



Primrose traffic calming project funded

"The Transportation Committee met May 6 to discuss ways of slowing down traffic through our neighborhood, particularly on Rockwood and Primrose Lanes." Quote from the July/August 1996 issue of NSCNA's newsletter

A long-standing problem with speeding drivers on Primrose Lane is going to be addressed, thanks to the recent distribution of \$22 million in Capital Metro money among Austin's ten council districts. On February 3, NSCNA President Amelia Cobb was notified by Council Member Leslie Pool's office that Primrose Lane's 2012 traffic calming request was among the District 7 projects chosen for funding.

The 2012 request was to the City of Austin's Local Area Traffic Management (LATM) Program, which is the main source of funding for neighborhoods with high levels of speeding and cut-through traffic. Primrose qualified for funding, but, because requests exceeded the money budgeted, the request was never funded.

The LATM Program, though intended to address both speeding and cut-through traffic, currently addresses

only speeding. A new traffic study will be done to determine the extent of Primrose's speeding problem. Based on it, Austin Transportation Department (ATD) engineers will design and install the traffic calming devices needed to mitigate the problem. Please note the word "mitigate." Speeding can be reduced but not totally eliminated by traffic calming devices.

When the project will begin is currently unknown.

A committee of Primrose residents has been formed to work with ATD staff during the project. Evelin Nunes, who filed the 2012 request, is chair. If you are interested in joining, please email her at evelin@solutionfocusedpg.com. You must be a Primrose resident to join.

Primrose and Thrushwood have long been plagued by speeding and cut-through drivers. Residents will need to continue to work to get cut-through traffic addressed, but this project is a very welcome step forward.

Sharon Justice, Newsletter Editor

NEIGHBORHOOD SURVEY ENCLOSED PLEASE FILL IT OUT AND RETURN IT TO US!

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IMPORTANT DATES
March 11-20: SXSW 2016 Festival <i>(www.sxsw.com)</i>
March 14-18: AISD Spring break
March 26: Funky Chicken Coop Tour <i>(austincoptour.org/)</i>
April 30: Neighborhood and Pillow garage sales 8 a.m.-1 p.m.
May 3: NSCNA General Membership Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Pillow Elementary School, 3025 Crosscreek Drive
June 2: AISD last day of classes

Neighborhood News Spring 2016

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

Editor: Sharon Justice

Contributors: Brian Brandon, Sarah Brandon, Brian Cobb, Karen Denton, Donna Eagar, Barbara Gaston, Lois McEvoy, Lauren Mikulencak, Vannezsa Smith, Kenneth 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.

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President's Corner: we need your voice and your involvement

Now is the time to engage! North Shoal Creek is your neighborhood, your community, your home. I invite you to get involved. As the new president of the North Shoal Creek Neighborhood Association, I want you to know your voice matters.

The Board of Directors is reaching out to every resident of our North Shoal Creek Neighborhood through a neighborhood-wide survey. We are trying to reach out to **all** our residents, whether you live in a single family home, condo, duplex, or apartment. We want to know what are your visions, your needs, and your desires for your neighborhood.

Your participation in this survey is vital in directing the activities and priorities of the NSCNA this year. The survey is included in this newsletter. Please complete and return it to us, or complete the survey online at nscna.org.

Austin is in a stage of growth and change... and opportunity.

NSCNA
President
Amelia
Cobb



A lot is happening that impacts our slice of Austin, including the Burnet Corridor Plan, Code Next, Cap Metro Conversations, traffic calming, and neighborhood safety.

The NSCNA has committees devoted to engaging in these activities. Their effectiveness depends on the involvement and engagement of neighbors coming together to make a difference. Please consider joining one of our committees:

1) The **Development Committee** gathers information on new developments around or near our neighborhood that will potentially impact our quality of life and reports to the Board of Directors on its findings.

Continued on page 11

The North Shoal Creek Neighborhood Association (NSCNA) holds five membership meetings a year, on the first Tuesday of these months: January, March, May, September, and November. Membership meetings are held in the Pillow Elementary School cafeteria, 3025 Crosscreek, from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. All meetings are open to the public.

For information on joining NSCNA, please see page 12.



NSCNA thanks RBFUCU for sponsoring our 2016 newsletters. NSCNA members and their families are eligible to join RBFUCU; please visit rbfcu.org.

Austin Oaks charrette yields new plan; now what happens?

When news of the Austin Oaks Planned Unit Development (PUD) broke in July 2014, there was widespread consternation, focusing on two proposed buildings, one 17-story and the other 14-story.

