



nwacaNEWS

NORTHWEST AUSTIN CIVIC ASSOCIATION

DECEMBER 2018

VOLUME 9, ISSUE 12

President's Message

—Vicki DeWeese

December is a busy, short month!

Hopefully, we will all be able to slow down a little to visit with family and friends and go on some new adventures! On December 15th, NWACA, in conjunction with Cap Metro, is hosting a bus adventure, traveling to the Armadillo Christmas Bazaar. NWACA will pay the entry fee to the bazaar for the first 25 people who sign up! Find more information in this newsletter.

As the year ends, we say a heartfelt thank you to our neighbor and outgoing AISD District 4 Trustee, Julie Cowan. Julie has done an outstanding job serving our neighborhood schools since she began as Doss Elementary School PTA President and for the past four years serving our community as the district trustee representing our area. And, we welcome AISD's new District 4 Trustee, Kristin Ashy, who also began serving our neighborhood as Doss Elementary School PTA President. It is so important for our community that we continue to work with AISD and we are so fortunate to have these two women working on our behalf. See Julie's article included in this newsletter.

In case you haven't noticed we have amazing and generous neighbors in NWACA! Read about famous, and some possibly as yet undiscovered, artists in our neighborhood, enjoy reading a fun story about kids who grew up in our neighborhood and have remained living here, and learn about important people who settled in our neighborhood, before we were even a neighborhood, including a Texas Ranger. Learn more about a

unique neighborhood business and read about how one of our generous residents is helping to house the homeless.

December makes everyone think of warm fires in their fireplaces and fire pits. Please schedule your free Firewise evaluation today, so you can learn more about how to protect your property and our neighborhood. Trained Firewise evaluators will tour your property (but not the inside of your home), and leave you with recommendations as to how you can harden your area against fire. As Smokey the Bear once said, "Only YOU Can Prevent Forest Fires." We love living in the NWACA area because of our beautiful hills and trees, so please learn how to protect our neighborhood. To further protect your property, in this newsletter you can learn about how to slow the impact of invasive tree and plant species in our area and you can read about how to keep uninvited pests from entering your home.

If you're planning to travel during the month of December, we've included home safety tips to help you protect your property over the holidays. Holiday time often means gift giving, cooking, parties, and family gatherings. Please read about how to reduce, recycle, and reuse holiday materials.

And, speaking of gift giving, please give back to your neighborhood by becoming a dues-paying member of NWACA. It's easy; sign up at: www.nwaca.org

Have a safe, peaceful end to 2018. See you next year!

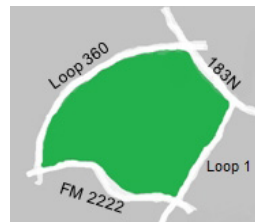
Am I a Member?

Since you get the newsletter, you're a NWACA member, right? Not necessarily! Thanks to our advertisers, every single-family household in the NWACA area receives the monthly newsletter.

Members pay annual dues of only \$25, ensuring that NWACA special events such as the Fourth of July parade, fall garage sales, recycling events, and summer pool parties continue. NWACA committees such as Wildfire Prevention; Crime and Safety; and Tree, Wildlife, and Environment depend on your dues to produce educational materials and programs. The Special Projects Fund helps improve the quality of life in our neighborhood. Want to get more involved? Go to www.nwaca.org and join a committee from the Get Involved tab.

If you're not sure you're a member, either go to www.nwaca.org and use the quick link on the home page or email us at nwacamembership@gmail.com. Thanks from all your neighbors!

New to the Neighborhood?



If this is your first copy of our newsletter, welcome to the NWACA neighborhood! The map shows our boundaries – Mopac, RM 2222, Loop 360, and US Highway 183 (Research Boulevard). There are about 13,500 households who are your neighbors and are happy you're here!

This newsletter is one way to know what's happening in NWACA, but there's much more. Check out the quick link For **New Neighbors** on the home page at www.nwaca.org. Use the **Contact** tab to see how to get the weekly NWACA Notes, sign up on Facebook, and join NextDoor. Become a dues-paying member by using the form at the end of this newsletter, or you can join online.

Welcome to NWACA!

NWACA EVENTS CALENDAR

December 2, 2 PM

Parks Committee
Biderman's

December 11, 8 AM

Communications Committee
Kneaded Pleasures

December 15, 1 PM

Cap Metro Bus Adventure to the Armadillo
Christmas Bazaar
Northcross Mall Station to Palmer Events Center

December 16, 2PM

Tree, Wildlife, and Environment
Kneaded Pleasures

Jan 6, 2 PM

Parks Committee
Biderman's

Jan 8, 8 AM

Communications Committee
Kneaded Pleasures

Jan 8, 6:30 - 8:30 PM

NWACA Board Meeting
Galaxy Cafe

Jan 22, 5 PM

NWACA Zoning and Transportation Committee
Temple Beth Shalom, 7300 Hart Lane

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Recap of It's My Park Day Fall, 2018

— Louri O'Leary and Janelle Medrano



On Saturday morning, November 3rd, neighbors gathered to volunteer at Stillhouse Hollow Nature Preserve's Fall Clean-Up, one of 83 park projects sponsored by the Austin Parks Foundation that day. The group picked up trash, dug up invasive grass, tidied up previous plantings, and planted twelve new Turk's Cap (*Malvaviscus arboreus*), a native butterfly and hummingbird attractor provided by Mark Sanders, biologist with Austin Water Utility's Wildlands Conservation Division. Turk's Cap flowers through the summer heat into the fall, and is fairly drought-resistant.



