



# nwacaNEWS

NORTHWEST AUSTIN CIVIC ASSOCIATION

OCTOBER 2019

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 10

## Message from the Board

Thank you joining us at the second annual **NWACA National Night Out (NNO)** party to honor our first responders! Event chair, Connie Lundgren, outdid herself! District 10, City Council Member Alison Alter read a proclamation, from the City of Austin, declaring September 28, 2019, as NWACA Neighborhood National Night Out! Our multi-talented, AISD School Board District 4 Trustee, Kristin Ashy, also helped kick off our evening.

We had representatives from the Austin Police Department, Austin-Travis County EMS, and Austin Fire Department (who showed us how to use a fire extinguisher), as well as Travis County Constable Aiden Ballesteros, Sargeant Sam Lindsey, from Pct. 2, our very own NWACA Board Member-AISD PD Corporal Chris Roddy, and Texas Game Warden, Ben Echelson. They all came with cool vehicles for neighbors to look at and climb on.

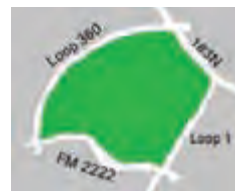
We couldn't have done NWACA NNO without our wonderful sponsors! Please thank them when you visit their businesses. Randall's grilled hotdogs even though our event was on the same day as the grand re-opening of their remodeled store. o parking across the street. Torchy's Tacos, Sweet Caroline's "snoballs", Fancy

Fluff cotton candy, popcorn and lemonade from First Presbyterian Church, and water from Nest Properties kept us energized and hydrated. Our entertainment, provided by Ryan Perry's Band, Shotguns Ready was the best. A+ Federal Credit Union, Coach Mo's Fitness, ATX Ballers, and F45 Training provided fun games and folks from Austin ER checked our blood pressure. We had booths from Drive a Senior, Wes Peoples Homes, and the City of Austin. Shirley McPhail School of Dance provided electricity for our event. First Presbyterian Church- Boy Scout Troop # 1 helped with staffing, as did our fabulous NWACA Board members Bridget Keating, Joanie Arrott, Vicki DeWeese, Teri Schock, Richard Grayum, and Julie Waidelich. We had fun door prizes provided by The Turquoise Table. Finally, outstanding publicity was provided by NWACA Communications Committee member and graphic artist, Nyre Spitzer, and Austin Yard Cards. Our community was out in force!

If you haven't made it to any of our **NWACA Texas Football Game Watch** parties, you've missed out NWACA Board members,

*(Continued on Page 2)*

## 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!



### 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/JOINNEW](http://NWACA.ORG/JOINNEW)

# NWACA News

## *Message from the board (Continued from Cover)*

Chris (Kaz) Wojtowicz, Joanie Arrott, Teri Schock, Roger Bolick, Robin Nunis, and Chris Roddy, served as hosts for our first two parties. NWACA sponsored the food and Austin Terrier provided a cash bar during the LSU and Rice games. Save the Dates and/or Watch NWACA Notes (our weekly email) and the NWACA Facebook page for game times for Texas at West Virginia on October 5th, Texas/ OU on October 12th, Texas at TCU on October 26th, Texas at Iowa State on November 16th, and Texas at Baylor on November 23rd.

Thank you to NWACA Board members Mike Polston, Roger Bolick, Louri O' Leary, and Teri Schock for working hard on our **NWACA Garage Sales** on October 5th with about 50 families participating. NWACA provides the advertising and the signs for this annual event, which requires a lot of personal resources. Lots of great bargains will be on hand in yards near you!

Also, on October 12th (before the Texas/ OU game) from 8-10 a.m. in the Mesa parking lot of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, NWACA will have our annual **BOPA (batteries, oil, paint and antifreeze) recycling event**. We provide the "humanpower" and the truck, and we deliver all the recyclables to the various processors! All you have to do is be a NWACA member and show up with your stuff! If you're not already a NWACA member, join at the event or

[www.nwaca.org](http://www.nwaca.org). Annual dues are just \$25. For more information, contact Tree, Environment, and Wildlife Chair, Joanie Arrott at: [nwacainfo@gmail.com](mailto:nwacainfo@gmail.com).

Our last monthly **Bull Creek District Park cleanup** will be October 19th. Please sign up to help using the link in the calendar of this newsletter. On November 2nd, the annual fall "It's My Park Day," we will have at least one, and maybe three activities from which to choose. These are still under definition, so watch NWACA Notes and Facebook for upcoming details.

**Halloween**, Thursday, October 31st, is always busy in the neighborhood! Please exercise caution during "trick or treat" hours while children take over our streets. Our NWACA-sponsored Constable will be on patrol to help keep everyone safe, so please consider donating to the Constable Fund. Donations may be made through our website [www.nwaca.org](http://www.nwaca.org) (go to the Quick Links and click Donate to Special Funds) or mail a check to NWACA, P.O. Box 26654, Austin, TX 78755. Please mark "Constable Fund" on your check.

