

THE MUELLER NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

FRONT PORCH FLYER

HONK!TX Street Bands Perform at Mueller Lake Park by Ted Herr



Members of Funkrust Brass Band, a band from Manhattan (New York City) wait for their scheduled performance time. Photo courtesy of Ted Herr.

HONK!TX made its annual pilgrimage to Mueller Lake Park on Friday, March 29. HONK!TX is a nonprofit, community-driven festival that brings street and brass bands from around the country to perform for free in public spaces. This year's festival started off with



Street band "Kupira Marimba" performs on stage at Mueller Lake Park. Photo courtesy of Ted Herr.

bands playing simultaneously

in five venues around Mueller. HONK!TX strives to "transform everyday locations into spontaneous stages, dissolving the line between crowd and performers and inviting everyone to celebrate the joys of music and community." The audience indeed did celebrate the music; there was enthusiastic applause, plenty of folks recording with their smartphones, and both kids and adults dancing.

HONK!TX began as a festival of "activist street bands," performing for free in a celebration of "collaboration and creative expression." Many bands are provided housing and meals by community volunteers, and the volunteerism extends to local schools and homeless shelters with free concerts.

Many of this year's bands featured traditional marching band instruments, such as trumpets, tubas, saxophones, sousaphones and drums. Austin's own Kupira Marimba featured three marimbas. HONK!TX described the genres represented as "New Orleans second-line brass, European Klezmer and Balkan, Brazilian, West African and more." Many songs were familiar -"Oye, ¿Cómo Va?," "Killing Me Softly (With His Song)"- while others, such as those performed by Funkrust Marching Band from New York, were original pieces. Funkrust's composer, Phil Andrews, described his band's music as "post-apocalyptic disco



Austin street band "Minor Mishap Marching Band" members perform near Mattie Street in Mueller Lake Park. Photo courtesy of Ted Herr.

punk."

Defining bands as "mobile and unamplified" fits in well with composer Andrew's comment that "when the electric grid fails, we'll need bands to play at parties."

The festival continued for two more days at Adams Park and Pan Am Park.

More information on HONK!TX can be found at http://honktx.org and

https://www.wbur.org/ artery/2014/10/11/honkmusic-fest-somerville-oralhistory

FRONT PORCH FLYER

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Letter from the Co-Chairs

Hi Neighbors,

It's hard to miss all of the new construction happening around Mueller. Couple that with the ongoing road improvements to Zach Scott, and we've got quite a bustling neighborhood. As the number of homes and residences expands, the Mueller Neighborhood Association serves as a great conduit for community involvement.

Preston and I are excited to welcome Taylor Youngblood as the new Chair of the Block Captain Network and thank Dennis Mick, the outgoing chair, for all of his hard work. Taylor brings years of experience working in the public sector for the City of Austin and the University of Texas. We are confident that Taylor's enthusiasm and energy will not only help build on this committee's past successes, but create new opportunities for our organization to grow.

Karen Sharp will be joining the Property Owner Association's Transition Committee as the official representative of the MNA. As the Chair of the MNA's Neighborhood Transition Planning Committee, Karen has worked tirelessly over the past several years to advocate for the creation of a framework in which governance will eventually be transitioned from Catellus to the MNA once Mueller is completely built out. This lines up with the work of the new POA committee Karen will join.

Committees are just one of many great ways to get involved. We are always looking for folks to help us with our annual events as well. Keep an eye out for future information on how to volunteer for our signature summer event: the 4th of July Parade and Festival!

Our upcoming general meeting will be on Saturday, May 18th. While the meeting will begin at 10 AM, we hope you will stop by beforehand to chat with your neighbors and enjoy some coffee and light snacks.

Your neighbors, John Wooding & Preston Tyree

May 2019 Bike to Work Day

By Betsy Hilton



May is National Bike Month! This nationwide event is sponsored by the League of American Bicyclists and showcases the many benefits of bicycling. Events are held nationwide to encourage more folks to giving biking a try.

Have you ever thought about biking to work? Want to beat traffic and avoid a parking hassle? Get your bike ready and give it a try on May 17, National Bike to Work Day!

