



July 2020

COURTYARD HOMEOWNERS
ASSOCIATION, INC.

COURTYARD CALLER

Official Courtyard Newsletter

Volume 16, Number 7

BOARD MESSAGE

COVID-19

July has arrived and we are still figuring out how to regain a sense of normalcy while containing the community spread of COVID-19. Please continue to follow safe practices, such as wearing a mask when outside the home, frequent hand-washing, and regularly disinfecting frequently-touched surfaces such as doorknobs, light switches, countertops, car door handles and steering wheels. As of the date of preparing this message, the amended Stay-At-Home order for Austin was still in effect and likely to be extended due to the spike in COVID-19 cases after the partial re-opening of businesses. As long as City of Austin guidelines restrict meetings of 10 people or more, the HOA Board cannot hold in-person Board meetings, but will likely hold a virtual meeting. Please watch NextDoor and/or your email inbox for notices regarding HOA Board meetings. Emails will come from denise.1.hogan@gmail.com, so please set up a contact for this address so it won't get lost in your junk/spam folder.

Our Neighbor & Friend Marty Markovich

With a heavy heart, we acknowledge the passing of our neighbor and friend Marty Markovich. Marty was well-loved by so many here in the neighborhood, and the Men's Poker Group will miss his gentle presence and his consistent ability to quietly clean out everyone's pockets! Marty, may you rest in peace.

Park Updates

Changes are coming to the pedestrian opening. The HOA Board is reviewing bids to install a pedestrian gate with a keypad, similar to the main gate. *Neighbors, do not give the gate code to any non-residents! All guests of residents MUST BE accompanied by the resident in the park, no exceptions.*

We are happy to report successful reinforcement of the support frame under the dock at the water's edge. Thanks go out to Jim Lloyd, Raul Riojas and the team who made this happen. You are awesome!

We also want to thank Megan Lasch, who made a wonderful donation to help with the cost of ball moss removal for some of the trees in the park. Now that oak wilt season has passed, our plans to remediate some of the ball moss can proceed. Although the HOA

has a budget for tree maintenance, ball moss removal is extremely expensive. Because the HOA maintains hundreds of trees with a rotating schedule of pruning, emergency limb removal from storms, and maintains all of the common area grounds, we will be able to remediate ball moss from only a few trees in the park this year. If you would like to make a donation to this project, please contact Jim Lloyd, HOA Board Treasurer, at jlloyd@austin.rr.com

As you all know, the park Playscape equipment was closed in March in accordance with the City of Austin ban on use of playscape equipment. Neighbors, we fully empathize with our parents whose children just want to play, and we hope you will understand that an abundance of caution is the best course of action for all. The HOA Board has always followed, and will continue to follow, City of Austin policies regarding public safety. We are watching the City of Austin website, and will re-open the Playscape as soon as we possibly can.

Finally, neighbors, we continue to receive messages from residents who encounter off-leash dogs in the park. If it is you, then this message is ***FOR YOU: put your dog(s) on a retractable leash.*** That way your dog can run around but is still under your control at all times. Even dog-lovers don't always want your dog approaching them or their dogs, who may not be friendly. Leash laws apply to the entire City of Austin, and they ARE the rules of our private HOA Park.

Time to Trim Oaks

Oak wilt season has passed, and it is now okay to trim oaks up until January 31, 2021. If you need to do regular maintenance or trim branches away from your house or roof, NOW is the time. This protects your home from many potential issues, including transfer of embers during wildfire season. If you are planning significant oak limb removal, check the City of Austin website for rules regarding heritage trees AND please communicate with any neighbors who will be affected by your tree limb removal project. ECC approval is required for ANY complete tree removal, but is not required for regular pruning of non-heritage trees. If you have questions, contact Janet Wright at mightywrights@me.com.

Continued on Page 3

Bicycle Accidents | Boating Accidents | Car Accidents | Dog Bites | Drunk Driving Accidents
Injuries to Children | Motorcycle Accidents | Slip and Falls | Truck Accidents | Wrongful Death



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Styrofoam Recycling: The City of Austin styrofoam recycling program is currently on hold during the stay-at-home order. Styrofoam cannot be recycled curbside in your blue receptacles. Please consider saving your styrofoam for drop off at the City recycling center once the center has reopened. Thank you!

"Board Message..." Continued from Cover

Email Addresses

Thank you to all of the residents who have updated their contact information in the Courtyard HOA Website Directory. We are happy to report that quite a few of you have completed this simple process! It is critical that your HOA Board is able to send you notices for the neighborhood, including park gate code changes, website password changes, neighborhood event information, and Fire Safety alerts. The website directory also serves as an important avenue for communication between residents. It feels great to know you can get a message to your neighbor, and conversely feels really disconnected and frustrating if you need to reach out but cannot.

