



COURTYARD HOMEOWNERS  
ASSOCIATION, INC.

# COURTYARD CALLER

Official Courtyard Newsletter

August 2014

Volume 10, Number 8

## BOARD MESSAGE

### JULY 4

Once again, Courtyard residents were treated to a great annual Independence Day parade and fun-filled picnic celebration in our Community Park. Led by our Fire Station 31 firefighters and Grand Marshall Luis Suarez riding in "grand" style in Ed Zibilski's 1930 Ford Model A Phaeton sedan, and accompanied by residents in beautifully decorated cars, bikes, strollers and wagons, the parade wound its way from Parade Ridge, down Courtyard Drive to Scout Island Circle South, across Tom Wooten Drive, and along North Scout Island Circle to the Park. Upon arrival, residents were presented with gourmet picnic fare from world renowned hotdog chef Lewis Price with assistance from Grand Marshall Luis. Activities included kayak and canoe rides, face painting, a Moonwalk, and the ever popular Slip'n'Slide. The Fire Safety Committee information table, manned by Fire Safety Chairman Jim Gattis and his wife, Barbara, was also there to provide important information about the Committee's plans to help make our neighborhood safer from wildfires.

Hats off to Social Committee Chair Joany Price and all the community volunteers who gave their time and energy to organize and present this most enjoyable event and to those members of the Kayak/Canoe Committee who so generously shared their time, boats, and equipment so that residents

could enjoy a boat ride: Lewis Price, Luis Suarez, Kathy & Winston Cundiff, Robert Dickinson, Rong Fu, Fred & Jean Heath, John Mannix, Allen & Mary Lou Nilson, Jim Vence, Fred Wahlers, Sean Walgren, Ron Cass, Susan Fulton, Carrie Holland, Jenny Peloquin, Doug Richards, Dan Sharphorn, Robert Wooten, and Jeff Dodson. Sincere apologies to anyone who might have been left off of our thank you list. We hope to have pictures from this year's celebration in the website Photo Gallery soon. ([www.courtyardhoa.org](http://www.courtyardhoa.org))

### FIRE SAFETY PLANS

While we aren't trying to scare you with this discussion, we do want you to keep in mind and give some serious thought to the very real and continuing threat of a wildfire in the Courtyard. Even though this summer hasn't been too bad so far, and we've had rainy and cloudy days, the conditions that create wildfire disasters are not going away anytime soon. This fall, the FSC hopes to have trained teams ready to begin to offer Courtyard residents free assessments of the outside areas of their homes and yards along with suggestions of ways to help make their homes safer from wildfires. We urge everyone to take advantage of this service and work with the volunteers on our Fire Safety Committee (FSC) to do all that we can to increase the likelihood that our residents and

*(Continued on Page 3)*

## CHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Fire Safety Committee  
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Villas at Courtyard:  
Thomas Hoy..... 231-1270  
..... Thomas.Hoy@freescale.com  
Wolf Court:  
Tim Sullivan..... 346-3146  
..... tsullivan@austin.rr.com

## COURTYARD Book Club

**Tuesday, September 2, 2014, 1 p.m.,  
5612 Scout Island North**

September's reading is a novel set in Nigeria in the 1960's -- *Half a Yellow Sun* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. Given the recent events in Nigeria, this story is unsettlingly current. Central characters, twin sisters Olanna and Kainene, are members of the Igbo people. Although twins, they are physically and temperamentally quite different, and while both girls greatly value family loyalty, their choices often put them on opposites sides of issues and challenge loyalty. The twins are also drawn to very different men as Olanna becomes the mistress of Odenigbo, an academic who teaches at a provincial university; and Kainene falls for Richard, a shy, awkward Englishman who supports the Biafran effort to secede and form a separate state in southern Nigeria. Rumors of war, then an all-out conflict throw this privileged foursome's world into disarray. The affect of the conflict on the poor is seen through the eyes of the houseboy, Ugwu.

*Half a Yellow Sun* won the Orange Prize which is given annually for the best book written in English by a woman. Adichie's latest novel, *Americanah* has won wide praise. It was selected by the New York Times as one of the 10 best books of 2013.

In October, the club will read *Sweet Thursday*, one of John Steinbeck's less well-known novels, a sequel to *Cannery Row*. Quite popular at the time of its publication in 1956, the novel was adapted for stage with the title, *Pipe Dream*, and nominated for 9 Tony awards.

Call or email Jean Heath,  
c.jeanheath@gmail.com; 512-231-9412, for  
more information on the club or questions about  
upcoming meetings.

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## SEND US YOUR EVENT PICTURES!!

Do you have a picture of an event that you would like to run in the newsletter? Send it to us and we will publish it in an upcoming issue. Email the picture to janeegib@gmail.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](http://www.PEELinc.com)



## Board Message - (Continued from Cover Page)

their homes will survive a fire. Please keep watch in the newsletter and on the website for further information. Contact Jim Gattis with questions and/or to provide help with this important work. jim.gattis@ymail.com; (512) 468-2266.

