

# BARTON HILLS NEWS

A Quarterly Newsletter

April 2012

## Volunteers wanted!

### July 4th Parade preparation progresses

By Sunny Scott-Luther  
BHNA July 4th Parade Chair

Plans are well underway for the Barton Hills Fourth of July Parade and Celebration. This may well be the biggest and brightest event of the year!

To make this happen we need the support of everyone in the neighborhood. Although we already have committee chairpersons to oversee many of the tasks involved in making the Fourth of July Parade a successful event, we need neighbors to assist on every committee.

We need volunteers to help set up the tables at the school, blow up balloons,

set up games, cut watermelon, supervise games, judge parade entries, bring cookies — in other words be involved.

If you have a special desire to help out on a specific committee, just let me know. If you want to volunteer, but don't have a specific committee in mind, great — we will fit you in! We have enough jobs and enough committees to ensure no task will be too tough or take too long to complete.

The more volunteers we have the quicker we all get to eat watermelon. Contact me at [ssluther@austin.rr.com](mailto:ssluther@austin.rr.com) and I will see that you have a starring role in making this year's event one we'll long remember. ♡

## Picnic in the Park photos online

Friends and neighbors celebrated spring at the park at Barton Hills Elementary on April 7 during the first annual Picnic in the Park, hosted by the Barton Hills Neighborhood Association. Many thanks to all the volunteers who made this a memorable event. Visit <http://bartonhills.org/pictures> for picnic photos. See you at the picnic next year!

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## NEXT MEETING Tuesday, April 24 6-9 p.m.



Join us at St. Mark's Church (corner of Barton Skyway and Barton Hills Dr.). All are welcome! Social hour 6 p.m. Pizza, salad and pasta from Rockin Tomato \$7.

### Agenda

- 7:00 Call to order
- 7:05 Brief announcements
- 7:10 Approval of Jan. 24, 2012 meeting minutes
- 7:12 Treasurer's report  
Kerry Price
- 7:15 Committee reports
  - Neighborhood Watch  
John Luther
  - Greenbelt Guardians  
Glee Ingram
  - Membership Outreach  
Sunny Luther
  - Area Development  
Peter Hess
  - ANC Report  
Tom Nuckols
  - Emergency Preparedness  
Bob Bridge
- 8:00 Barton Hills Park/Playground
- 8:15 PARD presentation: Neighborhood Wildlife Habitat Challenge
- 8:30 COA Watershed Protection Department presentation: Robert E. Lee tributary improvements in Zilker Park
- 8:45 Other business, as brought to the floor by membership
- 9:00 Adjourn

## Barton Hills News

The Barton Hills Neighborhood Association newsletter is published quarterly and supported by advertisers. It's distributed to homes in the Barton Hills neighborhood of Austin, Texas. For more about membership and neighborhood affairs, contact the appropriate person below.

### 2012 Executive Committee

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## President's message

# A neighborhood together during trying times and good times

By Melissa Hawthorne  
BHNA President

As I sit in my home and write this, on March 16, I can hear the chopper circling, and I wonder what is going on. An attempted burglary in progress (right here in my little section of Barton Hills) was reported, and the Austin Police Department descended on our neighborhood in full force to catch the bad guys.

I'm humbled by the city's commitment to protecting our neighborhood and to improving our infrastructure, especially in the wake of the accident that claimed the life of the City of Austin's own Tim Louviere. The neighborhood's response to that

tragedy humbled me, as well. The cards and collection for Mr. Louviere's family were absolutely overwhelming.

We also come together for happier reasons. Our first annual Picnic in the Park was a way to get everyone together to simply enjoy a spring day. There is a lot of interest in the neighborhood in repairing and revitalizing the Barton Hills Park (which doubles as the Barton Hills

Elementary playground). In the course of planning we discovered that AISD still had 2008 bond money slated for a portion of the issues at hand, as well as a great project manager. More to be revealed on that project soon. We also had a great turnout for the It's My Park Day to help improve the Greenbelt. There is nothing

like spending a morning of camaraderie with the Greenbelt Guardians.

The City of Austin is growing rapidly and the landscape on South Lamar is changing. There are two apartment projects under construction with at least five more in the permit

approval process. Here in the neighborhood, we continue to be the same as ever... a community that cares and shows up in times of adversity or in celebration.

