

Neighborhood Compassion Watch!

On April 14, 2016, the Austin City Council passed a resolution designating Austin as a Compassionate City. There are now over 350 compassionate communities globally and the number is growing. Compassionate Austin is recognized as a leader!

Let's start the "Neighborhood Compassion Watch"! Compassion exists in 3 key dimensions: caring for others, self, and the Earth. Discover and share your stories of "3D" compassion. Catch people in the act! Engage youth in a treasure hunt for compassion and help them tell about what they find. Send your stories to Compassionate Austin at compassionateaustin@gmail.com. Be sure to identify your neighborhood when you submit your story! We may be able to publish them in this newsletter or on the Compassionate Austin website or Facebook page. Also, we are looking for stories that we can highlight in Citizen Communications at Austin City Council meetings.

Breaking News! The Global Compassion Summit is coming up July 13-14th. It is part of the 5th annual Summer of Peace — the largest online peace event on the planet! Dr. Lesa Walker, Founder of the Compassionate Austin Movement, is one of the speakers on

July 14. She will provide information about the Compassionate Austin movement and the importance of the daily practice of "3D" compassion! The Global Compassion Summit is a FREE online event. Google it to learn more and register. Sign up TODAY!! Here is the link: <https://shiftnetwork.isrefer.com/go/sop16LW/lwalker/>.

This year's theme for the Summit is Mindfulness and Compassion in Daily Life. Speakers are global leaders and experts in the field, sharing stories of how compassion and mindfulness are contributing to a more conscious, peaceful and sustainable world. You'll hear from teachers bringing mindfulness to at-risk youth, attorneys using mindfulness and compassion to shift our legal system, physicians putting "care" back into health care, and activists who are using compassion to anchor their communities together.

Research shows the personal and community benefits of strengthening our compassion skills. We grow stronger in what we practice! Let's join together to bring 3D compassion to life! We ALL are Compassionate Austin! Find out more at:

WWW.COMPASSIONATEAUSTIN.ORG

Pruning Dilemma Part II

Currently, the State of Texas does not require any licensing for tree contractors. There are many contractors such as electricians, plumbers, irrigators and pest control contractors (to name just a few) that need to pass exams, maintain continuing education units plus keep other important commercial contractor requisites such as current liability insurance and sales tax payments. This begs the question: "Why not for tree contractors"? This needs to change!

Until there is change, it is a voluntary practice in the tree industry. Those tree contractors that maintain education are certified by the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) and we are known as arborists. The arborists who are current with their credentials can be found on the ISA consumer website: www.treesaregood.com.

Unfortunately, the present day reality in the tree care industry is slow in its caring and earning the education. The majority of tree care services have little, or none, of the professional requisites noted above. Consequently, the Texas Forest Service sets out recommendations on concerning issues such as oak wilt.

With the tree contractors not following education and a significant amount of ranchers and homeowners often unfamiliar with the oak wilt, there are potential problems. Adding improper tools plus minimal manpower to prune oaks safely and correctly, those problems are compounded especially during the spring/summer months. The Texas

(Continued on Page 2)

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

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Sheriff – Non-Emergency.....	512-974-0845
Animal Services Office.....	311

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O. Henry Middle School.....	512-414-3229
Austin High School.....	512-414-2505

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Custom Service.....	1-800-700-2443
Emergencies.....	512-370-8609
Call Before You Dig.....	512-472-2822
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(Continued from Cover)

Forest Service recommends a complete prohibition of pruning of oaks during spring for both the tree contractor and the arborist. Yet, spring is the best season for pruning trees, shrubs, etc.

The message delivered by the Texas Forest Service's spring "pruning ban" recommendation

is seriously flawed with this total prohibition in my professional opinion. The impression is that "no tree contractor or arborist" is capable of safely pruning oak trees during the best season for pruning.

Ironically, the Texas Forest Service maintains a website (www.texasoakwilt.org) where you, the consumer, can locate Texas Oak Wilt Certified arborists (the designation will change in a few years to Texas Oak Wilt Qualified). You can also find a listing of the most highly-qualified vendors, their locations and contact information.

It is my firm conviction that these highly-qualified individuals as well as many other arborists are fully capable of pruning oaks safely during the spring and summer months. Including this caveat to the pruning ban practices recommended by the TFS serves the tree, consumer, and the credentialed commercial arborist(s) best.

The following questions can be helpful to you, the consumer, as a means to further verify a particular arborist's oak wilt pruning practices.