There will be a lot going on across Austin on this special day. We'll have a breakfast "fueling station" right here in Mueller that honors our early neighbor and encourager, Michael Adams. We'll have breakfast items (including

coffee!) and some great swag and it's all organized by neighborhood volunteers. We do this with support from great local businesses like Frost Bank, AMLI and SYNC apartments, Mueller Neighborhood Association, and Catellus. The fueling station will be open from 6:30 - 9:00 a.m. and is located on the roundabout at the intersection of Mueller & Aldrich.

Hope to see you there. Happy biking!



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Wastin' Away Again in Austin, Texasville?

By Shawn Collins

"Margaritaville" from Jimmy Buffett is not just a catchy party tune, it's also got to be the most merchandised song ever. It has spawned books, beverages, clothing, restaurants, and even the Margaritaville Lake Resort in Lake Conroe next year.

But did you know the song has origins right here in the neighborhood?

Back in 1976, Buffett was at a restaurant called Lung's Cocina del Sur at the Village Center strip mall on Anderson Lane where he discovered Margaritas with a soon-to-be ex-girlfriend.

Afterwards Buffett headed to a friend's Northwest Hills duplex (6109 Shadow Valley Dr.), where he strummed his guitar on the deck and started what we now know as "Margaritaville."

Buffett continued working on the song about Margaritas and heartbreak in the terminal of Robert Mueller Municipal Airport as he waited to board his flight, and finished it in Key West.

The Key West/Jimmy Buffett connection has ties to Austin, as well. Back in 1971, Austin's Jerry Jeff Walker drove Jimmy Buffett for a visit to Key West, that for Buffett has extended to the current day.

In an interview with the New York Post, Buffett recalled how he was going to call it "Wasting Away Again in Austin, Texasville," but he revised the title during his return flight to Key West.

I think he made the right call there. In 1977, Jimmy Buffett recorded the song, which became his highest charting hit at #8 on the Billboard chart.

So next time you are driving along Berkman and you hum the tune about nibblin' on sponge cake and watchin' the sun bake, blame Jimmy and his Margarita heartbreak at the airport four decades ago.

Calendar of Events

May 3, 6:15pm: KUTX Rock the Park – Lake Park

May 14, 6-8pm: Robert Mueller Municipal Airport Plan Implementation Advisory Commission - Chestnut Community Center, 1183 Chestnut Ave

May 18, 10am: Mueller Neighborhood Association Meeting, Seton Admin Building, 1345 Philomena St.

May Events at Mueller on Wednesday:

• May 1, 5 - 8pm: TFM at Mueller on Wednesday Birthday Party w/ Free Cake, Bouncy House & Chef Demo w/ Colleen's Kitchen

• May 8, 6 - 7:30pm: Fondant & Decorating Basics Workshop w/ Elly's Sweet Shop (ticketed, go to our website events calendar to sign up) & Season's Best Chef Demo w/ Maggie Perkins

• May 22, 5:30 - 7:30pm: Zero Waste Chef Demo w/ Monique Santua

• May 29, 5:30 - 7:30pm: Les Dames D'Escoffier Cookbook Swap May Events at Mueller on Sunday:

• May 4, 11am - 1 pm: Zero Waste Chef Demo w/ Monique Santua

• May 12, 11am - 1pm: Mother's Day Clay Hand Imprint Activity

• May 19: 11am - 1pm: Season's Best Chef Demo w/ Maggie Perkins

It's Time for **REAL** Integration in Austin ISD

By Rebecca Harshman

My name is Rebecca Harshman, and I am a freshman at the Liberal Arts and Science Academy at LBJ High School. I have been a proud Austin ISD student since kindergarten, when I began to attend Maplewood Elementary School. I enjoyed a rich experience in a culturally-diverse environment at my elementary school. After attending both Kealing Middle and LASA magnet schools, I wish that these schools felt more like my diverse elementary.

