



# Message from the President

*Chris Hajdu*

Thanks to everyone who made it out to the NWACA Annual Meeting. We had a great turnout and I heard from several of you that you enjoyed the meeting and the content we covered. For those that didn't make it, we have posted the presentations on the NWACA website so you can catch up on what you missed. (Go to the Resources tab, then Library, then NWACA General – they're on page 2.) Special thanks go out to our speakers, who included Chris Dolan (Austin City Arborist,) Sherri Gallo (District 10 Councilmember,) Julie Cowan (Board of Trustee Member for AISD District 4,) Lynda Rife (CTRMA,) and Michael Whellan (Representative for Austin Oaks.)

A big thanks also goes to our board and committee members who staffed the various committee tables at the Annual Meeting. And, just in case you missed the exciting news, the northern part of the Mopac project will be opening this summer, with the rest to follow in the next 6-10 months – woohoo!

As I mentioned a few newsletters ago, NWACA functions because of contributions from volunteers. Our volunteers tirelessly contribute their time and effort across a wide variety of committees and activities each and every year. At our annual meeting, we recognize a volunteer for their contributions to NWACA. This year, our NWACA Volunteer of the year is Cecelia Burke. Cecelia was previously on the NWACA board, holding the office of Secretary. She has also been involved with recruiting many board members over the years. She's helped organize our wonderful July 4th parade over the years, and recently she was our number one fundraiser on the Murchison Pool project. A heartfelt thanks goes out to Cecelia, for all she's done for NWACA and for all she will continue to do. If you see her around the neighborhood, make sure to thank her for her commitment to NWACA.

Lastly, don't forget that utility work on Far West Boulevard will impact the parade route this year. Check out the article in this newsletter with details about the new route. We can't wait to see you at the Parade!

# AISD Bond Planning

*Lauren Ward*

As many of you know, our neighborhood schools are at beyond maximum capacity. Two elementary schools, Doss (162%) and Hill (140%), are significantly above capacity – and the most crowded in the district (according to data from February 2016 boundary planning meetings). Five year projections (SY2020-21) indicate all five elementary schools in the region will have enrollment exceeding 100% of capacity: Davis (123%), Doss (175%), Hill (166%), Summitt (119%), and Highland Park (105%). Because of this, any boundary changes are no longer sufficient to offer relief.

It is not just our neighborhood that is in crisis; Blazier Elementary school in Southeast Austin is also overcrowded at 140% capacity. To address the shifting demographics of Austin, as well as the issues with current school facilities, AISD has taken the next step – the creation of a Facilities and Bond Planning Advisory Committee (FABPAC).

Part of the mission of this group is to provide an update of the 2014 Facilities Master Plan, and propose the scope and timing of future bond proposals. In the last bond election, held in 2013, a series of bond recommendations made it onto the ballot to address overcrowding of neighborhood schools as well as structural and maintenance issues. Unfortunately, not all of the needs in our neighborhood – or throughout Austin – were met, as only two measures passed (and not those offering relief for overcrowding specifically), so AISD is revisiting the process.

Their hope is to create a long-range, comprehensive master plan that outlines the current status and future use of district facilities, guides the development of future capital improvements, and supports planning for future bond elections.

Through the summer, AISD is in the process of soliciting input from various stakeholders – with community engagement meetings being held around town. In addition, they have contracted a specialized education planning consultant to review current economic and demographic data, as well as projections, and the 2013-2014 materials.

Over the course of this summer, AISD and the consultants will be conducting both a facility condition assessment (does the roof need to be replaced? is the boiler likely to fail within the next five

*(Continued on Page 2)*

## IMPORTANT NUMBERS

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Each of the Board members can be reached at:  
[nwacainfo@gmail.com](mailto:nwacainfo@gmail.com)

The NWACA Board meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month, except December. Please visit our calendar at [www.nwaca.org](http://www.nwaca.org) to see the specific time and location. If you wish to speak at a Board meeting, please send email a week before the meeting, so that we can get you on the agenda.

NWACA is bordered on the north by Spicewood Springs Road, on the west by Loop 360, on the south by RM 2222, and on the east by Mopac (Loop 1).

## ADVERTISING INFO

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(Continued from Cover)

years?) and sustainability assessment (do the educational spaces serve modern needs?). Almost all 130 school sites will be evaluated (the district's newer school don't need to be evaluated), with the end goal to develop strategies and considerations for the next step in the process – bond planning.

