



HIGHLAND PARK WEST BALCONES  
AREA NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

# THE HPWBANA NEWS

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[www.hpwbana.org](http://www.hpwbana.org)

## Back to School

By the time you read this, Highland Park Elementary will have been in session for two weeks. Hopefully the construction at Highland Park Elementary of the drainage improvements, the new Multi-Purpose Room and the repaving of the two parking lots will be complete. Construction work at private residences continues around the school.

Since we do not have enough sidewalks in the neighborhood, it seems most children are brought to school by their parents with resulting very heavy traffic on Fairview Drive and the intersecting streets. Efforts are underway to encourage more walking and biking to school including the Hancock bridge sidewalk improvements. School Crossing Guards are at the busy crossings for the safety of pedestrians. Some of the street area on the north and west side of Highland Park Elementary is signed as No Parking, Tow Away Zones to allow adequate street area for the large buses and cars to safely get by. However, there are often times when parents either do not see or ignore these No Parking Areas and needlessly place pedestrians and traffic at risk with the much reduced street travel area. These traffic control signs and No Parking signs have been installed for

student safety.

Kealing Middle School students are picked up by bus at Highland Park Elementary (near Sunny Lane) at 6:26 a.m. and returned at 3:14 p.m. Lamar Middle School students are picked up by bus at Highland Park Elementary (near West Highland Terrace) at 7:33 a.m. and returned at 3:59 p.m. Highland Park Elementary class time begins at 7:35 a.m. with the school day being over at 2:57 p.m. And, McCallum High School students are picked up by bus at the corner of Sunny Lane and Valley Oak at 7:48 a.m. and returned at 5:04 p.m. Students are everywhere around Highland Park Elementary.

AISD's Department of Transportation encourages drivers to reduce their speed when driving near schools and follow posted signs that require drivers to slow down to 20 miles or less when lights are flashing. Police officers will be enforcing reduced speed limits from approximately 45 minutes before school opens, during lunch periods, and for 30 minutes at the end of the school day.

Failure to yield to pedestrians in crosswalks or stop when school bus lights are flashing for students boarding or exiting the bus, and speeding through school zones when lights are flashing could result in a fine of up to \$400 dollars.

AISD's transportation team offers tips for driving in school zones:

- Follow all posted speed signs
- Be aware of surroundings at all times and eliminate distractions
- Find alternate routes if possible
- Stop at all crosswalks marked and unmarked, as pedestrians have the right of way
- Stop for all buses with red flashing lights

And also remember, cell phone use is prohibited in School Zones. Excerpts from the Texas Driver's Handbook (Revised July, 2012): "Yield Right-of-Way to School Buses

You must yield the right-of-way to school buses. Always drive with care when you are near a school bus. If you approach a school bus from either direction and the bus is displaying alternately flashing

*(Continued on Page 3)*



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 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](http://HPWBANA.org) for our current meeting location or contact [president@HPWBANA.org](mailto: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)

red lights, you must stop. Do not pass the school bus until:

1. The school bus has resumed motion;
2. You are signaled by the driver to proceed; or
3. The red lights are no longer flashing.

It isn't necessary to stop when passing a school bus on a different road or when on a controlled-access highway where the bus is stopped in a loading zone and pedestrians aren't permitted to cross. A person who fails to obey the law regarding yielding the right-of-way to school buses displaying alternating, flashing lights is subject to the penalties listed in the Penalties for Failure to Yield Right-of-Way to School Bus.

**"Do Not Park or Stand a Vehicle"**

Whether occupied or not, do not park or allow a vehicle to stand idling:

1. In front of a public or private driveway
  2. Within 15 feet of a fire hydrant
  3. Within 20 feet of a crosswalk at an intersection
  4. Within 30 feet upon the approach to any flashing signal, stop sign, yield sign, or other traffic control signal located at the side of a road
  5. Within 20 feet of the driveway entrance to any fire station and on the side of a street opposite the entrance to any fire station within 75 feet of entrance
  6. At any place where an official sign prohibits parking or standing."
- Let's have a Safe School Year.

