



nwacaNEWS

NORTHWEST AUSTIN CIVIC ASSOCIATION

DECEMBER 2020

VOLUME 11, ISSUE 12

'Tis the Season for a NWACA Holiday Decorating Contest Happy Holidays NWACA!

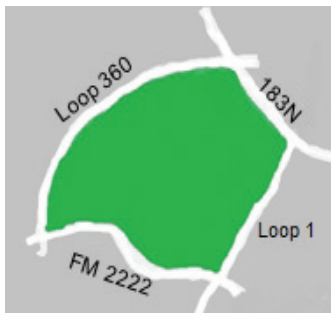
As this rather strange 2020 comes to a close, the NWACA Board issues a challenge and an invitation to all neighbors to sparkle up their outdoor holiday décor more than ever before. Many of us may be staying closer to home with a little extra time on our hands, so let's get extra creative. Walking, riding, scooting, or even caroling through the neighborhood on mild (or even bracing) Central Texas winter evenings will not only be uplifting, but also healthful.

To that end, the NWACA Board will be awarding prizes for the best outdoor holiday decorations – special festive yard signs applauding the homeowners' creativity. Moreover, we will feature the winners across our communications platforms, including the January newsletter. Board Member and Treasurer Robyn Nunis will lead the judging team, which will fan out across the neighborhood on Monday, December 14 between 6:00 and 8:00 p.m. The judging criteria will be based on creative use of lights, yard decoration placement, storyline and/or theme, and overall presentation. So, join us in helping spread some holiday spirit across Northwest Austin this December and we'll look forward to an exciting new year in 2021.

Continued on Page 2



New to the Neighborhood? *Welcome to NWACA!*



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

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/departments/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:
info@nwaca.org

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.



NWACA Events CALENDAR

These events are as planned on November 15. As you consider participating in one of the events listed, please check first with the organizer, since the Covid-19 outbreak may affect the ability to conduct the event.

