

HIGHLAND PARK WEST BALCONES AREA NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

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www.hpwbana.org



HPWBANA Annual Meeting and Observance of National Night Out

Russell's Bakery 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, October 5, 2015

Come spend the evening with your neighbors at Russell's Bakery! Hear a review of 2015 highlights from HPWBANA and participate in the election of board members. Complimentary appetizers, desserts, and beverages provided.

Neighbor Shares Memories of Sculpture Planned for Perry Art Park

HPWBANA

by Jessica Winslow

THE

NEWS



Nakisa Moin has fond memories of her young son playing hide-andseek around a sculpture on the Laguna Gloria grounds. Coincidentally, this sculpture, "Dayton," by Jim Huntington, will be installed at the new Perry Art Park on Balcones Drive later this year.

"He liked to hide in that art sculpture and come out and surprise me," says Nakisa of her son Nima, who is about two years old in the photos. He is now a fourth grader at Highland Park Elementary, where he plays soccer. Nima,

a budding scientist, likes to collect specimens such as rocks and feathers.

Nakisa thinks the latest addition to Perry Park is very exciting. "Perry Park is a great place for neighbors and school families to use the exercise facilities, such as the workout stations and tennis courts. The sculpture installation will bring a new perspective to the park so that neighbors can enjoy art," she said.

Nakisa, a nutritionist and excellent cook, and her husband Pirouz, a supervising engineer with the City of Austin, are natives of Iran. Nakisa moved to the US about 20 years ago and Pirouz came in the late 1970s. They moved to Highland Park West in 2009. Their

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IMPORTANT NUMBERS

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

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The HPWBANA Board meets on the first 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

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(Continued from Cover)

daughter Arina is a sophomore at the Liberal Arts and Science Academy. They love living here, especially the friendly neighbors and beautiful natural setting.

The Perry Art Park is a collaborative project with the Friends of Perry Park, City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department, The Contemporary Austin, HPWBANA, Highland Park Elementary PTA, and Austin Parks Foundation. For more information about the project, visit http://friendsofperrypark.org/.



Photos by Pirouz Moin.



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OCTOBER 2015



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- Grocery bags will be picked up from your home on Saturday, October 17.



Together we can make a difference!

JENNIFER SMITH REALTOR[®], GRI, CLHMS





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Rebecca's Listings



1–Story House: 4 Beds, 3 Full Baths, ≈ 3,100 Sq.Ft. Separate Studio: 1 Bed, 1 Bath, Kitchenette, ≈ 500 Sq.Ft. Extensive Remodeling & Addition to be Completed Soon 0.32 Acre Lot, Plenty of Room for a Pool Offered for \$1,375,000



4606 Horseshoe Bend

1-Story House: 4 Beds, 2 Full Baths , 2,661 Sq.Ft. Cottage: 1 Bed, 1 Bath, Full Kitchen, 420 Sq.Ft. Huge Private 0.73 Acre Lot Offered for \$925,000



Be Careful Out There: Traffic and School Safety

by Pieter Sybesma

Two weeks have passed since school started at Highland Park Elementary. Even though we have a shortage of sidewalks, it appears that more children and parents are walking or biking to school. From the U.S. Surgeon General: "Only half of American adults get enough physical activity to reduce the risk of chronic disease, the leading cause of death in the United States. Walking is an easy way to start and maintain a physically active lifestyle. The Surgeon General aims to increase walking across the nation by calling for access to safe and convenient places to walk and wheelchair roll.

There have been a number of times this school year when cars have continued up Fairview going the wrong way on the one-way street area in front of the school around the time school was being dismissed. Luckily no one has been hit. APD has been alerted to these incidents. And on several occasions cars have turned into a crosswalk while the crosswalk was occupied, there have been midblock crossings, and some children have been let out of cars mid-block in the center of the street. For a few more steps, please cross safely at the cross-walks or corners. We have crossing guards at both crosswalks on Fairview Drive for the busy intersections with Sunny Lane and West Highland Terrace. And shortly, there will be construction of a new home at the northeast corner of Fairview/West Highland Terrace, in addition to the school construction, which will further impact traffic and pedestrians.