We are so fortunate to live in this special place and we look forward to continuing to build upon the community spirit of our neighborhood, working with both residents and businesses. Remember, we are a click away at: [www.nwaca.org](http://www.nwaca.org) or via email: [nwacainfo@gmail.com](mailto:nwacainfo@gmail.com).

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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

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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

**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  
Mesa Parking Lot, St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, 8134 Mesa Drive

**Oct 12, 11AM**

Texas Longhorn Football Watch Party – UT vs. OU;  
first appetizers are on NWACA  
TBD

**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

**Nov 2, 9AM to Noon**

It's My Park Day – beautification at the preserve at 7810 Sterling Drive,  
just off Burney Drive; Register at [www.austinparks.givepulse.com](http://www.austinparks.givepulse.com)  
Stillhouse Hollow Preserve

**Nov 2, 1pm**

It's My Park Day – guided hike at a new trail in the neighborhood  
Shinoak Valley Greenbelt; limited to 30 people; register at:  
[www.austinparks.givepulse.com](http://www.austinparks.givepulse.com)  
3900 Dry Creek Drive

**Nov 3, 2 PM**

Parks Committee  
Biderman's

**Nov 13, 6:30 – 8:30 PM**

NWACA Board Meeting  
Galaxy Cafe

**Nov 17, 2 PM**

Tree, Environment, and Wildlife Committee  
Epoch Coffee

**Nov 18, 4PM**

Communications Committee  
Galaxy Cafe

**Nov 26, 5 PM**

NWACA Zoning and Transportation Committee  
Temple Beth Shalom, 7300 Hart Lane, r.201

## Upcoming Special Events at Our Area Schools

— Teri Schock

With all our area schools in full swing now, here are upcoming events you won't want to miss.

### Doss Elementary

Doss H'Owl - October 27, 2019 from 2:00 – 5:00 p.m. at Lucy Read

### Highland Park Elementary

Hoot Fall Carnival - October 21, 2019 from 3:00 – 7:00 p.m. at Highland Park Elementary

### Hill Elementary

Hill Spirit Night - October 22, 2019 from 4:00 – 9:00 p.m. at Austin Terrier. A percentage of all sales will go to support Hill Elementary.

### Lamar Middle School

Lamar Fest – November 8, 2019 from 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

### Murchison Middle School

6th Grade Dance – October 25, 2019 from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. at Murchison Middle School Large Gym

### Anderson High School

Homecoming Dance – October 19, 2019 from 8:00 – 11:59 p.m. at Red Oak Ballroom

### McCallum High School

Princess Tea Party – October 26, 2019 at 2:00 p.m. at the McCallum High School Cafeteria. Your favorite princesses and princes will perform, sign autographs, and take pictures with attendees. Tea party snacks and drinks will be provided. Guests are invited to attend in their Halloween or favorite dress up costume.

## Annual Battery, Oil, Paint, and Antifreeze (BOPA) Recycling, October 12

— David Hogan

The St. Matthew's Mesa parking lot at Steck Avenue and Mesa Drive will be the site of the NWACA annual fall collection of batteries, oil, (latex) paint, and antifreeze for recycling. We will also take toothbrushes, toothpaste tubes, and razors/cartridges. The event will be Saturday, October 12th, from 8 to 10 AM. Volunteers will take these materials to the City of Austin's Hazardous Waste Center. This is an event for NWACA members, but you can join by paying your annual \$25 dues at the event. Save up your old electronics and used-up bathroom supplies for next spring's recycling event.



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## Writers CORNER

**Richard Z. Santos**

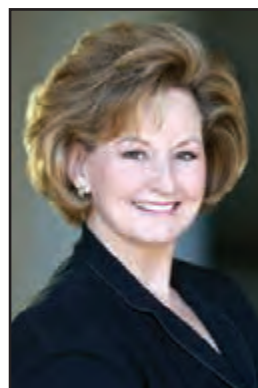
The One Page Salon is a monthly gathering of writers hosted by Owen Egerton at the North Door just off IH35 and 5th Street. With a theme set for each event, four published authors read one page of a work-in-progress and answer a few interesting questions Owen has dreamed up. There's also a drawing for an audience member to read a page of their work.

Sometimes the genre and theme have been to my taste, sometimes not, but it's always been interesting; and the North Door tacos are excellent without fail.

Several months ago, our neighbor, Richard Z. Santos, read a page from his new novel, now being shopped to agents. *Every Family Is a Conspiracy Theory* is set a few decades into the future, the young hero reluctantly pushed into a life mission. His mother has disappeared, and on her computer he finds information about a conspiracy whose aftermath has caused the country to lose its direction. He is determined to find her and to discover her involvement in the dangerous political landscape.

