



News **from** Northwood

www.northwoodna.com

May/June 2015

Upcoming Events

July 4 parade

Bring flags to wave and decorated wagons and bikes to ride for the annual Independence Day parade. 10:00 AM. Meet at Oak Creek Cove (just west of Timberside). From there the route is Oak Creek to Manhasset.



Anyone who wishes a longer parade route, we suggest continuing to Council Bluff, turning left and going up Tamarack to Manhasset.

At Manhasset we will end the parade and have some refreshments. Everyone is invited to stop and meet neighbors in the shade (or continue with a longer parade if you prefer). See you at 10:00 on July 4! ☺

2015 Dues are Due! see page 5

Neighborhood Notes

Association President position open

The Association Board President position is open. Duties include being a contact with the City for zoning and other issues as well as other groups and working with the other officers to make decisions on issues that affect the neighborhood. If you would like to help keep Northwood the great place it is to live, consider stepping up! It only takes a few hours a month and much is done via email. If you are interested, contact any of the officers (last page). ☺

Water Heater updates

The federal efficiency standards for waters have recently changed; as of mid April 2015, vendors can manufacture only more energy efficient models. Why is this important? They are up to 2 inches bigger, so they may not fit in the water heater closets in existing homes without some remodeling, which is an additional cost. The older ones can be sold after mid April but will eventually no longer be available. Options:

- buy an "older" water heater now while they are available
- switch to tankless heaters
- upgrade to the new more energy efficient model when your current water heater needs to

Oak Wilt Alert: only prune and paint oak trees when it is very hot or very cold, then prune and immediately paint (you can use latex spray paint). Avoid pruning between February and June when the beetles transmitting the fungus are most active.



be replaced at a future date, and start saving for the additional costs.

If your water heater is older, when you replace it, expect additional costs to bring the system up to code.



One possible required upgrade: If the water pressure entering the house is greater than 70 PSI, a Pressure Control Valve (PRV) must be installed with the new water heater. This reduces the incoming water pressure, which helps prevent the pipes and joints from

weakening and possibly bursting due to excessive water pressure. And if the pipes burst when no one is home, the house could be flooded.

Installing the PRV can cost at least several hundred dollars or more, depending on the plumber and the amount of work required. And current City code requires additional components along with the PRV; another potential cost.

Bottom line: the cost of the code compliance upgrades could easily equal or exceed the cost of the water heater - and this doesn't include the potential remodeling cost. Talk to a plumber for details.

Tip: This information was available to NextDoor subscribers in early April, so they were able to act on it while the older models were widely available. If you don't subscribe to nextdoor.com, consider it! ☺

Flushable(?) wipes clogging sewers

From a [local news story](#)

Per a recent local news story, thousands of wipes are clogging Austin sewers (and those in other cities). Wipes can remain intact while traveling through the sewer pipes, and as they move through the wastewater treatment collection system they may intertwine with cooking grease,

hair and other trash, forming sometimes giant "rag balls" which can clog the lift stations in the treatment systems, requiring time and money to clear and fix -lift stations used to be cleaned every 3-5 years. Now some must be cleaned every 2-3 weeks. These costs are passed onto the customers.

The reporter placed several sheets of toilet paper and a wipe advertised as flushable into two glass jars filled with water and shook the jars. The toilet paper disintegrated, the wipe remained intact. He let the two jars sit overnight. The next day the toilet paper was a mass of tiny particles at the bottom of the jar. The flushable wipe was still intact.

Flushable wipes companies stated their wipes meet requirements and don't cause problems when flushed. An analysis of wipes showed that 12% of wipes removed from sewage systems are flushable and 18% of them are non-flushable baby wipes. ☹

Oak wilt survey!

We are nearing the end of oak wilt season. The tiny nitidulid "sap" beetles visit infected trees and get the spores on them and then land on a recently-cut healthy oak tree and infect it. Avoid pruning or injuring oaks from February to June, and immediately paint wounds on oak trees year round.

If you see someone trimming oak trees without painting and are not comfortable talking to them, call 311, they will contact the City Arborist.

