

The Whispers

PUBLISHED BI-MONTHLY BY NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS, INC. FOR THE WHISPERING OAKS HOMEOWNER'S ASSOCIATION

WOHA Annual Meeting—A Crucial One!

Large Crowd Expected

This year's annual meeting of the WOHA membership will undertake a long-awaited issue. The group is expected to approve pursuit of selected revisions to the Whispering Oaks Community Covenants. Those rules, installed by the community's builders over 50 years ago and never since revised, apply to every household, regardless of HOA membership status.

Although any property owner could undertake the daunting task of securing amendment approvals from the majority of all 752 property owners, WOHA members can call upon the organization's volunteers to coordinate a ballot campaign on

their behalf. The group debated potential revisions at last year's annual meeting and the Board has been preparing with its attorney to revisit the topic this month.

Attendees are encouraged to arrive early because the meeting will start promptly at 2:00 pm on Sunday, 17 September, at Hobby Middle School (11843 Vance Jackson at Huebner). This year, to allow ample time for comments and questions from the floor, no guest speakers will be featured. For additional information, see President's letter on Page 2.

Can you Imagine...

The Past Year with NO WOHA?

Here's an idea of what Whispering Oaks would be like without its homeowner's association (WOHA) and its all-volunteer Board of Directors for just this past one year:

1. Short-term rentals rapidly increase, creating a noisy neighborhood at night.
2. We become part of Council District 1, which is too-little like Whispering Oaks.

3. The entranceways deteriorate, making entering the neighborhood unattractive and less safe.
4. The grass in the common areas dies, leaving ugly brown patches.
5. People leave large trash bins, campers, and the like every which way.
6. Residents remain unaware that there is an Oak Wilt plague spreading rapidly throughout the neighborhood.
7. Residents who are aware of Oak Wilt just don't know where to turn for advice.

(Continued on page 3)

WOHA Annual Meeting

Sunday, Sept. 17th
at 2pm

Hobby Middle School
11843 Vance Jackson
near Huebner

All members encouraged to attend.
Please check-in early.
Refreshments served.

WOHA 2024 Membership Drive

I'll do my part! My check for the \$125 annual household dues is enclosed.
 I can do more! Additional \$ _____ enclosed supports the WOHA Capital Fund.

WO Street Address: _____


Your Name: _____

Spouse / Partner Name: _____

Your Email: _____

Your Phone: _____ Year Arrived in WO: _____

Please mail by Oct 31. Prefer credit card or auto-payments? Visit whisperingoaks.org





2023

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President
Peter Lund

Vice-President
Simon Esparza

Treasurer
Cheri Wiese

Secretary
Evita Morín

Welcome Wagon
Adele Barnett

Infrastructure
Ben Dilly

Code Compliance
Ted Pastrano

Newsletter
Richard Pressman

Online Communication
Ami Sewell

Membership
January Smith

NCD, Code Compliance
Janis Witt

General communication:
board@whisperingoaks.org



Peter's Prez-spective

A Letter from the WOHA President

Our Community Needs Protection Against Modern Threats

Like many Whispering Oaks homeowners, when I bought my home, I didn't realize our neighborhood had Community Covenants. Those restrictions, which are attached to every property deed, were put in place by the community's builders years before WOHA was formed. I'm sure the document was in the stack of closing papers I had initialed, but I never heard the term "deed restrictions" until I got involved with the WOHA Board.

I recall asking my real estate agent at the time if Whispering Oaks had an HOA and he said no. Technically, he was right. WOHA is actually more of a voluntary Neighborhood Association of select homeowners than a mandatory HOA like across the street within the gated Elm Creek subdivision. Over the years, some Board members have suggested realigning the organization's name to avoid the negative connotations some folks associate with the term HOA. I can't say I would object. But there's a more important change the organization has been mulling these days.

Like many of you, I've come to realize our Community Covenants are a wonderful, unexpected benefit and safeguard. However, most subdivisions which are lucky enough to have similar covenants in place eventually update them, but Whispering Oaks hasn't modified a single word in over 50 years. Meanwhile the world around us has changed dramatically, so, as a result, unlike our peer communities, we don't have important protections.

So while we have a rule prohibiting short wave radio towers on rooftops, we don't have any restrictions whatsoever on the types of home-based businesses which can easily become disruptive. And I'm not just alluding to short-term rentals. The latest internet-inspired headache for neighbors on the west side stems from a resident with an online car rental business from his driveway operating around-the-clock. Think of it as an AirBnb for automobiles in which the hosts often purchase several extra cars to rent out to strangers. There's currently no covenant prohibiting that kind of intrusion popping up next to your home. And waiting for City ordinances to fill the void can take years.