Writing novels isn't all that keeps Richard busy. He writes profiles and reviews for Kirkus, taking joy in "amazing discussions with authors" and writes frequent reviews for Goodreads. His fiction, essays, and interviews have appeared in The Rumpus, Nimrod, The San Antonio Express News, and The Huffington Post. His work has been nominated for The Pushcart Prize, Dzanc Best of the Web, and the StorySouth Million Writer's Award. Three times he has served as judge for the National Book Critics Circle Leonard Award and in May will be a moderator for events sponsored by American Short Fiction, one of the country's top literary journals.

(Continued on Page 6)



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# NWACA News

## Writer's Corner (Continued from Page 5)

Richard is a knowledgeable and generous teacher. His classes for the Writers League of Texas on structure, craft, synopsis-writing, and author's media presence, are always well received. His active involvement with the Texas Book Fair, both here and in San Antonio, is very much appreciated.

With an MFA from the Program in Creative Writing at Texas State University, Richard was drawn to Austin and its literary scene, "active but not closed off, not intimidating. Not all cities have such a wonderful writing community."

In his own words, "Before this I lived in Washington, DC and worked for some of the nation's top campaigns, political consulting firms, and labor unions. For reasons that are still mysterious to me at times, I walked away from DC and moved back to Texas to write and teach."

To find out more about Richard Z. Santos and read his work, visit <http://www.richardzsantos.com>, <https://www.texasobserver.org/author/richard-z-santos/> and <https://twitter.com/richardzsantos>

For more information on the One Page Salon see <http://www.owenegerton.com/> and for the next event, October 1, <https://austin.eventful.com/events/one-page-salon-owen-egerto-/E0-001-118223072-7@2019100119> Future events are on November 5 and December 3.

## How to Throw a Neighborhood Block Party

— Caroline Alexander



The City of Austin has created a new program to help neighbors shut down a residential street to throw a block party. They have created an application and registration process, and they have an inventory of barricades to block off the street so the party can take place in the public right-of-way.

At the end of the last school year, our Highland Hills neighbors gathered on a traffic-free Highland Hills Terrace for a BBQ, potluck, and epic water balloon fight. Strollers, bikes, scooters, and hoverboards cruised around the closed-off street while a beautiful spread of food was placed on the tables and a large gathering of lounge chairs appeared nearby. Neighbors of all ages visited, played, and forged or renewed relationships. We all agreed to make these block parties a regular occurrence.

The process to apply with the City for the street closure was fairly straightforward. For one of the requirements, 80% of the neighbors on the block signed a form to document their approval of the street closure. Next, we submitted a diagram of the street closure and how we would maintain emergency access. And, finally, we applied for a street event permit. It was an easy process and resulted in a memorable night for all who participated.

If you and your neighbors are interested in planning a block party, visit <http://austintexas.gov/blockparty> to find all of the information you need!





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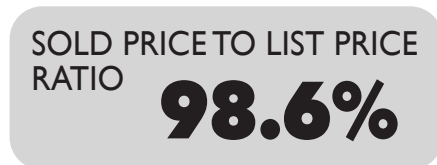


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# NORTHWEST HILLS AND WESTOVER HILLS MARKET REPORT UPDATE



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

## HAVE A SAFE SPOOKTACULAR HALLOWEEN.

*from your friends  
at Nest.*

### THIS IS AN EXCITING TIME OF YEAR FOR KIDS!

*To help ensure they have a safe holiday, here are some tips from our home to yours!*

- When in doubt, throw it out!
- Inspect all candy before it is consumed.
- Trick or Treat only at well-lit homes and never enter a stranger's home.
- Be cautious of other's pets and animals.
- Travel in small groups and be accompanied by an adult.
- Carry a cell phone for quick communication.
- Have emergency contact information attached to costumes.
- Use reflective tape on costumes for greater visibility.
- Have kids carry glow sticks or flashlights with fresh batteries.
- Stay on well-lit streets and always use the sidewalk.
- Watch for cars that are turning or backing up.
- Ensure children wear well-fitting costumes and that their eyesight is not limited by masks.



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# NWACA News

## GOURMAND'S CORNER:

### District Kitchen and Cocktails

—Chris Hajdu



District Bar and Grill opened a few months ago at 7858 Shoal Creek Boulevard in the old Suzi's Chinese Kitchen location. I've had multiple opportunities to go there for different occasions - date night dinner with my wife, an after work happy hour with the guys, and a lunch meeting. This place works for all of these options. I have not been there for brunch, but I plan to go soon after hearing amazing things from a neighbor about their experience.

District Kitchen and Cocktails is one of several restaurants operated by the owners. They also operate the District Kitchen and Cocktails on Slaughter Lane and the Oasthouse Kitchen and Bar near 620 and 2222.

