

# NORTH SHOAL CREEK NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS



WWW.NSCNA.ORG SPRING ISSUE 2014

## NEIGHBORHOOD GARAGE SALE COMING SOON

The time is drawing near for the Neighborhood Garage Sale, **Saturday, May 3rd from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm.**

The annual Neighborhood Garage Sale is hosted by the North Shoal Creek Neighborhood Association. Participation is FREE; there is no fee to register your garage sale.

Plan your garage sale for that date, then register it by email to [garagesale@NSCNA.org](mailto:garagesale@NSCNA.org). Or, call 512-364-5519. Be sure to include your name and the address of the sale.

### The North Shoal Creek Neighborhood Association will:

Advertise the Neighborhood Garage Sale.

Post NSCNA signs announcing the garage sale in the neighborhood.

Prepare neighborhood maps showing locations of garage sales.

Distribute copies of the map to registered locations by early that morning to be given to shoppers.

You must sign up by Thursday, April 24th to be included on the map. And don't forget, even if you don't want to sell anything, you can always BUY! It's a fun way to meet neighbors too!



*Contributed by: Amelia Cobb, Chair, Social Committee*

### IN THIS ISSUE

Editor's Corner	2
Neighborhood Planning	3
New District 7 Website	4
Luminaria Walk	5
We're Not a Trendy Neighborhood	6
Pillow Spring Fling	7
Gardening Naturally	8
On-Line Newsletter Archive	9
NSCNA Website	10
Why Join NSCNA?	11
Membership Form	12

### IMPORTANT DATES

**General Meetings are held at the Pillow Elementary School, 3025 Crosscreek Dr, at 6:30 p.m. on the following dates:**

- \* Tuesday, May 6, 2014
- \* Tuesday, September 2, 2014
- \* Tuesday, November 11, 2014

### Neighborhood Garage Sale

- \* Saturday, May 3, 2014, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

## Neighborhood News Spring 2014 Issue

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

### Co-Editors:

Sharon Justice, Erin Poole, Debi Smith  
newsletter@nscna.org

### Contributors/Volunteers:

Amelia Cobb, Lois McEvoy, Kenneth Webb,  
Shirley Webb; Mary Jane Wier

## NSCNA 2014 Officers & Board

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president@nscna.org

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Kenneth Webb  
Jeri Wines  
  
directors@nscna.org

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## EDITOR'S CORNER

This is going to be an eventful year for our North Shoal Creek Neighborhood. Our neighborhood planning process is beginning, and I hope a lot of us will take part. The neighborhood plan we end up with will be an important influence on our neighborhood for many years.

The planning process is for ALL North Shoal Creek residents. It's not connected to

or under the auspices of NSCNA. But, because our neighborhood plan is so important and because NSCNA has some established communication channels (this newsletter and our website), we'll be focusing on the neighborhood plan in this newsletter and in future ones. It's important we have widespread participation, so please be sure to participate.

*Sharon Justice, Co-Editor*

## NEW OFFICERS ELECTED AT JANUARY MEMBERSHIP MEETING



NSCNA 2014 officers and directors, left to right: Kenneth Webb, Lois McEvoy, Elizabeth Ray, Dallas Maham, Karen Denton, Jeri Wines, Mike Blood, Erin Poole, Sharon Justice, Levi Bullock, and Barbara Gaston. *Photo credit: Shirley Webb*

At NSCNA's January 7, 2014 General Membership Meeting, members elected a slate of 4 officers and 7 directors. 2014 Officers are Elizabeth Ray, President; Mike Blood, Vice-President; Karen Denton, Secretary; and Lois McEvoy, Treasurer.

2014 Directors are Levi Bullock, Barbara Gaston, Sharon Justice, Dallas Maham, Erin Poole, Kenneth Webb, and Jeri Wines.

Thank you to the Nominating Committee (chair, Erin Poole; members, Ernie Garcia, Sharon Justice, Tomas Rodriguez, and Jeri Wines) and to the Election Committee (Jon and Julie Menegay) for their help in suggesting candidates and handling the election.

