



Walnut Creek Neighborhood News

Walnut Creek Neighborhood Association

A pdf version in color is available at www.WCNAnews.com

July
Aug
2021

Join Us!

Dues information is shown in this newsletter on the back page beside your address label. Information is shown for paying by check or PayPal.

Social Media/Listservs:

NextDoor: <https://is.gd/3K9VnZ>

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

Website: www.WCNAnews.com

Rain Couldn't Stop the Terrific Tenth Ninth Annual Walnut Creek Neighborhood Fourth of July Parade and Potluck Picnic!

(Almost forgot about that horrible year 2020.) When Kay and Joel Klumpp first invited neighbors to join them in a parade around the “peninsula” followed by a potluck picnic in their yard ten years ago, it started an annual event, with them providing most of the effort involved. With a new organizational approach this year the event went quite smoothly with (we hope) somewhat less stress on the Klumpps. Our neighbor bagpiper Philip Bates - for the fourth successive parade - led what likely was a record number of participants with the usual diversity of ages, colors, sexes, affluence, and political opinions. Evidently, though, one attribute most of us seemed to lack is an ability to march. Would be hard to find a more rag-tag bunch following Philip as he strode along the parade route loop around the peninsula (formed by north Indianhead, east Caddo and north Oakwood). Periodically he had to pause or slow down to keep us from stretching all the way around.



Bagpiper Philip Bates leads the parade up the Indianhead hill with Kay just behind him. (Photo by Eric Shaughnessy (ES))

The “potluck” food is always amazing at this event. Along with the Klumpp’s hot dogs and the sensational “regular” fare of casseroles and such, vegetarian and vegan dishes were presented, including some in that modern category “Gluten Free” (like the home brew brought by Todd Johnson - a “Tropical IPA” made using tropical fruits and sorghum molasses: strong and tasty!).

This year a group worked together to help with organization and promotion: Sara Breuer, Kay Klumpp,

Adrienne Alter, Eric Shaughnessy, and friends and relations. Additional volunteers helped in setting up tables, tents, lawn furniture, water (for the always-numerous dogs), etc., etc. Joel took over the “dog (hot variety) preparation” that his dad, who passed away last year, had done since the first parade. And Tim and Sara ((Mateer/Breuer) took over the dog-serving duties which his mother always participated in. There also were servers for all the food categories, which helped the process run smoothly. And there were too many fantastic deserts even for this record crowd.

And – thanks, Sara – we got nametags! No more stressing brains trying to remember!

As usual, Philip tried to start the procession by firing up his bagpipes, and as usual people randomly joined the parade when they saw they were getting left behind. With bicycles, strollers, canes, and a few tired and/or sore legs we scattered along Indianhead as we proceeded uphill (south) on Indianhead from the Klumpp home before turning down the hill on Caddo. There were more spectators along the way than in the past, probably thanks to the advertising, and this helped to rejuvenate those tired legs. Another new aspect this year was Eric running to stay near the front in order to take some terrific pictures along the way, showing both the participants and the spectators. These can be viewed on the Walnut Creek Neighborhood Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/wcnanews>



Adah Scout “blows” a bubble. ES

Future parades look to be better and better with the collaborative approach adopted this year. So keep your eyes out next June for the many notices like you saw this year: Signs at street intersections, events in the social media, invitation and description in this Newsletter and other forms of communication, and make a plan to join us for the camaraderie, fun, food and exercise. The parade was inspired partly because of the handy route provided by the peninsula, which is about 0.6 miles, walkable by most of us even in the near-100-degree temperature we can have at this time of year. But you don’t have to “do the walk” to have the fun!

The Disaster Finally Arrives! So?

The nearby neighborhoods have been dreading it, after opposing its construction for many months:

The opening of Austin Football Club's Q2 Stadium at Braker and Lamar!

AAS – Jay Janner



On Wednesday, June 16th the US Women's Soccer Team played a "friendly" match against Nigeria (US 2, Nigeria 0) to christen the stadium. [To be totally accurate, a watch party was held at the stadium on June 12th when Austin FC played Kansas City in Kansas City, drawing some 5,000 fans to watch on the Jumbotron]. But the USA team vs Nigeria filled the 20,700-seat stadium and presented most of the issues we've been worrying about: Effects of insufficient parking places and congestion on Braker and Burnet. Some folks drove around residential and other parking areas near the stadium during the match, reporting on social media the expected dense parking in nearby neighborhoods as well as at the Domain and nearby industrial parking areas. There always will be parking problems at big events, and we'll

start hearing about them in the media at some point. But the good news is that we couldn't tell anything was happening in the Walnut Creek Neighborhood, and haven't heard any serious complaints from Gracywoods either. Apparently a few neighbors ventured out near the starting and ending times for the matches, since complaints about getting around near Braker and Burnet sounded catastrophic on social media .