Stillhouse Hollow Nature Preserve, located at 7810 Sterling Drive, is a 20 acre portion of the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve, which provides habitat for endangered species. A paved trail meanders about a quarter of a mile to a deck overlooking a spring-fed canyon. The preserve is dually managed by Austin Water Utility and Austin Parks and Recreation Department. To protect the habitat, access to areas off-trail is limited to approved guided hikes which are scheduled 2-3 times a year and announced in NWACA media.

Other volunteer teams worked at Bull Creek District Park that morning, focused on removing invasive species – primarily *Ligustrum*.

The Parks Committee works to support and enhance NWACA's open spaces by organizing volunteer projects, designing and implementing improvement projects in partnership with the City of Austin and Austin Parks Foundation, and serving as an advocate and active steward of our precious parks and greenbelts.

Spring through Fall each year, the NWACA Parks Committee invites you to join us the third Saturday of each month from 9 AM to noon to walk the trails at the park to pick up trash and keep Bull Creek Park looking great. To sign up to volunteer for the Parks Committee or one of the other NWACA committees, please go to <https://nwaca.org/join-a-committeevolunteer>



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Emergency, Police..... 911
Non-emergency (coyote sightings, compliance issues) 311
To check status, go to: <http://www.austintexas.gov/department/myaustincodestatus>
APD District Representative,
Officer Darrell Grayson...512-974-5242
District 10 Councilmember, Alison Alter.....512-978-2110
Enroll in the District 10 monthly newsletter:
.....district10@austintexas.gov
.....www.district10austin.com

2018 NWACA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

The NWACA Board meets on the 2nd Tuesday 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 US Highway 183 (Research Boulevard), on the west by Loop 360, on the south by RM 2222, and on the east by Mopac (Loop 1)

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November once again brought us the East Austin Studio Tour of 277 studios, 67 galleries and 185 exhibitions, and the 16th Annual Travis Heights Trail highlighting the works of 37 professional artists. These tours were glorious displays of Austin's talents, still more of which will be showcased in May on the West Austin Studio Tour.

Last year, Murchison Middle School was the only West Austin Tour stop in our neighborhood and while an unspoken boundary of Mopac had been set, the tour organizers assure me they will follow the artists, so it's up to us if NWACA is represented.

Might your art studio be showcased in May? Are you hiding right next door without us realizing the enormity of your talents?

I remember a playdate many years ago, bringing my little ones to the home of new friend a few blocks north of Anderson High School. Linda, a gentle, soft-spoken new mom whom I'd met at the gym, had mentioned she painted. "A pleasant hobby." I had thought, leaving the rest unsaid, arriving at her home unawares a few days later, diaper bag in hand.

When Linda opened her front door to us, it was onto a gallery of her works, canvases 4'x4', 6'x8', 8'x12', covering the high, white, well-lit walls, abstract expressions of startling arrays of emotion, each an invitation to places unknown.

She painted under the professional name, Linda Dumont. Her works hung in Boston's Museum of Fine Arts. She was represented by galleries across the United States. Her work amply supported her family. Yes, the mother of my children's new playmates painted!

Over the years, I have been able to afford only three of her pieces, the first in the early abstract style, another from her period of playful, abstract animals, which you might know from Seton Hospital. My collection has nothing representing her cityscapes, often done in pastel dashes, or her fanciful, over the doorway, rectangles of excitement, but one of my walls roars with the frenzy of an oil-pastel-on-black river, done in Israel on a grant Michael Dell provided her after her children were grown.

Meeting my friend Linda Dumont is a memory I cherish, and though I would never expect to replicate it, I'm always delighted to meet new artists, especially close to home.

(Continued on Page 5)

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Recently, I was introduced to a gentleman living a few blocks away who learned to paint landscapes and waterscapes on line through Bob Ross instructional videos and over the years has created a prolific stream of canvases, honing his technique in the process. What fun to find him just a few streets away! If you know him and are just now learning he's an artist, have him show you some of his work! He may well inspire you to pick up a brush yourself.

And now, looking forward to the West Austin Studio Tour and considering the creativity and talent in Northwest Hills, I wonder which of my neighbors might now be preparing works that will be on display in May, inspiring us and helping expand the tour into our area.

Might your studio be included? I sure hope so!

The call for participating artists goes out January 15-February 15. west.bigmedium.org

Bus Adventure to Armadillo Christmas Bazaar

— Transportation Committee

On December 15th, we'll be taking our next NWACA bus adventure with Cap Metro. This time, the destination is the Armadillo Christmas Bazaar at Palmer Events Center. We'll catch the #803 bus at the Northcross Station on Burnet Road (on the west side of Burnet, close to Panda Express) at 1 PM, returning whenever we choose; the bus runs every 20 minutes on the weekend.

Cap Metro will provide bus passes for everyone who wants to go. NWACA will pay the Christmas Bazaar entry fee for the first 25 people who sign up. Kids 12 and under are free. And... you have no parking fee, which for this event is \$8!

Come join us! Here's where to sign up:

<https://nwaca-armadillo2018.eventbrite.com>

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A Message to the Community

— Julie Cowan

It has been a privilege to serve this community as a trustee on the AISD School Board for the last 4 years. After much consideration this summer, I decided not to run for re-election.

I will miss working with the current Board, AISD staff, District 4 principals, and local community members to "move AISD forward," as my original campaign materials declared. For those of you not directly connected to our public schools, you cannot imagine just how much time and effort these individuals give daily to our district and our students.

