

## THE HPWBANA NEWS

Volume 13, Number 9

September 2017

www.hpwbana.org

## **Shoal Creek Trail Plan**

Attention all bikers, hikers, walkers, and nature lovers: thanks to Shoal Creek Conservancy, it's about to get a lot easier to bike and walk from north Austin to south! The Conservancy, a local community nonprofit, is working with the City of Austin to improve, extend, and connect the Shoal Creek Trail.

Among the many treasures that await visitors to Austin's Shoal Creek is a 3.25 mile long patchwork of trail that runs alongside the Creek from Lady Bird Lake to 38th Street and Lamar Boulevard. Shoal Creek Conservancy works with hand in hand with the City, community groups, and businesses, to protect, restore, and enhance Shoal Creek and its surroundings. Through its community-guided Shoal Creek Trail: Vision to Action Plan, SCC will make the Trail more accessible to people of all physical abilities, and to install amenities to such as bathrooms, drinking fountains, and maps. The Shoal Creek Trail will also grow Austin's expanding urban trail network by connecting to the Northern Walnut Creek Trail to the north, and to the Butler Hike-and-Bike Trail and the regional Violet Crown Trail to the south. Where possible on public land, a creekside trail will be constructed. Where the Creek extends through private land, the creekside trail will transition to a safe on-street bike route. The improved trail will encourage green, human-powered transportation, provide a setting for outdoor family activities, and inspire Austinites to discover Shoal Creek's hidden natural gems.

Learn more and give your input:

• A representative from Shoal Creek Conservancy will give a presentation at the upcoming Highland Park West/Balcones Neighborhood Association the evening of **September 11** at the Old Quarry Branch Library, located at 7051 Village Center Drive.

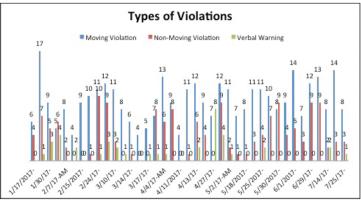
• All Highland Park West/Balcones residents are encouraged to attend the next **Shoal Creek Trail Community Meeting on Wednesday, September 13, 6-8pm.** Meeting location is Congregation Beth Israel at 3901 Shoal Creek Boulevard, Austin, TX 78756. The purpose of this meeting is to gain public input on the Trail Plan process so that the new Shoal Creek Trail can best serve the needs of our community!

SCC also regularly organizes volunteer service days along the creek. If you are interested in volunteering by yourself or with a group, please visit https://www.shoalcreekconservancy.org/events or contact volunteer@shoalcreekconservancy.org for other volunteer opportunities. To learn more about SCC and support its work, visit shoalcreekconservancy.org.

## **2017 Report on Constable Patrol**

With the expansion of the geographic area of responsibility of our APD District Representative in 2016, little neighborhood patrolling can be accomplished by APD since officers are generally going from call-to-call. It is unfortunate that the City does not provide enough support to allow neighborhood police patrolling on any regular or consistent basis. To address the patrol need and speeding issues on our streets and around the school, several residents have voluntarily funded supplemental patrolling and enforcement of speed limits within the neighborhood by a Constable beginning in early 2015. Emphasis is placed on traffic enforcement on Perry Lane, Hancock Drive (from Bull Creek Road to Balcones), Balcones Drive (from 35th Street to RM 2222), and on neighborhood patrolling.

An updated supplemental enforcement report through July of 2017



(Continued on Page 2)

## **IMPORTANT NUMBERS**

Austin Citywide Information Center. 974-2000 or 311	
Emergency Police	
Non-emergency Police (coyote sighting, etc.)	
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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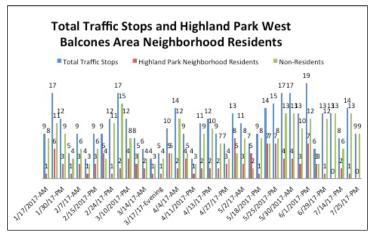
The HPWBANA Board meets on the first Monday of each month except December. Please go to HPWBANA.org for our current meeting location or contact president@HPWBANA.org.

