



Neighborhood News

News and information for the residents of Wells Branch.
Vol. 24, Issue 6, Holiday 2016

Holiday Events

The holidays are here! We hope you'll join us in celebrating these wonderful Wells Branch traditions. Reach out to the new folks so they feel welcome. Take time to reconnect with family, friends and neighbors. We look forward to seeing each of you at the festivities!

Luminary Fest

Friday & Saturday, December 9 & 10 • 6-9pm

Experience the glow of the holidays as our trails light up with luminaries around Katherine Fleischer Park on December 9 & 10. Santa will be visiting the Homestead Cabin both nights from 6-9pm with FREE photos provided by WB Community Church.

WBNA sponsored craft tables will be set up both nights inside the Community Center and children will have the opportunity to make jewelry boxes for gifts, decorate ornaments, and color. Dianne Koehler and numerous volunteers will be on hand to assist the children with crafts and MUD staff will keep refreshments flowing.

Join us outdoors for a caroling hayride or a trip around the trails on the holiday express train to see the luminaries up close. We'll be starting the hayride at 5:30pm both nights so bring the little ones and come early.

Saturday night, Jessica Shepherd will host the kids' karaoke inside the Community Center with continued crafts and refreshments for all to enjoy. Wells Branch Community Church Band will perform outside the Buffalo House both Friday and Saturday.

Holiday Home Decorating Contest

Judging begins Sunday, December 11!

Break out the tinsel and holly! Deck the halls, yard, trees, cars, dogs, cats... Let's show some good 'ole WB spirit! The WBNA is sponsoring the Holiday Home Decorating Contest again this year! Judging will begin on Sunday, December 11. For more details, please visit our website at wbna.us. If you'd like to help judge or nominate a home, email lights@wbna.us. Be sure and watch for the "Winners" as we post signs in their yards and feature the homes on Facebook and wbna.us! Categories include: Most Original, Most Traditional, Most Elaborate, Best Use of Lights, Most Energy Efficient, Visible from Space, Most Patriotic and Best Block.

St. Andrews Presents an Evening of Music

Monday, December 12 • 7:30pm

Join us for a holiday handbell concert of cross-continental carols and classics Monday, December 12 at 7:30pm at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 14311 Wells Port Drive.



The Austin Handbell Ensemble consists of sixteen ringers, five octaves of handbells, five and a half octaves of handchimes, coordinating tremendously, collaborating fiercely to create the smoothest, most expressive musical experience possible.

For ticket information, please visit their website at austinhandbells.org.

See Events on page 2

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Safety Seminar with TCSO Captain Craig Smith
Sunday, December 11, 4:30pm, Community Center on Klattenhoff

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Meals on Wheels: A Gift to Serve

by Kim Lanicek

My children and I have been delivering Meals on Wheels for almost 10 years. We started with MoW because it's one of the few volunteer opportunities that welcomes children. I thought that I was going to be teaching my children to give of their time and energy to others, but MoW has become so much more to us than that! It has been a blessing to me to see our clients' joy when my children (even my gigantic teenager!) deliver meals to them. I realize that as important as the food is, it's so much more than just the food.

It is a gift to serve, and a rare chance to directly help individuals in your community one meal at a time. The holiday season is when Meals on Wheels has their greatest need, since many of their regular volunteers go out of town on vacation.



The training video is short and after that, you can pick up meals for delivery at a convenient location. When a substitute driver is needed, MoW will contact you in the morning and ask if you're available that day. If you can deliver, they'll give you the route details. If you're not available, just let them know! It's that simple!

We have had the joy of serving our Wells Branch neighbors for 9 years through the convenient Pflugerville pick-up site. I hope you join us!

Call 512-476-MEAL(6325) or visit <https://www.mealsonwheelscentraltexas.org/> for more information.

WBNA Officer Elections

A Nominating Committee is responsible for interviewing residents seeking to serve on the Wells Branch Neighborhood Association Board and in turn, submitting a list of names for consideration at the January General Meeting.

WBNA service is voluntary, a huge commitment, a tremendous amount of work, and extremely rewarding. If interested in serving as a Board Member on the WBNA, please contact the Nominating Committee via nominatingcommittee@wbna.us. Four positions will be elected to two year terms in January. Those currently serving on the Board will be seeking re-election.

Events continued from page 1

Polar Express Pajamarama

Friday, December 16 • 6:00 & 7:00pm

All aboard, for WBCL's yearly Polar Express Pajamarama! Enjoy holiday crafts, hot cocoa and cookies, a bedtime reading of The Polar Express and a special visit from Santa Friday, December 16 at 6:00pm & 7:00pm! Advance online registration required. See wblibrary.org for details.



Night Before Christmas Celebration

Saturday, December 24 • 5:30pm

Wells Branch Community Church and Abundant Life Church will be coming together to host a Christmas Eve service at the Wells Branch Rec. Center appropriately titled "Night Before Christmas". The service begins at 5:30pm and all are invited. Come join in the celebration of the true meaning of Christmas as neighbors sing carols and creatively remember the Christmas story. You won't want to miss what is in store this Christmas Eve so make sure to bring the whole family out to celebrate the holiday season!



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Home Safety for the Holidays

by Allison Struheck, PIO/Community Outreach Coordinator,
Prevention Division Pflugerville Fire Dept./Travis County ESD No. 2



As you prepare to celebrate the upcoming holidays, we encourage you to put safety at the top of the gift list. One of the best ways to show your family and friends how much you love them is to make their safety (and your own) a high priority.

The following tips cover some of the most common fire and emergency medical calls during the holiday season:

COOKING SAFETY

Thanksgiving is the #1 day of the year for home cooking fires, followed by Christmas Day and Christmas Eve. Unattended cooking is the top cause of these fires and fire-related deaths. Other common injuries are burns related to spills, splashes, or steam from hot foods. So what can you do to keep your busy and sometimes crowded kitchen a place of joy during the holidays?

Stay with the Stove: Always stay in the kitchen whenever you are cooking on the stovetop to watch the food. Keep the handles of your pots and pans turned back away from the edge of the stove so they aren't knocked or pulled down. Even when the stove is off but especially when it's on, keep the area around the stove clear of flammable items such as hot pads, paper towels, cookbooks, decorations, and notes/cards. Never leave your house unattended when you have food cooking in the oven – not even a ham or turkey.

