



NEWS FOR THE RESIDENTS OF TARRYTOWN

JULY 2015

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 7

TARRYTOWN NEWSLETTER

*A Newsletter
for the Residents
of
Tarrytown*

The Tarrytown Newsletter is a monthly newsletter mailed to all Tarrytown residents. Each newsletter is filled with valuable information about the community, local area activities, school information, and more.

If you are involved with a school group, play group, scouts, sports team, social group, etc., and would like to submit an article for the newsletter, you can do so online at www.PEELinc.com. Personal news (announcements, accolades/honors/celebrations, etc.) are also welcome as long as they are from area residents.

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Hosting an exchange student is a great way to learn about another country and culture without leaving your home town. It provides a cultural exchange experience for the entire family while providing a student from another country with a slice of American life.

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Hosting an exchange student provides your

family, your high school and your community with a direct window into another country and culture, providing an opportunity for life-long learning.

Families of all shapes and sizes can host an international exchange student. We've had host families with young children, no children, high school aged children – as well as empty nesters and single parent households.

Ayusa is a non-profit based in San Francisco that promotes global learning and leadership through foreign exchange and study abroad programs for high school students from around the world.

For more information about hosting a high school foreign exchange student, please contact your local representative Vicki Odom at 832.455.7881 or vodom@ayusa.org or Ayusa at 1.888.552.9872 or by visiting the website at www.ayusa.org.



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ARTICLE INFO

The Tarrytown News is mailed monthly to all Tarrytown residents. Residents, community groups, churches, etc. are welcome to include information about their organizations in the newsletter. Personal news for the Stork Report, Teenage Job Seekers, recipes, special celebrations, and birthday announcements are also welcome.

To submit an article for The Tarrytown News please email it to tarrytown@peelinc.com. The deadline is the 15th of the month prior to the issue.



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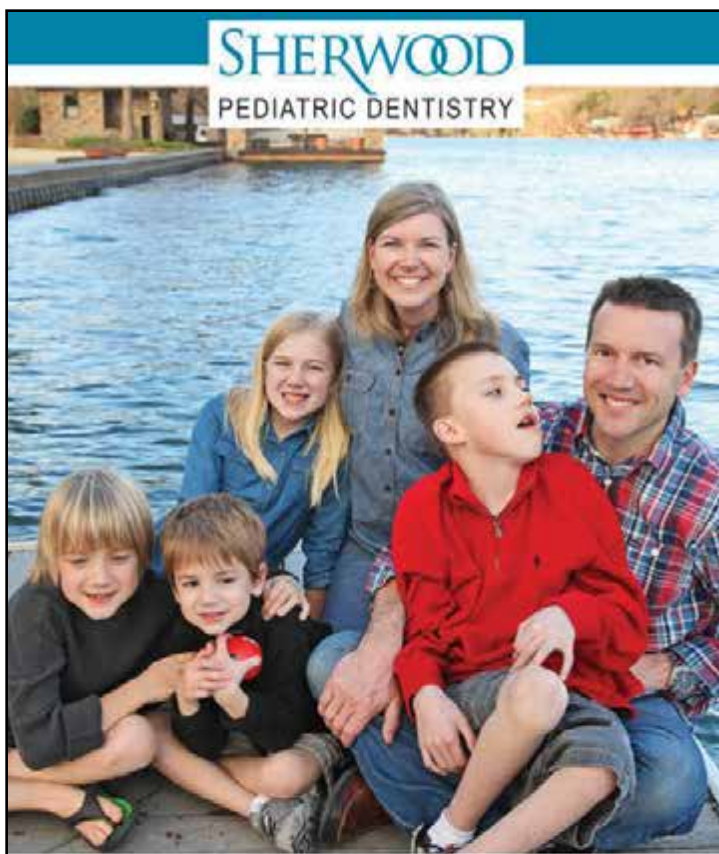
Cicadas are fairly large insects but can vary in size with some growing over 1 ½ inches. Color may also vary depending upon species, but many are brown or green. All cicadas have bulging eyes and, on adults, wings that are held roof-like over the body. The wings are semi-transparent with thick wing veins. The majority of their life cycle is spent underground.

Cicadas have 2-5 year life cycles and appear in Texas in mid to late summer. Females insert egg clusters into branches of trees using their saw-like ovipositor (egg laying structure). Eggs hatch after about 6 weeks and small nymphs drop to the ground where they burrow into the soil. Nymphs feed on sap of tree roots with their piercing-sucking mouthparts. After becoming fully developed, nymphs emerge from the ground at night and climb onto nearby objects such as tree trunk, plants, fences, etc. Adult cicadas emerge from the last nymphal stage leaving behind the exuviae (cast skin). Adults can live 5-6 weeks.

Male cicadas are well known for their “song”. They rest on a tree and produce a whining sound to attract females. The sound is produced by two vibrating membranes on the side of the abdomen. Females do not “sing”. Adults feed on juices from tender twigs, but usually do not cause lasting harm to the plant from feeding.

