

YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

by NACA

February 17, 2017 NACA Meeting

Please join us at the second meeting for the year on February 16, 2017 at 7:00 PM at the North Austin Community Center/YMCA, 1000 W. Rundberg.

At our February meeting, the YMCA will present on their programming, including the many free/subsidized programs. We will also invite the Lanier High School Community Garden, YMCA Community Garden, and St. Johns Episcopal Community Garden to present on their gardens.

The NACA contact team will present on the status of adopting Quail Creek, Wooldridge Elementary and Cook Elementary parks in an effort to apply for grants through the Austin Parks Foundation. These projects will take some work but will be very exciting to improve our schools and parks. See you there!

17 de Febrero 2017, Reunión de NACA

Por favor, acompáñenos a la segunda reunión de el año, el 17 de Febrero del 2017 a las 7:00 PM en North Austin Community Center/YMCA, 1000 W. Rundberg.

En nuestra reunión de febrero, el YMCA presentará sobre sus programas, incluyendo los muchos programas gratuitos/subsidiados. También invitaremos al Jardín Comunitario de la Escuela Secundaria Lanier, el Jardín Comunitario YMCA y el Jardín Comunitario St. Johns Episcopal para presentar acerca de sus jardines.

El equipo de contacto de NACA presentará sobre el estado de adoptar los parques Quail Creek, las escuelas primarias Wooldridge y Cook en un esfuerzo para solicitar becas a través del Austin Parks Foundation. Estos proyectos tomarán trabajo, pero será emocionante mejorar nuestras escuelas y parques. ¡Los esperamos!

D4 Homelessness Initiative

By Caro Dubois

Several neighborhoods in District 4 are partnering to try to tackle homelessness in our area. The organizing persons have met with several people from City Hall and some of the many non-profit groups that offer services for this portion of our population. Churches and neighborhood associations are planning a meeting for our D4 area to present information regarding the planned initiative on Wednesday, February 22, place and time (evening) to be determined.

The City has received a \$5 million grant aimed specifically at homeless youth. Either Mayor Adler or Councilman Greg Casar will fill us in on the details on this grant. One or two representatives from the various non-profit agencies will present an overview of the services available throughout the city but specifically for our area. APD will be in attendance to provide information on their Homelessness Outreach Team that is already working in our area. Perhaps some data from the ECHO Point-in-Time count from Jan 28 will be available.

Details of the agenda, the time and place of the meeting will be on the NACA website soon and pushed out in our email and on various social media sites. Please plan to attend and find out how we can help end homelessness in our area.

NORTH AUSTIN CIVIC ASSOCIATION (NACA)

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Randy Teich 512-426-7769

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ANC Representative

Domenic Schiera 512-573-6620

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NEXT MEETING

Date 02/17
Time 7:00 pm
Place N. Austin Community Center
(YMCA) on 1000 W. Rundberg

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President's Letter

By Randy Teich - NACA President

I wish to thank everyone for re-electing me to be your president for the next year. I am pleased to be serving with co-vice presidents Melinda Schiera and Ashley Harris, treasurer Brian La Cour and secretary Matt Myers. Jack Morrissey has agreed to chair our membership committee and Ellen Martin has agreed to represent us on the Austin Neighborhoods Council. Eleanor Langsdorf continues as our editor of the newsletter and Allison Scharf is coordinating our neighborhood cleanup efforts. These and others will be working to put together pertinent and informative programming for our monthly meetings and will keep our representatives in state and local government informed on issues important to our neighborhood.

One of the important efforts for NACA in 2017 is to participate in the redesign of N. Lamar Blvd., approved with last year's bond package. Council member Casar spoke at last night's NACA meeting and stated that 2017 will be the year of developing the specifics of what will happen along N. Lamar. NACA will keep you informed as to when these meetings will occur.

One of my goals for 2017 is to find a vehicle for dialogue with our Spanish speaking neighbors. I am convinced that we share many of the same concerns within the neighborhood and hope to find ways that we can join together to combine our efforts in making the NACA area a safer, better connected and an example for others on how blended neighborhoods should look.

Please feel free to reach out to your officers with your suggestions and your concerns. We look forward to serving you in 2017.

