

July



Aug

2014

Walnut Creek Neighborhood News

Walnut Creek Neighborhood Association

Walnut Creek
Neighborhood

New area: North
boundary now Yager
Lane, page 2

Social Media/Listservs:

Yahoo: <http://goo.gl/vU5wjL>

NextDoor: <http://goo.gl/UbLiAu>

Facebook: <http://goo.gl/4G41rS>

Old area demographics,
2014:

730 "Units"

683 Single Family

263 Lease/Rental

Est. 40% Minority

Est. median income: \$75,061

Source: Federal Financial

Institutions Examination Council

The Third Fourth Was A Hoot!

It was surprisingly cool on the morning of the 4th when Kay and Joel Klumpp started preparing for the upcoming rush of revelers. And even at parade time it was pleasant if you stayed in the shade. Once again a good crowd of kids of all ages -



← toddlers to nonagenarians →

- came together to march and munch in celebration of our nation's "birthday" and of our good fortune to live in the Walnut Creek Neighborhood.

The parade was too slow for some of the kids, whose back-&-forth probably made twice the distance while most were

walking around the "peninsula" once. On the other hand,

Myrtle and John Brown (right) joined the parade as it came by their home on the north end of Oakwood, then joined the feast of hot dogs to watermelon, with tables

of dishes and deserts in between. Celebrants

settled in and enjoyed the food, the friends

and neighbors (many new), the kids, the

weather (sorta), and hospitality of the hosts.

Another fine Fourth in the community:

Thanks and kudos to Joel, Kay and parents!



Canopy Comments by Sharon Porter

Chris Dolan, City of Austin arborist for oak wilt mapping, has completed his survey of Walnut Creek Neighborhood. Chris has followed the progression of oak wilt in our neighborhood and has characterized our neighborhood as an 'old historic oak wilt currently "quiescent"'.

The only evidence of oak wilt he found was at Indianhead at 11817 and 11812. The tree at 11812 is in the city right-of-way, and Chris secured funding to treat it.

His recommendation is that live oak trees within 150 feet of these trees be treated by an oak-wilt-certified arborist. He met with neighbors to review his findings, answer questions, and post notices with his contact information on the doors of houses with live oaks at risk.

There are limitations to the survey. Chris was unable to enter back yards to examine trees, and his survey was a one-time review of the condition of the trees he could examine.

There are limitations to our follow up: the survey has been communicated on all neighborhood social media, in posted notices, and now in our newsletter. However, we do not know who has had access, whether they read the reports, or whether they acted on the recommendations. Therefore, there is no assurance that appropriate action will be taken, leaving the risk that the oak wilt will continue to progress from yard to yard each year.

What we can do:

1. Talk to neighbors with at-risk trees and encourage follow-up on the recommendations.
2. Educate ourselves and others. <http://texasoakwilt.org> is a good reference, including a list of oak wilt certified arborists. We also have many very knowledgeable neighbors, having been through a couple of defensive projects (trenching) and WCNA sponsorship (providing treatment tools) of treatment by residents with diseased trees. (Equipment to treat your trees is available; Contact a board member.)
3. Be alert to signs of oak wilt in trees that you see regularly. Use oak wilt certified arborists to treat your live oaks. Until temperatures are consistently above 95 degrees, the beetle carrying the fungus is considered active. There have been several events that have the potential for creating new oak wilt: city departments pruning trees over street, broken limbs from passing vehicles or storms, neighbors engaging in unsafe pruning practices, to name a few. Remember to examine live oaks in your back yard that were not included in the survey.
4. Plant oak wilt resistant native trees this fall to protect your canopy.

How Green Was My Pitch

Do you know where the grass on the soccer pitches for the World Cup in Brazil came from? It's Canadian (Manitoba) Perennial Rye Grass, seeded over the standard Bermuda Grass for the winter months, when the Bermuda turns brown. Some of us do the same here, with either Annual or Perennial Rye.

Good news: Green lawn all winter (with precipitation). Bad news: Mowing all winter.

