

Updates on the Crump/Gordon properties, the Austin Oaks PUD, and some changes at Pillow Elementary School *by Sharon Justice*

The sale of the Crump/Gordon properties at 8528 Burnet and 8647 Rockwood was completed June 2, 2015. We don't know when construction of the 300 unit apartment complex will begin. The developer didn't responded to an email sent asking this question.

NSCNA has received an email from the developer addressing use of neighborhood streets by construction-related traffic. The email says "...efforts will be made to minimize construction impacts on the neighborhood.... We will make a concerted effort to limit construction cut through traffic." We're pleased the developer has addressed this issue, although NSCNA's Development Committee had requested a statement less open to interpretation.

The fate of the Austin Oaks Planned Unit Development or PUD may be decided this fall. It was first proposed for the southwest corner of Mo-Pac and Spicewood Springs in September 2014. Now

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it's scheduled for a hearing before the Zoning and Platting Commission on September 15. It's also on the agenda of the Environmental Commission at the Commission's September 16th meeting. Its final fate will be decided by the Austin City Council, and that date isn't set yet. However, the results of these two September meetings may presage the City Council's final decision.

The Northwest Austin Civic Association (NWACA) has pulled together information on the Austin Oaks PUD at this site: *nwaca.org/austin-oaks-pudinformation/*

Planning for Pillow's new playground is progressing. It should reopen by Spring 2016. I hope you'll read the article on page 3 describing the project. Also relating to Pillow, the school has a new principal, and I also hope you'll read his article introducing himself on pages 4-5. Welcome to North Shoal Creek, Principal Brian Hill!

IMPORTANT DATES

September 26: National Public Land's Day sponsored by the Austin Parks Foundation and Texas Conservation Core October 6: Join your neighbors in celebrating National Night Out., 7:00-9:00 p.m. October 12: AISD student holiday November 3: NSCNA General Meeting, Pillow Elementary School, 3025 Crosscreek Drive, 6:30 p.m.; also election day November 11: AISD student holiday November 25-27: AISD Thanksgiving Holiday December 19: AISD winter break begins

Photos of North Shoal Creek's Independence Day PARADE AND CELEBRATION ON PAGES 12 AND 13

Neighborhood News Fall 2015 Issue

A quarterly newsletter for the North Shoal Creek Neighborhood Association (NSCNA)

Editors: Sharon Justice, Erin Poole

Contributors/Volunteers: Becky Campbell, Amelia Cobb, David Harakal, Brian Hill, Celia Holm, Brian Kemp, Steven Reich, Vannezsa Smith, Kenneth Webb, and Shirley Webb,

Color edition of newsletter available at www.nscna.org.

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To submit an article for consideration, email it to newsletter@nscna.org. All articles are subject to editing.

NSCNA P.O. Box 66443 Austin, TX 78766-0443

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Editor's corner — We're not a homeowner's association...

Neighborhood associations are sometimes confused with homeowner's associations, but the two are very different. Homeowner's associations (HOAs) make and enforce rules in a subdivision. They can levy fees and place liens on properties when owners fall behind on their HOA dues.

Neighborhood associations like NSCNA can't levy fees, place liens, or enforce zoning codes. We're a non-profit association of volunteers whose purpose is to protect and promote the quality of life, safety, residential characteristics, and property values of our neighborhood.

Everyone living within our neighborhood's boundaries can join NSCNA. and we invite renters and homeowners alike to become members. Adding your voice and input strengthens us, makes us more representative of our neighborhood, and helps us effectively represent our neighborhood's interests at City Hall.

Dues are \$15 per household per calendar year and entitle you to vote for officers and on issues brought before the membership for a vote. But even if you don't pay dues you can still participate in NSCNA, and we hope you will. To participate or make your voice heard, you can —



- Attend meetings and speak up. We hold 5 meetings annually, on the first Tuesday of January, March, May, September, and November. Non-members are welcome to attend and speak. We meet in the Pillow Elementary School Cafeteria, 6:30-8:00 p.m.
- Come to a board meeting. Our board meets the last Tuesday of each month in the Town North Nissan Dealership conference room, 6:30-8:00 p.m. Please email directors @nscna.org to tell us you're coming and what you want to speak about so you can be included on the Board's agenda.
- Email your concerns to one of our officers, our Board, or a committee: email addresses are listed in the sidebar to the left on this page.
- Join a committee! Without the time and effort of dedicated committee volunteers. we'd have no website or Facebook page, no newsletter, no events, and no one to speak on our behalf at City Hall. You don't have to be a dues paying member to join a committee.

