



nwacaNEWS

NORTHWEST AUSTIN CIVIC ASSOCIATION

FEBRUARY 2020

VOLUME 11, ISSUE 2

Happy Hearts to You!

Crime is on our minds! And, it's not Cupid shooting arrows. NWACA is hosting a **Town Hall Meeting on Crime Prevention** at 6:30 p.m. on February 19th at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Huffman Hall. Join APD District Representative Officer Darrell Grayson, Travis County Pct. 2 Sgt. Sam Lindsey, and Connie Lundgren, NWACA Board Member and Neighborhood Watch Chair to learn how to harden our neighborhoods against crime.

APD has noticed an uptick in crime along the Loop 360 and RR 2222 corridors between the hours of 1 and 5 p.m., and that has moved into our neighborhood. We've also had several auto thefts in the early morning hours and numerous thefts, burglaries, and assaults during the day. Officer Grayson has asked for increased patrols in our area. He reminds us that if we see something, we must call to report it. Don't just assume APD is too busy to come and don't just post to Facebook. Patrols are based on demand. If we're quiet, they assume we don't need them.

NWACA is also adding overnight hours to our current daytime paid Constable patrols. Overnight patrol is expensive, requiring more officers, so if you are able, **please donate to the NWACA Constable Fund**; go to www.nwaca.org and use the green *Donate/Shop* tab. You don't have to be a member to donate, but we hope you will join if you're not a member. Join NWACA and join our Facebook page to stay up to date on the latest news.

Time to Nominate Your Neighbors, or, Yourself! February means it's time to nominate members for a new NWACA Board. Our Nominating Committee is looking for potential board members. If you would like to serve on the board, please email the Nominations Committee at nwacainfo@gmail.com; they will send you information on the process. NWACA members who have been paying dues for at least one year or who have been actively serving on a NWACA committee for at least three months are eligible to run for the board. Board members can serve for up to three consecutive, two-year terms. Elections will be held in April, and all NWACA members in good standing as of 30 days prior to the election are encouraged to vote. New board members will be announced at our May annual meeting and begin their work in August.

There is a lot of good information in this month's newsletter. You

will soon see signs alerting that Oak Wilt season is here. We have active oak wilt in our neighborhood. Please remember to prune your trees in the hottest part of the summer or the coldest days of winter. Need help with Oak Wilt in your yard? Thanks to the donations of generous neighbors, we have funds to help you. See Joanie's article in this newsletter for more information.

Have you ever wondered what Firewise is and why it's important? See Joyce's article.

Crazy Rich Asians in our neighborhood?! No, we're not profiling, but they're here and they're famous! Read Idee's fun article about our neighbors.

Interested in how the ETJ and City of Austin Code affects you? Read Alan's article.

And read Janice's article to learn about the Beeweaver Honey Farm, and our neighbors who founded it.

It's time for NWACA Special Projects grants. Do you know of something that you really want to see done or improved in our neighborhood? Read about our grant procedure; email our Finance Committee at nwacainfo@gmail.com with questions. Submission deadline is March 31st, with presentations at our April board meeting, and funding in May.

Know of events happening in our neighborhood? Send your information to Monique at nwacainfo@gmail.com and we'll try to include it in our weekly *NWACA Notes* email. NWACA members can also post events on our Facebook page.

Save the Dates! In addition to what you see on this newsletter's calendar page, plan for these:

Saturday, April 18th Earth Day Celebration Clean-up of Dry Creek at 9:00 a.m.

Sunday, April 23rd from 3:30-6:30 p.m. NWACA Concert in the Park, location TBA. We'll have rock bands, jazz bands, neighborhood artists, food vendors, and displays from some of our business members. Spend time outdoors with your neighbors enjoying our beautiful spring weather! If you want to volunteer, please contact Julie Waidelich at nwacainfo@gmail.com

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

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

The NWACA Board meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, except December. Please visit our calendar at www.nwaca.org to see the specific time and location. If you wish to speak at a Board meeting, please send email a week before the meeting, so that we can put 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. The advertising deadline is the 8th of the month prior to the issue.

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 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.



ARE YOU A NWACA MEMBER?

Receiving the newsletter does not guarantee membership.
Not sure? Visit 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/MEMBERS

NWACA Events CALENDAR

February 2, 2PM

Parks Committee

Biderman's

February 11, 6:30-8:30PM

NWACA Board Meeting

Galaxy Cafe

February 19, 6:30PM

NWACA Town hall on Crime Prevention

Huffman Hall, St.