Walnut Creek Neighborhood Association: We're Bigger Now!

By Robert Meadows, President

The Board of Directors, by a unanimous vote at its 7 May 2014 meeting, voted to expand our northern boundary from Walnut Creek to West Yager Lane. This change is noted by the city in its Community Registry (<http://austintexas.gov/cr>), which defines and gives contact information for all the recognized neighborhood associations and similar organizations. The city is required to contact these organizations whenever an action (e.g., zoning) might affect their area. Our northern boundary description there is the new one given above.

The discussion of this issue began at the March, 2014, Board meeting, and several past-presidents of the Association have participated in these discussions.

Here are the pros and cons.

Pros: (1) The boundary extension to Yager prevents a new neighborhood association from starting in the area north of Walnut Creek or an existing neighborhood association from absorbing it. Certainly the area just north of our neighborhood has and will have a great deal of influence on our neighborhood, so having another neighborhood association there seems like something to be avoided. (2) When an upzoning case or site plan filing occurs, the City of Austin must notify all property owners and neighborhood associations within 500 feet of the particular property. The boundary extension to Yager means that we will receive (more) notifications of developments north of us, and our opinions will carry more weight when an upzoning case is within our boundaries. (3) The larger footprint makes us larger on maps, which can be important when negotiating with property owners, the City, Cap Metro, etc. For example, our neighborhood appears rather puny compared to the Gracywoods Neighborhood Association, and a larger map footprint will - to some degree - overcome this perception. Moreover, as development occurs to our north, the WCNA will then actually represent — at least as far as a neighborhood association represents anyone — more households.

Cons: (1) There are essentially no single family residences in the new area, and any and all apartment complexes and other multifamily dwellings will be part of WCNA (On the Green Apartments currently are the only such in the original boundaries). This might have unforeseen consequences for our ability to resist upzonings and 'densification'. (2) There is a risk that residents north of Walnut Creek might "take over" our association with prejudice to the residents south of Walnut Creek. Also, the impact of the commercial and State of Texas entities north of Walnut Creek on the Association is unclear. (3) The interests of (mostly apartment / condo) residents north of Walnut Creek may be so different from those living south of the creek that a single association cannot really represent everyone.

Resolution of the arguments: Argument (1) under the pros was very persuasive, to the point of being dispositive. With regard to the apartment issue, the Gracywoods Neighborhood Association has many multifamily dwellings in its boundaries, and this has not presented a problem for that association. Their opinion is that our and their association can represent diverse residents because we all have many common interests (safety, security, traffic, etc.). WCNA further recognizes that it now bears the burden of outreach and of representing the newcomers north of the creek. So, expanding the northern boundary is a bit risky, but a risk thought to be worth taking. Neighborhood associations already exist at all our other borders (Northeast Walnut Creek to the east, Mockingbird Hill to the south, Gracywoods to the west), so no other borders can be expanded. It should be noted that no purpose seemed to be served by seeking to include the area further north (to Parmer), as this area is almost entirely commercial.

Finally, the Board attached the condition to this boundary change that, in the event of negative consequences, the boundary would be changed back.

I personally think that the new residents who will show up north of Walnut Creek will be fortunate to find themselves within the boundaries of an existing active neighborhood association such as ours. Given the wave of development that is travelling north on North Lamar, better to think ahead, remembering that we here now have been bequeathed a beautiful neighborhood and a respected neighborhood association through the forward-thinking actions of those who have come before us.

Reserve 6:30 – 8:30 p.m., Oct 7th for our National Neighborhood Night Out party. Food, fun and safety/security education. Play stuff, firetrucks and cop cars for the kids; Contests with prizes and fellowship for us "others".

**Also save up your unneeded treasures for the Neighborhood Garage Sale in mid-October:
Date & time to be announced in the next issue of the newsletter and on social media.**

Abandoned - The Story of Booker the Dog

The dog seemed to be attached to the “demolition” crew that was working on the house on Lamar, which had been used for gambling in the recent past. Mary Griffin, who lives behind the house, called Code Compliance. The operation was shut down, and everybody disappeared – except the dog. As near as Mary could tell nobody was taking care of him, and she posted her observations on NextDoor on Dec 7th of last year.