Whispering Oaks doesn't have many covenants, but they play an important role in the quality of life we take for granted today, and the stable property values each of us will benefit from when we eventually sell our homes. Like many of us years ago, potential buyers see an appealing community of well-kept homes which somehow sidestepped many of the pitfalls common in lesser subdivisions. But it's not happenstance; it's the covenants. Simply put, those rules quietly ensure that everyone here takes a bit more pride in our neighborhood, and safeguard against decline—regardless of what happens to the areas which surround Whispering Oaks.

The covenants that our residents commonly rely upon are those that ensure neighborly conduct and minimize conflicts. For example, your neighbor is prohibited from owning chickens, which could wake you up on a lazy Sunday morning. Un-sightly trailers can't be parked in driveways for months on end. Garages can't be converted into habitable rooms with shoddy-looking exteriors. Local ordinances

(Continued on page 4)

Residents Debate Possible Short-Term Rental Restrictions

More than 40 residents attended a Town Hall Meeting sponsored by WOHA on 19 July at the Walker Ranch Senior Center to discuss potential restrictions on Short Term Rental properties (STRs) within Whispering Oaks. While some STRs operate without incident, others have caused serious problems for nearby neighbors, prompting many to call for greater deed restrictions that govern all Whispering Oaks properties.

WOHA President Peter Lund opened the meeting by explaining that the pro-business state legislature has curtailed the City's power to regulate the industry, but communities with deed restrictions have the right to impose their own STR rules, with many already having done so. In the coming year, WOHA members could authorize their organization to initiate a community-wide ballot and approval of an amendment that would require a simple majority among all property owners, not just HOA members.

The majority of the meeting was set aside for open floor comments from residents. One current STR permit holder acknowledged that problems often stem from poor local management hired by out-of-state investors operating multiple properties. STRs with swimming pools and outdoor spas generate the most complaints within Whispering Oaks and are often promoted by their owners for gatherings.

Residents who have endured a problematic STR nearby shared stories of loud late-night parties spilling into the street, overflowing garbage can unattended, neglected yards becoming lingering eyesores, and safety concerns for children due to a constant turnover of unfamiliar guests.

Several speakers insisted that all types of STRs should be prohibited because most operators have little connection to the community and the community has little to gain by tolerating the problems which may arise. In fact, few of the current permit holders contribute directly to the community financially, such as via WOHA membership, causing one speaker to complain that many operators profit off the appeal of Whispering Oaks while simultaneously undermining it.

Lund pointed out that many communities prohibit all STRs because allowing some to operate while restricting others creates loopholes for exploitation. For example, allowing rentals of homes which are occupied by the owner requires on-going verification and supervision. WOHA volunteers would not be able to take on that work, particularly if the quantity of STRs continues to proliferate, so Lund says that management would need to be outsourced and the significant cost burden appropriately passed on to the operators.

A review of city records finds Whispering Oaks currently has a dozen permitted STRs, which represents a three-fold jump in just the past 36 months. Two additional properties have been discovered operating illegally and are being investigated by the City. Most of the properties are not occupied by the owner, and about half are owned by investors who operate multiple STRs, often in several states.

WOHA members are likely to discuss deed restriction amendments at its annual meeting on Sunday, 17 September, at which they could approve initiation of a community ballot to be circulated among all property owners in the coming year.



Residents meet to debate potential restrictions on Short-Term Rental businesses.



Brad and Abby Hughes describe living next to a problematic STR.

("No WOHA" continued from page 1)

8. The value of every home—even the best kept—goes down.
9. There'd be no sidewalks along Lockhill-Selma.
10. There'd be no lighting at all the entranceways.

That's why your support of the HOA all-volunteer Board is in your interest. If you can afford to live in Whispering Oaks, you can afford our low dues. Please do your part: Join us!

Your Neighborhood Financial Planner!

Comprehensive Financial Planning and Investment Management.

Call or stop by anytime.



January Smith IV

210-503-9982

www.janusfp.com

2715 Oak Bluff, San Antonio, TX 78230



(“Peter’s Prez-spective” continued from page 1)

allow all of these things in neighborhoods Citywide, but Whispering Oaks set the bar higher from its outset.

And yes, some of our covenants do overlap existing local ordinances. For example, there are fencing rules which duplicate our Neighborhood Conservation District design standards that City staff are responsible to enforce. However, this redundancy actually has an important silver lining. City code officers can’t always resolve violations in a timely manner and the City Attorney is reluctant to pursue such matters in court. But thanks to the covenants, our residents are often empowered to remedy the problem themselves because every property owner has the legal right to insist nearby neighbors adhere to the rules just like everyone else. Because no one wants to live next to a lingering eyesore or headache, the covenants can provide a viable alternative when default solutions fall short.