Matthew's Episcopal Church,

8134 Mesa Drive

February 26, 5PM

NWACA Zoning and Transportation Committee

Temple Beth Shalom, 7300 Hart Lane

February 28

NWACA Annual Survey is due by the end of today

March 1, 2PM

Park's Committee

Biderman's

March 7, 9AM-Noon

It's My Park Day – Starting February 6, register at www.austinparks.org for a limited number of slots for a hike in Stillhouse Hollow Preserve. See article in this newsletter.

Stillhouse Hollow Nature Preserve,

7810 Sterling Drive

March 10, 6:30PM-8:30PM

NWACA Board Meeting

Galaxy Cafe

March 15, 2PM

Tree and Environment Committee

Epoch Cafe

March 16, 4:30PM

Communication's Committee

Galaxy Cafe

March 24, 5PM

NWACA Zoning and Transportation Committee

Temple Beth Shalom, 7300 Hart Lane

Annual NWACA Survey

– NWACA Board

As we do each year, we're asking for your input to help us understand the needs of the neighborhood and to get your guidance on where the NWACA Board and committees should focus their efforts. In this year's survey, we're also asking for your thoughts about the renovation of the Old Quarry Library, to help our District 10 Library Commissioner, Deborah Pardo-Kaplan in her work on our behalf. Later this year, there will be other opportunities for community input regarding the renovation, and your answers will help guide that as well.

For NWACA members who have no email address, we'll be sending the survey via U.S. mail to be completed and returned. All other neighbors are invited to go to this link and take the survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2020NWACA>

Please complete your response by February 28.

Thank you for your input!



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Explore Stillhouse Hollow Preserve on March 7th

— Janelle Medrano

Join us for another fun Walk N'Talk hike at Stillhouse Hollow Nature Preserve at our next It's My Park Day event, Saturday, March 7th. There will be two hikes, one at 9:00 AM and a second at 10:30 AM, led by Mark Sanders, biologist with Austin Water Utility, and Jane Tillman, neighbor and representative of the Travis Audubon Society. Each hike will last about an hour and will go into the restricted areas of the preserve, including a visit to the Cotteral Cave opening. It will be an opportunity to learn about the preserve's habitat, endangered species, and the resident and migratory visiting birds. There will also be time to help with trash clean-up.

Registration for this event will open on February 6th and must be made online via the Austin Parks Foundation website, www.austinparks.org.

Each hike will be limited to 15 participants. Long sleeves, long pants, and closed-toe shoes will be needed due to likely poison-ivy exposure and uneven terrain. Access to the canyon is steep in places and may be slippery. Please remember that the preserve is off-limits to pets at all times in order to keep the habitat as natural as possible and protect the native flora and fauna.



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People Spotlight:

Dan and Laura Weaver of Bee Weaver Honey Farm

— Janice Green



"There are certain pursuits which ... suggest a nobler and finer relation to nature than we know. The keeping of bees, for instance." (Thoreau)

BeeWeaver Honey Farm is such a noble pursuit – a family enterprise spanning 130 years, now in the hands of Dan and Laura Weaver, long-time NW Hills neighbors. For all things related to bees, the Weavers are your resource. While their major hub

of operation is the honey farm in Navasota, there is now a South Austin retail and events location.

Dan's significant contribution to the business, and to the beekeeping world, is the development of a bee strain that is resistant to pathogens. Queens, bees, and supplies are shipped across the continental U.S. to commercial beekeepers and hobbyists. An important mission of BeeWeaver is to educate about the art of beekeeping and the role these pollinators play in the survival of humanity. According to Einstein, "If the bee disappeared off the face of the earth, man would only have four years left to live." Almost 8 billion people are dependent on nature's free pollination services provided by bees. Their populations are environmentally challenged, especially by landscaping that eliminates deciduous trees and other blooming plants, widespread herbicide applications, and climate change.

BeeWeaver has an extensive, easy to navigate website. Their bee blog brims with instructive information on beekeeping. Their retail offerings include honey products, body and bath items, beeswax candles, flower seed mixtures, beautiful bee art, and so much more.

Learn how to make (and sip) mead at their Bees Honey Mead Tour. Check out their observational tours about beekeeping and the biology of bees. BeeWeaver's BuzzFest is an experiential-based festival where folks learn to overcome fear of bees and to grasp the beauty of the animal husbandry involved in their care. Dan and Laura highlight the bonuses of beekeeping: mental stimulation, relaxation, and connection to nature's wild side.