### POO PICK-UP

Despite putting out containers for easy access to poo bags, “deposits” continue to be left behind by some dog owners. You know who you are, and there isn’t a lot more we can say to you that hasn’t been said before. To all the rest of the conscientious dog owners and non-owners who are nice enough to make the effort to pick up poo – thank you. Please keep up the good work. If the incentive of being a good neighbor and responsible pet owner does not work for some people, we are hoping that residents will report anyone who does not pick up their dog’s poo. Absent a very good reason, we will report them to the City so that they can begin paying the City’s \$fine for this offense.

### TREE & SHRUB MAINTENANCE

Just a reminder that now through January is the time to be trimming your oak trees. Note also that our Declaration requires that “no tree, shrub or planting of any kind . . . shall be allowed to overhang or otherwise encroach upon any sidewalk or other

pedestrian way from ground level to a height of seven feet (7’),” and the City of Austin requires that all trees overhanging streets have a minimum clearance of fourteen feet (14’) above street level. Please take a look and see if your greenery needs some work.

### THINK BEFORE YOU ACT

Efforts to clean, repair, or revive areas of one’s property are great, and good home and yard maintenance is among our responsibilities as homeowners in the Courtyard. However, before beginning a big project, please consider taking a few minutes to visit with your neighbor(s) to give them a head’s up about outside work in your yard that might involve that neighbor’s property or drastically alter view(s) from his/her home. As most of you are aware, some of us live in very close proximity to our neighbors and in some instances shrubbery, trees, and/or fences that belong to one property owner have, over time, come to be an important part of the privacy enjoyed by several neighbors. Other times, there is no fence to clearly define boundaries or help identify which yard the plants or trees are growing in. Since you want to be very sure before you begin your project that you are working only on your own property, a short discussion with your neighbor(s) might save everyone a lot of time and “upset.”

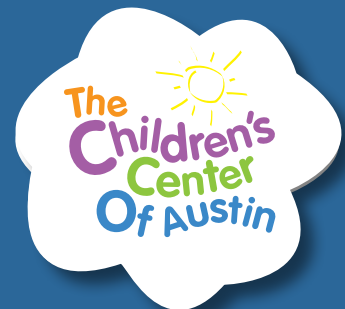
Finally, August is back to school month for many students. Please take a little extra care to watch out for students during the morning and late afternoon hours as they begin travel to and from school.



### Intelligent minds are nurtured by a peaked curiosity and love for learning.

A child with confidence is built on a foundation of love and support. The Children’s Center of Austin’s educational and developmental curriculum is like none other and reaches to all types of early learners. Learning doesn’t only take place in our classrooms! Learning continues to be fostered in our school library, gym, art studio, computer labs, and playgrounds.

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512.329.6633

# FLAG VANDALISM

For many years Austin realtor, Jo Carol Snowden, has kindly provided our neighborhood with American flags to decorate the community for Independence Day. These flags are usually in place several days before Independence Day and give the whole neighborhood a nice cheerful patriotic look. For many of us, it is our only special decoration, and we have come to enjoy and expect them each year. Jo Carol – on behalf of the Board and Courtyard community – thank you very much. We appreciate receiving them and hope you continue your practice.

Last year, for some reason known only to the person(s) that did it, several flags along North Scout Island Circle were removed from yards and tossed in the back of a pick-up truck. When the flags were discovered, they were “re-homed” along the path into the Park. It was annoying but chalked up to bored “kids.” This year, they struck again, removing most all of our flags and throwing them in drainage gutters and elsewhere along our streets. Why would someone do this? What possible message could they be trying to send? We don’t know. It is

unlikely any message was intended. This was simple vandalism, and their actions are too selfish and senseless to bother to consider further. As for the various theories about who might have done this – please keep in mind the wise old adage that you should “believe half of what you see and none of what you hear.” In other words, deal in facts not innuendo or rumor. We know the flags were still in place around midnight and gone by 4:30 a.m. and from following the train of beer bottles that accompanied the discarded flags, we decided whoever these people were, they were most likely older “kids” again, were not too bright, and need to “get a life” or at least a job - since they clearly have too much free time on their hands.

After talking with her about this, Jo Carol was kind enough to bring over some new flags, and we were able to retrieve some more from where they were dumped. The morning of July 4, we were able to replace most all of the flags by the time the parade started. Thank you to the residents who were out walking and offered to take a bunch and help distribute them. It was truly heartwarming and much appreciated.