Of course, we hope you'll value our efforts enough to officially join NSCNA, but whether you pay dues or not, we need and want your participation.

NSCNA thanks RBFCU for sponsoring our 2015 Newsletters. NSCNA members and their families are eligible to join **RBFCU;** please visit rbfcu.org.

Pillow Playground's renovated playscapes to be completed late 2015 or early 2016 by Becky Campbell and Sharon Justice

Austin Parks and Recreation has begun working on a site plan for the renovation of Pillow Playground!

Renovations include replacing the pea gravel and rubber surfaces, which no longer meet safety standards, with engineered wood fiber surfaces. Drainage issues will be addressed and hopefully additional seating—natural limestone benches and picnic tables—will be added.

North Shoal Creek resident Becky Campbell is chairing a neighborhood committee that has been working with PARD and Pillow School staff to decide what sort of new playground equipment will be installed. We've requested a more nature-inspired theme, with earth-toned colors consistent with the playground's live oaks and shade, although we are working with a pre-determined manufacturer and budget. Other important considerations are that the new equipment be inclusive of a range of ages and physical abilities as well as able to accommodate the large number of children who'll be using the playground during recesses. Each of the four play areas will feature different activities such as climbing, swinging, and spinning. The toddler swings will remain and we are hoping a couple of alternative swings might be added.

The construction phase—which is expected to take 8-10 weeks—will begin near the end of the year and probably finish in early 2016. The playground's trees and their root systems will be protected during construction. The live oaks will be trimmed to lift their canopies. One tree—the one next to the trash container—is rotting and will be removed; fortunately, it's not a live oak. If installation goes smoothly, the renovated playground should be open for use before spring arrives.



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Meet Pillow's new principal



Principal Brian Hill, wife Caitlin, and son, Everett

My name is Brian Hill, and I am the proud principal of Dorinda Pillow Elementary School!

I am so fortunate to have this opportunity to lead a campus as diverse and welcoming as Pillow. I have been in the district for 7 years, serving as a teacher at

Volma Overton Elementary and an administrator at Zilker Elementary, Reilly Elementary, Gus Garcia Middle School, and Blanton Elementary. I was most recently an administrative supervisor in the Associate Superintendent's office where I supported campus principals in north Austin elementary schools.

My lovely wife Caitlin and I have an amazing 18month old son named Everett. I am an Austinite, born and raised, and a product of AISD schools.

I am very excited to be a part of the Pillow community. I've been completely blown away by the professionalism, work ethic, and level of care our Pillow staff shows when focusing on the business of teaching and learning for our students. We have an amazing faculty that truly cares about wholechild development and preparing our Panthers for college, career, and life. We are excited to introduce Social & Emotional Learning to the campus this year, which will continue to build upon the culture of caring and inclusiveness that already exists at Pillow.

As I met with staff individually this summer, the main theme that came out of our meetings was



that the Pillow community is a "family." I love hearing that and I've enjoyed seeing that acted out already this summer. We have an amazing PTA and parent presence, and I welcome you to join our staff, students, and parents as we journey into this next year and continue to strive for excellence for <u>ALL</u> of our Panther kiddos.

If you have any questions, comments, or want to know how you can be involved in helping out this year, please email me at brian.hill @austinisd.org or call me at 512-414-2350.

Go NSCNA and Go Panthers!

Brian Hill, Dorinda Pillow Elementary Principal

Editor's note: In addition to being father, husband and principal, Principal Hill is also working toward a Doctorate of Education in UT's Education Administration Cooperative Superintendency Program



HAVE YOU WONDERED ABOUT THE CONSTRUCTION AT PILLOW? Pillow's library is being renovated and enlarged. The big portable building recently placed next to the parking lot is serving as the temporary library. Construction is expected to be completed by Spring 2016.