It seems like many schools in AISD lack the diversity of Maplewood when I attended. Even Maplewood has become a less diverse school over the last few years. When I started Kindergarten, 65% of the students were at an economic disadvantage (eligible for free or reduced-price meals), and we were just losing our Title 1 status. Nine years later, the number of those students is at 34%. With a district average of 53%, what if we built a plan that kept our schools closer to the average, fully integrating our district? Currently, most of our schools are nowhere near the average, and it distances our communities. What if we could bring our communities together by truly reinventing the urban school experience by integrating our schools?

Some students in Austin are guiding change in that direction. We are called Integrate AISD, and we are following the footsteps of a group of students in New York City called Integrate NYC. Students across New York City worked together to define REAL integration through 5 Rs--race and enrollment, resources, relationships, restorative justice, and representation of school faculty. Centering on justice, it is a much broader definition than prior school desegregation efforts. Their work has greatly influenced mayor Bill de Blasio's effort to integrate NYC public schools.

In Austin, students from Akins, Austin High, LASA, LBJ, and McCallum have stepped forward to help continue this conversation. The interest of students is rising, and we look forward to AISD following our lead.

If you would like to learn more about Integrate AISD or join our student group, follow @IntegrateAISD on Instagram and/or e-mail Integrateatx@gmail.com.

School Finance and the Texas Legislature

By Billie Jo Elbom, Maplewood Elementary PTA

The 86th Texas Legislative session started January 8, 2019 will be wrapping up this month on May 27, 2019. It's been referred to as "The Education Session." There are many bills moving through the process that have the potential to bring change to our schools. Specifically, HB3 and SB3 could bring major school finance reform by way of raising the basic student allotment, lowering recapture for school districts, funding full-day and high-quality prekindergarten for eligible students, along with a laundry list of other changes.

The Austin Council of Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), in conjunction with Texas PTA, have been instrumental in empowering Austin area parents to advocate for our schools at the state level. On February 25, 2019, Texas PTA hosted it's legislative session Rally Day to urge legislators to prioritize public schools. Maplewood Elementary represented with 9 parent advocates (your neighbors): Kim Luci, Stephanie Perrone, Elizabeth McQueen, Melissa Tester, Amber Welsh, Melissa Nicholson, Jennifer Potter-Miller, Lila Valencia, and Billie Jo Elbom. It was a proud day listening to Representative Cole speak from the capitol steps, but also a reminder there is much work to be done on behalf of ALL Texas children!

Visit www.txpta.org for more information about Texas PTA's legislative priorities.

To stay up to date with bills supporting AISD's legislative priorities visit: www.austinisd.org/legislature/bills

ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE:

- Call, write, visit your legislators. They need to hear from voters. Tell your story and express why more money in public ed is important.

- Testify during a committee hearing
- Support your school board

- Reach out to friends and family outside of Austin and promote the concept of lifting up the Texas education system as a whole Additional Resources:

• http://justfundittx.org/ - Grassroots Education Finance Reform Organization

• Texas PTA has an online tool for calling or writing your legislators.

https://www.txpta.org/take-action

• Subscribe to Under the Dome, a newsletter from Texas PTA, that provides information and alerts.

https://app.e2ma.net/app2/audience/ signup/1768473/1715664.44919248/

- Raise Your Hand Texas https://www.raiseyourhandtexas.org/
- Texas School Coalition https://www.txsc.org/



Photo caption: Top Row (Left to Right) Elizabeth McQueen, Kim Luci, Billie Jo Elbom, Melissa Tester, Lila Valencia; Bottom Row (Left to Right) Stephanie Perrone, Amber Welsh Photo credit: Melissa Tester



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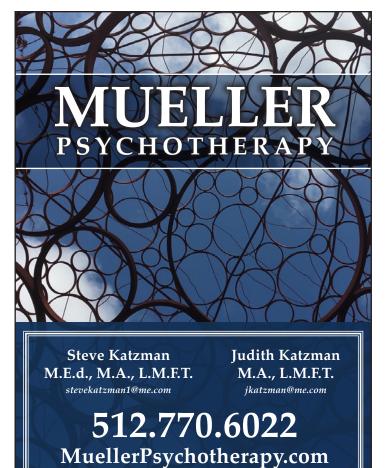
Life in Association with Others

By Steve Katzman

It was just a chance meeting of our eyes. You never know if someone can see you through a glass window's glare but I waved. She smiled and waved back, then continued down the sidewalk toward Mueller Lake Park. "How nice," I thought. That's never happened anywhere else. I never would have waved to a stranger in Houston, Los Angeles, or Medellin, and I'm not sure a passerby would have waved back. Mueller was already seeming like a friendly place.

