



nwacaNEWS

NORTHWEST AUSTIN CIVIC ASSOCIATION

JUNE 2017

VOLUME 8, ISSUE 6

President's Message

Chris Hajdu

We had a great NWACA Annual Meeting last month. The violent storm and hail may have caused a few people to stay home, but those who made it to the meeting received some great information. Major topics discussed included:

- Oak Wilt (a constant threat to our community's Oak Tree population,)
- CodeNEXT and its potential impact to our neighborhood
- AISD's current bond formation which may include help for our area's schools
- District 10 update from Councilmember Alison Alter.

If you missed the meeting, we have posted the slides at our web site www.nwaca.org

Also at our annual meeting, we handed out TWO volunteer of the year awards - to Ben Luckens and Jerry Levenson. We cannot say enough about how much these two volunteers have done for NWACA over the years.

• Jerry Levensen (also known as the "Ligustrum Liquidator") has been an extremely active member of our parks committee and has also helped perform 55 Wildfire Home Risk assessments in the NWACA area. He has been responsible for removing many invasive species (Ligustrum and many others) from our area parks. He is a great teacher and mentor to others in our community.

• Ben Luckens, an expert in urban planning and zoning and a former City of Austin employee, is an active member of the Zoning and Transportation committee. Ben was instrumental in pushing the city and surrounding neighborhoods for an Austin Oaks Charrette

and then ably let as its project manager. His work as project manager was done pro-bono - many, many hours of work at no cost to NWACA.

Also, present at the meeting were folks from Austin Fire Department who shared Wildfire impact maps detailing NWACA's susceptibility to wildfire. Vulnerability to wildfire is based on three things: access, slope and fuel. Please look out for more information we will be publishing soon that will help you assess your home's vulnerability to Wildfire. Remember that you can always schedule a free Firewise evaluation for your home. For more details, see <http://nwaca.org/firewise-request/>

Please remember that we will be holding our July 4th parade along North Hills Drive this year (the same route as last year.) We look forward to seeing everyone at the parade and the after-party at Doss Elementary. Read the article this month for more information about the parade.

Our local history expert, Richard Denney, was involved in a very special visit by descendants of the Comanche Nation. The Comanche once occupied the area west of Austin including our neighborhood. Please read the article this month in order to learn more about this historic visit. Their visit included stops at City Hall, Treaty Oak, Lady Bird Lake, Mount Bonnell, and Comanche Point.

Remember, if you are interested in contributing your time to one of the many NWACA committees, please contact us at nwacainfo@gmail.com and we will put you in touch with the right folks. Thanks, and have a great summer!

New to the Neighborhood?

If this is the first time you're seeing our newsletter, welcome to the NWACA neighborhood! This newsletter is one way to keep up with what's happening here, but there's a lot more available, too. Check out the Quick Link For New Neighbors on our web site at www.nwaca.org

This map shows our boundaries – Mopac, RM 2222, Loop 360, and Spicewood Springs Road. There are about 4100 other households who are your neighbors and are happy you're here!



Welcome to NWACA!

NWACA EVENTS CALENDAR

JUNE 1, 8 AM
KNEADED PLEASURES
SPONSORSHIP COMMITTEE

JUNE 3, 8:30 AND 10:00
STILLHOUSE HOLLOW
NATURE PRESERVE
7810 STERLING DRIVE
NATIONAL TRAILS DAY
GUIDED HIKES
AT 8:30 AND 10:00,
WITH A BIT OF TRASH CLEANUP

JUNE 4, 2 PM
KNEADED PLEASURES
PARKS COMMITTEE

JUNE 7, 8:30 AM
KNEADED PLEASURES
CRIME AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

JUNE 13, 8:00 AM
KNEADED PLEASURES
COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

JUNE 18, 2:00 PM
KNEADED PLEASURES
TREE AND ENVIRONMENTAL
STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

JUNE 27, 5 PM
TEMPLE BETH SHALOM, 7300 HART LANE
NWACA ZONING AND
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

JULY 2, 2 PM
KNEADED PLEASURES
PARKS COMMITTEE

JULY 4, 9 AM-11 AM
NORTH HILLS DRIVE AND
DOSS ELEMENTARY
4TH OF JULY PARADE AND
AFTER-PARADE PARTY

JULY 5, 8:30 AM
KNEADED PLEASURES
CRIME AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