Keep Kids Back: Always keep children at least 3 feet away from a hot stovetop. Move knives well out of their reach. Don't let them too close to hot dishes or liquids such as gravy and coffee.

Use a Timer: It's easy to forget you have the stove or oven on, especially once you sit down to enjoy your feast. Set a timer to remind you to turn things off.

Caution with Cords: Be sure cords from electric knives, coffee makers, plate warmers, and mixers are not dangling off of the counter. Adults may accidentally snag these dangerous items, and children may be tempted to pull them down.

KNOW THE RISKS OF TURKEY FRYERS

Turkey fryers use a lot of cooking oil at high temperatures, and there is a significant danger that hot oil will be released during cooking. Additionally, the burners that heat the oil can ignite spilled oil. To reduce the risk of a turkey fryer catching your home on fire, only use it with great care on a flat surface in the open, well ventilated outdoors.

CHRISTMAS TREE SAFETY

- Before placing the tree in the stand, cut 1-2" from the base of the trunk.
- Add water to the tree stand every day.
- Always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving your house or going to sleep.
- Make sure the tree is located at least three feet away from any heat source, and it isn't blocking an exit.

See Home Safety on page 4

23 yr WB resident & community volunteer

As part of my commitment to our community, a donation will be made to the WB Library or 501(c)3 community group of your choice upon closing.

Peace & Prosperity
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and in the New Year!



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WB MUD Holiday Closures

Trash and recycling collection days in December and January will not be impacted by the holidays.

However, in observance of the holidays, and to allow employees the opportunity to spend time with family, all District facilities will be closed on Christmas Eve and Day and New Year's Day. The Recreation Center and Willow Bend Pool will operate under modified hours on New Year's Eve. Please contact WB MUD Customer Service with questions at 512-251-9814.

A promotional advertisement for Bribery Bakery. It features a decorative circular frame with a scalloped edge. Inside the frame, the text reads: "Bribery BAKERY" in a script font, followed by "\$3 OFF" in large bold letters, then "FOR OUR WELLS BRANCH" in smaller letters, and "NEIGHBORS" in large bold letters. Below that, it says "WHEN YOU PURCHASE \$10 OR MORE". At the bottom of the frame, it states "*Expires 1/31/17. Limit one per visit. Must present coupon." Below the frame, the website "BRIBERYBAKERY.COM" and phone number "512.531.9832" are listed. The background of the ad has a repeating geometric pattern.

LIGHTS, CANDLES, AND DECORATIONS

- It is against both Fire Code and Electrical Code to use temporary electrical power (such as extension cords) or to display holiday lighting for more than 90 days.
- When hanging holiday lights, use clips – not nails – to hang lights so the cords do not get damaged. If you need to use a ladder, work with a partner on the ground.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for the maximum number of light strands to connect.
- Some lights are only safe for indoor or outdoor use, but NOT both.
- Keep lit candles away from decorations and other things that can burn. Locate them away from windows and doors so exits are not jeopardized if they catch fire.
- Keep matches and lighters out of children's reach – ideally up high in a locked cabinet – and don't leave them or pets alone in a room with a lit candle.
- Blow out lit candles when you leave the room or go to bed.



KUDOS!

Thanks to all of you who delivered our Fall Newsletter. It was huge! You ALL were GREAT! Because of you, EVERYONE in Wells Branch knew about our amazing fall events. Each and every event was well attended. **Dan Barnekow · Courtney Baumann · Anne, Colton, Brady, & Winston Bennett · Emily & Brendan Berver · Melissa Biegert · Shannon & Durbin Black · Gail Bloch · Karen Buerkle · Garland Bullock · Creola Burns · Kim Clark · Chris & Alex Connell* · Delian Filip · Miriam, Melissa & Briana Garate* · Dave Gezana · Carla & Alexander Gordon* · Matthew Grimsley · Cynthia Hannon · Maria Harte · Travers Hough · Bruce Jones · Jennifer Jones · Jack & Lucy Krystinik Kim & Sarah Lanicek · Rachel & Brian LeBansky · Sherrie Lindig · Brian Litke · Angel Lugo · Erik Macdanz · Siv, Jyoti & Arjuna Manda · Jane Marawar · D'Arlyn Marks · Joan & Dave Mead · Gary Mueller · Arlie Pfeifer · Amanda & Thomas Reed · Jennifer & Audrey Ricci · Barbara Romero · Vangie Sager · Max & Grant Shields · Ralph Simon* · Virgil Smith* · Sharon & Jenny Sproat · DeLane Spriggs · Margaret Sufke · Debby Thompson* · Jill & J.R. Traffanstedt Daisy Valdez · Pam Wachholz · Joe, Lincoln, Beckett, & Oslo Weick · Mike Weis · Daniel White* · Wally Wingfield · Pamela & Bre Woodward**
***Delivered more than one section**

If you would like to deliver the newsletter, please contact our distribution team at info@wbna.us or 512-656-0654. We'll bring the newsletters over to you along with a map of the delivery area. If you've never done this before, it takes about 45 minutes to an hour. We always try to match up everyone with the area they live in. Sometimes there's a lot of response for one area and none for other areas. If so, we try to "get you close". Or, if you'd like to see other parts of Wells Branch, let us know and we'll gladly find a section for you.

Holiday Safety Tips

by Debby Thompson, WBNA President & WB Neighborhood Watch Coordinator

With the bustle of the holidays just around the corner, make sure you're taking every precaution possible to keep your home and family safe and secure. We usually see an increase in opportunistic crime this time of year; please remain vigilant.

Keep your blinds and drapes closed when away, even if only for a short period of time.

Keep your house well lit at night (backyard included). A motion sensor activated light is an inexpensive deterrent.

If your Christmas tree is displayed in front of a window, **don't pile the presents around it**. Store the gifts in another area away from view when the blinds or drapes are open.

Do NOT put the empty boxes for the new computer, TV, stereo system, etc. on the curb for the trash. Take the time to break down every box and put it inside your trashcan/recycling bin so that it is concealed, even if you have to hold it over to the next week. People start cruising our neighborhood on Sunday afternoons to see what has been put out. The less they know about what you have inside, the better.

Door-to-door solicitations increase tremendously this time of year. **Always look out the window or peephole before opening the door or answering a knock**. Never open the door all the way, especially if you have a Christmas tree and/or presents in plain view.