Then the first Major League Soccer (MLS) match in Austin and in the new stadium was held on Saturday night, June 19th. The stadium was totally packed, even with the match televised. I found few reports about the parking and traffic issues again, though congestion must have been extraordinary before and after the event. The limited parking allowed inside the stadium, about 850 spots mostly reserved for people involved with the operation, meant a relatively small number of cars trying to get into and out of the stadium proper, so most of the snarls probably were created by traffic looking for parking places in the neighborhoods before or trying to leave the area afterward. The right lane of Braker Lane eastbound and the right lane of Burnet Road northbound are closed starting four hours before matches begin, and the effect on regular traffic obviously will depend on time-of-day and day-of-week. But it would seem advisable to bypass the area if possible during those periods. Experience will show pretty quickly.

Reporting in the media and by CapMetro indicated that access by train, bus and Uber/Lyft went smoothly, with many buses arriving in close proximity and special pickup/dropoff places designated for all. Some glitches were reported, but apparently the transportation process was planned and handled pretty well.

AFC has played four times in the stadium at this writing, scoring four of the first 5 MLS goals in Q2 on 1 July but not a single one in any of the other matches. They lost for the first time in the stadium on 7 July, by 2-0 against Los Angeles FC (LAFC). Low scores in MLS are not that unusual, I hear, and yet watching some of the action on TV has been quite exciting, even for this non-fan. But apparently our team needs a couple of "scorers".

To plan for attending or avoiding a match, check here: <https://www.austinfc.com/schedule/>

Austin's Outdoor Advertising Policies are in the Supreme Court

OK, I'll admit I don't understand the controversy over street signage in Austin that's been roiling since about 2016. I do understand that it has to do with conversion of signs to "digital", allowing them to change at will (allowing multiple advertisers on a sign) and have animation and "infinite" color and brightness capability. The brightness issue was significant, as they can be so bright they're difficult for a driver to ignore, especially with "motion", and can thus be seriously distracting. But this was made controllable and the parameters required to make them "safe to motorists" were defined by law and transportation agencies. But many cities, including Austin, were intent on minimizing signage on roadways in the city, thus creating ordinances that prohibit new signs, though previously existing signs were not allowed to be removed by force. New signs are allowed, but their locations are limited to the property being advertised on the sign, along with some other restrictions. This set up the fight about "digitizing" existing large billboard signs, mostly along highways or other major arteries. Austin is trying to prevent this, based partly on the fact that this would constitute creating new signs not on the advertisers' premises; i.e., "we don't want your dadburn signs" on our major streets! I assume this limits the sign companies' ability to maximize income from the few signs they're allowed, so they're suing Austin about it, and the case will be taken up by SCOTUS next year.



I don't pretend to have explained this completely or even accurately, but the result will define all big cities' ability to control signage on major roads within their limits, and, based on knowledgeable observers of the court, it seems likely they won't get near the control they would like to have.

The Amazing Purple Martins

By: Jennifer L. Bristol, Author- *Parking Lot Birding: A Fun Guide to Discovering Birds in Texas*

Purple Martins are the largest of the swallows in North America. They are one of the first migrants to arrive in Texas during the spring migration and are one of the first to return to Central and South America in the fall. After their chicks have fledged the family group gathers with thousands of other Purple Martins in large evening roosts during July and early August. The birds are so dense it is easy to see them on weather radar, especially as they disperse in the morning to go feed. Travis Audubon celebrates this interesting wildlife event by hosting Purple Martin parties at the roost site to watch the “hurricane of birds” in the evenings. This year’s events start on July 17 and continue through the month of July at the La Frontera shopping center in Round Rock. To learn more visit-

<https://trivisaudubon.org/purple-martin-parties>

Purple Martins are well adapted to living with humans as they have been doing so for hundreds of years. Eastern Native Americans hung up hollowed out gourds to attract the insect eating birds and the tradition of providing housing has continued ever since. After all, the martins are a handy bird to have about as each bird consumes millions of insects in their lifetime. Because the birds are well adapted to urban living their populations are stable; however, they are susceptible to cold snaps like the one we had in February. Thankfully, few martins had reached Texas by the time the winter storm rolled through. The Cedar Waxwings are reported to have had one of the larger die-offs during that storm.