December 8th, 6:30pm

NWACA Board Meeting
Virtual

January 3rd, 2:00pm

Parks Committee
Virtual

January 12th, 6:30pm-8:30pm

NWACA Board Meeting
Virtual

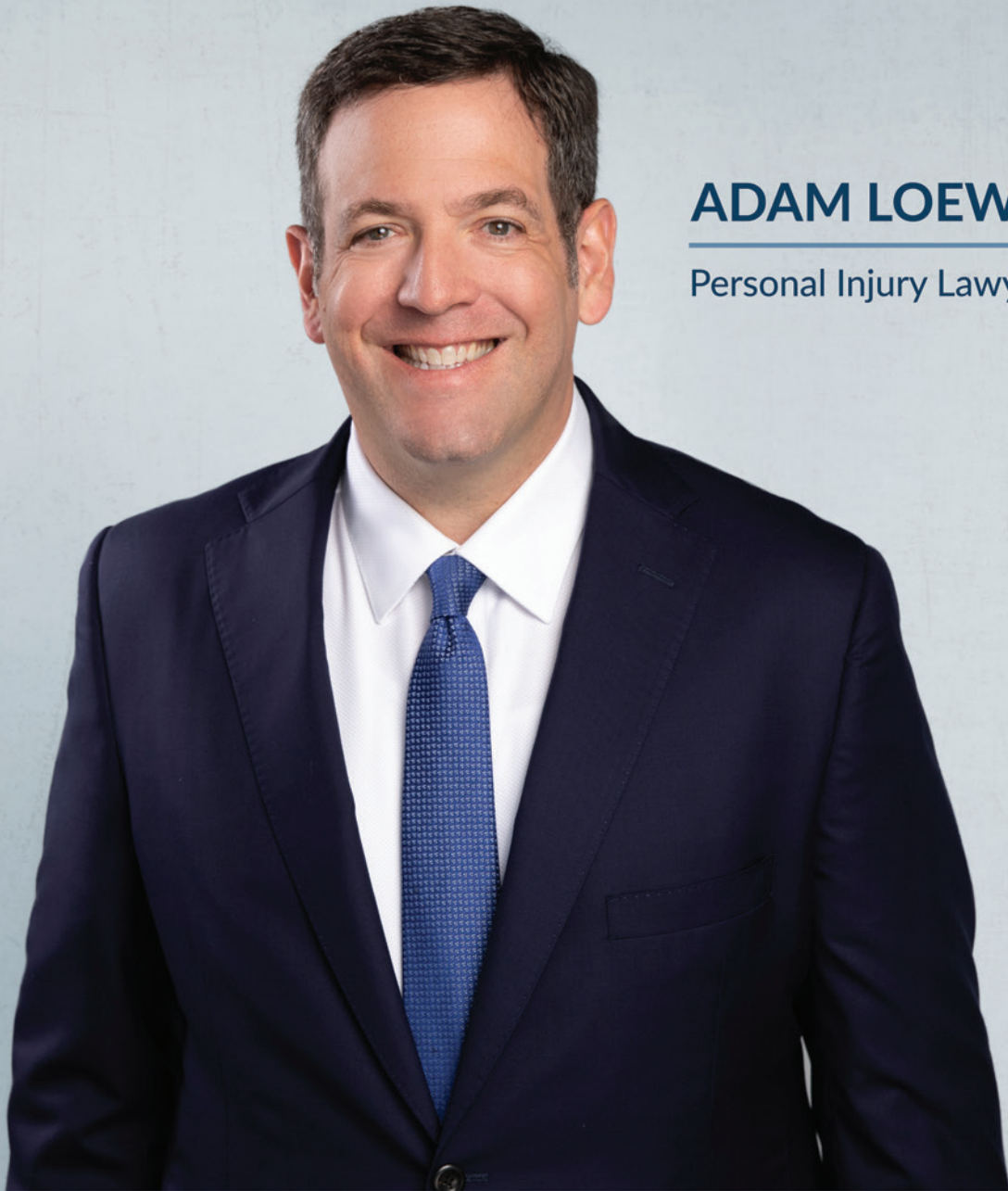
January 17th, 2:00pm

Tree and Environmental Stewardship Committee
Virtual

January 26th, 5:00pm

NWACA Zoning and Transportation Committee
Virtual

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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HILL ELEMENTARY'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

-Teri Schock with photos credit to Liz Neff

Hill Elementary recently celebrated their 50th Anniversary with a drive-by car parade on November 7th. The Anderson Drumline performed for families and the Trojan Belles also participated. Congratulations Hill Elementary!



Hill Elementary School Song

Hill is where we work
and it's where we play
As we grow and learn
with each passing day.
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Armadillos shining bright
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Hill's the best from coast to
coast
May that always be our boast .
Do our best & reach of up high.
We are proud of Hill!

NWACA Project Reserve Fund Inviting Applications

– NWACA Board

The Project Reserve Fund was established by the NWACA Board to help fund special projects that have a community benefit for neighborhood residents and are publicly accessible.

During recent 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, provided part of the funding for the pilot Constable patrol project, and contributed to the Loewy Playground funding. Most recently, the Project Reserve Fund helped with the Murchison Middle School Common Space improvements.

Any group or individual can apply for Project Reserve funds; just download an application online at www.nwaca.org using the link in the Hot Topics list.

Applications for the current round of projects will be accepted until December 15, 2020, and selected applicants will be encouraged to present their projects at the January 2021 NWACA Board meeting. Submit applications, drawings,

pictures, and estimated project costs to info@nwaca.org or by U.S. mail to: NWACA, P.O. Box 26654, Austin, TX 78755. Applicants will be notified of their acceptance and funds can be distributed as early as the month following project selection. The number of projects funded is at the discretion of the Board. If you have questions about the program, email info@nwaca.org

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. Funding is available because of the careful management of NWACA funds. Please help us to continue our work by maintaining your NWACA membership.



Brian's Real Estate Listing Activity in 78731

UNDER CONTRACT



4512 Colorado Crossing

UNDER CONTRACT



5100 Smokey Valley



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After every closing, I give back a portion of my sales to Austin's affordable housing initiatives which assist families in need. Since 2011, I've contributed nearly \$30,000 and together with my company we've donated millions towards Foundation Communities, Austin Habitat for Humanity, and Community First! Village. Realty Austin raised over \$400,000 for these local charities this year alone.

This giving season, I challenge you to support local and give local. When you shop, try to buy from an Austin business owner. If you want to contribute to an important cause, I can help you find one. Austin is our home – let's take care of it together and spread the

#neighborhoodlove.

Brian Copland
REALTOR®



Northwest Austin Holiday Outdoor Decorations Contest

— Robyn Nunis

Let's have some fun during this holiday season and bring on the yard decorations!!