Starting in September, AISD will be holding a series of master planning workshops in the Austin area. The goals of these meetings are to allow the community to see the results of all the data and facility evaluations and to provide feedback, recommendations, and comments. All of this information will be rolled into the development of a series of bond program recommendations, with the thought that a bond will be on the ballot in May of 2017. It is important to note that this is planned – and has not been finalized by the board.

NWACA will continue to keep you updated on the progress of the facilities and bond planning committee as well as the overall recommendations – particularly those impacting schools in our neighborhood. However, if you are interested in more information or would like to follow the progress more directly, here is a link to the AISD committee page: <https://www.austinisd.org/advisory-bodies/fabpac>



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# NWACA AND NEIGHBORHOOD EVENTS

**JUNE 10, 10AM RIBBON CUTTING;  
6-8PM POOL PARTY WITH KONA ICE**

*Murchison Pool*

Opening weekend celebration – details TBD

**JUNE 4, 8 AM – 11 AM**

*Stillhouse Hollow Preserve*

Guided hikes and celebration of completion of Stillhouse Hollow  
Preserve Improvement Project

**JUNE 5, 2 PM**

*Kneaded Pleasures*

NWACA Parks Committee

**JUNE 7, 8 AM**

*Kneaded Pleasures*

Communications Committee

**JUNE 8, 8:30 AM**

*Kneaded Pleasures*

Crime and Safety Committee

**JUNE 9, 8 AM**

*Kneaded Pleasures*

Sponsorship Committee

**JUNE 15, 6:30 – 8:30 PM**

*Mangia Pizza*

NWACA Monthly Board Meeting

**JUNE 28, 5PM**

*Temple Beth Shalom, 7300 Hart Lane*

NWACA Zoning and Transportation Committee

**JULY 3, 2 PM**

*Kneaded Pleasures*

NWACA Parks Committee

**JULY 4, 9 - 11:30 AM**

*Farhills Drive and North Hills Drive*

44th Annual 4th of July Parade

**JULY 5, 6:30 - 8 PM**

*Cornerstone Church, 1101 Reinli St.*

Region 1 APD Commander's Forum for third quarter

**JULY 5, 8 AM**

*Kneaded Pleasures*

Communications Committee

**JULY 6, 8:30 AM**

*Kneaded Pleasures*

Crime and Safety Committee

**JULY 7, 8 AM**

*Kneaded Pleasures*

Sponsorship Committee

**JULY 13, 6:30 – 8:30 PM**

*Mangia Pizza*

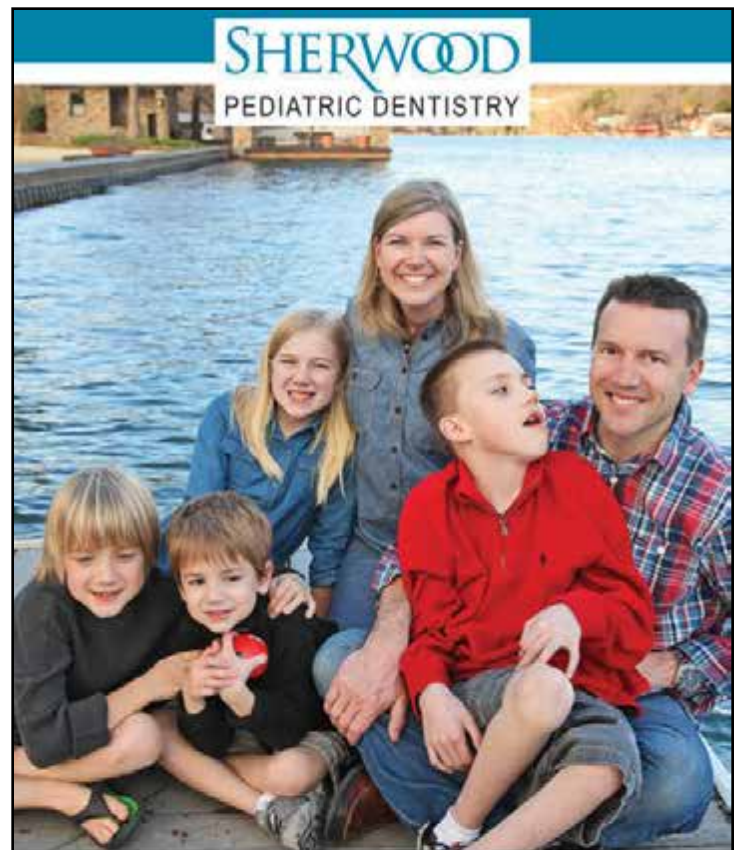
NWACA Monthly Board Meeting

**JULY 26, 5PM**

*Temple Beth Shalom, 7300 Hart Lane*

NWACA Zoning and Transportation Committee

*Note: For each of these events, please check our web site for the latest  
information, since meetings may be rescheduled because of other conflicts.*