Val Henson, who is Pack Team 4 Street Dog Rescues (packteam4.org), immediately investigated and recorded her contact with the dog, (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mUCAhtp1nqg>). As Mary had reported, he appeared emaciated and nervous, but Val eventually got water and food into him. She sent a text to the phone number on his tag, and reported the situation to the Austin Animal Cruelty Division. Eventually, he was released to her, and she had him evaluated at TechRidge Pet Hospital. He was estimated to be between 8 and 12 years old. Besides being emaciated and dehydrated, he was found to be suffering from heart worms: He was very



Booker looking good at home after several months of recovery. Check out the smile!

sick. Immediately, Val set up a fundraising campaign on the neighborhood social media sites, where the neighborhood came through - especially Mary - raising all the money needed for his treatments. The foster family that was originally lined up fell through, and he ended up living at the pet hospital for a couple of weeks. The situation became scary, because if a new foster home wasn't found soon, he would have to go to the shelter! Meanwhile, Brad Wilcox – with Christie Yudell – were discussing if they could take on the task. They said “Yes” they could, and stepped up and volunteered to keep the dog while permanent owners were sought. Things started looking up for this beautiful, sweet dog.

Brad brought him home from the hospital and named him Booker. Over the next weeks, Brad and Christie discovered what a great dog Booker was. While he continued to recover, he showed himself to be a loving companion in spite of his previous life. Like most dogs and fosters, the three bonded over the next six months. His preferred hangout gradually changed from the back yard under a tree, to the foot of the couch, and eventually to their bedside.

He seemed to be continuing his recovery, experiencing no pain and loving even more than he could be loved. Booker gained 11 pounds in his time with Brad and Christie, putting him well over what the vet considered a minimum at the time of his treatments. He went recently for a complete checkup, including blood test, and everything came out as expected. So it came as a shock when he suddenly started to indicate that he was in pain. In less than 24 hours, the decision was made to end his suffering. The presence of a ruptured mass strongly indicates – but does not prove – cancer may have been involved.

Booker was an angel who softened many hearts and brought people with very dissimilar views together, perhaps giving us hope that the same may be possible in our social and political interactions. And his spirit will live on as Brad and Christie will never cease giving to his abandoned and neglected brothers and sisters.

Booker, ~2006 – 2014, RIP.

Important: Did You Know?

As a Travis County Resident, you can get a free microchip and ID tag for your pet. If your pet is not microchipped and/or does not have an ID tag, go to the Austin Animal Center at **7201 Levander Loop, Bldg A** (turn left off Airport Blvd. at the light just before the 183 intersection (and the river) and immediately turn right on Levander Loop; Enter to the left at the sign and stay to the left to the parking area). Go to Animal Services during the hours of 11am to 7pm to get a free microchip and/or ID tag for your pet.

The Church Bulletins: Some of us can identify with this progression

Eight new choir robes are currently needed due to the addition of several new members and to the deterioration of some older ones.

Unique dog harnesses

By Alison Brown

On neighborhood social media over the last few months, there have been several postings about behavior of dogs when approaching other dogs being walked on the sidewalk (or in our case, mostly the street) and how sometimes aggressive behaviors ensue. Recently I saw on-line color-coded dog leashes/collars and thought this might be helpful to folks who walk in public with dogs. These run about \$30.00 on Amazon.

The following information is from www.dogspired.com (see the full article on <http://dogspired.com/color-coded-system-for-dog-collars-and-leashes/>).

These collars and leashes address three types of dogs, and the bright, tri-colored products match the color of traffic signals. They can be seen from a distance, and thus act as a guide to prepare oncoming walkers and dog owners for coming into contact with any breed of dog. The colors indicate the “personality” of an approaching dog thusly:

Red: Dogs should be approached with caution.

Orange: Dogs are friendly toward adults and children, but they are not good with other dogs.