Always lock your car. Never leave your car running unattended or leave your keys in the car or ignition. If you usually keep a garage door remote control in your car and don't park it in the garage each and every time you return home, hide the remote or take it inside. Thieves check visors and this gives them instant protected access to your home.

Keep your garage door closed at all times and keep the inside door from your home to the garage **LOCKED**.

Don't leave valuables in plain view, even if your car is locked. Take them in the house or put them in the trunk out of sight **BEFORE** arriving at your destination.

While shopping this holiday season, **remain aware of your surroundings at all times**. If unsure of your safety, ask a store attendant to have security walk you to your car. You can't be too safe. This goes for trips to the grocery store as well. When unloading your car at home after a day of shopping, lock it between trips to and from the car.

If you plan to be away:

Let a neighbor and/or block captain know you'll be out of town and when you'll return. They should have the following: your emergency contact information; contact information for anyone with access to your house (pet sitter, etc.); when they should be expected; what they look like and a description of their vehicle(s).

- Let only those who **NEED** to know, know when you are going out of town.

- **Don't share vacation plans on social media.**

See Holiday Safety on page 5

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Holiday Safety from page 4

- Arrange to have your lawn cared for if you are going to be away.
- Don't hide keys under doormats or flowerpots or in similar places.
- Put your lights, stereo or TV on timers.
- Keep your house well lit at night (backyard included). A motion sensor or photocell activated light is an inexpensive deterrent.
- Leave a car in your driveway (yours or neighbors')
- Don't cancel your paper or mail deliveries; ask that your neighbor pick them up every day.
- Leave a key with a friend or neighbor; ask that the house be checked at regular intervals.
- Store all your valuables.
- Consider asking friends or relatives to live in your home while you are away.
- Ask your neighbor to put trash in your trashcan and to put it out for collection and away when they put theirs away.
- **File a Close Patrol Request.** The filing of this form alerts patrolling officers so that they may pay close attention to one's residence. To do so: Contact the Travis County Sheriff's Office at 854-9721. Ask to make a Close Patrol Request. You will be asked for information on those

caring for your home while you're away - make and model of their vehicles, name, description and times they should be at your home.

- A comprehensive list of Safety Tips as well as numerous articles by the Travis County Sheriff Deputies are available on our website, wbna.us under Safety.
- If you are not already, become a Wells Branch Neighborhood Association member. "Like" us on Facebook for community updates. The more community involvement and connectedness there is, the safer we all will be.
- Join the community listserv aka 'The Google Group' by sending your name, physical address and email to wbneighbors@gmail.com.
- Most of all, be aware of your surroundings and look out for your neighbors. If you see or hear something suspicious, call 911. The Sheriff's Department would much rather answer a false alarm than deal with a tragedy later.

We live in a **GREAT** community **AND** a **SECURE** neighborhood. Let's all do our part to keep it that way. **Here's to a safe and happy holiday season!**

For information about starting your own **Neighborhood Watch Group, please call Debby Thompson at 512-656-0654.*

Local Election Results



WB MUD Board of Directors:

Thanks to all who participated in the WB MUD Board elections. The WBNA would like to congratulate newly elected MUD Board Director,

Moises Solis (Place 2) and returning MUD Board Director, Janet Maxey (Place 4). After the installation of Directors on November 22, the Board self-aligned to the following positions:

President: Shelley Palmer

Vice President: Howard Hagemann

Secretary: Betsey Harper

Treasurer: Moises Solis

Asst. Sec./Treas.: Janet Maxey

For Committee Assignments, please visit wellsbranchmud.com

A special thanks to Joe Petronis for his four years on the MUD Board. We are all grateful for all of your time, energy, and work! Best wishes on future endeavors!

WB MUD Board Meeting Change

WB MUD will hold only one meeting during the month of December. December 13, 5:30pm at WB Community Center with Citizens Communication to be held at 6:30pm.

WB Community Library Board of Trustees: Congratulations to Faye Cormier, Matt Sims, and Jill Traffanstedt for their victories, and Darlene Bauhs for making it such a close race.

Travis County Brown Santa



BROWN SANTA, celebrating its 35th year, is a community service program of the Travis County Sheriff's Office and the many sponsors and volunteers (like you) who make it happen each year.

You can help spread the joy of Christmas by donating or volunteering.

Call 512-247-2682, e-mail traviscountybrownsanta@gmail.com, or browse their website at traviscountytexas.gov/brown-santa for more information or to volunteer or donate. Brown Santa is a tax-exempt organization (501c3).

Donation barrels are available at the Wells Branch Recreation Center on Shoreline through December 9 when they move to the Community Center for Luminary Fest. Pick up will be Monday, December 12 at the Rec. Center. Please share if you can to help make a Christmas morning special for a child.

The warehouse for this year is located at 305 S. Congress Ave. Austin, TX 78704. This location is in the Austin American Statesman building. Please visit the website for specific parking instructions.

This program provides assistance to underprivileged children and their families in Travis County and Senior residents of local retirement centers in Travis County.

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**parking
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A Shared Responsibility

by Mack Marsh, Project Dir., Parking Mobility

It happens all too frequently...that car parked in the accessible space with no plate or placard. Or you come out of the store only to find that someone has parked in the access area next to an accessible space. But what to do about it? You can confront the driver, but these days, that's a dangerous proposition and never ends positively. And getting a police officer there before the violator leaves is unlikely. But now there is an easy way to address the issue in a positive, proactive way.

Accessible parking violations are more than an inconvenience. It's the number 1 threat to the health, safety and community access for people with disabilities. Parking Mobility, an Austin based nonprofit organization, puts the solution into the hands of those directly affected. "Before Parking Mobility I got so frustrated about disabled parking violations. Now I can be a part of the solution." Renee Lopez, Parking Mobility Volunteer.

Parking Mobility provides a free smartphone App that allows anyone to report violations quickly and easily. Using the Parking Mobility App takes as little as one minute, is discrete and provides much needed data to address the issue.

And if you become a Parking Mobility volunteer in Hays or Travis County, your reports are processed by local law enforcement partners and a citation is issued (mailed) to the owner of the offending vehicle. The person cited can pay the fine or be offered an opportunity to take an educational alternative that teaches them about the importance of accessible parking spaces and the laws protecting them. This program has proven to reduce accessible parking abuse by as much as 80% in less than two years.