Candidly, updating the covenants has been discussed for decades, and the WOHA Board thinks some modest amendments are overdue. Clearly, we’re not alone. At last month’s Town Hall Meeting regarding short-term rental properties, dozens of residents called for the types of restrictions many similar subdivisions have already imposed (see related story, page 3). As I explained in last issue’s column, lobbyists influencing our State legislators make it difficult for City officials to enact these types of restrictions, but our covenants enable Whispering Oaks to protect its residents without the government’s assistance or interference.

There’s a growing consensus that we’ve hit a tipping point on a few hot-button issues which may become harder to mitigate the longer they fester. Nearly a year ago, WOHA received overwhelmingly positive feedback from its members regarding potential amendments, and the Board has been working with its attorney sorting through which to pursue. The team has been working methodically because it’s a task that requires thoughtful consideration and ample debate.

It’s safe to say, an amendment on short-term rentals and similarly intrusive businesses would be welcomed by our residents. But some important housekeeping may be wise as well. One amendment the Board is likely to recommend would combine the “units” the builders established when filing properties with the County long ago. These contractual groupings were a simple way to register bundles of similar properties as the community developed from east to west over nearly a decade. Some units are comprised of just a few homes while others are several dozen.

One unfortunate result is that rules vary slightly among the approximately two dozen units, and the groupings inadvertently undermine enforcement. Therefore, if your property sits on the border of a unit, you have limited power mitigating a problematic residence directly next door in

a different unit. An amendment would better unify the community under a more consistent set of rules.

Amending the covenants would be a cumbersome process. Each amendment would require majority approval among property owners within each unit. Any unit which fails to ratify a particular amendment would not receive its benefits like those who did. In the long run, homes in less-protected units may be less desirable to future potential buyers. For this reason, WOHA would be vigilant to ensure each residence has the opportunity to fully understand any proposed amendments.

The next step could be for WOHA to take the lead in creating and circulating a legally binding ballot. Its members may authorize the organization to do so at their Annual Meeting on Sunday, 17 September (see page one). If so, diligently soliciting votes from all 752 households would require dozens of volunteers, and those willing to help can pre-register at whisperingoaks.org.

If a ballot does move forward with a few common-sense amendments, Whispering Oaks residents will rest assured the wonderful neighborhood they chose, the quality of life they enjoy, and the home they value will be better protected in a modern world.

John M. Martin IV, M.D.
Board Certified Dermatologist
President of the San Antonio
Dermatological Society

Mention this Ad for
10% OFF
Skincare Products!



Have you had your skin checked?

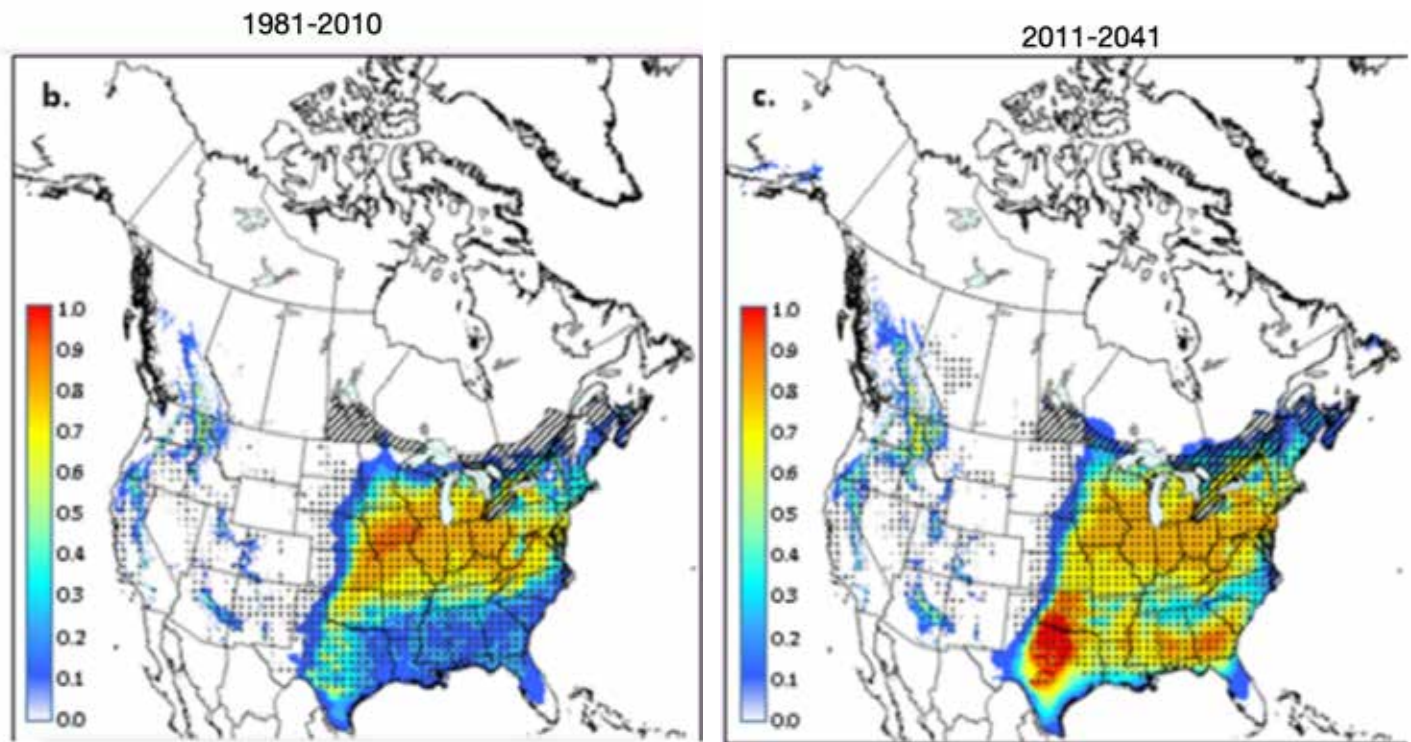
- Detection and treatment of skin cancer.
- Treatment of skin disorders, hair and nails.
- Cosmetic Botox and Chemical peels.
- Accepting new adult and pediatric patients.