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**

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#### (Continued from Cover)



follows. Please note that to date for 2017, 7% (298 out of 412) of the traffic stops by the Constable were of drivers who do not live in the Highland Park West Balcones Area. For 2016, 66% (250 out of 378) and for 2015, 48% (157 out of 328) of the traffic stops by the Constable were of drivers who did not live in the Highland Park West Balcones Area. Neighborhood residents have slowed down but the other traffic has not.

The cost of this effort is \$60/hour for Constable patrol/enforcement time. Now is the time for other residents who support an increased law enforcement presence in the neighborhood to join in funding this. Increased law enforcement presence should help deter vandalism, burglaries, and auto break-ins. Please consider making a donation for 1, 2, 5, or more hours of patrol time. To contribute to this effort, you may donate through http://hpwbana.org/get-involved/join-hpwbana, or you may contact me at psybesma@austin.rr.com.

Unfortunately, APD resources are directed where there is the most need to preserve life and property, and speeding and patrolling suffer. We live in a low crime area. There are not enough patrol officers for APD. The ones who are here are going from call to call with very little time for patrolling. At a 2015 APD Commander's Forum for our area, the question was asked about on-duty Directed Patrols. The Commander supported them, when there is time, but if there is an emergency in the area, the Directed Patrol officer would be expected (and may be dispatched) to respond to the emergency. At subsequent Commander's Forum meetings, the answer has remained the same. And since the worst speeding times that have been communicated to the HPWBANA Board coincide with the morning and afternoon rush-hours, our experience of the availability of on-duty APD patrolling has been disappointing. So, our Council needs to know that more APD officers are necessary and should be funded. And there is a whole other discussion on the priorities of services that the City provides: Public Safety-Parks and Recreation-Libraries-Roadsetc., as well as the tax bite from all the taxing jurisdictions.

Thank you for your continued support. Please encourage your friends and neighbors to also support this effort. The current HPWBANA Board supports this initiative and approved \$1,600 funding in the 2017 budget. (Continued on Page 4) 4507 Balcones Drive Soft Contemporary Nestled Among Trees 4 Bedrooms, 3.5 Bathrooms, 3,523 Sq.Ft. Per TCAD Offered for \$1,250,000



4903 Westview Drive Sophisticated Contemporary 4 Bedrooms, 3 Bathrooms, 3,642 Sq.Ft. Per TCAD Offered for \$1,380,000

4702 Valley Oak Drive Beautiful Craftsman Style Home 4 Beds, 3 Full and 2 Half Baths, 3,599 Sq.Ft. Per FPG Offered for \$1,325,000





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4902 Ridge Oak Drive Custom French Country Home 4 Bedrooms, 4.5 Bathrooms, 4,116 Sq.Ft. Per TCAD Offered for \$1,425,000

#### (Continued from Page 2)

What else can you do?

1. Be aware of the speed limits and observe them.

2. Help with funding patrols by the Constable. The cost of the patrol effort is \$60/hour.

3. Purchase a "Drive Like Your Kids Live Here"<sup>®</sup> yard sign for your yard. The yard signs are available on-line for \$12.98 each (shipping included) at http://drivelikeyourkidslivehere.com/our\_store/17/yard-sign

4. Let the City Council Members know of support for funding more APD officers for patrol. The Council is just beginning its work on the 2017-2018 City Budget and citizen input is encouraged.

5. And, become a member of HPWBANA,your Neighborhood Association at http://hpwbana.org/



## SEND US YOUR Event Pictures!!

Do you have a picture of an event that you would like to run in this newsletter? Send it to us and we will publish it in the next issue. Email the picture to *newsletter@hpwbana.org*. Be sure to include the text that you would like to have as the caption. Pictures will appear in color online at *www.PEELinc.com*.