The young executive chef has created amazing food and beverages at these restaurants, using local and organic ingredients. The menu includes great appetizers: Shishito peppers, Moroccan lamb kebabs, scallop ceviche and roasted eggplant dip are some of our favorites. They also have some tasty soups and salads. Several friends of mine swear by the corn bisque and the beet salad. Favorite entrees include the prime cowboy ribeye and the seared scallops and risotto. The rest of the menu includes everything from pork to chicken to beef dishes and even great seafood options like the N'awlins shrimp and grits. The oysters are also great and they're half price during happy hour.

In addition, District has a great cocktail menu. One of my favorites is the Old Fashioned (I order mine made with Templeton Rye.) They

also offer a Bees Knees, a Manhattan and a great Sazerac. Check out the website for the latest list of adult libations.

They have kids' menus at lunch, dinner, and brunch with food kids want to eat, including chicken tenders, mac-n-cheese, cheese flatbread, and a Nutella and strawberry sandwich – all at a reasonable \$6. With the kids are taken care of, parents can eat real adult food and have good drinks at the same time. In our neighborhood, I think having good kid options can make or break a place.

There is a great happy hour (3-6 weekdays and 4-6 on Sunday) with discounts on drinks (\$3 domestic beers, \$1 off all other draft beers, \$5 glasses of wine, and half-price bottles of featured wine) and discounts on several appetizers, including half-price oysters.

Brunch is served from 10:30am-3pm Saturday and Sunday with omelettes, Eggs Benedict, and more. Drink specials include a Bloody Mary Bar and bottles of bubbles (prosecco, cava and a sparkling rose). Brunch options for kids include a breakfast of champions (two scrambled eggs, bacon, and potatoes) and waffles.

Overall, I think District is a great option for all kinds of events - a quiet dinner with a significant other, drinks with friends, lunch, and weekend brunch. Get out there, check it out, and enjoy!

For information, go to <http://districtaustin.com/district-north/> or call 512-284-7837

## It's My Park Day at Stillhouse Hollow

—Janelle Medrano

The annual fall It's My Park Day event sponsored by the Austin Parks Foundation will be held on Saturday, November 2, 2019. NWACA and the Friends of Stillhouse Hollow Nature Preserve will host a workday from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm at the preserve, located at 7810 Sterling Drive. Tasks to be completed include cleaning out the landscape bed near the entrance sign and re-planting the bed with native species to attract butterflies; general trash pickup; and stabilizing the fence posts above the deck with rock shards. Volunteer registration will open on October 3rd and must be completed online at [austinparks.givepulse.com](http://austinparks.givepulse.com). Please join us to continue our work at this important community green space.



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# Business Spotlight: Shirley McPhail School of Dance

—Janice Green



The longevity of a business is not only measured by the years of commercial life, but also by the generations of consumers it has touched and the values instilled in its wake. The Shirley McPhail School of Dance (SMSD) excels on all three measurement scales. For fifty years, through three McPhail generations of teachers, via 125,000+ classes, the SMSD on Mesa Drive has enhanced the grace, manners, and movement of students ranging in age from 2 to 92.

Edwina McPhail Worley and Judy McPhail led me on a tour of the two large studio spaces, including the Dancers Den, which is a retail hub for dance accessories, clothing, and shoes. Seeing the barres, the mirrors, the tap and toe shoes – it was like I'd stepped into a time machine, traveling back through the 21 years I studied ballet and tap. We talked about the gifts of dance training beyond mastering technique – self-discipline, working through discomfort and limitations, poise, agility – benefits even for those students who end up with careers in a courtroom, an operating room, or a boardroom. These values cascade beyond the applause.

How do you select a dance school? Edwina recommended that potential students look around for the studio with the right atmospheric fit – whether it be competitive, performance-based, or playtime. A genuine inviting, warm, family atmosphere is important, too; there was plenty of that at SMSD.

The classes and programs offered at SMSD will send your brain into pirouette mode:

- **Twinkle Tots**, starting at age 2, introduces movement to music.
- **A host of class levels in ballet, point, tap, jazz, hip hop, contemporary.** There are also summer classes, camps and intensives for advanced students.
- **Tap classes for adults** help fine tune balance, muscle memory,

and memory pattern plasticity. If your bucket list includes learning to tap, you'll make new friends as you check it off your list. Your class may even end up performing for residents at nursing homes, inspiring others to move as well. There are also adult classes in ballet, contemporary, jazz, and praise dance.

- **Troupe SMSDance** is the formal performance-based team of 55 students age 8+ who imagine following in the footsteps of the former SMSD students performing on Broadway, in professional dance companies, drill teams, dance teams, and who teach.


- **The Musical Theater Program**, for ages 6+, develops a range of singing, dancing, and acting talents.

- **Cotillion Austin-Style** offers basic etiquette, social dancing and communications skills for boys and girls ages 10-13. In five classes spread over 2 ½ months, students gain confidence in partner dancing and social situations (e.g., table manners and settings, even handshakes), with poise and good posture slipped into the mix.

