



# nwacaNEWS

NORTHWEST AUSTIN CIVIC ASSOCIATION

SEPTEMBER 2019

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 9

## Message from the Board

Join us for a fun, festive, fall season.  
So many **SAVE** the DATES!



### September 1st NWACA Members Garage Sale Sign Up Begins

Sign up continues through September 15th. Sales take place Saturday, October 5th from 8:00 a.m.- noon. NWACA members

host sales in their garages or front yards and keep their proceeds, while NWACA advertises for you and provides yard signs. We even pick up and deliver signs to your door! That's a deal that can't be beat! Sign up is easy. If you're not a member, you can join NWACA and then sign up to host a sale at [www.nwaca.org](http://www.nwaca.org), Get Involved tab.

### Saturday, September 7th, 6:30p.m. is UT vs. LSU, NWACA Watch Party at Austin Terrier

Join your NWACA neighbors for a UT vs. LSU watch party. It's an in-town game, but Austin Terrier will be cool, with food and libations, plus you will be able to spend time with your neighbors! (Rumor has it the Texas A&M vs. Clemson game may also be showing.) First appetizers are on us!

### Saturday, September 14th, 7:00p.m. is UT vs. Rice Watch Party at Austin Terrier

Join your NWACA neighbors for a UT vs. Rice watch party. This game is out of town, but you can share your Texas spirit with your neighbors, right here in the neighborhood. First appetizers are on us!

### Saturday, September 28th, 6-8:00p.m. NWACA National Night Out at Mesa Plaza

This will be our Second Annual NWACA National Night Out based on the National Night Out Program. We will serve Sweet Caroline's snowballs again to the first 300 visitors, have Torch's Tacos, honor our first responders who will be there with emergency vehicles, and listen to music from our neighbor, Ryan Perry's band, Shotguns Ready! Plus, we'll host an art contest from neighboring elementary schools, have drawings, and more! Members, please watch our weekly NWACA Notes email and Facebook for more details. This event is open to the public. Parking courtesy of our friends at First Presbyterian Church across the street.

**Saturday, October 5th, 8:00 a.m. -12 noon - NWACA Garage Sales at your yard.**

*(Continued on Page 2)*



### ARE YOU A NWACA MEMBER?

Receiving the newsletter does not guarantee membership.  
Not sure? Visit [nwaca.org](http://nwaca.org) to confirm!

#### *Here are 5 great reasons to join today!*

#### **GREAT NEIGHBORS = GREAT NEIGHBORHOOD**

Together, we can continue to do great things for our neighborhood!

#### **STAY INFORMED ABOUT ISSUES THAT AFFECT YOU**

We are actively involved in our community and advocate for our residents.

#### **GET TO KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORS**

We encourage friendships among residents through our events - July 4th parade, National Night Out, Recycling Collection, Garage Sales, and more!

#### **PROTECT AND IMPROVE OUR COMMUNITY**

Learn about fire safety, crime prevention, oak wilt, environmental concerns, park development, wildlife management, zoning/planning, and more!

#### **SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL BUSINESS COMMUNITY**

We are deeply invested in building strong relationships within our business network to positively impact our neighborhood.

*Together we can make a difference!*

JOIN TODAY @ [NWACA.ORG/JOINRENEW](http://NWACA.ORG/JOINRENEW)

# NWACA News

*Message from the board (Continued from Cover)*

**Saturday, October 12th, 11:00 a.m.- UT vs. OU, NWACA Watch Party at Galaxy Café.**

Don't feel like making the trek to Dallas? Join your NWACA neighbors for a UT vs. OU watch party in the cool confines of Galaxy Café. First appetizers are on us!

**Exciting Murchison Pool Loewy Family Playground News.**

The equipment has been ordered; ETA-only 12 weeks!

There's more! See the NWACA Calendar on page 4 for more important dates.

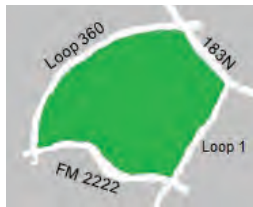
Please note that if a senior needs a ride to any NWACA event, we're happy to provide one. Just contact Robyn Goodrich Nuniz at: [nwacainfo@gmail.com](mailto:nwacainfo@gmail.com).