- (1) How much paint is stocked on your trucks?
- (2) Do you replenish your stock of paint to ensure more than one day's worth?
- (3) Does every climber carry paint when in an oak tree pruning?
- (4) Do you have a paint pole taller than your tallest pole saw?
- (5) Does sawdust from chainsaw cuts get wiped off the cut oak branch before paint application?
- (6) Do you paint all cuts before moving on to the next tree?
- (7) Does the ground man understand that his most important job function regarding oak tree pruning is painting the cuts made?

Questions or comments that this article or previous articles have generated, may be directed to me at: kevin@arborcareandconsulting.com

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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.

Emerald Ash Borer found in Texas

Emerald ash borer, often referred to as EAB, is an exotic pest from Asia. This beetle is a serious threat to ash trees. Emerald ash borer was accidentally introduced into the United States and was found in Michigan in 2002.

Four beetles were found in a trap located in NE Texas (Harrison County) in late April 2016. There are currently no confirmed cases of ash trees that are infested. The beetles will continue to be monitored throughout the state.

Larvae bore into trees under the bark and cut off the water and nutrient conducting vessels. Larvae are creamy white, legless with a flattened body. Larvae are 1- 1 ½ inches in length when fully developed.

As an adult, the beetle is elongated and cylindrical with the pronotum (a part of the thorax) extended back as a lobe towards the abdomen. Most notably, these beetles are bright, metallic green with reddish hues. Adults are about 1/2 inch in size. If the wings are removed or lifted, the upper side of the abdomen is bright coppery-red which can help differentiate this beetle from closely related species in Texas.

In infested trees, canopy die back is often seen in the top one third of the canopy and then moves down until the tree is bare. Epicormic shoots (leafy shoots coming off the trunk of the tree) may also be seen. Vertical fissures may appear on the bark and galleries may be able to be seen through openings. If bark is peeled off, serpentine galleries packed with frass (excrement) may be seen. Adult beetles produce a d-shaped exit hole (1/8 inch diameter). Woodpeckers may cause damage to trees infested with EAB. Look for flaking bark and uneven holes caused by the woodpeckers feeding on larvae and pupae.

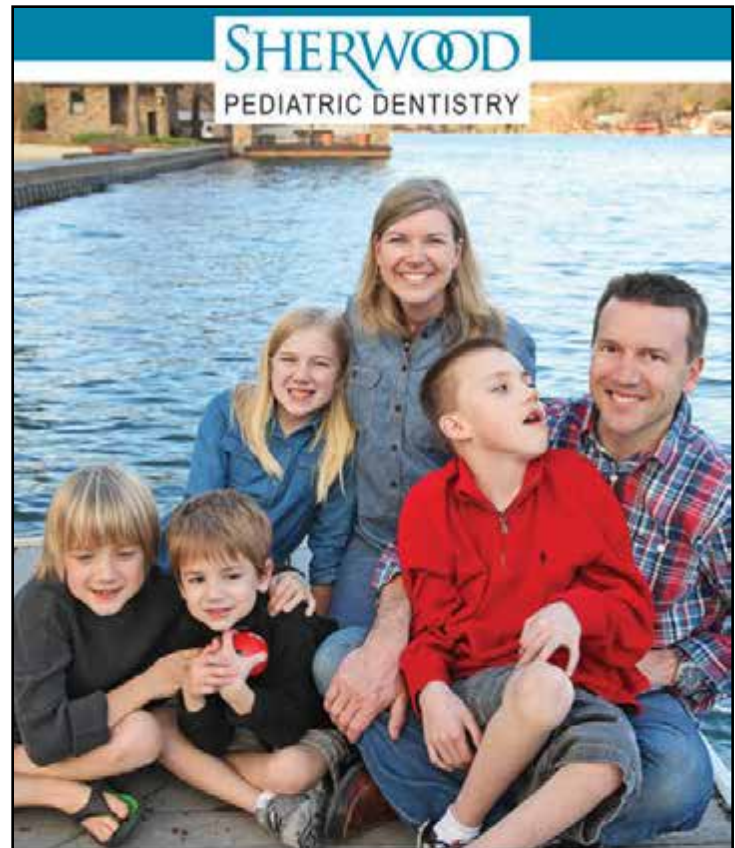
If EAB activity is confirmed for ash trees within an area, it is recommended that a systemic insecticide treatment is given to ash trees of high value. If more than 50% of an infested ash tree crown remains, then treatment with a systemic insecticide may slow the attack. If less than 50% of an infested ash tree crown remains, the tree should be removed.