JULY 6, 8:00 AM
KNEADED PLEASURES
SPONSORSHIP COMMITTEE

JULY 11, 8:00 AM
KNEADED PLEASURES
COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

JULY 25, 5:00 PM
TEMPLE BETH SHALOM, 7300 HART LANE
NWACA ZONING & TRANSPORTATION
COMMITTEE



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 APD District Representative, Office Darrell Grayson...512-974-5242
 District 10 Councilmember, Alison Alter.....512-978-2110
 Contact to enroll in the District 10 weekly newsletter:
district10@austintexas.gov
www.district10austin.com

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Each of the Board members can be reached at:
nwacainfo@gmail.com

The NWACA Board meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month, except December. Please visit our calendar at 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).

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AISD Update

—Julie Cowan, AISD District 4 Trustee jscowan@aol.com

The AISD Board of Trustees in March approved an updated long-range facility master plan (FMP). AISD and the board-appointed Facilities and Bond Planning Advisory Committee (FABPAC) are now moving toward the creation of a bond package that will address many of the deficiencies and needs of our district, as identified in the 25 year FMP. It is anticipated that the bond package could come before trustees as early as June 19, although by law we have until mid-August for our final approval, with the intention of a bond election before voters in November.

The FMP began by examining all AISD buildings to determine their facility condition and educational suitability. The average age of our district's buildings is 46 years. In fact, Doss is 47 years old; Murchison, 50; Highland Park, 55; and Anderson, 44. It is well documented in the FMP that our part of the district is in need of building modernizations and capacity relief. The FABPAC's work has identified billions of dollars of identified needs that AISD would address in subsequent PURPOSEFUL bond elections over the next 20 – 25 years, eventually modernizing all schools.

While specific items for this first proposed bond are still being vetted, it is possible that several of our NWACA schools, including Doss, Murchison and Highland Park could receive some level of attention.

A new elementary school that is aimed to relieve severe overcrowding at Doss and Hill is also being considered.

As your school board trustee, I don't take lightly asking for your support of a bond package. AISD's CFO has run numerous calculations to ensure that whatever request put before the voters will not cause us to raise the Interest & Sinking tax rate (I&S dollars = 100% kept by AISD vs. Maintenance & Operations tax dollars = 62% kept per Texas' Recapture System). Please note that AISD has lowered the I&S tax rate 5 cents since 2013, and NWACA residents with 65 and over homestead exemptions will not pay higher school taxes.

Northwest Hills is highly desirable and one reason for that is because of our wonderful schools. And while some public dissent is common leading up to bond votes, I hope that NWACA residents will first do their homework before criticizing 19 months of intensive study. In fact, I invite you to contact me if you have specific questions or comments.

Superintendent Paul Cruz and his team have created an academic vision that is forward-thinking, and that I believe will produce the graduates higher education and employers seek. The bond we create will address immediate needs and incorporate an academic vision for which we can all be proud.

As always, thank you for your support of our Austin public schools.



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The Day the Comanches Returned to Austin

—Richard Denney

As mentioned in a previous article, many a story of early Austin involved raids in which the Indians made good their escape to the “mountains” west of town; that is, to our neighborhood. At Austin’s founding, our neighborhood was in the domain of the Indians, notably the Comanche.

So, this month I want to tell you about a recent historic event involving Austin and the Comanche. The Comanche Nation Tribal Complex is based near Lawton, OK; their Elder Council makes trips to locations their ancestors used to call home as a way to reconnect with their past. A reconnecting with Austin was long overdue, so on April 26th 30+ members of the Elder Council travelled to Austin, and I had the honor of hosting that visit.

Our day started with a welcoming by Austin’s Mayor Steve Adler at City Hall. A short news piece is available on the City of Austin’s ATXN City View YouTube site; you can visit my blog to find the video link.

Following the meeting with Mayor Adler, we headed for nearby Treaty Oak, the last surviving member of the Council Oaks, a grove of oaks that served as a sacred meeting place for Comanche. Treaty Oak is estimated to be about 500 years old. Legend holds that Stephen F. Austin signed the first boundary agreement between the Indians and the settlers under these trees.