I set a few goals when I committed to running for this position.

First, I wanted to see the severe overcrowding in parts of AISD, including District 4, addressed in a meaningful way. Under the leadership of Nicole Conley Johnson, AISD's CFO, the district established the FABPAC to write a comprehensive, long range Facilities Master Plan that thoughtfully addresses our district's dynamic facility needs. With passage of the 2017 bond, Doss, Hill, and Murchison are scheduled to experience major facility work. Lamar and McCallum will also receive attention to parts of their buildings that support their unique programming.

Second, I wanted to introduce AISD to changemakers within the Austin community. An example is the unique relationship developed between AISD and the Austin Board of Realtors. Since fall 2015, AISD has hosted "realtor field trips" each semester to schools located in more affordably priced neighborhoods and that might have previously gone unnoticed. The realtors who attended our tours now have a richer knowledge of these schools and AISD.

And finally, when I ran for the school board, I promised that I would work to ensure that AISD students and taxpayers had a true presence at the Capitol as the need to reform Texas' school finance system moved front and center. After testifying many times before House and Senate education committees, I can confidently say that those legislators, along with the Lt. Governor's and Speaker's staffs, know well of AISD's unique challenges. Whether they are motivated to make the necessary changes to the Texas school finance formula remains to be seen. But AISD has NOT been quiet over the last two sessions and I am sure efforts to effect change on behalf of our community will not stop.

As friends, colleagues and AISD staff know, I prefer to work behind the scenes to effect change. I try to share positive messages,

(Continued on Page 6)



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ENGEL & VÖLKERS

NWACA News

(Continued from Page 5)

don't grandstand on the dais, and ensure that my votes are from the heart and with great intention, keeping politics out of the dialogue. I remind the community that school board elections are non-partisan by design. Too often, the work and mission of school boards is driven by adult issues and adult agendas, distracting the district from its central mission of educating children. I hope that as my tenure on the AISD school board concludes, that it is clear I wanted all Austin children to receive the same great education my three children received at Doss, Murchison, and Anderson. Public education is not perfect, but it is honorable and preferable and necessary to create a society filled with citizens who can think critically, create economic opportunities for themselves and their communities, and govern ethically.

The unsung heroes are District 4 teachers and principals. Thank you, Mike Garrison, George Llewellyn, Amber LaRoche, Katie Pena, Tisha Brown, Elizabeth Dickey, Sammi Harrison, Brad Clark, Janna Griffin, Beth Newton, Jenny Daniels, Kelly Friede, and Yvette Cardenas (and former principals Donna Houser, Brian Hill, Ami Cortes, Dedra Standish, and Janie Ruiz). Our children are blessed by your commitment and love for their learning.

Again, my greatest thanks to our NWACA neighborhood and association leaders for supporting our public schools. This community's support cannot be understated or underestimated. Best of luck to trustee-elect Kristin Ashy!

Housing the Homeless in Austin

—Dochan Realtors and Joyce Statz

People in many parts of the world experience homelessness. November 10-18 was Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week, a week that draws attention to the problems of hunger and homelessness across the country. Austin has approximately 7,000 people affected by homelessness, and it's nice to know that many nonprofit organizations and for-profit businesses are working to help serve these neighbors.

This is the first of two articles describing some good work being done by groups in Northwest Hills to help the homeless in our community and throughout Austin. It is good to know about (and join) work being done by individuals, families, businesses, and faith communities, as they lend a hand to our homeless neighbors. In general, the goal is to help our neighbors get off the streets and provide support as each person's case works its way through the maze of what it takes to get housing.

This month we focus on the work of Mobile Loaves & Fishes

(Continued on Page 7)



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(Continued from Page 6)



(MLF), which celebrated its 20th anniversary recently. Businesses, individuals, and faith communities in our neighborhood support this community-focused organization. Founded by Alan Graham, MLF has been bringing food, clothing, and hope to people on the streets for 20 years. Since 2004, they've been housing people in one way or another, starting with just a single RV. In December of 2015, MLF invited the first residents into Community First! Village on Hog Eye Road, just off Decker Lane near FM969. This village of RVs, micro-homes, and canvas-sided cottages now provides permanent affordable housing and a rich community experience to about 230 residents in its first phase of homes. Phase II is just being started, right next door, and it should house another 300 people transitioning out of homelessness.

The last micro-home being built in Phase I is being sponsored by Dochen Realtors. This donation of \$20,000 is part of an ongoing commitment by the company to ensure that everyone in Austin has access to a safe and stable home. For more than 20 years, Carol Dochen has donated a portion of every sale to Austin's Habitat for Humanity and Foundation Communities, so both organizations can continue to build homes and offer affordable housing to Austinites. Her latest commitment to Community First! Village helps the village reach a major milestone, one which Dochen Realtors is pleased to be part of.

To learn more about Mobile Loaves & Fishes and about Community First! Village, visit their web site at <https://mlf.org/> and read Alan Graham's book, *Welcome Homeless, One Man's Journey of Discovering the Meaning of Home*.

