



HPWBANA

HIGHLAND PARK WEST BALCONES
AREA NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

THE HPWBANA NEWS

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www.hpwbana.org

Perry Art Park Installation Planned for January; Volunteers Needed

Perry Art Park is undergoing transformation as work began in November on installation of two additional sculptures. Friends of Perry Park is spearheading this project, which is supported by a grant from Austin Parks Foundation and donations from the HPWBANA Board and many local businesses and neighbors.

Installation of two sculptures is planned for January. These are "Blue Float," by Peter Reginato, and "Alas IV," by Betty Gold. The first sculpture, "Dayton," by Jim Huntington was installed in November 2015. All are on loan from The Contemporary Austin.

A volunteer work day is planned for Saturday, January 28, at 10 am. Workers are needed to build and fill the interiors of the plazas. Please email us at friendsofperrypark@gmail.com to volunteer.

For more information about the project and a complete list of donors, please visit <http://friendsofperrypark.org/>.



Lettuce Recycle!

by Dena Houston

WHAT TO DO WITH THAT TORN T-SHIRT AND THAT LONE TENNIS SHOE – THROW THEM INTO THE TRASH CAN? NO!! SIMPLE RECYCLING WILL SOLVE THE PROBLEM!



In 2014, an Austin Resource Recovery study found that its curbside customers were sending over 3,300 tons of textiles to Austin landfills each year.

The City of Austin recently launched a free new service for its curbside recycling customers to help

correct this problem. It's called **SIMPLE RECYCLING**.

This company provides green collection bags to be filled with useable clothing, housewares, shoes, accessories, fabric scraps, stuffed toys, linens, tools, toys, hats, purses, kitchenware, keys and books.

They also take that **ONE TENNIS SHOE** and sell it to reuse the rubber content and that **TORN T-SHIRT** for its fabric to make saleable rags or other fabric products.

The service occurs on the regular recycling day. Set the green bag near the blue recycling bin. It will be picked up by a Simple Recycling truck that follows the City of Austin recycling truck. Simple Recycling will leave a new bag in its place. The green plastic bags will be recycled after the items are collected.

If anyone has a question about this service, please send your questions to recycling@hpwbana.org.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM OUR READERS:

I FINALLY GOT THE SMALLER (64 GAL) RECYCLING BIN BUT IT TOOK SEVERAL MONTHS AND MANY CALLS. WHY WAS THIS SO DIFFICULT? In the past, the Austin Resource Recovery Department and City of Austin Utility Contact Center had conflicting information regarding the availability of smaller recycling

(Continued on Page 3)

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IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Austin Citywide Information Center. 974-2000 or 311
Emergency Police 911
Non-emergency Police (coyote sighting, etc.)..... 311
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

ADVERTISING INFO

Please support the businesses that advertise in the HPWBANA Newsletter. Their advertising dollars make it possible for all residents to receive a newsletter at no charge. No neighborhood association funds are used to produce or mail the newsletters. If you would like to support the newsletter by advertising, please contact Peel, Inc. Sales Office at 512-263-9181 or advertising@PEELinc.com for ad information and pricing.

(Continued from Cover)

bins. The Call Center now has the information to provide these bins to customers who request them. If you qualify for a smaller bin (you have to have the 24 gallon trash can), please email me at recycling@hpwbana.org. I will tell you how to get it.

CAN WE PUT PVC PIPE IN OUR BLUE CURBSIDE RECYCLING BIN? No, you must either put it in your trash can or set it out for bulk collection.

A REMINDER ABOUT WHITE CARTONS BEING PLACE IN OUR CURBSIDE BINS. The cartons must not be wax coated. For example, cardboard milk and juice cartons and wax coated paper cups are not recyclable curbside.

CAN I PUT CHRISTMAS WRAPPING PAPER INTO MY CURBSIDE BIN EVEN IF THERE IS SOME TAPE ON IT? Yes you can.

WHAT DO I DO WITH THE STRANDS OF CHRISTMAS LIGHTS THAT NO LONGER WORK? Take them to the Recycling and Reuse Drop Off Center.

Here is a very informative City of Austin recycling website: <http://www.austintexas.gov/what-do-i-do>.

Stay tuned for future tips that will include creative ways to recycle or reuse. If you have any questions or recycling ideas, please send them to: recycling@hpwbana.org.

