family fitness classes at Perry Park sponsored by HPWBANA really got the project moving last year.



Quarry Fitness Station: This station is located deep in the quarry along the running track. It has parallel bars, a sit-up bench and pull-up/dip bars.

Upper Fitness Station: This station is near the upper soccer field on the wooded side of the running track. It contains an assisted row piece of equipment.

The goal was to have the stations blend into the natural area as much as possible while being easy to find. This equipment is expensive so the Friends of Perry Park (the park adopter) applied for an Austin Parks Foundation grant to help fund the project. HPWBANA provided matching funds.

Austin Parks Foundation grants come with a volunteer matching component. Greg Morning let this effort by engaging the fitness community to help construct the pads. This was hard work involving lots of digging and moving tons (literally) of material to the area. Also for the volunteer component of the grant we also held monthly workdays to restore the nature trail. Little Helping Hands came out for monthly workdays, along with the Green Team, Girl Scouts and Cub Scouts. Friends of Perry Park tallied 542 volunteer hours towards this project over several months.

Many thanks go out to Austin Parks Foundation and the many volunteers who helped out!

Online Survey for State Land Development HAVE YOUR SAY!

By Donna Edgar

You may be familiar with the fact that the Texas legislature is in the process of attempting to sell or lease "underutilized" public lands to generate monies for the state. The 80 acre area in the southeast corner of 45th and Bull Creek Road (presently TxDOT owned and also state cemetery designated) is on that list.

The Bull Creek Road Coalition was formed to represent the interests of surrounding residents as this land is developed. Each of the surrounding neighborhood associations has a representative to the coalition and I have been representing HPWBANA.

There are several potential developers interested in the tract and the coalition has developed a survey to get input from the maximum number of surrounding residents.

You can take this survey by visiting this link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/StateLandApr2014>

The survey was crafted to take as little as five minutes to complete, although there are a couple of open-ended questions. The coalition will use this information to create several development plans and supply them to potential developers in the hopes of influencing the character and amount of development and (hopefully) preserve some urban greenspace.

You may recall that the first developer to put forth a plan had an HEB Plus with gas station, high-rise apartments, multi-story office buildings, etc., Having a "wishlist" can serve as a guide for potential developers to include (or exclude) amenities documented in the survey results.

Please take a few minutes to complete this!



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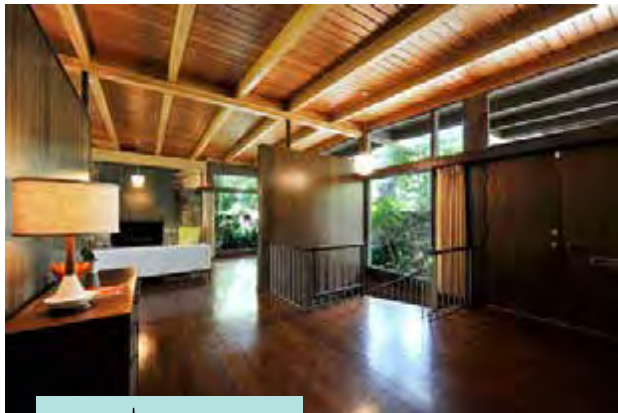


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New Board Meeting Location

HPWBANA board meetings will now be held in the meeting room at Yarborough Library located at 2200 Hancock. Meetings are held every third Monday of the month, except for December. The next Board meeting will be on June 16th at 7pm and will include a presentation by CH2M Hill and the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority (CTRMA), the consultants working on the Mopac Improvement Project. *Please note that Board meeting specifics may change due to scheduling conflicts. Remember to check HPWBANA.org or notifications on our Yahoo Group for any changes to the date, time, or location of monthly meetings.



**Please remember to pick
up after your pets and
"scoop the poop"**

Are You the Next Communications Chair for the HPWBANA?

The HPWBANA is currently seeking the next communications chair for the 2014-2015 year beginning in October. The communications chair is responsible for coordinating the flow of information to our neighbors, including announcements, news, and events in and around our community. Tasks include editing and submitting articles for our monthly newsletter as well as cross posting relevant items on our Yahoo Group, FB Page, and website.

Newsletter responsibilities include gathering articles relevant to the neighborhood that are free of advertising (ads can be purchased separately through PEEL, the company that prints and distributes the newsletter). Board members and residents are strongly encouraged to submit many of these articles, however, the editor can supply additional content.

The website tasks include updating our user friendly wordpress website, requiring only very basic computer and word processing skills. The communications chair does not have to be a board member

If you are interested in this position or have any additional questions, please send an email to newsletter@hpwbana.org

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