



NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

Traffic Happenings

By Jeff Russell

**Winter
2008
Issue 1**

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Our Neighbor:
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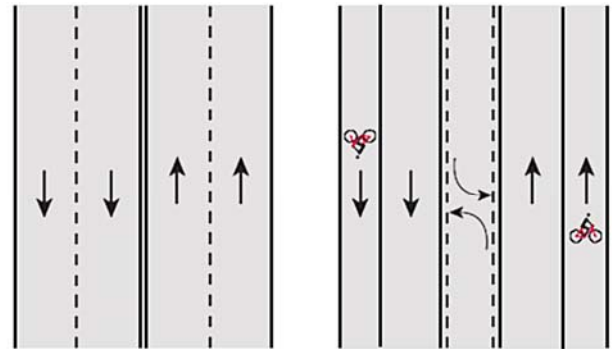
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Calendar
**Next General
Meeting**
Tuesday
March 4th
6:30pm—8pm

This year the City of Austin restored funding for traffic calming projects. There is quite a backlog of projects, and our neighborhood was ranked fourth in this section of the city. This year the top three neighborhoods will be studied, and projects will be implemented based on available budget. It looks like North Shoal Creek will be studied next year.

In the mean time, we need to keep our eye on funding for city projects that might help our traffic situation. One essentially “free” improvement is the upcoming re-striping of Steck Ave when it is resurfaced next summer. The lane configuration on Steck will be changed to include bicycle lanes and a shared left turn lane, similar to that shown in the diagram above.



Current Configuration

New Configuration

The city traffic engineers were reluctant to “remove” a lane of vehicle traffic, but research studies demonstrate this “road diet” configuration supports the same amount of traffic. To verify this, the city is implementing the Steck re-striping as a pilot study in which detailed before and after measurements will be compared.

One of the main reasons our neighborhood only scored fourth, is that Steck is not a candidate for traffic calming, because it is classified as a Minor Arterial road in the Austin Metropolitan Area Transportation Plan (AMATP). Traffic volumes show that many cut-through routes in our neighborhood make use of Steck, including a lot of the traffic on Rockwood Ln. See the map BELOW/ ABOVE. Since arterial streets are supposed to move high volumes of traffic over great distances at relatively high speed, we need to work on amending the AMATP to remove the arterial designation on Steck.

In the near term, Steck will be re-striped from two-lanes each direction into one-lane with a shared left-turn lane, including bicycle lanes. The impact on car traffic, pedestrians, bicycles, and cut-through traffic in the neighborhood will be evaluated to decide if the re-striping should be permanent. Projects similar to this in other cities indicate it should be beneficial.

Over the next year, we need to lobby to remove the arterial classification of Steck. This will provide several benefits: eligibility for traffic calming, emphasis as a residential street, and possibly long term changes to the way road improvements will encourage traffic flow in our area.

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President's Corner

Our neighborhood of North Shoal Creek is at the geographic center of Austin. Within the boundaries we have a park, an elementary school, and soon a library. We are fortunate to have convenient shopping and easy access to freeways—but this also leads to traffic problems and the potential for crime. Our central location also makes this area attractive for redevelopment of nearby commercial property.

With so much happening in our neighborhood, I encourage you to join the association (only \$15 per year!) and get involved in our little community.

Our primary purpose is to promote our neighborhood, and we do this through several committees that look at particular issues. For example, the Media Committee maintains our website (www.nscna.org) and publishes this newsletter. The Social Committee organizes the annual July 4th parade and other events; and the Development Committee is following a project to redevelop the Village Shopping Center on Anderson Lane as a vertical mixed use project of retail, office, and residential space. Consider participating on a committee, it's a great way to meet your neighbors.

This year, we plan to use our general meetings (about 4 per year), this newsletter, and e-mail groups to communicate what people are doing on behalf of our neighborhood and promote discussion. Our general meetings at Pillow Elementary are open to the public, and our board and committee meetings are open to any interested member. I hope to see you at an upcoming meeting.

Jeff Russell

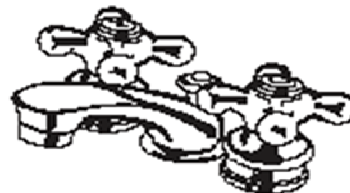
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Spotlight on our Neighbors

The Iris Queen of Primrose Lane

By: Cheryl Carter

Do you know the difference between a rhizome and a bulb? Can you tie a hooleyann? Can you grow prize-winning irises? Can you thoroughly trace your family's genealogy to over 100 years? Can you write poetry? Have you retired from a U.S. government job? Can you hawk face cream and eyeliner? How about all of these?

Carolyn Gifford of Primrose Lane, a NSCNA resident since 1983, can answer yes in her lovely West Texas accent to all of these.



Well, *mostly* all of them.

She hails from the tiny West Texas town of Hooleyann, and she may not have lots of practice tying a hooleyann, but she certainly knows what it is. What distinguishes Mrs. Gifford in Austin, in Texas, and certainly on Primrose Lane, however, is not her knowledge of a hooleyann but her expertise at growing and showing prize-winning irises, many from the 175 varieties that are native to the U.S. The iris has a storied and ancient past: admired by ancient Egyptians, used by Greeks and Romans for medicinal purposes and in perfumery, parlayed to freshen German beer, and to enrich the bouquet of French wine. Mrs. Gifford just puts her irises in wine bottles and wins.

Despite suffering a debilitating stroke in July on top of caring for her ailing husband, Guy Gifford, of 46 years, Mrs. Gifford is a mainstay and a celebrity on the Texas circuit for growing and showing prizewinning irises. Mr. Gifford was also an avid grower along with his wife up until his own health issues restricted him. This year, like many years past, Mrs. Gifford has won "Best in Show," and her ribbons and accolades are more numerous than would fit in the pages of this newsletter. In fact, Ms. Gifford said of 2007, "This was my banner year."

At the age of 11 or 12, according to Mrs. Gifford, she received her first iris from her 17-year old sister who is still raising irises, though not showing them. That older sister, who is now 84, still sends her iris rhizomes. Mrs. Gifford began seeding her interest in serious iris growing in 1997 when that same sister sent her more irises. A chain of events soon followed: In 1998 she joined the Iris Society of Austin, entered her first show in 1999, won her first blue ribbon in 2002, and was "Queen of Show" in 2004 in Belton.