Balcones Books

We now have our own bookstore, Balcones Books, in the Highland Park Center immediately east of Russell's Bakery. It caters to bibliophiles searching for fine firsts, autographed books, out-of-print, vintage and otherwise collectible in addition to having bargain great reads. Major sections include fiction, Americana, Texana, children and young readers, cookbooks, religion, philosophy, foreign policy and war, political economy, poetry, short story, drama, essay, books on books, lit crit, art and architecture. The book inventory is the paring down of a huge collection amassed over the past 30 years by Erwin McGee, a local attorney and now proprietor.

Please note that there is a problem with getting a new awning (which now reads "Cross/Recek Architects") five doors east of Russell's. Store hours: Wed. thru Sun. 11 - 7.

"When you're in a book you're never bored." Mary Beth McGee (1918-2015)

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How Realtors Sell Homes

by Rebecca Wolfe Spratlin



Everyday new homes pop up on the market. But, just what happens after a sign is stuck in a yard is often a mystery to most people. Just what do Realtors do to get homes sold? Here is a high-level overview of the steps taken. These steps, by no means, encompass EVERYTHING that is done, but will give you a general idea.

Before a home goes on the market a Realtor:

- Conducts comprehensive research of all area properties to provide a market overview, then creates a customized Competitive Market Analysis to ensure proper pricing of the property
- Works with owners to stage the home
- Makes recommendations on what to pre-pack and/or move into storage
- Prepares detailed marketing plan with action steps
- Makes recommendations on repairs and other things to be done to make the home most attractive to buyers
- Hires a floor plan graphic artist to measure and create a clear and accurate drawing of the floor plan
- Hires a professional photographer to take a minimum of 40 photos of the home, grounds and, perhaps, area amenities
- If there is a great view or other outstanding exterior features, hires a professional drone photographer to get dramatic aerial views of the property
- Ensures there is a fairly recent and accurate survey available, especially when the lot is a high percent of the overall property value
- Schedules appropriate broker/agent tour(s)
- Creates and prints attractive brochures and take-one flyers
- Inserts a "Coming Soon" listing into that special section of MLS

To Activate the Listing, a Realtor:

- Activates the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) listing with 40 photos and a video tour

- Attaches important documents to the listing, including Seller's Disclosures, Surveys, Floor Plans, other disclosure notices and important documentation

- Promotes the property through syndicated real estate websites
- Promotes the property through e-mail flyers to all agents in Austin and surrounding areas

- Places ads in various publications, newsletters and, if appropriate, Luxury Home magazines

- Hosts initial and subsequent Open Houses (according to sellers' preferences)

Ongoing Marketing:

- Vet and schedule showings
- Keeps sellers informed about feedback from showings, as provided by buyers' agents and their clients

- Hosts Open Houses as appropriate (according to sellers' preferences)

- Prepares periodic pricing analyses to keep abreast of changing market conditions

- Places ads, re-prints collateral materials and initiates Internet-based promotional programs

- Follows-up with each showing to ensure buyers' agents and their clients have all the information they need and understand the features and benefits of the property

Provides support during the offer, contract phases:

- Presents each offer to sellers and ensure all terms are understood
- Provides a detailed "NET Proceeds" estimate, so sellers will know what they will have a clear idea of the amount of money they will collect after closing and funding.

- Negotiates price and terms of the offer to ensure a contract will represent the best interest of the sellers and be acceptable by the buyers

- Set up escrow and ensure earnest money is deposited with the title company and the option fee is delivered to the sellers in a timely manner

(Continued on Page 5)

Free Estimates on New A/C Systems
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(Continued from Page 4)

- Helps schedule the inspections and other buyer visits
- Negotiates any repair requests and/or allowances for repairs
- Ensures all appropriate addenda and amendments are completed by all parties and provided to the title company
- Reviews title commitments, what they cover, what they do not cover

Closing:

- Reviews all final Closing Documents to ensure they reflect the contract, addenda and amendments, and that all pro-rations have been accurately calculated
- Advises sellers on what to expect at closing and how to best prepare
- Attends the closing with the sellers to ensure all goes smoothly and helps with any questions they may have

CELEBRATE!