Much of Comanche history centers around the Colorado River, so next we had some fun cruising Lady Bird Lake on Capital Cruises. David Burnet, the 1st ad interim president of the Republic of Texas, lived among the Comanche for several years in 1817. Historian Mary Starr Barkley has speculated that Mirabeau Lamar may have first learned about the location that would later be Austin from Burnet through his travels with the Comanche camping at and crossing the Shoal Creek ford.

After our cruise, we mounted our trusty steed (a very large travel bus!) and headed for Mount Bonnell, a historically documented Indian trail into Austin. Some history recounts Comanches watched the building of Austin from nearby hills west of town; most probably Mount Bonnell. Leading a core group to the top, we climbed a picnic table and gazed on Austin below. Definitely a high point of the trip (no pun intended).

Our trusty steed developed problems at the top of Mount Bonnell, but lasted long enough to get us to our next destination, The Oasis on Lake Travis, where the group received a special greeting and great lunch. If you aren’t aware, The Oasis sits next to Comanche Peak, as far as I’m aware the only natural geographic feature in Travis County named after a Native American tribe. Nearby is “Defeat Hollow” named after an encounter between Joel A. Harris (my 3rd great grandfather), a settler on Hudson Bend, and Comanches. When asked “Who got defeated?”, I told them it was a tie, which got a good laugh!

Our trusty steed died at the Oasis, but the travel company had a replacement by the end of lunch, and the next day the Elder Council travelled to Paint Rock, one of Texas’ premier rock art sites where I met the group for a wonderful tour by the Campbell family that has owned the property since the 1870s.

The last time Austin had 30+ Comanches visit was probably the raid of 1843, upon which a scene in Larry McMurtry’s book and TV miniseries “Comanche Moon” was likely based. I’m happy to say this visit was about friendship, not fighting. Long overdue.



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July 4th Y'all

— Amy Hajdu

The Annual July 4th parade in our neighborhood is like no other – not to mention the best way to kick off Independence Day with (approximately) 2,500 of your friends and family. Red, white, and blue everything, everywhere – the spirit of the float contest and the anticipation of who'll go home with the coveted trophy, the AHS Marching Band, Veterans, Scouts, Uncle Sam and Lady Liberty, the Bunny Brigade, the amazing, one of a kind Lawn Chair Brigade and so much more!

We're kicking off the 45th (yep, 45 years!) Annual Parade with opening ceremonies once again at the home of Angie and Gary Huels, 4302 North Hills Drive. Marchers in the parade will line up along the stretch of North Hills Drive between Far West Blvd and Far Hills Drive) and motorized vehicles (including Float Contest Participants) will line up on Far Hills Drive.

Immediately following the parade, join us at the Freedom Festival at Doss Elementary for a group gathering to sing the Star-Spangled Banner, play games, eat watermelon, listen to the School of Rock band, play in the petting zoo, ride the train, or

take a swing on the putting green (to name a few activities)! But, whatever you do, be there!

Here are some ways to get involved in this year's parade:

- Order this year's commemorative July 4th t-shirt, Y'all.
- Register and participate in the annual Float Contest.
- March in the parade with a group (family members, gymnastics, robotics, cheer, Girl scouts, Boy scouts, sports group, Chess Club, Karate, etc.) We'd love to have you join us!
- Volunteer at the Freedom Festival immediately following the parade.

Additional details about the parade including ordering t-shirt(s), float contest entry form, parade route, volunteer spots, and sponsorship opportunities can be found at www.nwaca.org. You're also welcome to contact, Amy Hajdu, Parade Chair, at amy.hajdu@yahoo.com

Keep an eye on your mailbox and NWACA social media platforms for July 4th parade, and we look forward to seeing and celebrating with each of you on July 4th.

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CodeNEXT Update for NWACA

– David Whitworth

The CodeNEXT zoning maps came out in April. View the new and old maps side by side here (enter your address and zoom in): <http://codenext.engagingplans.org/codenext-comparison-map>

District 10 Councilmember Alison Alter hosted a CodeNEXT event April 29th at Anderson High School. City staff explained the maps and development process while answering questions from the audience of about 75 people.