NWACA Board Members will evaluate holiday yard displays, while enjoying a ride around the neighborhood to see this year's contenders. Exterior decorations located on the street side of the participant's property will be considered. Judging criteria will include creative use of lights, decoration placement, storyline and/or theme, and overall presentation. Judging will take place Monday, December 14, 2020 between 6:00 and 8:00 pm.

Winners will receive yard signs for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place on December 20, 2020 and will be announced in NWACA Notes and the January issue of the NWACA Newsletter and on the NWACA web site and the Facebook Group page.



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Gourmand's Corner: Ghost Kitchens?

— Chris Hajdu



This column is about a month late, as Halloween would have been a good time to talk about ghost kitchens.

A ghost kitchen (also known as a cloud kitchen or a virtual kitchen) is basically a restaurant without the dining room. Such a facility can house multiple kitchens in a single location, so they can share parking, walk-in freezers, and other common facilities.

So why do they exist? Ghost kitchens arose with several key shifts in American dining habits, including an overall shift from a sit-down to a take-out or delivery experience. This change was accelerated by the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic. Economics is another driving factor. One of the biggest overhead costs for a restaurant is real estate for dining rooms, parking, etc. In cities with high rents, this is an even greater problem. It's no surprise that the ghost kitchen concept got started in cities like New York and San Francisco. If you do away with dining rooms and share parking costs, you can have several kitchens up and running in short order.

A list of benefits of ghost kitchens compared to conventional restaurants includes:

1. Reduced rent
2. Lower overhead costs
3. Maximized workflows
4. Ability to meet modern delivery demands
5. Increased speed to market
6. Extra money to spend on digital marketing

The ghost kitchen concept is not entirely new. Pizza places have operated under this model for years. Visit your local Domino's, and no one is eating in the dining room (surprise... there is no dining room since they offer only delivery or pickup). Ghost kitchens, however, generally take advantage of a single location to house multiple eateries. A local example is Kitchen United Mix located on Burnet Road, which houses 19 kitchens in the space that one traditional restaurant would occupy. (That's economy of scale!) It's a convenient spot for customers or delivery drivers to pick-up food. It also supports families with picky palates, as it's easy to order food from several kitchens at a single location (much like a mall food court, but without the seating).

Unlike a standard restaurant, a ghost kitchen doesn't need to be in a high rent location. It can locate where it makes economic sense. The ghost kitchen model also works well for startup restaurants, as the initial investment is much lower – hire chefs and expeditors, order some food, and you can get started. In this regard, they share a lot with the food truck model.

Continued on Page 8

NORTHWEST HILLS AND WESTOVER HILLS MARKET REPORT UPDATE

These statistics are for single family homes compared to last year YTD through October.