To learn more about Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week, please visit www.hhweek.org. There are so many actions each and every one of us can do to impact change in Austin.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

From Our Family to Yours

NEST'S TOP HOLIDAY EVENTS IN AUSTIN

MOZART'S LIGHT SHOW - FREE

3825 Lake Austin Blvd • November 16 - January 1, 6:00-11:00pm
<http://mozartscoffee.com/christmas-lights-show>

WINTER WONDERLAND AT CIRCUIT OF AMERICAS

9201 Circuit of The Americas Blvd • December 6-9, December 13-30
6:00-11:00pm (Fridays and Saturdays)
6:00-10:00pm (Sundays through Thursdays)
<http://www.circuitoftheamericas.com/winter-wonderland>

THE HOLIDAY STROLL - FREE

Congress Ave and 11th St • December 1, 5:00-10:00pm
<http://www.downtownaustin.com/holidaystroll>

AUSTIN TRAIL OF LIGHTS - FREE

Downtown Austin - Zilker Park • December 10-23, 7:00-10:00pm
<https://austintrailoflights.org>

MOVIE NIGHT AT THE TRAIL - FREE

Zilker Park • December 13, 7:00-10:00pm
<https://austintrailoflights.org/movie-night>

LAKE AUSTIN BOAT TRAIL OF LIGHTS PARADE

Pennybacker Bridge • December 8, 6:00 - 9:00PM
<https://btol.splashthat.com>

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<https://www.wholefoodsmarket.com/store/event/ice-skating-plaza-1>

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NWACA History Interview with Elizabeth Earle and Denise Pearson

—Carol Jones

Elizabeth Earle and Denise Pearson have been friends since preschool, living across the street from each other on Glen Ridge Drive for most of their childhood. Lucky to have their best friend so close, they often spent the night at each other's houses – sometimes sneaking out late at night from one house to the other, thinking they were getting away with a big secret!

An enduring memory of growing up in this neighborhood was how safe it was; nothing was off-limits. Their parents worked, so they just handled themselves. They walked to Doss Elementary School together, and then Murchison Middle School. Summer meant long months of freedom. Neighborhood kids all spent their time outside, walked everywhere barefoot, played kick-the-can, rode their bikes, and swam at Murchison pool. At Halloween, nobody went trick-or-treating with their parents. Kids of all ages headed out in groups, with instructions to stay within general boundaries like Mesa and Greystone.

They used to practice drill team dances in the street, and have shaving cream fights with the boys. They would walk across Mopac in their flipflops to watch boyfriends play baseball. It was perfectly safe, even though there was no bridge over Mopac at the time; so little traffic, no one thought twice about it. They took the city bus to Northcross Mall to play video games at Gold Mine. It was a much more carefree and unstructured time than today, when kids have their days filled up with scheduled activities.

They started working at young ages. Among other jobs, Elizabeth and Denise, as well as their classmate Brian Manley (now Chief of Police), worked at the H.E.B. on Far West. Elizabeth got her driver's license early at age 14, and they would all pile into her family's huge station wagon, with no air-conditioning and no seat belts.

All the parents knew each other, not just because the kids shared activities; there was a great sense of community. If a kid

got in trouble, nearby parents would discipline the kid – theirs or someone else's. The parents communicated with each other using the phone attached to the wall - no texting or Skype. Everyone was close. Kids had close relationships with their teachers, too.

As a result, neighbors formed long-lasting relationships. Kids made friends by making their own fun together. They knew kids from all over Austin, so when they were bused to the other side of town, they already had friends at the other schools. Parents didn't like the mandatory busing program, since they had spent good money to buy homes in Northwest Hills so that their kids could go to school at Doss, Murchison, and Anderson. But the kids didn't mind it.

For Elizabeth and Denise, things seem quite different now. Today's neighborhood kids don't seem to have a similar kind of village. Parents communicate about things like soccer games, but once those activities are finished, the relationships don't always continue like they did years ago. There seem to be higher expectations for kids now. If today's kids are using their imaginations, they are doing it in a club or team to build something, like *Odyssey of the Mind*. If they participate in sports, they are expected to have a batting coach for baseball or a dance coach for drill team. Before they can apply for things, they have to be the best of the best.

Growing up in Northwest Hills led Elizabeth and Denise to have many friendships that transcend time. Months can go by, and they can pick up where they left off. Austin has changed, but the people they know are still the same. The community is still a small town within a big town where everyone supports each other.

It was fabulous to listen to these stories of growing up in Northwest Hills. Do you have neighborhood memories you'd like to share? Contact nwacainfo@gmail.com and we'll come and listen.



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Texas Ranger Dick Preece

—Richard Denney



"A few miles from the Preece ranch lay the southern terminus of the bloody Comanche Trail ... The Comanches still claimed three-fourths of Texas as their hunting ground. Once they had raided Austin, slain and ridden off with Lone Star flags waving mockingly from their saddlehorns ... Often Dick [as a youth] ran into patrols of the celebrated [Texas] Ranger force searching for Comanche

horse thieves. As he kept growing, he determined to be a Ranger himself ... As the years went by ... The Comanche Trail faded. But a spur of the Texas Trail, which connected with the Chisholm Trail ... ran near his ranch. He became one of the main suppliers of horses for the big drives of Texas cattle to Kansas..."

Several years ago, I was able to track down and purchase a rare copy of Real West magazine from 1964 (Volume VII, Number 38) that had the article "My Grandfather, Dick Preece," written by his grandson Harold Preece. That article, and the quote above, set me on a quest to research Dick Preece, his time in Texas, Comanche trails near his ranch, the spur of the Chisholm Trail near his ranch, and history about our own Bull Creek. As I did my research, I found that Harold Preece may have used a bit of literary license at times in his article – it was after all Real West magazine! – but it was nevertheless a great piece of history that needed retelling.