If you are interested in putting up a Purple Martin house you can build your own from plans on the Cornell Lab of Ornithology website- Nest Watch <https://nestwatch.org/learn/all-about-birdhouses/birds/purple-martin>. When considering placement, it is important to get the height of the birdhouse correct and follow the instructions for care and maintenance closely.



Purple Martin
Cornell Lab;
Tom Johnson

When the Swallows Leave Home...

A Business Route 87 overpass over IH10 near Boerne likely has been the home for cliff swallows for “ages” before being marked for demolition this year to allow expansion and addition of turn lanes and sidewalks. Preparations were completed, but when eggs were found in the swallow nests the demolition was paused, since the birds are protected by federal law. Of course, this kind of occurrence always causes grumbling from some folks, and this was no exception. The time from egg-laying to fledging is about six weeks, so the delay won’t be longer than that, with demolition now anticipated by mid-July.

Jamaican Food May be Coming to the Neighborhood!

An application for change of zoning for the property at 1700 N IH35 to become GR was made by Tony and Kim Scott, with the intention of putting a food truck operation there, specializing in Jamaican food. WCNA, via our president Robert Meadows, supported the application but with a list of “Conditional Overlays” that we have developed over many years to prevent having inappropriate businesses adjacent to any of our residences. Zoning and Planning approved the zoning change including our overlays, but final acceptance is being held up by City Council scheduling. The property owner, Todd Ballard, was considering withdrawing the agreement with the Scotts because of the delay, but has decided to go ahead providing the Council approves the zoning by the end of 2021.

Having a Jamaican food restaurant in the ‘hood was popular on our social media, and it appears it may happen. The property actually includes the lot on the corner of Meadowlark and the short street inside the frontage road between Sandpiper and Meadowlark, which makes it accessible from both those streets.

Our neighborhood has lost an aristo-cat, known for years in the area of the neighborhood at Scurry and Hilltop Streets. A street cat, she was not homeless. She chose food, shelter and companionship at two residences, and had a fan club among those who walked in that area. It was not unusual to see walkers stop to sit and stroke her silky hair and talk to her in loving tones.

Blanche, aka Sugar, passed over the Rainbow Bridge on Friday, July 9th. She was with neighbors who knew and loved her, and she is greatly missed and mourned by others. At the end, we were informed by vet staff that she belonged to a rare breed of show cat called Chesterfield, virtually never seen as a street cat. For those who look for her when they are in that part of Walnut Creek Neighborhood, just know that while she is where we can no longer stroke her silky fur she will always be touching our hearts.



RIP dear Blanche aka Sugar. *Contributed by Sharon Porter*



House destroyed by fire at 306 Cedarbrook Ct

On the evening of June 23, this home “burned to the ground”. It was bought new in 1971 by Elizabeth Burks, who lived there until the last few years. Family members who remained there let the condition deteriorate, and a single person living there had accumulated inordinate amounts of “superfluous” materials, which were reported to city agencies by a number of neighbors without effect. The City of Austin immediately declared the house "structurally unsafe" and, the understanding of neighbors is that the house is considered a "crime scene" and under investigation as an arson case. It is surrounded by “keep out” yellow tape.

Construction and Maintenance on Capital Metro’s infrastructure has stopped service from July 10th through July 18th. Note detours will be required near the Howard Station on the 16th thru the 18th.

Covid Statistics

Travis County and Austin are doing pretty well with vaccinations: More than **70%** with at least one shot and more than **60%** completely vaccinated. **Unfortunately**, the **78753** zip code is one of the least-vaccinated in the county, at about **35%**.

Let’s pick it up, folks!

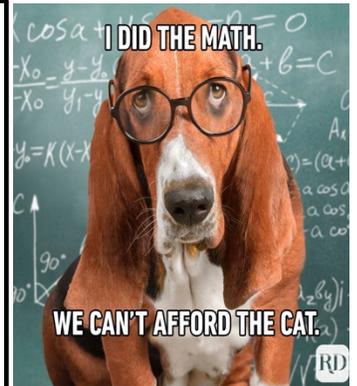
Travis has had seven deaths since 1 June and fewer than thirty since 1 May.

Only **~50%** are fully vaccinated in Texas.

Note: **67%** of U.S. population 12 & older have 1 or more shots.