For great information on emerald ash borer within Texas see the following site: <https://tfsweb.tamu.edu/eab/>

This information is to have you watch for this beetle on ash trees in your area. Only 4 beetles have been found currently and only in NE Texas. No trees have yet been confirmed to be infested.

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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A program of Partnerships for Children, The Heart Gallery of Central Texas is both a traveling portrait exhibit and outreach opportunity for individuals to learn more about children in the foster care system and the adoption process. The children are in foster care because they have been removed from their biological homes because of abuse and neglect, and are awaiting adoption. Learn more at:

www.partnershipsforchildren.org



Plant of the Month Sunflower

*Info from Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center,
University of Texas at Austin*

The Sunflower is one of the most common flowers in Texas. Varieties grow wild throughout the States. Some varieties grow up to 8'. They grow quickly, so are a good plant for children to try as one of their first gardening adventures. Point out to them that the flower heads follow the sun in a remarkable way, facing East in the morning and West at sunset. In fact the Spanish name for the Sunflower is Gyrosol, which means "follow the sun." The English scientific word for such turning is heliotropism. Remind them that the Sunflower is the State Flower of Kansas. The flower was used to obtain yellow, black, and blue dyes which were used by the American Indians for basket-making.

The Sunflower is drought-tolerant (once established), and the seeds may be planted as deep as 3 inches, though generally about an inch. Do plant them in the sun. Water sparingly, but water. In our soil, it is likely that they will become top heavy, so you may need to stake them. Birds and bees love them, and there is a certain strange spindly species of insect that you will probably find on the plants when they are mature.

Late April is the best time to plant, but July is not too late as long as you can keep the soil moist during the first few weeks of early life. Expect them to mature in about 90 days. It takes a very cold frost to kill them.

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TARRYTOWN REAL ESTATE MARKET REPORT

July 2016

by **Trey McWhorter**

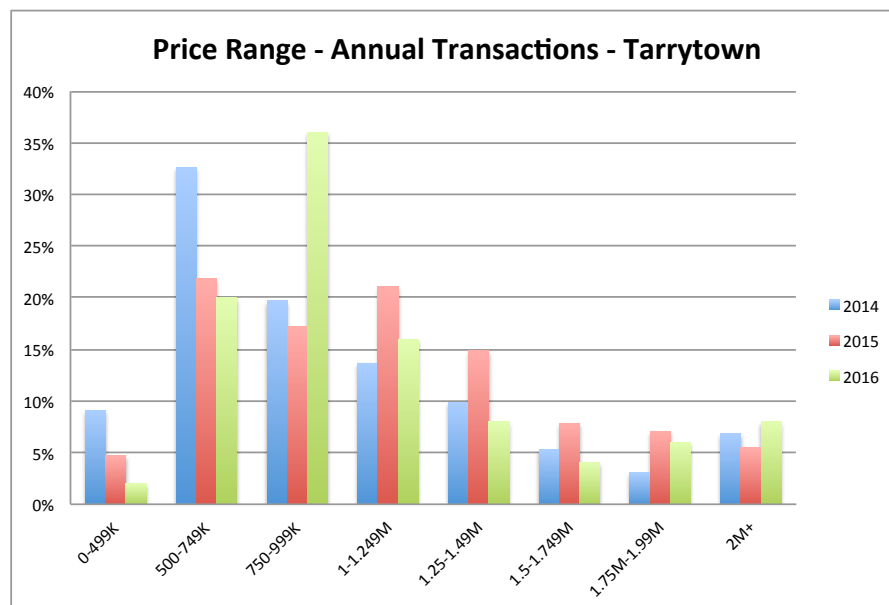
Here is an update on the Tarrytown real estate market through June 15th.

- The number of transactions remains lower than past years, down more than 10% from 2015 and more than 20% vs. 2014. Not pictured is the number of transactions in MLS in 2013 for the same time period – 83!
- Median and average list and sold prices are down vs. 2015, but this is at least partly explained by the smaller homes sold (the median is 2,527 sq ft in 2016, vs. nearly 2,700 sq ft in 2015), down more than 6%
- List and sold \$ / sq ft (both average and median) show gains, although the median numbers show the gains are rather small
- Average days on market is consistent with 2015, but the median number of days on market is up significantly over 2015, increasing from 27 to 44 days (up 63%)