Green: Dogs are friendly toward people and other dogs.

Of course it is the owner’s responsibility to put the appropriate collar and leash on his/her pet.



traffic light coded

Lessoned Learned from a 2014 Walnut Creek Bath Remodel

By Jill Leberknight

It’s like an archaeological dig! We have many things yet to discover because the process is far from over, but I couldn’t help sharing a few of the lessons already learned about our unique Walnut Creek neighborhood homes.

1. It’s worth considering what chemicals you let pass through our old cast iron pipes. The combination of years of tub, drain, & tile cleaners, soaps, shampoos & other various concoctions can combine to create quite a damaging effect on these poor babies. When dug up my pipes were in MUCH better shape than I expected, but it was fascinating to see up close the effects of the decades of modern chemicals.
2. It’s possible that your home was built without a traditional shower pan. Apparently a common practice of trained master plumbers of the 1920’s was to construct the shower pan with the materials used in the shower itself. Though our home was built in 1959, perhaps the plumber working was trained in this era as it had no standard shower pan. It’s a testament to their skill that our shower lasted as long as it did.
3. Sometimes a cast iron tub will fail well before your cast iron pipes do. At least that’s what happened to us. One reason for our mega hydrostatic fail was our deteriorated cast iron tub connection and a P-trap horribly clogged with corrosion. You should carefully examine your tub, pan, or drain with cameras & snakes before you jump to the conclusion that your cast iron pipes have entirely failed.
4. Man, did they like cement in the 50’s and 60’s. Layers upon layers intertwined with a cloth-like burlap 2-3 feet deep in the slab in many layers and backed with steel mesh under the bathroom tile. Our foundation company said it is unusual for homes in this neighborhood to have foundation movement partially because of how well they were built and the techniques and styles they used in laying concrete slabs, and also because of our soil properties.
5. The interior design trends of the 50’s & 60’s were sure awesome. We discovered first-hand the style & fashion of the era on wallpaper preserved behind our master bath mirror. Stop & imagine this design in a bath full of pink tile. Looks like it might point the way to a secret treasure of some kind!



I’ve saved many artifacts from our dig to use as visual aids. Look for a neighborhood presentation soon – maybe I’ll have a sarcophagus to display!

Zoning on Our Boundaries: ATT and Lamar/Scurry

The ATT “switching station” just south of Scurry on Lamar is being renovated and converted for more extensive office use, and will need additional parking for a few trucks in the back behind the property just north (at the corner of Scurry and Lamar, previously used as a carpet store, computer place, etc but currently unoccupied). ATT owns – and is in the process of selling – this corner property, but zoning changes are required for completion of the deal. The result is a complicated situation for the neighborhood. The WCNA president and board are keeping close tabs and intervening at every point of interest. Zoning hearings have been delayed several times but some issues appear to have been resolved. Status will be closely followed and reported in the Sept-Oct newsletter.