As a result of the negative reaction, that design was stopped. Ditto an April 2015 revision with 10-story buildings. In October 2015 the owner, Spire Realty Group, and area neighborhoods agreed to work together in a process called a “charrette”— a series of intensive planning sessions in which citizens, designers and others collaborate to create a development plan. Thus was born the Austin Oaks Charrette of January 25-29, 2016.

The charrette ended with the presentation of a final plan which merged feedback from the charrette’s previous sessions with input from the “Vision and Values” workshops that preceded the charrette. That final plan was named the “Preferred Plan.”

The Preferred Plan’s future is still to be determined. The Board of the Northwest Austin Civic Association (NWACA) — which is the neighborhood where the proposed PUD is located — has voted to approve the Preferred Plan. Representatives of the other neighborhoods taking part in the charrette have signed a letter expressing no confidence in the charrette’s results for the following reasons:

- Building heights were not adequately limited
- Traffic impact was not mitigated and minimized
- Mass transit was not integrated or considered with any scalability
- Heritage and Protected Trees to be preserved were not identified
- Open space in the Code Compliant Plan was inaccurately portrayed

Continued on page 4



Peggy Little

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Risa Kim

Continued from page 3

- Heavy traffic and parking impacts were not disclosed
- The Code Compliant Plan's current zoning was not given equal treatment during the charrette

At their February 23rd meeting, the NSCNA Board voted to endorse the no confidence letter.

The charrette's Preferred Plan will come before the Zoning and Platting Commission at its March 15th meeting, at which time City staff will request an indefinite postponement to allow the review process to continue. The NSCNA Board supports the postponement. NSCNA will continue to participate in the talks between the developer and the neighborhoods.

Day-by-day summaries of the January 25-29th charrette can be found at nwaca.org/austin-oaks-charrette/

*Brian Brandon and Sharon Justice,
Development Committee Members*

Mark your calendar! Neighborhood garage sales set for April 30


North Shoal Creek's annual neighborhood garage sales will be held **Saturday April 30, 8 a.m.-1 p.m.** Like last year, Pillow Elementary School's Wild About Reading Program (WARP) will be participating, so come prepared for a shopping extravaganza.

If you want to take part, you'll need to sign up so your address will appear on the map we'll distribute that Saturday to show shoppers where to find your sales. To sign up, send an e-mail to NSCNA Social Chair Brian Cobb at social@nscna.org or call 512-364-5519 and provide your name, address, and contact e-mail or phone number. (All that will appear on the map is your address.) **Deadline to sign up is April 22nd.**

WARP will be renting tables (1 for \$10; 2 for \$15) beginning **April 18th**. To reserve one, go to the Pillow Office, open M-F, 7:30-3:30. All proceeds will be used to buy books for Pillow students to take

(Continued on page 10)

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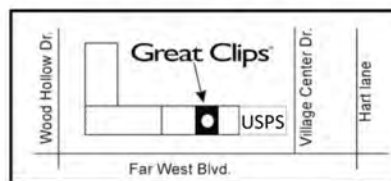
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Active students, smiles, sweat, looks of determination, and encouraging words occur daily on the track at Pillow Elementary School. When asked "What mile are you on?," students' eyes light up and they respond excitedly, proudly showing

their Nike running rewards. All of this is evidence that participation in the Marathon Kids program has sparked an interest in running in our Pillow Elementary School Panthers.

Marathon Kids (www.marathonkids.org) is a non-profit organization which, in partnership with Nike, is dedicated to improving the health of children by giving them the tools, motivation and support they need to live happier, healthier lives.

This year, all Austin ISD elementary school students participate in Marathon Kids during their daily W.O.W. (Working Out for Wellness) time. Over the course of the year, students are challenged to achieve the goal of completing four

MARATHON KIDS

Marathon Kids began in 1995 in Austin, Texas. Since its founding, Marathon Kids has worked with schools, community groups and parents across the United States to support and empower kids to get active while having fun.

marathons — that's 104.8 miles!

For each marathon completed, they receive exclusive Nike rewards provided by Marathon Kids. The rewards include a Marathon Kids-Nike T-shirt (26.2 miles), exclusive Nike shoelaces (52.4 miles), Nike shoe tags (78.6 miles) and a Nike finisher bracelet (104.8 miles).

Pillow Elementary is focused on educating the whole child, which includes social and emotional learning, academics, and the overall health of the students. The Marathon Kids program has helped support the school's mission by having students set goals and track their progress in becoming more fit and healthier individuals.