Median Sales Price

\$837,500

↑ 15%
FROM JAN-OCT 2019

Number of Sales

209 **↓ 12%**
FROM JAN-OCT 2019

Median List Price/Sqft

\$317 **↑ 9%**
FROM JAN-OCT 2019

5 Days Median on Market

↓ 61%
FROM JAN-OCT 2019

Median Sold Price/Sqft

\$317 **↑ 11%**
FROM JAN-OCT 2019

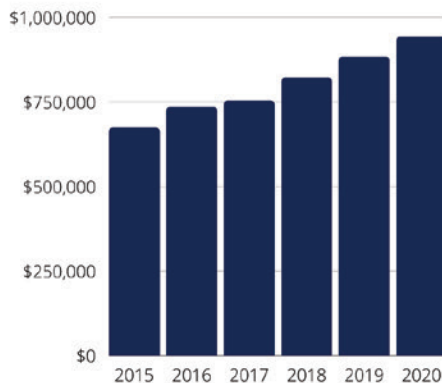
% of List Price Sold

100% **↑ 3%**
FROM JAN-OCT 2019

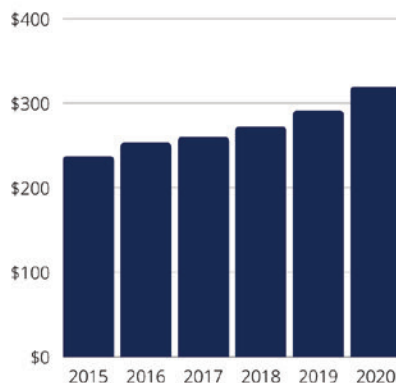
Total Sales Volume

\$187,254,151
↓ .4%
FROM JAN-OCT 2019

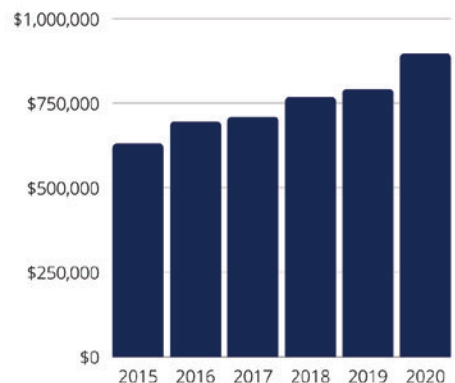
AUSTIN IS BREAKING ALL TIME HIGHS



LIST PRICE, AVERAGE



SOLD PRICE/SQFT



SOLD PRICE, AVERAGE

The Austin market continues to break records and our neighborhood is no exception. We've experienced positive appreciation over the past several years with expectations to continue this trend due to low interest rates, low inventory and high demand. With many people spending more time at home due to COVID-19, we're seeing a trend in homeowners moving or remodeling their homes to allow space for a dedicated office, home gym, or additional outdoor living space. If you would like more information on our housing market or improvements to consider for the best rate of return, Julie is happy to provide insight and guidance.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM OUR FAMILY TO YOURS!

nest

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NWACA News

Continued from Page 6

One company working the ghost kitchen trend is Tso Chinese Delivery. They have no dining rooms, just storefronts for pickup of orders and delivery, located in lower rent locations across Austin. PF Chang's has a location at Kitchen United Mix to help them funnel delivery and pickup traffic away from their brick-and-mortar storefront. The ghost kitchen model helps new and old restaurants alike.

Some of the largest players in the ghost kitchen game are Kitchen United (including Austin's Kitchen United Mix), funded by Google Ventures; Cloud Kitchens, funded at over \$400 million from several venture companies; DoorDash Kitchens; Uber Eats; and Virtual Kitchen Co.

It'll be interesting to see how this model plays out over the next 5 to 10 years. No doubt a lot of people are interested in the concept, as we can see from those betting on it as an investment.

If you are interested in Kitchen United Mix, check out: <https://order.kitchenunited.com/austin>

For Tso Chinese Delivery (they have free delivery) check out: <https://tsodelivery.com/>

Happy Dining!

1940 Aerial Photos of Our Neighborhood – Richard Denney

Ever wondered what the neighborhood looked like eighty years ago? A recent joint effort of the Travis County Historical Commission and Travis County Department of Transportation and Natural Resources now lets you travel back in time to about 1940 using aerial photos from the USDA.

The aerials are a valuable aid to historians, providing a snapshot of Austin and Travis County before WWII; before Travis County's explosive growth; before the construction of Longhorn Dam or the full completion of Mansfield Dam; before there was an I-35; before there was a 1st Street or Lamar Street Bridge; before there was a Bergstrom Air Force Base, much less an Austin-Bergstrom International Airport. They provide a view of a time when 19th century farms and homesteads dotted the landscape.

Here in the neighborhood, 1940 was a time before there was a quarry; there was no Far West Boulevard, no Loop 360, no MoPac expressway, no neighborhoods east or west of the railroad tracks, and no J. J. Pickle

Research Campus to our north.

Pleasant Valley School (AKA Bull Creek School; one of the "mountain schools") was still in use near the intersection of today's RM 2222 and Loop 360. The Esperanza one-room log cabin school, while no longer in use and moved from its original location overlooking Spicewood Springs, was extant at the intersection of Spicewood Springs Road and today's MoPac expressway. Near today's Waterloo Icehouse on Loop 360 sat the Champion family (early settlers to Bull Creek) dairy



1940 aerial of neighborhood. Arrows show NWACA boundaries. Starting in the southwest corner clockwise are FM 2222, Bull Creek, road to Jollyville and Burnet TX (today's US 183), MoPac rails.

barn. Today's Lakewood Drive / Loop 360 was still the original Bull Creek Road, some parts still tracking through the creek itself. Homesteads of settlers from the mid-19th century, some abandoned, could be found along Bull Creek.

Spicewood Springs Road was a dirt road connecting old Jollyville Road to Bull Creek to the west; the aerials show the original route of the road before it was straightened (the turnoff just 100+ feet northwest of Spicewood Springs Animal Hospital is the

old road). To the east Spicewood Springs Road continued as today's Foster Lane; Anderson Lane was not yet in existence. South of today's Anderson Lane, near Northwest District Park, the home of George Washington Davis, participant in the Battle of San Jacinto, was still standing (it burned in 1944).