Urban Rail, Bonds and the November Election

If you're a property owner and/or voter, there's no escaping the Urban Rail issue in Austin. At this point it seems certain that in November we will get to vote on bonds to build the first major component of a city-wide "mobility" system being planned by the City with input from several organizations (including citizens, to some extent). Project Connect (PC) (<http://www.projectconnect.com/>) is the overarching organization more or less in charge of developing the major details. PC is supported under CoA, CapMetro, CAMPO and LSTAR, and is charged with developing plans for all interconnecting public mobility projects in Austin and the surrounding region from Georgetown to San Antonio. "Urban Rail" refers only to the component that will operate within the city, with the goal to generate a rail-based network that connects "outer" parts of the city with the central core and local surface transportation (buses and streetcars). The bond election in November will address the first piece of that network. If eventually built, we would hope that this initial segment would come close to us, but the route selected by the city will come up only to Highland Mall, wind its way past Hancock Center and UT to downtown, then through a tunnel under the river to Riverside and east almost to Montopolis. The current estimate for construction of this segment of rail is about 1.4 billion dollars. Planning for Austin's cost is \$600 million, the rest to be picked up by the feds. For the election, this amount is likely to be combined with a "roads" project estimated at \$400 million, thus a bond proposal for about \$1 billion. This initial route is strongly opposed by groups led by OurRail (<http://ourrail.org/>), which supports a North Lamar/Guadalupe route over a bridge next to (or perhaps on) the South First Street bridge, to connect with an East Riverside leg. The arguments for this approach, and links giving the background for these arguments can be found in the North Austin Community Newsletter at <http://www.lovenorthaustin.com/new-page/the-hidden-costs-of-the-1-billion-dollar-transportation-bond-package>. Estimated costs for such a route are generally significantly less than the city route, but the strongest argument between the two sides concerns the likelihood of obtaining federal funds for the alternate routes. PC argues that federally funding of the Metro Rapid bus service on Lamar/Guadalupe disqualifies funding for another project on the same route. OurRail argues that building a high-cost, low-ridership line first will kill future funding for this project and future rail as well. You can find these arguments in articles in the Austin American Statesman and the Austin Chronicle as well as on the links above, along with other supporting or contradicting information for both sides.

Telephone Scams Continue: You may receive a call purporting to be from Austin Energy, the IRS or other government agencies requesting you to purchase a prepaid card for payment of utility bills or other common obligations, with the caller asking you to call back and provide them with information about the card (so he/she can record the expected payment, for example). He/she will want your PIN number for the card – a bright red flag that this is a scam. No agencies will ever ask for such information over the phone. Your job if this happens to you: Call CoA Customer Service Center at 512-494-4900. Also, if you have been victimized by any such crime call 311. **The same approach** is being used by scammers claiming to represent the IRS, and they may use email as well, either by itself or to add credibility to a phone call. Typically such scammers will indicate that you owe IRS money and will try to set up a prepaid card for payment, which will require personal information from you. IRS does not contact individuals electronically (phone, email, text social media, etc).

Bottom Line: Do not spend your money based on phone or electronic solicitation/coercion; You should make payments for anything only on your own initiative and based only upon obligations that you have verified by personal initiation. Contact any agency/company based on publicly-derived information.

Watering Schedules in Austin

June showers have prevented reinstatement of the county burn ban but, as of publication, has had no effect on our Stage 2 water restrictions (see graphic to the right).

For residences this means **no use of hose-end sprinklers between 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., for Houses with even-numbered addresses on Sundays and odd-numbered addresses on Saturdays.**

Automatic systems are allowed to water **before 5:00 a.m. and after 7:00 p.m., for even addresses on Thursday and Odd on Wednesday.**

Hand and drip watering can still be done anytime.

<http://austintexas.gov/department/stage-2-watering-restrictions>

RESIDENTIAL		COMMERCIAL		PUBLIC SCHOOLS	
Hose-End Sprinklers BEFORE 10 AM or AFTER 7 PM	Automatic Irrigation BEFORE 5 AM or AFTER 7 PM	Hose-End Sprinklers BEFORE 10 AM or AFTER 7 PM	Automatic Irrigation BEFORE 5 AM or AFTER 7 PM	Hose-End Sprinklers BEFORE 10 AM or AFTER 7 PM	Automatic Irrigation BEFORE 5 AM or AFTER 7 PM
Even Address Sunday	Even Address Thursday	Even Address Tuesday		Monday	
Odd Address Saturday	Odd Address Wednesday	Odd Address Friday			

**STAGE 2 WATER RESTRICTIONS
WATERING ONE DAY PER WEEK**

City Council District 7 Campaigning Underway

We now have six candidates announced for our district, representing a fairly wide diversity in ages, backgrounds and viewpoints. The best place to get to know each probably is through personal appearances at sponsored venues, and the next best at www.austindistrict7.org, established and edited by Steve Zettner. Backgrounds of all the candidates are given, as well as interviews with each about priorities and approaches to the major problems we face. In addition, Steve has set up a “candidate scorecard” by which an editorial board will establish/rank each candidate based on as much information as can be gleaned about each. Our president, Robert Meadows, will serve on this board to assure our issues are addressed. Keep up with this process at Austin District 7, on neighborhood social media and in the next issue of the newsletter.