*Lauren Mikulencak,
Pillow Elementary School,
Physical Education Teacher*

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Corroded cast iron pipes: a new homeowner's nightmare

One week after my husband and I moved into our Rockwood home, the toilet wasn't flushing quite right and water was rising in the bathtub. We hired a plumber to run a camera into the plumbing and discovered that the pipes were corroded. All our waste water was going directly into the earth under our home and mud was blocking our pipes.

Homeowner's insurance gave us two options: tunnel outside our home and they would cover nothing, or tunnel through our foundation and they would cover up to \$11,000. Our home warranty only gave us \$500 to go towards the repair.

We got three estimates and chose the company we did for three reasons. One, they were one of the first to come out, and we developed a sort of rapport with them. Two, they do this stuff all the time; it's sort of their specialty. Three, they promised the actual cost would not be any higher than the estimate.

Many of our homes in North Shoal Creek were built in the 1960's, and the pipes are made of a

low quality cast iron that has been degrading for years. It is something that everyone who owns a home here, or is planning to sell or buy a home here, should know about.

We later learned that the hydrostatic pressure test we requested would have discovered the problem; however, our home's seller had not heard of the test and was uncomfortable with it. This test is not part of the standard home inspection but is becoming more frequently used. If you are a potential buyer or seller, keep an open mind about the hydrostatic test or ask to have a camera run down the pipes. To me, full disclosure is preferable and will save everyone headache in the end.

Share your experience with your neighbors and people you know who are selling or buying a home in the neighborhood. If you have questions about our experience, email me at vp@nscna.com.

Sarah Brandon, NSCNA Vice-President


*Photo page 7: Corroded cast iron pipes
Photo by Sarah Brandon
Continued on page 7*





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Cast iron pipe was a sewer line mainstay for decades but began to be replaced by PVC pipe in the late 60s/early 70s. It has an average lifespan of 30 to 50 years. Many homes in North Shoal Creek were constructed in the 60s and have cast iron pipe plumbing. Those pipes have now reached the end of their lifespans and are causing headaches for some North Shoal Creek homeowners.

Replacing failing cast iron pipes is expensive, so if you find yourself in that situation do your homework. Is the problem limited so that it's feasible to **repair** some of the pipes instead of **replacing** the entire system? Get multiple estimates; carefully check out the plumbers you're considering; and talk to your insurance company to find out if it will pay some of the repair or replacement costs. Also, you may need to stay elsewhere while your plumbing is replaced, so budget for that cost too.

If you're thinking of buying a home, have a hydrostatic test done to see if the home's plumbing system is leaking. And if you're selling and know there's a plumbing problem, disclose it.

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Sandy Perkins, Realtor

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Mystery sidewalk along MoPac: why is it there and where does it go?

Have you noticed the new sidewalk along Mo Pac between Anderson Lane and Steck? When I first saw it, I wondered first “Where does it go?” and then “Why was it built here instead of next to a neighborhood street?”

Fortunately, NSCNA Development Committee members Brian Brandon and Lois McEvoy explained that the sidewalk is part of the MoPac Improvement Project. In case you, like me, didn’t know, that project includes bicycle and pedestrian improvements in addition to tolled express lanes and variable pricing. They’re intended to facilitate movement north-south across 183 and east-west across MoPac.

Our new sidewalk is one of four miles of new sidewalks along the frontage road between Anderson Lane and Parmer Lane.

Also to be included is a 10’ wide two-way shared use path running north from the Shoal Creek intersection with 183 to Neils Thompson Drive and



Sidewalk construction along northbound MoPac frontage road at Anderson Lane. Photo from MoPac Improvement Project website

then continuing north to the Shops at Arbor Walk shopping center. To enhance east-west connectivity, sidewalk extensions, bike lanes and ADA improvements will be made at thirteen MoPac cross streets, including Anderson Lane and Steck.

Given the current state of MoPac traffic, let’s all hope these improvements work very, very well.

Sharon Justice, Newsletter Editor

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Rockwood traffic calming project nears completion

The Austin Transportation Department (ATD) began installing speed mitigation devices on Rockwood Lane between Primrose Lane and Steck Avenue on Feb. 16, 2016. The project is part of the **Local Area Traffic Management (LATM)** program, a community-request driven program which aims to enhance safety by addressing a documented speeding issue on neighborhood roads.

Following approval of the Rockwood project through the LATM process, ATD completed installation of four sets of pre-fabricated rubber speed cushions as the first phase of the traffic calming project on Feb. 16. These cushions have been strategically placed so that passenger vehicles are required to slow down while still allowing emergency vehicles to straddle the devices without affecting response times.