The reduced school zone speed limit, cross walks, school crossing guard, and No Parking Zones have been established for the safety of the school children and school buses. Please continue to observe these safety features and encourage other parents to also do so.

Save the Date! Highland Park HOOT

The annual Highland Park HOOT will take place Friday, October 23 from 5:30pm to 8pm at Highland Park Elementary. The Halloween carnival is always a fantastic fundraising event for the school and for the surrounding community. Please save the date and contact the school for additional information.

Who Knew? Walking Safety

Did you know that it is the law in Texas to walk on the lefthand side of a roadway, against traffic?

According to Tex. Transp. Code § 552.006 (as stated on the TX DOT website):

A pedestrian may not walk along and on a roadway if an adjacent sidewalk is provided and is accessible to the pedestrian.

If a sidewalk is not provided, a pedestrian walking along and on a highway shall if possible walk on: (1) the left side of the roadway; or (2) the shoulder of the highway facing oncoming traffic.

The National Center for Safe Routes to School (www.saferoutesinfo. org) states:

If no sidewalks exist on the road, it is recommended to walk facing oncoming traffic on the same side of the road as the oncoming traffic. Also, you should get as far to the side of the road as possible to provide additional space between you and oncoming cars.

When bicycling, you will want to ride on the right (going in the same direction as automobile traffic).

So remember, walk against traffic when there is no sidewalk — oncoming traffic will have a much better chance of seeing you. Stay safe out there, walkers!

New Mortgage Loan Disclosures: Timelines, They are a Changin'

by Rebecca Wolfe Spratlin

Ever get a loan and try to figure out what in the world are all those charges and exactly what the true cost of the loan was? Most answer this with a resounding, "No, I have no clue!" The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, the offspring of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010 has come up with new disclosure forms that are designed to make the whole loan and closing costs confusion go away and clearly show, in consumer terms, the real cost of loans and closings, and also to make it easier to compare one loan quote to others so you can make an informed loan decision.

The new forms, the Loan Estimate and the Closing Disclosure, will be implemented effective October 3, 2015. No change comes without a learning curve. While banks and title companies work through the use of the new forms, and the new regulations that come with their use, closings will be delayed. Currently, most closings for homes being purchased with mortgages take about 30 - 45 days to close. With the new forms and regulations, homes purchased with mortgages are expected to take about 45 - 60 Days. In addition to the institutional learning curves, there are a few things that will also affect the closing timelines:

• The Lone Estimate must be provided to the borrower within 3 business days after the lender receives the borrower's loan

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application.

- The Closing Disclosure must be provided to the borrower and signed by him/her at least 3 business days before closing. This 3-day period is called the "disclosure period."
- If there are certain types of changes to the Closing Disclosure during the "disclosure period," the 3-day period starts over again, adding three days before closing (i.e. delays closing). The changes that can reset the time by 3-days are:
- Change in annual percentage rate (APR) of the loan by more than 0.125% for fixed-rate loans or 0.25% for adjustable-rate loans.
- Type of the loan changes, such as changing from a fixed-rate to an adjustable-rate loan.
- A pre-payment penalty is added to the loan.

The responsibility of adhering to the new forms and regulations are assumed by the lenders and title companies. Realtors and Brokers have also been trained to deal with these changes and are a good sources to help you through the entire process. Bottom line to sellers is to expect a longer closing period. Bottom line to buyers, is to do as much work on gathering and providing information to your lender as quickly as possible, provide a quick turnaround on signing the Closing Disclosure, avoid last minute changes that impact the Closing Disclosure and plan for 45-60 days to close.





stdavids.com/kids

Located at south entrance of St. David's North Austin Medical Center

Hosting an International Exchange Student

Submitted by Vicki Odom

Hosting an International Exchange Student is such a great experience for all of those involved. It leads to a better understanding between individuals of other cultures, hopefully branching its way out to a more peaceful global society. But don't just take my word about it, read about Nelva's experience and understanding of the exchange program.