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FEMA okays new Shoal Creek floodplain map

In July, the Federal Emergency Management Agency approved new floodplain maps for several Austin creeks, including Shoal Creek. The maps will be adopted formally by the Austin City Council in January 2016, but the new maps are already being used by the City of Austin for development purposes.

Shoal Creek's floodplain in our neighborhood has changed. Some areas along the east side of Millway south of Crosscreek, on Steck between Shoal Creek and Rockwood, and Anderson Lane from Shoal Creek to Rockwood that previously weren't in the floodplain now are. On the other hand, a couple of areas between Shoal Creek and Rockwood previously in the floodplain now aren't.

To find out if your property is in the floodplain, go to *www.ATXFloodPro.com* and type in your address.

Flood insurance is required for federally-backed mortgages in a floodplain. For more information on flood insurance, go to *www.floodsmart.gov*



Help a park on National Public Lands Day, September 26



The nation's largest single-day volunteer effort for public lands—including parks, trails, and green spaces—is **National Public Lands Day** (NPLD) on **Saturday, September 26.** The Austin Parks Foundation and

Texas Conservation Corps are sponsoring NPLD in Austin this year.

Last year, nearly 1,000 volunteers participated at 38 sites across Austin and Travis County. This year's projects will include mulching, habitat restoration, building and maintaining trails, park maintenance, clean-ups, and more. Please lend a hand by taking part in one of these projects. Help make this year even bigger and better.

Please visit *austinparks.org/npld* for information on this year's NPLD projects and to register as a volunteer for the project of your choice. To learn more about volunteering with the Austin Parks Foundation, please visit their FAQ page at *austinparks.org/ apf-blog.html?linkid=9943*



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Join your neighbors to celebrate National Night Out



Neighbors, don't miss the opportunity to partner up with law enforcement by taking part in the 32nd annual **National Night Out (NNO) on Tuesday, October 6.** Between 7:00 and 9:00 p.m., turn

on your front porch light, lock your door, and spend the evening at a neighborhood block party or other NNO activity taking place in your area.

National Night Out is an opportunity not just to strengthen police-community relations and heighten crime prevention awareness, but also to meet your neighbors, make new friends, and have fun, all at the same time. Plus, it lets criminals know neighborhoods are organized and fighting back against crime.

The **National Night Out Kick-Off Party and BBQ Cook-Off** takes place **Saturday, October 3rd**, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., at Mueller Airport Lake, 4550 Mueller Boulevard. There'll be food, fun, and music. It's open to the public and dog friendly.



Did you register to host an NNO activity this year? If so, please note that you need to come to the October 3rd NNO Kick-Off event between 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. to pick up your NNO bag. While you're there, you can also visit with vendors and pick up handouts and giveaways.

City-wide, Austin hosted 480 block parties in 2014, and organizers hope to surpass that number this year. Hosts in North Shoal Creek have multiple online options for publicizing their events: Next Door North Shoal Creek, NSCNA's Yahoo Group, and NSCNA's Facebook page. If you would like help posting your event on any of these sites, please email *newsletter@nscna.org*.





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Little free libraries in North Shoal Creek *by Sharon Justice*

The Little Free Library movement is a good example of how we humans find ways to be neighborly and interact with one another even in a digital age.

It began about five years ago as a way to share books you've enjoyed with others. Basically, it's a box, filled with books, and installed where others will have easy access to it. A little library operates on the honor system: take one and leave one. No one is required to return a book, leave one in its place, or pay a fine. But, of course, it's reciprocity that keeps the little library ever changing, interesting and fun.

North Shoal Creek is fortunate to have three Little Free Libraries. On Rockwood, school librarian Brian Kemp built one in the shape of a large book as a Valentine's Day gift for wife Cheryl. It's a little bigger than most LFLs, Brian says, and has separate areas for adult and children's books. On Stillwood, David Harakal designed a bright red and yellow one to be reminiscent of an old school house to honor his wife, Suzanne, and other teachers. They've placed a picnic table next to their LFL, providing a convenient place for those passing by not only to browse but to sit and read as well.