**FIRE:** Outdoor burning is prohibited in Travis County; the burn ban and will likely stay in effect for a while. We can't say it often enough: the NWACA area is ALWAYS a high-risk wildfire zone. Please be careful and sign up for a free Firewise evaluation on our website to learn how to harden your home against wildfire.

**WATER:** Please keep your dogs out of stagnant water. As I'm sure you have all seen, dogs throughout the South have been succumbing to the effects of blue-green algae. There is reduced water flow in area creeks and the water is warm, so it's best to avoid them. Please also remember that while it's this hot, pets can't thrive outside for extended periods of time, they need extra water and their paws should be protected while walking on hot surfaces.

We hope you enjoy all the wonderful articles from our board members and neighbors that are included in this newsletter and please support our sponsors and advertisers. If you have ideas or questions, please share them with us at [nwacainfo@gmail.com](mailto:nwacainfo@gmail.com). We answer all email and sometimes publish questions from neighbors in the newsletter. The spirit of community is what keeps our neighborhood alive! If you're a NWACA member, remember to sign up for our weekly email, NWACA Notes, and request to join our Facebook page for the most up-to-date happenings in our neighborhood. As always, we are a click away at [www.nwaca.org](http://www.nwaca.org) and [nwacainfo@gmail.com](mailto:nwacainfo@gmail.com).

## 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](http://www.nwaca.org) and visit our public Facebook page. Use the **Membership** button on the home page, or use the form at the end of this newsletter to become a member of NWACA. Members have access to the weekly **NWACA Notes** and the ability to join the NWACA closed Facebook group, to keep in touch with each other and with the latest news about NWACA.

## Welcome to NWACA!



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**Shannon Jones**

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## KEY CONTACTS

Austin Citywide Information Center.....512-974-2000 or 311  
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

## 2019 NWACA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**Each of the Board members can be reached at:**  
**[nwacainfo@gmail.com](mailto:nwacainfo@gmail.com)**

The NWACA Board meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, except December. Please visit our calendar at [www.nwaca.org](http://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)

## PEEL ADVERTISING

Please support the advertisers that make the NWACA News possible. If you are interested in advertising, please contact THE PEEL sales office at 512-263-9181 or [advertising@peelinc.com](mailto:advertising@peelinc.com). The advertising deadline is the 8th of the month prior to the issue.

## NWACA EVENTS CALENDAR

- Sep 1  
Signup begins for Annual Garage Sales on October 5, 2019  
NWACA web site
- Sep 8, 2PM  
Parks Committee  
Biderman's
- Sep 8, 2PM  
Tree, Environment, and Wildlife Committee  
Epoch Coffee
- Sep 10, 6:30 – 8:30PM  
NWACA Board Meeting  
Galaxy Cafe
- Sep 14, 7PM  
Texas Longhorn Football Watch Party – UT vs. Rice;  
first appetizers are on NWACA  
Austin Terrier, 3435 Greystone Drive
- Sep 16, 4PM  
Communications Committee  
Galaxy Cafe
- Sep 21, 9AM – Noon  
Monthly park beautification in the park and on trails; sign up at:  
<https://www.givepulse.com/recurring/364991?event=NWACA-Third-Saturday-Park-Clean-Up>  
Bull Creek District Park
- Sep 24, 5PM  
NWACA Zoning and Transportation Committee  
Temple Beth Shalom, 7300 Hart Lane, r.201
- Sep 28, 6-8PM  
NWACA Neighborhood National Night Out event – visit with first responders and enjoy music, dance and martial arts performances, food, and conversation  
Randall's Parking Lot - Mesa Plaza - Mesa at Spicewood Springs Rd.
- Oct 1, 7-9PM  
(State of Texas) National Night Out.  
Neighborhood areas
- Oct 5, 8AM-Noon  
Annual NWACA Garage Sales  
throughout NWACA
- Oct 6, 2PM  
Parks Committee  
Biderman's
- Oct 8, 6:30-8:30PM  
NWACA Board Meeting  
Galaxy Cafe
- Oct 12, 8-10AM  
BOPA Collection – Recycling batteries, oil, paint, antifreeze, plus used toothbrushes, toothpaste tubes, razors/cartridges  
Location: TBD
- Oct 12, 11AM  
Texas Longhorn Football Watch Party – UT vs. OU ; first appetizers are on NWACA  
Galaxy Cafe
- Oct 19, 9AM - Noon  
Monthly park beautification in the park and on trails; sign up at  
<https://www.givepulse.com/recurring/364992?event=NWACA-Third-Saturday-Park-Clean-Up>  
Bull Creek District Park
- Oct 21, 4PM  
Communications Committee  
Galaxy Cafe
- Oct 22, 5PM  
NWACA Zoning and Transportation Committee  
Temple Beth Shalom, 7300 Hart Lane, r. 201