While the rest of NSCNA residents probably remember that memorable hail storm of 2005 and bemoaned plants, trees and flowers damaged beyond repair, Mrs. Gifford's irises were also "destroyed," but she still managed to brush them into shape and rake in more blue ribbons. She politely but firmly declined to reveal her secret for winning in spite of the hail damage. Maybe it was the tender, loving care she gives each single iris that she prepares for show? That scrupulous attention includes delicately buffing with a small cosmetic brush each and every inch of the iris and its leaves before carefully arranging it in a vase or bottle. "I try to have 25 to 30 specimens to show," she said.

What she would reveal, however, was that "You feed and labor in September, give a little love again in

Continued on next page

February, and show 'em like crazy in April." She has a secret all-organic, pesticide-free mix for producing her award-winning irises that she also won't reveal. "That's why I'm 'Queen of Show,'" she said.

Mrs. Gifford has never been outside the U.S. or Texas to show her irises, but she is a longtime, active member of the Iris Society of Austin which will host a national convention in April 2008. She continues to recuperate from her stroke and stays busy selling Mary Kay cosmetics and researching her own family's Dutch origins and her husband's German origins.

She extends an open-invitation to neighbors and friends every April to see the beautiful blooms, hear first-hand her expert knowledge, tour her garden, and she will gladly offer cuttings. She also collects vases and green wine bottles for showing her irises. She recommends visiting the Iris Society of Austin website, <http://irisarian.com/isa> for more information about the beautiful flowers and the organization.

(And, by the way, a hooleyann is that short rope cowboys use to tie together the legs of a calf after roping it.)

In My Garden

by Carolyn Gifford

I walked in my garden, a bud is there
 Each day I inspect to see how far it grows
 It's early March, the progress is very slow.
 A few warm days bathe it with tender care.
 I'm waiting, do you see me standing there?
 The rains wash Mother Earth's milk to her soul.
 Then one day, I see it's open, oh, oh, oh!
 This iris name, this first one, her beauty to share.
 "Happy New Year", a name befitting the scene.
 She begins another year of my irises in bloom.
 You know there's more to come very, very soon.
 She's first in line to make my heart sing,
 "Winter's over, it's spring, spring, spring!"



If you would like to submit an article of interest or advertise with us, please contact Sandy Perkins at 452-6860 or newsletter@nscna.org

Deadlines to receive advertisement and articles are: January 1st, April 1st, July 1st, and October 1st

**Personal ads are free for NSCNA Residents.
 Limit 30 words**

Business classifieds are \$45 and the limit is 40 words.

AUGUST YARD OF THE MONTH WINNER WAS:

Joe Carroll, 8213 Rockwood Lane.
 Thank you for keeping our neighborhood beautiful!

See photos of this winning yard on the website

WINNERS OF OUR 3RD QUARTER MEMBERSHIP DRAWING WERE:

Bill and Carol Shield, 8308 Daleview Drive
 Congratulations! They won a \$50 gift certificate to Casa Chapala Restaurant just for joining or renewing their membership in 2007!

Why the September Vote to Give Money was Invalid

At the September 18 special meeting, a resolution was passed to give \$2,000 to the Allandale Neighborhood Association (ANA) legal defense fund by October 2. Both before and after the meeting, several members of our association suggested that such an action was in conflict with our bylaws. After the meeting, several board members sought legal aid to review whether or not the vote to give money to ANA was proper.

On September 28, the board was informed that the motion of September 18 was in conflict with our bylaws as well as prohibited by state law. Each board member received a copy of a legal opinion advising the board to take no action. This legal opinion was issued by the law firm Clark, Thomas, & Winters, the largest law firm in Austin.

The letter explained that the September vote violates Texas state law and the organizational documents of the NSCNA as follows.

- The donation to ANA exceeds the scope of power afforded to NSCNA under the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act. [Texas Rev. Civ. Stat. Ann., Art. 1396-2.02(A)(13)]
- The donation violates Article XI of the NSCNA bylaws
- Only the board has the vested power to approve expenditure of funds per Article NSCNA bylaws, Article VII, therefore the membership vote is interpreted as a policy decision.
- Texas state law requires 10 days notice of a special meeting, this requirement was not met.
- The action from the September 18 meeting is rendered null and void because the motion violates the bylaws [Roberts Rules Newly Revised, 10th ed., Chap 10—Improper Motions].

The opinion concludes that even if the membership elected to expend funds, the Board of Directors is prohibited from doing so under Texas state law. A copy of the legal opinion is available at:

http://www.nscna.org/issues/2007/ANA/Legal_Opinion.pdf


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Can you imagine being a child and having nowhere to live, hurting and feeling unwanted, rejected, abandoned? We receive calls day and night, "Do you have a home for a 3 and 6 yr old, newborn, sibling group..." One week we needed homes for around 35 children!

What these children have been through is unbelievable. Small children left alone for days, all kinds of abuse; the stories are so sad. These children are as important and precious as the children in your family, and they need us to be there for them in this crisis that is their life. They are worth it! It is for them that we founded FamilyLink, and when I look into their faces I know it is truly a privilege to care for them. However, for those that we have to turn away it is so sad!

Recently over the weekend I received two calls concerning two different abused babies with broken bones. We didn't have a home for either of them because our homes were full. I thought, "Where are the families for these precious children, the ones that can love them through this terrible pain and suffering?" Maybe that family will be yours or someone you know.

We want to replace the heritage of abandonment and abuse with the legacy of hope and love. Children's tears will be wiped, they will be held and comforted, and God will heal their broken hearts. When one child becomes part of a family and is loved and healed, it can impact and save generations! If we don't receive and love these children, then who will?

There are many children waiting to be adopted. Some have been waiting for years, and feel that no one wants them to be a real part of their family. In many cases children are split up in to different homes, which creates so much more loss and trauma in their life. This is a travesty, and breaks our hearts. We need families who have enough room in their hearts and homes to keep siblings together!

How You Can Help

Become a foster or adoptive family *Child Advocate* Become a Church/Community Liaison* Fundraising Committee* Construction help* Volunteer in the office

We are available for speaking engagements to share on behalf of the children. For more information please call or e-mail us.

Let your compassion compel you to action!

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WE WANT YOUR HELP!

To write restaurant or business reviews of establishments in our area to publish in the newsletter. We would also like you to share your favorite recipes for publishing in future newsletters.

Please email them to:

sandyperkins@earthlink.net or mail them before January 1st to: NSCNA, P O Box 66443, Austin, TX 78766-0443

Kitchen Cabinets

by David Dettmer, Founder of *Expertunity.com*

Is it time to dress up your kitchen? There are several alternatives that can make a big difference in the finished look of your cabinets.

Reface or Replace?