Our neighborhood's newest LFL is on Crosscreek, across from Pillow Elementary School. The Oeser family felt their location was perfect for families walking their children to and from school to stop and pick up or leave off a book.

To learn more about the Little Free Library Movement, visit *littlefreelibrary. org.*

The Oeser's Little Library at 3100 Crosscreek





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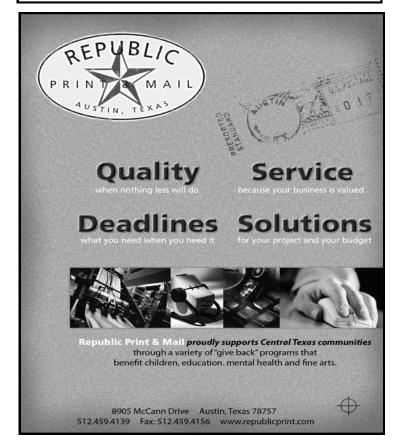
Cheryl and Brian Kemp and their Little Library at 8202 Rockwood.

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David and Suzanne Harakal's Little Library at 8609 Stillwood.

WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS FALL AT THE NORTH VILLAGE LIBRARY

Fall 2015 youth programming runs from Tuesday, Sept. 6 through Friday, Nov. 21, with programs for all ages!

Books and Babies Storytime (birth to 18 mts.) is Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m. **Toddler Storytime** (ages 18 mts. to 3 yrs.) is at 10:15 a.m. **Preschool Storytime** (ages 3 to 5) is at 11:00 a.m. on Wednesdays.

Miss Josefina retired this summer, so our Spanish Storytime is on a brief break.

Lego Lab (ages 5 and up) is at 4:00 p.m. the first Friday of every month: Sept. 4, Oct. 2, Nov. 6 and Dec. 4 .

Come in, relax and listen to stories at our **Book Circle** (for ages 5 and up) each Wed., 3:30 p.m.

Take a stroll through sunny songs, breezy stories, and wintry puppetry with the **Literature Live! fall show, "Wild & Wacky Weather!"** (ages 3 and up). It's coming to North Village on Friday, Nov. 13 at 3:30 p.m.

Practiquemos Español is Thursdays at 7 p.m. It's open to any adult wanting to practice conversational Spanish in an informal setting.

Information about all Austin Public Library events is on our website at http://library.austintexas. gov/events/search

Celia Holm and Steven Reich

July 4th parade and celebration was a BLAST! By Amelia Cobb, Social Committee Chair



Rocket-Man, the Statue of Liberty and Uncle Sam all showed up (disguised as neighbors) for North Shoal Creek's annual Independence Day parade and celebration, along with around 200 other neighbors,

family, friends (and dogs) in costumes and festive patriotic attire.

The opening ceremony started with the pledge of allegiance led by Jamie Espinol of Scout Troup 197 along with scoutmaster Chris Johns. North Shoal Creek resident and music teacher Judy Rowland sang the national anthem. Then the parade, led by an Austin Fire Department firetruck, started with neighbors dressed in red, white and blue, along with decorated bikes, trikes, wagons, and strollers, all marching around the block to patriotic music coming from the back of Dallas Maham's pickup truck.

After the parade, marchers were awarded prizes for creativity and originality of costumes; for best decorated bike, trike, wagon and stroller; and for best dressed pet.

NSCNA, in particular the Social Committee, thanks our trio of volunteer judges—Candy Swindall along with Sarah and Brian Brandon—who skillfully made the difficult decisions of which costumes and decorations were best. We also thank MC Brian Cobb whose commentary kept participants entertained and the celebration on schedule. Lastly, we thank the neighborhood businesses who generously donated prizes, coupons, and refreshments for attendees.

Along with food, the celebration included facepainting and balloon twisting provided by Art for Your Head Entertainment Services, games,

(Continued on page 11)

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sidewalk art, and drawings for raffle prizes donated by area businesses. It was a great time to visit, play and share with neighbors, sign up to vote, and join NSCNA's growing membership.

A huge thank you goes to members of the Social Committee. This event would not have happened without them. So THANK YOU to Sarah Brandon, Amelia Cobb, Lauren Werchan, Vannesza Smith, Sherran Williams, Carrie Francis, Ernie Garcia, Kenneth Webb, and Sharon Justice.

