

The Whispers

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

Wow! What a Party!

150 WOers Come Out for Memorial Day Picnic



A whole lot of Whispering Oakers and their guests came out. There was picnicking, swimming, barbecuing, games, children running around (as they will do), and a general neighborly camaraderie.

The center of the event, as always was the Swim & Tennis Club's potluck table and grilled sausages and hamburgers. But this time, instead of the event being sponsored by the Club alone, the Homeowner's Association got into the act by, not only helping with the labor, but sponsoring an Italian Ice dispenser. Alas and lack! Not realizing that ever so many people wanted to come to enjoy the day that they ran out of ices all too soon. Ah, the price of popularity. But let the photos speak for themselves:



(Additional photos on page 2)

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Warmth!

Yes, it's hot out. But when I think of summer, I think of warmth. Summer means a time for warm relationships: time to see family and old friends, time to get together with neighbors. And aren't we lucky in Whispering Oaks to have such a friendly neighborhood!

Besides just getting together on our own, we have lots of ways to get together as a neighborhood. Thanks to the Swim & Tennis Club, we have the three summertime parties at the pool at the Sunday before Memorial Day Monday, at Fourth of July, and again at the Sunday before Labor Day.

In addition, your WOHA Board has been planning post-COVID events, some of a social nature, some of a convenience nature, such as the neighborhood Garage Sale day and the shredding bulk disposal opportunities we've provided. This year, for the first time in two years, we plan to have a Christmas Party as well.

Then, too, there is the warmth of the lighted monuments at all the entranceways and the warm-felling landscaping at those entranceways—all arranged by your all-volunteer Board.

Finally—and quite frankly with a Capital campaign in progress and Annual Dues coming up —there is the warm feeling that those of us who are and have been on the Board and those of us who have been volunteers and long-time members of WOHA get when we see the response of the community to the appeal to join each year. And, even more, we feel warmly when we see the generosity of folks who care about the neighborhood enough to give something extra.

That's the warmth of love!



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Oak Wilt Encroaching on More East Side Properties

Oak Wilt continues to spread throughout the east side of Whispering Oaks, according to the annual assessment by Texas A&M Forestry Service. WOHA strongly encourages dozens of at-risk property owners to plan for fungicide treatment—which is the only way to avoid costly tree removal.

According to the survey, the highest number of at-risk trees are among properties on Whisper Path, Whisper Valley, and Whisper Moss. Whispering Wind and Whisper Fawn will see the disease encroach within the next two years. The map provided indicates which properties face varying degrees of risk. Residents can find important guidance at whisperingoaks.org, which explains how to monitor disease progression on your street. Summer is an ideal time to identify nearby infected trees that pose a threat.

Last year, via the expansive inter-connected root systems common among local Oak species, Oak Wilt spread approximately 75 feet. As a result, healthy trees within 100 feet of an infected tree are highly likely to contract the disease within a year. Some 90% of Live Oaks will die once infected, and those that survive are likely to be disfigured and sickly.

According to local arborists, the best defense is timely application of preventative fungicide treatment. It's also the most affordable option for an unavoidable threat. Average fungicide cost for an at-risk tree is \$250, while the average cost to remove a dead tree is \$1500. Recent removal of a large tree on Whisper Valley cost the homeowner over \$4000.

Some residents with multiple trees have chosen to sacrifice smaller ones, which can be removed less expensively, while allocating funds only to those with particular importance, such as shading of their homes to lessen utility expenses. A qualified arborist specializing in Oak Wilt treatment can provide helpful strategic guidance to property owners preparing a defense budget.

Page 5 shows the latest map of the Oak Wilt spread on the east side of Whispering Oaks, as supplied the Texas A&M Agricultural Extension Service.

- **Red** indicates that diseased trees in this area likely cannot be saved, but that one should *immediately* check with a licensed arborist.
- **Green** indicates that trees in this area should be treated absolutely immediately, keeping in mind that, as expensive as treatments may be, they are much less than the cost of losing a tree.
- **Blue** indicates that trees in this area can be expected to become infected within the next year, so that action should be taken as soon as possible to treat all Oak trees.

Remember that Oak trees are typically valued at about \$7000 each, which is part of the value of one's property. When selling one's house, such a condition must be reported by law. As well, not treating one's trees exposes one's neighbors' trees, which could be grounds for lawsuit. So to protect one's own property and one's welfare, it's best to be as proactive as possible. Oak Wilt is a very, very serious problem.