I'm so lucky to have been placed with a great host family in Texas! The best part is when we share each other's cultures and have a lot of quality time together. I'm blessed to have chance to study in American High School.

Being an exchange student is hard. For the first couple days it was hard because I didn't know anybody, the moving class system is new for me and sometimes it's hard to understand what they say. But America is really friendly and handy so I got a lot of help from them. From the exchange program, people can really get to know each other, people start to respect each other and we can start a new chapter to have a better world.

So if you want to enrich your life, host an exchange student!

Nelva is from Indonesia and is spending the academic year here in Texas as part of the Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study (YES) program. This program is funded by the US Department of State which provides scholarships for secondary school students from countries with significant Muslim populations. As part of her program year, Nelva is required to perform at least 60 hours of community service (however most YES students hours amount to hundreds of hours) and continue working with the program in her home country.

Our application process for the 2016 Spring Semester and 2016/2017 academic year will soon be opening. School spots in our area tend to fill up rather quickly, so get your application in early to host one of these amazing students!

Ayusa is a non-profit organization founded in 1981 to promote global learning and leadership through foreign exchange, study abroad, and leadership programs for high school students from the U.S. and 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.



Partnerships for Children

Marques is a charming and quiet young man. He loves basketball and enjoys most all sports. He also enjoys riding his bike, playing video games and listening to music. He would enjoy being in a family that would provide activities for him to be active, especially sports. He would like to have a Mom that is caring and loving. He would also like to have a father that will do "guy things" like playing basketball and camping.

Adopting a child from the foster care system requires little or no cost to the adoptive family and funding may be available to help the adoptive family support the child or sibling group.

The Heart Gallery of Central Texas is a program of Partnerships for Children. To learn more about the adoption or fostering process, please call the Heart Gallery of Central Texas at (512) 834-4756, email heartgallery@partnershipsforchildren.org or visit our website at www.partnershipsforchildren.org



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OMG - It's homework time and I need a drink!

Ah, the school year starts. Parents everywhere rejoice with visions of free time!

Free time to catch up on shows that aren't animated, to work out, to get your mani/pedi, to shop without listening to whining, to have conversations with complete sentences and big words.

But, instead that free time is:

Free time to get the oil changed! In both cars, to take the dogs to the vet for annual check ups, to call a plumber to fix the tub jets, to call an electrician because the plumber won't fix the tub jets, to call a tub dealer because the electrician won't fix the tub jets, to have an appliance guy come and tell you the tub has to be removed because the pump was installed backwards – and nope, he doesn't remove tubs, to call BOTH a plumber and the appliance back together – that may take forever to get scheduled, to take a bath IF you ever get the tub fixed!

Still it is easier than doing all of those fun chores AND playing referee to the kids.

With great joy comes great pain and agony – namely Homework!! Seriously, even Charles Dickens agrees... "It was the best of times,

it was the worst of times..." (A Tale of Two Cities)

O.M.G. Homework.

When. Did. Homework.

Become. Such. A. Big.

Horrible. Fricking.

NIGHTMARE???

I remember homework:

I remember homework from when I was a child. The teacher taught something in class. I listened and learned. I took the book home and did the "odd numbered problems" on page 72. This didn't take long because I actually knew the material. I had seen it recently – that same day! Homework – 15 minutes BOOM. Skill reinforced, mom not involved, and STILL time for playing outside.

Homework today?

Now kids stare blankly at the homework page which covers things they discussed months or even grades ago...and maybe, just maybe something they have actually seen before in class. Who refreshes their memory about these long forgotten skills? Mom, of course AND without the help of a textbook!

I remember homework:

I remember homework from my teaching days. (1988-2004) Each subject had a separate day for homework. For me that meant I only gave homework once a week -20 minutes homework for language arts. The kids had to know what to do or it wasn't useful for reinforcing that day's learning AND the phone rang off the wall the next day with parents complaining. Boom! Skill reinforced, mom not involved, still time for playing outside.