Built on ArcGIS, the new web page provides a basemap of your choice, georeferenced 1940 aerial photos, plus several layers to facilitate navigation and historic analysis: GLO abstracts, TCAD parcels, and subdivisions; lakes, rivers, and creeks. You can access the aerials here; screen shots will help you navigate the user interface: <https://traviscountyhistorical.blogspot.com/p/1940-aerials.html>

Richard Denney is Vice-Chair of the Travis County Historical Commission. For more on this topic and other local history, visit <https://traviscountyhistorical.blogspot.com/>



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IDEA KWAK'S

Writer's
CORNER

Peter Stone



Peter Stone playing violin in his back yard

As I walked through the colors of spring, live music drew me to a driveway rehearsal of Matt McCarty's band. Recently, as I walked through the colors of fall, live music once again drew me to a driveway rehearsal, on the same street, this time a rehearsal of Peter Stone's string quartet.¹

Peter, who alternates between first and second violin, is the founder and director of the Learning Agents Research Group within the Department of Computer Science at the University of Texas at Austin (UT) as well as associate department chair and Director of Texas Robotics. Mary Brown, the other violinist in the quartet, is an electrical engineer with Apple. Deb Welter, the violist, has retired, and cellist Scott McKenzie is a manufacturing engineer with Samsung.

The group, which meets every other weekend, was playing Shostakovich's Ninth String Quartet when I came upon them. Hoping to read through the other fourteen of the composer's quartets, their extensive repertoire includes not only the works by Beethoven, Mozart, and Haydn, but also the quartets of Dvorak, Debussy, Ravel, and even Piazzolla.

Peter began playing violin at the age of four in Buffalo, New York, where he studied with Mary Cay Neal, one of the earliest proponents of the Suzuki method. In his teens he performed with Neal's chamber group; three international tours taking them to Central Europe, the United Kingdom, and Hungary and Russia.

While attending public school, Peter played in all-state and all-regional orchestras. Later, in graduate school at Carnegie Mellon University, he joined the university orchestra, performing with them at Carnegie Hall, Boston Symphony Hall, and the Kennedy Center.

Continued on Page 10

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Continued from Page 9

When he arrived in Austin in 2002, he met the renowned Italian violinist Umberto Gabbi. Gabbi, a founding member of I Musici, invited Peter to join his quartet. Second violin to Gabbi's first, over the years Peter played the core repertoire by Beethoven, Mozart, and Haydn as well as Schubert and Shostakovich.

Peter has a large circle of friends in Austin's music community many of whom he met while playing with ECHO, UT's Engineering Chamber Orchestra, and the UT Orchestra, and when performing chamber music with members of other local groups like the Austin Civic Orchestra and the Balcones Symphony Orchestra.

Peter is married to Tammy Stone, an Assistant Principal at McCallum High School. They moved to Northwest Hills in 2003, their three children attending the Jewish Academy, Doss Elementary School, Murchison Middle School, Fulmore Middle School, and Kealing Middle School, before each graduated from the Liberal Arts and Science Academy (LASA). The Stones' oldest, a computational neuroscientist, plays violin; their second, a mechanical engineering and computer science major, plays piano and sings bass; their youngest, a molecular engineering major, plays cello.

If you're walking near Chimney Corners and Spurlock and hear a string quartet, chances are it's Peter, Mary, Deb, and Scott rehearsing. They welcome listeners, and during breaks they are fascinating to talk to.

May your 2021 be filled with good health, peace, and music.

¹ *The string quartet is one of the most prominent genres in classical music. Developed by Joseph Haydn, the form is a prestigious display of a composer's ability. The palette of sound, more restricted than that of an orchestra, forces the music to stand on its own rather than rely on tonal color and writing for four, equal instruments inherently inspires the complex dialogue of counterpoint.)*