If our Northwest Hills neighborhood had a "patron Texas Ranger," It would undoubtedly be Richard Lincoln Preece, aka

Dick Preece, the Preece family being early settlers to Bull Creek, and their family cemetery not far. His is a fascinating story but one that will not fit in a single newsletter article, so this is part one of six newsletter articles dedicated to telling the story of Dick Preece, Texas Ranger.

In doing research on Dick Preece and other bits of Bull Creek history, I've had the pleasure to make the acquaintance of some the Preece descendants who still live here in Austin. Forrest Preece was a survivor of the Charles Whitman UT tower shooting back in 1966 and one of those responsible for the new memorial that went up in August 2016 at the UT Tower Garden with the names of those killed. Several descendants helped with my research on the ruins of the old homestead on our local Bull Creek Greenbelt Upper hike and bike trail that I wrote about in the July 2018 newsletter article, "Isaac & Tena Thurm Venable, Early Settlers on Bull Creek." And I periodically get e-mail from descendants thanking me for helping flesh out family history and have connected with some on Facebook.

Ken Roberts' excellent new book, *The Cedar Choppers: Life on the Edge of Nothing* (2018), places the Preece family in what he calls the "Bull Creek clan." He uses this term "clan" to describe those early close-knit families that pioneered the hills and valleys of Bull Creek. Indeed, a popular story associated with the Preece family is that the name "Bull Creek" is attributed to the killing of a buffalo on Bull Creek by Dick Preece, the subject of my August 2017 newsletter article.

So, in the next five articles I'm going to introduce you to the Preece family, and in particular, the exploits of one Dick Preece, Texas Ranger.

For more on this topic and other local history, visit Richard Denney's blog at <http://txcompost.blogspot.com/>

CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS WITH
ST. MATTHEW'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Christmas Eve
Monday, December 24

4:00 pm
Children's Pageant
and Holy Eucharist

8:00 pm
Candlelight Choral Concert
and Festival Choral Eucharist



11:00 pm
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Tuesday, December 25

Christmas Day
10:00 am

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Business Spotlight: Nelo's Cycles & Coffee

—Janice Green



It was 1969 when Nelo Breda discovered his passion for cycling and recognized his mechanical skills to repair the frequent damage caused by roads riddled with potholes in his home country, Brazil. Soon he rose through the ranks of international cycling competitions to become one of Brazil's top cyclists and a highly regarded coach. Numerous titles and accolades are a testament to

his stellar history and reputation in the world of cycling.

Nelo opened a bike shop in Brazil, but in 1989 - while on his honeymoon in Austin - the opportunity to work for a cycling business arose, and he's been at it ever since. Nine years ago, he moved his storefront to Mesa Drive where he offers superior cycles (road, mountain, cross, commuter, and tandem), equipment, and

repairs (minor to complete overhauls). "My favorite thing is my work," and his commitment to quality and precision is a legacy from that confession.

The intimate and inviting atmosphere of Nelo's Cycles & Coffee is visible when you walk into his shop and eye the extensive array of bikes, saddles, apparel, nutritional aids, any equipment a cyclist could possibly need, and a repair workshop. Last year he added coffee, a snack bar, and pastry shop (plus drive-thru), with comfortable seating and cozy lounge areas not only for those awaiting repairs but also for neighbors who wander in for his superb coffee and pastries made with a Brazilian's know-how.

What makes his cycling establishment unique? Nelo's custom bike-fitting services assure your new or current bike frame's material, geometry and parts' dimensions are adjusted for a proper fit for an efficient and comfortable ride. He offers the only personalized saddle-fit service in the U.S. There are more than 120 to choose from and a stationary bike for fittings. As Nelo says with humorous wisdom, "You need to let your butt decide, not your head."

(Continued on Page 11)



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(Continued from Page 10)

Nelo is all about quality and service and customer satisfaction. His extended store hours of 7 to 7 from April through November are designed for customers' convenience before and after work and for the least cycling downtime possible. Weekly and special-occasion rides are sponsored with details online. His website also provides details about scheduling and rates for fittings and repairs.

Nelo's devoted clientele speak volumes about who Nelo is as a person and cycle proprietor: "best mechanical support in town," "courteous, professional," "no pressure environment," "honest and experienced opinions," "one of the best and trustworthy," "offers an old school bike shop."

Something else. When I asked Nelo about his experience immigrating to the U.S., his eyes clouded up and emotion lodged in his throat as he described the welcoming and helpful attitude of Americans, and the gratitude he felt for the encouragement and support of so many. That was a heartening reminder during these times.

For more information, current hours, and online shopping:
www.neloscycles.com, 8108 Mesa Drive, Suite B-105, 512-338-0505.

Evacuation: It's About Being Ready

— Joyce Statz

Growing up in Minnesota, kids in my family didn't learn about floods or hurricanes, but we did learn about tornadoes. And we all knew that the safest place during a tornado was in the basement, and we knew there we had water and emergency supplies. I still remember the fear of six nieces and nephews I was babysitting one summer, when the tornado siren sounded. But we all knew where to go and what to take with us, as we waited for the all clear signal! The tornado passed by, and nobody got hurt.