## Crickets

Field crickets are a common sight around homes in late summer into autumn. These insects are about 1" long when fully grown. Crickets are dark brown to black with large hind legs used for jumping. They also have two cerci, or appendages that come off the tip of the abdomen. Female crickets have a large sword-like structure, the ovipositor, protruding from the tip of the abdomen. The ovipositor is used to deposit eggs into soil.

Crickets feed on plant material as well as other insects. They are able to cause damage to seedlings and sometimes large populations can be destructive. Large masses of dead crickets around doorways or other areas can be distasteful to view and cause a foul odor.

Field crickets are primarily outdoor insects, but may occasionally venture indoors. When crickets do come indoors, they may bother residents with their chirping. Males chirp to attract a mate creating the sound by rubbing their forewings together.

Cricket management is more easily accomplished in the summer when nymphs, who cannot fly, are present. Unfortunately, this usually isn't when large populations of crickets are discovered.

Before turning to pesticides to manage your cricket problems, try these ideas:

- Turn off outside lights at night or use bulbs that are less attractive to insects
- Seal cracks & crevices where insects can enter with sealant
- Remove debris stacked near the structure
- Keep lawn & surrounding areas mowed
- Stuff weep holes with copper mesh

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 <http://www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com>

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# Lettuce Recycle!

by Dena Houston

## Recycling Challenges – Part 2

A study done by the City of Austin found that 44% of all items that end up in the City's landfill could have been recycled. There are many reasons we don't recycle. It is important to identify these reasons and correct them if the City is going to reach its goal of keeping at least 90 percent of discarded materials out of the landfill (Zero Waste initiative) by 2040. Recycling Challenges – Part 2 continues.

The Recycling and Reuse Drop-Off Center is too far away.

The collection center (<http://austintexas.gov/dropoff>) is not conveniently located for our neighborhood. With no traffic, it is at least a 45-minute round-trip drive, which is a lot of time for a busy family. Currently, curbside pick up of ALL the items accepted there is not an option. One person could collect items from neighbors and take them to the center, but that takes organization as well as cooperation of the neighbors. If readers have suggestions how to address this issue, please email them to [recycling@hpwbana.org](mailto:recycling@hpwbana.org).

Where to recycle various items is confusing.

It is difficult to know and to remember which items go into our curbside bin, go to the Recycling and Reuse Drop-Off Center, go into the plastic bag collection bin at the grocery store, or go into our trash cart. The following City of Austin website is a great resource to learn where various items should go: <http://www.austintexas.gov/what-do-i-do>.

This author will research any recycling questions you have. Just email your recycling questions to [recycling@hpwbana.org](mailto:recycling@hpwbana.org).

The blue curbside-recycling bin is too large to manage.

City of Austin customers who have the smallest (24 gallon) trash cart, qualify to receive a smaller (64 gallon) curbside-recycling bin. Call 512-494-9400 to get a smaller recycling bin.

For senior citizens or anyone with special needs, the City will collect trash and recycling bins at the house, empty them, and return them. The bins need to be in a visible location. Call 311 to get information on this service.

QUESTIONS FROM OUR READERS (AND THE ANSWERS):

Do we need to cut the plastic six-pack rings before putting them into the trash can? I have been doing this to avoid them being wrapped around animals or sea creatures.

The reason to cut up the rings is so that birds (land and water), turtles, and other wildlife do not get entangled in them. Even though we put these rings into plastic bags in our trash carts, the bag can come open. If that happens, the rings could become hazards to wildlife in the landfill area. Around bodies of water, it is critically important to cut them. Many sea turtles and sea birds have been killed by six-pack rings.

As mentioned in last month's newsletter, these plastic rings cannot be placed in our curbside recycling bins or the plastics recycling bins; they must be placed in our trash carts. The best solution is to avoid purchasing products with these rings!

