

BARTON HILLS NEWS

A Quarterly Newsletter

July 2011

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

John Luther, Chair, BHNA Neighborhood Watch Program

The BHNA Neighborhood Watch (NW) Program continues to stay very active in our neighborhood, and the very low crime statistics indicate our program is working. We have been able to keep volunteer patrollers on our streets several hours each day. This is the very heart of our program, and I can't say enough good things about these wonderful people. Although few in numbers, they are dedicated to the task of reducing criminal activity in Barton Hills. They gladly give of their time each week to serve us all. Please acknowledge the wonderful job they are doing by waving hello when you see a Patrol volunteer on your street.

The Barton Hills NW is also making other neighborhoods safer by providing patrol training to their residents. We receive calls from neighborhood associations saying that the Austin Police Department referred them to us for assistance as we have set the standard for neighborhood crime reduction in Austin. Heady stuff.

In June, BHNA NW Patrol volunteers provided training and orientation rides to recent volunteers in the Travis Heights area. Over forty volunteers attended the training over two evenings. They are now ready to hit the streets and provide security to their own neighborhood. Barton Hills NW Patrol volunteers **Don Madden, Jeff Morris, and Glenn Hopkins** assisted with the training. It could not have happened without their participation. They are neighborhood heroes. The Travis Heights folks were singing their praises at the end of the training, and so was I.

We are now looking for additional volunteers to patrol in Barton Hills. For an investment of just one hour per week you could become a part of the solution to eliminating crime in our neighborhood. Training and orientation rides are provided as well as magnetic Patrol signs. You simply need to drive the neighborhood and let the bad guys know that this neighborhood is alert and reports suspicious persons and vehicles. It is non-confrontational, and volunteers do not get out of their vehicles or attempt to apprehend; that is the job of the Austin Police Department. We serve as eyes and ears only. It works and you can help. For additional information please contact me at jluther@austin.rr.com.

NEXT MEETING TUESDAY, JULY 26 6-9 pm

Join us at St. Mark's Church
(corner of Barton Skyway
& Barton Hills Dr.). All are
welcome! Social hour 6 pm.
Italian dinner \$7.



AGENDA

- 6:45 Call to order
- 6:55 Treasurer's report, minutes
- 7:00 Group 10 Project: upcoming water/
sewer construction
- 7:15 Campaign to save BHE
- 7:30 Neighborhood improvement projects
 - 1. Projects BHNA able to do alone
 - 2. Project requiring govt. help
- 8:30 Committee reports: Neighborhood
Watch, Greenbelt Guardians, Area
Development, ANC
- 8:50 Other business from membership
- 9:00 Adjourn

A few helpful tips in closing:

1. Check your deadbolts (or have BHNA NW do it for you). Make sure the striker plate is attached with three-inch screws. This guards against kick-in burglars.
2. Keep your garage door down both day and night. Mowers and bikes are stolen in seconds.
3. When in doubt about a person on your property, call 911 and report your concerns.
4. Wave to the NW Patrol volunteers. It is hot out there, and they could use a boost that only a appreciative waving neighbor can provide.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

INDEPENDENCE DAY

The 4th of July reminds us of how lucky we are. Lucky to be Americans, who are blessed with a tradition of individual liberty and common responsibility, a bountiful land and economy, and a strong national identity and purpose. Lucky to be Austinites, who are proud of our city's healthy environment, broad prosperity, and diverse culture. And lucky to be residents of Barton Hills, who work and play together to keep our neighborhood an attractive, safe, and friendly place to live.

When we walk down Barton Hills Drive on Independence Day morning in our traditional neighborhood parade or wave to our neighbors as they parade by, we should remind ourselves that this is the kind of community that our founders had in mind when they imagined a republic.

We do not march in neat columns, but in the same direction. No single individual leads the whole way (save for our honorary Grand Marshal Art Stone, who says that he is moving away from us after 54 years), but different people lead the parade at different times, and we still get to our objective. The event happens because of the uncompensated work of many neighbors, for whom the experience is its own reward. We are not merely spectators but active participants in our celebration, and each of us makes a unique contribution, without which the whole would be less. Organized and spontaneous, individualistic and harmonious, on the 4th of July we are a picture of democracy in action.

I am proud to lead the preparations for this year's parade, and I thank the following neighbors for their vital assistance: Melissa Hawthorne, Anne Shelton, Antoinette Perez, Ellen Pitluk, Katie Achtermann, Ken Russell, John Luther, Chuck Ragland, Brian Linder, Art Stone, and many others.

"...o'er the land of the free and the home of the brave."

Craig Smith

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WANTED: NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Want to be the new newsletter editor? You'll need familiarity with desktop publishing (current template is in InDesign) and a desire to serve your neighborhood.

Contact Jennifer Cook:
jenncook@austin.rr.com

Barton Hills News

The Barton Hills Neighborhood Association newsletter is published quarterly and supported by advertisers. It is distributed to homes in the Barton Hills neighborhood of Austin, TX in January, April, July, and October. For more information on membership or neighborhood affairs, contact the appropriate person below.