### WATER SAFETY TIPS AT WWW.COLINSHOPE.ORG

#### At least 63 Texas children have lost their lives to a fatal drowning this year. \* Take our Water Safety Quiz. www.colinshope.org/quiz

September 10: Colin's Hope Kids Triathlon

Colin's Hope will host the annual Kids Tri on Sunday, September 10. The event is limited to 400 athletes, and will close quickly! For more information visit www.colinshope.org September 24: Colin's Hope Got2Swim Looking for our annual Got2Swim? Join Colin's Hope and Open Water Planet on Sunday, September 24 for a 10K solo, 2, or 3 person relay on Lake Travis!

Thank you to our sponsors, donors, and volunteers for their year round support! A special thank you to Peel, Inc. Their support helps us to raise water safety awareness to prevent children from drowning.

\*Source: Texas DFPS, Watch Kids Around Water AYERS OF PROTECTION CAN PREVENT DROWNING STAY AWAY CONSTANT WEAR MULTIPLE **KEEP BACKYARDS** CHECK POOL STAY AWAY RE SAFER LEARN CPR VISUAL TO SWIM LIFE BARRIERS & BATHROOMS & HOT TUB FROM AT THE & REFRESH SUPERVISION JACKETS TO WATER SAFER FIRST DRAINS REACH SKILLS YEARLY

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## Where to Look... When You're Looking

by Rebecca Wolfe Spratlin

Research shows that most homebuyers begin looking for homes online about a year before they anticipate purchasing their first, or next, home. There is no shortage of websites featuring residential real estate information. The most popular seem to be Zillow.com and Trulia.com. They have really great search engines and are very intuitive and easy to use. The problem is that these and many sites suffer from inaccuracy of information, most specifically the status of listings (Active/Pending/ Withdrawn/Sold/etc.) and list price. There are three key issues:

1) Sites often show properties as "off market" when, in fact, they are active on the market. Viewers are missing a lot of good listings due to this incorrect information;

2) Prices are often inaccurate due to the source of the information. Each MLS has a different agreement with third party real estate websites that determines what information will be shared, and how/when that information will be shared. If there is an error that blocks the feed of accurate information from the local MLS, the prices are found through other sources. For example, one source is emailflyers.com. In my opinion, this is a poor resource, as prices are changed on MLS, and there is no direct automatic feed to emailflyers.com. Only if the listing agent goes in and manually changes the price on emailflyers.com, will the price be reflected accurately. Even then, if there are problems with downloads, the price may be inaccurate or missing.

3) Estimates on market value are usually WAY off in Texas. Since Texas is a privacy state, websites other than MLS do not have access to actual sold prices and MLS is not free to share this information. "Zestmates" on Zillow.com, for example, are usually wildly inaccurate. According to the accuracy rating it has given itself in Texas, one out of four stars, they state that the low accuracy is due to, "[obtaining property values from] Tax assessor's value, and unable to compute Zestimate accurately."

The most accurate site for Austin real estate searches, including Residential Sales/Leases, Lot/Farm, Multi Family and Commercial Sales/Leases...is AustinHomeSearch.com powered by the Austin Board of Realtors. Why? Well, it is the public-facing version of MLS. All information on that site is in sync with MLS and has the most recent and most accurate data. This site also includes many distressed property listings (short sales, foreclosures). I do recommend, however, using Zillow.com, Trulia.com and similar sites for "For Sale by Owner" listing information, as this information is not included on MLS or AustinHomeSearch.com.

Enjoy the search for your next home or investment. Starting to look on-line in advance of making a purchase decision is very smart way to get started. When it comes time to actually purchase a property, use AustinHomeSearch.com and be sure to work with a Realtor who is active in your chosen neighborhood. She will often know of private listings and listings that will be coming soon to the market. Happy Hunting!



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# LETTUCE RECYCLE!

#### by Dena Houston

#### LETTUCE RECYCLE – IN THE BEGINNING!



Before there was curbside recycling in Austin, I began a neighborhood project in Highland Park to collect paper and take it to a local private recycling center to sell. The project was called "Lettuce Recycle" (sound familiar?). Many of my neighbors

saved paper to be recycled. The plan was that, once a month, one neighbor would take all the paper we had collected down to Springdale Rd. and Airport Blvd. to the recycling company. We were so excited because we were going to take all the money collected and have a BIG neighborhood party.