What do I do with a perfectly good pair of crutches? I would love to get them to someone who could use them. AGE of Central Texas (<http://www.ageofcentraltx.org/help.php>) will accept crutches, wheel chairs, etc., to loan to senior citizens who need them.

If any reader has any other suggestions of how to make recycling more doable, please share at [recycling@hpwbana.org](mailto:recycling@hpwbana.org)



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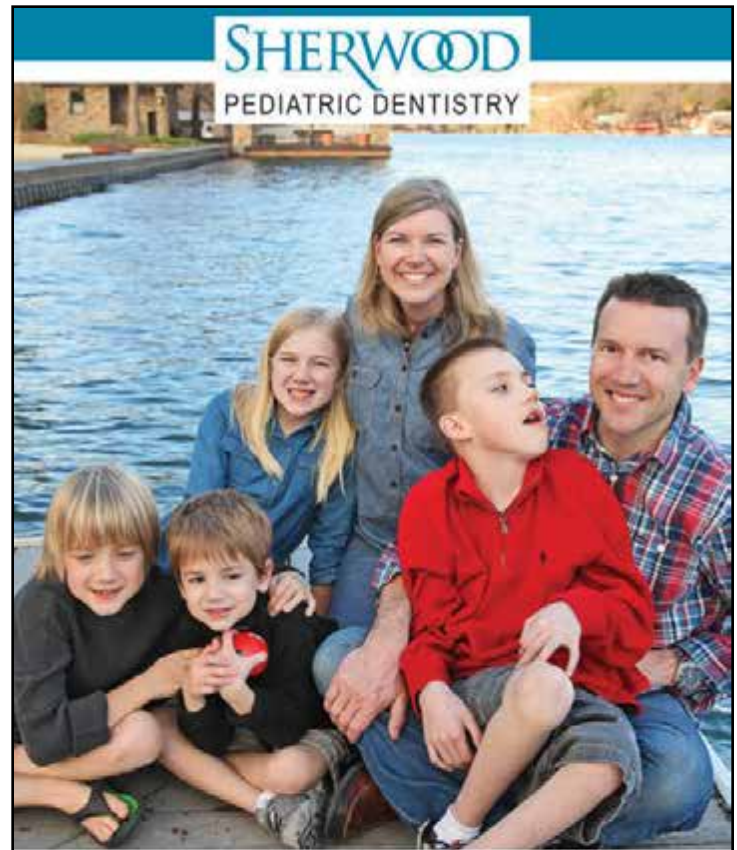
# Welcome, Come on In!

by Rebecca Wolfe Spratlin

There are open houses all over the city, many of which are in our neighborhood. When you're considering buying a home, attending open houses provides a great way to familiarize yourself with the inventory in your neighborhood, as well as get to know other areas of the city in which you may consider living. Here's a quick guide for making the most of your open house visits:

- Introduce yourself to the hosting Realtor and be willing to fill out a "sign in" sheet or card, and be sure to let her know if you are working with a Realtor or not. With this information, she can communicate to you and/or your Realtor regarding future price changes or other information that may be valuable to you. Remember, you are a guest in someone else's home, so be as gracious as you would
- Let the host know where you are in your search. If you are just gathering information for a future decision, are a serious buyer ready to make a purchase, are previewing the home for a friend or relative, or are just a nosey neighbor who wants to see that house you've walked by a thousand times, you are all welcomed. Some Realtors especially like to have the nosey neighbors because they tell their friends about homes on the market and the benefits of the neighborhood. One in three people buy a house in a specific neighborhood because they already have friends or family there.
- Before looking through the house, ask the agent if there are any special features in the house that are not readily apparent. These could be things such as solar energy, tankless water heaters, new HVAC systems, updated electrical/plumbing, new roofs and other hidden improvements.
- After walking through the house, feel free to ask the Realtor any questions you have, not just about the house, but about the neighbors, neighborhood, area schools, tax rates and commute times.
- If you are particularly interested in a property, request a copy of the Sellers' Disclosure Notice (this is the document that sellers use to let potential buyers know of any existing defects in the property and past defects that are now repaired). Also request a copy of the survey, the floor plan, the energy audit, the past year of utility expenses and any other document that provides information about the condition and functions of the home.
- If the home you're visiting doesn't fit your needs, ask the hosting Realtor about what other homes are available in the neighborhood and what homes are coming to the market soon. Often agents who are active in a neighborhood have good connections and know of "pocket listings" (listings that are sold without going on MLS) and homes that will be coming on the market soon.