If you have oak trees and they do not appear to be healthy, contact one of the Association officers; we will ask the Forester check your tree. For details on oak wilt, visit texasoakwilt.org. ☹



Is your identity safe?

If, like many people, you use the Internet for financial transactions (even just checking your bank balance) and more, your identity may be at risk. If you have an email account you may have seen scam or “phishing” emails that ask the recipient to help someone in Nigeria get money in a bank account. The goal is simply to get enough of the addressee’s (potential victim) information that the scammer can gain access to the victim’s accounts.. The Nigerian scams were fairly easy to spot. Unfortunately, phishing scams have evolved and become much harder to spot.



If you think you are good at spotting phishing scams, take a quiz and see how good you are! www.sonicwall.com/furl/phishing/ 

Northwood Real Estate Update

as of 5/16/15 By Linda Holmbeck, REALTOR® - Horizon Realty Austin 

Northwood Numbers Based on sales data from last 90 days

- 2 – Homes sold in Northwood
- 4 – Active listings on the market in Northwood
- 2 – Pending listing on the market in Northwood
- 43 – Average number of days homes in Northwood spent on the market
- \$382,500 – Average sales price for homes sold in Northwood
- \$ 192.57 – Average sold price per square foot in Northwood

Austin Market Stats March, 2015 (Per latest data released by The Austin Board of Realtors)

- 2,440 – Single-family homes sold (up 13% from March, 2014)
- \$255,000 – Median price for single-family homes (up 10% from March, 2014)

- \$334,758 – Average price for single-family homes (up 13% from March, 2014)
- 55 – Average number of days single-family homes spent on market (up 4 days from Mar, 2014)
- 3,402 – New single-family home listings on the market (up 6% from March, 2014)
- 2.2 – Months of inventory of single-family homes (unchanged from March, 2014)
- \$816,809,520 – Total dollar volume of single-family properties sold (up 28% from March, 2014)

The booming Austin area housing market continues to undermine affordability. According to Barb Cooper, 2015 President of the Austin Board of REALTORS, “The Austin-area housing market is the least affordable it has ever been.” Most Austin area houses are now priced out of the affordable range for first-time home buyers as well as first-time move-up buyers. Austin’s mayor and City Council continue to delve into possible solutions to the issue.

The market in Northwood remains healthy with the most recent sales averaging at \$192.57 per square foot. Active listings currently on the market in Northwood are priced from \$249,900 to \$275,000 and range in size from 1366 SF to 1658 SF.

If you’re considering selling your Northwood home advance preparation is one key consideration to preparing for the market.

Listings that are properly staged and photographed make the most favorable impression on buyers and typically sell for top dollar with minimal time on the market. Pricing the property correctly for the market is the most important piece of the puzzle.





Spring is finally here and the Austin housing market is ablaze as expected. Inventory remains low -- up only 1% compared to the same time last year. Home sales prices continue to rise at a brisk pace as a result of the low volume of inventory and the influx of home buyers. Mortgage rates remain at historic lows which makes this a great time to buy or refinance.

Houses in MLS Area N (which includes Northwood) sold for 99% of list price in January. Houses in Northwood are selling for historically high prices in record time. ☺

Four lined plant bugs

from Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
Four-lined plant bugs are brightly colored. Nymphs (immatures) are red while older nymphs start to have wing pads with yellow and black stripes. Adults have fully developed wings that are yellow and black striped. Adults look similar to, and may be mistaken for, striped cucumber beetles.



These insects have piercing-sucking mouthparts which they use to suck out plant juices. The plant bugs suck out chlorophyll and leave a “window” between the upper and lower epidermis of the leaf. Damage appears as white, dark or translucent spots of foliage and is sometimes mistaken for fungal damage. Feeding may also cause curling and browning. Fortunately, damage is mostly cosmetic, but if you are trying to eat the foliage of the damaged plant it may become a problem

The insects feed on a wide variety of hosts, including fruits and vegetables, annuals and perennials and woody plants. When disturbed, the insects are fairly good at hiding. They either crawl to the underside of the leaves or drop to the ground to hide among foliage.