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## Crime and Safety Reminder

*Cuatro Groos*

Summer's here! Are you headed out of town for some fun in the sun? Don't forget to talk to your neighbors about keeping an eye on your home while you're gone. Helping each other out by gathering mail/newspapers, parking cars in driveways, keeping lights on at night, and watching for anything out of the ordinary makes our homes much more safe from burglary.

## Weather, Urban Wildfires, and Perceptions

*Al Simmons*

All of Texas, including Austin, has had more than three months of record rainfall. Our lakes are so full that LCRA had to open flood gates for Lake Travis and Lake Buchanan to release water for the first time in five or six years. Our yards and neighborhoods are the greenest they have been in a long time, and the need to irrigate our yards has been significantly reduced. Our trees and other vegetation have grown perceptibly and have made our city into a very lush, beautiful place to live.

That said, there are other conditions that come with these blessed rains...first, flooding. Floods have caused extensive damage to homes and businesses, loss of property, danger to citizens, and interruptions to lives. All of this you already know... it is obvious. However, there is another less obvious danger we need to keep in mind; rains come and go, and when they go, Texas and Austin are very prone to drought - bad droughts and urban wildfires. In NWACA we have a special, beautiful danger - our valleys and yards with their well-watered trees, undergrowth (bushes), wild grasses, and wild flowers! A lot of this vegetation dries out, turns brown, drops to the ground, and becomes fuel for lightning, electric power lines, campfires, discarded cigarettes and matches, etc. In addition, in the normal growth cycles for trees and bushes, they drop old leaves and blooms following the cold season, getting ready for the summer season and new leaves and growth. All of this is fuel for urban wildfires (from February until May). It has to be blown, raked, picked up, bagged, and hauled away! And once we can work on the live oaks, they need to be trimmed, too.

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# 4th of July Parade is Just Around the Corner (literally!)

*Julie DePalma and Amy Hajdu*

Get ready to celebrate Independence Day with your neighbors at the 44th Annual July 4th Parade. Due to water main work being done in the neighborhood this summer we cannot march our normal route down Far West. But not to be deterred, the parade route will just be moved! This year's parade kicks off at 9am on Monday, July 4th, 2016 at the corner of Farhills Drive and N Hills (North Hills) Drive. Angie and Gary Huels have graciously agreed to host our opening ceremonies at 4302 N Hills Drive. They and their children, Zoe and Owen, are very excited about celebrating this amazing neighborhood event with all of us! Pedestrians will line up on N Hills Drive (between Far West Drive and Farhills Drive), and motorized vehicles will line up along Farhills Drive. (See map at [www.nwaca.org](http://www.nwaca.org)) The parade will march down N Hills Drive, and will again culminate at Doss Elementary on Northledge Drive.

Now that we all know where to be the morning of July 4th, it is time to start thinking about how to decorate those wagons, trucks, bikes, kids and pets! This year marks the 3rd annual Float Contest, and competition is getting stronger every year, so start planning your awesome float design now! There is a small entry fee and the Winner takes home prize money, bragging rights, and the coveted NWACA Float Trophy to keep and display for one year.

And then of course there is the super fun Freedom Festival on the Doss blacktop where the petting zoo and train will be making a return appearance. You can also sample snacks from our generous neighborhood sponsors, play games, and rock out to the talented School of Rock band!

If you love our parade tradition and would like to help, please email [nwacainfo@gmail.org](mailto:nwacainfo@gmail.org) to get in touch with Parade Chair, Julie DePalma. Many volunteers and sponsors are needed to make this time honored tradition a reality every year, and no contribution of time, talent, or money is too small! For sponsorship details, starting at just \$100, see <http://nwaca.org/how-to-be-a-sponsor/>

Watch our website ([www.nwaca.org](http://www.nwaca.org)) for detailed information about the float contest, t-shirts, and all things parade related and keep an eye on your mailbox (snail and virtual) and our Facebook page (NWACA - Northwest Austin Civic Association) for updates along the way. We look forward to seeing and celebrating with each and every one of you on July 4th.