If the structure of your cabinets is sound and you're only faced with minor chips and dings, paint can prove to be an affordable cure! If you're going for a short-term improvement, it is definitely simplest to repaint or stain. Keep in mind that you will still have the same configuration as before. Another option would be to replace doors and drawers, but it can sometimes cost just as much to do a complete replacement of the cabinets.

Pulls and Knobs

Replacing the hardware will do wonders to provide the look you want to convey. From modern, sophisticated or eclectic, there are options to suit your style. Visit your local hardware store for inspiration and to pick up lower cost items. If you're looking for something a bit more unique, try these websites:

spectradecor.com rejuvenation.com whitechapel-ltd.com

Remodeling

So maybe you're ready to take your kitchen from cramped to comfortable. Whatever your budget, there are various alternatives to consider. One choice is to simply remove the doors and finish the interiors with a clever shelving solution. If you are not moving plumbing or walls, you can work with a designer to make a better configuration and maximize the layouts, features and options.

Many thanks to Artisan Cabinetry & Design (www.artisancd.com) for their assistance with this article.

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“Walk and Talk” Groups *by: Coleen Jacobsen*

HAPPY NEW YEAR— and along with that greeting comes thoughts of resolutions, changes, and improvements. If getting exercise and meeting neighbors are two things on your New Year’s list, NSCNA might be able to help. Since the “buddy system” can help get us up and going, NSCNA residents have set up some times and meeting points for “Walking & Talking” groups. No one will be monitoring the schedule—purely come as you wish... and be healthier.

..... *Cut and keep at hand*.....

| <i>TIME</i> | <i>GROUP</i> | <i>MEETING PLACE</i> |
|-------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 7am | Early Birds | Corner of Donna Gail and Thrushwood |
| 9am | Moms with Strollers | Corner of Little Laura and Thrushwood |
| 1:30pm | After Nooners | Corner of Benbrook and Winding Walk |
| 6pm | After Workers | Corner of Benbrook and Winding Walk |
| 7pm | Family Walk | Corner of Benbrook and Melshire |
| 9pm | Dog Walkers | Corner of Benbrook and Winding Walk |

.....

We encourage neighbors in other sections to submit their own times, groups and meeting places and while we are all out getting healthy—we can be keeping an eye on our area! Just submit your information prior to April 1st to: newsletter@nscna.org and it will be published in the Spring Newsletter.

Other recommendations.... To detour thieves and let our presence be known throughout the day, possibly our retirees in the neighborhood might consider “front yard sit shifts” for enjoying that morning or afternoon cup of tea or coffee. If we are more visible in our area, perhaps those with bad intentions won’t bother to stop! Plus a bit of fresh air and sunshine might do the body good.

Car break-ins have not only been happening in our driveways but also at the neighboring businesses: Playland Skate Center, Crossroads Shopping Center and Highland Lanes. Beware of your surroundings and never leave any valuables in plain sight in your vehicle.

Don’t forget to pick up your newspaper and mail daily as well as bring your garbage can in to let others know you are home. And never forget to close and lock your garage doors.

Let’s have a safe and happy 2008!

NSCNA Welcomes Infiniti on Burnet Road

By: Mary Arnett

NSCNA would like to welcome Austin Infiniti Owner and Entrepreneur, Bryan Hardeman as our newest Business Member. Bryan purchased the former Bluebonnet Electric facility on Burnet Road in 2002 not certain of the ultimate use, but instinctively knowing that the area was ripe for redevelopment. His Austin Infiniti dealership had been located near Highland mall since 1992 but was growing steadily along with the Infiniti brand. Eventually, it became clear that Burnet Road would be a perfect fit for an expansion of the dealership. Bryan cites a vibrant central location, a concentration of current Infiniti owners within the area, and a great opportunity for drive-by traffic as his reasons. In 2007, Austin Infiniti celebrated 15 years of being in business!

While independently owned and operated dealerships are becoming rare, Austin Infiniti was one of only 31 dealerships nationwide to be awarded the 2007 Infiniti Award of Excellence- an award that recognizes superior customer satisfaction and sales achievements.

Bryan Hardeman is also a well known local entrepreneur, his family of dealerships including Mercedes-Benz of Austin and First Texas Honda (in business since the '70's). His 10 year old Austin Subaru dealership, also near Highland Mall, will soon to move into new digs at the former Infiniti site. Bryan says he is happy to be a part of the neighborhood and has already shown his willingness to work with NSCNA as construction was underway. Stillwood resident, Kevin Wier, met with Bryan early on and was pleased with the response to concerns about night lighting. The installation of high tech security on the premises should help the area as well.

North Shoal Creek neighbors are encouraged to stop in and give a friendly neighborhood welcome to General Manager Allen Clauss and take a look at their newest models or their pre-owned vehicles, located at 8140 Burnet Road, 512-454-9489.

The calm before the storm.

The all-new 330-hp G Coupe.