## NORTH SHOAL CREEK NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING BEGINS

Something important is going to happen in North Shoal Creek in April or May: the kick-off meeting of our neighborhood's planning process. It'll be the first of a year-long series of meetings that will end with the Austin City Council's approval of a North Shoal Creek Neighborhood Plan which, good or bad, will become the blueprint for how our neighborhood grows and changes over the next 20 to 30 years.

I'm writing this editorial to ask North Shoal Creek residents to please participate in the process. Like all of Central Austin, North Shoal Creek faces several difficult issues. If we're going to create a successful plan, a sizeable subset of our residents will need to bring their knowledge, experience, and creativity to the process. So, when notification of the kick-off meeting arrives, please mark it "important," add it to your calendar, and make time to attend.

Here are my best guesses as to the topics our planning sessions will cover. They're complex and interesting topics, and they represent both risk and opportunity for our neighborhood:

**Affordability:** Housing in Central Austin is increasingly unaffordable. As property values rise, so do property taxes. Can we remain a largely middle-class neighborhood? Do we want to? Can older residents "age in place"? Will we have enough

child-friendly amenities that families with children will want to live in North Shoal Creek?

**Density:** Currently our neighborhood has predominately single-family residential housing with multi-family duplexes, apartments and condos at the edges. As property values zoom upward, affordable housing increasingly means multi-family. Can we keep our core of single-family housing? Do we want to? If we add multi-family housing, what kind and where should it go?

**Traffic:** Austin has a planning document for the next 30 years called Imagine Austin. In it, the area directly to our north is called the "North Burnet/Gateway Regional Center." Regional centers are described as "places where the greatest density of people and jobs and the tallest buildings in the regions will be located." This means more traffic on Burnet. Can Burnet handle increased traffic or will it overflow onto neighborhood streets? What transpor-

tation options besides buses are planned for Burnet? If transportation projects are planned, how will they be funded? How secure is their funding?

**Green Space:** Right now, our only park is the playground at Pillow and our only green space our lawns plus the banks of Shoal Creek. Can we have more green space? Do we want more green space? Can it be incorporated into new developments?

As I said, our neighborhood planning process offers both risk and opportunity. The more we residents participate, the more experience, knowledge, and creativity we bring to the process, the more likely it is that our North Shoal Creek Neighborhood-of-the-future will be one we'll continue to be proud of and will love to live in. Help guide our neighborhood's future by participating in this year's neighborhood planning process.

*Contributed by: Sharon Justice, Co-Editor*

**Anji Little**

*Independent Consultant*

512-750-0138

nowicks4me@att.net

www.lookknowick.com



## NEW DISTRICT 7 WEBSITE

Austinites will vote for a single City Council member to represent their district instead of six at-large members in this November's municipal election. North Shoal Creek is now part of District 7, and there's a new website with information about District 7 candidates and their platforms. The website is aptly named **AustinDistrict7.org**.

AustinDistrict7.org is unaffiliated and is intended to provide information on District 7 City Council and mayoral candidates. It also covers a range of topics related to our district including information about the communities that comprise District 7; issues important to quality of life in our area such as affordability, transportation, code enforcement and more; and

issues specific to north central Austin such as its lack of public spaces compared to other areas of town.

There's also a "News & Opinion" section for editorials and essays about District 7 politics and issues. Don't miss an article called "Five Challenges as North Shoal Creek Undertakes a Neighborhood Plan" by Steven Zettner. It describes the potential pitfalls that North Shoal Creek faces as it develops its neighborhood plan. It's a must-read for all North Shoal Creek residents.

A handy calendar of North Austin events is included on the website. According to the calendar, there's a District 7 candidates' forum scheduled for September 2014.

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## DECEMBER 2014 LUMINARIA INCLUDES UNEXPECTED FESTIVITIES



*Luminarias decorated by Pillow Elementary School students*

*Photo credit: Kenneth Webb.*

For several years, NSCNA's Social Committee has sponsored an annual Luminaria walk at the Pillow Elementary School track. It's usually a quiet occasion, as walkers circle the track enjoying the beauty of the luminarias. Volunteers provide hot cocoa and cookies for attendees to enjoy before heading home. Our 2013 event, however, included an impromptu holiday party in addition to the traditional walk and refreshments.