Stay alert to save!



Pre-treating for oak wilt costs 6x less than removing a dead tree.

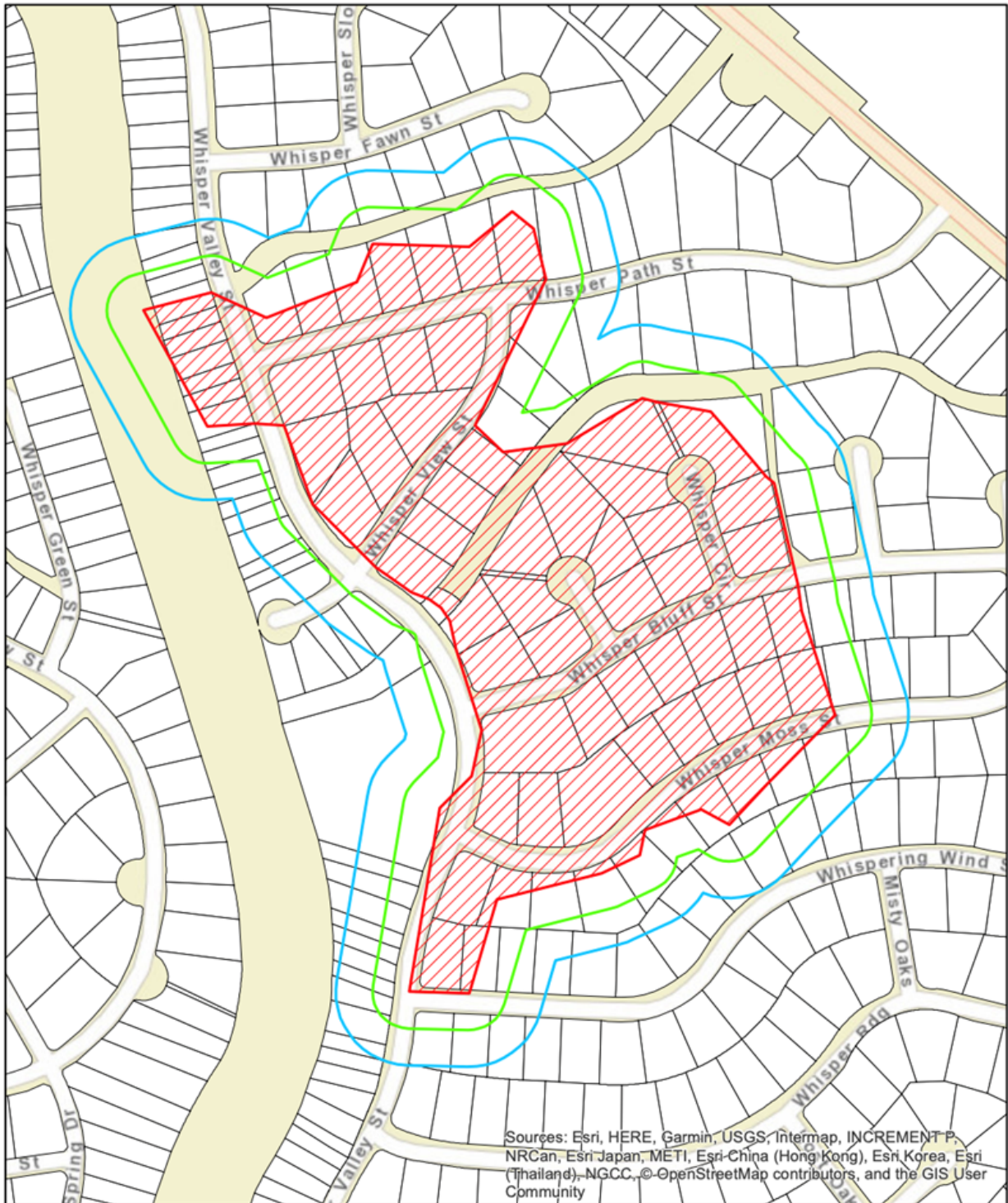
Deadly Oak Wilt!