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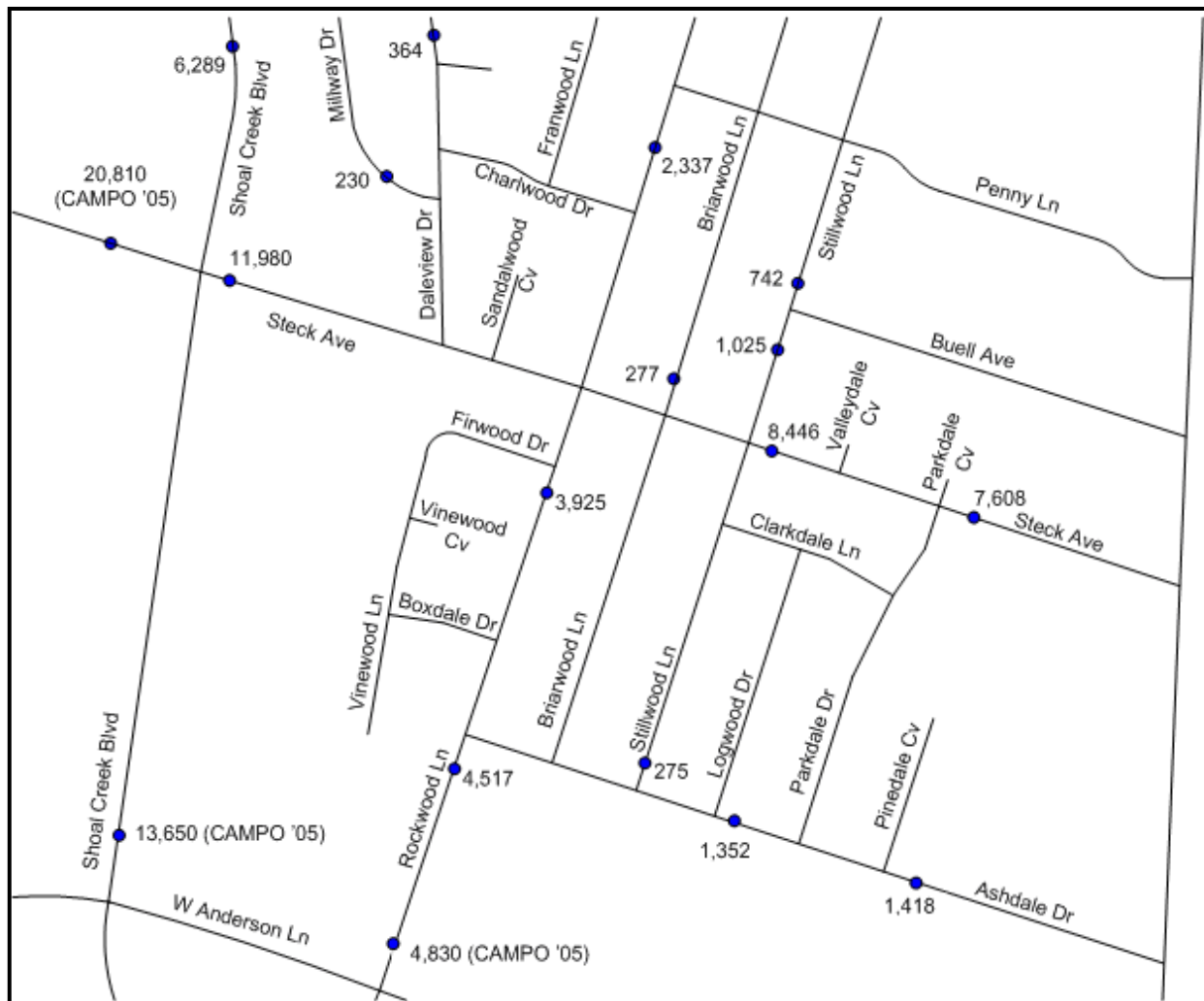
8140 Burnet Road

512-454-9489

www.austininfiniti.com

Traffic Happenings, *continued from page 1*

There are many other pressing traffic issues in our neighborhood, for example Primrose, Rockwood, and Ashdale. Hopefully we can find funded projects to improve traffic and/or the sidewalk situation on the streets. These improvements take time, and we need to continue to apply pressure on the city to help fix our traffic problems. If you want to get involved, please join the traffic committee.



This map shows daily traffic counts at various points near Steck Avenue.

TRIVIA QUESTIONS:

- 1) What was the first grocery store in the area and where was it located?
- 2) Where was the last drive-in theater closest to our neighborhood?

Mail your answers to: NSCNA, P. O. Box 66443, Austin, TX 78766-0443
or

Email your answers to: newsletter@nscna.org
before April 1st, 2008

Correct answers to go in a drawing for a gift certificate to Starbucks

Why Roberts Rules of Order?

At over 600 pages in length, Roberts Rules of Order provides a detailed framework for organizations to make decisions. In theory, a group holds a meeting and decides what action to take (or not to take) based on a majority of the members in attendance. It's that simple.

A *presiding officer* (chair, president, etc.) is responsible for conducting the meeting and insuring it is conducted fairly by enforcing the rules. A *parliamentarian* may be appointed to offer advice; however, the presiding officer is responsible for enforcing the rules. The presiding officer should also help a member state a proper motion when needed. Rulings by the presiding officer can be *appealed* by any member, meaning the matter is placed before the membership to vote on whether or not the rule was applied properly. Roberts Rules protect the minority by insuring full and open discussion, and by allowing members to challenge application of any rules.

A *motion* is the manner in which an organization formally takes action. A member makes a motion to do something or take a position on an issue, the matter is debated, and a vote is taken. During debate, *amendments* can be proposed to a main motion. These, in turn, are debated and voted upon. There are several types of motions that accomplish different things, and some of these interrupt the current debate, for example a motion to adjourn or to refer a matter to a committee.

The motions have a "hierarchy" of importance. For example, if a member believes the rules are being violated, he can immediately raise a *point of order*, even interrupting another speaker if necessary. Once given the floor, the member can state the breach of rules. For most rule "violations", the point of order must be raised at the time the breach occurs. As an example, if the chair is about to start debate on a motion that has not been seconded, the time to raise this point of order is when the chair states the motion. After debate on such a motion has begun, a point of order is too late.

The only exception to this timeliness requirement is when the breach is of a continuing nature. For example, if a main motion has been adopted that conflicts with the bylaws. A point of order can be raised at anytime during the continuance of the breach.

Motions that conflict with the corporate charter, bylaws, or procedural rules prescribed by national or state laws, are *out of order*. Ideally, this ruling is made when the motion is first proposed. However, if any motion of this kind is adopted, it is null and void. Ultimately, if there is ambiguity as to whether or not a motion is in order, a majority of the members present at a meeting decide this issue.



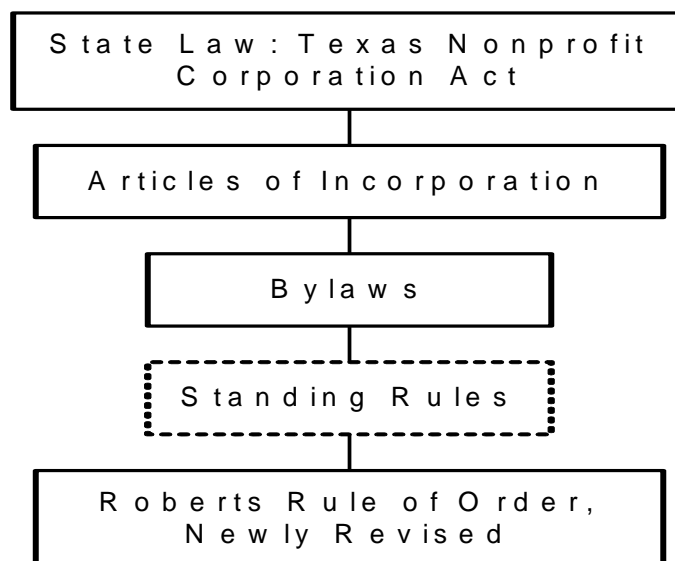
Available to do odd jobs in our neighborhood

Kyle Jacobsen, one of our young neighbors is back in Austin between jobs as he awaits wildland firefighter assignment - He is available until Spring to do odd jobs in the area:

Yard clean up, light tree trimming, moving items, cleaning gutters, errands etc.