'Tis the season to water wisely

Wells Branch residents can save money year-round by conserving water during the winter wastewater averaging period beginning December 12, 2016 and ending March 13, 2017.

There are no meters on customers' wastewater lines. To determine wastewater usage, a customer's water usage is reviewed over three consecutive, low demand winter months when lawn watering and irrigation are less frequent. The customer's wastewater charge for future billings will be based on the new wastewater average or actual monthly water usage, whichever is lowest. The usage during this time frame determines the wastewater charge each month from April 2017 to March of 2018. Now is the time to make sure that there are no leaking faucets or running toilets!!!

Customers who pay their water bill to Wells Branch Municipal Utility District (MUD) may contact Customer Service at Crossroads Utilities at 512-246-1400 or CustomerService@crossroadsus.com with any questions. Out of District customers who buy their water directly from the City of Austin, should call 512-494-9400 or check <http://austintexas.gov/departments/wastewater-averaging> for more information.

Visit the following site for more tips on water conservation: <http://www.watერიq.org/water-saving/>



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Friends of the Library News

The FOL participated in **National Night Out** on October 4th and gave away custard scoops from Culver's Frozen Custard. Enjoyed by everyone, the scoops went fast. Combined with the delicious sausage wraps and drinks, the scoops made a fitting end to a tasty meal. The FOL wishes to thank the WBNA and Wells Branch neighbors who attended for making the event a success.

We were excited to participate in **Halloween Trunk or Treat** and passed out bookmarks for young readers as well as spiders and assorted toy insects for the kids not yet of reading age.

In November, the FOL presented **Water for Wildlife: Ensuring Texas' Rivers Don't Run Dry** by Tom Spencer, the Central Texas Gardener and Director of the Texas Living Waters Project at the library. This well attended presentation discussed the many ways to conserve water and how the Texas Living Waters Project was helping create awareness and participation in conservation efforts. To learn more about Texas water, visit: texaslivingwaters.org and texas.sierraclub.org.

"A Portrait of Wells Branch" The friends of the Wells Branch Library (FOL) wish to thank and congratulate everyone who contributed photos to our calendar contest. We now have an incredible calendar that we hope everyone will order; they make excellent gifts. The calendar was to be available around the first of October but due to unforeseeable circumstances, it has been delayed until early December. You may order yours at <http://tinyurl.com/folcalendar>. The order process requires a pickup date; please select any date and realize you will be notified as soon as they become available.

NOTICE OF GENERAL MEETING AND ELECTION The Friends of the Wells Branch Community Library will hold a General Membership Meeting on December 11th at 4:00pm in the Community Center before the **Wells Branch Neighborhood Association Safety Meeting**. Proposed changes to the FOL Bylaws will be voted on and election of officers will be held. All members are invited to attend and vote. To view proposed changes, please visit our Facebook page at facebook.com/WBFOFOL/.

Silver Branchers By Darlene Bauhs

The Silver Branchers will celebrate their final meeting of 2016 with a Christmas luncheon at Garbos' in Bratton Square on Thursday, December 8th at 1 PM. For reservations contact Glen Gary at 512-461-1885 or email: glennoe@att.net.

Each Thursday, the Silver Branchers meet from 1-3pm at the Recreation Center on Shoreline Drive. Residents 55 years and older, are welcome. For additional information call the Wells Branch MUD at 512-251-9814. Regular meetings will resume on Thursday, January 5. We hope you'll join us.

WB Walking Club

WB Walking Club meets in front of KF Pool at 7am on Tuesdays & Thursdays and utilizes the WB MUD trails. Join us for a brisk walk! For more info, contact Katie Hutcheson at khutcheson@wellsbranchmud.com.



15001 Wells Port Drive
<http://www.wblibrary.org>
512-989-3188

Mon. – Thurs. 10 a.m. – 8 p.m.
Fri. – Sat. 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Sun. 1 p.m. – 6 p.m.

WINTER EVENTS AT WBCL

Ornament Making

Make a creative holiday ornament! (Tickets required.)
Sunday, December 4 at 1:30–3 p.m. and 3–4:30 p.m.

Polar Express Pajamarama

Enjoy hot cocoa, crafts, a visit from Santa, and a bedtime reading of *The Polar Express*!
Friday, December 16 at 6 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Storytimes with Mrs. Claus

Learn sign language at storytime with Mrs. Claus!
Monday, December 19 at 10:30 a.m. and 11:15 a.m.
Tuesday, December 20 at 6:30 p.m.

UPCOMING CLOSURES

Saturday–Monday, December 24–26

Library closed

Saturday, December 31

Library closes early at 4 p.m.

Sunday, January 1

Library closed

To see everything happening at the Library this winter, check out our event calendar at

WWW.WBLIBRARY.ORG

WINTER READING IS HERE!

Beat the winter blues while earning badges, points, and prizes! The Winter Reading Program runs November 14 through January 14 and is for readers of all ages.

Visit wblibrary.readsquared.com to register!



EVENTS FOR KIDS

Fun 2 Learn Coding for Kids

Introductory coding class for kids ages 8-12.
Tuesday, December 6 at 5:30 p.m.

Trading Card Club

Play Pokémon, Magic, and more!
Tuesday, December 13 at 6 p.m.

EVENTS FOR ADULTS

Strong Women, Smart Financial Strategies

Tuesday, December 6 at 6:30 p.m.

DIY Thursdays: How to Mend Clothing

Thursday, December 8 at 6 p.m.

Register online at wblibrary.eventbrite.com

Adult Coloring for Relaxation

Sunday, December 11 from 2 to 4 p.m.

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**Must be 3 of each item, no mix or match - please.*

BSA Cub Scout Pack 140

by Tonya Riley

Pack 140 is off to a great start this Scouting year! We've had a number of new Scouts join us from Northwest and Parmer Lane Elementary schools so we have grown tremendously! But there is always room! Contact us at info@pack140.org or visit us at www.pack140.org.