Beehives have a personality, distinct aromas, and different frequencies of "hums" which serve as the voice of the garden. The smoke used by beekeepers calms the bees' pheromone receptors and announces your approach. With spring comes an important foraging time when bees focus on rejuvenating the colony and providing pollen protein needed to feed their babies. The bees have two goals – to keep the queen alive (even at the worker bees' own peril) and defend the hive. They reflect nature's exemplar for work ethic and community organization.

Bees have inspired writers and philosophers; honeybees are the most studied creature by humans. They are the exquisite chemists of nature and designers of the hexagon. To talk with the Weavers about the history of their family business and the preservation of this vital creature is awe-inspiring. To visit one of their locations treats you to delicate honey varieties, increases your knowledge about this unique being, and may spark the beginning of a fulfilling hobby that nurtures and restores these pollinators upon whom we all are so dependent.

Contact info, hours, site maps: Beeweaver.com, (512) 535-2219.



IDEE KWAK'S Writer's CORNER

Crazy Rich Asians

In their lovely Northwest Hills home, ophthalmologist Steven McKinley and his wife hosted Christmas dinner for 18 relatives from around the world who had gathered to celebrate the 80th birthday of Dr. McKinley's aunt, Elizabeth Kwan, a beloved Houston piano teacher. Aunt Elizabeth's sons, including her youngest, Kevin Kwan, planned a wonderful, Christmas/birthday dinner enjoyed by all despite Kevin being repeatedly interrupted to sign his bestselling books: the "Crazy Rich Asians" Trilogy.

The first, published in 2013 and selling more than a million copies in more than 20 languages, led to Time Magazine naming Kwan one of its Most Influential People of 2018 and spawned the blockbuster movie of the same name.

Kwan, who studied at New York's Parsons School of Design and worked for Andy Warhol's Interview Magazine, Martha Stewart Living, and the design firm M&Co, also founded his own design studio with such clients as New York's Museum of Modern Art, the New York Times, and Oprah Winfrey.

Well into his design career, Kwan got the itch to write and remembered the advice received during his undergraduate days at the University of Houston-Clear Lake Creative Writing Program: "Write what you know. Tell your truth."

For his first 11 years, he grew up in the opulence of Singapore where his great-grandfather was a founder of one of Singapore's biggest banks, the Oversea-Chinese Banking Corporation. But repulsed by the extravagance of the lifestyle they were living, his father, a humble electrical engineer, moved the family to the Clear Lake area of Houston where his mother began teaching piano and Kevin and his two older brothers gradually adjusting to the shock of doing housework and mowing the lawn. "It really brought us down to earth. Now, I wouldn't have it any other way."

Through the years, visits to Singapore had shown him that not much had changed. "People were just getting so wealthy, in a way that a kid growing up in Clear Lake, which is upper middle-class, [was] just not used to." With this premise, he started writing but with no idea of the audience he would draw: "I thought it would be an amusing social satire that I would share with 20 friends in New York."

Critical acclaim for the books' reach and substance along with a bidding war over the movie rights took Kwan somewhat by surprise. "I'm honored and grateful in a way that this movie has become [a] lightning rod. So many people around the world, in the U.S.

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especially, are really hoping that it fulfills something.”

Kevin Kwan's cousin, our own Dr. Steven McKinley, practices at the Eye Institute of Austin on Anderson Lane, and he isn't the family's first doctor to choose this specialty. Within the large extended family, there are several ophthalmologists, including Arthur PC Kwan, a humanitarian knighted by Queen Elizabeth II for his services, who was Singapore's first Western-trained ophthalmologist.

I, for one, give Dr. McKinley my highest recommendation as both an eye doctor and surgeon and I give his cousin my highest recommendation as an author.

An aside: The Texas Heritage Songwriters' Association holds its Hall of Fame Show on February 21 and 22. Check out venues, performers, and ticket information at texasheritagesongwriters.com.

HELP US CLEAN UP DRY CREEK FOR EARTH DAY

— Maura Powers



NWACA and Keep Austin Beautiful are partnering in a pilot project to clean up a portion of Dry Creek on Keep Austin Beautiful Day, Saturday, April 18, 2020, 9 a.m., in celebration of Earth Day. Many organizations are participating in this citywide effort. Go to keepaustinbeautiful.org to learn more.

The entire length of the project is about one mile, which is anticipated to be divided into two sections for volunteer neighbors to cover, with creek entry at Tumbling Circle and at Highland Hills Drive. Some of the terrain is difficult, so this is not recommended for young children or mobility impaired individuals.