# Annual Neighborhood National Night Out Coming September 28

— Connie Lundgren

As summer winds down, parents and students prepare to return to school, and thoughts turn to cooler

weather and football. It's also the time for our neighborhood National Night Out celebration. Scheduled for Saturday, September 28th, the event will be held from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at Mesa Plaza - the Sweet Caroline's parking lot at Mesa Drive and Spicewood Springs Road. This free event offers food, fun, live music, and public safety awareness.

National Night Out began in 1984 as an effort to promote involvement in crime prevention activities between police and citizens. Our event is both a party and a crime prevention tool, as it promotes interaction between first responders and residents, who learn to recognize and report suspicious behavior or vehicles. Both kids and adults can explore an ambulance, a fire engine, police cars, and more. The event strengthens our commitment as a community to send a message to criminals that our neighborhood is taking a stand against vandalism and crime.

Favorite local band, Shotguns Ready, will perform; plans for other entertainment are in the works. We promise lots of food, prizes, great music, and new fun ideas to make this an even better event than last year's initial one. Mark your calendars, and we'll see you there!

## NWACA Sponsored Garage Sales October 5, 2019

— Mike Polston

This year's NWACA Garage Sale day is October 5, 2019, 8 am to 12 noon; the event is for NWACA members only. If you're not a member, please join us! Go to [www.nwaca.org](http://www.nwaca.org) to join today! Then, do yourself a favor: walk around your home and find anything that YOU DON'T REALLY NEED or WANT. Someone else is interested in what you are ready to clear out. The old adage "one person's junk is another person's treasure" definitely applies. Participating in the annual NWACA Wide Garage Sales is easy, as we do the advertising for you, bringing customers to your sale.

Garage sale registration begins on the NWACA website on September 1, 2019. Registering allows us to connect with people planning to hold a garage sale at their home. NWACA will post the neighborhood sales' locations on the NWACA web site and place notices in the Austin American-Statesman, on Craigslist, and on the NWACA Facebook page. NWACA provides participants with yard signs and also deploys signs around the neighborhood. Like last year, we anticipate supporting 40 to 60 garage sales. Good luck as you clean out your closets!



Blue Lapis Light is an Austin-based, site-specific, aerial dance company founded by Artistic Director Sally Jacques in 2005.

The performances, done without break, are danced to a compilation of music,

knit together by Austin's William Meadows. One of your Northwest Hills neighbors, a teacher of piano and composition, is a frequent collaborator, suggesting and sometimes writing music for works.

The company's name draws from Ghandi's description of a meditation practice, wherein the soul merges with eternal consciousness, taking the form of blue light. Extending boundaries, defying edges, and suspending graceful athleticism to ignite ephemeral beauty, Blue Lapis Light's works encompass social, political, and spiritual themes

Mostly large-scale productions, they take place in non-traditional public environments: warehouses, abandoned structures, federal buildings, power plants, or scaffolding at the shores of Lady Bird Lake.

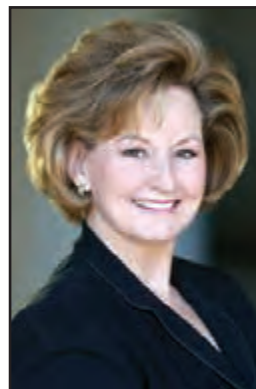
In June 2006 the company transformed the iconic Intel Shell, an unfinished building in downtown Austin, by creating a tribute to life's transcendence. Requiem featured dancers floating 75 feet from the ground, moving in and out of concrete columns and dancing on guy wire salvaged from the building itself. Over 14,000 people attended these performances. Requiem garnered multiple accolades including a rave review from the New York Times.

Blue Lapis Light continues to develop large productions on prominent public architecture. Sites include the historic Seaholm Power Plant, J.J. Pickle and Homer Thornberry Federal Buildings, Hyatt and Radisson hotels, Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum, and the Long Center for the Performing Arts. With a hope and prayer for transformation, the company seeks to create works of beauty that continue to touch our collective awareness.