In the new maps, Northwest Hills is mapped almost exclusively with the non-transect zone of Low Medium Density Residential (LMDR) where SF-3 zoning previously existed. Many aspects remain the same such as side and rear setbacks, sidewall articulation, and impervious cover. While SF-3 and LMDR theoretically allow for the same maximum square footage, LMDR omits parking exemptions of up to 650sf of parking structure from the calculation. Simply put, this possible error by omission has effectively reduced the maximum square footage by that amount. A solution could be to increase allowable square footage to make up for the resulting loss by deleting that complicated exemption section. Properties are limited to 2 stories where SF-3 allowed 3 stories. Structures are limited to single story beyond 80ft from the front property line, meaning the possibility of a rear 2-story accessory dwelling unit, or even a 2-story deep lot addition has been somewhat limited.

Front setbacks have decreased from 25ft to 15ft, allowing homes to be closer to the street. This allows significant remodel/addition design flexibility at the front that did not previously exist. Parking placement requirements do not appear to apply, which also contributes to some level of flexibility in reconfiguring existing garages and parking structures at the front. (transect zones carry a burden in this regard).

It is interesting to note that minimum lot widths are no longer included; the reason cited by City staff is that there is quite a lot of variance in existing lots, and they didn't want to introduce any non-conformances on width. While this author loves the idea of removing minimum lot widths entirely, and feels the same should be done in transect zones, this answer is perplexing with the backdrop of minimum lot widths applying everywhere else.

Currently LMDR appears to allow an ADU in addition to a duplex, allowing for 3 units on a lot, but there is already talk that this was an error and a two unit maximum will still apply when we see revisions.

Glitches aside, LMDR remains a viable zoning for (1) large single family, (2) single family plus ADU, or (3) duplex, but verify that what is allowed by city code is also allowed by your private deed restrictions.

There is only a smattering of transect zoning planned in Northwest Hills, generally as T4N along Wood Hollow where there are apartments, Far West at the Goodwill store, and along North Hills closer to Mopac. T4N can allow higher entitlements (up to 8 units). But the prescriptive nature of the form-based code in transect zones has serious limitations, such as very particular building placement and footprint size requirements. Transect zones will not appear to be a major conversation in Northwest Hills, but other areas in the urban core have significant transect zoning. It promotes increased density, but there are trade-offs. If you forgo the additional units because your plan was always to build one large primary unit, you can no longer build a large single-story structure. Or if you can't build the rear unit due to a tree, the design flexibility is gone where you could have incorporated that lost rear square footage into the front house with a larger footprint. While transect zones are theoretically a higher entitlement, there could be scenarios where owners would feel better off with non-transect to achieve their particular goals.

Most of the property along Far West from Chimney Corners to Mopac has been zoned with T5 transect zoning, which allows a height of 85ft, and higher density. This area is designated as a Neighborhood Center in Imagine Austin, and most of the T5 properties were already zoned VMU (Vertical Mixed Use) in the old code. It is hard to say how much additional height or density could actually be achieved though, due to additional design parameters that come along with the new code, particularly affecting the north side of Far West where the site is very constrained and shallow. The rock outcropping is possibly considered a critical environmental feature as well. We may keep the single story retail strip center for a good long while.

Note: The code is quite complex. This article is not intended an all-encompassing analysis but to provide food for thought. Many interactive parameters apply, and determining what can be done on a site will require professional guidance, especially when you also need to consider trees, or slope, or other design obstacles. As the public review is being conducted, there are already calls for simplifying many aspects of CodeNEXT in this regard.

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Wildfire Evaluations Do Matter!

— Joyce Statz

On May 11, one of our neighbor families was surprised, like many of us, to hear a very loud clap of thunder just before a hail storm. In the next several seconds, the family was alerted by nearby fence workers that lightning had just struck their very tall palm tree. As the photo shows, the top of the tree had a very healthy fire in progress! It was dropping palm frond pieces on the roof and lawn, starting little campfires everywhere. The workers and the family called the fire department, and they grabbed their garden hoses to spray water wherever the little fires were burning.