The end points for this Dry Creek project are near 6604 Shadow Valley Drive and near Reid's Cleaners at 3720 Ranch Road 2222. The properties bordering the creek are on the following streets: Knollwood Drive, Thorncliffe Drive, Laurel Valley Drive, Shadow Valley Drive, Shadow Valley Cove, Highland Hills Drive, Tumbling Circle, Wendel Cove, Highland View Drive, Highland Pass, and Camino Seco.

We live in a scenic and highly sought-after neighborhood, but our creeks suffer from trash, which limits their capacity to serve as drains for flood control and degrades the habitat for local and migrating species. As a community, we can do better. If you have questions, or would like to help with this effort, or would prefer no creek cleaners on your property, please contact Maura Powers at maura.powers2007@gmail.com.

History Interview: Donna Kemnitz McCamant

—Carol Jones

Donna Kemnitz McCamant grew up in west Austin near O'Henry Junior High School, in a 900 square foot cottage with four kids and one bathroom. In 1968 her parents were ready to build a larger house, and they wanted a nice view. The empty lot on the corner of Stahl Cove and Far West Boulevard at the top of the hill overlooking the canyons seemed perfect. The lot was \$3,000, with a \$500 down payment and the remaining \$2,500 balloon note due when the utilities went in.

They cleared much of the lot themselves and built their dream house. Their custom 2600 square foot home cost \$31,000. The house was designed with glass all along the back to take in the expansive view. Donna remembers magnificent sunsets and autumn mornings when fog would fill the surrounding valleys so that they looked like bowls of whipped cream. Sadly, four years later someone built behind her parents and the view was taken.

After living in a small house with noisy kids, her parents decided to build a sound-proof wall between the kids' wing and the rest of the home. They regretted that decision when their teenagers took advantage of the sound barrier to sneak out at night. After one early morning adventure, Donna was hoisting herself into her bedroom window and found herself staring at her dad's hairy legs. Busted!

The kids found adventure in the woods beyond Far West Boulevard by sliding down limestone sluices and wandering the canyons with BB guns.

Wildlife was plentiful in the greenbelt, especially snakes. In the spring, copperheads would come up to the porch to hunt frogs at night. They rarely saw deer or coyotes in the 1960s-1970s, however. Those populations migrated in later as habitat shrunk and people started feeding them.

Before Anderson High School opened in 1973, Mesa Drive ended at Steck Avenue. Mesa Drive was extended north, but it remained closed with sawhorse road barriers until days before Anderson officially opened; then the barriers were moved to the side of the street. Donna and her friend Vicki DeWeese found those barriers irresistible. As a prank, they moved them back onto the street to block traffic, figuring someone would quickly realize it was a joke and remove them. To their surprise and increasing hilarity, the barriers stayed in place for about 6 weeks, causing students in Westover Hills to detour getting to school.

Donna's friends also created their own spirit club at Anderson, wearing denim work shirts embossed with the initials HR. HR stood for "Hell-Raisers," although the name was more aspirational than genuine. After being called into the principal's office for having a non-sponsored club, they quickly and cleverly

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NORTHWEST HILLS AND WESTOVER HILLS 2019 YEAR IN REVIEW



AVERAGE SALES PRICE
\$785,087



266
CLOSED SALES



SALES VOLUME
\$208,833,023

LIST PRICE PER SQFT
\$298

SALE PRICE
PER SQFT
\$294

AVERAGE LIST PRICE
\$840,344

LIST PRICE RATIO
98.7%

41
DAYS ON MARKET

SOURCE: ABOR MLS INCLUDING DATA FROM JANUARY 1 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2019 FOR SINGLE FAMILY HOMES. BASED ON NWACA BOUNDARIES: MOPAC/HWY 360/2222/SPICEWOODSPRINGS

TOP 2020 INTERIOR TRENDS

1. TWO-TONED KITCHENS
2. BRASS EVERYTHING
3. FAUX FUR AND FAUX SKIN
4. MODULAR FURNITURE
5. NESTING TABLES

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NWACA News

(Continued from Page 6)

explained HR stood for "Helena's Royalty," and got a history teacher to sponsor them.

Donna remembers when County Line BBQ on 2222 was Bull Creek Lodge, with little cabins that you could rent. You could sit on the covered boat docks at dusk with the lights turned on and watch the water moccasins swimming around. She also remembers the farm at the corner of Burnet Road at U.S. 183, where you could pick your own sweet corn to bring home. Before HEB came into the neighborhood, the nearest grocery store to her parent's house was KashKarry on Northland Drive where Jack Brown Cleaners is now.