Blue Lapis Light's next performance is In Light, a journey into the heart, to an awakening of the light/soul within each of us. However chaotic the outer world seems, there equally exists the dance of stillness and beauty. Inspired by the Rumi quote "I wish I could show you when you are lonely or in darkness, the astonishing light of your own being," In Light features aerialists performing off the side of IBC Bank, 500 W 5th Street. Dancers will perform on Chinese poles, as well as including an ensemble whose feet touch the ground.

A family friendly show, it begins at 8:00 P.M., September 19–22, and September 26–29. While tickets are available at the door, shows are often sold out.

To learn more, visit [www.bluelapislight.org](http://www.bluelapislight.org)



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## PSA: Dealing with Unwanted Mail

— Carol Jones

Do you have unwanted paper and junk mail coming into your home every day? There are effective and safe ways to reduce the volume of incoming paper, that may also help to prevent identity theft.

### **Unwanted credit card solicitations and loan offers:**

Do you get too many unsolicited credit card offers? Besides being a nuisance, the blank application forms in these offers can be used by identity thieves. To stop the offers and reduce the risk of identity theft, go to [Optoutprescreen.com](https://www.optoutprescreen.com), the official website of the Consumer Credit Reporting Industry. The site is safe and effective. You do have to give them your personal information including Social Security number, but it is a legitimate consumer website and your information is encrypted. It may take a few weeks for the credit offers to stop coming, but I am here to testify that it does work.

If you prefer not to opt out online, you can write directly to the credit reporting agencies. See more information at <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0262-stopping-unsolicited-mail-phone-calls-and-email>

Opting out at [Optoutprescreen.com](https://www.optoutprescreen.com) is free. They will never contact you by phone or email to ask for your personal information. If someone claims that they will stop credit offers from coming in the mail if you pay them a fee, they are trying to scam you. Report such incidents to the Federal Trade Commission's Consumer Response Center at 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357).

### **Unwanted catalogs:**

Do you get flooded with catalogs? Go to [Catalogchoice.org](https://www.catalogchoice.org) for an easy, effective way to stop unwanted catalogs from overloading your mailbox. You can also use this website to sign up for new catalogs that you would enjoy receiving. Catalog Choice is a free service.

### **Unwanted direct mailings**

Want to stop other types of mail, such as magazine offers and donation requests? Go to DMAChoice (Direct Mail at <https://dmachoice.thedma.org/>) You can register to stop direct mail for a \$2 fee, or you can write to them if you prefer not to do this kind of thing online. See more information at <https://dmachoice.thedma.org/register.php>

**The following questions are from the FAQ page at <https://dmachoice.thedma.org/static/faq.php>:**

### ***"What types of mail can I stop? What types can't I stop?"***

*"You can request to stop any type of mail solicitation. This includes credit offers, catalogs, magazine offers, donation requests, retail promotions, bank offers, and many others. However, you cannot stop bills, statements, notices and political mailings."*

### ***"How can I stop receiving mail addressed to Current Resident or Occupant?"***

*"These types of mail are included in the Other Mail Offers category on the **Manage My Mail** page. If you'd like to request to stop receiving them, locate the company within the Other Mail Offers list—then use the information on their page to contact them and ask to be removed."*

## Understanding City Code Home Occupations

— Alan Carson

If you currently have a home-based occupation, or plan on having one, it is important that you familiarize yourself with the City of Austin Code 25-2-900 HOME OCCUPATIONS. The easiest way to access this is by searching for <Austin TX Municode Library> in your web browser.

The code requirements are quite reasonable, and their purpose is to ensure that a residence with a commercial use is a good neighbor. The commercial use must be accessory to a residential use. In other words, the business must be secondary to a home, not a business where you also happen to live. The occupation must be conducted entirely within the dwelling unit or one accessory garage. Participation in the occupation is limited to the dwelling's residents, except that one nonresident may participate in an office if off-street parking is provided.