The “Delta” variant is raising hell, and the 7-day cases (per 100,000 people) rate in the U.S. is **~26**, in Texas **~33**, and **3** in Travis.

Evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins coined the term "meme" in his 1976 book called The Selfish Gene. The word describes an idea, behavior, or style that spreads from person to person within a culture — something viral. Since then, it has been hijacked by the Internet. For example:



Walnut Bluffs to Walnut Creek Metropolitan Park Trail Status

The Project Engineer, Genest Landry, sent WCNA officers email in late June describing essentially what they put online at the site given below on 9 July. The Public Works Department is advertising for construction bids, which are scheduled to be evaluated this month (July) with the intention to start construction in November. After selection, a “Meet the Contractor” event will be scheduled for online public participation. The 12-ft wide concrete trail will connect our park with Walnut Creek Metropolitan Park across Lamar, providing us with safe passage under Lamar for access to the park (and some fear “from” the park). The design incorporates most of the requests from WCNA in the design. The link below gives a brief description and a further link for keeping up with progress/status.

<https://mailchi.mp/f4fb88aa57ae/project-update-for-northern-walnut-creek-trail-phase-2?e=5ddc59ffda>

Walnut Creek Safety Team

by Luis Chapa

The Walnut Creek Safety Team is a group of volunteer neighbors who care about improving the sense of safety for all residents in the Walnut Creek Neighborhood. We do this by organizing safety initiatives, regularly patrolling the neighborhood, connecting neighbors with one another, and communicating with residents about safety issues.

"The Safety Team held an open event hosted by Christian Ninaud on Sunday, June 13th. The objective of the meeting was to increase transparency and work with neighbors about safety matters that impact us. We had a great turnout and enjoyed spending time with fellow Walnut Peeps! Additionally, the Safety team met to align its Block Captain responsibilities. (See below).

With extraordinary selflessness, Tony Potts has offered free installation of your wireless security cameras and a free home security inspection; i.e., the wireless Camera(s) is/are supplied by the resident and Tony is offering free labor.

Also, be on the lookout for future Weekend Safety Socials that everyone can attend and get to meet more neighbors.

IMPORTANT: The Safety Team is NOT qualified to respond to emergencies. If there is a crime or other emergency in progress, or if you see suspicious activity in the neighborhood, **CONTACT 911 IMMEDIATELY**. Once the authorities have been notified, we encourage you to contact your Block Captains for additional support.

Block Captains

- Act as a point of contact for Safety Team members and all Walnut Creek residents
- Get to know all residents on their block and create opportunities for block residents to get to know one another (parties, meetings, cleanups, etc).
- Maintain communication system with block residents for important announcements and alerts (text thread, email, etc)
- Inform residents about how to become active in Safety Team efforts
- Work with other Block Captains and law enforcement to steer the direction of the Safety Team, based on feedback from all Walnut Creek residents
- Regularly patrol their block or the entire neighborhood

To get connected with your Block Captain, contact

Tony Potts: (512) 800-9292

Luis Chapa: (512) 589-4818

Safety Team Members

- Get to know their neighbors and surrounding area so they can know when things are out of the ordinary
- May patrol their block or the entire neighborhood at whatever frequency feels right to them (the more the better!)
- May participate in safety-related initiatives (cleanups, improvement projects, etc) in the neighborhood
- Give feedback on how the Safety Team and general neighborhood safety can be improved

If you are interested in getting involved with the Safety Team, contact Tony or Luis OR Scan the QR code OR visit www.bit.ly/NWinterest to fill out the form and we will be in touch!



The Importance of a Dark Sky
(Especially to birds and insects, which means US)

Do you remember being able to see the Milky Way in the neighborhood? Wasn't that long ago. The process of lighting the night everywhere people live has led to the washing out of the night sky, now called "light pollution". I.e., light wasted by being cast where it isn't needed, a phenomenon now affecting a quarter of the earth's land surface! Not to mention the wasted energy which reflects back to carbon emissions for most of it.

There's a world-wide movement to reverse this situation, initiated by the International Dark-Sky Association. Based on extensive research, the IDA develops strategies for moving to a dark-sky future via programs for cities and other agents to adopt and implement. IDA also generates guidelines for deployment and light source specifications for manufacturers of outdoor lighting. The aim is world-wide employment of light sources that limit projection to the areas intended for the particular source: primarily streetlights and floodlights that shine down with little direct spillover directed above the targeted area (indirect upward scattering from the illuminated surfaces is largely unavoidable).