It's remarkable how many kids who grew up in Northwest Hills have moved back here as homeowners. Back to School nights at Murchison Middle School and Anderson High School brought back lots of memories! Donna was always grateful no administrators at Anderson recognized her when her own daughter started there 20 years later.

It was delightful talking with Donna! If you have memories of Northwest Hills or Austin that you would like to share, please contact nwacainfo@gmail.com.

NWACA Project Reserve Fund Inviting Applications

– NWACA Finance Committee

The Project Reserve Fund was established by the NWACA Board to help fund special projects in our neighborhood. Projects must benefit our community and be publicly accessible.

During the past few years, NWACA funded the purchase of five recycling containers for use at our local parks, contributed funds for the development of a new soccer field behind Doss Elementary, helped refurbish the Anderson High School Gym, and provided funding for Constable patrol in our neighborhood.

Any group or individual can apply for Project Reserve funds; just download an application online at www.nwaca.org - use the Get Involved tab and look for Project Reserve Fund.

Submit applications, drawings, pictures, and estimated project costs to: nwacainfo@gmail.com or by mail to: NWACA, P.O. Box 26654, Austin, TX 78755. Project applications for spring/summer grants will be accepted until March 31, 2020; finalists will be asked to describe their projects at the April 14, 2020, NWACA Board meeting. Finalists will be notified regarding acceptance and funds distributed as early as the month following project acceptance. The number of projects funded is at the discretion of the Board. If you have questions about the program, email those to nwacainfo@gmail.com

Some applicants may choose to submit an idea in concert with the City of Austin Neighborhood Partnering Program (see details at: <http://www.austintexas.gov/neighborhoodpartnering>). Such applications must be submitted by October 1st or June 1st for their cost-sharing funding cycle. Other applicants may choose to team with the Austin Parks Foundation (see details at: <http://austinparks.org/tag/grants/>). Applications for different types of grants have different deadlines.

The Project Reserve Fund is just one of many ways that NWACA serves our community. These monies are available because of the careful management of NWACA funds over the past several years. Please help us to continue our work by joining NWACA or renewing your membership today.

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Watching our Neighborhood through Krimelabb.com

— Connie Lundgren

Are you curious about what your neighbors have been up to or what goes on in “the hood” after you have gone to sleep? Or are you simply interested in monitoring crime statistics? Then look no further than www.krimelabb.com. The site was started by local Austinite and IT analyst Jack Darby. Darby developed the site after his home was broken into twice on two successive days. As an analyst, Darby began culling the Austin Police Department data base for his own neighborhood and loading it into a program that is easily searchable by zip code, date or type of occurrence. He quickly expanded his search to all of Austin with the goal of providing citizens the tools they need to become aware of crime in their community and take the necessary steps to prevent further occurrences. The eye-opening site now has over 2 million reports and is an eye-opening experience. For the first half of the month of January 2020, zip code 78731 had 26 incidents, 29 offenses and 7 arrests. Zip code 78759 showed 63 incidents, 69 offenses and 10 arrests.

Knowing about crime in your neighborhood puts you in a better position to partner with law enforcement. Check out the Krimelabb site and learn what is going on around you. Being informed is one of the best ways to protect yourself and your home.

For information about starting a Neighborhood Watch on your street, contact us by completing the form under the Get Involved tab at www.NWACA.org. All the materials you need are provided to you, and you will be able to enhance your security and quality of life.



CASE #	DATE	OFFENSE	ADDRESS	ARREST
2020-10037	2020-01-01	DWI	3300 NORTLAND DR	
2020-20	2020-01-01	THEFT BY SHOPLIFTING	8040 MESA DR	
2020-11384	2020-01-01	ASSAULT BY CONTACT FAN/DATING	7117 WOOD HOLLOW DR	
2020-5000272	2020-01-01	BURGLARY OF VEHICLE	4801 REVERLY HILLS DR	
2020-21716	2020-01-02	DWI - DRUG RECOGNITION EXPERT	8000 N MOPAC EXPY DR	
2020-5000357	2020-01-02	CRIMINAL MISCHIEF	5607 DREYFUS DR	
2020-5000267	2020-01-02	CRIMINAL MISCHIEF	7101 N MOPAC EXPY SWRD FR	
2020-5000299	2020-01-03	BURGLARY OF VEHICLE	5204 FRI 2123 RD	
2020-41244	2020-01-04	SUSPICIOUS PERSON	4503 PLACID PL	
2020-41244	2020-01-04	SUSPICIOUS VEH	4503 PLACID PL	
2020-5000662	2020-01-04	THEFT	6800 AUSTIN CENTER BLVD	
2020-40417	2020-01-04	REQUEST TO APPRAISE	7201 WOOD HOLLOW DR	
2020-40606	2020-01-04	BURGLARY OF VEHICLE	2611 PENNSAC TRL	