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

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TARRYTOWN REAL ESTATE MARKET REPORT

July 2015
by **Trey McWhorter**

In this month's article, I'll compare what is essentially the first half of 2015 (through 6/15) with the first half of each of the previous 3 years, and highlight some observations based on that data.

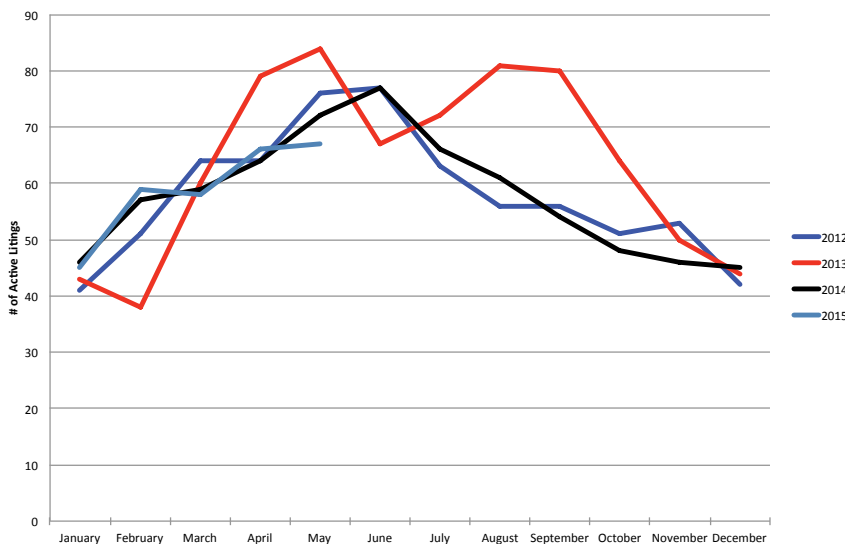
- The number of transactions continues to trend downward. With 56 MLS-recorded transactions in the first six months of 2015, this is down more than 10% from the same period in 2014, and down more than 30% from 2013.

- List and sold prices have increased substantially. Median price per square foot is also up significantly, almost 30%, over 2014.

Single Family Homes	Year-to-Date Stats for Tarrytown	YTD 2015	YTD 2014	YTD 2013	YTD 2012
SOLD	Single Family Homes Sold	56	63	83	75
List Price	Avg. List Price	\$1,217,524	\$1,033,908	\$1,037,670	\$814,300
	Median List Price	\$1,150,000	\$730,000	\$800,000	\$675,000
Sold Price	Avg. Net Sold Price	\$1,159,520	\$1,000,0019	\$998,955	\$786,202
	Median Net Sold Price	\$1,065,500	\$720,000	\$810,000	\$640,000
List Price \$ / Sq Ft	Avg. List Price / Sq Ft	\$396.07	\$373.96	\$328.58	\$308.00
	Median List Price / Sq Ft	\$392.37	\$356.70	\$324.85	\$300.13
Sold Price \$ / Sq Ft	Avg. Net Sold Price / Sq Ft	\$379.23	\$366.07	\$320.53	\$297.74
	Median Net Sold Price / Sq Ft	\$379.52	\$355.38	\$315.39	\$293.18
Days on Market	Avg. Days on Market	61	47	54	58
	Median Days on Market	27	12	12	26
Size of House	Sq/Ft (Total)	2694	2401	2847	2500
Age of House	Year of Construction	1960	1949	1954	1952

- Homes are spending a little more time on the market, with the median number of days on market increasing from 12 days in the first half of 2014 to 27 days in 2015. Still a very healthy, hot market!

Graph 1: Active Listings_2015 vs. Prior Years



The number of active listings for the first half of 2015 (see Graph 1) started to depart from the trends of the last few years. Active listings in May, which typically increase substantially (May is often a month with the highest number of active listings of the year), were relatively flat with April. If that continues then we could expect to see more upward pressure on pricing as buyers compete for fewer available homes.

If you would like to see analysis of something in particular related to real estate in Tarrytown or Austin in general, please let me know.

Note: All data comes from the Austin Board of Realtors' MLS report, reflecting activity through June 15, 2015.

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IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE

NATUREWATCH

by Jim and Lynne Weber

For many of us, the outdoor magic and mystery of summer nights was best embodied by the blink of fireflies or 'lightning bugs', which are neither flies nor bugs, but beetles. With over 170 species of fireflies in North America, and about 36 of those species in Texas, fireflies fall into three main genera: the Photuris, Photinus, and the Pyracomena. The most common species in Texas is the Pennsylvania Firefly (*Photuris pennsylvanicus*), which ranges from the eastern U.S. to Kansas and into Texas.

Most likely to be spotted at night in fields and near wooded areas, the adult Pennsylvania Firefly's elytra (hardened forewings that form a protective covering over flight wings) are dark brown with yellowish margins and slanted stripes. The head is yellow around the sides and red in the middle, and their overall length is about half an inch. After mating, the female lays tiny, spherical eggs singly or in small groups in damp soil, around grass or moss, and they hatch in about 4 weeks. The larvae feed in the grass on slugs, snails, earthworms, and cutworms, and in this immature phase their light isn't visible unless they are turned over. They overwinter as larvae in small chambers within the ground, waiting for the spring months when they pupate and emerge in early summer as adult fireflies, giving them an average lifespan of approximately two years.