From toddlers in tutus to seniors learning a time-step, SMSD is abuzz with activities that you can learn about on their in-depth website.

Shirley McPhail School of Dance now has third-generation students, and it is easy to understand how that happened as their 50th Year Celebration unfolds.

**Contact info: [www.smsdance.com](http://www.smsdance.com);  
512-345-1284; 8020 Mesa Drive.**



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## History Interview: Carol and Sandy Dochen

— Carol Jones

Carol and Sandy Dochen have lived in their Northwest Hills house off Valburn Drive since 1996. Before then, they lived in the house that Sandy's parents built in 1967, at 4201 Far West Boulevard. Back in the mid-60s, Far West stopped at the top of the hill past Mesa, near present-day Stahl Cove. When Sandy's younger sister Dee Dee was in high school, she walked to the end of the street, lay down on the hill to take in the incredible view, and read Rod McKuen.

Before the Dochen family lived on Far West Blvd, they lived on Turnabout Lane off Hancock Drive. It was very exciting when the Americana Theater (now Yarborough Library) opened in 1965, because all the movie theaters had been downtown until then.

Sandy's grandfather, Sam Dochen, came to the U.S. in 1910 from Ukraine. Sam died at age 39 of pneumonia, but he got a lot done in his time. He had three kids, started a business (the Capital Junk Co.), and helped charter one of the first Jewish synagogues in Austin, Agudas Achim.

The Dochens went into the retail business, selling used auto parts. Sandy's father was born in 1916, above the family store on Neches between 5th and 6th street. Sandy said that among

things they sold back then were animal bones from ranches and farms around Austin. The bones would be used to make buttons, fertilizer, and other products. It was, as Sandy says, "recycling before recycling was cool."

Sandy's great-uncles on his mother's side were the Frost Brothers, who created a popular store in San Antonio.

In 1965, Sandy's father built a new store on Burnet Road near Anderson Lane, called Central Auto Parts. People thought he was crazy for building a store so far out, away from town. The building is still there and houses the current Sherwin-Williams paint store.

Across the street, near where Bartlett's restaurant is now, was a discount store called Gulfmart. In high school, Sandy was really into music, and he would go record shopping at the Gulfmart. Among the records selling for \$3.95 or so, he found a bargain album: Best Hits of Buddy Holly, for 69 cents, that he still owns.

Sandy started working on the switchboard for KLBJ radio about a month before he graduated from high school. At this point, KLBJ was KTBC TV and radio, owned by the Johnson family. About 1973, they sold the TV station and kept the radio station,


*(Continued on Page 11)*

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## History Interview (Continued from Page 10)

changing the name to KLBK. Sandy stayed on as a reporter for KLBK, becoming news director in 1976. Later he worked for Congressman Jake Pickle. He remembers Pickle as a wonderful person with a great sense of humor, who worked tirelessly to improve the world and brought out the best in everyone. The group of tight-knit, loyal people who worked for Pickle were called the Pickle Factory.

Sandy remembers when President Johnson shook his hand. Jim Novy, a prominent Austin businessman, had been good friends with Lyndon Johnson for decades, and Johnson had close ties with many people in the Austin Jewish community. When the new Agudas Achim Synagogue was preparing its new Bull Creek Road location in November 1963, Jim arranged for his good buddy Vice-President Johnson to come dedicate the synagogue. Despite the tragic assassination of President Kennedy, Johnson kept his promise and dedicated the synagogue in December. Sandy, standing near the presidential limo, got to shake his hand.

Carol Dochen grew up in Dallas and met Sandy when they both lived in Houston. She has been in real estate since 1981, when she worked for Irene Smith in her office on Balcones Drive. Their daughter Katie Dochen has followed her mother into her very successful business.

Carol has sold many houses in Northwest Hills; her company has about 20% market share of homes sales here. She says her job is complex and multi-faceted. In helping clients with their exciting and often emotional life transitions, she serves as therapist, marriage counselor, mortgage guide, matchmaker, taxicab driver, and most importantly, a problem solver.

It was delightful to talk with Sandy and Carol Dochen! If you have memories to share about Northwest Hills or Austin, please contact [NWACAinfo@gmail.com](mailto:NWACAinfo@gmail.com).





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## How Can we Help Our Homeless Neighbors?

— Joyce Statz

There have been many gatherings of Austin citizens recently to learn more about homelessness throughout the city. Those meetings have also helped attendees understand what the various social services agencies and our City government are doing to help improve the situation of our homeless neighbors.

A key message from these forums is that all of us need to be involved. Here are some things we can do as individuals, as businesses, and as members of other community groups.