With help of AFD, they were able to control the fire, and the house experienced very little damage – just a small patch of shingles needs to be replaced, where some of the little fires got too big for the garden hoses before the fire department arrived. The tree is quite charred, as the photo shows, but there's hope it will recover, like similar trees have after fires in California.

We learned from the homeowner that their wildfire home risk evaluation several years ago probably saved them from more serious damage. Why? One of the recommendations of the evaluators was to trim off all the old palm fronds and leftover debris on the trunk, since all of that posed a fire risk. The homeowner took the recommendation and had a lot of work done on the tree – and he's quite sure if that had not been done, much larger chunks would have fallen from the tree during the fire, and those would have caused more damage and been much harder to control.

We also noted the new cedar fence being built between this home and the one next to it. They're doing it well, though, with no wood coming up to either home. Their fence includes a wrought iron segment that goes up to each house, which creates a break in case that cedar fence should ever light on fire. Again, this is common advice from a wildfire home risk evaluation.

If you haven't yet had yours, sign up for your free evaluation on the NWACA web site, www.nwaca.org using one of the Quick Links.



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Remote Citizen's Communication Option

– Public Service Announcement

The public now has the ability to participate during General Citizen's Communications during regularly-scheduled City Council meetings via videoconferencing. Time is set aside at noon at each council meeting for a maximum of 10 individuals to address the city council on topics of their choice. After piloting the process in three Austin Public Library branches since March, the program is now open to libraries in all districts. The Old Quarry Branch Library is the nearest one for most NWACA residents.

Remote citizen communication makes government more accessible to Austinites," said Mayor Steve Adler. "This allows the City Council to hear from people we might not normally hear from."

A person who intends to speak at this time must register in advance with the Office of the City Clerk. Registration must include the meeting date, name, contact information, and location (either in Council Chambers at the meeting or off-site at a participating library). Contact the Office of the City Clerk by phone (512-974-2210) or by email (citizens.communication@austintexas.gov) to sign up. The registration period for a given meeting begins at 9:00 am 14 days prior to the meeting and ends at 4:30 pm the following Thursday.

Library staff are trained and ready to assist people in using the videoconferencing technology. For more information about the General Citizen Communication process please visit www.austintexas.gov/department/citizen-p... or contact the Clerk's office at 512-974-2210.

*For more information about citizen communication, visit:
www.austintexas.gov/council.*



Stormy Days in the City

– Joanie Arrott

Recent weather in Central Texas has brought us rollercoaster temperatures, strong storms, and possible resulting damage to our trees. Being oak wilt season, it is vital to respond to tree damage with the proper tools, techniques, and knowledge to keep your trees safe. Homeowners and property owners can directly manage the landscaping on their property in most cases. However, there are times when they should consult with applicable city staff to verify appropriate steps to be taken. For example, when trees or plants need to be trimmed around power lines or if a tree has fallen on a powerline, then Austin Energy should be contacted to address the situation.

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, and these wounds should be properly and immediately treated by painting them with a commercial tree wound dressing or latex paint. While all oak tree species are susceptible to the disease, there are certain ones that are most at risk. These include varieties of live oaks, white oaks, and red oaks.

Make a habit of sterilizing pruning tools each time they are used to greatly reduce the spread of disease among your landscape plants and trees. In some cases tools should be disinfected between each pruning cut, like when pruning oaks. Denatured methyl alcohol (shellac thinner), isopropyl alcohol, or a general purpose household disinfectant such as Lysol, Listerine, or Pine-Sol, can be used.

It is recommended to employ only certified arborists, specializing in tree trimming or removal, to prune your valuable trees, especially oaks, especially if they have been storm-damaged or appear sick or dead. The International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) recommends hiring a tree service company that has ISA-certified professionals on staff. They have developed two easy-to-use tools to assist homeowners in locating an arborist in the area (Find an Arborist tool) and in confirming whether an arborist has an ISA credential (Verify a Credential tool). Access them here: <http://www.isa-arbor.com/findanarborist/arboristsearch.aspx>.