I was the first to make the trip. We filled my Toyota van with paper and I happily drove to the plant to collect our wealth and save the planet, all at the same time.

The van was weighed before and after the paper was unloaded. After unloading a van full of paper, I was handed **\$1.30**. Well,

at least we did our best to save the planet! With Single Stream recycling and a nice large can to put all our recyclables in, WE HAVE COME A LONG WAY!

#### NO RECYCLING IN AUSTIN PARKS?

Recently, I was at an outdoor party at a City neighborhood park. When I looked for recycling collections bins, I discovered that there were none. After doing some investigating, I learned that, In October 2015, the City's Parks and Recreation Department had recycling programs at all of its recreation centers, museums, and cultural centers. However, for outdoor facilities, it only had recycling programs as follows:

- For 50 swimming pools, only Barton Springs and Bartholomew Pool
- For 271 parks, only Zilker Park (with limited availability)
- For 6 golf courses, only Hancock, Clay, and Kizer golf courses
- For 36 sports complexes, only 1 (with limited availability) People who use the City's outdoor facilities are the ones who have

(Continued on Page 8)

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#### (Continued from Page 6)

aluminum cans, plastic water bottles, and glass bottles. Unless they bring their own containers to take recyclables home, those items eventually end up in the landfill.

Why, you may ask, are there no recycling collection bins in City parks? As you might guess, it's a matter of money. Setting up recycling at an outdoor facility is expensive and must be budgeted by Parks and Recreation. With a City of Austin mandated goal of Zero Waste by 2040, it is shocking that this has not been done for all City outdoor facilities.

What can you do? Contact the City Council Member for your district and encourage them to support a mandate for recycling collection bins at all City outdoor facilities.

#### **COMPOST COLLECTION CURBSIDE**

The Austin City Council has now awarded a contract to Organics "By Gosh" to provide organics processing services for compostable pick- up curbside. Hopefully, by the time this edition of Lettuce Recycle is published, we will know which neighborhoods will be included. Please email any questions you might have regarding curbside composting to recycling@hpwbana.org

#### HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO MAKE THE TRIP TO THE RECYCLE, REUSE DROP-OFF CENTER?

We are often discouraged from driving "all the way down south" to the Recycle Reuse Drop-Off center because it seems so far away. On a recent trip, I discovered that it took only 41 minutes to drive down, unload, visit with a few of the very kind and helpful people who helped me unload, and return to the Highland Park Neighborhood. The trip was made on a Wednesday afternoon at 2 PM. JUST A THOUGHT!

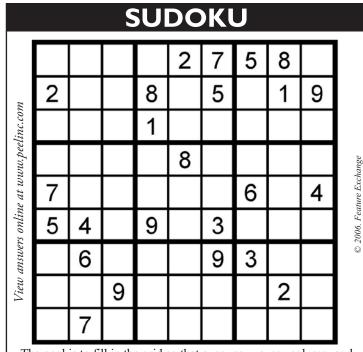
#### QUESTIONS FROM OUR READERS (AND THE ANSWERS):

I JUST STAINED AND OILED MY DECK AND HAVE LOTS OF EMPTY GALLON CANS AND LOTS AND LOTS OF OILY RAGS AND BRUSHES. WHAT DO I DO WITH THESE? Rags with oil on them can be a serious fire hazard. Put the oily rags and brushes in the empty cans. Fill them with water and seal them shut. You can then take them to the Recycle & Reuse Drop-Off Center for safe disposal.

HOW DO I RECYCLE THE AIR PILLOW PACKS THAT COME IN PACKAGES? PAK Mail on Balcones will reuse them if they still have air in them. Pak Mail also takes clean bubble wrap, Styrofoam and cornstarch peanuts. You can also put the air pillows and bubble wrap into the plastic recycling collection bins at the grocery stores.