Single Family Homes		Year to Date - Tarrytown		
		2016	2015	2014
SOLD	Single Family Homes Sold	50	56	63
List Price	Avg List Price	\$ 1,157,198.80	\$ 1,217,524	\$ 1,033,908
	Median List Price	\$ 937,000.00	\$ 1,150,000	\$ 730,000
Sold Price	Average Net Sold Price	\$ 1,120,303.34	\$ 1,159,520	\$ 1,000,002
	Median Net Sold Price	\$ 923,250.00	\$ 1,065,500	\$ 720,000
List Price \$ / Sq Ft	Average List Price / Sq Ft	\$ 425.42	\$ 396.07	\$ 373.96
	Median List Price / Sq Ft	\$ 394.36	\$ 392.37	\$ 356.70
Sold Price \$ / Sq Ft	Average Net Sold Price / Sq Ft	\$ 412.16	\$ 379.23	\$ 366.07
	Median Net Sold Price / Sq Ft	\$ 387.20	\$ 379.52	\$ 355.38
Days on Market	Average Days on Market	61	61	47
	Median Days on Market	44	27	12
Size of House	Sq/Ft (Total)	2,527	2694	2402
Age of House	Year of Construction	1955	1960	1949

Tarrytown Market Activity

Looking at 2014 – 2016 YTD, one can see a shift in the mix of sales to the higher price ranges. In 2015, there was a more even distribution of sales across the price ranges from 500K up to 1.5M (all from 15-22%). However, in 2016 so far the greatest amount of activity has been in the 750K – 1M price range, with a drop in the share of homes priced 1-2M.



Luxury Market Update

Lastly, a quick update on the luxury market in Austin through the end of May. In Austin, MLS data indicates that through the end of May, sales of homes priced \$1M+ was down roughly 19% from the same time in 2015. The drop is the most pronounced with homes priced above \$2.5M, where the year on year decline in transactions is over 45%.

Note: All data comes from the Austin Board of Realtors' MLS report, reflecting activity through June 15, 2016.

Texting and Cell Phone Use during Driving

By the National Highway Safety Administration (edited for space)

In 2014, 3,179 people were killed in crashes involving a distracted driver. One of the most alarming and widespread forms of distracted driving is cell phone usage. According to a study by the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute (VTTI), sending or receiving a text takes a driver's eyes off the road for an average of 5 seconds, the equivalent of driving blind at 55-mph for the length of an entire football field. And a 2014 special article in the New England Journal of Medicine found that the risk of a crash or near-crash among novice drivers increased with the performance of many secondary tasks, including texting and dialing cell phones.

Text messaging is of heightened concern because it combines three types of distraction – visual, manual and cognitive. In other words, texting involves taking your eyes off the road, your hands off the wheel, and your mind off the task of driving.

NHTSA's message is simple – "One Text or Call Could Wreck it All." Legislation is being passed across the nation to

discourage distracted driving. We hope drivers get the message loud and clear.

So the next time you are pressed for time, and it seems like multitasking in the car is the best decision, remember those 3,179 lives that were taken because someone decided they could do two things at once. A text or call is not worth your life, or anyone else's.



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Bidding Farewell and Saying Hello

School's out for the summer and with that we say goodbye to our latest group of foreign exchange students. As they pack their bags and head back to their parents and their home countries, their host families are left with the memories of a great year, and a new son or daughter that lives in another country. Plans are already underway for travel abroad so they can once again be with their students and see the sites of their home countries.

The Houston and Austin based students had a great time this past year – visiting a number of our local attractions in both cities as well as San Antonio. We are hoping to be able to do the same for our incoming students for the 2016/2017 school year.

Ayusa is currently looking for volunteer host families to open their hearts and their homes to these wonderful students. All that is needed to host is to be able to provide a room for the student to sleep and three meals a day. The students come with their own spending money and medical insurance. Help us to welcome these great kids into Texas – you'll be happy you did!

How to Host an International Student

Interested families can learn more about the program and available exchange students and request additional information by visiting

<http://www.ayusa.org> or calling 1-888-552-9872.

The process to apply is simple. Families complete the online application, which includes questions about themselves and local high school, references, and a background check. The local Ayusa Community Representative conducts an in-home interview. They can also help each family with any questions they may have about the application or process.

After families are fully approved, they can select the Ayusa student they would like to host.

About Ayusa

Ayusa International (<http://www.ayusa.org>) is a 501(c)3 non-profit student exchange organization founded in 1981 and an official U.S. Department of State designated Exchange Visitor Program Sponsor. In addition, Ayusa administers high profile grant programs funded by the U.S. Department of State and other organizations. Ayusa is a sister company of Intrax, a family of organizations that provides a lifetime of high-quality educational, work and volunteer programs that connect people and cultures. Intrax is headquartered in San Francisco with offices on four continents.

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