Of course, every Broker and Realtor has his or her own specific marketing plans tailored to the individual property being sold...but this gives a pretty good overview of the basic services they provide before and during the sales process. As you can see, it is a lot more far-reaching than sticking a sign in the yard and putting the property on MLS. There are extensive, customized marketing programs implemented to do a great job of selling properties for sellers.

NOW HIRING

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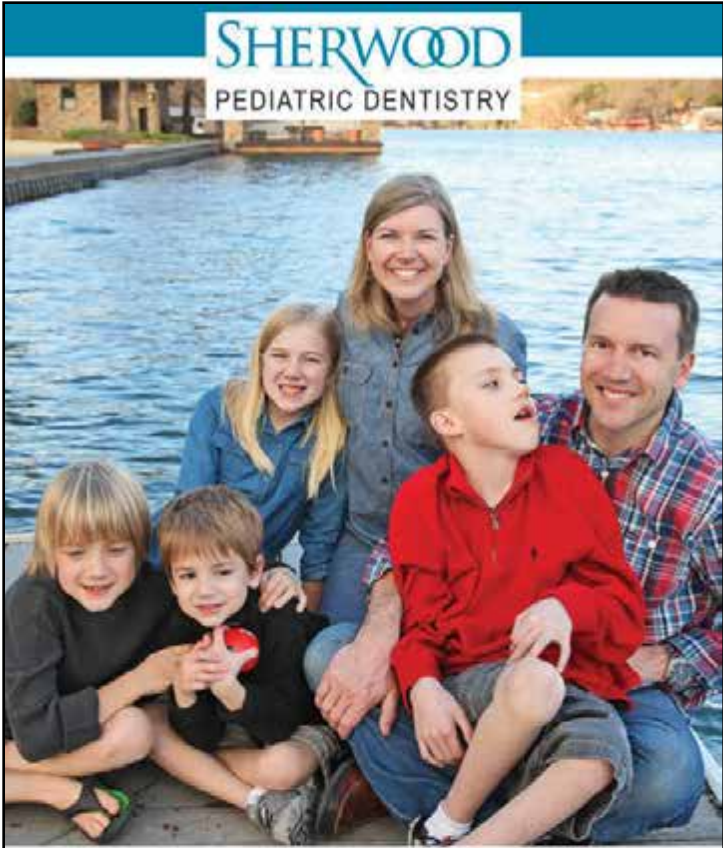
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FUNGUS GNATS

Fungus gnats often become a problem in homes due to an overwatering problem. Since this time of year can bring poinsettias or other plants into the home, fungus gnats are a pest to watch for.

Fungus gnat adults are small, black, long-legged flies with long antennae. Most adults are about 1/16 an inch but some can get up to 1/2 an inch. They are weak fliers and generally remain near potted plants, growing media, foliage or leaf litter.

Larvae, or immatures, have a black head capsule and long whitish body without legs. They feed on organic matter such as mulch, compost, grass clippings, plant roots and fungi. When conditions are very moist, fungus gnat larvae can become abundant and may leave slime trails on media that looks similar to trails left by snails or slugs.

While these gnats are a nuisance they are fairly easy to manage.

Indoors, it is a good idea to use yellow sticky cards as a monitoring tool. Potato pieces may also be used as a monitoring tool for fungus gnats. To do this, imbed a peeled potato cube into media and inspect the underside of the potato and the media directly below it twice a week for fungus gnat larvae.

To manage fungus gnat populations, work on reducing excessively moist conditions. Avoid overwatering and make sure that there is good drainage. The surface of container soil should be allowed to dry before watering again.

If using compost, make sure that items have been fully composted. Compost piles should be turned regularly and kept away from doors or windows. Inspect all doors, windows, vents and screens for a good seal to reduce the number of gnats that may enter a structure.

Bacillus thuringiensis var. *israelensis* or the nematode *Steinernema feltiae* can be applied in containers to control larvae. Either spray on the media or apply as a soil drench. Biologicals work best when they are applied early in an infestation. If a population is already large, they may not provide the control desired.

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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NEW YEAR TRIVIA

“Happy New Year!” That greeting will be said and heard for at least the first couple of weeks as a new year gets under way. But the day celebrated as New Year’s Day in modern America was not always January 1.