## NWACA Used Electronics Collection Event Wrap-Up

*Joanie Arrott*

A big thank you goes out to the volunteers and homeowners who ensured the first annual collection of used electronics for NWACA members was a huge success. There were 6 volunteers who worked on a steamy Saturday morning to unload materials from 67 total households. There was enough material collected to load up 5 pallets and one extra-large Gaylord box. The collection included: big screen and flat screen televisions, mini-fridges, printers, monitors, scanners, fax machines, small kitchen appliances, laptops, personal computers, and an unbelievable amount of keyboards, mice, and power supplies. We're excited to build on the success of our first-attempt at this type of collection event and look forward to holding it again next spring.

Our other highly successful collection event (BOPA – Batteries, Oil, Paint, and Antifreeze) is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, October 15th. We're just waiting on the final approval from Doss Elementary to allow us to use their parking lot again. Be gathering your leftover paint, used oil, and batteries, so we can help you clean out your garage this fall. Once we confirm the date and time for the BOPA event, we'll advertise accordingly using all the NWACA media outlets. We're always needing more volunteers for our collection events, so contact us at [info@nwaca.org](mailto:info@nwaca.org) if you're interested.



## Don't Start Pruning Yet!

Joanie Arrott

For those of you who couldn't make the Annual NWACA meeting on May 11, you missed out on hearing Chris Dolan, the City of Austin Arborist. He also manages their Oak Wilt Mitigation Program and gave an update on our city's fight against the disease. I won't candy-coat it—we're losing the battle still! You could definitely hear a gasp from the audience when he mentioned identifying a new section of oak wilt diseased trees right down Far West Blvd. He even brought us leaves to show proof of the disease taking hold. (You can find his presentation here on the NWACA web site: <http://nwaca.org/category/library/nwaca-general/page/2/> )

It's going to take effort from every single one of us in this neighborhood to win the war that is killing our oak trees. Don't listen to tree trimming companies that tell you it's not a real problem or they can protect against it. Don't let them prune your live oaks or red oaks before July 1st. Fresh tree wounds, whether by pruning or storm damage, are great entry points for oak wilt fungus spores or insects that may carry the spores. If you see pruning happening in the neighborhood, email your concerns at [nwacainfo@gmail.com](mailto:nwacainfo@gmail.com). You can also contact us if you have any questions about the oak wilt program. If accidental damage occurs, tree wounds should be treated

with commercial tree paint or wound dressing immediately. When your trees appear sick, reach out for help to ensure measures can be taken to prevent spread of infectious diseases if necessary. Chris Dolan and his City of Austin Community Tree Program staff can be contacted here: <http://www.austintexas.gov/department/city-arborist>

**Prevent Oak Wilt**

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# Ball Moss - Friend or Foe?

Joanie Arrott

It seems our beautiful spring growing season has been extended this year due to the consistent rainfall since October. All the trees and flowers have been so beautiful. But, what are all those small, moss-like balls that can be seen in some trees? Are they harmful and potentially sapping away nutrients from the tree? Those fluffy masses are known as ball moss and are in no way parasitic. Ball moss is actually known as an epiphyte, which is a type of plant that grows on the surface of other things. Other types of epiphytes include: bromeliads, orchids, ferns, and lichens. Like the rest of us living organisms, they are just trying to survive in this tough world. They live by absorbing water and nitrogen from the atmosphere and are completely harmless. Ball moss prefers both shade and high moisture - both of which can be found beneath a tree.

The presence of ball moss is not an indication of overall tree health, but instead, it indicates that ball moss prefer that type of tree over another. Many folks will look at a dead or dying limb in the lower portion of a tree's canopy and jump to conclusion that it was killed by ball moss. The lack of sunlight penetrating the canopy is the most likely reason for the limb to have died and becomes the preferred place for the ball moss to live. The fluffy seed of the ball moss adheres best to rough barked trees. Oaks, with their roughly textured and thick

bark, provide a very good surface for the seed to adhere. Typically hanging onto dead limbs for 15 or 20 years or more, oaks make a good place for ball moss to live and proliferate. While possible, it is less frequently seen on smooth barked trees such as crape myrtle or sycamore. In addition, trees that regularly shed large pieces of bark such as pecans seldom have large infestations of ball moss. Heavily infested trees are generally found near bodies of water where the ball moss can benefit from the higher relative humidity. Along streams, creeks, and lakes, (even small ponds), one finds a greater incidence of ball moss.