This tree dead tree was cut down and removed from 11511 Whisper Valley because it had died from Oak Wilt. Please, neighbors, if you are in the affected area, treat your trees. If you wait until you see the signs, it's already too late!



OAK WILT Treatment Map



-  Diseased Area
-  75ft Immediate Injection Zone
-  150ft Next Injection Zone

0 150 300
Feet

Whispering Oaks (2022)
County: Bexar
Quad: Castle Hills
Date: 5/18/22
Forester: Erin Davis

Garden Club Report

We Will Be Back!

During our 2021–2022 schedule, the Garden Club enjoyed an almost full program of meetings and events. But due to spikes in Covid cases in Bexar County, we had canceled our August “Welcome Back” gathering and had moved our January meeting to St. Patrick’s Day.

Now in our “dog days” of summer hiatus, but certainly not idle, we are working up the schedule for 2022–2023. Thursday, August 18, will be the date of our kick-off coffee. Men and women, if interested in joining the Garden Club, please contact President Pamela Harrison-Martínez at 210–690–2422.

Bird or Bug?

It buzzes, hovers, and flies like a hummingbird from flower to flower. Is it really a hummingbird? According to the Farmers’ Almanac, it might be a hummingbird moth, a fascinating INSECT!

Belonging to the genus *Hemaris*, the species include Hummingbird Hawk-Moth, Five-Spotted Hawkmoth, White-Lined Sphinx, and two types of Clearwing Hummingbird Moths.

The hummingbird moth’s buzzing and humming sound is created by its rapid wing movement which, depending on the species, can be 70 beats per second, enabling it to fly up to 12 miles per hour.

Instead of a beak, this insect has a long, tongue-like proboscis that rolls out of its coiled tube to reach the nectar deep inside flowers. Its tongue is about double the length of its body.

These moths range in length from 2 to 2.5 inches long and are covered in gray hair that resembles feathers, with white, rust, or brown markings. Their wingspan can be from 2 to 6 inches, depending on the species.

Can they do damage to your plants? In their larvae form (called tomato hornworm caterpillars), they can munch on

honeysuckle, hawthorn, dogbane, viburnum, and fruit and vegetable plants.

Are they useful in any way? Yes, they make excellent pollinators, working day and night to improve your garden. So please trash the pesticides and let nature take its course.

“

**“Nothing is impossible. The word itself says
‘I’m possible!’”**

—Audrey Hepburn

**“All my life through, the new sights of Nature made me
rejoice like a child.”**

—Marie Curie

**“The very act of planting a seed in the earth
has in it to me something beautiful.”**

I always do it with a joy that is largely mixed with awe.”

—Celia Loughton Thaxter, 1835–1894, American Poet

”

Yards of the Month



JoAnn Aguilera, 2834 Whisper View – Yard of the Month for May

Beautiful yard with the bonus of a Free Library.

Yes, JoAnn is on the WOHA Board; no, the fix was not in!



**Louis Bixenman & Sterling Zinsmeyer, 11302 Whisper Willow
Yard of the Month for June**

Beautiful Yard of the Month with an astonishingly beautiful home.

Yes, Louis is on the WOHA Board; no, there is no connection.

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Big Garden Club Event

"I Went to a Garden Party..."

On Friday, 20 May, at the beautiful home of JoAnn Aguilara—whose home was also selected as the May Yard of the Month—where gathered some 40 folks. They were members of the Whispering Oaks Garden Club, their spouses, or, in some cases, their dear relatives.

After a welcome by Vice President Suzanne Stewart and a brief blessing, everyone was treated to a remarkable spread of food. The center was traditional barbecue, but richly amplified by an array of salads of all sorts and of melons. There was no program, just a chance for conviviality.

Some folks took advantage of the pleasant weather by sitting in the back yard, to which was piped pleasant music. Most, however, enjoyed the comfortable inside. And many drifted from table to table and seat to seat to greet old friends and make new ones. Seemed it was a typical Whispering Oaks event!



Folks enjoying the food and the beautiful back yard.



JoAnn poses with some friends as she proudly shows off her digs.



Folks having a hard time deciding which salads to choose, while in the background, others are serving themselves some of the barbecue.



Some of the guests digging in, while making a point about the superiority of Longhorns over those derved Aggies!