- **Help fund the Rathgeber Center operations budget for families experiencing homelessness.** The Rathgeber Center, run by the Salvation Army, will have 212 beds to provide transitional housing for families with children. Some of these families are currently housed in the Salvation Army Center downtown; moving them to the new Rathgeber Center will free up space for individuals experiencing homelessness. Each of these centers focuses on getting people into permanent housing, with case management to help them navigate the social services available to them and get employment and health care. Although there have been significant contributions (\$1M from the City of Austin, \$200K from other sources), there is still a \$400K shortfall, for which a \$100K

challenge grant has been promised. Community contributions are being sought to fill this gap; you can contribute at <https://downtownaustin.com/foundation/>

- **Donate time or money to groups that directly help the homeless.** These include Caritas of Austin, Casa Marianella, Family Eldercare, Foundation Communities, Foundation for the Homeless, Front Steps, LifeWorks Austin, Mobile Loaves and Fishes, SAFE Alliance, Salvation Army, The Other Ones Foundation, and many others. Each of these has a web site where you can learn more and put your time and treasure to work.

- **Donate funds to the Austin Community Foundation to help keep our neighbors out of homelessness.** Examples found at <https://www.austincf.org/> include:

- o Austin Community Endowment, which supports a variety of local causes
- o Women's Fund, to improve lives of women and children
- o Hispanic Impact Fund, for economic security of Hispanic Central Texans
- o FundATX, a resource for projects that strengthen economic development

- **Greet a homeless neighbor.** When you see someone on the street corner “flying a sign,” often the same person time after time, give them a smile. Just acknowledging them is often a gift, and so is food or water. Especially during the hot summer months, they appreciate water. Front Steps suggests freezing bottles of water to hand out. Remember, when you give food, many have very poor dental health, so soft things are best – bananas, not apples, for example. Ask them if they'd like what you have to offer; some things are welcome, some not.

- **Volunteer for the PIT Count.** Each January, Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO) conducts the Point in Time Count for Austin and Travis County, as part of the national count being done that day. Results help determine where federal resources will be allocated, so it's important to get as accurate a count as possible.

- **Learn the facts.** There is a flurry of homelessness information coming to the public and it's hard to get all the data to reconcile. Some good resources include:

- o KLRU's Decibel Project – homelessness is among the topics addressed; they have some informative, brief Youtube videos
- o Ending Community Homelessness Coalition – the lead agency that plans and implements community-wide strategies to end homelessness in Austin and Travis County; their web site <https://www.austinecho.org/> has a lot of background data
- o City of Austin web site – In September, Austin hired a Homelessness Strategy Officer, to coordinate the City's response to homelessness, the City Council's current top priority. See <https://www.austintexas.gov/homelessness> for information about current initiatives and answers to frequently asked questions.





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## Boo-tiful Tips for a Green Halloween

— Joanie Arrott



Halloween festivities in our neighborhood are right around the corner; it would be frightful to not consider zero waste while planning for the fun. Here are some tips to make it easier for creepy and kooky items

to end up in your compost or recycling and out of your trash.

1. Shop for previously-owned costumes at local thrift stores, online, or consider a costume swap with friends. Get creative with clothing that you already own and will wear again after the ghoulish night is over. Goodwill of Central Texas will help you create your own costume at <https://www.goodwillcentraltexas.org/halloween>.

2. Buy candy with recyclable packaging including paper or cardboard. Purchase boxed candy that can be recycled or composted, instead of individually-wrapped candy that cannot be recycled.

3. Replace candy with games, books, or other giveaways that can be enjoyed many times over. Fun examples of gifts for children include crossword puzzles, comic books, card sets, flash cards, seashells, rocks, crayons, or colored pencil sets.

4. Decorate with the natural world. We've got plenty of leaves, branches, and ball moss right outside our door, for filling containers to display or to even to stuff a scarecrow. Fall means pumpkins, gourds, and dried corn; they're perfect to add to your centerpiece. Eat or compost them afterward.

5. Plan your fun to minimize your carbon footprint. Talk to neighbors and friends to find the best houses or streets for trick-or-treating and plan an efficient route. Consider carpooling with other families so there are fewer cars on streets.

6. Eat and compost your pumpkin. After carving the pumpkin, save the seeds for roasting and adding to your salads, yogurt, or cereal for weeks to come. After the costumes are put away, your pumpkin is ready for pie-making fun! Any leftover pieces can be composted.

Credits: this information was partially sourced from Austin Resource Recovery

## Keeping Embers Out of Attics

— 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 attics and crawl spaces.

Most of the damage experienced during a wildfire is caused by embers released by the wildfire; some 80% of structures that burn are ignited by embers, not by a moving wall of flame. Thus, it's important to ensure that our homes are hardened against a barrage of embers – whether they're from a wildfire or from a fire in a nearby structure.

Among the vulnerabilities in many homes is the attic, where we store a lot of flammable material. If embers can get into the attic, they may start a fire that smolders for hours before someone notices. This was the case in a house fire in Northwest Hills several years ago; tens of thousands of dollars of damage was done before firefighters working on the fire next door noticed that this other house was also on fire.