Call Us Today for an appointment.
(210) 614-4185 or (210) 614-3575

www.JohnMartinTX.com

Medical Center Tower I, 7950 Floyd Curl Drive, Ste. #909,
San Antonio, TX 78229

Look How Oak Wilt Is Spreading in Texas



Oak Wilt Isn't Just a Texas Threat

We hear a lot about Oak Wilt these days, especially in our neighborhood, but it was actually first identified in the upper Midwest in 1942. Although the origin of the Oak Wilt fungus is still unknown, some theorize it originated



in Mexico or Central America, home to the largest variety of Oak trees, while others theorize it is a non-native fungus. The fungus, known scientifically as *Bretziella fagacearum*, can infect any Oak tree species; however, some species such as Red Oak and Live Oak are more susceptible than others. With its large stands of Live and Red Oaks, central Texas became a hot spot in latter part of the last century, although it was first lab-verified in Texas in 1961 and probably spread much earlier. It continues to spread across the Hill Country, which has had a big negative impact on our tree canopy. This is in part because root systems in the shallow Texas soils are very broad, so different Oak trees can root graft together. Plus, Live Oaks grow in motts, meaning they are essentially root sprouts of the same root system, so spread through roots and root grafts is very efficient in our region.

Oak Wilt is considered one of the three most devastating diseases in North America, preceded by Chestnut Blight and

Dutch Elm Disease, both of which depopulated most of those iconic trees in the United States. Oak Wilt has killed millions of Oak trees in the United States, and new counties in Texas and other states continue to be added to the Oak Wilt range map as it is found and confirmed. Fortunately, Oak Wilt can be preventatively treated with fungicides when administered properly and at the appropriate time.

Refer to texasoakwilt.org for more on fungicide treatments and other information.

Oak Wilt Poem

I watch both horrified and mystified,
as the great oaks around me slowly die.
Day by day, hour by hour,
Their leaves browning with veins bulging before
they fall.
These majestic oaks have fought off droughts and
pests and violent storms,
for over one hundred years.
Why can't they, with all their impressive might,
fight off a microscopic fungus
traveling in tiny roots and tinier beetles?
Is there a larger lesson?



“Trees give peace to the souls of men.”

—Nora Waln

A Darned Effective Scam...So Beware!

Your computer freezes. You try to turn it off, but it won't. Or you try to turn it off, but it remains frozen. Then you get a telephone call from some company related to your computer—the manufacturer, for example. And/or you get a call from your own bank telling you how much money you have in your account and then asks for specific information, supposedly to protect it from a scam.

That *is* the scam! So beware!

What do you do? Don't respond to *any* of it over the phone. You might suggest that you call the person back and ask for an extension. Don't be pushed! Or you can just pack up your computer immediately and take it to your repair shop to have it stripped clean. And then change your bank account a.s.a.p.

How do I know? This recently happened to a close friend, who told me the whole story about how his account was cleaned out.

The Editor

DID YOU KNOW?

Not only do we publish & print your community newsletter, we also design, print, address and mail for your business as well.

- Full service graphic design
- Printing, folding, collating and more!
- Complete mailing services, marketing mail, EDDM, first class, etc



Neighborhood News



210-558-3160 • sales@neighborhoodnews.com   @neighborpro

Advice on How to Avoid Scams

Seven Smart Security Steps from Consumer Reports

1. Slow down.

Scammers often press you for immediate action. Pause and think through whether what you're being told is plausible. You can always respond later, through an organization's official channels—not the mail, text, phone number, social media message, or link sent to you.