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District 9 Bond Program Investments



Streets, Bridges & Sidewalks

PROJECT	ESTIMATED AMOUNT
District 9 F-Streets Reconstruction	\$ 7,344,000
District 9 Pedestrian Mobility	\$ 1,000,000
District 9 Traffic & Mobility Improvements (Bitters Rd Area)	\$ 4,000,000
District 9 Traffic & Mobility Improvements (Stone Oak Parkway, Evans, Hardy Oak and Stone Oak Area)	\$ 5,000,000
Evans Road Phase 1 (E. Elm Creek to Masonwood)	\$ 8,850,000
Oak Haven Area Streets (Kentwood Phase 2)	\$ 7,900,000
Perennial Area Streets (Heimer Rd to Dutch Myrtle)	\$ 2,750,000
Sonterra Rd Extension (Sonterra to Loop 1604)	\$ 6,000,000
Total	\$ 42,844,000

8 PROJECTS

Drainage & Flood Control

PROJECT	ESTIMATED AMOUNT
Evans Road Drainage Phase 1 (E. Elm Creek to Masonwood)	\$ 8,450,000
Oak Haven Area Drainage (Kentwood Phase 2)	\$ 7,900,000
Perennial Drive Area Drainage (Heimer Road to Dutch Myrtle)	\$ 2,750,000
Total	\$ 19,100,000

3 PROJECTS

Parks, Recreation & Open Spaces

PROJECT	ESTIMATED AMOUNT
Classen-Staubing Ranch Park	\$ 5,000,000
Stone Oak Park	\$ 750,000
Walker Ranch Park	\$ 500,000
McAllister Park	\$ 1,000,000
Total	\$ 7,250,000

4 PROJECTS



Information from Councilman Courage on Mail-In Voting

In 2020, the Texas Supreme Court determined that the lack of immunity alone is not a disability for purposes of voting by mail. However, the court also stated that voters can take into consideration aspects of their own health and health history when determining whether, due to a physical condition, in-person voting is likely to cause injury.

Does the voting clerk automatically send an application to vote by mail? No. Senate Bill 1 makes it illegal for County Election Administrators to send mail ballot applications, including already-eligible voters 65 and older. The voter must reach out specifically to request an application to vote by mail.

Senate Bill 1 sets new rules to voting by mail. Those who are eligible to vote by mail will need to provide: (1) their driver's license number and/or (2) the last four digits of their Social Security number. These numbers must be written in two places: (1) on the Application to Vote by Mail and (2) on the completed Ballot Envelope.

Wanna Contact the HOA? Wanna Know What's Goin' On?



There are several ways to do it or to find things out:

You can email the Board at:
board@whisperingoaks.org

You can email any Board member from the list on page 2 of *The Whispers*.

You can contact the Board through Facebook at:
<https://www.facebook.com/WhisperingOaksHomeownersAssociationSA>

You can join the [Nextdoor.com](https://www.nextdoor.com) HOA group by searching:
 Whispering Oaks Homeowners Association

You can join the WO Garden Club. (see article on page 6)

You can join the Swim & Tennis Club at
woswimclub.wildapricot.org

Tennis Park Landscape Upgrade

In case you haven't noticed, there have been several landscape upgrades to the Tennis Park in recent months. Building on the renovation of the play area last year, five new planters have been installed full of mostly shade plants.

According to Karen Mannheim, Director of The Tennis Park, planning for the upgrades began after the "snowmageddon" in February of 2021, which destroyed much grass and other vegetation. Says Karen, "We have beautiful trees, but the sparse ground cover was no longer doing justice to them." Spurred by an anonymous donation by a Whispering Oaks resident of some limestone blocks for the planters, The Tennis Park began to scout around for a variety of plants, including ferns, philodendron, salvia, flax, Mexican petunias, liriopes, and flax.

Karen is pleased with the compliments from tennis players and residents alike, who can rest on one of the park benches while enjoying the new landscaping. "We just love being part of and contributing to the Whispering Oaks community," she says.



Slow Down, Kid!

Did you know that the summer months are the deadliest months of the year for teen drivers? Don't let it happen to you! And don't let it happen to your child. This summer, take care, and take your time.