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Warmer Temps Equals Oak Wilt Risk – Joanie Arrott

Warmer temperatures that awaken plant life and wildlife also bring some risks that require our attention. Plants and trees transition from their dormant stage and grow, while insect activity increases, increasing disease transmission risk. Such is the case for oak wilt.

Oak wilt is a virulent, infectious disease that can easily spread throughout a community of trees. Currently, it is one of the most destructive tree diseases in the U.S. Once a tree is infected with the fungus that causes oak wilt, death is assured. Awareness of disease transmission mechanisms and prevention measures are our best allies in an on-going battle to protect our beautiful neighborhood urban forest.

While all oak tree species are susceptible to the disease, there are certain ones that are most at risk, including varieties of live oaks, white oaks, and red oaks. The fungus can be spread by beetles moving between infected trees and uninfected trees with fresh wounds. Oak wilt can also move between infected and uninfected trees through their interconnected root system, especially with regard to live oaks. As trees wake up to warmer temperatures, the disease can spread and reveal symptoms.

What are steps you can take to help protect our beautiful village of trees? Learn the basics about oak wilt, how to identify it, and who to contact for help. If you contract with a landscaping or tree trimming company, scrutinize their operation to ensure proper practices are being followed. Make sure they staff a certified arborist, and if you have oaks, ask if their arborist is Texas Oak Wilt-Qualified (a special certification on how to identify and manage oak wilt).

The International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) recommends hiring a tree service company that has ISA-certified professionals on staff. It has developed two easy-to-use tools to assist homeowners in locating an arborist (Find an Arborist tool) and in confirming whether an arborist has an ISA credential (Verify a Credential tool). Access them here: <http://www.isa-arbor.com/findanarborist/arboristsearch.aspx>.

Any work or pruning involving oak trees should not occur in warmer temperatures. Historically, forest specialists would recommend no pruning from February 1st to June 30th. However, each year the climate cycle changes, and this timeframe is not always appropriate. As a result, we're not just watching strict dates; we're also paying attention to the climate during which beetles are more active and could spread the disease.

The best times for tree work and pruning include the coldest days of winter or the hot days of summer. Even then, proper measures should always be used on any fresh oak tree wounds. This includes painting the wounds to protect against insect contact and properly cleaning all tools.

You should see "Prevent Oak Wilt" signs placed in yards throughout the neighborhood as a reminder of oak wilt season. The sign campaign is managed by the NWACA Tree, Environment, and Wildlife Committee to support efforts to battle the oak wilt fungus which has infected several parts of our neighborhood for decades. Reminder signs will not help our new neighbors who recently moved here, so please share this information with them. Let us know if you're interested in hosting a sign in your yard.

More information about oak wilt can be found here:

<http://texasoakwilt.org/>

The City of Austin Oak Wilt Suppression Program staff can also help:

<http://austintexas.gov/page/oak-wilt-suppression>

What is Firewise™? – Joyce Statz

For several years, the NWACA Newsletter has included articles about aspects of making your home more resilient to wildfire; we hope you've found these helpful. In the articles, we often use the term "Firewise" in a generic way. However, it has a very specific meaning, as well as being a registered trademark of the National Fire Protection Association, Inc. (NFPA) in 2004. In addition, "Firewise USA" is a trademark that was registered in 2017.

From an NFPA document about Firewise Communities, we learn that "Originally coined in 1992 by a botanist working with the National Wildland/Urban Interface Fire Program, the term "Firewise" describes the state of being knowledgeable and prepared for wildfire in residential or urban settings." A University of Florida source describes it as "living safely near a fire-dependent natural community."

The concept is a broad one, employed by national, state, and local groups encouraging practices that make communities resilient. After the wildfire season of 1985, national working groups began to focus more on local efforts, with NFPA as the coordinator of guidance and information resources to state forestry agencies and local communities. That NFPA effort has evolved to these programs and services:

- www.firewise.org – a web site with educational information for homeowners and fire professionals, focused on "teaching people how to adapt to living with wildfire, working with their neighbors to take action to prevent losses." The site has videos, links, and helpful documents, many free in bulk quantities for community meetings.