Open houses can be great sources of information, so enjoy them, engage with the hosting Realtor and gather as much information as you can. Enjoy looking at various styles of homes and learn the benefits of living in neighborhoods across Austin. The more you know about the market, the better prepared you will be to make informed decisions about your future home purchase.



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# Texas Association of Sports Officials

In the late 1930s, the Southwest Conference (SWC) recognized the need for training sports officials and developing local officials associations under the umbrella of the Southwest Officials Association (SOA) throughout the state. While the SWC was motivated by a commitment to improving officiating and athletics, the overriding belief was that such a structure would result in better trained officials for SWC competition. As a result, the Southwest Conference Official's Association (SWOA) was formed to handle football and basketball officiating duties.

Though originally formed to train collegiate officials, many high school officials joined the SWOA ranks. In 1977, the Texas football, basketball, and baseball officiating associations recognized the need to form a statewide governing body for high school officials. As a result, the Southwest Officials Association (SOA) was formed, with an office based in Dallas. Since the formation of the SOA in 1977, the volleyball, softball, and soccer divisions were added under the SOA umbrella.

In 1999 the SOA changed its name to the Texas Association of Sports Officials (TASO). After a brief tenure in Mesquite and Austin, The TASO office relocated to its current location in Richardson.

With the University Interscholastic League (UIL) governing high school athletics in Texas, and the Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools (TAPPS), the largest organization of private schools in Texas, TASO provides officials for UIL and TAPPS contests. Though independent of both organizations, TASO works closely with the UIL and TAPPS in providing officials for sports contests.

Unlike most every other state, TASO is an independent organization of sports officials governed by sports officials. Each of the six divisions is individually governed by a board of directors comprised of officers and regional directors elected

by the membership throughout the state. Overall TASO policy is set by the TASO board of directors. The TASO board of directors is comprised of the president and president-elect (or vice president), of each of the six sports.

Current TASO membership is approximately 14,000 members in 155 local chapter throughout the state.

For more information, or if becoming a sports official interests you, please refer to <http://www.taso.org>.



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## The Texas Driver (from the Texas Driver Handbook)

# FLOODS

- Six inches of water will reach the bottom of most passenger cars, causing loss of control and possible stalling.
- Twelve inches of water will float many cars.
- Two feet of water will carry away pick-up trucks, and most other vehicles
- Water across a road may hide a missing segment of roadbed or a missing bridge. Roads weaken under floodwater, get out quickly and move to higher ground. Better yet, when there's water on the road, Turn Around. Don't Drown. Saving your life may be as simple as choosing an alternate route.

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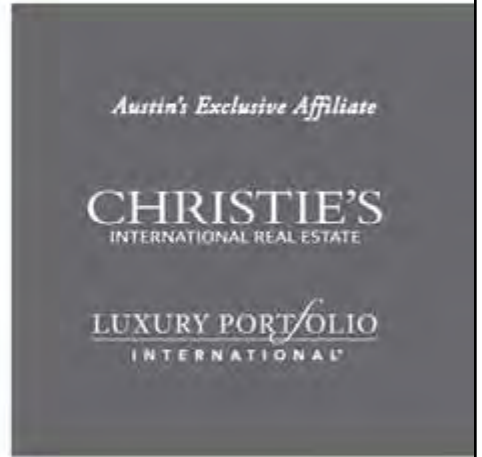
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