Because an end-of-semester program at Pillow took place during the luminaria walk, event organizers invited parents and students attending it to take part. NSCNA volunteers, using paper bags decorated by Pillow students, made a children's luminaria walk on the school's basketball court and served refreshments. While children played about the smaller luminaria and people enjoyed cookies and cocoa at the basketball court, the luminaria-lined track provided a quiet walk for those who wanted to relax, reflect, and enjoy the beauty.

*Pillow students and their families along with neighborhood residents enjoy the luminarias.*

*Photo Credit: Kenneth Webb*

NSCNA would like to thank all the volunteers who took part in the luminaria walk. It was no small task to coordinate all the supplies, assemble and disassemble the luminarias, serve refreshments, and clean up the track and basketball court over a five hour span. NSCNA appreciates all the volunteer work. Special thanks go to the student volunteers who did everything their elders assigned them to do and whose energy levels never flagged. We also thank University Federal Credit Union for donating several large trays of cookies along with hot cocoa. Finally, thanks also to everyone who came to enjoy the luminarias. Together, we made the 2013 luminaria walk an enjoyable and memorable event.

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*Luminaria—: A holiday lantern consisting of a votive candle set in a small paper bag weighted with sand and typically placed with others along a driveway, sidewalk, or rooftop as a holiday decoration*

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*Neighbors chat after setting up the luminarias.*

*Photo credit: Lois McEvoy*



## WE'RE NOT A TRENDY NEIGHBORHOOD (YET) A NEIGHBOR'S PERSPECTIVE

I recently browsed reviews of our North Shoal Creek neighborhood on Streetadvisor.com, a neighborhood rating and review site. Given how Austin is booming, I thought I'd check out what soon-to-be Austinites see when they search reviews of Austin's neighborhoods. As it turns out, our North Shoal Creek Neighborhood is favorably reviewed and even some of the not-so-favorable adjectives could be viewed as compliments.

Streetadvisor.com ranks us the 37th best neighborhood in Austin. That's more of an average rating because the site rates a total of 66 Austin neighborhoods. Until I read their list, I hadn't realized Austin has 66 neighborhoods. (In case you're interested, Hyde Park and Barton Hills are the #1 and #2 neighborhoods.)

Our reviewers describe us as "quiet," "convenient," and "affordable." One even calls us "an awesome old Austin neighborhood." Others say we're a "good area to raise your kids" and "convenient to everything."

On the not-so-favorable side, we're "not as trendy as Crestview or Rosedale," and our night-life is described as "fairly tame." Another reviewer says "the neighborhood stands out in Austin for being on the quiet and rather boring side." Personally, I prefer quiet and boring neighborhoods, so I consider that description a compliment. I'd call us "a comfortable neighborhood with a relaxing vibe; a 60s/70s suburb that is, for the most part, aging gracefully."

Still, our neighborhood is changing, and change is like a Chinese ideogram that supposedly represents both opportunity and danger. We North Shoal Creekers need to be dexterous enough to take advantage of the opportunities while simultaneously sidestepping the risks. Our upcoming neighborhood planning process will be our best opportunity to control change and channel it where we want it. If we do it right, we can be a neighborhood that is aging gracefully and rejuvenating itself as well.

I plan to check again next year to see if our ranking has changed and if we've become trendy yet.

I'll be hoping not.

*Contributed by Sharon Justice, Co-Editor*



*Shoal Creek at Steck*

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## PILLOW PTA SPONSORS SPRING FLING

The Pillow Elementary School PTA hosted a Spring Fling carnival on the school's blacktop on Saturday, March 29th. Along with cotton candy and sno cones, there was face painting, inflatables, and a lot of fun games. Proceeds from the carnival went to the Pillow School PTA.

*Children and their parents enjoying the Pillow Spring Fling. Photo Credit: Kenneth Webb*





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## LOCAL RESOURCES FOR THE NATURAL & CREATIVE GARDENER



Flowers are blooming, birds are chirping, and the sun is shining after a particularly cool winter. It's time to mow the lawn, get rid of pesky weeds, and tend your garden.