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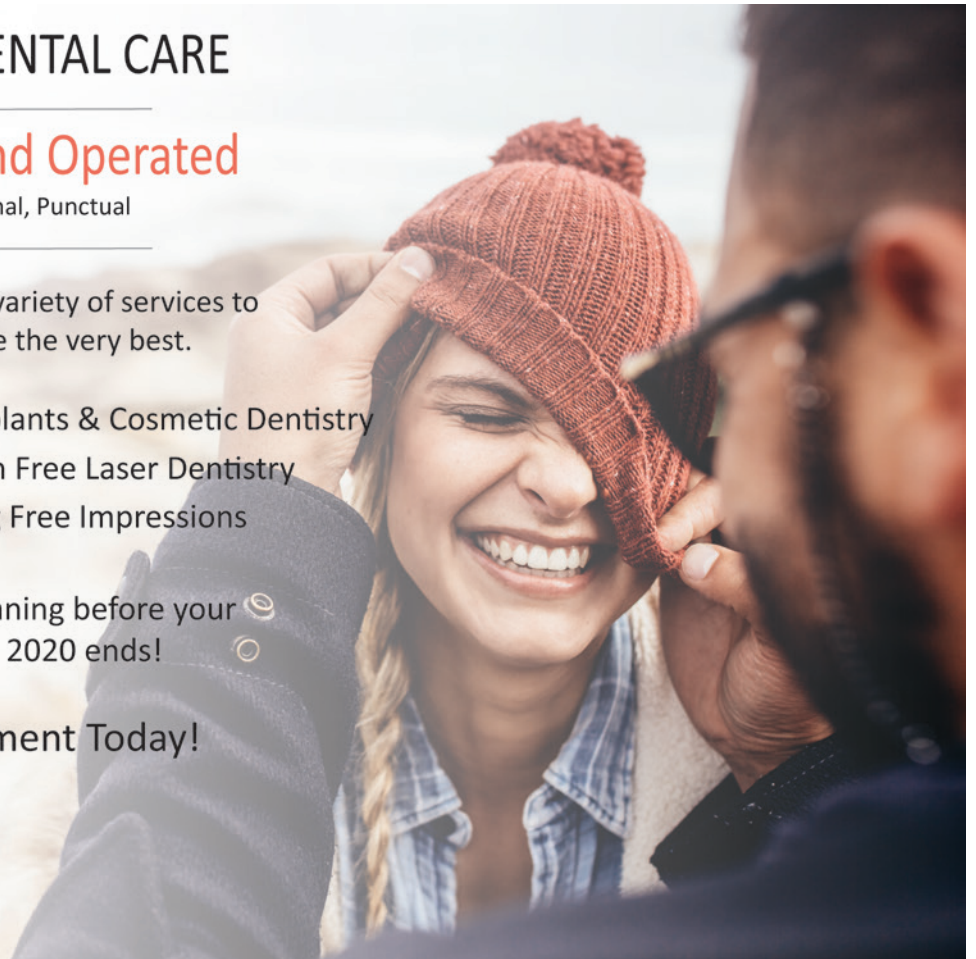
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Traffic Concerns in Our Neighborhood

– NWACA Transportation Committee

Mesa and North Hills Drives

There have been 13 car crashes at the intersection of Mesa and North Hills Drives over the last four years, more than for the Mesa Drive and Far West Boulevard intersection, which carries about 20% more traffic. This level concerns both neighbors and the Austin Transportation Department (ATD).

A partial explanation for the crashes is that the Mesa and North Hills intersection only has stops on North Hills. It's too close to the Mesa and Far West intersection to put in another four way stop. Warning signs have been put up on North Hills, and Mesa Drive has markings painted on the street to encourage care. Unfortunately, the warning signs are usually effective only with strangers to an area; local drivers don't pay attention to warnings they see every day.

What else can be done? The intersection is too small to create a roundabout without acquiring additional right of way. So, what remains is vigilance on the part of all! Be aware that this is a problematic intersection, and always look in all directions before entering or crossing Mesa from North Hills.

25 MPH Neighborhood Speed Limits

In support of the Vision Zero program, the Austin City Council approved lower speed limits on city streets in June 2020. Neighborhood streets that are 36 feet or less in width and have front-facing residences will have posted speeds at 25 mph. Some wider than 36 feet will also have reduced speed limits. Signage is gradually being deployed across the city; work should be complete in 2021.

In our area, the changes affect primarily these streets:

- Interior streets off Far West Drive, including Far Hills Drive, Edgefield Drive, Knollwood Drive, Walnut Clay Drive, Running Rope, Spurlock Drive, Montana Norte, Lamplight Lane, and Ladera Norte, will be reduced to 25 mph.

- Interior streets off Mesa Drive, including Enclave Mesa Circle, Honeycomb Rock Circle, Tablerock Drive, Paint Rock Drive, Rustling Road, Austin Woods Drive, Green Hill Place, Green Mountain Lane, Silver Springs Drive, Point West Drive, and Hycrest Drive, will be reduced to 25mph.