And where else in town could you see a ring-tailed cat? Recently at our house we had three ducks in our tree one morning. Ducks mind you.

Melissa

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*We continue to be  
the same as ever...  
a community that  
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celebration.*

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## What Is the BHNA?

The Barton Hills Neighborhood Association (BHNA) is a voluntary association made up of residents — home-owners and home-renters alike. It exists to improve the quality of life in the neighborhood for everyone.

Being a member has benefits. The listserv is a trove of information, recommendations, ideas and much more. Quarterly meetings give you a chance to meet other residents and voice your opinion about neighborhood issues. Dues are \$10 per year. The membership registration form is on page 8 of this newsletter. For more information, visit <http://bartonhills.org>.

# Happy birthday, Greenbelt Guardians

By Glee Ingram

Chair, Greenbelt Guardians

The Greenbelt Guardians celebrated our ninth birthday on March 3 during It's My Park Day — a citywide event coordinated through the Austin Parks Foundation. We led groups at both the Gus Fruh and Homedale trails, with 52 volunteers who worked to improve the trails and remove the invasives. Around the city there were 60 other park-loving groups tending their parks, with a city-wide total of 2,100 volunteers or more. What a great way to welcome spring.

One of the gifts this birthday brings is the recognition of a growing partnership with our neighborhood school, Barton Hills Elementary. Science teacher Collins Van Nort joined us early on for some of our workdays, and invited me to talk to his class about our Greenbelt work. He has since become a regular team leader for our workdays, and brings some of his

students to help. We now store all of our weed wrenches (a specialized tool for uprooting plants) in his storage shed on the school campus, so he can use them with his students who participate in extracurricular Greenbelt projects. This year I was invited to lead his class on a special field trip to the Greenbelt to help recognize the difference between the native plants and the invasive plants, and to show them restored areas that were repopulating with native plants.

In addition, I am participating with a group of neighbors, PTA members and school staff for a series of meetings to re-vision the school and parkland grounds, to improve access and drainage, and to envision ways to improve the playgrounds and add elements that encourage community gatherings and events. Our neighbor, Stefan Pharis, has



*Collins Van Nort shows how to identify ligustrum during It's My Park Day on March 3.*

volunteered his time to translate the ideas into a master plan. The preliminary ideas will be presented at the April BHNA general meeting on Tues., April 24. We look forward to yet more new ways to integrate our Greenbelt work with schools and youth groups. They are the advocates of the future for our green spaces, so vital to our health and well being. ♦

## City's No Mow campaign explained at April 24 meeting



The Watershed Protection (WPD) and Parks and Recreation Departments (PARD) have joined forces with the Austin Parks Foundation and Tree Folks under the Future Forest Project to improve the health and functionality of Austin's urban forests. One focus of this agreement is the establishment of protected "no-mow" buffers along land adjacent to streams (riparian zone) within City of Austin parks. The Robert E. Lee tributary in Zilker Park has been selected as a riparian restoration site.

An overview of this program will be presented at the April 24 Barton Hills Neighborhood Association meeting.



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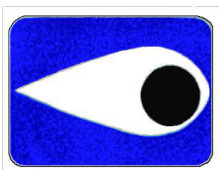
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## Neighborhood Watch

# How to deter criminal activity on your street

By John Luther

Chair, BHNA Neighborhood Watch

Although Barton Hills continues to be one of the very safest neighborhoods in the city, it is not completely without criminal incidents. Two home burglaries in January and two more in February are not-so-gentle reminders that we must remain on guard and take precautions to reduce opportunities for criminal behavior. Let's make our neighborhood a risky area for criminals to operate. To do this effectively requires the participation of the residents in our neighborhood. There is a role for each of us in combating crime in Barton Hills. Each participant makes it that much harder for criminals to ply their trade. We can show you how.

Neighborhood Watch traditionally is a program of neighbors looking out for neighbors. It could be as simple as ...

- Keeping an eye on the home of a vacationing neighbor and bringing in their newspapers, mail and door advertisements.
- Taking note of people and cars moving on your street.
- Removing items from your vehicle and locking it.

All of these things deter criminal activity and can be done without leaving your block. If several of your neighbors par-

ticipate in Neighborhood Watch at this level, just think of the number of alert eyes that can be watching out for your block.