Here in Austin, my greatest natural disaster fear is that of a wildfire in the beautiful green spaces around our neighborhood. And my greatest source of calm is the evacuation plan for my home:

- two ways out of the neighborhood, since at least one is likely to be blocked by the fire
- having enough fuel in a car (gas in one, battery in the other), so we can make it through potentially long waits in lines of people leaving
- phones and email and text registered with <https://warncentraltexas.org/> so that we get notifications in an emergency
- "go kits" filled with things to take with us if/when we need to leave

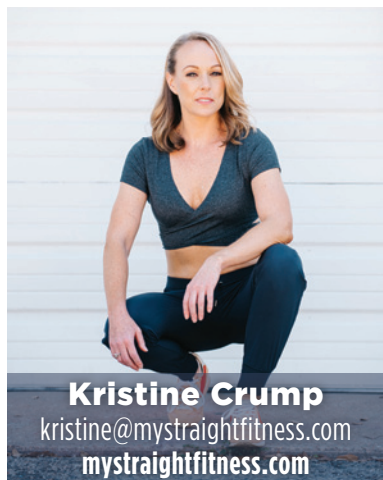
(Continued on Page 12)



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Kristine Crump

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NWACA News

(Continued from Page 11)

- a list of last-minute things to grab and to do – posted on the fridge – since we won't remember everything to do without that list! Meds, papers, computers, that favorite painting in the dining room, ...

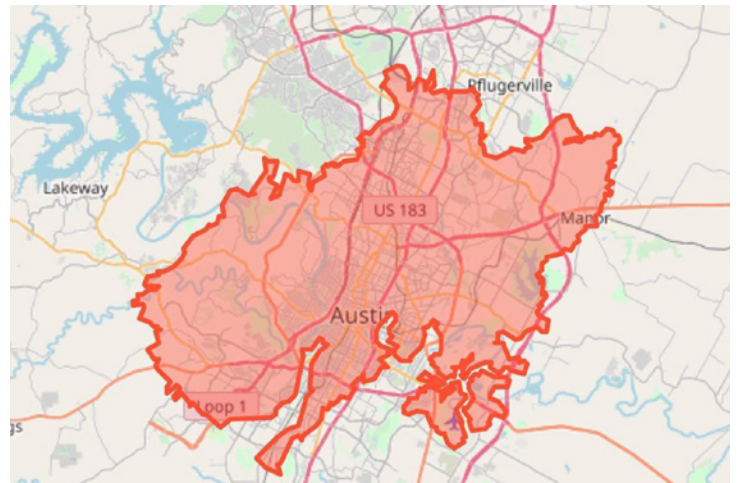
We can also be assured that the first thing firefighters do in case of a wildfire is to ensure residents are told to evacuate... then fight the fire.

Evacuations in California show us that even with excellent planning, things can go awry. But without a plan, we have little chance of success. And, without talking about that plan, and practicing that plan, we might as well not have one. There was an interesting study done after the 2011 Bastrop fire to see how kids were affected by evacuation. Findings showed that kids were exposed to three types of situations: cases where families had done no advance evacuation planning; cases where parents had a plan, but didn't discuss it with kids; and cases where there was a plan that was discussed with the whole family. After the fire, kids who had the least trauma were those who had gone through a discussion of the plan. Kids from families without a plan and from families who didn't discuss their plan were the more traumatized by the experience – approximately equally so.

For the sake of everyone in the family, each head of household needs to think about what to do if/when the wildfire happens, make a plan, talk it over with the family, and be prepared. There is good guidance offered in a booklet titled "Ready, Set, Go!" which you

can find on the NWACA web site here: <https://nwaca.org/awd/wp-content/upload/2015/02/ReadySetGoTexasBooklet.pdf> (or just put Ready Set Go into the search bar). If you sign up for a Firewise evaluation, we'll bring you a copy of this and other materials that are helpful for preparing your home and yourself to withstand a wildfire.

[Note the relative size of the recent Camp Fire in California, overlaid on a map of Austin. It would stretch from the Arboretum to Bergstrom Airport, and from Manor almost to Lake Travis. The Thousand Oaks Fire was even larger.]



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Holiday Travel Safety Tips


—Connie Lundgren



Will you be away this holiday season? Here's a quick list of reminders to help keep your home and belongings safe.

1. Alert your neighbors about your plans, when you'll be leaving and returning.
2. Alert your alarm company that you will be out of town.
3. Lock the garage door - there may be several places to lock – the door between the house and garage (lock from inside the house), any door from the garage that leads outside, and disengage any automatic garage opener.

4. Set lights on a timer.
5. Stop mail and newspaper delivery or have a neighbor pick them up.
6. Plan for package delivery. Consider using an Amazon locker or have packages held at the US Post Office. If ordering from a retailer, have the package shipped to the store for pickup. Most shipping providers, including UPS and Fed Ex, allow you to postpone delivery until you know someone is home.
7. Take a break from social media and do not post travel plans or share photos of your home and your "stuff." Adjust privacy settings for event RSVPs so intruders will not know your schedule.
8. Secure valuables inside the house.
9. Prevent power surges. Disconnect computers, TV, stereos, and other electronics.
10. For online security use a VPN (virtual private network) when using public Wi-Fi to protect online data. When shopping online, be sure the site is secure and has a valid encryption certificate (you can usually spot the green locked indicator in front of the site address).
11. If purchasing a new security package for your front door, look for one that sends real-time alerts to your phone so you can see and speak to who's on your porch, or it can sound an alarm directly from an app, if necessary.