A few minutes later the doorbell rang, which was a surprise because we didn't know anyone here, yet. It was her. She'd come back to thank me for the friendly wave, to introduce herself, and to welcome us to Mueller. She lives on the street behind us. It turns out we have other things besides neighborhood in common—the same second language, a child of the same Hispanic name, and we are psychotherapists, all three of us—my wife and I and our new neighbor.

We all look for what we have in common to form a community. But in this case, it was really just the wave and the welcome that made us feel connected. Sometimes a healthy community can be simply built on proximity and basic kindness. One of the first definitions of community in the Oxford English Dictionary is "life in association with others, the social state." In Mueller, we live close



to one another on purpose. We share time at the mailboxes, running in the park, walking the dog, getting coffee in the morning, meeting accidentally or on purpose.

When we lived on a farm, we saw up close how community can be based on differences. We asked a pastor why he didn't meet his two congregations in one location since they were only five miles apart. "They don't like each other at all. It's been this way for three generations."

Focusing on differences keeps people apart. We also see this in relationship counseling where people can get too focused on how the other person "doesn't think as I do." Differences matter and have to be addressed, but in intimate relationships, as well as the larger community, if anger and defensiveness are in charge, it blocks our pathway to remembering how we are alike. Polarization wins out over "we"—— over a connection. The opposite is also true: whenever we spend time with others, with a sense of curiosity and openness, we discover or remember our connection and solutions present themselves.

We know how lucky we are to live here in Mueller, this "life in association with others." The friends we've made in this community are stuck with us for life.



SPEND YOUR SUMMER WITH US

The Y is here to help you make the most of the hot summer months ahead. Indoor and outdoor pools, all of your favorite group exercise classes, personal training programs and summer enrichment activities for kids are just few reasons to join the Y today. Plus, membership includes access to 8 area facilities so an escape from your normal routine is always in reach.

Learn more and join today at AustinYMCA.org



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Texas State Parks for Mueller Families

By Ky Harkey, Director of Interpretation, Texas State Parks

Families that spend time in nature are healthier, happier, and smarter. You intuitively know that, and volumes of research back it up as well. So your family strolls the greenways at sunset, you walk to the Farmers Market, and you make time for playing in our many local parks. But outside of the boundaries of our green neighborhood, Texas State Parks offer even more resources for outdoor families looking for self-guided experiences, or ranger-led nature programs.

When you show-up to a Texas State Park, we work hard to make sure your family has the experience you're looking for and better. The Jr. Ranger program is a great compliment to any family's trip to a Texas State Park. The program is aimed at getting kids to engage in the outdoors in new ways and use outdoor spaces as inspiration for creative and scientific thinking. Jr. Ranger Journals are personal to each young visitor and are taken home. Our Explorer Backpacks offer drawing pads, pencils, binoculars, microscopes, and field guides to turn every little visitor into a scientist. You can check with the staff at any Texas State Park to learn more about the program.

Austin-area State Parks like McKinney Falls, Bastrop, Inks Lake, Lockhart, and Pedernales Falls State Parks all have talented Educational Rangers ready to help your family explore. If you check the Texas State Park Calendar of Events, you'll find ranger-led programs like night-time star parties, nature walks, and arts in the parks programs. If you're looking for an even more immersive experience, check-out the Texas Outdoor Family Program for a ranger-led overnight camping experience. Starting at \$75 for a one-night workshop, each family gets a campsite with nearby restrooms and the use of equipment including: tent, cots for two adults, foam sleeping pads for children, lantern, and cooking equipment - you just bring a few basic items from home. Rangers guide you through the whole weekend, so it's a great experience for families that have never been camping before or parents ready to get back in to it now that the kids are old enough.

