



May 2019

**COURTYARD HOMEOWNERS
ASSOCIATION, INC.**

COURTYARD CALLER

Official Courtyard Newsletter

Volume 15, Number 5

BOARD MESSAGE

A special thank you to all the volunteers and Community Park Chairman Terry Edwards who braved the elements on Saturday, April 13th to clean up the community park. We hope you will join the crew for our next Park Day this Fall! Thank you also to Joany Price, Social Committee Chairperson, and all her helpers who made the Spring Celebration and Easter Egg Hunt a success. This annual favorite couldn't happen with your generosity of time and talent!

If you have recently moved into a Courtyard home, welcome! If you have not had a visit from a member of the Welcome Committee, please contact any Board member. We need to collect your contact information for emergency and security purposes. Thank you.

The City of Austin department of Public Health reports that mosquitoes are present in Central Texas year-round, but the population is largest and most active from April through September. Check out the article in this month's edition for reminders on how to control the presence of mosquito breeding grounds on your property.

Memorial Day is May 27th. An annual Memorial Day ceremony honoring the men and women of our armed forces who have given their lives in service to our country will be held at the Veterans Memorial Plaza in Georgetown on Monday, May 27th. The ceremony will begin at 9:30 a.m. and will feature a guest speaker. Music will be provided by the 36th Infantry Division Band of the Texas Army National Guard. Visit <https://www.sctexas.org> for more details.

Finally, please continue to drive at or below the speed limit through the neighborhood. Nothing is so important as to justify speeding and possibly running into someone or their pet. Whether you are cycling, walking or running, please take care when moving by or between vehicles parked along our streets.

Drive Slowly in the Courtyard!

Spring Park Volunteer Day



A great big "Thank You!" to the eight brave souls who ventured out to volunteer their time for Park Day on Saturday, April 13th. Although the rain did not start in earnest until 11 AM, the cloudy skies and promise of imminent rain may have kept our usual numbers from coming out in force. A shout out to (pictured from left to right) Arthur Wright, Shannon Smith, Emerson Smith, Paul Stanfield, Fred Wahlers, Steve Bosak, Denise Hogan, and Park Chairman Terry Edwards.

We were able to clear the branches that were blocking the pathways and drag a number of downed branches to the access point for pickup later next week. Although a huge downpour ended our efforts at 11 AM, we think the Easter Egg hunters will have a great time and a beautiful park to frolic in!



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Courtyard Book Club Tuesday, June 4th, 2019 @ 1pm - 5612 N Scout Island Circle

Please join the Courtyard Book Club in May as we discuss *Behind the Beautiful Forevers*, by Katherine Boo.

In this brilliant, breathtaking book by Pulitzer Prize winner Katherine Boo, a bewildering age of global change and inequality is made human through the dramatic story of families striving toward a better life in Annawadi, a makeshift settlement in the shadow of luxury hotels near the Mumbai airport. As India starts to prosper, the residents of Annawadi are electric with hope. Abdul, an enterprising teenager, sees "a fortune beyond counting" in the recyclable garbage that richer people throw away. Meanwhile Asha, a woman of formidable ambition, has identified a shadier route to the middle class. With a little luck, her beautiful daughter, Annawadi's "most-everything girl," might become its first female college graduate. And even the poorest children, like the young thief Kalu, feel themselves inching closer to their dreams. But then Abdul is falsely accused in a shocking tragedy; terror and global recession rock the city; and suppressed tensions over religion, caste, sex, power, and economic envy turn brutal. With intelligence, humor, and deep insight into what connects people to one another in an era of tumultuous change, *Behind the Beautiful Forevers*, based on years of uncompromising reporting, carries the reader headlong into one of the twenty-first century's hidden worlds--and into the hearts of families impossible to forget.

In July, we will be discussing *The Curious Charms of Arthur Pepper* by Phaedra Patrick.

For more information about the Courtyard Book Club or for details about upcoming events, contact Lou Blemaster at 512-551-2659 or email loublemaster@gmail.com.

Home Ignition Zone (HIZ) Wildfire Risk Protection

The key to reducing wildfire damage is to maintain a defensible space around your home and structures. Clearing or trimming vegetation reduces the chance of fire damage and provides a safety zone for firefighters.