The Austin Stone

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# The Courtyard July 4th Parade and Picnic *was a Blast*



**Joany  
Price**

*Your Courtyard Neighbor  
& Tennis Club Member*

Realtor, CLHMS  
Certified Previews™ Property Specialist  
International Diamond Society  
Coldwell Banker United, REALTORS



*I work here, I play here, I live here*



*Joany Price*



## PET OWNERS BEWARE

Recently, one of our families suffered the needless and tragic loss of their beloved dog. The culprit in this case was the Sago Palm – a common yard plant in Texas. The shock and sadness of learning about this lead to the desire to share this message and warning with all our pet owners in the hopes of avoiding further such tragedies.

Sago palms are naturally found in tropical/subtropical environments, and are also used as ornamental Bonsai houseplants – so they are not just something to watch for outside your home. Sago palms contains cycasin, which is the primary active toxic agent that results in severe liver failure in dogs. Note that it is also considered toxic to cats. All parts of the sago palm are considered poisonous, with the seeds (nuts) being the most toxic part of the plant. In this case, it is believed the dog chewed some seed pods discarded by squirrels. Ingestion results in acute gastrointestinal signs (e.g., drooling, loss of appetite, lethargy, vomiting, diarrhea, abnormal fluid accumulation in the abdomen,

abdominal pain, jaundice, and black-tarry stools) within fifteen (15) minutes to several hours. Central nervous system signs (e.g., weakness, loss of muscle coordination, seizures, tremors) and severe liver failure can occur within two to three days. Aggressive decontamination and treatment should be initiated. Even with aggressive treatment, the survival is about 50%.

If you suspect your dog or cat ate or even chewed on any part of a sago palm, call your veterinarian or Pet Poison Helpline immediately for life-saving treatment recommendations. Look these numbers up and keep them posted within easy reach. This article deals only with the sago palm, but we encourage you to do more reading to learn about the many common household plants that can kill or severely harm your beloved pets. Learn whether there are any helpful remedies that you can keep at home and administer immediately to help your pet until you can get him/her to the vet's office. As in any poisoning case, speed of response can be critical to the victim's survival.



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## TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION

### APHIDS

Aphids feed on a wide variety of plants in Texas. They have high reproductive capabilities so their populations can grow to large numbers quickly.

Aphids are small, soft-bodied insects that come in a variety of colors. Some have wings while others may not, but all have cornicles, or "tailpipes" that come off the tip of the abdomen.

Aphids have piercing-sucking mouthparts which they use to pierce plant tissue and suck out the juices. Damage often appears as yellowing or curling of foliage. Aphids also secrete a sweet, sticky substance called honeydew. Honeydew often appears on the plant as a shiny spots or sometimes the honeydew may have sooty mold growing on it. Sooty mold is a black fungus that can block sunlight from reaching the plant leading to a decrease of photosynthesis.

*Some ideas for managing aphids are as follows:*

- Encourage natural enemies such as ladybugs, lacewing larvae & syrphid fly larvae; know what these creatures look like so you don't kill them
- Use high pressure water sprays to dislodge aphids from the plant
- Less toxic pesticides include active ingredients such as insecticidal soap, azadirachtin (neem), horticultural oils or d-limonene
- Other pesticides to manage aphids may include active ingredients such as permethrin, acephate (non-food items only), carbaryl or imidacloprid

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

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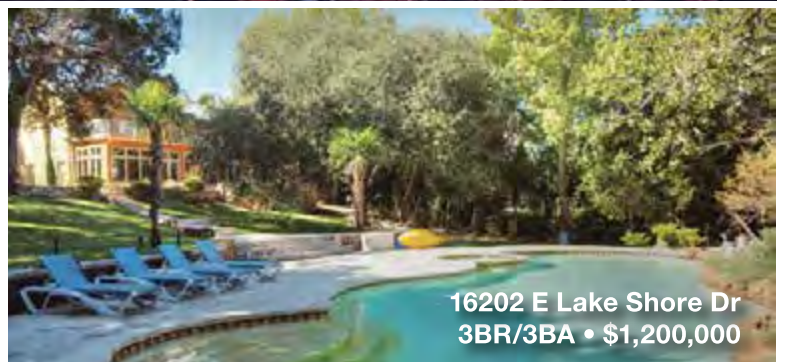
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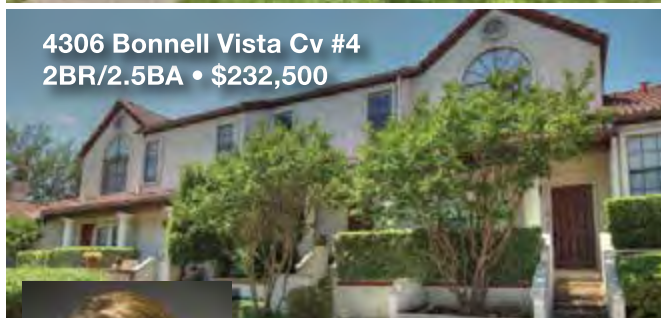
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