Section 4 Events and Contact List

July	2, 16, 30	Recycle (blue) containers will be picked up along with trash
	18, 21	Volunteer Training class (only one needed) for homeless counting project nikipaul@austinecho.org
	26	Park Habitat Restoration Workshop; North Star Greenbelt 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Aug	25-29	Next Bulk Collection
	16	Park Habitat Restoration Workshop; Blunn Creek Nature Preserve 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Sept	15-19	Next Large Brush Collection
Oct	7	National Neighborhood Night Out
	Weekend	Neighborhood Garage Sale (save up your stuff!)

Large Brush and Bulk Collection Schedules: <http://austintexas.gov/departments/residential-curb-side-collection-schedule>

Neighbor-generated file of criminal activity in the neighborhood:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/cc?key=0Aj5ZBhBXL3ydHpOYmw3Vm5menktSXFVTHhSbmNJaEE&usp=sharing>

Austin Code Compliance: 311 or <http://www.austintexas.gov/departments/code-compliance>

City/County Contacts:

Mayor Lee Leffingwell, 974-2250
lee.leffingwell@ci.austin.tx.us

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mike.martinez@ci.austin.tx.us

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Chris Riley, 512-974-2256
chris.riley@ci.austin.tx.us

Kathie Tovo, 512-974-2255
Kathie.Tovo@ci.austin.tx.us

County Commissioner Pct 2

Bruce Todd, 512-854-9222
Bruce.Todd@co.travis.tx.us

EMERGENCY: Police, Fire, EMS, Animal Control: 911

City of Austin: All services, codes & code violations, animal reports: Phone: 311 Online: <http://austin-plcsrprodwi.motorolasolutions.com/Home.mvc/Index>

APD Burglary Unit
<http://www.facebook.com/APDBU>

Report abandoned/suspicious vehicles: 512 974-8119

North Austin Coalition of Neighborhoods Newsletter:
<http://www.lovenorthaustin.com/>

Adam Soliz, APD District Rep
512 974 8143
adam.soliz@austintexas.gov

Sam Lindsey, County Constable (512) 854-4515
sam.lindsey@co.travis.tx.us

O'Shay Garden, County Constable (512) 854-9697
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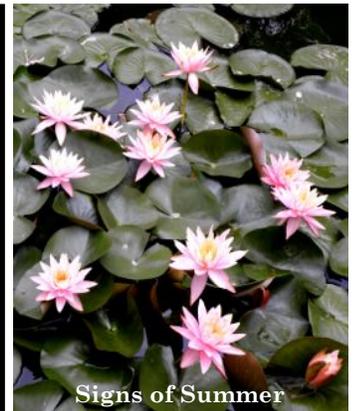
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Call us to make reservations for Private parties and Meetings



July :: Aug 2014

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Rick & Angela's Century Plant at Hornsby & Covington



About WCNA and the newsletter

Walnut Creek Neighborhood Association membership is open to any resident (owner or renter) or property owner within the boundaries, including perimeters, of the association.

Membership dues are \$15 per household for a calendar year. Send a check to: WCNA ; PO Box 82746; Austin, TX 78708-2746

Dues notices and payment envelopes are included in the Nov-Dec and Jan-Feb newsletters each year.

Payment also may be made using PayPal: <http://goo.gl/jdG00o>

WCNA News is sent to all members and every household within the boundaries represented by the Walnut Creek Neighborhood Association: Braker Lane, North Lamar, I-35, and Walnut Creek.

To contribute content to the newsletter, send contributions via email to wcna.contact@gmail.com or contact a board member.

The opinions expressed in articles printed in this newsletter are the explicit opinions of the writer(s) and, unless explicitly stated, are not to be implied as the opinions of either the editor or the Board of Directors of the Walnut Creek Neighborhood Association, Inc.

Chris & Deborah's Century Plant on Tedford