Firefly mating is dependent on the female seeing the distinct flashes of a mate-seeking male, and each must find the exact right blinking pattern in order to mate successfully. Males begin flying after dark, emitting yellow or yellow-green flashes, some flying above the tree canopy. Interestingly, ambient light

around a firefly's natural habitat decreases the chance it will find a mate. In order to rise to the challenge of producing offspring with artificial light around, fireflies must increase the intensity of the flashes they produce in order to be seen. This increased light emission decreases the stored energy supply in the firefly that would normally be used directly for reproduction. Artificial light also exposes the fireflies to nighttime predators, even when they are not blinking. This combination of effects from artificial light directly decreases the chance that fireflies will survive and mate.

Flashes of light can be emitted by both male and female fireflies, and can also be used for purposes other than mating. One additional use is to lure prey to them; in fact, females from the *Photuris* genus will often mimic the flashes of a female *Photinus* firefly, and a male *Photinus* that falls for it will quickly be devoured! Not all female fireflies are capable of flight, however, as some species are wingless and bear a strong resemblance to larvae rather than to adult males of the same species. Often, these types of fireflies are



referred to as 'glowworms'.

The abundance of fireflies has been decreasing over the years, greatly challenged by both the increasing presence of artificial light and the rapid development of our open fields and forests. As human light pollution and development continues to spread, fireflies just might disappear altogether, in a blink of an eye!

Send your nature-related questions to naturewatch@austin.rr.com and we'll do our best to answer them. Check out our blog at naturewatchaustin.blogspot.com if you enjoy reading these articles!

Mental Health Break

Submitted by Steve Bryan

Who doesn't love a vacation? For many, vacations are a staple of summertime. But have you ever wondered why vacations make us feel so good? Sure, it's the adventure, seeing the sights, having new experiences. It is also about stepping away from our daily routines and taking a break from the mundane grind of daily life. So it may not be surprising to learn that vacations are wonderful for our mental health and sense of well-being.

In terms of brain science, the benefits of vacations are rooted in the idea of novel experience. Our brains love novelty. Our brains thrive with new experiences and flourish when presented with new sights, sounds, smells, ideas, and adventure. In addition, sharing these novel experiences with another person, like your spouse, family, or friend expands the dynamic of novelty while deepening your mutual bond and connection with another.

As we age, we can develop a sense of "been there done that" and lose our childlike wonder of the world. We can easily fall

into a rut because our brains are also designed to simplify and generalize our experience. When we learn something new, our brain tries to integrate it into the mind and move on. As a result, over time, the experiences that once brought us joy and excitement, may no longer do so.

So a vacation is an easy way to re-ignite our sense of awe and wonder. But a far-away adventure is not the only way to experience novelty. Anything that creates a shift in your routine can have a similar effect. Simply taking a walk, connecting with a friend, trying a new restaurant, or even a new dance/yoga class can stimulate your brain toward a more healthy sense of well being. There are infinitely more ways to incorporate novelty into our lives, but before the summer ends, why not take a vacation?

Steven Penn Bryan is a Licensed Professional Counselor Intern at Center for Relational Care, 2312 Western Trails Blvd., Austin, TX 78745. He is supervised by David Burleson, LPC. (512) 492-6200. www.relationalcare.org

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CHOOSING A CAREGIVER FOR AN ELDERLY PERSON

The task of choosing a caregiver for an elderly person can seem intimidating, and often falls to a close friend or relative. Questions arise from how to vet the right person for the job, to choosing the best professional agency.

The first thing to consider is the type of services needed: whether the elderly person needs a companion type service, assistance with activities of daily living, or more skilled nursing needs. If the needs are for a companion, there might be a neighborhood friend available to fill the position. It's important to meet with the applicant to make sure there is a clear understanding of the job description, rate of pay and that there is an employment contract in place. This avoids any misunderstandings in the future.

If more assistance is needed with activities of daily living, such as bathing, dressing, eating and so on, it may be advisable to choose an agency that can provide trained personal. Make sure these employees are insured and bonded through the agency. These caregivers also engage in light housework activities, and it's also important to know if they will provide transportation for the client to doctor and other medical appointments if needed. Some agencies will provide transportation with a waiver, but if the caregiver is to use a family vehicle make sure that correct vehicle insurance is in place.

A trusted person representing the client should be present at the interview with the agency, and with the proposed caregiver to make sure that the person is a good fit. Make sure that the agency has performed a background check and that the caregiver has provided good references.

Cost is usually a key factor when choosing caregiver services, but the lowest priced services may not always be the best fit. It's always a good idea to shop around and compare agencies in your area.

Lastly it's very important that an outside person keep a watchful eye on the situation with a caregiver and elderly person, for possible abuse and neglect. The agency should be notified immediately of any problems. Unfortunately our seniors are vulnerable in our society and need help to stay safe.



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