In the next phase a traffic circle will be installed at the intersection of Rockwood and Stillwood.

ATD workers install speed cushions on Rockwood Lane



Traffic circles have been proven to reduce speeding and increase driver awareness, two things that will help enhance roadway safety for neighborhood residents and families attending Pillow Elementary School. ATD anticipates construction of the traffic circle to begin later this year.

Residents along Rockwood Lane submitted an LATM program application in 2012. As part of the approval process ATD completed a speed study in the area and, during a 24-hour period, documented more than 320 instances of vehicles traveling more than 35 mph in the 30 mph zone.

*From the February 16th issue of **Austin Mobility**, a weekly online newsletter published by the City of Austin Transportation Department.*

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(Continued from page 4)
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We'll advertise the sale in the Austin American Statesman, on Craig's List, on websites, and with banners and signs around the neighborhood.

So, start that spring cleaning while the weather is beautiful and get ready to have a great sale and a great time.


Brian Cobb, Social Committee Chair



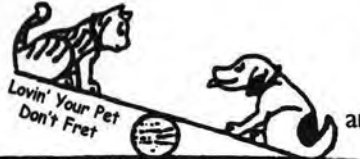
Money saving tip: Austin Water is offering a one-time rebate of up to \$400 to encourage eligible homeowners to upgrade their existing irrigation systems. To learn more, go to <http://www.austintexas.gov/department/water-conservation>.

The Irrigation Upgrade Rebate is the third one in the "Rebates and Incentives for Residential Customers" section. Click on it and you can read more about it and download an application.

Please note that upgrades must be to improve an existing irrigation system. New systems and expansions to existing systems are ineligible.




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2016 NSCNA officers elected at January General Membership Meeting



Front row, left to right: Sarah Brandon (vice president); Ernie Garcia (director); Sharon Justice (director); Barbara Gaston (secretary); Donna Eagar (treasurer).

Second row: Michael Yetter (director); Amelia Cobb (president); Kenneth Webb (director); Vannezsa Smith (director); Laura Werchan (director); Evelin Nunes (director).
Photo by Shirley Webb

Continued from page 2

- 2) The **Traffic Committee** identifies problems associated with vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians and works closely with the City of Austin to lobby for solutions.
- 3) The **Safety Committee** interacts with the Austin Police Department, promotes crime prevention techniques, organizes block captains and reports to the Board of Directors on incidents that occur within the neighborhood.
- 4) The **Media Committee** prepares the newsletter and maintains the official website of NSCNA.
- 5) The **Social Committee** organizes approved events to encourage interaction with neighbors.
- 6) The **Beautification Committee** organizes projects that improve our neighborhood's appearance.
- 7) The **Membership Committee** organizes activities to increase membership and involvement of the neighbors of North Shoal Creek.

We need **you** to help make a difference in our community. Your membership, your involvement, and your vote on issues and activities during this coming year are important in shaping our neighborhood.

Voting members of NSCNA will have an opportunity to leverage Association funds to make improve-

ments in our neighborhood via partnerships with the City of Austin and the Neighborhood Partnership Program. Voting members will engage in decisions about development projects proposed for the North Shoal Creek and surrounding neighborhoods. Voting members will impact our neighborhood's safety and quality of life.

To be eligible to vote on these issues, you need to join NSCNA and pay membership dues for 2016. If you are not yet a member of the NSCNA, please complete the form included in this newsletter and join. If you are a member, or once you join, please contact the chair of the committee you are most interested in and get involved.

It is an honor to serve my neighborhood as President this year. I look forward to your responses to the neighborhood-wide survey. I look forward to meeting you, to engaging with you, and together making our North Shoal Creek Neighborhood a place to truly call home.

Amelia Cobb, NSCNA President

Please take a few minutes to complete our survey and return it either by mail to NSCNA Membership / PO Box 66443 / Austin, TX 78766-0443 or by scanning and emailing it as an attachment to survey@nscna.org. You can also choose to complete the online version; please go to www.nscna.org for information about and a link to the online survey. Your input will help us effectively represent you.

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THERE'S A LOT GOING ON IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

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NSCNA 2016 MEMBERSHIP FORM

Names of all residents over 18: _____

Street Address: _____

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Which committees are you interested in?

Beautification Bylaws Development Media Membership
 Safety Social Traffic

Please bring this form with you to our next membership meeting or mail it with a \$15.00 check payable to NSCNA to: NSCNA Membership/ PO Box 66443 / Austin, TX 78766-0443

You can also join online via PayPal at www.nscna.org/join