Attics in most homes are kept cool by air flowing into and out of the attic through some type of vents. Vents parallel to the flow of embers (such as the horizontal soffit vents in most homes) are less vulnerable than the ones which are perpendicular to the flow – like the gable vents on many homes. Each of these vents,

however, should be screened with metal screening of no more than one-eighth inch mesh. An inexpensive material that works really well for this purpose is aluminum window screening, sometimes called window screen fabric. This screening is malleable for working with corners and edges, easy to cut to size, and easy to tack down with simple tools.

If you're unsure about the screening behind your attic vents, have someone look at them from inside the attic. Many older homes have screening that will keep out rodents (perhaps one-fourth inch mesh), but that is too coarse to keep out embers. Take advantage of cooler autumn days to check out your home vents and replace the screening if it's not sufficiently safe.



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# Understanding City Code: Exotic Animals as Pets

— Alan Carson

A series of TV shows on the NatGeoWild channel features a veterinarian in Miami who specializes in treating exotic animals such as prairie dogs, bearded dragon lizards, sloths, and lemurs. This made me wonder whether having exotic pets is legal in Austin and, if so, what animals are allowed? There is no simple answer, as federal, state, county, and city laws and ordinances are involved; even international treaties govern the sale and transport of wild animals.

Dangerous wild animals can be kept as pets under strict rules. The definition of a dangerous wild animal in Texas can be found in an internet search at <V. T. C. A. Section 822.101>. Dangerous wild animals are referenced in the Austin City Codes, chapter 3-1-1. You can find this using an internet search for <Austin TX Municode Library>. If you would like your very own lion, tiger, or bear (oh, my!), you must provide an adequate enclosure, obtain a license from the state, and carry liability insurance of \$500,000 per claimant (Austin Code chapter 3-5-2).

“Protected” animals are all wild animals indigenous to Texas, fur bearing animals, and protected and endangered species, so you can have no pet raccoons or squirrels. A good source of information on

protected animals can be found with an internet search for <Texas Protected Animals>. Of course, the list includes mockingbirds, the Barton Springs salamander, bats, and the Texas horned lizard, aka horned frog or horned toad.

If you consider purchasing an exotic animal, check Austin Code chapter 3-2-3. It prohibits sale of animals on a roadside, public right-of-way, public parking lot, swap meet, or flea market. An exotic pet must be purchased from a licensed pet store; such stores can sell only animals that are legal for private ownership. Possession of an illegal animal can result in its being impounded, and you will have lost your investment plus paid a charge for impoundment.

Most exotic animals are poor choices as a pet, since they often require a special diet and accommodations. If the pet was to have a medical problem, you might find it difficult to find a veterinarian with experience with that species.

Code chapter 3-2-7 is somewhat unusual as it prohibits the use of a bull hook to train or control an elephant. There is probably an interesting story concerning the origin of this code. Maybe a city father, many years ago, was offended by the treatment of elephants in a visiting circus.

## Questions from Neighbors

— Joyce Statz, aggregator

**A reader asks: is it legal to park (store) a utility trailer in the front or side yard of my property?**

A call to 311 was referred to the city code compliance office. They said that parking a utility trailer on your front or side yard is not prohibited. However, it cannot be parked on a public street, per paragraph 12-5-10 of the city code. If it is a camper, then there is a requirement that it be screened by use of a wood or concrete block screen.

**I wondered what started the fire on 2222 during the week of bulk trash pickup.**

Austin Firefighters attributed the fire to trash left on the hillside for Austin Bulk Trash Pickup. A mirror or other reflective object ignited the fire from the sun's rays. Please be careful when putting out trash for bulk pickup; be aware of what's underneath, such as dry grass, and if there are any shiny objects or glass in your trash that the sun rays could use to ignite the grass.

AFD also pointed out that the Austin Resource Recovery staff who pick up our regular trash often put out fires in the garbage, especially during dry months. Again, be aware of the hazards.

**Where can I get that red and white “Drive Like Your Kids Live Here” yard sign?**

The yard signs are available online for \$12.99 each at [http://drivelikeyourkidslivehere.com/our\\_store/17/yard-sign](http://drivelikeyourkidslivehere.com/our_store/17/yard-sign).

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

## Opportunities for Children with the ASO

— Rachel Santorelli and Louri O'Leary

On Tuesday, June 25, area children participated in the Children's Day Art Park at the Old Quarry branch of the Austin Public Library. The featured story was “Hansel and Gretel” narrated by Bernadette Nason and accompanied by the Austin Symphony Orchestra (ASO) Woodwind Quintet. This was part of an ASO summer series held throughout the city. After the mini-concert, attendees enjoyed interactive stations, instrument making, rotating arts and crafts, and an instrument petting zoo. The Woodwind Quintet continued to play music in the main area.