PLEASE, check your phone number and email address on the website now with this simple process:

1. Go to CourtyardHOA.org
2. Click on Directory.
3. Enter "courtyard" (all lower case) as the username.
4. Enter the Directory password.
5. Look up your contact information.
6. If any of your contact information is incorrect or missing, email Denise Hogan and copy Erik Maye.

If you need the Directory password or have trouble with any part of this process, please email Denise Hogan at denise.1.hogan@gmail.com and copy Erik Maye at erikmaye@gmail.com ; we will help you have success!

Have a great month, and as always, please drive slowly in the Courtyard!



Courtyard Book Club

Tuesday, August 4, 2020

1 p.m. 5612 N. Scout Island Circle

Join us for some refreshing social interaction as we continue to review books together! We've stayed connected via Zoom Video conferencing, and it's working out great. You will find the conversation lively and relevant in this amazing group of knowledgeable, articulate, and well-traveled women from diverse backgrounds.

We "meet" at 1PM on the first Tuesday of each month, hosted by our Book Club President Lou Blemaster. To receive Book Club information, contact Lou at LouBlemaster@gmail.com.

In August, we will review *The Girl Who Wrote in Silk* by Kelli Estes. In this pleasing blend of historical fiction and contemporary drama, we experience the tale of two young women – a 19th-century Chinese-American and a recent college graduate trying to piece together a family mystery.

Inara Erickson, just out of business school, has a corporate job at Starbucks waiting for her. She just needs to settle her aunt's estate before she steps into her career. Aunt Dahlia has bequeathed to Inara the family compound Rothesay, nestled on Orcas Island in the Puget Sound. When Inara arrives, she begins to warm to Aunt Dahlia's dream of transforming the estate into a hotel. When she finds a piece of elaborately embroidered cloth hidden in a stair tread, she returns to Seattle with two objectives: to discover more about the embroidered sleeve and to convince her father to finance the conversion of Rothesay into a boutique hotel.

Alternating with Inara's story, Mei Lien's tragic tale unfolds. Born in Seattle, Mei Lien lives with her father and grandmother above their dry goods shop until public sentiment turns violent after the Chinese Exclusion Act. Mei Lien and her whole neighborhood are forced onto a boat for China. But the ship's racist owner, Inara's great-great-great grandfather Duncan Campbell, decides to dump his human cargo into the sea. After Mei Lien is rescued by Joseph McElroy and brought to his homestead on Orcas Island, the two fall in love and begin a life together. But the plot thickens as they discover Duncan Campbell is their neighbor.

As the story turns back to present day, Inara begins a romance with Daniel Chin, an academic who helps her research the origin of her embroidered cloth. When Inara discovers that her ancestor Duncan Campbell, soon to be commemorated in a city park, was a mass murderer, she must decide whether to reveal the secret or keep it hidden.

Inspired by true events, Kelli Estes's brilliant and atmospheric debut serves as a poignant tale of two women determined to do the right thing, and reminds us of the power of our own stories.

WATER CONSERVATION

Austin Water is currently in Conservation Stage Water Restrictions. You may water only on your assigned day(s) and times:

Residential Automatic Irrigation

Even Address: Thursday

Odd Address: Wednesday

Residential Hose-End Sprinklers

Even Address: Thursday, Sunday

Odd Address: Wednesday, Saturday

Residential Hours

Midnight – 10 AM

7 PM – Midnight

- Wasting water is prohibited
- Washing vehicles at home is permitted with an auto shut-off hose or bucket
 - Charity car washes may only be held at a commercial carwash
 - Fountains must recirculate water
 - Restaurants may not serve water unless requested by a customer
 - Patio misters at commercial properties (including restaurants and bars) may only operate between 4 p.m. and midnight
 - Commercial power/pressure washing equipment must meet efficiency requirements

The following are allowed at any time on any day of the week:

- Watering with drip irrigation, a hand-held hose or a refillable container
- Watering trees with a Treegator®, soaker hose or automatic tree bubbler
- Watering vegetable gardens with a soaker hose
- Pressure washing sidewalk/driveway/deck/patio/paved areas/home siding/fence

Enforcement

Failing to follow the water restrictions may result in enforcement action, including fines of up to \$500 per violation. To report violations, call 3-1-1, use the 3-1-1 mobile app, or submit a report online. Please provide the address, time, date, and type of violation.

Resources

Visit <https://www.austintexas.gov/departments/water-restrictions> for more information about Frequently Asked Questions, Variances, Drought Contingency Plan and the Water Conservation Code.

BANDIT SIGNS

What is a bandit sign?

A bandit sign is any sign which is illegally placed in a restricted area, often advertising anything from new homes to weight-loss products.

Is it legal for citizens to remove bandit signs?