If you feel the need to manage these insects, try insecticidal soap. If that doesn't work, you can try azadirachtin (neem- concentrate, not oil; it's getting too hot to use oil formulations) or pyrethrins. If that doesn't work then try a residual contact product.

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600. Check out my blog at www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com. ☺

Family Safety
Home security videos may help solve crimes

Several neighbors had asked the Association Board about using their home security video systems to help solve nearby crimes. With that in mind, we invited our community Police representative Officer Whetston to attend the April Association meeting and talk about that topic. He noted that video can be a helpful witness if a crime occurs in its area and made the following suggestion:

If you have a surveillance camera and want to make video footage available to the police if it contains evidence of a possible crime, first you need to know when a crime has been reported near your house. There are two websites, www.krimelabb.com and www.spotcrime.com, that report on crimes by street. Check those regularly; if you see your street listed and your camera captured something, call the police if you wish to give them the video. ☺

Continuing News
2015 Due\$ are due

The 2015 dues are due. They are \$15 and are for the calendar year 2015. The dues pay for the gift certificates for the yard of the month and help pay for the newsletter and some of the special activities.



To join the Northwood Neighborhood Association, either complete the form on the back of this newsletter and mail a check to the treasurer at the address listed on the form OR use the PayPal option on the web site, www.northwoodna.com.
 ☞

Dues must be current to be eligible for financial assistance for treatment of oak wilt

Join the Northwood Nextdoor and Facebook groups!

Join the Nextdoor Northwood neighborhood group and the Facebook group to stay updated on the latest - from lost/found pets, recommendations for home repair, and more to advising of suspicious persons and updates from the City and Police. They both also have apps for smart phones.

Nextdoor messages can be shared only with Northwood neighbors or also nearby neighborhoods. To join over 280 Northwood neighbors on Nextdoor, go to www.nextdoor.com and sign up. ☞

Police neighborhood contact

Our police contact is Officer Michael Whetston. Contact him at 512.974-5553 or Michael. Whetston@austintexas.gov. To just report an incident, call 311. ☞

Police report

The City's Crime Viewer is available at www.austintexas.gov/GIS/CrimeViewer/

Street	Crime	Time
March		
Oak Creek	Assist complainant	3:02
Silver Creek	Criminal Mischief	21:38
April		
Burr Oak	Debit card abuse	11:40
Silver Creek	Fraud - other	12:55
Oak Creek	Inquiry - disabled individual	12:08
May		
Oak Bend	Fraud - other	13:12
Cv		
Burr Oak	Possession of drug paraphernalia	15:43

You can also find crimes by zip code at www.krimelabb.com :and subscribe to alerts at www.spotcrime.com/

Any time you see a person or vehicle that doesn't seem to belong, get as detailed a description as possible and notify the police – call 311 (or 911 if they are still present). If you can safely do so, get a photo. ☞

Calendar

July	4	Parade
October	10	Fall Garage Sale
December		Holiday lights contest



Officers:

President vacant

Vice President Jeannie Beckham 512.371.7014
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Secretary Rosalia Nassaux 512.826-3111
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*Your
real estate goals
are
my priority*

I've called Northwood home for over 23 years and have been a REALTOR for 15. We live in one of the most unique and desirable neighborhoods in North Austin.

Austin is currently a seller's market and I would love the opportunity to meet with you if you're considering selling or buying. I'll focus on your individual needs and provide you with the highest level of service.

Your neighbor on Timberside

Linda Holmbeck
ABR, CRS, GRI, REALTOR®
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512-653-4644



Northwood 2015 dues \$15.00

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Email _____

Make check payable for Northwood Neighborhood Association and mail to Nancy Grijalva, 4507 Tamarack Trail, Austin, TX 78727 (do not drop in the Association mailbox, it isn't waterproof) OR pay via PayPal on the website, www.northwoodna.com

Be sure to join the Northwood Nextdoor discussion group - go to www.nextdoor.com to sign up.