Neighborhood Watch Patrol is a more proactive approach to the traditional program. It involves neighbors who volunteer to drive through the neighborhood in clearly marked vehicles looking for possible criminal activity. These volunteers receive orientation in patrol policy and procedures, including reporting to 911. Neighborhood Watch Patrol is considered by law enforcement agencies to be a very effective deterrent to criminal activity in a neighborhood. Barton Hills has received several awards for developing and employing this crime prevention method.

The Neighborhood Watch Patrol is currently seeking resident volunteers so that we can expand our daily patrol coverage. For just one hour per week — the equivalent of one bad TV show — you could make a positive contribution to neighborhood safety. Contact me at [jluther@austin.rr.com](mailto:jluther@austin.rr.com) if you want to be a part of the solution in reducing crime in our neighborhood. ♦

### Keep track of local crime online

Visiting SpotCrime.com is one of the ways Barton Hills residents can keep up with any criminal activity around them. It is free and you set it to report criminal activity at any distance from your home. It also will give you a daily automatic crime report.

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# St. Mark's: The good neighbor on the corner

By Leah Golden

BHNA Newsletter Editor

The story of St. Mark's Episcopal Church is intertwined with the story of the Barton Hills neighborhood.

The 9-acre site on which the church stands — at the corner of Barton Hills Drive and Barton Skyway — was purchased by Bishop John Hines in 1956, not long after the neighborhood itself was platted. In October 1958, when special missionary Malcolm Riker visited the site, the surrounding neighborhood contained just 100 homes. Riker decided to start

a mission in the area as soon as possible. A little over a year later, an all-purpose building on the site where the church now stands officially opened.

Rev. Elizabeth Turner, St. Mark's rector, said the church has been very much a part of the neighborhood ever since.

"[It's] a church that's been very involved in the community and is very committed to the community. I think it provides a lovely undeveloped oasis in the community. ... What I would hope is that it says something about God,"



*St. Mark's Episcopal Church has graced the corner of Barton Hills Drive and Barton Skyway for more than 50 years.*

Turner smiled.

St. Mark's Episcopal Day School, on the church grounds, opened in 1963. Gina Newton, the head of school, grew up in Barton Hills, and both her sister and niece attended the day school.

Newton said it was a neighborhood school then and still is today, with the majority of students living in the area.

"It's a very loving environment," Newton said "It just seems like the staff and the parents really work well together, and it's just a great place to be."

The church does make its meeting facilities available to other groups in return for a

donation to the church. The church is a meeting site for Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops, as well as the quarterly Barton Hills Neighborhood Association general meeting. It also provides space for several addiction-support groups and Spanish classes.

"It just has to be a time that works for us, in terms of our schedule of services," Turner said.

There's another thing Turner and Newton agree that the church brings to the neighborhood: possibly the best playground in Austin.

To learn more about St. Mark's and the day school, visit [stmarksaustin.org](http://stmarksaustin.org).

## Dinosaurs? Spanish missionaries?

Find out who roamed these hills before there were houses on the neighborhood association website at <http://bartonhills.org/about/history/>.

Photo by Leah Golden

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## EVACUATION ROUTE

# What to do if you have to evacuate

By Susan Donaldson  
Chair, BHNA Emergency Preparedness Committee

Evacuations are more common than many people realize. In the past two months I've read about local neighborhood evacuations due to a bomb scare, a SWAT situation, a gas pipeline leak and an apartment fire.

What should you do if you are told to leave your home?