You can call Kyle at 454-1816

The Nuts and Bolts of Our Association



The North Shoal Creek Neighborhood Association (NSCNA) is actually a nonprofit corporation, and there is a hierarchy of rules under which it operates (shown above). State (and federal) law takes the highest priority. The Articles of Incorporation establish us as a Texas nonprofit corporation, and these are filed with the Secretary of State. The Bylaws define more specific operating rules, and these are easier to change because they do not need to be filed with the state. An organization can also have standing rules that define specific procedures like how a meeting is conducted. Finally, the 600 plus pages of Roberts Rules of Order define how to conduct meetings, including a wide variety of unusual circumstances that might arise.

The original goal of NSCNA was to be tax exempt with the IRS. Thus, some of the language in the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws are intended to meet the requirements for tax exempt status of a 503(c)(4) organization. For example, Article XI of the Bylaws state “the Association’s net earnings shall be devoted to charitable, educational, or recreational purposes that are within the stated purposes for this Association”, which match IRS requirements described in Publication 557.

This past year saw a renewed interest in understanding and using the rules that govern our organization. A few inconsistencies between different sets of rules were discovered, for example, the bylaws require seven days notice of a meeting, but state law has a stricter requirement of ten days notice (state law wins). Another key aspect of our association’s organization is that the “management of the Association is vested in the Board of Directors.” Simply put, the board is responsible for business decisions, and the membership votes on matters of policy.

This year, the Bylaws Committee will propose a set of bylaws changes to eliminate inconsistencies with state law and clear up other ambiguities. It takes a 2/3 membership vote to amend the bylaws, and there will be plenty of notice given prior to any vote. The Articles of Incorporation will also be examined to insure consistency with the new Texas Business Organizations Code that goes into effect in 2010 (for our organization).

Our Bylaws and Article of Incorporation are available online at www.nscna.org. Click on the “About” tab near the top of the page to find the links to these documents.

Exhausted to Energized in 30 Minutes a Day

Do you take time to pamper yourself? If you're like most superwomen, you probably put work, family, pets, chores, volunteering, exercise, and finally, sleep ahead of self-care, relaxation and relieving stress. With every new year, many of us make a resolution to slow down and take better care of ourselves, however the reality is that taking time to pamper yourself typically does not take top priority on your To-Do list. However, neglecting your own needs can leave you feeling frazzled and worn down, putting you at risk of illness, depression, and feelings of resentment. Your family's wellbeing depends on your own, so take time to relax and rejuvenate your body, mind and spirit.

Setting aside just thirty minutes to an hour each day for targeted self-care and alone time is an effective way to boost your mood and give yourself a mini-vacation from the stress of your daily routine. Sit in a bubble bath with low music and lighting and let your mind wander or sit outside in the morning, enjoy a cup of coffee and simply people watch. Whatever you do, make sure you set aside uninterrupted time – taking calls on your cell phone from the tub or hopping up every few minutes to check on your kids will inevitably end up making you feel more tense. Giving your body some well-deserved down time at least once a week to recharge your batteries will give you the energy and motivation you need to tackle whatever challenges arise in the week ahead.

Once you've made a commitment to pamper yourself with a little TLC, be sure to experiment with a variety of methods to stimulate many different senses. The following tips for pampering yourself will soothe body, mind and spirit while promoting maximum relaxation and revitalization:

1. Take care of your feet: For those on their feet all day, one good way to soothe aching muscles is to soak your feet in a tub of hot water with aromatherapy bath salts, following up with a sea salt scrub to soften calloused skin. The warm water lowers blood pressure and promotes peace and tranquility. Finishing off with a rich herbal foot cream with alpha hydroxy acids will let you walk away feeling refreshed and make your feet feel reinvigorated.
2. Deep-clean pores and nourish your skin: You need to continue to put your best face forward, so indulge tired pores with an anti-oxidant masque to increase microcirculation and cell proliferation, while drawing impurities out of your skin and stress out of your system. Then follow-up with rich, moisturizing creams that protect, strengthen and restore skin to its natural state of health and beauty.
4. Relax with a Cup of Hot Tea: Rejuvenate your spirit with a steaming cup of herbal detox tea, which will help cleanse and eliminate toxins from the body while supporting relaxation and serenity. Additionally, treating yourself to foods high in potassium, such as bananas, kiwi and avocado, helps relieve stress and anxiety; papaya also cleanses the digestive system; and celery combats anxiety and depression.
5. Light Up: Turn down the lights, put on soft music and light up some scented candles around the room, then just sit and relax in the quiet, soothing ambiance. Place a candle in your favorite scent around each room of the house to remind you to slow down and relax. The soft light and fragrance of aromatherapy candles have the power to gently lift spirits, reduce tension and calm and balance emotions.
6. Get a Massage: Regular massage can do wonders to loosen up tight muscles, promote circulation, and make you feel relaxed. Whether you schedule a professional massage or ask a loved one to lend a hand, use aromatherapy massage oils that contain botanically-based essential oils to help enhance relaxation while moisturizing and pampering your skin.

While it may not be easy to incorporate self-care into your daily or weekly routine, you can create rituals that you look forward to so it will be easier to keep your commitment to pampering yourself. You deserve some down time so indulge and let the pampering begin!

Sarah Miller is the owner of For the Health of It, an independent distributor of pure, safe and beneficial health and wellness products from Arbonne International. For more information or to sample some of the pampering products mentioned in this article, contact Sarah at: 512-417-2259.

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It's Not Too Late to Join Scouting

There is still time for families interested in Scouting to sign up their sons for Cub Scouting (boys 1st - 5th grade), Boy Scouting (boys 11-18 years old) or Venturing (boys and girls 14-20 years old).

Research by Harris Interactive shows that men who were Scouts are more likely than non-Scouts to graduate from high school and college, value family relationships and believe in helping others.

Every new Cub Scout that joins that fall/winter will receive a free Pinewood Derby car kit, courtesy of Gatti's Pizza.

For more information, visit www.bsacac.org and click on the "new to Scouting" tab. If you'd like to be contacted about joining Scouting, click on the "Join Scouting" link on the website



Girl Scouts of Central Texas is starting an exciting new year! Through Girl Scouts, girls have the opportunity to learn life skills, explore their environment, make new friends and have fun in a safe and education setting. For the 2007-2008 school year, programs include participation in the Austin Veteran's Day Parade, an overnight trip to Cameron Park Zoo, kayaking on Lady Bird Lake and more!