Remember, the best defense against oak wilt disease or pest infestation is to prevent pruning during the time of year that has the highest risk of infection, Feb 1st to July 1st. That being said, when accidental damage occurs, the best response is to safely remove any branches and properly cover or paint all wounds, no matter how small. Any questions about NWACA's oak wilt prevention campaign can be sent to: nwacainfo@gmail.com.

Five Tips to Shape Up Your Home for The Summertime Sales Market

— Carol Dochen

We've all seen enough HGTV to know that "wow factor" is an integral part of selling a home. House hunters must fall in love with a property to consider the purchase. If you're about to list your home — or if your home has been on the market but isn't moving — consider these five tips:

1. Buyers fall in love from the curb

- Trim front yard trees so viewers can see the actual home as they park.
- Remove cobwebs and plant flowers near the front door. Potential owners have time to look around as their Realtor unlocks the main entrance.
- Get windows professionally cleaned.
- Windex is your new best friend. Remove dust and dirt from the mailbox, outdoor tables, etc.

2. Declutter and then declutter again

It's hard to declutter while still living in a home, but it's crucial. Pare down overstuffed pantries, closets, utility rooms, and garages so buyers can imagine themselves living there.

- Spend a week clearing out spaces. Rent a storage facility that's easily accessible or donate items that haven't been used in 18 months. You can even neatly stack the garage with boxes if you leave a walkway. Remember to leave the attic stairs and water heater closet unblocked.
- Remove shampoo and soap bottles from the showers to showcase fixtures and built-in storage areas.
- Store cleaning supplies rather than leaving them on top of appliances. The same goes for kitchen and bathroom counter tops. Make product storage a daily habit so house showings don't cause panic.
- Remove motorcycles and lawn mowers from the garage and

store them off-site since the smell from their gasoline can be a turn-off to potential buyers.

3. Depersonalize

Remove and store personalized artwork, photos, and diplomas. Remember to caulk and repaint the holes left behind by nails.

4. Modernize a home in minutes

- Steam clean the carpets, with a focus on removing pet stains.
- Remove dark draperies since they're currently out of style. The same applies to out-of-date blinds.
- Consider replacing out-of-date items such as ceiling fans, lights, and bathroom fixtures. This is a relatively inexpensive way to update the home.
- Consider a fresh coat of interior paint, neutral-colored.

5. Make the inspection seamless

- Replace rotting wood.
- Remove ivy, which creeps up walls, giving termites and other bugs an entry point into the house.
- Clean the gutters so leaves don't back up, letting bugs nest and allowing moisture into the roof and attic.
- Keep flower bed soil four inches lower than the foundation. Any higher, and termites can too easily creep into weep holes.



Carol Dochen has been selling homes in Austin for more than 30 years.

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There's Lots to Recycle in the Bathroom

— Joanie Arrott

Most households do a great job of recycling from the kitchen, pantry, and laundry room. However, a common part of the house that is overlooked for trash minimization is the bathroom trashcan. While the bathroom is often the smallest room in the house, it can have a huge impact in helping our planet. A 2014 study sponsored by the Johnson & Johnson Family of Consumer Companies found that only about 50% of consumers consistently recycle beyond the kitchen. If we don't recycle, 552 million 15-ounce shampoo bottles could end up in landfills each year unnecessarily – an estimated 18,000 tons of plastic.

The study also found the two biggest barriers to recycling were not having a recycling bin in each room that produced recyclable materials and lack of knowing what products could be recycled. In our small two-bedroom house, both the master bathroom and guest bedroom each have a small bin labeled for recyclables. They are emptied out into the main kitchen recycling container every couple of days. The photo below was taken during a recent in-home recycling round-up, in preparation for the bi-weekly curbside recycling pick-up. I bet many of the materials pictured below are in your bathroom trashcan too—just waiting to be recycled.




Special Thanks to Members

— Membership Committee


NWACA thanks members who generously contributed to the Oak Wilt Fund, the 4th of July Parade Fund, and the Park Fund, between April 12, 2017 and May 12, 2017.

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.