2011 Executive Committee

President - Craig Smith

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Greenbelt Guardians - Glee Ingram

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Neighborhood Watch - John Luther

(jluther@austin.rr.com)

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(in no particular order)

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 Karen Huber, Travis Cty.
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Grand Marshal Art Stone
 Brian Linder
 Cub Scout Pack 17
 Boy Scout Troop 17 Color
 Guard: Alex & Tony Kirk
 Melissa Hawthorne
 John Luther
 Anne Shelton
 Kay Killen
 Ellen Pitluk
 Antoinette Perez
 Glenn Hawthorne
 Lee Pitluk
 Jennifer Ellen Cook
 Ken Russell
 Kelly Little



Jeff Embree
 Bob Daemmrich
 Chuck Ragland
 Mary Ann Neely
 Craig Smith
 Sunny Luther
 Jeff Morris

...and every child
 (or child at heart)
 who dressed up a
 dog or decorated a
 bike and made this
 parade so much
 fun.



You can download a color pdf of this newsletter at www.bartonhills.org

NEW BHNA SECRETARY

New to the Barton Hills Neighbor Association executive board is Recording Secretary David Poisson. David is a 15-year resident of Barton Hills, residing on Forest Bend Drive. Perhaps you've seen his German Shepherd out in the front yard if walking past his house. He works as a realtor for Sky Realty, a local Austin company. Interests include hiking and swimming at Barton Creek, going out on Lake Austin to waterski, all the spring, summer and

fall festivals, seeing live music, and cooking. He is an active volunteer for Trees for Pease and Friends of the Forest.





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GREENBELT GUARDIANS: Grant Funds in Action on the Greenbelt

Glee Ingram

Since the beginning of the year, the activity level of greenbelt maintenance and improvement activities has increased exponentially. The grant funded by Impact Austin (with matching funds from Austin Parks Foundation and Hill Country Conservancy), which was reported in the January newsletter, is now in its action phase.

Our Greenbelt Guardians have aligned our quarterly work day calendar with the four major volunteer work days that APF committed to for the grant. Thus the total number of volunteers, and the areas impacted on those four work days, have increased considerably. In addition, APF has also hosted 12 additional work days for specific projects between the Zilker and Spyglass entry trails, primarily invasives clearing and minor trail maintenance repairs. Up to 50 acres have been cleared. As of April, APF reported a total of 14 separate volunteer events, hosting 898 volunteers.

The Barton Creek Trail Corps began work in early January. It consists of five trained Environmental Corps crew and a staff supervisor. Last fall, a stakeholder committee (APF, select Parks & Recreation Department staff, E-Corps staff, and Greenbelt Guardians coordinators) planned their work scope by hiking the main trail and identifying 46 unique trail maintenance and repair projects.

Since January, the E-Corps crew has been chipping away at the list. To date, they have cleared the main trail corridor to an eight-foot width, for the majority of the eight-mile trail. They have also done three miles of trail surface work and improved trail drainage to avoid compaction and runneling. Several underground cross-trail drainage pipes have been realigned and upgraded. A set of boulder and gravel steps was constructed near the Gus Fruh pool dam, to improve passage between the main trail and the Gus Fruh entry trail. The biggest restoration project was done at the Twin Falls area, which was suffering significant trail erosion. A large, three-tiered retaining wall system, with steps, was constructed

using on-site boulders, and the trail was rerouted, allowing for separate pedestrian and bicycle passage. An old picnic table, dropped in the creek by the flood waters, was put to use in a shaded area by the trail.

The work being done is reviewed weekly by a committee that includes Charlie McCabe, APF executive director and grant manager, John Cook, Parks & Recreation Department greenbelt management staff, Paul Stuffel, E-Corp's staff supervisor, and myself, as the APF board representative. This hybrid model of public-private funding and management is having a test run on the ground. All involved are excited with the results. I hope you greenbelt lovers will go check out these improvements. There are many more to come in the next six months.

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PHOTO ESSAY: RESCUING A BABY SCREECH OWL

Jennifer Cook

So it was Mother's Day and instead of taking my visiting mom to brunch, I was letting her watch me refinish the deck of my house on Westhill. I saw this pathetic thing hanging upside down from a branch over my mom's head. It was a bedraggled, fledgling screech owl, and either his feet were tangled or he was just afraid to let go. I went to cut the branch he was caught on and instead he just latched onto my fingers.



We moved him to a tree. He tried to stand up tall. He looked like a ridiculous muppet.

Mom and I spotted both parents watching, waiting for dark so they could take care of him. Later that day we found the baby owl again. He had relocated near the parents and was sleeping.



photos by Jennifer Cook. Thank you, iPhone!

MORE THAN SALAMANDERS



photo by Raf Rodriguez

Some people still don't realize there are fish in Barton Springs pool in addition to the famous salamander. Take a snorkel mask to the deep end and you'll see beautiful architectural spires of aquatic plants, some with bright red leaves or tiny white flowers. These plants keep algae to a minimum and reduce sediment in the water. They also provide cover for two types of bass, three species of sunfish, Mexican tetras, and catfish. Turtles and even a freshwater eel are very elusive residents as well.