A house burns because of its interrelationship with everything in its surrounding home ignition zone—the house and its immediate surroundings. To avoid a home ignition, you must eliminate the wildfire's potential engagement with your house. This can be done by interrupting the natural path a fire takes. Changing a fire's path by clearing a home ignition zone is an easy-to-accomplish task that can help in avoiding home loss.

Here are several easy and inexpensive ways to create and maintain a defensible space and protect against wildfire damage to your home:

- Take care of the area immediately around your home by removing dead shrubs, dried grass, fallen branches and dried leaves within 30 feet, if possible, on all sides of the structure.
- Focus especially on the area up to five feet around the base of the house, use fire-resistant plants, and ground cover that is non-flammable, such as rocks or gravel. Maintain a space of at least 18 inches between the sides of the house and the nearest plantings.
- When planting trees and shrubs, use native shrubs and hardwoods. Healthy live plants are generally not a problem in wildfires.
- Keep trees and shrubs properly thinned and pruned within your defensible space of 30 feet. Dead branches in a live oak tree aren't going to burn unless the tree is already on fire. Remember, to prevent the spread of oak wilt in neighborhoods, do NOT prune any oak trees from February through June.
- Be sure to comply with Austin tree regulations, found at: <https://www.austintexas.gov/faq/tree-regulations>.
- Remove "ladder" fuels — plants, low branches, and firewood that can allow a fire on the ground to climb into the trees. In considering how to trim, note that bushes can flame up to three times their height.
- Consider replacing wooden sheds, decks, and privacy fences with fire-resistant/Firewise alternatives.
- Keep your roof and gutters clear of debris, and remove overhanging branches.
- Keep grass and weeds mowed at a low height. Green grass will usually dry out in the hot Texas summer weather. Grass fires move fast and pose a risk to dwellings.
- Wind-blown embers are the biggest threat to homes. Be sure that there are no entries for embers into attic vents or under roofing materials. Be sure there is no place for embers to land such as on debris in the gutters, stacks of wood or on wood fencing that adjoins the house.

Register with **WarnCentralTexas** at <http://warncentraltexas.org/> to allow emergency personnel in our local area to directly contact you by phone, text or email during a wildfire alert or evacuation, or other disaster or public safety event.

Sign up with the Courtyard Fire Safety Committee at email fire-safety@courtyardhoa.org to schedule a **home wildfire risk evaluation** and recommendations to improve home protection.

Drive-A-Senior West is Looking for Volunteers

Operating since 1985, Drive-A-Senior-West (DSW) is a volunteer based non-profit organization whose mission is to help senior adults live independently, avoid social isolation, age in place, and enhance the quality of life by providing free transportation and support services such as light home maintenance and repairs, referral services, in-home visits, and reassurance calls. Volunteers serve clients in the following zip codes: 78701, 78703, 78705, 78731, 78751, 78756, and 78759, and provided over 6,000 rides to home-bound seniors last year in this region alone.

DSW is looking for volunteer drivers. It's easy, convenient, and requires no minimum time commitment. Everything is done through your smart phone or computer. Please visit DSW's website for more information and to sign-up. If you have further questions, contact Virginia Jones, volunteer and member of our recruiting committee: (512) 289-6455, virginiajones00@gmail.com; www.driveasenior.org, westaustin@driveasenior.org, main office (512) 472-6339.

Mosquitoes



Mosquitoes can not only be irritating by biting, but they also are able to transmit various diseases to humans and animals. They are known to transmit heartworm in dogs and cats, and they can spread encephalitis (including West

Nile Virus), Chikungunya, Zika, dengue, yellow fever, malaria and filariasis among humans.

Most female mosquitoes require a blood meal for egg production whereas males feed on nectar and do not bite. Eggs are laid on the surface of water or in dry locations that can be flooded by water. Eggs laid in dry locations can remain dormant under for several months. Eggs hatch into larvae, or wigglers. Mosquito larvae live in water and feed on organic debris or microscopic plants and animals. Larvae molt into pupae which are non-feeding. Mosquito pupae spend the majority of their time at the surface of the water, only moving when disturbed.

Many things can help to reduce mosquito problems around the home. Since three of the four life stages of mosquitoes are in or near water, it is best to eliminate all sources of standing water. Containers such as watering cans, buckets and bottles can turn into mosquito breeding grounds. Water should be drained from birdbaths, gutters, flowerpots and pet dishes at least once a week. Children's wading pools should be emptied of water at least once a week and stored so they cannot collect water when not in use. Tree holes should be filled in with sand or mortar, or drained after each rain. Leaky faucets and pipes located outside should be repaired.