The residential character of the lot and dwelling must be maintained, and no structural alteration is permitted, other than to comply with accessibility requirements (no display windows). The sale of merchandise directly to a customer on the premises is prohibited (I once saw a liquor store operating in a residential garage - in another country). The business may not generate more than three vehicle trips each day of customer-related vehicular traffic. Noise, vibration, smoke, and other such offensive conditions are not allowed. Parking a commercial vehicle on the premises or on an adjacent street is also prohibited. Advertising a home occupation by a sign is not authorized except as provided under Code Section 25-10-156 HOME OCCUPATION SIGNS.

The Code prohibits 17 home occupations; most are just plain common sense. Examples include clinics and hospitals, animal hospitals and animal breeding, dance studios, restaurants and cocktail lounges, equipment sales and rental, automobile and equipment repair, scrap and salvage services, and adult-oriented businesses. Massage parlors with state-licensed therapists, however, are permitted.

Good luck with your enterprise. If you adhere to the Code you shouldn't ever have a visit from a City of Austin code compliance officer.

# NORTHWEST HILLS AND WESTOVER HILLS MARKET REPORT UPDATE



SOURCE: ABOR MLS INCLUDING DATA THROUGH JULY 31, 2019 FOR SINGLE FAMILY HOMES. BASED ON NWACA BOUNDARIES: MOPAC/HWY 360/2222/SPICEWOODSPRINGS



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## Waxed Cartons - Recyclable or Not?

— Joanie Arrott



The quick answer is--no. Waxed/paper cartons, like those used for a half-gallon of milk, do not belong in your City of Austin recycling bin for curbside pickup. Instead, put them in the trash. Many other foods and beverages use this type of packaging, like soups and juices. You'll also

find the same material lining the inside of many disposable paper coffee cups. Put them all in the trash. For our apartment and condo dwellers, we recommend you check with your recycling vendor to see if these materials are accepted. They might belong in your trash too.

In truth, these containers don't really contain any wax and haven't for several years. They're composed of multiple layers of

paperboard and plastics. The various types of cups and cartons each have a different ratio of paper to plastic. The Carton Council of Canada states that "cartons require fewer natural resources to transport due to their efficient product-to-packaging ratio. On average, a product sold in a shelf stable carton is 94% product and 6% packaging. This means that fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions are reduced since products in cartons can be shipped using fewer trucks."

Until consumers have access to reliable recycling options for these materials, consider alternative food and beverage items packaged in paper, aluminum, or plastic that can be recycled. Also, be sure to contact your area representatives that have authority to modify recycling options at and around your home, whether that be your city council member, apartment management company, and/or HOA board. And, remember to keep waxed/paper cartons out of your recycling collection.

### COMPASS

## Considering a move? We can help.

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Reach out to learn more about how we simplify the process of selling your home so you can focus on your next chapter.



### Homesville Realty Group

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# History Interview: Leon and Kay Whitney

— Carol Jones

Leon Whitney got his architecture degree at UT in the early 1950s, at about the same time as David Barrow, Jr. and Chuck Stahl, the developers of Northwest Hills. The dean of the Architecture School at the time was Harwell Hamilton Harris, who later designed and built the David Barrow Sr. home on Edgemont Drive, off Balcones. Leon worked in city planning, and they lived up north for a few years. After three winters of record snows, Leon and his wife Kay decided to move back to Austin.

When Leon and Kay were first married, the builders had a



Parade of Homes on Mesa. Most of the houses in the Parade were priced about \$35,000, and Leon promised his wife that someday, they would live in a \$35,000 house. They've had a good laugh about that, over the years.

They wanted to build a new custom house, and chose Northwest Hills because of the large lots, good tree cover, and the scenic winding roads. Leon contracted his house himself, and they were picky about details, so there were some changes to the design along the way. Their house wasn't the first house to get started on his street, but it was the last one to finish.

They moved into their new house in 1970 with a 2-year-old

daughter, a 1-month-old daughter, and a dog. As they grew up, the kids walked to Doss, and then Murchison, and they were bused to Johnson for high school.

Kay Whitney and her good friend Harriet Nagel formed a Campfire Girls group for the neighborhood girls, from about 1973 to 1985. Leon and Kay were co-presidents of NWACA around 1976-1977 and made lots of good friends from being active on the NWACA Board.

in 1970, Leon bought a piece of land from the Harts, north of Greystone between Chimney Corners and Hart. It was the first subdivision he developed, and he enjoyed creating the names of Hidden Hollow and Stonecliff Drive for the streets running east-west there. Hart Lane ended at Hidden Hollow for several years before it was extended to Spicewood Springs Road.