- Streets that will remain at 30 mph include Mesa Drive, Far West Boulevard from Chimney Corners to the west, North Hills Drive, Sierra Drive/MountainClimb Drive, Dry Creek Drive, Hart Lane south of Far West, West Rim Drive, Greystone Drive, Myrick Drive, Adirondack Trail, Steck Avenue, Cima Serena Drive, Hydridge Drive, and Tallwood Drive.

Note that some portions of streets will be reduced to 25 mph. Included are these segments:



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- Far West Boulevard, between Stony Meadow Lane and Candle Ridge Drive

- Valburn Drive from Greystone Drive to Ladera Norte

- Hart Lane from Far West Drive to Greystone Drive

A map of the impacted changes can be located at <http://austin.maps.arcgis.com>

Changes in Local Area Traffic Management (LATM) Program

For years, ATD used their LATM program to respond to neighborhood speeding issues, relying on citizen requests along with ATD speed studies to determine where to install measures like speed humps. The program has been replaced this year by a new method for determining which streets receive traffic calming treatment.

The new method used crash history and community context scores for all level 1 and level 2 streets (equivalent to “residential” and “collector” streets) citywide to identify a set of 150 streets for which additional speed data were collected, and then selecting 14 streets for traffic calming project implementation.

The community context score includes factors like pedestrian traffic not on sidewalks; proximity to parks, schools, and libraries; and census equity. Unlike some past city programs, project selection was on a citywide basis, with no weight given to the council district in which streets are located.

ATD still welcomes citizen input on dangerous areas, but that input will no longer be necessary for ATD to decide for the department to undertake a traffic calming project.

Understanding City Code: Bandit Signs

— Alan Carson

Illegal right-of-way signs are also known as “bandit signs.” Any sign which is placed in/on a restricted location (utility poles, traffic control boxes, traffic sign poles, or any public property) is illegal. Bandit signs cannot be placed in the median, at intersection corners, or on traffic islands. At a residence, signs, such as those dealing with real estate or political campaigns, cannot be placed in the right-of-way in front of the house alongside the street (that is, in the area between the street and the first expansion joint in a driveway, the street and the sidewalk, or the street and the utility poles). Off-premises signs, of signs pertaining to a site other than where they are located, are not allowed in the City of Austin.

It is legal for residents to remove bandit signs, but the City of Austin strongly recommends that you call 3-1-1 to have the sign(s) removed by code officials. While first time offenders may be issued a warning, repeat offenders will receive fines to a maximum of \$500 for each sign that is found to be illegally placed, for each day it is there. Such a violation is a class C misdemeanor.

The applicable ordinance is 25-10-103 (Signs Prohibited in Public Right of Way), which can be accessed with a web search for Austin Illegal Signs.

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

What is the Austin WUI Code?

— Joyce Statz

In April 2020 the Austin City Council voted to approve a version of the 2015 International Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Code, making Austin the first major city in the state of Texas to adopt such a code. Implementation begins on January 1, 2021.

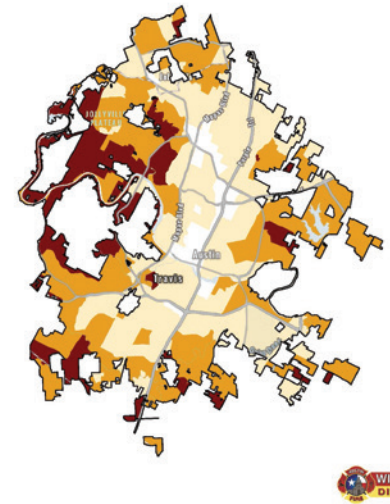
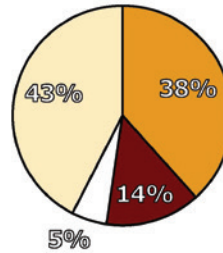
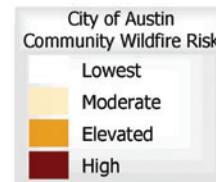
Austin's code is a tailored version of the template in the International WUI Code that focuses primarily on the sections governing materials used in building new structures which are in close proximity to 40 acre or larger wildlands and the management of nearby vegetation. Ember protection will be required for these structures and for any that are within 1.5 miles of 750 acre or larger wildlands.

Existing homes in such areas will be affected only if they go through significant remodeling, and in that case, only the remodeled portion will be subject to the WUI Code. Most existing homes will rely on the efforts of residents to make their dwelling as wildfire resilient as possible.

Key elements in the Austin WUI Code include ignition resistant construction and defensible space around the structure.