BSA Cub Scout Pack 728

by Shannon Best

Pack 728 is moving right along! Scouts are earning their belt loops and pins and having fun while doing so. We've learned basic first aid care (A Scout is Helpful), introductory to CPR, how to whittle (of course!), sewing a bag for marble keeping, constructing a bird feeder out of a milk carton (A Scout is Kind) and much more. We held our Thanksgiving Potluck dinner and will go camping at Berry Springs Preserve. Pack 728 will also assist TCSO with Brown Santa. We meet every Wednesday at 6:30pm at the Live For More Center at Bratton and Merriltown. Contact us at: wbpack728@gmail.com

BSA Troop 1409

by Daniel White, Asst. Scoutmaster

Nov 4-6, Troop 1409 camped at the Smiling V Scout Camp, near Liberty Hill. The purpose of this camp out was for the older Boy Scouts to teach the Cub Scouts scouting skills including how to use a compass and map to find locations.

The troop will be camping in December at Lost Maples State Park and holding a Court of Honor on December 11, with a potluck meal and a Christmas party gift exchange.

We always welcome new youth between the ages of 11 to 18. Contact scoutmaster@troop1409.com for more information or visit our website at <http://www.troop1409.com/> or our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/Troop1409/>

BSA Venture Crew 1409

by Jill Douglass, Advisor

The crew just completed a 14.6 mile canoe trek on the Wilbarger-Bastrop Paddling Trail. Good recent rainfall means we completed those miles in under 4 hours. Next up is a weekend backpacking trip to Lost Maples State Park in December. In a departure from our usual Spring Break adventures, the crew is heading to Mississippi to participate in the annual SCA Gulf Wars event. Part of the preparations means scrounging, sewing, or purchasing medieval garb. The crew leads the adventure, and sometimes they surprise us with where we end up going!

Venturing is a youth development program of the Boy Scouts of America for young men and women who are 14 – 20 years of age. Contact Jill Douglass (512-293-9022 / jdouglass@crew1409.com) for questions about the Crew. Visit <http://www.crew1409.com/> to learn more!



WB Armada

Information regarding Registration for our 2017 Summer Season will be available on our website next month. The tentative team schedule for the 2017 summer season can be found on our site as well: <https://wellsbranch.swimtopia.com/>



Nicole A Viator Financial Advisor

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Happy New Year

As the calendar turns the page, we wish you the very best in the year ahead.

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KWBB Events by Katie Hutcheson

Structure Tree Pruning • Sunday, December 4 • 2-4pm
WB MUD Recreation Center, 3000 Shoreline Drive

Many of the structural problems of mature trees can be prevented with proper pruning of young trees. Join us for a free hands-on workshop to learn how to correct minor defects. Participants will learn how to make proper pruning cuts with the appropriate tool and properly sterilize tools to prevent the spread of diseases.

What you will learn:

- to identify the parts of tree • the goals of pruning
- how the tree reacts to pruning
- and, most importantly, when you should hire a professional

What to bring:

- a notebook and pen • your questions • and your neighbor

There will be an arts and craft activity for children to participate in so they are welcome to attend, also.

Our monthly KWBB event for January will be held on Saturday, January 8, 2017 (instead of the first Sunday of the month to avoid the New Year's Eve weekend) from 2- 4pm at Katherine Fleischer Park. Volunteers will actually prune the young trees along our trails and in our parks by utilizing the information that we covered at the December educational session. Even if you didn't attend the December session, come on out to volunteer, we can partner you with someone that did attend.

Online Holiday Safety Reminders

Watch out for these holiday scams:

- Fake purchase invoices
- Fake shipping notifications
- Bogus e-mail deals and promotions
- Phishing using fake links and sites
- Phony surveys promising gift cards
- Card skimmers in ATMs, gas stations
- Fake support and tech calls
- Fake Wi-Fi access points in Hotspots
- Internet of Things gifts
- Phony System and software patching
- RFID Fraud with credit cards, etc.

Tips: Monitor your accounts regularly for unauthorized purchases. Place fraud text alerts on accounts. Use strong passwords. Get and use cards with EMV chips as opposed to swiping. Happy and safe shopping!

KWBB Arbor Day - It's My Park Day

Over 56 volunteers showed up on Saturday, November 5 to pick up litter, spread mulch around existing trees to help them resist drought and soil compaction, and plant several new drought-tolerant trees to provide a next generation of trees for the Wells Branch greenbelt. The tree planting focused on the north area of the disc golf course adjacent to the new Affinity at Wells Branch apartments, where trees in the area have been lost to old age, drought, and development.

Thank you to Katie Hutcheson and Braxton Blane of the WB

MUD for setting up a basecamp tent and spreading mulch, Dianne Koehler for providing art activities for the kids, Shelley Palmer for pulling up ligustrum, Rebecca Johnson for her knowledge of trees and best practices, and the Austin Parks Foundation for the free mulch. Thank you to Brian Litke and the Wells Branch Disc Golf Club for coordinating the event, purchasing the trees, and helping out during the activities.

Reflections on event from volunteer Wendy Lambert:

"Wonderful experience for all! Our little Girl Scout Brownies had a fun time helping to mulch the trees! Even my five year old son got into the action. His favorite part was learning about worms. Thanks again WB for hosting an incredible event... We look forward to helping out again."



Save the Date! Extreme Clean January

January 14 • 8am-5pm
13905 Thermal
See details at wbna.us.

WB Running Club by Russell Jones

The WB Running Club is a completely free and fun group of community members who meet every Tuesday and Thursday from 5:45-6:45am at the Gazebo in Katherine Fleischer Park. Workouts are tailored to meet the needs of every individual with members running at all different paces. We have over 20 active members each run. Come join the fun! For more info go to www.wbrunclub.com or call, text, or e-mail Russell@wbrunclub.com, (512) 825-2369.

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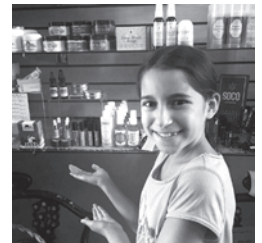
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Business Spotlight – Update by Gus Kohn

Wells Branch is home to many small businesses. If they thrive, we thrive. We continue to feature an ongoing series on our area establishments. Remember that sales tax paid within Wells Branch from your purchases benefit both the Library and the Fire Department (ESD#2). The continued success of the merchants in the district directly influence our property values. When we “Shop WB” we all benefit.