We at Texas State Parks like to say Life's Better Outside. And we want to make sure your family has every chance to explore the great parks that make Texas special. Learn more at TexasStateParks.org



Photo courtesy of Ky Harkey

Oh, Those Pesky Mosquitoes!

By Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist



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 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, and 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



The Turpin girls selling their wares at the Mueller Neighborhood Association spring yard sale.



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A FEW DAYS IN THE LIFE OF A HOME HANDYMAN

by: Gordon R. Watson

DRIPPING FAUCETS

Vacationing at my mother-in-law's home always means doing some repair work. I like keeping busy, and there are generally some things needing attention. One of the recent issues there was a dripping kitchen faucet. Drips are really a thing of the past for most faucets. Happily, ceramic has replace rubber as the seal, so most faucet manufacturers have a lifetime warranty of one sort or another. I gave her my standard verbal disclaimer (that her home's piping is old and something might break and require a real plumber). So far, I have never had to resort to calling one (knock on wood). I turned off the main water supply outside because her 1950's home doesn't have shut off valves (called stops in the trade) beneath the kitchen sink. Outside, after digging a hole in a flower planter to find the shut off valve, I gently advised her not to bury the main shut off valve because it wasn't designed to be buried, and it might be difficult to find quickly. In the kitchen again, fully expecting the old style rubber washers, I removed the kitchen faucet handle, protected the shiny chrome with masking tape, applied a wrench, and removed the faucet stem. To my surprise, the sink faucet did have new-style ceramic style seals. The problem, it turned out, was that debris, probably from her home's aging and rusting (50+ year old) galvanized pipes, had stuck in the ceramic cartridge, causing the seal to be incomplete. Fortunately, once I cleaned the debris out, the drip went away. I love it when I don't have to buy parts for a repair. The fact that the old piping is obviously corroding and slowly failing is another story for another time. Replacing that piping almost certainly will require a real plumber. Sometime I might mention to her that it might be a good idea to replace the old pipe on her schedule rather than the pipe's schedule.

CORROSION

Her home also has a clothesline (not all that common these days) which had all but fallen over. The old clothesline was the old style with two "crosses" each cross with a two-inch galvanized pipe stuck in concrete (with five ropes for holding the clothes). Over time, these pipes rusted away. The funny thing is that the pipes really only rusted in one place: about two inches above the ground and two inches below the ground. The remaining pipe was in near-perfect condition. Even the pipes buried twenty-four inches in the ground were near-perfect! My point in mentioning this is that this corrosion is caused by moisture and oxygen. While we will likely never have a clothesline, the principle applies to all materials such as iron and wood placed in the ground and prone to rust or wood rot. While there is little we can do about oxygen, to the degree



feasible, we should try to keep water away from anything placed in the ground. Better yet, when feasible, avoid putting anything which can rust or rot directly in the ground.

STUD FINDERS

Over the years, I have owned at least three electronic stud finders. These are the devices that are supposed to locate the wooden or metal studs behind the sheet rock. My history with them hasn't been trouble-free. My last one worked fairly well for a few years, but it recently proudly advised me that the closet wall I wanted to attach a shelf to, had no studs. I now have three "broken" stud finders in my tool box. I promise to properly dispose of them soon. Fortunately, while doing some work at my son and daughter-inlaw's home, I found (in my son's tool chest) a non-electric, entirely rare earth magnet-type "stud finder" that works so well that I don't think I will ever go back to the electronic type. It is made by C.H. Hanson. Of course, it only indirectly finds the stud. It finds the nails or screws holding the sheet rock to the stud. At about \$10, it is a bargain. I just bought one for myself, and believe it may be the last I ever have to buy (unless I lose it, of course). Hint: Once a stud is found, you can apply painter's tape (masking) tape (not too tight or you may strip away the paint) to the stud location, or you can place another magnet on the nail location as a marker.

Your Community at Your Fingertips



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As a Mueller Pioneer and neighborhood organizer, I am in-the-know of all things Mueller and what's on the horizon throughout the city. A house is more than just materials – each part is a vital branch of the community. Contact me today!