Leon remembers the Harts as very friendly people. They were originally from Canada and looked at several possibilities for settling in the United States, choosing Austin as their favorite. The Hart house, on the ranch that now houses Shalom Austin Jewish Community Center, was a charming, very informal European-style stone house with rustic wood beams and a huge stone fireplace. The Harts had a pet deer that would come up to you and let you pet it. Mrs. Hart was an avid environmentalist, and she did some of the tree trimming and land-clearing herself.

When the Whitneys chose Northwest Hills as their future home, decades ago, their friends said, "Why do you want to move all the way out there?" Now, their friends say, "You're so smart, you're right in the middle of everything!" Leon and Kay love being close to their church, St Matthews Episcopal Church, and they enjoy the restaurants in the neighborhood, especially the burgers at Boulevard Bar & Grill on Far West Blvd.

It was delightful to talk with Leon Whitney about his memories of the neighborhood! If you would like to share your memories of old Austin or Northwest Hills, please contact [nwacainfo@gmail.com](mailto:nwacainfo@gmail.com).



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## Fireproof Coatings - Reality or Wishful Thinking?

— Joyce Statz



*Over the last several years, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has issued a series of fact sheets that help homeowners harden their homes against wildfire. The nine fact sheets issued to date are on the NWACA web site for you to peruse; go to [www.nwaca.org](http://www.nwaca.org) and enter "fact sheet" in the search bar.*

This month, we focus on the fact sheet about fire-retardant or fireproof exterior surface coatings.

An internet search will identify several types of coatings that are marketed as fire-retardant or fireproof. Some claim to offer 30 minutes of protection, others provide no limit. One site offers intumescent fireproofing to reduce the spread of fire in or on a structure. Intumescent coatings swell when heated, up to 20 times their original thickness, so they can create an insulation layer around something threatened by a fire. However, as the NFPA data sheet points out, intumescent coatings used on exterior surfaces have an uncertain shelf life. They need to be renewed regularly.

Some gels that are sold as fire retardants are protective for only a

matter of hours. The time to apply them would be just as a wildfire is starting in the neighborhood – and that's really the time for you to gather loved ones and a few belongings and leave the area!

Experts at NFPA, the Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety, and the Austin Fire Department Wildfire Division agree that it's wise to keep wooden decks and other exterior wood surfaces in good condition, painted or stained as appropriate. This keeps water from penetrating the wood and causing it to deteriorate or crack, thus becoming kindling for a wildfire. However, none of them recommends coatings now available on the market as insurance against wildfire damage.

To its credit, though it sells a coating, Home Depot's web site includes this caution: Fireproofing your property is more than just a coating on the roof, walls, and decking. It also involves proper clearance of brush and wood materials around structures. Even if you have a fireproof structure and roof, proper ground clearance as well, you must also prevent the fire from getting inside your home through vents and windows.

While it's more work on our part, such home hardening is really the best advice we can give.

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## Questions from Neighbors

—Joyce Statz, aggregator

**A reader asked who was responsible for maintaining the trees and other plants in the right of way of our streets.**

Alan Carson, our resident code nerd, found this answer in Austin's city code, article 2 "Restrictions on Tree or Plant Maintenance," which can be found with an internet search for <Austin TX Municode Library>. The Public Works Department has a web page that addresses right of way maintenance: <https://austintexas.gov/cleartherow>

This web page gives an overview: "Street and Bridge crews are responsible for repairs and maintenance in the city's right-of-way (ROW), including public roads, alleys, sidewalks, multi-use trails and public trees. But did you know property owners are responsible for maintaining trees and all other vegetation to the edge of the street or alley? To ensure ease of mobility and safety for all Austin residents, it is important to keep these areas free of obstructions. When notified, the City will prune or remove trees that pose a hazard to the public (dead, diseased, low limbs) and trees or limbs downed by storms. Crews and City contractors also perform routine mowing of medians and prune public trees

along selected routes."

Article 2 of the City Ordinance summarizes the related requirements as follows:

- Sidewalks: Limbs and vegetation must be trimmed back from the edge of and at least 8 feet above the sidewalk.



- Streets/Alleys: Limbs and vegetation must be trimmed back from the curbline (edge of street or alley) and at least 14 feet above street or alley.