Ignition-resistant construction includes these components:

- Roofing material
- Protection of eaves
- Gutters and downspouts



COA Risk Map

- Exterior wall materials
 - Enclosing of underfloor areas
 - Materials used on decks, unenclosed accessory structures, and fences
 - Types of windows
 - Fire rating of doors
 - Materials used for vents and openings
- Defensible space considerations include:
- Ignition-resistant construction
 - For a prescribed distance from the building, distinct hazards need to be addressed, generally vegetation that is not fire-resistant
 - Trees and vegetation must allow space for firefighting operations
 - Dead and down vegetation needs to be removed (and maintained)

Specific guidance in these areas is based on the hazard severity (risk to wildfire) of the building site, derived from a combination of proximity to a wildland area, the topography, and local wildland vegetation as a type of wildfire fuel.

Implementation of the code includes a set of rules that are in the process of being added to the City of Austin Fire Protection Criteria Manual. The WUI Code and these rules will be used by engineers and officers of the Austin Fire Department (AFD) as they review and inspect new development and significant remodeling. AFD will work in collaboration with the City's Development Services Department when significant remodeling of existing structures or building of new structures occurs in or near the WUI. Since more than 60% of Austin's current structures are within 1.5 miles of the WUI and much of Austin's new development is occurring along its outer edges near the WUI, developers and homeowners will be paying close attention to the wildfire risk level of these new areas. The accompanying graphic shows the approximate levels of risk for the City of Austin. A map like this will be kept current and used by those reviewing development plans, to see what specific guidance from the WUI Code needs to be followed for a given building site.

To access the WUI Code and to see an interactive map of the Austin WUI, go to <http://austintexas.gov/department/wildland-urban-interface-code>

Living Safely in an Apartment – Connie Lundgren

Most of the past safety articles published in this newsletter have centered on single family homes. However, many of our friends and neighbors live in multi-family communities; about half of the population within NWACA boundaries lives in apartments. So, this month we focus on safety guidance for these folks.

During times of stress such as a pandemic, people seem even more concerned about crime. Though no place is immune, there are practical tips that can minimize incidents of crime in our community.

Teamwork is one of the best crime-fighting tools. Neighborhood Watch, in cooperation with the Austin Police Department (APD), is one of the most effective means for deterring crime. Working together, neighbors become the eyes and ears of law enforcement and alert one another to possible criminal activity. Whether you live in an apartment community or on a street of single-family homes, you can establish a Neighborhood Watch group. Check out the resources on the NWACA web site, www.nwaca.org, or send email to info@nwaca.org to learn how to get started.

Another useful deterrent mechanism is social media. You could start a Facebook group for your apartment building and share anything that seems suspicious. A telephone tree would also enable residents to reach out easily and quickly when the situation calls for it.

Common areas of concern in apartments are entrances, hallways, walkways, parking lots, elevators, stairways, and mail and laundry rooms.

If these areas are not properly lit or fitted with security cameras, you might discuss the need for additional safety measures with apartment management or the residents' council or board.

No matter where you reside, good advice comes from Robert McCrie, PhD, Professor of Security Management at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City. He advises us to make photocopies of all ID and credit cards and keep those in a safe place, in case of theft.

APD District Representative Darrell Grayson provided these tips for those who live in apartments, and many of these are universally relevant.

- Be aware of your surroundings and what is going on around you.
- Avoid going out alone at night, but if you must, then stay in sight or yelling distance of other people.
- Always lock car doors and take or hide valuables.
- If you think someone is following you, don't drive home. Go to a police station, fire station, or 24-hour store.
- If you have car trouble, do not accept rides. If someone stops to help, tell them you already called the police.
- If you see someone having car trouble, do not stop. Note their location and vehicle model type and call the police. Never pick up hitchhikers.

Working together and following a few simple tips can enhance our community's quality of life and possibly prevent someone from becoming a statistic.



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NWACA thanks members who generously contributed to the 4th of July Parade Fund, the Park Fund, and the Constable Fund, between August 15, 2020 and November 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.

- Judy and Richard Greffe
- Janice Pierce and Don Greffe
- Walter and Ingrid Hennigan
- Dorothy Layne
- Brian and Ilene Novy
- Tom and LaVonne Rogers
- Marjeanne Rutt
- Glenda Smith
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- (and apologies to anyone whose donation we might have missed!)

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go to **www.nwaca.org** and pay online via credit card or PayPal
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