Girl Scouts also have the opportunity to camp at any of the council's seven camps. From Camp Texlake on Lake Travis to Camp Kachina on Lake Belton, girls have the opportunity to get up close and personal with the natural side of Texas while participating in activities like horseback riding, sailing and archery.

To learn more about the Girl Scouts of Central Texas and how to be involved, visit www.gsctx.org or email Membership Development Specialist, Divina Ormsby at divinao@girlscouts-lonestar.org

Is Homework hurting your family?

Do you, as parents, sometimes feel like you are doing 7th grade all over again?
Has it been a while since you have done Algebra, Geometry, and Physics?
Is it difficult to manage the plethora of homework that stresses your family time?

College Tutors understand how to work with children and make learning easy, fun, and rewarding. Whether the tutor is a college student, recent college graduate, certified teacher, or industry professional, they don't simply produce results, they make it enjoyable for everyone involved. The approach is to create a customized learning plan for each student and all tutoring is one-on-one with no contracts. Maybe one day it is homework help for math and the next day is help studying for a history test...the structure is flexible and personal.

College Nannies are flexible to work any number of hours, any number of days...even if it is an occasional (or regular) date night! In addition, College Nannies are often asked to help with after-school care. A typical employment may involve picking the children up after school, taking them to their activities, getting them started on homework, or starting the dinner preparations before mom or dad gets home from the office. Imagine what a stress relief that can be after a hard day at work.

College Nannies was started by Joe Keeley in St. Paul, MN where he was working summers as a 'manny' while attending college. He received so many requests to find other childcare providers like himself, that it rapidly grew into a full time nanny placement business. With an emphasis on age appropriate developmental activities and a focus on education, the expansion to provide tutoring services was a natural progression. College Nannies & Tutors is the largest nanny placement and tutoring service in the nation. Today there are over 55 franchises in 14 states reaching from Connecticut to California and Florida. Their influence stretched to Texas in 2007 when Donna Balsler, a long time Austin resident and mother of three, started serving families in this area.

To learn more about how College Nannies & Tutors can help, visit their newly opened learning center conveniently located at 3908 C Far West Blvd.(across from Doss Elementary School) or call 372-8385. They can also be found online at www.collegetutors.com and www.collegenannies.com.

[Mention this article by 2/28 and receive your first tutor session free at the learning center]

BRAIN FOOD – Is your child getting enough?

Here are some important ways to make sure your child has the fuel needed to use their brain to its maximum potential.

1. **Eat breakfast!** The best fuel for your brain is found in a high-protein, low-carb meal such as a cheese omelet with wheat toast. Proteins provide the building blocks of neurotransmitters in your brain that will get the answers from your brain cells to your pencil.
2. **Ward off stress** before it gets in your way. Add home fries to your breakfast routine to stock up on B vitamins, excellent at keeping stress down.
3. **Make these minerals part of your diet:** zinc – Improves attention and reasoning. Find zinc in: oysters, beef, pork, liver, dried beans and peas, whole grains, fortified cereals, nuts, milk, cocoa and poultry. Copper – Needed for function of the nervous system and enzymes that yield energy. Find copper in potatoes, beans, peas, peanuts, wheat, rye, peaches, raisins, and chocolate. Magnesium – Helpful in converting blood sugar into usable energy and in keeping stress down. Find magnesium in spinach, nuts, seeds, and dairy products. Calcium – Enhances learning; find calcium in dairy.
4. **Eat fish** (sardines, salmon, tuna) for omega-3 fatty acids. It is believed that our brains evolved in the presence of these compounds. Studies indicate improved mental test scores with increased omega-3 fatty acids in the blood.
5. **Vitamin C** not only will keep you from being sick on test day, it is also used by the brain to make neurotransmitters that get the answers out.

These items actually keep your brain from performing: saturated fat and refined sugar. Moderate the number of French fries, white bread and soda you include in your diet.

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through academic & developmental growth

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National Night Out

By: *Mary Arnett*

With hot dogs grilled by Stillwood neighbor, John Anderson, and a very cool dog that stole the show from APD K9 Unit led by Sgt. Mike Fitzgerald, North Shoal Creek neighbors celebrated National Night Out in a big way at Pillow Elementary on August 8th! Austin Fire Department brought their impressive ladder truck and gave away two fire extinguishers courtesy of Lowes. APD District Rep James Hellums hung out with us as we discussed current crime issues and the need for our neighborhood to be aware of crime activity that happens around us, the importance of reporting crime to 911 or 311, and a sense of community that allows us to know and watch out for each other.

Special thanks to Bryan Hardeman and the Austin Infiniti Dealership on Burnet Rd for his financial support of this event. Debbie Luna from Randolph Brooks was on hand to help with water bottles, glow necklaces and some gift certificates to Target and Home Depot. Special thanks to Lowes for door prizes: two personal safes, a motion detector floodlight, two fire extinguishers. Cothrons Lock and Key gave us two combination key holders. Austin Energy gave us energy efficient light bulbs to remind us about turning on our porch lights to fight crime at night. Also in kind donations were made by Dairy Queen, Mrs. Baird's Bread, Sonic, Picky's Pantry at Steck and Burnet.

Extra special thanks to the whole Anderson family: John and Denise, Caleb, Ben, Lauren and Arial, who presided as our hosts that evening and made the event go so smoothly. Thanks to Linda Wilson for her assistance with checking people in and making them feel welcomed. Thanks to Malcolm St. Romain for his assistance with the presentation, not to mention his neighborhood event sized grill.

There were 126 attendees including a baby less than a year old, all the way to Flossie Sweat, 100 year old resident of our neighborhood who still lives in her own house, who found the time, motivation and strength to come and participate in National Night Out. We were honored by her presence.

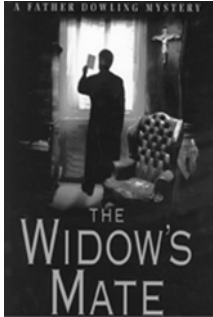
Stillwood residents won the energy efficient bulbs for having the highest number of attendees. Thanks to everyone who made it a success!!!



Library News

By: Beth Solomon

Hello, neighbors! Construction is moving along nicely at the North Village Library site. Walls are up and the large drainage hole has finally been completed and covered over. It really is starting to take shape. At the temporary location, we have many new book arrivals since the last newsletter—over 200 new adult fiction and non-fiction items in just the last couple of weeks. As you may know, we receive two copies of each fiction bestseller and one copy of each non-fiction bestseller that make the *New York Times* Bestseller List. In addition to Best Sellers, we also receive many other items that are well worth your time. Here are highlights of three lesser-known books that may not have come to your attention.