Controlling ball moss isn't easy. I have heard several tree and landscaping companies offer their services at my door and attempt to scare me into thinking that the ball moss is killing my live oaks. Remember, ball moss is not like mistletoe. While it is possible to physically remove more than 95% of the moss from a single tree, removal of the seed left by the ball moss is difficult if not impossible. Ball moss on neighboring trees will release seeds and can re-infest the tree in a short period. Spraying is often touted as a cure but may not be a very satisfying remedy for the time and money spent. Most products commonly used are chemical salts that work by desiccation,

*(Continued on Page 10)*

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# High Water Bill Concerns?

Stayton Wright

For those of you experiencing high water bills, the City of Austin has a great program that helps determine, or rule out, if your sprinkler system is to blame.

We recently experienced our second significant spike in our water bill and assumed that the meter had been misread as it was previously. Unfortunately for us, the meter was read correctly which meant we most likely had a leak somewhere in the house or sprinkler system. We checked the most likely suspects - leaky faucets, shower heads, etc. - but could not find any leaks. After a little digging on the City of Austin website we felt we needed some added assistance, and an Irrigation Specialist was dispatched to our house to investigate.

The Specialist audited our sprinkler system and was able to identify the previously undetected leak. Not only did he solve our immediate leak problem, but he took the time to explain how we could save water and money in the future via seasonal water cycles and time adjustments. In addition, he explained that we could save even more water by fitting some of our sprinkler heads with a special gasket that helps retain water within the sprinkler system instead of releasing it

as run off down the street.

If you suspect a leak within your sprinkler system, I encourage you to visit the webpage, <http://www.austintexas.gov/highwaterbill>. Once there you can learn about additional water saving tips, how to check for leaks, self-auditing of your irrigation system, and general tips about water conservation.





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6629 Valleyside	2	3	2/1	0/2	YES	1973	.040	1,804	\$235,000
6467 Hart	2	2	2/1	2/2	YES	1972	.034	1,482	\$285,000
6602 East Hill	2	3	2/1	0/2	YES	1972	.038	1,886	\$395,000
7136 Chimney #7200B	2	3	2/1	2/0	YES	2006	.093	2,010	\$427,900
6106 Twin Ledge	1	3	2/0	2/0	NO	1960	.077	1,662	\$470,000
5900 Camino Seco	2	3	2/1	2/0	NO	1982	.239	1,933	\$525,000
7309 Running Rope	1	3	2/0	2/0	NO	1971	.233	1,666	\$595,000
7901 Moritz	2	4	3/1	2/0	NO	1999	.155	3,041	\$735,000
6804 Marbrys Ridge	2	3	3/0	2/0	NO	1995	.229	2,751	\$749,000
7905 Moritz	2	3	2/1	2/0	NO	1999	.155	3,133	\$749,900
5600 Lemonwood	1	4	3/0	2/0	YES	1985	.433	3,210	\$750,000
4105 North Hills	1	4	3/0	2/0	NO	1965	.314	2,727	\$750,000
5911 Mountain Villa	2	5	3/0	2/0	NO	1994	.300	3,652	\$810,000
6210 Cat Mountain	1	3	3/0	2/0	NO	1978	.339	3,023	\$895,000
7704 Stoneywood	2	4	2/1	2/0	YES	1974	.413	3,906	\$975,000
6713 Valburn	2	4	5/1	2/0	YES	2006	.450	4,202	\$1,350,000

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## AFD on Fireworks

### *Public Service Notice*

Each year in late June or early July, the Austin Fire Department reminds Austin citizens that fireworks are illegal within the Austin city limits. Each year, there are hundreds of brush, grass, and structure fires across the state started by fireworks, doing millions of dollars in damage and risking the lives of innocent bystanders. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), an estimated 17,800 reported fires were started by fireworks and 8,700 fireworks-related injuries were treated in hospital emergency rooms; 25 percent of those were due to sparklers and novelties. The NFPA also states there are more fires on a typical Fourth of July than any other day of the year, and that fireworks account for two out of five of those fires, more than any other cause of fires. Additionally, the risk of fireworks injury is highest for those ages 15-24.

It is illegal to possess fireworks within the City of Austin, and to use or sell fireworks within the City of Austin and within 5,000 feet outside the city limits. If you are found in violation, the fine is \$568; that may not seem like much, but if your fireworks cause bodily harm and/or property damage, you can be charged with assault and/or arson, both felony crimes.

The Austin Police Department responds to fireworks complaint calls made to the 311 system. Do not call 911 for fireworks complaints; should call 311.