Benefits of Nextdoor.com

By Jack Morrissey

It was a cold January afternoon. Out of my garage door window I noticed some teenagers in a small pickup truck ripping open a package while another was heading up my neighbors driveway when the driver noticed me watching, alerted his buddy and they sped off. I checked outside and found an empty shipping box and I recognized the address and the recipient as a neighbor from down the street and around the corner (Who a few months back had attended our National Night Out event – invited through Nextdoor.com)

I immediately realized the situation, contacted 911 and filed a report and set out in the direction the vehicle had traveled and found an additional parcel ripped open in the middle of the street. I returned both of the damaged boxes to their rightful owners explaining to them all that I knew.

Returning home a few minutes later I posted an "ALERT" on the Nextdoor.com website. This provided every member of Nextdoor.com within that neighborhood an instant report of the crime as well as a description of the offenders and their vehicle. Soon Nextdoor was a buzz with folks that had seen that vehicle earlier but more importantly everyone's eyes were

on the lookout from that moment forward. Neighbors were watching out for neighbors

Though these teens weren't apprehended that day it certainly served as an excellent example of the power of a social network that is afforded to us from places like Nextdoor.com. I always liken it to Facebook for your neighborhood.

Nextdoor is a private social network for you, your neighbors and your community. It's the easiest way for you and your neighbors to talk online and make all of your lives better in the real world. And it's free.

Nextdoor's mission is to provide a trusted platform where neighbors work together to build stronger, safer, happier communities, all over the world.

Fences are sometimes necessary. But online privacy is always necessary. Nextdoor makes it safe to share online the kinds of things you'd be okay sharing with your neighbors in person.

Here's how:

- Every neighbor has to verify their address.
- Every neighbor signs in with their real name. Just like in person.
- Your website is protected by password and encrypted by HTTPS.
- Nextdoor.com never shares your info with advertisers.

So if you haven't signed up for Nextdoor.com I highly recommend you consider doing so. Signing up is easy and the benefits are immense.

AISD Facilities—The 2040 Plan

By Mark Grayson

Austin is blessed to have some great public schools with creative and caring teachers and staff. At the same time, the Austin Independent School District also faces challenges. A big one is that the average age of the district's 130 school buildings is well over 40 years, and many of them are not aging "gracefully."

Instead of short-term fixes, AISD is working on a long-range

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If you have News or Event Information contact Eleanor Langsdorf

plan for the next few decades. The goal is to create a 24-year plan that will result in the modernization of all of AISDs school buildings to meet the goals of 21st-century learning.

I'm a member of the Facilities and Bond Planning Advisory Committee (FABPAC for short), a volunteer committee of citizens appointed by the AISD Board. For 18 months, our group has been working with district staff and consultants. We've been examining objective data about the buildings, considering future trends in population growth, and reaching out to the community. That's where you come in.

Through that work, we've come up with a draft set of recommendations for the next few decades that covers every school, and we want to hear from you and your neighbors—especially from children and young adults attending AISD schools—about how our plan seems right and how it doesn't.

We'll be holding a series of community meetings from 6 pm to 8 pm on these dates:

Tuesday 31 January—Martin Middle School

Wednesday 1 February—Burnet Middle School

Thursday 2 February—Gorzycki Middle School

(Materials for every neighborhood school will be available to discuss at every meeting.)

We'll take that feedback and revise our plan before checking in with the community in a series of meetings one last time before taking the plan to the AISD Board for approval in March. The dates for these meetings are:

Tuesday 21 February—Webb Middle School

Wednesday 22 February—Kealing Middle School

Thursday 23 February—Anderson High School

Tuesday 28 February—Austin High School

Wednesday 1 March—Perez Elementary School

Thursday 2 March—Travis High School

If you can't make it to a meeting, you can get details on the plans at the AISDFuture.com website. (AISDFuturo en Español). You can provide feedback by emailing future@austinisid.org (English o Español) or calling (512) 414-9595 (English o Español).

Thank you!

By Carol Pazera

As I step down as chair of the NACA Membership Committee after serving for 2 years, I want to thank the committee members for all their hard work to get the word out about NACA, attract new members, and engage current members. The committee formed when NACA membership was on the decline. NACA had decided, for financial reasons, to stop the practice of volunteers delivering newsletters monthly to everyone in the neighborhood. We needed a new, sustainable way to reach people. Through our membership drives, delivering a flier

to every doorstep once a year, with the help of many volunteers, we were able to increase membership to a level it had not reached in years, if ever. We increased NACA's visibility with our fabulous t-shirts and outreach at local schools. For instance, we presented at PTA meetings, and attended parent meetings and principal breakfasts. We distributed many membership fliers at Lanier's homecoming parade, and met and chatted with neighbors at the Family Fun Fest. We promoted participation in National Night Out after surveying members about the activities in which they most wanted NACA to engage. We printed and distributed signs to advertise NACA meetings and sent newsletters to people who had just moved to the neighborhood. And let's not forget the 1,000 pencils with NACA's website on it that we need to distribute!