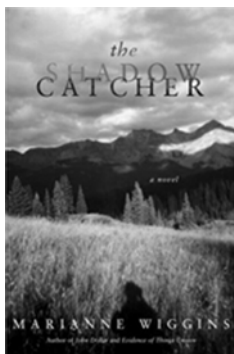
The Widow's Mate by
Ralph McInerney

Book 26 in the Father Dowling series finds the “dedicated parish priest who happens to have a knack for unraveling the mysteries of the real world as well as those of heaven” investigating “the disappearance of Wallace Flanagan---[which] doesn't seem to be a mystery so much as a dirty little secret. By all appearances, Flanagan, the heir to a lucrative concrete business, skipped town with his mistress more than ten years ago, although no one talks about that out of respect for his abandoned wife. But appearances go right out the window when his mangled--and recently live---body is found wedged into one of his father's cement mixers.”



The Margarets by
Sheri S. Tepper

“The Margarets marks the long-awaited return of one of the most respected authors in the sci-fi community. Sheri S. Tepper dazzles yet again with a powerful tale of ingenious survival and strange destiny. The only human child living in a human work colony on the Martian satellite Phobos, little Margaret Bain has devised a system for keeping the suffocating demons of boredom and loneliness at bay: She invents six imaginary companions, each an extension of her own personality, to play with. When the unproductive Phobos project is shut down, and after Margaret is forced to return to Earth with her parents, the child's other selves are lost to her. But they are not gone. Left behind, each one flourishes—refining its own persona, acquiring its own history—before ultimately dispersing to far-flung destinations throughout the universe.”



The Shadow Catcher by
Marianne Wiggins

Wiggins “turns her extraordinary literary imagination to the American West, ... interweaving narratives from two different eras: the first fraught passion between turn-of-the-twentieth-century icon Edward Curtis (1868-1952) and his muse-wife, Clara; and a twenty-first-century journey of redemption. Narrated in the first person by a reimagined writer named Marianne Wiggins, the novel beings in Hollywood, where top producers are eager to sentimentalize the complicated life of ...[the photographer] as a sunny biopic.”

Library News, continued

Those of you who prefer non-fiction--don't despair! More than half the new books received in the last several weeks have been aimed at you. Need ideas for pin-striping your car? Want some new recipes for low-fat, high-taste Italian dishes? Wonder what it is about those long-form comic books that kids (and adults too) find so engrossing? Are you curious about what makes writers tick? How they get their works published? Or maybe you've always been a fan of camouflage in all its fashion forms! Taking up beadwork? Are you a history buff or a biography junkie? We've got you covered! Come in and enjoy our really wide-ranging selection. We have also recently received our first MP3 CDs. These require a special player, but a 10-CD book will fit onto one MP3. Our regular books on CD section is growing, too.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING

Our children's story times continue on Tuesday mornings, 10:15am for toddlers (18 months to 3 years of age accompanied by an adult) and 11:00 am for pre-schoolers (3 to 5 years of age). Here are the topics:

| | |
|-------------|-----------------------------|
| February 5 | Colors All Around |
| February 12 | I Love You! Valentine's Day |
| February 19 | Bedtime, wear your jammies! |
| February 26 | Dinosaur Day |
| March 4 | In the Garden |
| March 11 | Spring Break, no story time |
| March 18 | Rabbits |
| March 25 | To the Farm |
| April 1 | Funnybone Day |
| April 8 | Hats |
| April 15 | Love My Library |
| April 22 | Bugs |
| April 29 | Gone Fishin! |

ADULT PROGRAMMING

For adult programming this Spring we have a monthly meeting, on the first Monday of the month, of the FACT Science Fiction/Fantasy Reading Group. Here are the books they will be discussing (I don't have an April book):

Monday, February 4, "Mothers and Other Monsters" by Maureen F. McHugh

Monday, March 3, "The Moon Is A Harsh Mistress" by Robert Heinlein.

For more info their Web site is www.fact.org/reading

If you've passed by the site of our new building, you know that there are walls going up! The architects have designed a very "green" building, and so these are not just any ordinary kind of bricks. They are made of a variety of materials that you might not expect to find in a building block. We've been promised that soon we will have one of these on display, along with explanatory information. So stop by to get a closer look at what's in the new library's walls.

In fact, stop by any time. We'd be delighted to see you. We have lots of things of interest for you. And if you don't find something you like, please take the opportunity to tell us what you would like. You're the reason we're here, and we always want to hear from you!

Many thanks for supporting the library! - Beth Solomon, Librarian III, North Village Branch

Avenue Five Institute Opens in Rockwood Village

From the outside it looks like a nice salon or spa. On the inside, the impression continues with a dramatic entry chandelier, Italian leather styling chairs, and wall TVs playing New York fashion show videos. Those are just a few of the things that make Avenue Five Institute one of the most innovative cosmetology schools in Central Texas. It's certainly not what you normally expect to find at something that's called an "institute."

Avenue Five Institute opened its doors on July 15th, and they're one of the newest business neighbors in the North Shoal Creek Neighborhood. Designed to easily handle over 125 students, the school has already enrolled more than 20 aspiring professionals. Programs are offered for both cosmetology and esthetics, and the curriculum and highly interactive programs have been designed by one of the country's leading cosmetology master educators. All of the instructors have spent years as working professionals in their fields and they all have many years experience as licensed instructors.

The great news for the North Shoal Creek Neighborhood is the fact that the school will offer a full range of salon and spa services at greatly reduced prices. In fact, from now until March, any service for a first-time customer is free and all service after that are offered at half price. With a quiet, private spa area for skin and body services, and a spacious music-filled salon floor for hair and nail services, Avenue Five should be a welcome retreat for neighborhood guests and their friends. All services are performed by advanced students under the careful supervision of their skilled instructors.



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Pillow News

By: Huddie Murray

Pillow Elementary welcomed students back for the new school year on Monday, August 27, after a successful Meet the Teacher Orientation on Friday, August 24. The first day also brought a visit from the Interim State Commissioner of Education, Robert Scott. Pillow won another award over the summer, this time from the Texas Business and Education Commission. The school was honored for being in the top 5% of all schools in Texas. The award presentation took place on October 22.