2. Share less of your personal info.

People on Facebook, Goodreads, and online neighborhood groups don't need to know your favorite musician, your mother's maiden name, or your birthday. Such info helps crooks "phish" for possible answers to security questions. Online quizzes can also provide personal info to scammers.

3. Delete old accounts.

The more digital accounts you have, the greater the risk of your personal info being stolen or misused. Shut accounts you rarely use and delete the apps.

4. Allow automatic software updates.

These ensure that you always have the latest security patches for smartphone, computer, and router operating systems. Allowing them is usually the default setting, so you might not need to do anything.

5. Double up.

Multifactor authentication provides an extra layer of security. So if someone steals your bank or email password and tries to use it from an unrecognized device, the account remains sealed until you respond with a second proof of identity (like a one-time code). Scammers may try to get these codes, so never share them over the phone or via text or email.

6. Stick with safe payment methods.

Credit cards and PayPal offer legal protections not found with other methods. With gift cards, cryptocurrency, and wire transfers, it's almost impossible to get your money back if you're scammed. Peer-to-peer payment apps such as Venmo and Zelle also offer little recourse if you get swindled, so it's best to use these only with people you know.

7. Use antivirus protection.

Windows 10 and 11 have Microsoft Defender Antivirus, which can shield you from threats like malware. (Check setting to make sure it's turned on.) Apple's built-in security is always on. You can get additional protection from software such as Avast Premium Security or Bitdefender Internet Security.

How to Deal with Mail Theft

You can't necessarily stop someone stealing from the mailbox, but there are two steps one can take to deal with it.

1. If you want to know what mail is scheduled to be delivered to your mailbox so you can check to see if anything is missing, set up Informed Delivery, which lists each piece. This can be set up at www.usps.com under "Quick Tools."
2. If you see or suspect mail theft going on, call the USPS Police Inspector at 1-877-876-2455.

Thanks to Eleanor Siegel for the information.



San Antonio Neighbors Together is an annual event held on the first Tuesday of October each year. The event focuses on strengthening relationships between local police and the communities they serve. At these events, neighborhoods connect with City departments, and learn tips on crime prevention. Residents are often unaware of the variety of services and events that the San Antonio Police Department (SAPD) offers to help educate communities. This event can help the police inform communities of what's going on in their neighborhoods.

Get Involved

All types of community groups are encouraged to participate in San Antonio Neighbors Together. To get involved, talk to your neighbors about crime issues in your neighborhood, and register with us for more information. San Antonio Neighbors Together events can be as big or small as you want. They can be as simple as inviting a few neighbors over and discussing the importance of leaving porch lights on at night to deter criminals. The best crime fighting tool is often community involvement.

Dates

San Antonio Neighbors Together is held every year on the first Tuesday in October. Start planning as early as possible in the year as you can. The 2023 event will be held on **Tuesday, 3 October**.

NOTE: 2023 Events must be registered by Friday, 8 September, to be eligible for full SAPD support.

Register your Event with the City at:

<https://us.openforms.com/Form/fe8b7463-4aac-40ca-a00a-5d6c4db6e09e>

—Sponsored by SAPD

Posted on Nextdoor.com

Carjackings Can Be Deadly!

"Recently, I was carjacked at gunpoint after grocery shopping. He came and demanded my vehicle while pointing a firearm directly at me. Since this is an active police investigation, I'm not going to go into too much detail of where or when, but I will say this: I did comply with his demands. I acted calmly and non-threatening. What he didn't know is I had my firearm as well, but I knew that would be a potentially deadly choice. So I acted as calmly as possible. I was ordered out of the vehicle and made sure police were called. If this ever happens to you or your loved ones, don't try to fight them. Give them whatever they are asking for, then get away as quickly and as safely as possible. It's not worth risking your life over something that can be easily replaced."

A Hunter's Creek resident

Editor's note: Not many years ago, a woman driving a Cadillac was confronted right in the North Star parking lot. When she refused to turn over the keys, she was shot dead. Also, the text above has been corrected for spelling and punctuation, but no words have been changed.



New Project?

Now reach our full listing of vetted and reliable service providers ONLINE

NeighborsWeb.com
Online Business Directory

Yes, the businesses that you have come to know and love in your newsletter are now available in our NEW Online Service Directory.



