

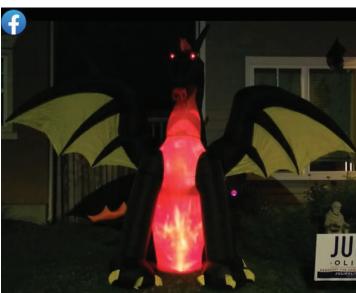
THE MUELLER NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

# FRONT PORCH FLYER



# LOWEEN IN MUELLER! (





Dragon with Fire Halloween Decor by Snow White



Sorry, no candy! by Mike Sears



Early afternoon Halloween decoration hunt by Meaghan Regier

Continued on Page 3







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## FRONT PORCH FLYER

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#### **EDITORS-IN-CHIEF**

**Dusty Harshman** Kathy Sokolic

#### **EDITORIAL STAFF**

Greg Buford, Cynthia Cammack, Andrew Clements, Shawn Collins, Ani Colt, Luke Downs, Susan Egan, April Geruso, Drew Harris, Bart Jacob, Judith Katzman, Woody Lauland, Layla Mansuri, Dennis Mick, Sadia Tirmizi, Preston Tyree, Lila Valencia, **Chrissy Yates** 

☑ fpf@muellerneighborhood.org

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#### Continued from Cover





Haunted Page Street Garage by Meaghan RegierRegier

Mask-up Witch by Snow White



Tea Party with Mad Hatter Kennedy Coe and friends by Snow White

### Letter from the Chair

Dear Neighbors,

As we approach the holidays, I can't help but reflect on the spirit of the season – especially as we wind down an eventful year.

The holidays are a time for giving and a time for being neighborly. There are more ways to give other than financially. The MNA is always looking for more residents to get involved in our organization. This is a great way to give your time, talent, and passion to bettering our neighborhood. For more information on the various committees and opportunities in the MNA, visit our website at muellerneighborhood.org.

Have a safe and happy holiday season!

John Wooding



### Mueller Restaurants Stay in Business While Helping Local Families

By Lila Valencia



Eggplant parm 2 servings

March 2020 brought record low unemployment and a nationwide economic boom. Locally, stages were being set for SXSW, Aldrich Street was bustling with patrons awaiting their restaurant reservation times, and AISD students were enjoying their Spring Break. All that changed on March 19th when Governor Abbott signed an executive order to close schools and bars and restrict restaurants to takeout and delivery orders. This order was followed by a stayat-home order from the City of Austin and Travis County

on March 22nd. Almost overnight, unemployment in Austin rose from 3.7% to 12.4%. Adam Orman and Fiore Tedesco, co-owners of L'Oca d'Oro, wanted to avoid this outcome for their staff.

Already advocates of fair wages for restaurant employees, Orman and Tedesco began researching ways to help their staff weather this economic storm. Armed with models of private-public partnerships from around the country, such as World Central Kitchen and DC Central Kitchen, they reached out to the City of Austin in March to impress upon local officials the need for short-term revenue solutions for restaurants and the imminent rise in food insecurity due to the pandemic.

In April, Orman and Tedesco learned of an opportunity from the Austin Independent School District (AISD) that would pay restaurants to prepare meals for the caregivers of AISD students receiving free and reduced lunches. Through their food service program, AISD had been providing school meals to students from the start of the pandemic, but they did not have resources to provide meals for caregivers, too. This is when the Caregiver Meal Program, a partnership between the City of Austin, the Austin Ed Fund, and AISD's Crisis Support Fund, was established. Caregiver meals are now served alongside student meals at curbside distribution sites throughout the district. Meals are distributed on Thursdays at over 50 AISD schools during three distinct time blocks.

Caregiver meals are prepared by local Austin restaurants, including Mueller's own L'Oca d'Oro and Colleen's Kitchen. As part of the program, restaurants prepare 14 meals (seven breakfasts and seven lunches) per week and are reimbursed about \$5 per meal. The meals must be wholesome and well-balanced, include foods that are ready to eat as well as foods that can be frozen to be consumed at a later date, and appropriately packaged conditions that pose logistical challenges to the typical restaurant model.