Austin has subscribed to the International Dark Sky Association / Illuminating Engineering Society of North America-recommended Model Lighting Ordinance to help municipalities with standards for outdoor lighting. It also classifies light fixtures by effective backlight, uplight and glare control, for producing the most effective outdoor lighting; i.e., minimize "wasted" light while maintaining safety. The result is Austin is becoming "dark-sky friendly". Most of the streetlights south the river have been converted to LEDs with shielded fixtures that direct most of the illumination downward, and all are now automated to track light conditions to minimize loss of light energy (see <https://tinyurl.com/AusLighting>). Austin hopes to become a "Dark-Sky City", perhaps bringing back our ability to see the Milky Way as we could in the 60s in Walnut Creek Neighborhood.

But outdoor lighting is proving to be even more important because of effects on wildlife!

You may have seen the recommendations back in March/April about turning outside lights off from early evening through first light, or from 11:00 p.m. till 6:00 a.m., to help birds during the March through May period of peak migration in our area, and then again August through October during the return migrations. Millions of birds are migrating across the U.S. during these periods, and unnatural light sources cause the deaths of millions by obscuring the starlight used for navigation and by causing collisions with buildings because of confusion from such sources. Artificial light sources can also affect their timing, causing them to migrate too early or too late.

Support Our Supporters!

Our advertisers help offset the costs associated with publishing and mailing our newsletter.
Please patronize them!

SANTORINI CAFÉ
mediterranean cuisine
coffee & wine bar

Happy Hour
Daily 5-8pm

Breakfast
Monday to Friday
11:00am - 2:00pm

11800 North Lamar Blvd, Bldg #1, Austin, TX 78753
PHONE: (512)833-6000
Facebook: Santorini Cafe, Music & Entertainment

Call us to make reservations for Private parties and Meetings

Jill Leberknight
512.294.7296
jill@agentjill.com

Lead Agent, REALTOR®
The AGENTJILLTEAM
Certified Negotiation Expert



Charlotte: "Are you coming?"



Reagan & Apple

It was the Fourth of July Parade, so of course there were kids...

and spectators!

and adults of all ages.



Dean



Ellie



Sara, Joan & Jean



Eric, Luis (Safety Team), Paul and Emily



Organized spectators on Caddo!



Ed was watching and Kelvin was marching



A serious rain shower toward the end, so...

Kay, Joel and Jonas grabbed umbrellas



and the rest crowded under the tents.

Large Brush Pickup not until 6 September. Bulk: 11 October

PRSRT STD.
US POSTAGE
PAID.
AUSTIN, TX.
PERMIT #986

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

Membership dues are \$25 per household for a calendar year. Send a check to: WCNA ; PO Box 82746; Austin, TX 78708-2746

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

Payment also may be made using PayPal: <http://goo.gl/5iQIk>

WCNA News is sent to every household within the Walnut Creek Neighborhood Association boundaries: Braker Lane to Yager Lane and North Lamar to IH-35.

To contribute content to the newsletter, send contributions via email to wcna.contact@gmail.com or contact Pat Pitt, 512 837-6620.

Calendar of Events

July	4	Independence Day
	7	Blue Recycle Container Picked Up: Curbside by 7:00 a.m.
	9	Zilker Summer Musical begins - https://zilker.org
	10-18	CapMetro Rail Service Suspended for Construction/Maintenance Except: Service to Q2 Stadium on 13 July https://tinyurl.com/repairail
	21	Blue Recycle Container Picked Up: Curbside by 7:00 a.m.
	24	Lady Bird Day - https://www.wildflower.org/event/lbd
	27-28	Blues on the Green coming: check for details
August	4	Blue Recycle Container Picked Up: Curbside by 7:00 a.m.
	6-8	Texas Tax-Free Weekend: https://comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/publications/98-490/
	10-11	Blues on the Green coming: check for details
	14	Zilker Summer Musical ends
	14	Waterloo Park (finally) Opens After Total Renovation
	17	AISD First Day of School
	18	Blue Recycle Container Picked Up: Curbside by 7:00 a.m.
	25	UT classes begin
	28	Bat Fest - https://www.austintexas.org/event/16th-annual-bat-fest/359378/
September	1	Blue Recycle Container Picked Up: Curbside by 7:00 a.m.
	6	Labor Day - Banks and Post Office closed
	6	***Large Brush Collection begins until all is picked up***