Along with large home improvement retailers, you have additional options for natural gardening supplies and eye-catching pots. Some of my favorites haunts include: Red Barn Garden Center, The Natural Gardener, Miguel's Imports, Shoal Creek Nursery, and The Great Outdoors. On a budget? Check craigslist, freecycle, or garage and estate sales for treasures.

### Natural choices

Purchase everything from diatomaceous earth for bug control (be sure to get food grade, which is non-toxic for people and pets), to neem oil spray to protect roses from fungus and aphids, to organic fertilizers. Plan your trip and call ahead if you have questions about particular items.

### Containers, plants, and yard art

At The Great Outdoors you'll find a breathtaking selection of plants and containers, as well as succulents in many shapes and sizes, a gift shop, even a coffee shop. Spend a lazy day wandering through the beautiful gardens at Shoal Creek Nursery. You'll love their seasonal displays and watching staff artfully fill pots.

Miguel's Imports is a mecca for those seeking the perfect container, fountain, or decorative accessory. They have a great selection of quality succulents too. Many places allow friendly dogs—just ask them—and keep a lookout for a resident cat or two. Happy gardening.

*Contributed by Erin Poole, Co-Editor*



## ON-LINE NEWSLETTER ARCHIVE MORE COMPLETE NOW

Our on-line archive of neighborhood newsletters is more complete now thanks to Stephanie Sheridan. Stephanie graciously loaned her copy of 1996 Issue 3, which has been scanned and added to our on-line archive. Thank you, Stephanie!

We're lacking 1996 Issue 1 and part of 1996 Issue 4. If you have a hard copy of either of these newsletters, and are willing to lend it to us for scanning, please email us at [media@nscna.org](mailto:media@nscna.org).



*Shoal Creek at Crosscreek*

*Photo credit: S. Justice*





## CHECK OUT OUR NSCNA WEBSITE

If you haven't already visited our website, take a few minutes to browse through it. You'll find useful information such as upcoming events ([Calendar](#) tab) and how to join our Yahoo group ([Email List](#) tab), along with an archive of our newsletters dating back to 1996 ([Newsletters](#) tab).

Our North Shoal Creek neighborhood was originally five subdivisions built during the 1960's and 1970's: Northtowne (built 1960-61); Northtowne West (built 1962-66); Allandale Place (built 1964-68); Allandale Estates (built 1966-1970), and Northwest Terrace (built 1966-1971).

Between 1997 and 1999, a sixth subdivision was added: Cottages of North Shoal Creek.

If you want to know which subdivision your home was originally in, select the [About](#) tab and then the [NSCNA History](#) tab. There you'll find a map of the six subdivisions. There's also a link on that page to *Trulia's website* where you can watch the growth of our neighborhood graphically. It's a mesmerizing time lapse and well-worth watching.




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## NORTH SHOAL CREEK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

The North Shoal Creek Neighborhood Association is a non-profit organization of volunteers who are dedicated to promoting and protecting the quality of life, safety, residential characteristics, and property values of the North Shoal Creek Neighborhood. For more information, please visit our website:

[www.NSCNA.org](http://www.NSCNA.org)