Also, THANK YOU to the neighbors who helped with set up, activities, and clean-up: Donna Eagar, Candy Swindall, Dallas and Helene Maham, Brian Cobb, Brian Brandon, John and Denise Anderson, Kate Brien, Jason Werchan and Barbara Gaston.

And finally... a GREAT BIG THANK YOU to all of the businesses who donated prizes and give-aways: Sonic Drive-In, Allandale HEB, Taco Cabana, RBFCU, Mr. Gatti's, Playland Skate Center, Yogurtland, Alamo Drafthouse, McAlister's Deli, Highland Lanes, Hat Creek Burger Company, Precision Camera & Video, Phil's Ice House, Terra Toys, Schlotzsky's, Burnet Road Animal Hospital , Skinny Limits, Waterloo Ice House, Pinthouse Pizza, Tomlinson's, Egg & I, Austin Antique Mall, Noodles & Co., and Hopdoddy Burger Bar. The North Shoal Creek Neighborhood Association appreciates your help and support.



July 4th NSCNA volunteers: Front row, left to right: Sarah Brandon, Amelia Cobb, Ernie Garcia, Barbara Gaston, Sharon Justice, Donna Eagar, Carrie Francis, Candy Swindall. Back row: Dallas Maham, Brian Cobb, Helene Maham, Kenneth Webb, and Brian Brandon. (Not pictured: John and Denise Anderson, Thelma DeLeon, Vannezsa Smith, Jason and Lauren Werchan, and Sherran Williams). Photo by Shirley Webb



Thank you, sponsors! NSCNA's Independence Day sponsors banner made by Thelma DeLeon. Photo by Shirley Webb



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North Shoal Creek Neighborhood's 15th annual Independence Day parade and celebration

















Avoid remodeling hitches by knowing when you need a variance *by Sharon Justice*

Zoning does more than just regulate what you can build on a piece of property. It also regulates a lot of details about how the structures on it can be built. For example, a typical single-family house and lot in Austin (SF-3 zoning) has to meet these zoning standards (also called Site Development Standards):

- Minimum lot size: 5,750 sq. ft
- Maximum building height: 35 ft
- Minimum lot width: 50 ft
- Maximum Units Per Lot: 1
- Front yard setback for structures: 25 ft.
- Street side yard setback: 15 ft.
- Interior yard setback: 5 ft.
- Maximum building coverage: 40%
- Maximum impervious cover: 45%

If your proposed remodel runs afoul of any of these, you need a variance from the City's Board of Adjustment to proceed. Basically, you're asking permission to break the rules that your neighbors are following (or at least presumably following), so getting one isn't easy. It requires filing a variance request application and presenting your case to the Board at a public hearing.

The Board of Adjustment's rules say it may grant a variance if it makes the following findings:

- A zoning regulation is preventing a reasonable use.
- Because of it, you're suffering a hardship unique to your property and not general to your neighborhood.

• A variance in your case won't alter the character of or impair the use of adjacent properties and won't impair "the purpose of regulations to the zoning district in which the property is located."

These criteria are a high hurdle, but submitting a well thought out, detailed and careful variance request application can surmount them. If you feel someone with experience in variances can do a better job than you in presenting your case, you can have someone (an agent) help with the application and represent you at the hearing.

The Board of Adjustment meets the second Monday of each month, at 5:30 p.m., in Council Chambers. For information on the Board's rules and procedures and to download the application form for a variance, go to *austintexas.gov/boa*.

At the hearing, the Board will take into account the extent to which your request is supported by or objected to by neighbors. Neighbors within 500' of your lot will have been notified of the requested variance and will have an opportunity to speak for or against it. It's to your benefit to explain to them beforehand what you want to do and why. It's also a plus if you get signed statements from them in support of your request. Getting a variance isn't easy, but it can be done.