While it is legal for citizens to remove bandit signs, the City of Austin strongly recommends that citizens instead contact code officials to deal with the matter. All citizens are urged to call 3-1-1, and can do so anonymously.

Where can I legally place signage?

Legal signage includes any signs placed on private property.

Is it possible to obtain a permit to place signage in non-private areas?

At this time, the City of Austin does not issue any permits which allow citizens to post signage in any public or otherwise restricted areas.

Does the content play a part in where a sign can go?

No, however, signage is not allowed in the Right of Way.

What are the consequences for posting bandit signage?

Bandit signage will be removed by code officials. While first time offenders may be issued a warning, repeat offenders will receive fines (a maximum of \$2000) for each sign that is found to be illegally placed.

Questions?

Email: CodeCommunications@austintexas.gov



Mealybugs

Mealybugs are pests of landscape plants and houseplants. Outdoors, they are often active during times of warm, dry weather, but can be a problem indoors at any time of year. Infestations usually start at the base of stems and then spread from there as populations increase.

Mealybugs are a type of unarmored scale insect. They are sexually dimorphic, with males and females looking different. Males have wings and can fly while females remain wingless throughout their life. Immature (nymphs) and female mealybugs are oval, soft-bodied and covered with a white waxy powder.

These insects have piercing-sucking mouthparts which is used to penetrate plant tissue to suck out juices. Feeding by mealybugs can lead to yellowing or wilting of the plant and distortion of the leaves. With larger infestations, the insects may cause stunted growth, premature leaf drop or plant death. Mealybugs excrete honeydew, which is a sweet, sticky substance on which a fungus called sooty mold can grow. Sooty mold can indirectly harm plants by blocking sunlight from reaching plant surfaces and reducing photosynthesis.

Tips for mealybug management:

- Conserve beneficial insects; there are many insects that feed on or parasitize mealybugs
 - To help conserve beneficial insects, use other methods to manage pests before choosing a pesticide.
- **Use high pressure water sprays to dislodge the insects from the plant
- **Insecticidal soap
- **Horticultural oils
- **Other insecticides labeled for mealybug control (look for active ingredients such as azadirachtin, pyrethrum, pyrethrins). Read and follow all label instructions.
- For severely infested plants, it may be best to throw the plant away and buy a new one
- **If treating houseplants, move plants outside during treatment then move back inside once treatment has dried.

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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REMINDER FROM THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL COMMITTEE

Got plans to spruce up your home? Remember, exterior painting, new windows and doors, new roofs, major changes to landscape, fencing, any room addition, any tree removal all require prior approval by the Environmental Control Committee. Please send an email detailing the work you propose to do to mightywrights@me.com.

Please send the request well ahead of when you plan to have the work done so that the Committee has time to review and approve. Together we are all working to keep our community one of the most beautiful in Austin!

VISION ZERO UPDATE

In June, the Austin City Council approved a new milestone in its Vision Zero goal, the strategy to end traffic fatalities and increase mobility for all users. In effort to make city streets safer, neighborhood streets less than 36 feet wide with primarily front-facing residential land uses will now have 25 mph speed limits. Some streets wider than 36 feet may also receive reduced speed limits according to the city.

For more information and an interactive map, visit: <http://austintexas.gov/news/speed-limits-change-neighborhood-and-urban-core-streets-improve-safety-all-travelers>

FIREWISE

Despite the impacts of COVID-19, the Firewise Association, of which the Courtyard Community is a long-time member, has been working to ensure that the member communities are kept up-to-date on fire safety decisions and activities.

The Firewise Association held a virtual quarterly meeting in April with members and guest presenters. The agenda included issues of vegetation, landscaping, AFD Wildfire Division and Texas A&M Forest Service activities. One of the most significant was the clearing of overgrown ground cover and heightening tree canopies to create shaded fire breaks.

These activities are essential in eliminating fuel for wind blown embers from brush fires and active wildland fires which are the most concerning element. During the recent stay-at-home period many homeowners spent time clearing out gutters, dead branches and vegetation around homes which is the first step in prevention.

Also noteworthy, the Austin City Council took action on two resolutions that bode well for the fire safety future. The Council adopted the International Wildlands Urban Interface Code, which will be incorporated into planning. Still to be determined is the impact.

In addition, the Council adopted a resolution to initiate an Austin Civilian Conservation Corp. to work on fire fuel mitigation, erosion, trail and waterway maintenance. These activities have been a challenge to the AFD and communities. The call went out the Firewise Association for projects and with the leadership and initiative of Denise Hogan and the HOA Board the Courtyard Community submitted projects to address several common areas that are in need of clearing, Park Trail maintenance and the Bull Creek erosion. The Council will review all the submitted projects as they implement the ACCC.



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