Austin's Embroidery, Alteration & Cleaners at 3407 Wells Branch Pkwy #725 has been in the Market at Wells Branch for over 20 years but in 2014 it opened under the new ownership of Joe and Anna Duran. Joe and Anna, as well as customer service representative Nicki, are all Wells Branch residents. They are currently offering holiday embroidery at special pricing. Visit Austin's Embroidery, Alteration & Cleaners and see what they have to offer! This customer service oriented, family owned business places their customer first above everything else. Please only consider Yelp and Google ratings that come AFTER 2014; some negative reports were issued for the previous owners. Ask about their dry cleaning specials every Tuesday, their number is 512-388-4111. Please see their ad on page 10.

Vida Green Consulting is a Wells Branch original. When Tara Fisher-Muñoz' daughter Maia developed sensitive skin, Tara discovered that most “Natural” products contained ingredients that were risky & far from natural. She researched and developed her own bath, body and skincare products for Maia. When friends began asking for them she began making more. After eight years, Tara is now handcrafting small batches from truly organic and natural ingredients that are affordable and accessible without harsh chemical preservatives that are better for your body and the environment. See her website, vidagreenconsulting.com for the range of products from hand soap to facial care, calendula salves and top selling probiotic deodorants & perfume oils. These products are so natural they are food quality (although Tara doesn't recommend eating them)! She only sells products she would use on herself or her kids. She offers online sales for pick up in Wells Branch as well as a display at Tiny Taiga on E. 11th and at many pop-up shops; see the website for a list of shops or call Tara at 512.809.3471. Holiday gift sets are available.



BRANCH BBQ & CATERING has been busy! They've got new electronic menus and additions to their winter menu. Stop in on Thursdays for Chris' Homemade Chili and Fridays for his delicious Chicken & Dumplings, Candied Yams and Collard Greens. Get there early though because they go very quickly. Be sure and ask Chris about his new grandson Rosen Everett McIntosh! See their ad on this page.





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Leave the Leaves by Rebecca Johnson, ISA Certified Arborist

Ahhh fall, when the days get shorter, the nights get crisper and ... leaves start falling off the trees. This is the time of year when the silence is broken by the sounds of leaf blowers starting up and blowing leaves out of yards and into the streets. What if there were a better way to deal with leaves?

The National Wildlife Federation is encouraging people to leave their leaves where they fall. In a blog post on their site (bit.ly/dontrakeleaves) they state that fallen leaves are really important habitat for many beneficial insects and wildlife, including salamanders, box turtles and toads. In the podcast "Trees Are Key - Fallen Leaves are Key" (bit.ly/takfallen-leaves), Paul Johnson extols many of the virtues of fallen leaves for soil amendment.

Many years ago, I was a devoted reader of *Organic Gardening* magazine. The Editor in those days often referred to SPBs - stupid people bags. SPBs are the bags of leaves that people put out for trash pickup. He and his wife would sometimes go out late at night and grab the bags of leaves to use in their compost bin and as mulch around their plants. Here in Wells Branch, the bags of leaves are taken for composting, so they don't end up in a landfill and go to waste, but they would be even more beneficial if they were used where they fell.

My yard is non-turf, I have drought tolerant ground cover rather than grass. When leaves fall off my trees, they disappear into the ground cover and serve as mulch over the winter and as an important source of nutrients in the spring. I haven't fertilized my yard since I moved and my plants always look amazing. However, I know many of you really value your lawns and a heavy carpet of leaves isn't a look you find attractive. If you can stand to have them on your lawn for a short while, run your mower over them to shred them and they'll break down fairly quickly. If you just can't stand having them on your lawn, instead of using a leaf blower to blow your leaves into the streets, where they become a nuisance for your neighbors and clog our storm drains, blow them onto a tarp and use them in your compost. Or, you can put the gathered leaves in a heavy duty garbage can and use your weed eater to shred them and use them as mulch around your trees and shrubs. A four inch layer will break down amazingly quickly and will help replace many of the nutrients your trees and shrubs used over the summer. If you still have more than you can use (lucky you!) put them out for the compost trucks.

Rebecca Johnson is an ISA Certified Arborist and "Arborholic". She can be found on social media as "Arborholic".

New Hours for Aquafit Classes

by Katie Hutcheson

WB MUD offers Aqua-fit classes year-round each Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 1-2pm at Willow Bend Pool. Water aerobic workouts are a form of fitness training that can be beneficial for people at any fitness level. The surrounding resistance of the water provides a challenging environment for performing exercises, according to the American College of Sports Medicine. Fitness training with water aerobics can improve athletic performance, aid in rehabilitation and improve activities needed for daily living.

This class requires the MUD Multi-class card; for more information visit wellsbranchmud.com.

Please wear swim attire, bring a water bottle and towel.

If it is raining or below 55° we will not meet. Otherwise, we are there year round. See you at the pool! For more information, contact Katie Hutcheson at 512-516-2621 or khutcheson@wellsbranchmud.com

Help Plan the Cultural Diversity Fair

Calling all neighbors, come be a part of this free community event with live shows, food to sample, ethnic kids games, etc.



Interested? Curious? Want to represent a country?

The first planning meeting will be held at the WB Rec Center on Sunday, Jan 8th at 4 pm

<https://sites.google.com/view/WBCulturalDiversityFair>

European Dance Guild

Come learn something NEW (or OLD, as the case may be). The European Dance Guild meets on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month, from 6 to 8pm in Room 101 of the Rec. Center, 3000 Shoreline Drive. The meeting is free and open to the public. No previous experience is required. Every dance is taught before it is danced to music. If you can walk, you can do this type of dance. Please contact Daniel White with questions at 512-413-0097.



Joe Lee Johnson STEAM Academy News

JLJ PTA by Stephanie Hilchey, Secretary, JLJ PTA

Thank you to our JLJ PTA and volunteers for partnering with us to make Spirit Week and Family Fun Day a huge success! The event, attended by approximately 500 people, could not have been possible without you. Family Fun Day was!