The U.S. Department of Transportation does not classify the following items listed as common fireworks, and their use is allowed within the City of Austin:

- Wooden Stick (not Wire Stick) Sparklers
- Smoke Bombs
- Glow Worms and Snakes
- Poppers, Trick Noisemakers, Snappers

However, sparklers can reach temperatures of 1,800 degrees and smoke bombs shoot a flame of 2 to 3 inches when ignited; even though these items are legal, they can still be very dangerous.

*(Continued from Page 7)*

drying out the ball moss and eventually killing it. Ball moss starts as a minuscule plant until at maturity it weighs just a few grams. Most of its weight is water held within the plant. When desiccated, its weight can be reduced as much as 90%. Then the dead ball moss continues to hang in the tree for 8 to 10 years in oaks, less in other trees.

Most likely ball moss does no harm to healthy trees, but I understand when folks state it is aesthetically displeasing. However, what makes an oak tree ugly to some, may give the tree character to others. I personally appreciate the small bugs and birds that can call the ball moss their home. I even have a large collection of ball moss that I spray painted and used as Christmas ornaments last holiday season. Beauty is definitely in the eye of the beholder—just remember, ball moss is not our enemy.

## Help Keep our Wildlife Wild!

NWACA advises residents to NOT feed wildlife. Many well-intentioned individuals do so out of concern for the wildlife they are feeding. However, intentional and unintentional feeding of wildlife attracts predators to the wildlife being fed. Additionally, an association with humans and food contributes directly to habituated behaviors of animals like coyotes and feral hogs, which then become aggressive in pursuit of a food or prey attractant. Please eliminate food attractants from your yards for the safe enjoyment of our streets, parks and playgrounds for neighbors and pets.

## WHY JOIN NWACA?

The Northwest Austin Civic Association is your neighborhood association! NWACA represents YOU on issues like:

- Crime (how to prevent car and home break-ins, interacting with APD on issues)
- Transportation (raising awareness about excessive vehicle speeds, congestion, etc.).
- Zoning concerns
- Wildfire Prevention (helping homeowners harden their homes against wildfire)

NWACA plans the annual 4th of July Parade (43rd Annual in 2015!), organizes election and issues forums, sponsors an annual neighborhood garage sale, publishes this newsletter and much, much more!

**PET WASTE POOLLUTES**  
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If you would like this yard sign, please send email to [nwacainfo@gmail.com](mailto:nwacainfo@gmail.com)



# NWACA MEMBERSHIP FORM

Send annual dues of \$25 with this form to:  
NWACA, P.O. Box 26654, Austin, TX 78755

Homeowner Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email #1 (kept private; print): \_\_\_\_\_

Email #2 (kept private; print): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (with area code): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## ANNUAL DUES: \$25

(Optional) 4th of July Parade Contribution:

\$10\_\_\_\_ \$20\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_

(Optional) Oak Wilt Fund Contribution:

\$10\_\_\_\_ \$20\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_

(Optional) Parks Fund Contribution:

\$10\_\_\_\_ \$20\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_

*You can also pay via PayPal by going to [www.nwaca.org](http://www.nwaca.org),  
selecting the Get Involved Tab, and choosing Join/Renew*

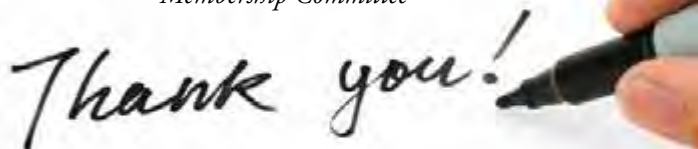
**Volunteers are always needed on our committees.**

**Please mark those on which you'd like to actively participate.**

- Civic Engagement
- Communications
- Crime and Safety/Neighborhood Watch
- Events/ 4th of July
- History
- Parks
- Sponsorship
- Transportation
- Tree and Environment
- Wildfire Prevention

## SPECIAL THANKS TO MEMBERS

Membership Committee



Thank you!

NWACA thanks members who generously contributed to the Oak Wilt Fund, the 4th of July Parade Fund, and the Park Fund, between April 16, 2016 and May 12, 2016.

Donations to the Oak Wilt Fund provide financial assistance to property owners dealing with oak wilt. Donations to the 4th of July Parade Fund help NWACA to host the best 4th of July parade in Austin! The Park Fund helps us revitalize parks in NWACA with projects such as cleanup days.

- Kent and Emily Ashworth
- Craig and Sylvia Carper
- Zada Doherty
- Ken and Kendal Gladish
- Karen and Ben Graf
- J. Edward Jones
- John Yatsu

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