- Multi-use Trails: Limbs and vegetation must be trimmed back from the edge of and at least 10 feet above multi-use trails.

- Grass and Weeds: Maintain grass and weeds at a maximum height of 12 inches throughout property to the edge of the street or alley.

- Corners: Maintain vegetation at a maximum of 2 feet above ground within a 10-foot setback from the curbline (edge of street) and 40 feet along the curbline from the street intersection.

- Fire Hydrants: Remove trees or plants within 5 feet of fire hydrants.

Further, article 6-3-24 states that a person shall maintain a tree or plant under this article to be compatible with the aesthetic character of the public right-of-way.

Non-compliance can result in a notice of obstruction of public right-of-way by the city. If the obstruction is not removed within 10 days, the trimming or removal will be performed by the city, and the cost will be charged to the owner.

Report issues to 3-1-1, regardless of who is responsible.

**I recently got email that referenced the Office of Police Oversight. When I sought more information, here's what I learned.**

The Office of Police Oversight (OPO) is responsible for processing complaints and thank yous for the Austin Police Department. It is the only civilian-run oversight office in the state of Texas. See more information about the office in the accompanying graphic or online at <https://alpha.austin.gov/police-oversight/> [Note: it appears there is a new City of Austin web site under construction. I can't find this page in the old site, but this alpha-level link should work for a while.]

If you have questions you'd like answered, please send them to us at [nwacainfo@gmail.com](mailto:nwacainfo@gmail.com).

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## Help Keep our Wildlife Wild!

– Public Service Announcement

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.

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## Special Thanks to Members

– Membership Committee

NWACA thanks members who generously contributed to the 4th of July Parade Fund, the Park Fund, and the Constable Fund, between July 16, 2019 and August 14, 2019.

Donations to the 4th of July Parade Fund help NWACA to host the best 4th of July parade in Austin! The Park Fund helps us do events in our parks and revitalize parks in the NWACA area. The Constable Fund helps us provide the patrol activities of the Travis County Constable.

- Kay and Tim Bradley
- Frank and Vicki Carmichael
- Margaret Denena and Cliff Knowles
- Ivan Milman
- Wayne and Phyllis Prescott
- (and apologies to anyone whose donation we might have missed!)

## Fall Baiting for Ants

– Wizzle Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service

The month of September celebrates Fire Ant Awareness Week, so get involved! While you may not be seeing too many mounds yet, fall is a great time to bait for fire ants. Baiting in fall can help reduce the number of mounds appearing in spring. Baits take time for results to be seen, so be patient and schedule a regular baiting program for every spring and fall. If you need fire ants killed quickly, you may want to use



an individual mound treatment.

Tips on using fire ant baits:

- Make sure you have a bait, not a granular
  - o Baits are either broadcasted over an entire property or sprinkled AROUND individual mounds for fire ants to pick up as food. Baits should NOT get wet.

o Granulars are sprinkled on TOP of a mound and watered in to carry the pesticide into the mound to come into contact with the ants.

o Read the product label BEFORE YOU BUY to figure out if it is a bait or granular.

• Broadcasting baits using a handheld spreader saves time and reduces the amount of chemical applied to the environment.

• Use the proper amount of bait and application equipment for your yard size

o Read the label; it will tell you the rate of application and equipment required for application.

o Many baits are placed at a rate of 1-1 ½ pounds per acre.

o Many people do not follow the label and put out more bait than is needed.

• Check that fire ants are foraging before putting out bait.

o Place a hotdog slice or potato chip near a mound, leave for 10 minutes, then check for fire ant activity.

• Do not use stale or old bait.

o Smell bait to make sure it is not spoiled; spoiled bait smells rancid (if you are using spinosad fire ant bait, it smells somewhat funky normally so do not be alarmed).

o Store bait sealed in the original container out of reach of children and animals.

• Get your neighbors to bait the same time as you do; this will push reinvasion boundaries of fire ants further away from your property.

o Even better, organize a community-wide fire ant management program; they can help reduce the number of fire ants within your community and save money on chemical costs for everyone in the neighborhood.

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzle Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600. Check out my blog at [www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com](http://www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com)



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## Genista Caterpillar

– Wizzle Brown, Texas AgriLife  
Extension Service

Genista caterpillars can often be seen on Mountain Laurel, but may also be found on crape myrtle and honeysuckle. These caterpillars can grow up to one inch in length and are yellowish-green with small black and white dots along their body. They have sporadic hairs protruding along the body, but are not covered densely.