Photos of the Children's Parade on the Fourth of July



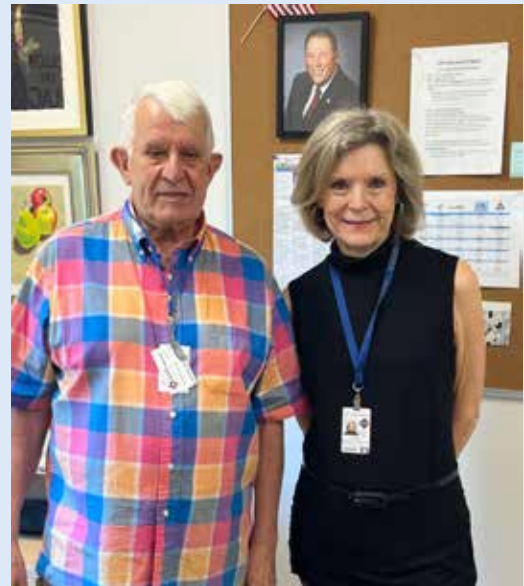
SPOOKTACULAR HOUSE DECORATING CONTEST

EVENING OF SUNDAY OCT 29TH

SPOOK AND SCARE THE WOHA BOARD WHILE WE ROAM THE NEIGHBORHOOD FROM 6 - 8 PM TO PICK OUR FAVORITE HOUSES!

1 GRAND PRIZE: \$100 HEB GIFTCARD
2 RUNNER UP PRIZES: \$50 HEB GIFTCARD
 WINNERS ANNOUNCED THE NEXT DAY ON WWW.WHISPERINGOAKS.ORG

Two of WO's Finest!



Both **Louis Bixenman** and **Pam Harrison-Martínez** can be found, each day, Monday through Friday, handling the satellite office of Councilman John Courage at the Walker Ranch Senior Center, serving as liaisons to the main office. Actually, they work in shifts, one working 8:00–12:00, the other 12:00–4:00, covering most of the hours the Center is open.

What sorts of problems do they handle? People looking for low-cost housing, having street and sidewalk problems, and needing code enforcement. They then determine which staffer in the Councilmanic office should deal with it and forward the information accordingly.

Both have extensive experience helping folks right in Whispering Oaks, as both have served on the WOHA Board, while Pam is also the past President of the WO Garden Club. Why do they do this work? As Pam says, "It's fun." That is, it's fun helping folks and meeting nice people.

BULK COLLECTION!



Coming up the first week in October.

Watch for a leaflet from the City.

D9?



Just in case it's not clear, "D9" is a shortened form of "Councilmanic District Number 9," which is ours. Our present and long-time City Council Representative is John Courage.

Interview with TAnon

What follows is an “interview” with TAnon, an anonymous Whispering Oaks trash collector and no relation to “QAnon”:

Q: What led you to start collecting trash along the frontage of our two main arteries—Wurzbach and Lockhill-Selma.

A. I needed a motivator to get out and walk and keep my weight down and stay somewhat fit. But I also wasn't thrilled seeing all the trash in front of our neighborhood. Most of my walking is to and from Wurzbach and Lockhill-Selma, whereas on those streets it's mainly stop-and-go while picking up trash. I sometimes even get extra weight training when my bag gets a little heavy, which happens more than one might think.

Q: How often do you collect trash?

A. Maybe once a week, on alternating streets.

Q: What is the biggest source of trash along the way?

A. Paper is by far #1—anything from tissues to pizza boxes. Next in line is plastic, everything from bags to bottles. Aluminum cans and styrofoam are plentiful as well. Only about 25% is recyclable.

Q. What was the most unusual trash you encountered?

A. One time I saw a baby carriage lying on the ground. Every now and then I'll find a piece of furniture, sometimes broken in pieces. Lots of car parts, too, everything from rubber flats to chrome fender pieces and plastic hubcaps.

Q. Has the composition of the trash changed over the years?

A. Yes. During COVID, there were a lot of masks on the ground, but not so much anymore. And, fortunately, all the construction debris from the Wurzbach revamp is pretty much gone now.

Q. What do you notice besides the trash when you walk?

A. I'll spot dead tree limbs and water leaks. Water leaks are a little hard to see from the road and are sometimes occurring only while the sprinkler timers are on, but they're easier to spot walking along the sidewalk.

Q. Is there anything you won't pick up?

A. Dead animals ... and business cards. Last year, someone had a whole stack of business cards fly all over the grass along Wurzbach. It was like the Harry Chapin song “30,000 Pounds of Bananas.” I started picking up a few cards but then realized it was hopeless. Those cards lingered for weeks.

Q. Is there advice you'd like to give your fellow Whispering Oaks neighbors?

A. We live in a great neighborhood, and lots of us walk in it. Most of the trash isn't coming from us, but we can still do our part to pick it up. When you walk along the streets within the neighborhood, carry a little sack with you. There isn't a lot of trash within our boundaries, but even a little amount can mar the look of the neighborhood and our waterways.



A morning's haul of trash from along the Wurzbach frontage.

How Good is Spell-Check?