To find out your home's zoning, search your address in Austin's Zoning Profile Report database: *austintexas.gov/gis/ZoningProfile/*

BACK TO SCHOOL SAFETY TIPS FOR DRIVERS

- Put away your cell phone. Using a cell phone in a school zone can mean a fine of up to \$200.
- Obey school zone speed limit signs. Traffic fines usually double in school zones.
- Drop off and pick up children in the school's designated areas, not the middle of the street.
- Keep an eye on children gathered at bus stops; be alert for children who might dart into the street, especially from between parked vehicles.
- Stop for flashing red lights on a school bus, regardless of which direction you're headed.
- Watch for and obey school crossing guards. Be patient; wait for the guard to lower his or her stop sign before proceeding.
- The rest of us can help drivers by keeping sidewalks and pedestrian paths clear of vegetation and other obstacles, especially near intersections. Don't obstruct a driver's line of sight.
- Pedestrians don't always have the right of way but always drive as though they do.

Watering your trees under Stage 2 watering restrictions

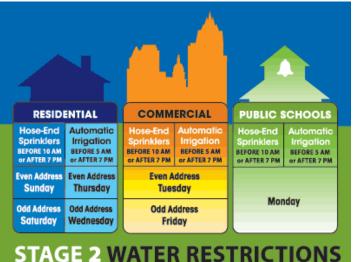
Heat and drought can make it difficult for folks without automatic irrigation systems to keep trees alive under Stage 2 watering restrictions. Fortunately, using a soaker hose to water trees is not limited to the once a week Stage 2 restriction. You can water a tree or a vegetable garden with a soaker hose or soaker tape at any time on any day. For tree watering, the soaker hose must be placed within the drip line of the tree.

Trees and vegetable gardens are the only exceptions: other uses of a soaker hose or tape are limited to the hose-end sprinkler times of 12 a.m. to 10 a.m. and/or from 7 p.m. to 12 a.m. on your assigned outdoor water use day.

You can also water using drip irrigation on any day at any time. If your drip irrigation system is part of an automatic sprinkler system you must turn off the spray head zones.

You can also water with a handheld hose, a refillable container, or a Treegator or similar product at any time on any day.

For more information on Stage 2 watering restrictions, please go to www.austintexas.gov/ department/stage-2-watering-restrictions.



WATERING ONE DAY PER WEEK

HELP WANTED!

NSCNA needs volunteers for its Nominating Committee. The Committee is active from September to the January election of new officers. Committee members solicit and vet candidate for the Association's seven board and four officer positions. If you are interested in serving on this important committee, please email directors@nscna.org.

We also need candidate to run for our board and officer positions and volunteers to serve on our eight standing committees. For more information, please email directors @nscna.org.

North Shoal Creek Real Estate Info

8211 Daleview	1,907 sq. ft.	\$429,000
8708 Donna Gale	1,590 sq. ft.	\$420,000
8414 Stillwood	1,051 sq. ft.	\$339,000
8217 Briarwood	1,383 sq. ft.	\$349,900
2705 Kerrybrook	1,630 sq. ft.	\$465,000
8004 Parkdale	1,178 sq. ft.	\$315,000
Condos:		
2600 Penny Lane #21	l 1 828 sq. ft.	\$120,000
2600 Penny Lane #10)8 846 sq. ft.	\$104,000
2425 Ashdale #25	644 sq. ft.	\$120,000
2425 Ashdale #68	979 sq. ft.	\$148,500

Listings compiled from Zillow.com, Realtor.com, and Trulia.com websites

Safety Tips

Vehicle burglaries are on the rise in our area. Most happen in parking lots or garages of shopping centers and commercial/office buildings along Anderson Lane, Burnet, Research, and MoPac, But recently, several have happened in residential areas, with vehicles broken into and, on one occasion, tires stolen. Please take precautions to keep this from happening to you: always lock your car doors; don't leave anything in your car that might attract a thief; park near outdoor lighting when possible; consider installing additional lighting near driveways; and, if you have a garage, always park your car in it.

As a member of the North Shoal Creek NA, you and your family are eligible for membership.

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- ⇒ Visit www.nscna.org and pay with Paypal (\$16.00, including \$1.00 processing fee)
- ⇒ Mail your completed form and check for \$15.00 to NSCNA, P.O. Box 66443, Austin, TX 78766.
- ⇒ Join at any of our general membership meetings

Hope we'll be hearing from you soon!



North Shoal Creek Neighborhood News Ad Prices

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