Rain Brings Mosquitos

Tips from Councilman Courage's Office to Prevent Mosquito Breeding & Bites

1. Once a week, empty, turn over, cover, or throw out containers that hold water.
2. If water must be stored, tightly cover storage containers to prevent mosquitos' laying eggs.
3. Use air conditioning or make sure screens are on all doors and windows to keep mosquitoes from getting inside.
4. When working outside, avoid the use of perfumes and colognes.

Editor's Note: These tips are a follow-up to a more extensive article in the previous issue of *The Whispers* provided by Peter Lund. Most back issues can be accessed on the WOHA website: whisperingoaks.org.



Cars Vandalized in Whispering Oaks

At 2:45 in the morning of Monday, 2 May, some teens vandalized four cars along Whispering Wind. A security camera caught them in the act. So please be sure your cars are all locked and, if at all possible, garaged.

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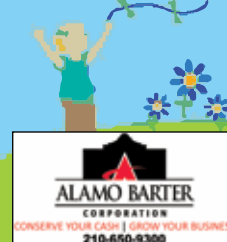
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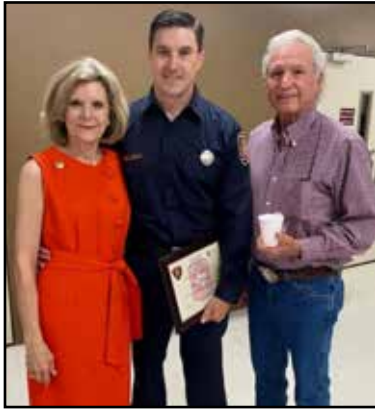


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Another Proud Whispering Oaker's Accomplishment

After 10 years as a history teacher for Northside ISD, Chase Harrison, Pamela Harrison-Martínez's son, decided to change career directions and applied with the San Antonio Fire Department.



Pamela Harrison-Martínez, Chase Harrison, and John Martínez

After acceptance through exam merit, he joined the ranks a little over three years ago. Recently, he received a promotion, which entailed a seven-month-long course of study through the UT Health Science Center. On May 6, he graduated as one of San Antonio's newest Paramedics.

It has been eye opening to see the amount of education and training these young men and women receive to fill this position. As citizens of San Antonio, we are in the good hands of the first responders serving our great city. Pam has been fortunate enough to see it from the inside, through her son, Chase.

Chase spent many a summer with his grandparents on Whisper Sloe, for Pam was raised here, then, later in life, moved back—happily for Whispering Oaks. And for a time, Chase moved in with Pam and her husband, John Martínez. So he counts as a Whispering Oaker! Pam is presently the President of the Whispering Oaks Garden Club and is the former Vice-President of the Homeowner's Association. Every Christmas season, Pam and John can be seen putting up our neighborhood's decorations.

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What do you do when you've about had it with discourteous, disloyal, even dishonest employees, but you don't want to retire? Maybe you do what our own Colleen Escamilla did: you downsize to one and move into your own home.

As you can see, Colleen is a barber—and a first-rate one. It all began when she and her late husband, Juan Escamilla, had been living and working in Chicago for ATT, but, alas, after 20 years, she was laid off. A friend, said, "Why not try barbering?"—something she never would have imagined. So she did. And she liked it.



Colleen cutting longtime customer Bill Gayton's hair.

In 1999, she and Juan decided it was time to get out of the Chicago cold and, meanwhile, they had often vacationed in the South Texas area and loved it. So they moved here. And Colleen went to work barbering. After four years, she opened her own shop, which she then had for 12 years.

Meanwhile, the Escamillas had moved to Whispering Oaks 10 years ago. Many will remember Juan's activity on the WOHA Board. But, sadly, he passed away in February of 2021. And Colleen's problems with employees during the pandemic escalated. So finally she decided it was time to simplify her life. In January, she moved a single chair into her home. And there she does her thing! She's easy to find. Just look in the neighborhood directory.

*Graduating?
Getting Married?
Starting a Career?
Is There a New One in Your Family?*

Let your neighbors know about it so we can share your joy! Send the information to *The Whispers* so it can appear in the next issue. Photos are most welcome, too.

Send it to rpressman@satx.rr.com.