Pillow would like to invite our North Shoal Creek neighbors to join in the life of the school by becoming Mentors. We have many children who could benefit from the guidance of another dedicated adult in their lives. Please contact Annette Hendricks, Pillow Counselor, if you can give a half hour per week to a child. You will gain more than you give! You may contact Annette at 414-2350. We appreciate the work that has been done by some neighbors to keep the beautiful landscaping around Pillow looking fresh. The flowers surrounding the marquee and the front of the school have been maintained so nicely. Thanks! And thanks to The Seedlings Foundation for "freshening up" our landscaping on November 3rd.

Back to School Night, Grandparents' Lunch Day, Gift Wrap fundraiser, Parent Coffees, a Zach Scott Theater Production and the Diez y Seis celebration, Fall Festival, Science Fair, Math Night, Money Smart class, Coats for Kids, Holiday Food Drive, "Dear Santa" program are some of the events that have already happened at Pillow this school year.....not to mention all that learning that takes place daily! Time is flying! Watch our marquee for announcements about upcoming events. Our annual Literacy Night is Tuesday, January 29th. Please feel free to visit Pillow often. Better yet, come to volunteer! Contact Huddie Murray at hmurray@austinisd.org or 841-4837 if you would like to be part of this wonderful school community.

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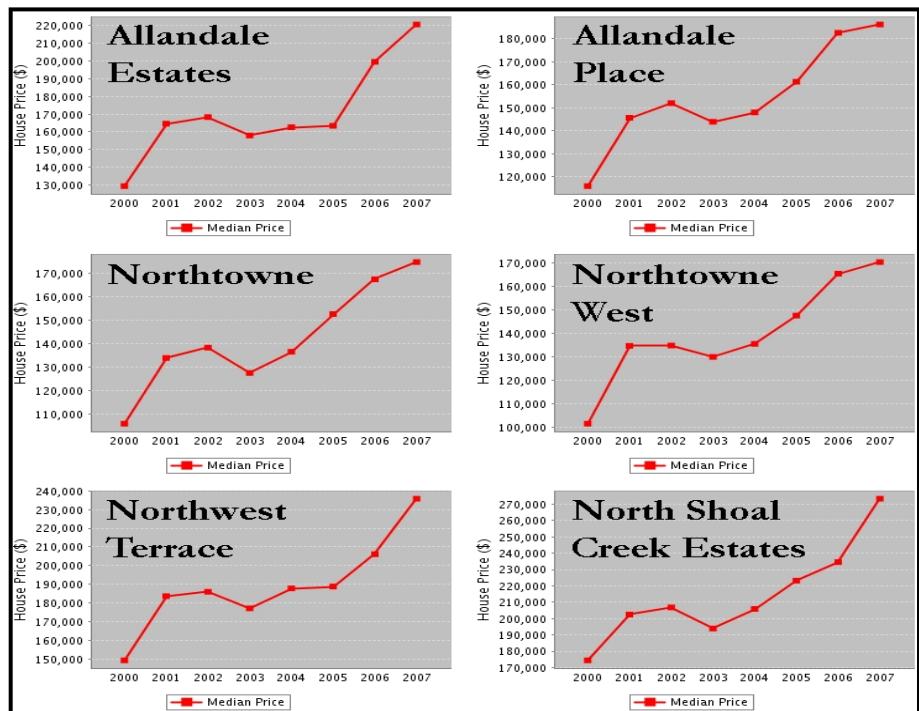
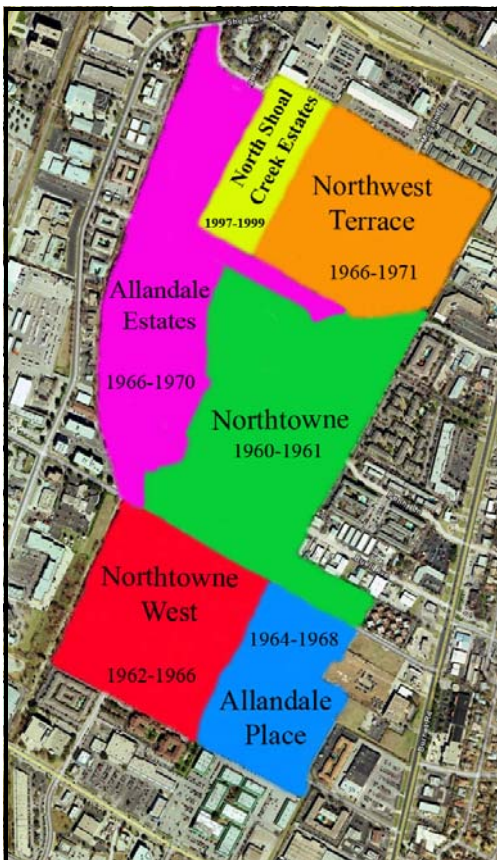
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Real Estate News

By: *Sandy Perkins*

The North Shoal Creek neighborhood is actually comprised of six different subdivisions, each having its own unique characteristics. The map below shows the location and names of each subdivision as well as the dates in which homes were being built. Home prices vary in each of these subdivisions. We collectively refer to the whole area as North Shoal Creek because we sit at the headwaters of Shoal Creek. I have been asked by several residents how the market is doing in our area. Below is a comparison of 2006 sold home prices versus 2007 sold home prices for each subdivision.

| Year | Allandale Estates | | Allandale Place | | North Shoal Creek Estates | | Northtowne | | Northtowne West | | Northwest Terrace | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|------|-----------------|------|---------------------------|------|------------|------|-----------------|------|-------------------|------|
| | 2006 | 2007 | 2006 | 2007 | 2006 | 2007 | 2006 | 2007 | 2006 | 2007 | 2006 | 2007 |
| Number of Sales | 6 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 13 | 13 | 13 | 11 | 8 | 2 |
| Average Square Footage | 1358 | 1524 | 1423 | 1259 | 1671 | 2160 | 1329 | 1343 | 1381 | 1404 | 1782 | 1885 |
| Average Price | 220k | 267k | 219k | 258k | 277k | 345k | 188k | 230k | 193k | 234k | 253k | 302k |
| Days on Market | 33 | 33 | 35 | 16 | 15 | 33 | 48 | 20 | 45 | 47 | 27 | 32 |



The above median price vs. year graphs were taken from the website: (austin.housealmanac.com) and show the last seven years of median house prices for each subdivision.

The sales information above was gathered from the Austin Multiple Listing Service by **Sandy Perkins**, your neighbor, your **Realtor** with Coldwell Banker United, Realtors. **(512) 797-PERK (7375)**. If you mention this ad when buying or selling a home with me, a \$200 donation in your name will be given to the Pillow PTA.



NSCNA

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