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Sunday, December 16th, 10:40 AM

Christmas Service

Sunday, December 23rd, 10:40 AM

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Monday, December 24th, 7:00 PM

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At the top of Shepherd Mountain

Greg Lanier, Senior Minister ~ Jeff Robinett, Associate Minister
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Unwelcome Guests

—Joanie Arrott

We write a lot about appreciating and protecting our trees here in Northwest Hills. Time and effort must be taken year-round to maintain our urban forest, and that includes working to prevent and minimize the damage caused by unwanted invaders. Invasive species include a wide variety of plants that have been introduced from other countries, and they possess traits allowing them to establish over large areas and persist in the environment. Their success is also attributed to favorable environmental conditions and lack of natural competitors and diseases that normally regulate their populations in their countries of origin.

Three common offenders in Northwest Hills include: Chinaberry, Nandina, and Ligustrum. Each of these is a prolific invader, because they have berries which birds and other animals eat and carry far and wide – often into our creek beds, parks, and green spaces.

Chinaberry trees are fast-growing, deciduous trees with poisonous, yellow berries. Nandina, or heavenly bamboo, is an evergreen shrub that resembles bamboo and has leaves that turn tinged red in cold temperatures. (Note that there is a variety of Nandina which does not bloom and produce berries; that variety does not cause problems through propagation.) Ligustrum, or glossy privet, is a fast-growing evergreen that has purplish-black berries. In many yards and greenbelts, what was bought as a relatively short shrub grows into a 30-foot tree, which proliferates its blossoms and berries widely.

Invasive species are a direct threat to our biodiversity by impacting the survival of native plants and animals. These unwanted invaders are often unintentionally introduced through the everyday activities of citizens—what you buy at the local nursery or bring back from your vacation matters. We all have a responsibility to identify common invasive plants, take action to control them, and prevent accidental spreading or introduction.

Tips for slowing the impact:

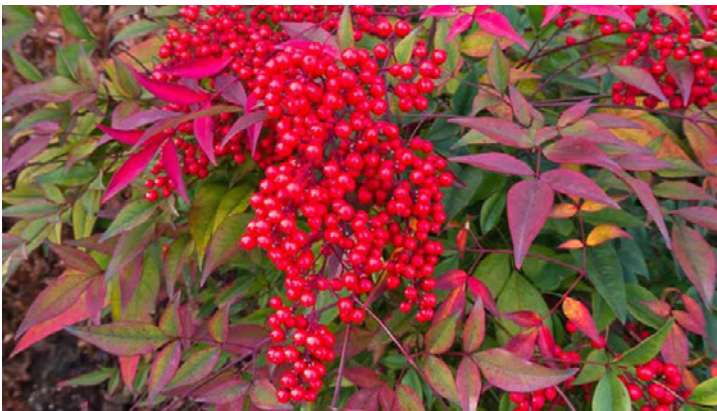
- Visit the Invasive Species Database at https://www.texasinvasives.org/invasives_database/ to learn about the common invasive species and options for management.
- Tour your yard space to identify any unwelcomed guests.
- Take action to remove any invasive plants.
- Avoid purchasing these plants at area garden centers.
- Join NWACA's Parks Committee or other local organizations that work to remove invasive species and maintain our green spaces.



Chinaberry (Texasinvasives.org)



Ligustrum (Texasinvasives.org)



Nandina (gardenia.net)

Reduce Your Holiday Impact

—Joanie Arrott

Did you know that 25% more trash is produced between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day? While it may seem impossible to skip that second piece of pie or overindulge on gifts for the kiddos, here are some simple steps to reducing your waste this the holiday season:

Shopping:

- Select the weird looking carrots or slightly bruised apples that others are less likely to purchase. Imperfect produce tends to end up in the trash, but it tastes the same or better.
- Opt to buy products that contain less packaging or those that come in recyclable packaging.
- Consider buying from local businesses to minimize the carbon footprint of your gifts and support the local economy. More information can be found at: <https://golocalaustin.com/>.

Serving:

- Break out the real dinnerware and ditch the single-use plates or cutlery. It makes for easy cleaning when all the plates and glassware head straight for the dishwasher. If you don't have enough of your own, borrow from friends and family or get what you need from a thrift store.
- Consider using cloth napkins. They reduce waste and add a little extra elegance to your meal.

Cooking:

- Minimize food waste by knowing how many are going to be at your table, and prepare just what is needed.
- Use every part—keep those turkey bones to make broth, baked potato skins for chips, etc.
- If you have leftovers, consider beeswax paper to wrap plates instead of plastic wrap. Give away food in reusable or recyclable containers.
- Pack up extra leftovers for donation to nearby food pantries.
- Compost what you can't save or donate.

Wrapping:

- Find low-cost, used arts and craft supplies at Austin Creative Reuse. More information can be found at: <http://austincreativereuse.org/>.
- Create your own wrapping paper, bows, and other holiday decoration. Pinterest is always a great place for ideas, or some examples can be found here: <http://www.austintexas.gov/blog/sustainable-diy-project-upcycled-gift-wrap-bows>.

Clean-up:

- Visit the Austin Reuse Directory to find places for donating or selling your used clothing, electronics, furniture, and other household items. More information can be found at: <https://austineconetwork.com/austin-reuse-directory/>.
- Visit the Reuse & Recycle Drop-Off Center to recycle your old electronics, styrofoam, plastic wrap, and many other items that cannot be recycled in your curbside blue bin. More information can be found at: <http://www.austintexas.gov/dropoff>.

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Living Nativity

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Christmas Eve Services

Dec. 24

4:00 pm—Family Friendly

7 pm—Classic Carols & Candlelight

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selecting the Get Involved Tab, and choosing Join/Renew*

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

Help Keep our Wildlife Wild!