Too many folks, especially students, depend so much on spell-check that they forget that that feature cannot tell if the word being used is correct in that context. So they write nonsense, while spell-check shows no red underlinings. Here's an exaggerated example of spell-check errors that lead to nonsense:

Weather the writer new witch was the correct word or knot is irrelevant. Won or too of these misused words can reek havoc on even a grate peace of pros and can quickly be scene as a laps in professionalism.

Butt two bee fare, print publications aren't the soul place wear mistakes can be scene. Web cites are often pact threw and threw with homophone misuses.

Let yore ayes gaze over a web page. Yule be astounded by the number of typos ewe will sea. Yesterday, I found ate in too articles.

I rays this point because homophone typos are ultimately a reel waist of a reader's valuable thyme. I wood hope that writers and editors he'd my warning and say buy buy to this common grammatical missed stake.

To some up, homophone typos are not a miner issue. Their are know excuses for them. Nun.

I wrest my caise.

Courtesy of Perry Flippin,
former Editor-in-Chief, *San Angelo Standard-Times*



**Please
Pick Up
After
Your Dog!
It's the Law!**

DOUBLE PANE WINDOWS • MIRRORED WALLS
REPLACEMENT GLASS • SHOWER ENCLOSURES
GLASS TABLE TOPS

Free Estimates

B&T Glass & Mirror

TOMMY MOON
BRIAN MOON

656-8507

GOT TRASH? GARAGE FULL? START CLEANING NOW!

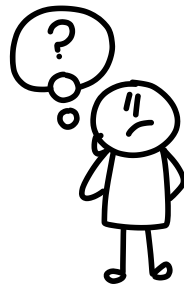
The week of 16 October is scheduled for the next Whispering Oaks bulky trash pick-up by the City of San Antonio's Solid Waste Department. As part of the City Public Service bill, every residence receives at no extra charge two bulky trash pick-ups and two brush/organic pick-ups per year.

Additionally, homeowners who place their leaves and green organic material in paper bags can also get those picked up curbside for free twice a year. But that pick-up must be scheduled by the 311 operator usually a week in advance. **Note:** Leaves and organic green debris should never be placed in plastic bags; Solid Waste employees will not remove those.

Home pick-ups of "Out of Cycle" trash, brush, and other debris can also be scheduled by the 311 operator for an extra fee.

Property owners can also take items to the Bitters Bulky Drop-Off Center at 1800 Wurzbach Parkway (just east of Jones-Maltsberger Road.) There is a low, per-pound fee to dump items as long as a current CPS bill address matches that of the driver's license.

Paint and other household hazardous chemical waste can be dropped off at 7030 Culebra Road, just inside Loop 410. For more information on these programs and more, call the Solid Waste Management Division at 210-207-6428, or visit sanantonio.gov/swmd.



What's the difference between...

“regardless” and “irregardless”:

That's simple: There is no such word as “irregardless”: The prefix “ir” is a negative, as in “irregular” or “irreligious,” while the suffix “less” is also a negative, as in “thankless” or “hapless.” Hence, “irregardless” has to mean “regardful”! People say it because it just sounds smart.

“alot” and “a lot”:

...as in the sentence, “Thanks alot for your help.” Put simply, again, “a lot” is just not a word. If it were, then there would have to be a word called “alittle.” There may be a confusion with “alot,” meaning to apportion.

“everyday” and “every day”:

The first is an adjective, a modifier; the second is a subject. A sample sentence that makes the point is this one: “An everyday occurrence occurs every day.”



Whispering Oaks Sales

June – August 2023

Prepared by Jean Marie Ruffini,
Resident Realtor®

	Price	Per Sq. Ft.
Sold listings – 3		
High	\$493,000	\$200
Median	\$492,000	\$195
Low	\$420,000	\$174
Active – 4		
High	\$700,000	\$223
Low	\$534,900	\$179
Pending – 2		
High	\$425,000	\$207
Low	\$271,000	\$165

“There was a total of 3,354 home sales in San Antonio, representing a 9% decrease compared to a year ago. However, the average price of homes sold remained steady at \$395,524, signifying a stable market overall. While the median price experienced a 6% decrease from 2022, settling at \$320,950, this adjustment can be seen as an opportunity for potential homebuyers to enter the market. Moreover, the price per square foot declined by 4% to \$183, providing additional affordability for prospective homeowners.

The inventory situation in San Antonio remains relatively stable, with 3.7 months of inventory available. This balance signifies a market that is conducive to both buyers and sellers, creating a fair playing field for negotiations.

Additionally, 95% of sales closed close to the original listing price, indicating that sellers are achieving their desired outcomes in most transactions. Another noteworthy trend observed is the significant increase in the number of days on the market, which rose by 121% to reach 64 days. This suggests a more deliberate decision-making process among buyers.”