Continued on Page 5

## FRONT PORCH FLYER

#### Continued from Page 4



Colleen's Kitchen owner Ashley Fric embraced the challenge. She learned of the program through Good Work Austin, a collaborative founded in 2019 by several small business owners, including by Orman and Tedesco, focused on sharing ideas and resources to support each other and their employees through this pandemic and beyond. Fric admits it was a leap of faith, and they have to be prepared to constantly pivot, but it has provided their restaurant the short-term

Hummus and tabouli plate with crudite relief they needed. "It's not super lucrative but it allows us to keep our staff employed, trained, and helps to address the larger food insecurity issue that a lot of families are facing."

Fric added "These families are at home just like us, feeling stressed and overwhelmed with their responsibilities. We feel so passionate about the program. It's local residents employed in local businesses and feeding Austinites. It means a lot to everyone who works here.'

Orman noted, "We want more restaurants involved in solving food insecurity." He stated participating in the program has made him even more aware of the issue and allowed them to take on some of the load that volunteers and food banks typically



Meals Shipping Colleens

carry. Prior to the pandemic, the Capital Area Food Bank was providing meals to over 184,000 clients per month. In August, they provided meals for 340,000 clients.

Orman describes food worlds colliding, "There's the food world that feeds people who pay for their food and the other food world that feeds people who cannot afford to pay for food." He adds, "It's ridiculous we had not come together sooner because we are better together."

To date, nearly 2.4 million meals, including over 582,000 caregiver meals, have been provided to AISD families. L'Oca d'Oro has prepared over 100,000 of these meals, and Colleen's has prepared another 40,000. Through an extension of funding for the program, caregiver meals will continue to be available through the end of the year. For additional information on the Caregiver Meal program, distribution sites and times, and more, visit austinisd.org/openforlearning/meals. To learn more about Good Work Austin, including their guidelines for restaurants reopening "Dine with Confidence," visit goodworkaustin.org.

Disclosure notice: Colleen's Kitchen and L'Oca d'Oro have made in-kind contributions and sponsored events of the Mueller Neighborhood Association.



Quinoa tabouli with curried chickpea salad and beet yogurt



Radicchio and spinach salad with candied pecans and grana padano

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# Package Safety This Holiday Season

By Taylor Youngblood, MNA Steering Committee

You may have done a lot of your shopping already on Black Friday and Small Business Saturday. For those of you that have not finished already (you aren't finished are you?) or are still expecting deliveries this holiday season, here are a few reminders as well as some new information about package deliveries.

- Sign up for alerts. Amazon will email you and share a popup on your phone if you activate these features. UPS and FedEx will text you when they deliver. UPS and FedEx alerts also show up for deliveries from others, like gifts, as long as your phone number is listed on the delivery.
- Make neighbor friends. If you are away when you receive a package or alert, make arrangements to text or call a neighbor to retrieve packages for you. I recommend having at least two neighbors you can contact. For example, I've offered to help neighbors with packages but have been texted when my son and I are napping, so I know it's good to have a backup for situations like this when someone is unavailable.
- Use your porch lights. Not all deliveries are made during daylight hours. Some deliveries occur early in the morning before daylight, and some can be as late as 9:00 PM. Delivery workers don't always hide packages, so do what you can to deter theft by lighting up the dark.
- Many major shippers have delivery lockers stationed at area businesses. Check to see if yours has one nearby.
- Amazon customers: There's a new program called Key by Amazon for In-Garage Delivery. It's free for Prime customers and is available with a subscription for non-Prime customers. You'll need to see if your garage is compatible. If so, this allows Amazon to open your garage and leave a package inside. If you use this service I recommend you make sure your interior garage door, your home doors, and your gate are all locked just for extra safety.

If you do experience package theft, report it. If the theft has already occurred, call 3-1-1. If you notice a theft occurring, call 9-1-1. The Austin Police Department (APD) is aware of the level of crime in Mueller only when crimes are reported to 3-1-1 or 9-1-1. In addition to 3-1-1 and 9-1-1, you can report crimes online to APD via this link: austintexas.gov/department/ireportaustincom

Or use the APD app - Austin PD (it looks like the APD badge) at: austintexas.gov/department/austin-pd-smartphone-app. This option offers real-time texting with police officers which can be very helpful for a crime in-progress. Real-time cameras like Ring and Nest can be accessed by APD when you report crime via the app.