We hope to see you at Family STEAM Night on December 8, from 6:00 – 7:30pm. Families are invited to school to participate in STEAM stations, take a gallery walk of student art, and watch musical performances by our Kinder-2nd grade students. PTA will also be selling concessions. Performance Times:

K: 6:00 – 6:20pm • 2nd: 6:35 – 7:00pm • 1st: 7:10 – 7:30pm

The JLJ PTA is selling new Spirit Gear! Choose from youth hoodies, tees, adult soft v-neck and dri-fit tees, adult hoodies and zip sweatshirts, stuffed Trailblazer mascots, car decals, water bottles, hair bows, pompoms, wristbands, tattoos, and stickers. Please visit our online store at www.jljpta.org

Did you know we have a literacy program at Joe Lee Johnson called Education Connection? We need volunteers to read to children during the school days. Join us in seeing every child reading by the end of 3rd grade, impacting the next generation in our school! Please contact steph.hilchey@att.net for more information or visit www.education-connection.org

Mark your calendars for Winter Break! Joe Lee Johnson Elementary School will be closed for Winter Break from December 19 through January 2. Classes will resume on January 3, 2017.

Garden Program by Heather Johnson

JLJ Elementary is ecstatic about the new gardening program in their outdoor learning space. If you'd like to be a part of this exciting, student led effort, please send an email to JLJgarden@gmail.com and we'll add you to our e-mail list. We need parent and community volunteers to assist the students in their learning. Gardening knowledge is not necessary! Please watch for our Farmer's Market coming this spring!



Athlos Leadership Academy/

WBLA PTO by Marisa Sawatphadungkij & Sylvia Brito

Athlos would like to thank Wells Branch MUD, WBNA, and all the volunteers that helped us with our 4th Annual Fall Fest. Together we've raised over \$8,000 to support student activities, clubs and field trips at Athlos Leadership Academy and Wells Branch Leadership Academy. Go community!

We are looking forward to a month full of holiday spirits. We will be kicking off 2017 on Tuesday, January 3rd. Happy Holidays from all of us at Athlos Leadership Academy.

RRISD Boundary Update by Emily Berver

I recently had the opportunity to represent WBNA during the RRISD Middle School Boundary Process. I greatly appreciate all of the help and support I received from our community throughout this process.

The final plan that the Board of Trustees approved has all of Wells Branch tracking to Deerpark, but also greatly relieves the overcrowding at Chisholm Trail, which should open it up to transfers for families that wish to stay there.

Next year both WBAIA & JLJ Elementary Schools will be schools of choice and Deerpark Middle School will become a STEAM Academy. Now that our neighborhood is vertically aligned, families are free to pick whichever elementary school they think best suits their child's interest. Both schools will track together to middle school and then high school. In the long run, I think our neighborhood will benefit greatly from the approved boundary plan.

Pumpkin Patch & Painting Thank You

We had absolutely glorious weather and a fabulous time at our Wells Branch Pumpkin Patch and Pumpkin Painting in the Park! Thrilled so many of you made it out - lots of new faces!

A HUGE Thank You to our Pumpkin Patch Sponsors: Pam King Wachholz, REALTOR®, Christopher Stapleton, REALTOR®, Trinity Title Texas, Jay Garrett of Parkview Mortgage, Carmina Eaton Insurance Agency and to Dianne Koehler, teacher and artist, for bringing all her painting toys for us to play with and offering inspiration. Special thanks to all the WBNA volunteers: Margaret Sufke, Donna Lyons, Lara Bennett, Sherrie Lindig, Donna Malone, Tracy Simon, Derek Cohen, Janet Maxey, Lexie Le, Ayanna Walsh, and Vanely Gutierrez. You guys are awesome! We couldn't do it without you!

Thanks to Wells Branch MUD for the use of both the facilities and tables, and for help storing the hay bales as they traveled from one event to the next. Shout out to MUD Staff, who are always so very helpful! You are appreciated!

Check the WBNA Facebook page for photos from Pam Wachholz, Steve Hilchey, Madonna Johnson and Debby Thompson. Feel free to tag and share and as always, please let us know if there are any photos you'd like removed.

Katherine Fleischer Pool September 6, 2016 - March 31, 2017

Pool Closed - Swim Team Use Only

Willow Bend Pool 512-310-1833

November 1, 2016 - March 31, 2017

Open/Lap	S-S	1-6pm
	M-F	3:30-8pm
Lap Swim	M-F	12-2pm

Please note: These are general guidelines. Hours are subject to change. Visit: wellsbranchmud.com/pools for current information and specific exceptions. Pools may be closed due to inclement weather. During heavy storms or below freezing temperatures check the website or call the pools to confirm if they are open.

WBE Arts Integration Academy News

PTA Update by Laura Gomez-Horton, Secretary, WBE AIA PTA

Wells Branch Elementary Arts Integration Academy has had a great beginning! This semester we've enjoyed our Move-a-thon, Reflections program, Mini-Fall Fest, International Fair, and the various enrichment programs! The teachers, staff, students, volunteers, PTA, donors, and the Wells Branch neighborhood have all been instrumental in this success! Coming up:

12/13/16 at 6:30pm: PTA General Meeting to feature 4th and 5th grade performances

1/12/17 at 6:00pm: 1st ever WBE AIA Showcase: Gallery Walk and Art Performances

With the New Year to come, consider volunteering and sharing your skills and knowledge. It is never too late to give of yourself and contribute to this amazing community! Everyone is welcome through the WBE PTA. Make us your new year's resolution!

WBE PTA is a volunteer membership program that works collaboratively with the school and community to bring amazing programs, field trips, and materials that supplement learning to WBE AIA students. If you are unsure how to get involved, and would like to speak with someone about possibilities, contact Laura Gómez-Horton, PTA Secretary at secretary@wellsbranchpta.org. If you want to get involved, become a member, donate some time, and/or show off your talents, please visit our website at wellsbranchpta.org or our facebook page, wellsbranchpta/

We look forward to seeing everyone back and energized for an amazing 2017!!!



Outdoor Science Lab and Garden Program Update

by Dianne Koehler

The Garden program at WBE has students focusing on true exploration of the plants and animals found in the garden. The students have participated in tastings of the various produce and made herb packets for cooking at Thanksgiving. We are blessed with many new teachers giving us more diversity than ever.

The 5th grade Farmer's Market opened in October and offers student grown organic vegetables every Friday at 2:45pm for the community to purchase. Look for weekly postings to Facebook and the Google Group listing offerings. We expect to have winter vegetables soon like broccoli and cauliflower in addition to salad greens.