Free swim is 9-10 p.m. Nights of the full moon, there's a pot-luck party.

MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENTS ALONG S. LAMAR

Jennifer Cook

Austin-based Cypress Real Estate Advisors plans to build a 318-unit complex at 2700 S. Lamar (at Manchaca) starting in 2012. Central Texas added 50,000 people in 2010, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, fueling demand for apartments. Stricter mortgage requirements have also increased demands for apartments.

Post South Lamar (see illustration) is one of the first properties in Austin to use the City of Austin's Vertical Mixed Use Overlay. The crater-like excavation at 1500 S. Lamar is at the former location of the Stoneridge Apartments. Post South Lamar will be a 298-unit complex built by Post Properties and slated to be completed the first quarter of 2013. According to developer Ardent Residential, the mixed-use development will also include 9,600 square feet of retail in four- and five-story buildings (zoning limits buildings along Lamar to five stories). Amenities will include a pool, fitness center, parking garage, and views of downtown Austin.

Another development is the Gibson Residences, planned at 1201 S. Lamar, where a 200-unit complex will break ground on the site now used by food trailers.

Also, although details are unclear, Lamar Plaza, home of the Alamo Drafthouse, is likely to become a new mixed-use development, adding retail space and apartments. Concerns include adequate parking and making South Lamar more pedestrian friendly.



Proposed Post South Lamar

Illustration courtesy of/copyright Ardent Residential

AMPLIFIED GREENBELT

Some neighbors along the greenbelt have been disturbed by the level of music and especially trivia questions hollered off of Red's Porch on South Lamar. Residents along Westrock and other nearby streets have called 911 to complain, since attempts to discuss the matter with owner Davis Tucker have been unsuccessful. Until now, Red's has been operating without a sound permit. In April, the restaurant and bar applied for a sound permit of up to 70 db at the property line. Such permits typically allow amplified sound until 8 p.m. weeknights and 10 p.m. weekends and may include restrictions, such as a requirement to build a sound-proof wall or face the speakers in a certain direction. Red's Porch's permit is currently under review by city staff member Clara Hilling (974-2686).

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ANIMAL LOCKED IN A HOT CAR?

In summer, a closed automobile can reach dangerous temperatures quickly. If you see an animal in a hot, unattended car, take these steps:

1. Write down the make/model and license plate number. Get the owner paged in the store, if possible. Remember, time is of the essence; every minute that passes makes the car hotter.
2. If you are not immediately successful, call 911 for the police department or animal control.
3. If time is of the essence and you are tempted to break into the car, just remember that it is illegal for a private citizen to break into a vehicle to rescue a dog, even if its health or safety is at risk. No law prohibits locking a dog in an unattended car. However, there are anti-cruelty laws. Leaving a dog confined in a car on a hot day can certainly be construed as cruel. So if you have to break the window, you may be prosecuted (although decent people everywhere hope you are rewarded instead). If you are prepared to face the possible consequences...
 - (a) Ask people nearby to be witnesses.
 - (b) Document the rescue with a cell phone or video camera.
 - (c) Break a window and remove the animal.
 - (d) Perform first aid. When a dog is suffering from heatstroke, his body temperature must be lowered as quickly as possible. The best way is to move him into the shade and soak him down with cool (not cold) water from the nearest spigot. Leave a note on the car for the owner with your contact information and get the dog to a vet.

Information from the Up on the Woof blog:
<http://thewoof.wordpress.com>

SAVING STRAYS

The Town Lake Animal Center (TLAC) shows six months of at least 90% no-kill at the shelter. This makes TLAC the largest city animal shelter in the country earning a no-kill status. The shelter takes in over 23,000 animals a year.

Rescue partners are a significant factor in this success. In June, 900 homeless pets were fostered by volunteers working with the TLAC.

Austin Pets Alive! (APA!) saved 350 animals in June alone. APA! is a private nonprofit working to save stray animals from certain death. They hold adoption events and seek volunteers to foster pets. Fostering is usually an average of two weeks. See the Adoption Center in our 'hood, at 2803 Manchaca. APA! needs donated items, volunteer time, or cash. See www.austinpetsalive.org



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2011 MEMBERSHIP FORM

Join or renew your membership in the Barton Hills Neighborhood Association. Annual dues are \$10/household. Make checks payable to BHNA and mail them to **Barton Hills Neighborhood Association, PO Box 2042, Austin TX 78768-2042**. You can pay dues online (with a \$1 PayPal service fee) at www.bartonhills.org/membership.html. If you pay online, send an email to barton_hills-subscribe@yahoogroups.com to be added to the list serv.

Your Name: _____

Other 18+ members of your household: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

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Memberships are due every January. If you need to update your email address for the listserv, please let Vice President Melissa Hawthorne know both new and old email addresses. Over 500 people enjoy the listserv, one of the benefits of membership, including information from your neighbors about lost & found pets, furniture, crime, contractors, and events. The listserv can send you a daily "batch," which is a single email with all the posts.



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