Homework today?

There are no text-books. Everything is online and Lord help me, everything requires 'signing' in. We have log in and password information for countless (no seriously, I don't even want to count them!) accounts:

*profiles *schoology *band calendar *PTO information *lunch account *soccer schedule *Prezi *spelling town *math practice *school newsletter AND *each teacher has a website ** I just went to parent night at the school last night and there are more accounts coming soon. Wonderful.

All of the above....for EACH kid. I have trouble keeping track of my own online life and you want me to add 40 logins and passwords per kid? I need a drink.

Skills reinforced? Um....I have no idea what skill this reinforces. Mom involved? You BET! Time to play outside? HAHAHAHA!

Sigh...remember the good old days?

Homework was easy and painless, dishes washed themselves, fairies did the laundry in the night, beautifully coifed children played happily together while you cooked gourmet meals in your heels and pearls, remember those days? Yeah, me neither. And since none of those things are a part of the world, past, present, or ...well hopefully in the future we need to get it together now!!

Tips for less painful homework time!

1) Pay attention.

Homework time always comes during the witching hour of the day when the baby is crying and the dogs are barking and dinner needs to be cooked... Homework is hard enough when you are focused on it, right? So, do what you can to give yourself the space to pay attention. Like:

*Make dinner early or use a crockpot.

*Feed dogs a little earlier so they will not be needy or freaky.

*Break out the treats for baby.

2) Foster independence.

I'll wait for you to stop laughing. I know I just said that the kids don't have any idea what have the homework is even about so how are they supposed to be independent? By trying. Yes, foster that "old college try" while they are still in elementary school. It turns out some of those problems they really CAN do or at least get close.

3) Keep it quiet.

It should go without saying that the house should be quiet. No TV. No DVD. No Internet. Just kids sitting at tables focusing on their task. I have no luck with mine together so I divide and conquer by having them at different work stations. (Fancy word for one at the kitchen table and one at the coffee table.)

4) Free time first.

I believe it a little break between working all day at school and working again on homework, but only a little one. Give them a snack, potty break, time to tell about their day...part of a video game or tv show or swing set time in the backyard. Thirty minutes of downtime gives everyone a breather before settling down for work.

5) NO breaks.

Just get it done. Whining about it and talking about it and needing (Continued on Page 9)

Highland Park West Balcones Area

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a drink and throwing a fit, etc. all just wastes time. Tell the kids to just get it over with. We all know that if they would just buckle down, focus, and get to it, homework would take 1/2 the time!

6) Bring the phone.

OK, perhaps this is the "WTF is math all about this year" part of me, but please keep your phone nearby logged into Facebook so you can bail me out when I post a picture of tonight's "how the hell do I figure out this math problem?" photo. I'm happy to help you out, too for more reasonable subjects than math.

7) Be ready.

Have paper, pencils, books, drink, snack, dictionary, lap top ready. Do not give kids the chance to 'forget' something and waste time wandering around the house looking for it. You'll save your sanity by spending 2 minutes getting ready.

8) Have a mantra.

When the kids are whining about how hard the homework is or how stupid the homework is or how 'mean' their teacher is for assigning it, you need a mantra. Do NOT engage in this time wasting conversation – even if Mean Mrs. Smith really did assign the dumbest homework assignment ever. Instead, have a mantra to repeat over and over again in response. Mine is, "We are not talking about that right now. We are doing our homework. Focus." Over and over and over and over.

9) Pat yourself on the back.

Lastly, raise your glass in a toast (we really are drinking now aren't we?) and give yourself a pat on the back. Homework is tough on everyone and making sure they 1) do it and 2) do it well will give them skills to last their entire life. You are doing a great job, momma. Cheers to you!

Boy, you'll need a vacation when you get a break from homework for the holidays.

Stop by and see me for tips on making it AWESOME!

Natalie Tanner, The Educational Tourist helps family plan adventures and make them awesome! Www.theeducationaltourist. com





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