Farewell to Howard Alwais

Now *That's* an Estate Sale

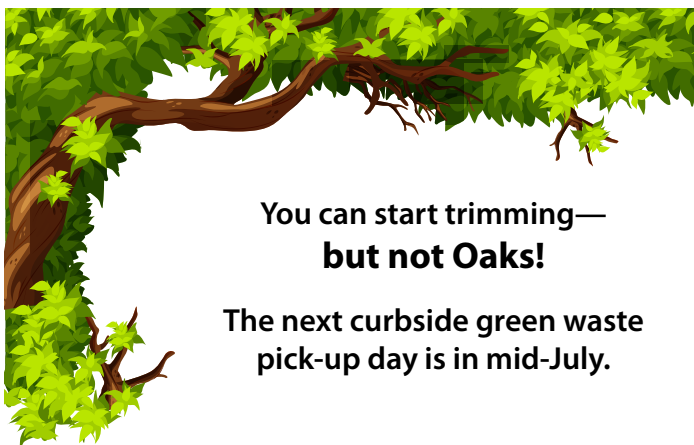
On the weekend of 20 May, Howard Alwais held an estate sale, the biggest one your editor has ever seen. But it stands to reason: He and his wife, Myrna, raised seven children here in Whispering Oaks, right on Whisper Spring. Original residents, they lived here for 50 years. So in that time they collected a lot of memories in the form of souvenirs and items for their use and that of their children.

Myrna served on the Board of the Swim & Tennis Club, while Howard served on the WOHA Board and was its President for several years. Sadly, in December Myrna passed on, and now it's time for Howard to move on.

Howard has moved to Austin to be close to his children. He says he misses all the friends he and Myrna made over their 50 years in San Antonio, especially at Whispering Oaks.

For those who might like to keep in touch or just wish him well, they can reach him at this address: 9306 Great Hills Trail, Unit 14, Austin, TX 78759-71721. He says it's a great place with a "spectacular view, an indoor exercise room, and numerous activities."

We wish him the best. And we thank him and Myrna for their service to our community! They have been model neighbors.



Here Are Some Outdoors Ideas*

Wanna Get Away, But Not Too Far?

Here are some links to City and area parks. Most are first-come, first-served, so be sure to wake up early to claim your spot:

Parks and Recreation

San Antonio: www.sanantonio.gov/ParksAndRec/Home

Austin: www.austintexas.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation

Pickleball. This sport is growing quickly in communities around the country because it's easy to play, and it's a fun, sociable game. Google "pickleball" for courts nearby.

Picnic. Even if your "outdoors" is just your back yard, plan a picnic. Because it's hot out, you might want to make easy snacks. And wading pools for the kiddies and even the pets can be had quite inexpensively.

Photography. And, of course, a way to add to the pleasure of it all is to capture some of the golden moments on your camera or phone so you can relive them and, even better, share them with family and friends.

Enjoy!

**Edited from suggestions by Neighborhood News.*



Real Estate Report

April – June 2022

Prepared by Jean Marie Ruffini, Resident Realtor®

	<u>Price</u>	<u>Per Sq. Ft.</u>
Active listings – 5		
High	\$670,000	\$256
Median	\$485,000	\$171
Low	\$399,900	\$167
Sold listings – 7		
High	\$563,000	\$239
Median	\$396,000	\$173
Low	\$260,000	\$131

"The month of April showed a slight cooling in home sales for the San Antonio area. 3,255 homes were sold compared to 3,524 in April 2021, a 7.6 percent decrease. The average home price is now \$395,847, a sold percent increase from last year. The median home price also saw an increase of 23 percent from last year, now at \$338,700.

As the year progresses, we continue to see an increase in average and median home prices in the San Antonio area."

—San Antonio Board of Realtors

Helping Your Graduate Prepare for the Future

By Sharon Reynolds, Neighborhood News Staff Writer



Finding a job after graduation can be a scary proposition for most young men and women. The direction they go in could determine their career path for the rest of their lives. It's important as parents to support our graduates and instill in them a sense that they have what it takes to succeed.

Take this time to reiterate the importance of looking for a position in a field that interests them. Whether they have just graduated from college or high school, it's not too soon to find a career they are passionate about pursuing. As parents we want our children to be happy and healthy. If we can lead them to work in a field that they love, their passion and strength will shine through.

The following list provides some tips on how parents can support their child after graduation.

Career Roadmaps. Talk to your children about the importance of avoiding dead-end jobs. It's important for your jobseeker to focus on positions that offer upward growth potential. The difference of going to work for something (raise, promotion, training) instead of just working at something (same thing, different day) could be the motivation they need to do some soul-searching that could lead them to their happily ever after.