May you and your packages stay safe this season. Happy Holidays to you and yours!

# December 2020 Mueller Update

By Rick Krivoniak, Vice Chair, Robert Mueller Municipal Airport Plan Implementation Advisory Commission

Mueller's affordable housing program was on the agenda for November's Commission meeting. The program is still very successful, though the pandemic has had an impact. A few families have required some financial assistance, and it's anticipated that early 2021 may bring more. Fortunately, the Mueller Foundation is capable of providing that assistance. Besides three tax-credit apartment projects where all but a few units are affordable, most other apartment complexes at Mueller have at least 10% of their units available for tenants that qualify under the affordable program at or below 60% of Austin's Median Family Income (MFI), which is currently \$58,550 for a family of four, or \$41,000 for one person.

Habitat for Humanity has a row of homes nearing completion across from the new Jesse Andrews Park, and as a new section of Mueller opens, a number of new affordable row homes, garden homes, and condominiums will be built. Homes in the affordable program are priced well below market value, selling in the high \$100,000s to low \$200,000s for those at or below 80% of MFI, or \$78,100 for a family of four, or \$62,500 for a two-person household.

One of Austin's best sushi restaurants, Kyoten Sushiko, closed earlier this year, but chef Michael Che will soon open a new contender in the category. Che plans to open omakase sushi restaurant Tsuke Edomae in the same Mosaic at Mueller space at 4600 Mueller Blvd. #1035 in March 2021.

Following the City of Austin's protocol, the play, exercise, and sports facilities at Mueller's parks have opened with notices to follow COVID-19 precautions. Mueller's pools have closed for the season, but are anticipated to open next April for resident swim and to the public on Memorial Day.

Mueller Commission meetings continue to be virtual for the foreseeable future. Agendas, minutes, meeting recordings, and other documents are available at austintexas.gov/rmmapiac





#### Mueller Neighborhood Association Membership Form

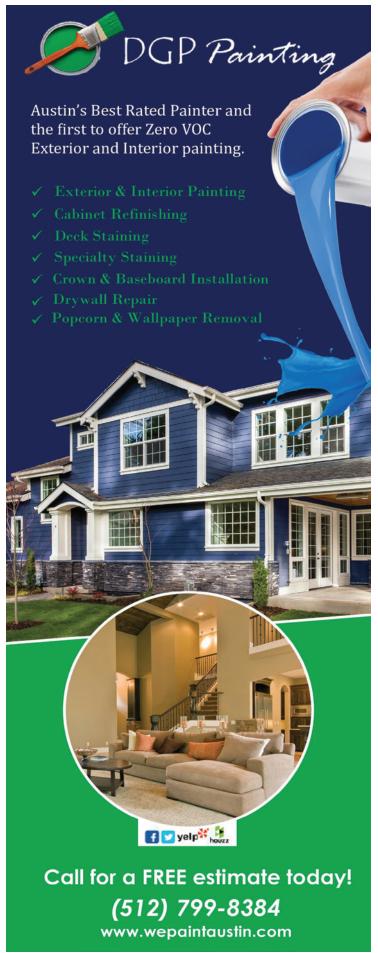
To become a voting MNA member, a Mueller resident must complete this form and submit annual dues. New members must then wait 14 days before they may vote. Annual dues are \$5.00 per resident, 18 years or older. These funds are used to help pay for the Front Porch Flyer, MNA Grants, funding neighborhood events, and operating costs such as printing, record-keeping, and the MNA P.O. Box.

You may give your dues to your Block Captain, bring it to an MNA meeting, or mail it to: MNA, PO Box 49123, Austin, TX 78765.

Checks may be written to "Mueller Neighborhood Association."

NAME:	DATE:
ADDRESS:	
PHONE:	
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(Your email will only be used for official MNA communications)	

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