Areas that cannot be drained, such as ponds or large rain collection systems, can be stocked with fish that eat mosquito larvae. Dunks can also be used in these areas. Dunks are a small, donut-shaped product that contains *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *israeliensis*. The donut disrupts the life cycle of the mosquito and is non-toxic to humans, amphibians and fish.

Avoiding outdoor activities during peak mosquito hours is the best method to avoid being bitten. When outside, wear loose-fitting, light colored clothing with long sleeves & long pants. Repellants containing active ingredients such as DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE), para-methane-diol (PMD), or 2-undecanone can be effective to keep mosquitoes from biting when evening activities cannot be rescheduled.

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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Answer: Spinosaurus

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REMINDER:

The Environmental Control Committee (ECC) is responsible for reviewing and approving plans for new construction and modifications to existing homes in The Courtyard. Please contact ECC prior to making changes to the exterior of your home such as new roofing, fencing, paint, driveways or sidewalks, or significant alteration to landscaping environmental@courtyardhoa.org.



TxDOT Project Plans for Loop 360 Intersections

Questions or Comments??

Contact TxDOT Public Information
Officer: Brad Wheelis, (512) 832-
7060 or bradley.wheelis@txdot.gov

Find out more at
www.loop360project.com

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REMINDER:

Oak Trees Should NOT be Trimmed Until July



Please be aware that January was the last opportunity for oak trees to be trimmed until July of this year.

The season not to trim oak trees is from February through June when the oak wilt carrier beetle is most active. Oak Wilt is a serious threat to the oak trees in central Texas (see Oak Wilt Disease in Central Texas article in this issue).

GERMAN PANCAKES

At least twice a week, German pancakes are my go-to for breakfast. Known alternately as Dutch babies or little Bismarcks, my family loves them. This particular recipe came with my great grandparents from Germany.

I make the batter the night before and store it in the fridge for easy morning prep. The batter can be cut in half, doubled, or tripled. You can make it in virtually any pan that has sides. Just be sure to spray the entire baking vessel with a little Pam, as this pancake crawls up the sides as it bakes and could stick. The batter must be poured into a hot pan.

The below recipe fits nicely in a medium skillet.

Preheat oven to 425 degrees.

Melt ½ stick of butter in an oven proof pan in the oven, so the pan gets nice and hot.

Mix together 2 eggs, ½ cup flour and ½ cup milk with a pinch of salt. It may have some lumps and that's okay. Pour the batter into the melted butter in the skillet, return to oven and bake for 12-15 minutes, until risen and a golden brown. It will deflate a bit once you cut it.

Top with syrup, fruit, powdered sugar, or nothing. It tastes delicious all on its own.

Nota bene: Sometimes these pancakes don't rise. No one knows why. Just try again with different flour or butter or eggs. It's only occurred to me three times in the 25 years I've been making them. You can also cut the butter down to as much as half, but Julia Childs would surely not advise that.

Would you like to share a specific recipe? Your neighbors would love to read about it! Email me at tiffivelytx@gmail.com. If I don't, my Cordon Bleu trained stepmother will!



Dinosaur Hunter

1) I lived in the Late Cretaceous period

2) My fossils are found in Egypt and Morocco

3) I have paddle-like feet for swimming and razor-sharp teeth for catching prey

4) I am the largest meat-eating dinosaur - even larger than T. Rex!

5) My name means "spine lizard"



Find the Answer on Page 5!



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THE COURTYARD Q1 2019 STATS

January 1 – March 31, 2019

HOME STATS

2

SOLD

\$246.42

AVG \$/SQFT

56

DAYS ON MARKET

TOWNHOME STATS

2

SOLD

\$250.70

AVG \$/SQFT

13

DAYS ON MARKET

HOMES WITH BOAT DOCK STATS

1

PENDING

\$727.17

AVG \$/SQFT

33

DAYS ON MARKET

THE COURTYARD Q1 2019 ACTIVITY

January 1 – March 31, 2019

3 HOMES available | 1 HOME pending

1 TOWNHOUSE available

2 WATERFRONT HOMES available

4 PROPERTIES sold

For more details on what is going on in The Courtyard, please give me a call.

Information compiled from the Austin Multiple Listing Service.



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