Another in the ASO's programs for families is coming up on October 27 at 3 p.m., the Halloween Children's Concert. It will be held in Dell Hall at the Long Center for the Performing Arts. Details can be found at <http://www.austinsymphony.org/events/halloween-childrens-concert-2019/>



# NWACA News

## Resolution on Intersection Improvements

— NWACA Board

In late August (past the deadline for our September newsletter), with help from NWACA Zoning and Transportation Committee members, the NWACA Board joined the Highland Park West Balcones Area Neighborhood Association (HPWBANA) in addressing a traffic issue on RM 2222. The NWACA area borders the north side of RM 2222, and HPWBANA boundaries include the area south of RM 2222. The NWACA Board sent the Cedric Benson-Aamna Najan Memorial Resolution on August 28, 2019. This resolution, which asks for improvements to the roadways near the intersection of RM 2222 and Mt. Bonnell/Small Drive, to the Austin Mayor and City Council members, the Austin Transportation Department, and the Texas Department of Transportation.

The full text of the resolution can be found in the Meeting Minutes section under the Resources tab at our web site [www.nwaca.org](http://www.nwaca.org)

## Slow Down Austin for Refuse Trucks—It's the law!

— PSA from Austin Resource Recovery

As of September 1, 2019, Texas drivers are required to move over and slow down for vehicles in the process of collecting trash, recycling, compost, bulk, and brush items. Similar to legislation for emergency vehicles, tow trucks, and certain TxDOT vehicles, Chapter 545.157 of the Texas Transportation Code was amended to require motorists to slow down, safely change lanes if possible, and operate with caution around solid waste trucks when safety lights are flashing.

Austin Resource Recovery has over 290 trucks that collect refuse from more than 200,000 Austin area homes. Note that there are several other solid waste vendors operating in the Austin area, and all trucks and staff should be treated with caution. Be sure to "Slow Down to Get Around".

## 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 August 14, 2019 and September 15, 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.

- Emory Gose
- Suzanne Huff
- Thomas Kelly
- David Kincaid
- Anne LeClair
- Mary Frances Markley
- Valerie Maurer
- Laverne and Jon Sharp
- Fred and Janet Stidman
- (and apologies to anyone whose donation we might have missed!)



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# Cockroaches

– Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service

The common cockroaches found outside include the American and Smokybrown cockroaches. American cockroaches are about 1 ½ - 2 inches long, reddish-brown with yellow markings above the head; see the photo. The adults have well-developed wings, but seldom fly; they do often glide. American cockroaches are usually found outside near decayed trees and plants, in crawl spaces and sewers. Smokybrown cockroaches are often mistaken for American cockroaches. Smokybrowns are about 1 inch long and dark brown to black. Adults have fully developed wings and are capable of flight. This species often inhabits leaf litter, compost piles and ground cover.

If you find cockroaches in your compost pile, in leaf litter, or in other outdoor locations, it isn't really necessary to kill them. You may want to make sure that your house is excluded, to avoid having the outdoor cockroaches move indoors when the temperatures cool down. The following tips may help:

- Prune back any vegetation touching or overhanging the home
- If you have a brick or stone façade, stuff weep holes with copper mesh
- Make sure screens are in good repair
- Replace weather stripping where doorways do not have a good seal
- Repair any water leaks
- Clean debris from gutters
- Place stainless steel screening over vent access in the attic
- Use sealant around pipe penetrations or other cracks or crevices into the home

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](http://www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com)



## 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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## *Considering New Construction?*

### **Think You Don't Need a Realtor During the Building Process? *Think Again...***

Sometimes, I'm shocked there are a few good professionals left in this world. I must say, Dawn Lanier is a true professional. The home buying process before Dawn was pretty gut wrenching. Other Realtors we had worked with wanted us to shut up and pay for things that didn't seem right. As a business owner myself, it's rare to meet people in business who are truly experts and you don't realize how little people know until you're knee deep in the transaction. As we went through the process of building a home, here are some things that really stood out about Dawn's professionalism and expertise:

- \*always had thoughtful and accurate information
- \*never made us feel stupid for asking a million questions
- \*went to bat for us at a moments notice and made things happen
- \*was the bad guy when we needed to have the tough conversations with the builder
- \*respected our time and money
- \*cared more about us getting what we wanted in our forever home than trying to beef up her commission check
- \*amazing problem solver allowing us to talk things out together to get the best solution when faced with challenges



Words can't express how truly grateful we are to have been introduced to her. We are blessed to say the least. I called her the **"pit bull in pearls."** Tough when you needed her to be, but elegant in her dealings with others. The combination was powerful. She is a rare breed.

I will never work with anyone else but Dawn when it comes to our real estate needs and I will sing her praises from the rooftop. In fact, if she wasn't so good at what she does, I'd try to steal her to come work for me! ~Sonia Roselli



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