NWACA advises residents to NOT feed wildlife. Many well-intentioned individuals do so out of concern for the wildlife they are feeding. However, intentional and unintentional feeding of wildlife attracts predators to the wildlife being fed. Additionally, an association with humans and food contributes directly to habituated behaviors of animals like coyotes and feral hogs, which then become aggressive in pursuit of a food or prey attractant. Please eliminate food attractants from your yards for the safe enjoyment of our streets, parks and playgrounds for neighbors and pets.



Spot Crime.

**Be a Neighborhood Watch
Block Captain**

Stop Crime!

More info: email nwacainfo@gmail.com

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NWACA REAL ESTATE

NORTHWEST HILLS AND WESTOVER HILLS MARKET REPORT UPDATE

DECEMBER
2018

Below is a YTD overview (January through November) for single family homes in the Northwest Hills market. This year has shown healthy demand with an overall increase in home prices and activity.

LISTINGS	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Single Family Homes	225	212	218	245	234
AVERAGE					
List Price	\$641,909	\$675,314	\$734,132	\$751,524	\$823,068
List Price/Sqft	\$228	\$245	\$261	\$269	\$282
Sold Price	\$619,488	\$629,214	\$688,759	\$703,830	\$764,029
Sold Price/Sqft	\$224	\$242	\$254	\$261	\$275
Sold Price/Original List Price	97.4%	97.0%	97.5%	96.3%	97.2%
Days on Market	44	44	47	58	45
MEDIAN					
List Price	\$599,000	\$635,000	\$687,000	\$695,000	\$750,000
List Price/Sqft	\$226	\$242	\$260	\$267	\$277
Sold Price	\$590,000	\$605,250	\$638,965	\$652,000	\$732,500
Sold Price/Sqft	\$220	\$240	\$252	\$261	\$272
Days on Market	16	17	20	17	20

*Due to publishing deadline, 2018 figures include sales from January through November 15.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Median Sales Price is up 12.3% compared to last year.
- Transactions are down 4.5% from last year.
- Median Sold Price/Sqft is up 4.2% compared to 2017.

Considering a change in 2019? NOW is a great time to start the conversation. Feel free to contact me for a **FREE** market analysis or to discuss the best updates to consider for a future sale.



FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR UPDATES, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT JULIE.
WWW.NESTPROPERTIESAUSTIN.COM

JULIE WAIDELICH
BROKER/OWNER, REALTOR®

SOURCE: ABOR MLS including data through November 15, 2018. Based on NWACA Boundaries: MOPAC/HWY 360/2222/SPICEWOOD SPRINGS



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A NEW HOME Makes a GREAT Holiday Gift! **COMING SOON ~ 3901 Petra Path**

**One Story*Three Car Garage*Level Corner Lot*Pool and Hot Tub
4 Bedrooms, 3 Full Baths, 3 Living Areas, 2 Dining Areas**

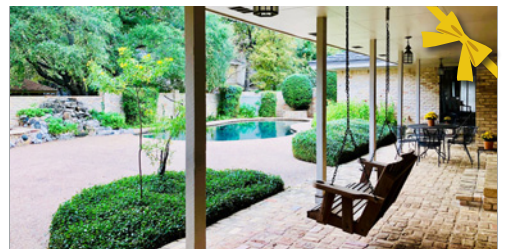
First time on the market, this coveted one-story home is situated on a large, level corner lot with a 3 car, side-entry garage. On a quiet street in the heart of Northwest Hills, stately heritage oak trees grace the front lawn of this lovingly maintained property. With striking curb appeal, it is a pure delight to come home to every day and a great source of pride with its superb craftsmanship and beauty. All four sides are lovely antique, solid brick. Both front and back patios possess that same brick along with maintenance free matching brick fence.

Upon entry, step into a wide foyer and capture a view of the cozy, brick fireplace in the vaulted Great Room. You can just imagine the stimulating conversations, laughter and family memories that will be created in this warm, inviting space. There is plenty of room to host a large crowd for the holidays! In addition to the Great Room, there is also a large living area on the other side of the kitchen and breakfast room perfect for television/media space plus a formal dining area and another living area with pocket doors for a home office. Possibilities abound for space utilization in this home because it is sprawling on one level.

The Master Bedroom is tucked away on one side of the home at the rear. Down the hall from the Master there are two other bedrooms which share a Jack-and-Jill bath. On the opposite side of the home, there is a separate wing equipped with a bedroom and full bathroom creating the quintessential Mother-in-law plan. This wing can also be accessed via sliders from a front yard brick patio or through the 3-car garage without disturbing the family on the other side of the home. The separation of space is excellent for privacy allowing everyone to live comfortably and peacefully under one roof.

Slip into your expansive outdoor living area through sliders from the living room/breakfast areas as well as the Master bedroom. The backyard space is a peaceful paradise equipped with a sparkling pool, hot tub, easy to maintain foliage, and a relaxing porch swing on the brick patio which spans the length of the home. A deep overhang provides shade for entertaining and beckons you to sit for a while and enjoy nature. This outdoor living space has ample room for cookouts and can accommodate a variety of outdoor living furniture for your family and guests.

The home has a freshly painted exterior and has been smartly pre-inspected with major issues addressed. It's ready for another wonderful family to place their own imprint on the well-loved space and enjoy, inside and out, for many years to come. Price Upon Request.



Dawn Lanier, ABR, GRI

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