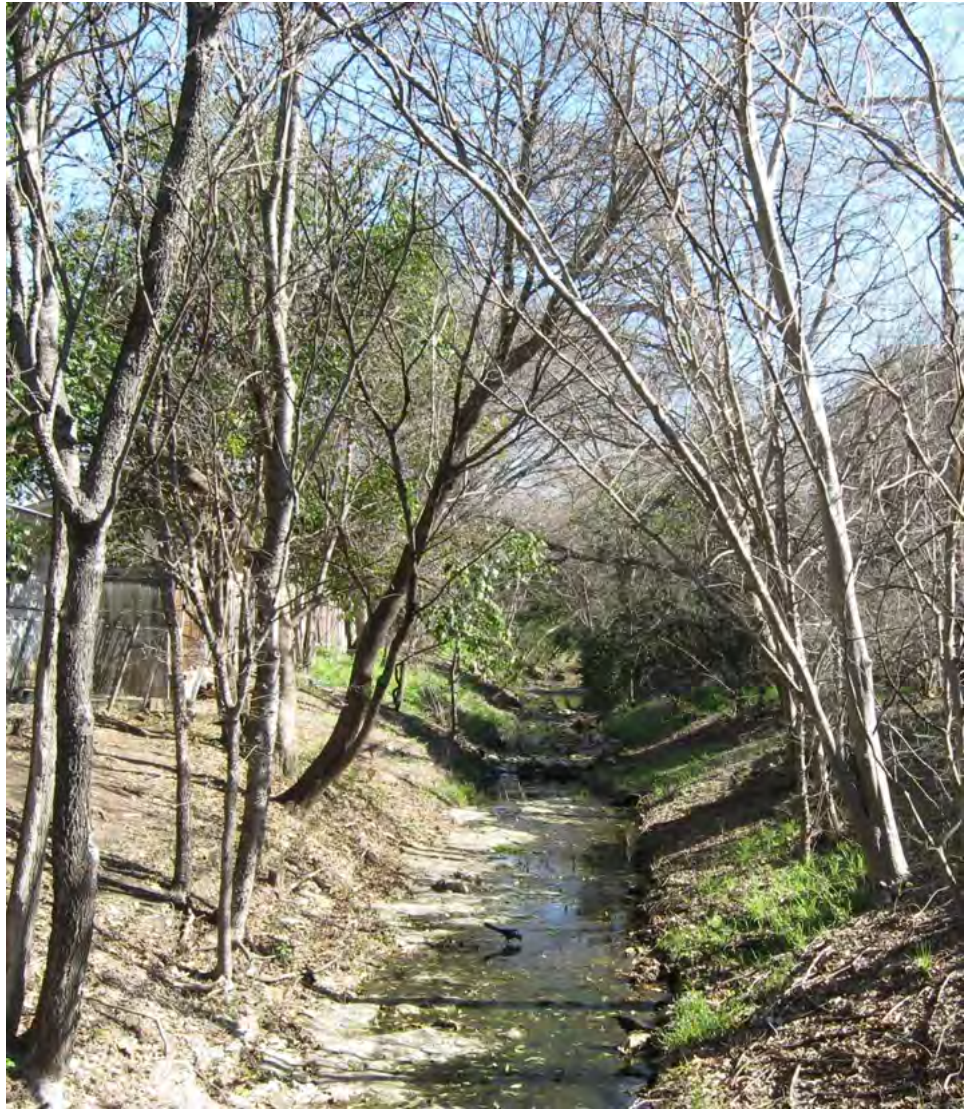
## WHY JOINING NSCNA IS A GOOD IDEA

By paying dues and becoming an official member of NSCNA:.

- You help fund neighborhood events like our annual Fourth of July Parade;
- You become eligible to vote in NSCNA elections and on issues that are brought before the membership for a vote ;
- By increasing our membership, you help strengthen NSCNA's position as an advocate for our neighborhood.

Dues are per household and cover a calendar year (through December 31). Because dues aren't prorated, the earlier in the year you join, the more months of membership your dues cover.

You can join online via PayPal at [www.nscna.org/join](http://www.nscna.org/join) for \$16.00 (\$15.00 dues plus a \$1.00 processing fee). Or, you can fill out the membership form on the back of this newsletter and mail it and a \$15.00 check payable to NSCNA to: PO Box 66443, Austin, TX 78766.



*Creek, Rockwood near Penny Lane*

*Photo Credit: Mary Jane Wier*



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**2014 NSCNA MEMBERSHIP FORM**

Names of All Residents Over Age 18: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Your email will only be used for the Association's purpose.

Please circle an area of interest:

- |                |             |            |            |          |
|----------------|-------------|------------|------------|----------|
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Please mail this form with a \$15 check payable to NSCNA: PO Box 66443, Austin, TX 78766 or go online to register/pay on [www.NSCNA.org/join](http://www.NSCNA.org/join). Better yet, come join us at the next general membership meeting! You can complete the information and pay with a check.