- **Be prepared and leave the area quickly** following the instructions from authorities. Have a "go bag" ready for all family members including pets. This bag should include:
  - Three-days worth of medicine, medical supplies, a change of clothing and minimal toiletries. Remember to pack baby food and pet food.
  - ID, insurance and vital records. The BHNA Emergency Preparedness committee has large labeled plastic bags for this. Keep a copy of all these items in this bag and put it in the freezer so you can grab it quickly. (This also gives the bag a good chance of surviving a fire or flood.)
- **Designate a meeting place outside of Barton Hills** in advance in case your family is separated at the time you are told to evacuate, so family members know where to meet. This could be a nearby parking lot, a church or a friend's house. Know where you would go if you had to leave town.
- **Have a central point of contact.** This is a person everyone in your family knows to call in case of an emergency. Choose a contact who lives out of town. Often in a disaster, local telephone lines become clogged. Don't depend solely on cell phones as cell towers often become overloaded.
- **Secure your home** before you leave:
  - Close and lock doors and windows.
  - Leave freezers and refrigerators plugged in unless there is a risk of flooding.
  - Know how to turn off your gas, electric and water in case you are told to do so.
  - Put a note on your front door with your name and contact number to let officials know you have evacuated.
- **Know more than one exit route.** Most people use Barton Hills Drive, Robert E. Lee or Barton Skyway to enter or exit our neighborhood. Any one of these streets may be blocked off in an emergency. Learn other streets that will take you to Lamar. If an evacuation route is marked, follow it.
- **Sign up for reverse 911 now.** This system uses a "reverse dialing" method to notify the public of emergency information when property or human life is in danger. Get started at [wireless.capcog.org/ENS/HowItWorks.aspx](http://wireless.capcog.org/ENS/HowItWorks.aspx).

Being told to leave your home is always going to be scary! Being prepared will help reduce the stress. If you have special needs, have no transportation or require extra care, please make sure a neighbor or someone in the area knows you need additional assistance. The Neighborhood Watch or the Emergency Preparedness Committee are good resources. ♦

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### Alternate route out of Horseshoe Bend

If you live or travel in the Horseshoe Bend, there is a way out that doesn't use Barton Hills Drive at Barton Skyway. Take Barton Hills to Mountain View, then take Kassarine Pass to Matterhorn. Then take either Rockingham or Rock Terrace to Barton Skyway.

**Join BHNA or renew your membership!**

**Turn to page 8 for more details.**

# I love Barton Hills

A poem by Kay Killen, BHNA Vice President

I love the diversity of our neighbors  
I love the caring, helpful nature of neighbors  
I love driving past beautiful sculptures and yard art  
I love the beautiful and diverse tree-covered rolling hills  
I love seeing neighbors out using the sidewalks and streets  
I love living adjacent to the Greenbelt and feeling like a steward  
I love having two "official" Greenbelt entrances in our neighborhood  
I love driving Barton Skyway and our South Lamar "Austinville" charm  
I love seeing (and hearing) all the different birds around the Greenbelt  
I love driving past St. Mark's Church — more than an intersection — a partner  
I love seeing (and hearing about) the wildlife co-habiting this Greenbelt with us  
I love seeing the running, walking and biking clubs enjoying our lovely rolling hills  
I love still getting lost driving around our winding streets  
I love seeing all the diversity of architecture making up our homes and landscapes  
I love driving past Barton Hills Elementary and seeing children playing outside  
I love driving past the back door of Barton Springs, seeing the beautiful pecan trees  
I love being at the confluence of Barton Creek and the Colorado River  
I love driving onto Robert E. Lee from Barton Springs Road with an open window,  
and feeling the air temperature drop several degrees  
I love driving up Barton Hills Drive, and the dogleg curve that takes me  
to one of the best neighborhood markets in town  
I love the names of our streets: Tip Cove, Top Cove, Side Cove, Dove Cove, Fox Cove,  
Trailside, Mountain View, Westhill, Westrock  
What a blessing it is to live in Barton Hills.



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### INSIDE THIS ISSUE OF BARTON HILLS NEWS

- ▶ July 4th Parade volunteers needed
- ▶ Meet the good neighbor on the corner
- ▶ Stop crime on your street
- ▶ What to do if you have to evacuate

## 2012 MEMBERSHIP FORM

Fill out this form to join or renew your membership in the Barton Hills Neighborhood Association. Annual dues are \$10 per household, payable when you join (for a new membership) or every January (for renewal).

**Your Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Other 18+ members of your household:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

☐ **Sign Me Up!** I/we wish to receive email from the BHNA listserv.

☐ I am interested in getting more involved in neighborhood activities. Please contact me.

Please send this form along with your annual dues to:

**Barton Hills Neighborhood Association, PO Box 2042, Austin TX 78768-2042**

Make checks payable to BHNA. You can pay dues online through PayPal at [www.bartonhills.org/membership.html](http://www.bartonhills.org/membership.html).  
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