We accomplished a lot, and yet there is so much more that can be done. I believe we can improve our use of social media. We can make and implement a plan to attract business members. We can discover more ways to connect to people, to reach out. I believe we will depend on each other more in the coming years, and if NACA includes and engages as many people as possible, it will strengthen the effectiveness of our advocacy. I wish the new membership committee chair the best of luck. I know you'll do a great job!

Why I'm a NACA Member

By Carol Pazera

Back in December, we asked our members a question – Why are you a NACA member? We were interested in knowing how people became members, and why NACA membership is important to them. If you'd like to share your reasons, please email me at cpazera@gmail.com. Here are some of the answers we've received so far.

I am a member because I've lived in the neighborhood for 16 years and I feel it's important to support the many people who work to keep our neighborhood clean and informed. I think most, or all of us, want the best for our neighbors. Thank you officers for all your hard work and dedication.

B.J. Wedlund

We bought our house in this neighborhood and feel that not only did we invest in ownership of our house, but also invested ownership in the neighborhood that we live in.

Adrian E.

I support NACA for the good work it does in code enforcement, zoning issues and keeping the neighborhood clean with Beautification volunteers.

And, let's not forget, we would not have the North Austin YMCA Community Center without the NACA members who lobbied for it to be on the bond election. The pocket park at Heron Hollow is also here due to NACA's efforts.

Linda Moore, Past President

I'm a very nominal member, not involved but I pay dues. It's

what I can do to keep the organization going since I have limited mobility to do other projects. I'm grateful that I can help in some small way to keep this neighborhood I've lived in 38 years healthy and strong. We can all give in different ways!

Bonnie W.

I believe we're all wired to be in community, and I appreciate NACA as an avenue for engaging in that way. Before Thanksgiving, my neighbors hosted a potluck for our cul de sac and the street that abuts it. It was so much fun to meet neighbors and learn about their families, their concerns and their interests.

Stephanie F.

When we moved into the neighborhood 27 years ago, we knew there was something different about it. It wasn't like the then-new cookie-cutter neighborhoods on the edge of town. With time, we've come to recognize in depth both the wonderful things and the challenges that entails. We're proud to be at home in such a friendly, diverse neighborhood where people say 'hello.' We're also proud to be a part of NACA as it celebrates what's great and works to improve the rest.

Mark and Terri Grayson

I chose to become a NACA member because I've seen throughout my life that people are happier when they're connected to their community, and communities are stronger when their members are connected. Throughout history, divided communities are communities where individuals are easily victimized and abused. If we stand together, we win together. Though we may occasionally disagree, if we remain committed to our community and to one another, we can resolve those differences respectfully. When we're divided, we stand alone, and none of us is as powerful or safe individually as we are with others. I'm committed to our community, and to our residents!

Dylan Cornelius

When I was a child, my brothers and sisters and I would take turns staying with my oldest sister who owned and was living in a home on the east side of Tampa, Florida. Halfway through my stay with her that summer, her neighborhood found out that a park area right next to her subdivision was going to be developed into the Florida State Fairgrounds. I can recall going with her to a specially-called neighborhood meeting regarding that issue. It was a big crowd, and many people seemed pretty impassioned. After all, this was their neighborhood. I was certainly impressed by the civil engagement that took place that evening years ago.

Twenty years later, after purchasing my own home in Quail Creek, I learned of the North Austin Civic Association and joined as a quickly as I could. Over those 25 years or so, I've watched as NACA became our collective voice regarding neighborhood plans, development, code enforcement, crime prevention, parks initiatives and so many other concerns specific to the Quail Creek area. In that period of time, I have been just as impressed by our neighborhood's civil engagement as I was at that meeting in Tampa so many years ago. After all, this is OUR neighborhood. We should be just as impassioned.

Jack Morrissey

NACA MEMBERSHIP FORM

Enclosed are my dues for calendar year 20__

___ Regular Membership (\$15)

___ Silver Membership (\$25)

___ Gold Membership (\$50 or more)

___ I would like to volunteer for NACA.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Pay online at naca-austin.org
or mail this form & check to:

**NACA Treasurer
PO BOX 180803
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