- Barbara Anderson
- Richard and Merriessa Anton
- John and Cindy Cantwell
- Rob and Julie Cowan
- Zada Doherty
- John and Katherine Foster
- Louri O'Leary and William Harrison
- Valerie Laubacher
- David Mielke
- Roslyn and Chris Phillips
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- Susan Thompson
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Austin Fire Department on Fireworks

– Public Service Notice

Each year in late June or early July, AFD 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.



House Flies

– Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service

Moving into summer, we should prepare for the inevitable...house flies. While many see house flies as a nuisance, they are capable of spreading diseases such as dysentery or food poisoning. Due to the locations house flies frequent- garbage, manure, and carrion- they can pick up bacteria and other disease organisms which can transfer to other areas where they may land such as dishes, food, or countertops. House flies regurgitate onto food to liquefy it before eating and they can further contaminate items by defecating upon surfaces.



The common house fly has two wings and is dull gray with black stripes on the thorax (the section where the wings are attached). Adult flies can eat only liquid foods and have sponging mouthparts specialized to help them feed.



Eggs are usually laid on decaying matter such as animal fecal material, grass clippings, or garbage. Around 100-150 eggs are laid by the female. Depending upon temperature (warmer temperatures speed things up); eggs may hatch within 8 hours to 2 days.

Maggots, the immature stage of a fly, are small, white, carrot-shaped, and legless. There are 3 larval molts then mature larvae seek a dry location for pupation. Pupae are reddish brown and somewhat oval in shape.

During the summer, house flies may live up to 2.5 weeks while during cooler times of the year they may live up to 3 months.

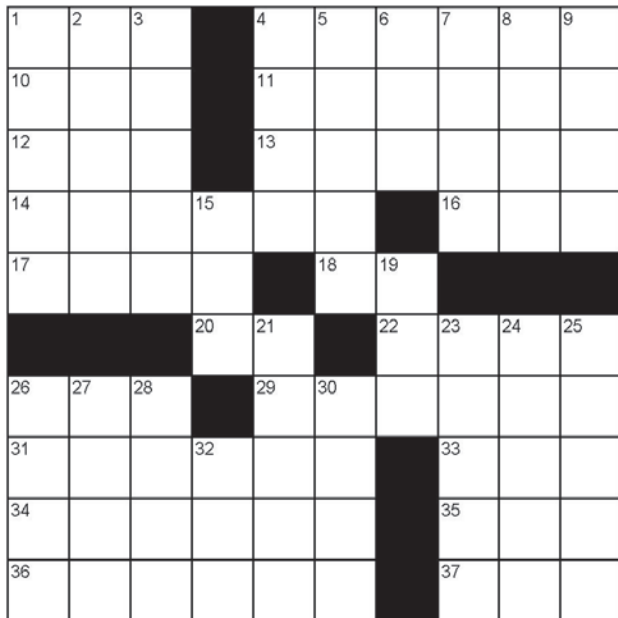
The key to fly management is sanitation, or cleaning. Eliminate breeding sites by picking up animal waste one to two times per week; empty garbage cans regularly; clean garbage cans at least once a month with soapy water. Keep garbage cans located away from doors that lead into the home, and make sure they have tight fitting lids.

Other items that can help reduce fly problems include keeping window screens in good repair; making sure doors and windows have a tight seal and weather stripping is in good condition; and using fly swatters or sticky fly paper to get rid of adult flies.

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

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS

1. Small amount
4. Metal bracket that holds stones together
10. Terminal abbr.
11. Timid
12. Mama
13. City in W. Oregon
14. Straighten
16. Spots
17. Stable gear
18. Gold (abbr.)
20. Mr. ___ (tv horse)
22. Canned meat brand
26. Oolong
29. Come out
31. Italian sausage
33. Wing
34. Busyness
35. Still
36. Parallelograms
37. Pigpen

DOWN

1. Object
2. Repent
3. Deer
4. Prayer ending
5. Orange cheese
6. Floor covering
7. At sea
8. Defend
9. Potato sprouts
15. Compass point
19. Employ
21. Demobilize
23. Petitions to God
24. Metal tip on the end of a lance
25. Substantive
26. Despot
27. Every
28. Singing voice
30. Brief
32. Point

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Phone (with area code): _____

Date: _____

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 \$10___ \$20___ Other ___

(Optional) Parks Fund Contribution:
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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



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