Genista caterpillars create and feed within webbing similar to webworms. The caterpillars have chewing mouthparts and cause defoliation of the plant. Eggs are laid in overlapping clusters on the underside of leaves. Pupation occurs in a small, white silken cocoon that is attached to plants or structures. There are two generations per year.

Management of outbreaks can be rather simple. If plant size and number of caterpillars allows, then hand-picking or vacuuming caterpillars can be a good method of control. Removed caterpillars can either be smashed or dropped in a bucket of soapy water. Other options may include pesticides with active ingredients such as insecticidal soap, horticultural oils, pyrethrum, spinosad, or *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *kurstaki*, also known as Bt. *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *kurstaki* specifically targets caterpillars, but does not distinguish between “good” and “bad” caterpillars, so be careful where you apply it and also be aware of drift that may occur. When using Bt or spinosad, good coverage of the plant foliage is essential since caterpillars need to consume a lethal dose. There are also numerous synthetic insecticides formulated to treat for caterpillars. When using any pesticide product, be sure to read and follow all label instructions.

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzle Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600. Check out my blog at [www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com](http://www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com).

## Acrobat Ants

– Wizzle Brown, Texas AgriLife  
Extension Service



Acrobat ants usually nest outdoors under stones or in dead wood such as firewood, tree stumps, dead tree branches, or hollow tree cavities. Because they are found in similar habitats, acrobat ants are sometimes confused with carpenter ants. Indoors they can nest in foam insulating board or water-damaged wood. Acrobat ants get their name from the act of raising their abdomen over their thorax when in defensive posture which makes the ants look similar to circus acrobats.

Acrobat ants have a reddish-brown head and thorax with a dark blue-black abdomen. The abdomen is a distinctive heart-shape. Acrobat ants primarily feed on honeydew produced by aphids and can often be seen tending honeydew producers on plants. They will sometimes use overhanging tree branches or power lines to enter homes in search of food.

Outdoors, acrobat ants are usually not a problem directly. They can be seen as a problem in that they protect honeydew producers from predators and parasites. You can use this to your advantage by using acrobat ants as a monitoring tool to watch if you have honeydew producers on your plants.

To avoid a home invasion by acrobat ants follow these tips:

- Remove tree stumps and dead limbs from trees
- Trim back branches overhanging or touching the roof
- Fill tree cavities with sand
- Do not store firewood in or near the home
- Keep weather stripping around doors and windows in good repair
- Seal around pipe penetrations with caulk or expanding foam
- Fix any water leaks
- Replace water-damaged wood on the structure
- Spray around the foundation of the home; select a product labeled for ants

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzle Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600. Check out my blog at [www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com](http://www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com).



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## NWACA MEMBERSHIP FORM

Send annual dues of \$25 with this form to:

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(Optional) Constable Fund Contribution:

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*You can also pay via PayPal by going to [nwaca.org](http://nwaca.org)  
and selecting Membership*

**Volunteers are always needed on our committees.**

**Please mark those on which you'd like to actively participate.**

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Throughout the purchasing process, Dawn was not only the consummate professional, but also an incredible problem solver. Fortunately, any issues that arose during our purchase were small, yet Dawn was always quick to seek input from one of the many contacts she has across a wide array of skillsets. This provided clarity and input regarding the situation so that we were better prepared to make an informed decision. She provided sound guidance whenever we asked for it. She was always helpful with a visionary suggestion whether it was about the style or design of the house or about the cost or implication a solution might involve. Her insight was not only spot on, it was always very much appreciated!

Dawn listens very intentionally. She picks up on all the details and offers purposeful insight no matter the situation. When we were faced with uncertainty regarding the septic system at the house we were considering, she quickly had a septic system inspector on the line with us to talk through our concerns and determine an appropriate course of action. The same held true with respect to window replacement considerations, the hot tub, the lake pump, and so on! Not only did she provide great input and direction, she brought the right resources to the discussion to help us make the best decision.

Dawn was an incredible advocate for us throughout the entire process. We could not have asked her to do anything more and yet we understand that this is simply who she is and how she conducts business, regardless of who the client might be."

~Merry Ann & Jim



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