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



The goal is to fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9. Each digit may appear only once in each row, each column, and each 3x3 box.



## **Monarchs & OE**



The protozoan parasite Ophryocystis elektroscirrha (OE) infects monarch and queen butterflies. It is an obligate **EXTENSION** parasite and requires a host to live

within and to grow and multiply. It was first discovered in the 1960's infecting monarchs in Florida. Since then, it's been found in monarch populations across the world. It is thought that the parasite has co-evolved with monarchs.

There are three major populations of monarchs in the United States- one east of the Rocky Mountains that winters in Central

Mexico and migrate north into the US and Canada; another west of the Rocky mountains that overwinters on the coast of California; the third population are non-migratory and can breed year round in areas such as Florida, Texas and Hawaii. All three populations are infected with OE.



Monarchs infected with OE will have spores wedged between the scales on their body, with the greatest concentration usually occurring on the abdomen. The spores are very small and require a microscope to see.

Female monarchs pass OE spores onto their offspring when they lay eggs. When caterpillars emerge from the egg, they eat the egg shell ingesting the spores. When spores reach the midgut of the insect, they break open and release protozoan parasites. The protozoans move through the gut lining to the epidermis where they reproduce asexually (divides multiple times increasing the number of protozoans). In the butterfly chrysalis stage, the protozoans go through sexual reproduction (again increasing the number of protozoans). Spores form so the emerging butterfly is covered in spores. Spores can also be scattered onto milkweed from butterflies laying eggs or feeding on nectar. Spores on the milkweed can be consumed by caterpillars as they eat foliage.

Once butterflies are infected, they do not recover. OE does not grow or reproduce on the adults; spores remain dormant until they are ingested by a caterpillar.

Infected pupae have dark blotches 2-3 days before emergence. Adults that are heavily infected often have problems emerging from the chrysalis and some may die before emerging. Others that do emerge may fall to the ground before their wings are expanded leading to them dying quickly. Many infected monarchs look healthy, so the only way to determine infection is by looking for spores.

What can you do? Check monarchs for spores and destroy any you find that are infected. I know this seems harsh, but infected monarchs further spread the protozoa and kill more butterflies in later generations. Cut down milkweed several times per year to get rid of any possible spores that may be on the plants and to encourage new, healthy growth.

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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## What You Need

- 3- pound chuck roast
- 1- ounce packet of dry ranch seasoning mix
- 1- ounce packet of dry au jus gravy mix
- 6 tbsp unsalted butter
- 1/4 cup water
- 5-6 pepperoncini

## **Directions**

1. Pour 1/4 cup of water into the insert of your slow cooker. Lay the chuck roast on top.

2. Sprinkle the dry ranch seasoning mix on top of the chuck roast, then sprinkle the dry au jus mix on top, then place 6 tbsp. of butter on top of the roast, and finally 5-6 pepperoncini around the roast.

- 3. Cook on low for 8 hours.
- 4. Shred and serve with gravy.

## **Cook's Thoughts**

You may serve this with a side of mashed potatoes and vegetables, or serve it on top of white/brown rice, or make a sandwich. Avoid adding salt because the gravy is fairly salty already.

If you wish, add vegetables to the slow cooker to cook along with the roast. Add Potatoes, carrots, celery, or anything else you wish 2-3 hours before the roast is done.

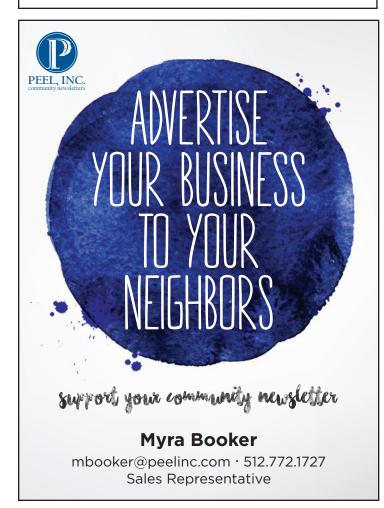
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