ANCIENT NEW YEARS: The celebration of the new year is the oldest of all holidays. It was first observed in ancient Babylon about 4000 years ago. In the years around 2000 BC, the Babylonian New Year began with the first New Moon (actually the first visible crescent) after the Vernal Equinox (first day of spring). The beginning of spring is a logical time to start a new year. After all, it is the season of rebirth, of planting new crops, and of blossoming. January 1, on the other hand, has no astronomical nor agricultural significance. It is purely arbitrary. The Babylonian New Year celebration lasted for eleven days. Each day had its own particular mode of celebration, but it is safe to say that modern New Year’s Eve festivities pale in comparison. The Romans continued to observe the new year in late March, but their calendar was continually tampered with by various emperors so that the calendar soon became out of synchronization with the sun. In order to set the calendar right, the Roman senate, in 153 BC, declared January 1 to be the beginning of the new year. But changes continued until Julius Caesar, in 46 BC, established what has come to be known as the Julian Calendar. It again established January 1 as the New Year.

NEW YEAR TRADITIONS: Traditions of the season include the making of New Year’s resolutions. That tradition also dates back to the early Babylonians. Popular modern resolutions might include the promise to lose weight or quit smoking. The early Babylonian’s most popular resolution was to return borrowed farm equipment. The tradition of using a baby to signify the new year was begun in Greece around 600 BC. It was their tradition at that time to celebrate their God of Wine, Dionysus, by parading a baby in a basket, representing the annual rebirth of that God as the spirit of fertility. Early Egyptians also used a baby as a symbol of rebirth.

AULD LANG SYNE: The song, “Auld Lang Syne,” is sung at the stroke of midnight in almost every English-speaking country in the world to bring in the New Year. At least partially written by Robert Burns in the 1700’s, it was first published in 1796 after Burns’ death. Early variations of the song were sung prior to 1700 and inspired Burns to produce the modern rendition. An old Scotch tune, “Auld Lang Syne” literally means “old long ago,” or simply, “the good old days.”

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View answers online at www.peelinc.com

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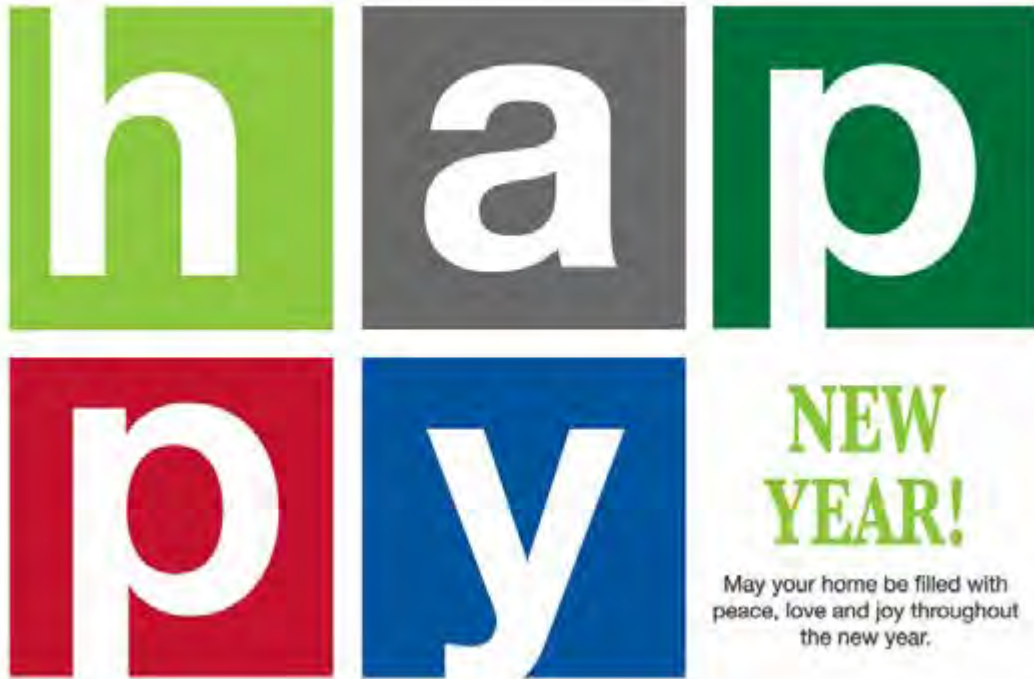


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