- Firewise USA® recognition program – a national program that recognizes communities that have evaluated their risk, created a plan to mitigate risk, and maintain that plan over time. While originally called Firewise Communities, the recognized entities are now called Firewise Sites. There are more than 1,500 recognized sites, with about 100 in Texas. Sites can range in size from 8 to 2,500 housing units. The NWACA Wildfire Prevention Committee would like to see many more Firewise Sites added to the four in our neighborhood. Contact us for help at nwacainfo@gmail.com if you'd like your HOA or street to get involved.

Another national effort, Fire Adapted Communities (FAC), developed in 2005, is now part of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Strategy (see details at <https://www.forestsandrangelands.gov/strategy/>). The strategy has three major goals: Resilient Landscapes, Fire Adapted Communities, and Safe and Effective Wildfire Response. FAC is a broad umbrella that incorporates guidance from 15 different groups, including NFPA and Firewise USA®. The Ready, Set, Go program is among those 15. We have a downloadable local Ready, Set, Go guide on the NWACA web site describing how to assess and mitigate your risk, and be prepared to leave in case you need to evacuate. Go to www.nwaca.org and search for "Ready."



To have a free home wildfire risk evaluation by a team of trained volunteers, go to www.nwaca.org and sign up under the Get Involved tab. Use the Firewise tab for a wide range of information about wildfire prevention.

Understanding City Code: Extra Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ)

— Alan Carson

What is ETJ, and why is it of concern? If you own property outside the city limits or you contemplate purchasing such property, then you should find this of interest. Extra Territorial Jurisdiction is the capability of a municipality to exercise authority beyond the boundaries of its incorporated area. For municipalities of 5,000 or fewer inhabitants, the ETJ extends one half mile beyond the city limits. The extent of the ETJ increases with the size of the municipality, so for cities with 100,000 or more inhabitants, such as Austin, the ETJ extends for five miles. Thus, Austin wields its regulatory power to contiguous land where annexation is a consideration. Without ETJ, annexation could result in massive red tagging of newly incorporated property. “Red tag” means “not habitable,” as determined by city inspectors. With ETJ, the property would all be green-tagged, that is, habitable.

Although all property in the ETJ is regulated by the municipality, residents are not taxed and cannot vote in municipal elections. The State of Texas authorized the ETJ by law in 1987, “LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE, CHAPTER 42.” The US Supreme Court ruled that it was constitutional. Thus, if you intend to develop property within the Austin ETJ, you will be required to submit

plans and specifications for approval, then be subject to inspection throughout all construction, as well as a final inspection when a Certificate of Occupancy is authorized.

Having been involved in a project in the Austin ETJ, I can assure you that conforming to the codes is taken quite seriously. The City has the authority to issue citations for violations; the penalty can be a fine or even a class C misdemeanor.

An interesting aspect of the ETJ law is that all annexations must be made from a municipality’s ETJ. Thus, if a rogue Panhandle town such as Carsonville needed revenue and decided to annex Driftwood in Hays County so that they would have access to the sales taxes from The Salt Lick Barbecue, it could not, as they are not contiguous. What rights do the residents have? Because of a Texas law that became effective May 24, 2019, almost any entity in Texas that is a candidate for annexation requires landowner or voter approval.

Does Travis County have a construction standard? Yes. For all areas within a municipality and its associated ETJ, the standards of that municipality shall comply. For all other construction, the International Residential Code is applicable. Of course, they are

(Continued on Page 12)



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(Continued from Page 11)

administered separately by Austin and Travis County. Once annexed, will the area have city utilities? Actually, electric power, water, and wastewater collection services are regional in nature. A larger city can provide better service at lower cost due to the economy of scale. Austin Energy provides power throughout much of Travis County, serving 14 different municipalities. Austin Water Utility provides water and wastewater collection services to 21 wholesale customers, even the Travis County water system; it plans to provide service throughout the Austin ETJ.

Police and most fire protection in the Austin ETJ are not provided by the City, but by Travis County, as property owners in the ETJ pay no municipal taxes.

If you would like to learn more about ETJ, do a web search for Austin ETJ.

If you have a question or concern about a City code that we haven't yet covered, send us email at nwacainfo@gmail.com, and we'll have Mr. Carson check it out. It may be the topic of an upcoming article.

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 December 15, 2019 and January 15, 2020.

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.