Skills and Training. Most good positions offer skills training to their employees through a Learning Management System (LMS). Employees are usually allowed to choose from a long list of skills that they would either like to learn or are interested in trying in the areas of technology, finance, or business. Help them consider this opportunity in their first job. If your child did not go to college, this could be a way to get the training they need for the career they are striving to obtain.

Interview Preparation. Help your child prepare for an upcoming interview by doing a mock interview with them. This will let your child know whether they are prepared to ace the interview or if more practice is needed. Also, help them determine a list of questions to ask the employer.

It's a jobseeker's market. According to the Deloitte Global 2022 Gen Z & Millennial Survey, this time of historic voluntary turnover presents significant opportunities for millennials and Gen Zs. As this year's survey results indicate, the workplace changes they've been asking for—including higher compensation, more flexibility, and a better work/life balance are in place as employers seek to retain employees and fill positions.

Resource:

www2.deloitte.com/global/en/pages/about-deloitte/articles/genzmillennialsurvey.html

Crime Prevention Tip **LOCK, TAKE, HIDE**

One of the easiest ways to prevent becoming a crime victim is to lock your car doors. Leaving cars unlocked in your driveway allows easy access to see what can be stolen. Please keep the crime tip of **LOCK, TAKE, HIDE** in mind. Lock, Take, and Hide is an easy 3-step plan that drastically reduces your chances of becoming a victim:

1. **Lock** your car doors.
2. **Take** your keys and valuables with you. (This includes cell phones, wallets/purses, GPS units, computers, weapons, and jewelry).
3. **Hide** those valuables so they aren't in plain sight.



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Wanna Read Sumpin' Funny?

I used to eat a lot of natural foods until I learned that most people die of natural causes.

How important does a person have to be before they are considered assassinated instead of just murdered?

Why do you have to "put your two cents in," but it's only a "penny" for your thoughts"? Where's that extra penny going?

Once you're in heaven, do you get stuck wearing the clothes you were buried in for eternity?

What disease did cured ham actually have?

How is it that we put a man on the moon before we figured out it would be a good idea to put wheels on luggage?

Why is it that people say they "slept like a baby" when babies wake up like every two hours?

If a deaf person has to go to court, is it still called a hearing?

Why are you IN a movie, but you're ON TV?

Why do doctors leave the room while you change? They're going to see you naked anyway.

Why is "bra" singular and "panties" plural?

Can a hearse carrying a corpse drive in the carpool lane?

If the professor on Gilligan's Island can make a radio out of a coconut, why can't he fix a hole in a boat?

If corn oil is made from corn, and vegetable oil is made from vegetables, what is baby oil made from?

Did you ever notice that when you blow in a dog's face, he gets mad at you, but when you take him for a car ride, he sticks his head out the window?

—Courtesy of Ann Parsons

Y Uno en Español

Un hombre hablaba con un amigo:

"Este médico es un genio. Me prometió que en una semana estaría caminando después de la operación."

"Y lo logró?"

"Por supuesto. ¡Tuve que vender el automóvil para pagarle!"



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Drowning is preventable because much of the battle to protect children around water happens in your own mind. Here are some mental shifts to make (and old habits to break) in order to keep your children safe around pools.

It Can Happen to You

Tragically, many of the parents who lose children to drownings never considered that their child could be at risk. They weren't negligent; they just failed to realize how close the danger was.

Don't Pass the Buck

Be sure to take ownership of your child's safety. Don't count on responsible behavior from your children, or every adult. Try to be with your child when they are in the water, and know who is watching them when you can't be there.

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- Jaqueline K.

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Not the Time to Multitask

Train yourself to view pool time with your kids as an exclusive activity. Pools make poor baby sitters. It's tempting to send your kids to the pool so you can catch up on emails or yard work. Supervising your children means your eyes are on them, and it requires your full attention.

Supervision Fails

Don't trust in your ability to monitor your children 100% of the time. Eventually, your supervision will break down. Set up secondary barriers to keep your kids safe that don't rely on your constant attention, like fences, pool coverings, alarms, and lifejackets for non-swimmers.