–San Antonio Board of Realtors

E. L. Smith Plumbing



www.elsmith.com
210-736-1647



Welcome Back, Garden Club Friends

By Ann Parsons

The Whispering Oaks Garden Club welcomed back new and renewing members at a coffee on 17 August at the home of President JoAnn Aguilera. The August 2023–May 2024 schedule of events and meetings was distributed and discussed. It offers something for everyone—from gardening newbie to seasoned experts. Gardening not your thing? Then come to meet new people, socialize, and help with our charity outreach. If interested in joining the club, please call JoAnn, at 210–394–5234, or Treasurer Teresa Walker, at 210–388–1568.

Love the Bees, Hate the Wasps?

The last several weeks have seen a relocation battle with the wasps at my front door. Our lovely decorative wreath, made by an artist friend and purchased at a silent auction, has become the wasps' favorite place to set up shop. We really don't want to kill them; we just want them to move elsewhere. So the wreath is now stored in the garage and the front door has been swept each evening to ward off any new nests. The wasps took the hint and rebuilt about twenty feet away under the front eaves. So far, so good.

There are valid reasons why we should coexist with them. Wasps provide us with free, eco-friendly natural pest-control services. In a world without wasps, we would need to use more toxic pesticides to control the insects that eat our crops and carry diseases. Yes, their sting can be harmful, so we take precautions. Let's just not hate them.

One of our great ancient philosophers, Aristotle, writing around 300 BCE, had the wrong idea when he wrote: "Hornets and wasps ... are devoid of the extraordinary features which characterize bees; this we should expect, for they have nothing divine about them as the bees have."

Hopefully, a certain great poet learned the purpose of wasps, after he wrote about his childhood holiday gifts: "And books which told me everything about the wasp, except why": Dylan Thomas, in *A Child's Christmas in Wales*, 1952.



Yard of the Month – July
Tracey Maurer & Adam Poncio
3019 Whisper Lark



Yard of the Month – August
Denise and Bryan Miranda
2826 Whisper View

ESTATES
AT SHAVANO PARK

Call Today
to schedule a tour:
210-761-9261
EstatesAtShavanoPark.com

Amenities:

- Long-term care & rehabilitation services
- 112-bed beautiful skilled nursing facility
- Private and semi-private rooms
- Heated bathroom floors
- Complimentary WiFi
- Flat-screen smart TVs with cable included
- Full-size private ADA compliant showers
- Large covered veranda with gas fireplace
- Two therapy gyms

4366 Lockhill Selma Road • San Antonio, TX 78249



Whispering Oaks HOA
11515 Whisper Forest #B
San Antonio, TX 78230-3500

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SAN ANTONIO, TX
PERMIT NO. 1568

Time Dated



Join
In The Neighborhood
for a weekly dive into
community matters

Scan the QR code below to sign
up for insightful discussions
and local highlights, landing in
your inbox every Friday!



SCAN ME






Eleanor Kolitz Hebrew Language Academy

- COME GROW WITH US -

- A Thriving K-8 Tuition Free Charter School
- Rigorous Academics
- Nurturing Environment
- Fine Arts Enrichment Programs K-8
- Texas Charter Athletics League 4-8
- Afterschool Care Program until 6:00 p.m. K-8
- Outstanding Faculty

11327 Dreamland | 210-890-7267 | Call for a tour or visit us at www.ekhla.org

Founded in 2013, The Eleanor Kolitz Hebrew Language Academy is a free public school located in Northeast San Antonio. EKHLA raises the bar in public education by providing strong academic and behavioral standards, as well as teaching impactful core values. EKHLA's core values are Support, Passion, Integrity & Honesty, Respect & Acceptance, Curiosity, Creativity, and Learning and "Repairing the World". With a total enrollment of under 550, students in grades Kindergarten thru 8th, receive extraordinary support from staff. Culture Day, Spelling Bee, and Israeli Culture class all provide a fun, purposeful experience for our thriving student body.



ADVERTISE WITH US!

For information, call (210) 558-3160 or email Sales@NeighborhoodNews.com

Published and distributed by: **Neighborhood News, Inc.**
3740 Colony Drive Suite LL100, San Antonio, TX 78230 • www.NeighborhoodNews.com

Articles that appear in the Whispering Oaks newsletter do not necessarily reflect the official position of Neighborhood News, Inc. and their publication does not constitute an endorsement therein. The appearance of any advertisement in the Whispering Oaks newsletter does not constitute an endorsement by Neighborhood News, Inc. of the goods or services advertised. Neighborhood News, Inc. is not responsible for errors beyond the cost of the actual ad space. Any publication of Neighborhood News, Inc., whether draft or final is the sole property of Neighborhood News, Inc. and cannot be reproduced or distributed in any way, whether in print or electronically, without the express written consent of Neighborhood News, Inc. ©Neighborhood News, Inc.