- Larayne Dallas and Timothy DeFries
- Dale and Marlyn Davis
- Bill and Michelle Earley
- Jennifer Faulkner
- Jeffrey Josephs and Diane Ginsburg
- Doug and Ann O'Connell
- Julie Sher
- Denise and Matthew Steinberg
- (and apologies to anyone whose donation we might have missed!)

FRUIT FLIES - Wizzie Brown



Fruit flies can become a nuisance problem at any time of year. They can enter homes from ripe fruits or vegetables picked from the garden or purchased at the grocery store. Fruit fly adults may also fly into homes from outdoors.

Adult fruit flies are small (about 1/8 of an inch) and often have red eyes. The front portion of the body is tan while the back portion is dark brown to black. If given the opportunity, females can lay up to 500 eggs. Larvae are surface feeders on fermenting foods or other organic matter, which means that you can cut off the overripe parts of the fruit or vegetable and eat the rest.

To prevent bringing fruit flies into your home, do not purchase over ripened fruit and vegetables. Eat fresh produce in a timely manner and store items in the refrigerator or a paper bag that is clipped closed. All recyclables should be rinsed thoroughly before placing them into the recycling bin. Recycling and garbage bins should be cleaned on a regular basis with soapy water to eliminate any spilled material.

If your home already has fruit flies, locate all sources of infestation (where the larvae are living) and eliminate them. Insecticides only target adults and will not control the problem. While searching and eliminating breeding sources, a trap can be constructed to capture adult flies. Create a paper funnel by rolling paper and taping it closed. Place the funnel into a jar that has a small amount of apple cider vinegar in the bottom.

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600. Check out my blog at www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com

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☐ Parks



Members, please request to join our **Facebook Page** and sign up for **NWACA Notes**, our weekly email.



For more info email us at: **nwacainfo@gmail.com**

Drain Flies

- Wizzie Brown, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service



Drain flies are small brownish-grey insects with two wings. They have fuzzy wings and bodies and when at rest, the wings are folded over the body making them look like tiny moths. This is why they are sometimes called moth flies.

Drain flies may be seen in kitchens and bathrooms near sinks or tubs. They tend to be more active in the evening. Female flies lay eggs in the thin film of organic matter that builds up on the inside of drain pipes. Larvae develop in the slime layer, feeding on fungi and other microorganisms.

Unfortunately, killing adult drain flies will only temporarily solve the problem. To manage drain flies, the source should be located and treated to reduce the population of developing flies. To track down where the flies are coming from, place tape over one side (don't cover the drain completely) of drains in sinks and tubs before you go to bed. In the morning, check tape for flies that emerged during the night to find out which drain(s) is/ are infested.

Once the drain is located, take a stiff brush and scrub the inside of the drain, following up by flushing the drain with boiling water. There is no need to treat the drain with bleach or ammonia. It may take several days to see a reduction of the adult flies once the drain has been cleaned; you have to allow the emerging adults to die. If you have drains that you cannot access to clean, there are biogels that consume the organic matter where the larvae develop. Read and follow all label instructions.

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

Help Keep Our Wildlife Wild!

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



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My husband and I recently purchased a home with our daughter using Dawn Lanier as our agent. I just wanted to tell you how extraordinarily remarkable she is. Having bought and sold real estate on both coasts and in between, I have never had an experience like working with Dawn. She is simply amazing.

I flew out from California for a couple of days to help my daughter find the right property. At each location, Dawn noticed everything and zeroed in immediately on all of the right questions to ask. For example, she gently pushed to get an answer on the plans for undeveloped land one block from a property that my daughter liked. She could easily have allowed my daughter to fall in love with the place—it was one of the most expensive homes we looked at—but Dawn's instinct to keep pursuing questions led the other agent to acknowledge that there were issues ahead in the neighborhood.

When we settled on finding a home in Mueller that would be built, I sat back and watched with awe as Dawn traced each bus route, traffic zone, direction of the properties, and location within a block to pick just the right townhouse with best location and resale value for what my daughter could afford.

That was only the beginning, however, of Dawn's amazing service. She was there with my daughter, every step of the way from design meetings, to building meetings, to walkthroughs, to finding outside vendors and resources. Whatever question arose, she had a solution and the wisdom of experience. As a mother, it was difficult to be so far away from my daughter for her first major purchase, but I felt as if my daughter had a guardian angel with her.

I am so deeply grateful for our experience with Dawn. When we sell the property, there is no one else I would use other than Dawn, and I know that my daughter has already referred another client to her.

From a grateful client,
Robin Feldman



Dawn Lanier, ABR, GRI

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