Let's Get Vigilant About Doors

Develop a zeal for keeping doors and gates that lead to water closed and locked. It's easy to get lackadaisical over time, but they are your last line of defense. Create a routine for yourself of shutting and locking doors behind you, then checking them frequently.

Know Yourself, and Prevent Distraction

If you know the pull of a good novel or smart phone is strong enough to distract you, choose to leave them behind when you take the children to the pool. The best-case scenario is for you to get in the water with your children so that you can always be within arm's reach and attuned to their safety.

Visualize Your Emergency Response in Advance

Prepare yourself mentally for emergencies. Plan what steps to take and practice them. If there are other adults in your household, make sure they know of the plan as well.

Don't Stop at Your Pool

Even if you've done everything you can to safeguard your own pool, don't stop there. Every pool your child might visit has the potential to be dangerous. Make sure other pool owners and parents in your neighborhood know how to keep children safe around pools.

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Drought is No Match for a *WaterSaver Garden*

By Cleveland Powell and Brad Wier,
SAWS Gardenstyle San Antonio



Flash back to summer 2021, when it seemed to rain almost every week for half the summer. What a contrast to 2022, with months of dry weather behind us and three months of a mostly dry summer ahead.

Landscaping in Texas always means making the most of unpredictable weather without losing our cool doing it. On the bright side, WaterSaver gardening means designing for weather just like this. Preparing and toughening your landscape for the inevitable dry times.

Instead of considering drought as a crisis we hope never happens, your WaterSaver landscape uses drought as a starting point and makes it look its best. Texas has always been a drought-prone part of the world, and the native landscape can actually be quite lush and green on its own. After all, plenty of plants called this part of the world home long before people started watering them.

Using the right plants in the right place in your landscape means less time worrying about watering and yardwork during the hottest days of the year, and more time enjoying your outdoor living space.

The trick, of course, is the trial and error of finding the right plants for your landscape's specific conditions, and plants that are accustomed to our feast or famine precipitation regime.

Another strategy to minimize turf and save water is to observe the rule of thirds: 1/3 landscaping, 1/3 turf and 1/3 permeable hardscape (patios, decks, walkways, etc.) Hot dry seasons like these are a great opportunity to analyze your landscape and see what's working, what's not, and — with help from our WaterSaver programs — where you can replace grass with living landscaping or a functional feature.

At least two tools WaterSaver landscapers need in their toolbox are planning and attitude.

- **Planning ensures the right plant goes in the right place.** Often grass isn't the right plant if you want to save water. Do you have a patch of turf that never seems to make it through the summer without browning out? Maybe the trees are shading it out? These are excellent areas to convert to landscape beds, groundcovers, patios, and much more.
- **Attitude:** A drought gardener knows their garden will not look the same every season. In Texas we have two major seasons that come at any time of the year: wet and dry. Once native plants are established, they have the amazing ability to go dormant when it's dry and perk up as soon as it rains.



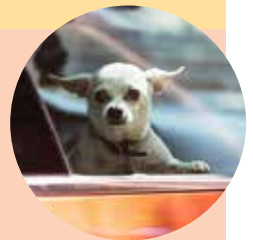
Never Leave Your Child or Pet Alone in a Car



Don't risk your child's life by leaving them in the car alone during hot weather. A child's body can heat up five times faster than an adult's, and even in cooler weather, cars can heat up to dangerous temperatures very quickly. On a mild day, the temperature inside a car can rise 20 degrees above the outside temperature in just 10 minutes or less! Here are tips to help keep your child safe this summer:

- Make a habit of checking your vehicle before leaving it. **Look before you lock!**
- Keep a stuffed animal or other objects next to you in the car as a reminder that your child is with you.
- If you ever see a child left alone in a car, **call 9-1-1 immediately!**

Pets can get dehydrated quickly. Make sure you take precautions to keep your pet safe.



- Give your pet plenty of water when it's hot outdoors. Make sure to fill their water bowl before you leave.
- Make sure they have a shady place to get out of the sun.
- Be careful not to over-exercise your pet. Too much playtime in the hot sun is dangerous for them.
- Hot asphalt and tar can burn sensitive paw pads, walk your pet on grass or dirt when possible.
- Keep your pet indoors when it's extremely hot outside.
- **Never leave your pet in a car!** Pets can overheat in minutes so don't put them at risk! Leave them home during hot weather.

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