Northwest Elementary by Cindy Padavick



We would like to take this opportunity to say a heartfelt "Thank You!" to all our PTO members, NW staff, parents and community volunteers. Thank you very much for your recent involvement in our school's Fall Festival fundraiser; we are so blessed to have so many be a part of our Northwest Elementary Family. You all truly make a difference in the lives of our staff, teachers, and students. The success of the Fall Festival was a reflection of the ever-increasing dedication and enthusiasm that our volunteers display on a continual basis.

Join us December 9 from 6:30-8:30pm for our PTO sponsored "Cookies with Santa" and Holiday Store. Don't forget, we'll be kicking off Winter Break December 16 with Early Release at Noon. We look forward to seeing our Northwest Stars return on January 3! Happy Holidays from the Northwest PTO!

Concordia High School by Jim Binneboese

Located at 1500 Royston Lane, just north of Grand Ave. Parkway, Concordia High School is the closest Christian High School to Wells Branch. The 36 member senior class is excited with the fact that over \$2.0M has been made available to them in College or University academic scholarships from 40+ schools. This amount is a new record for the school at this point in time of the school year. For students taking advantage of the scholarship offers, it basically means that the first year in college can be free.



Seniors are also participating in many other extracurricular and community events called co-curricular areas. These include sports, drama, debate teams, music and foreign travel opportunities. The girls' sports teams continue to win tournaments. In drama, 22 Concordia scholars and 8 parents traveled to Temple last month to compete in the TAPPS Division III District Contest. CHS received a stunning 42 superior grades, 18 excellent grades and 3 goods. This is a great showing for the young students.

Student registration continues for the 2017/2018 school year. CHS is working to raise funds, start construction and to move to permanent facilities at Heatherwilde and WB Parkway in Pflugerville. Contact the school office for more information and our exciting plans for the future – 512-248-2547.

CHS PTA Thank You – Rain didn't outshine the Connally HS Holiday Shopping Bazaar by Tammy DeWitt Le

The 12th annual CHS Shopping Bazaar was a big success. We had over 300 people attend despite it raining almost all day. Our 40 amazing vendors offered unique items including handmade jewelry, soaps, clothing, Christmas décor, baked goods, custom handicrafts, skincare and much more. And the Connally High school drumline, orchestra and drill team (along with Northwest Elementary choir) kept everyone entertained. This event is our school's largest fundraiser and all money raised is applied towards student scholarships awarded each year to deserving seniors.

A huge thank you to all the businesses that supported us. Please frequent these businesses who support our local Wells Branch schools: Starbucks, Dominos, Papa John's, Double Dave's Pizza, Bill Miller's BBQ*, Chick-Fil-A, El Rincon, Branch BBQ*, First Chinese BBQ, Trader Joes, Tammy DeWitt Le-Horizon Realty*, Peace Bakery, Randall's, Organic Edges-Laurie Childers*, Stephanie Peterson-LuLaRoe Boutique*, Tortilleria Rio Grande, Schlotszsky's, Costco, Sprouts, Café Java and Target.

**Business located in Wells Branch*

National Night Out Recap by Debby Thompson

As many of you know, the WBNA Silent Auction each July 4th funds National Night Out in WB. NNO is our biggest event and one of the ways we serve WB. Our tremendous sense of community is what continues to shape our neighborhood and helps maintain that small town feel. Thank you everyone for making time to come out and join us. We served around 700 hotdogs and sausage wraps on top of all the veggies, chips and drinks.

Special thanks go out to the Travis County ESD No. 2. Y'all are awesome! We appreciate the use of the Fire Safety House, the opportunity to tour the fire truck, and see the EMT truck up close. We value your service to our community and look forward to hearing about the new ambulances in February.

Thank you TCSO! We are always grateful for the Travis County Sheriff's presence at our events. Thanks to each of our WB officers, Captain Craig Smith, Deputies Deke Pierce and Robert Phillips, and the many other officers who keep Wells Branch safe.

Thanks Travis County Constable's Office Pct. 2 Explorer Post #711. You guys are great! Your presence at each of our events and your enthusiasm in talking with our youth about careers in law enforcement has made a lasting impression on our community.

Ms. Kristen, Children's Librarian, Wanda Holcombe, Board Trustee and Nathaniel with Wells Branch Community Library, hosted a safety themed table and had some really cool giveaways for all the kids. It was a wonderful addition to the event.

The Friends of the Library Board and members Gus Kohn, Joan

& Dave Mead, Gary Mueller and Madonna Johnson served up Culver's Frozen Custard to everyone. Thank you, Culver's for donating 150 scoops and giving the FOL a deal on the other 200 scoops. Everyone one who wanted a scoop, got one!

This year, we were also joined by the Parking Mobility Team, here to educate and invite residents to join other volunteers in parking enforcement.

Thanks to our Volunteer Deputy Voter Registrars who worked NNO registering voters: Ruth Gutierrez and Margaret Sufke.

Last but not least, thank you to all the WBNA Board Members, spouses and volunteers who make this event happen each year: Pit Master Chuck Walters, and Special Guest Pit Master, Chris Carby from Branch BBQ; Lara Bennett, Steve & Donna Lyons, Mark & Margaret Sufke, Donna Malone, Sherrie Lindig, and Gus Kohn; our emcee, Pam Wachholz; MUD Board Director, Janet Maxey; Madonna Johnson, our official WBNA photographer; Salvador & Nina Aguirre, Block Captains Extraordinaire, who manned the Neighborhood Watch table; Emily Berver for hosting the WBNA table (and letting me run around and take pictures); and our Fourth Fest Silent Auction Team for making it all possible with their fantastic fundraising efforts.

We also want to thank the MUD for the use of their facilities when hosting WBNA community events, as well as all the extra effort by the MUD Staff; Andy, Mouse, Felix and Cande, we appreciate all that you do to make and keep WB special.

Visit our Facebook page for event photos and a more detailed "Thank you".

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MAKE A DIFFERENCE – RETHINK your everyday actions for sustainability!

by Elaine Betterton

Rethink/ is Austin's own mobile app, designed to help everyone go green and protect what's best about Wells Branch and Austin. Ready to rethink your habits? Discover ways to easily incorporate sustainability into your daily routine - at home, at work, or on the town. Every effort counts! Feel great knowing you are making a difference!

Rethink/ provides simple actions that make sustainability a priority in the things you do every day. Categories include: Habits, Energy, Water, Waste, Transportation, Food & Drink, Shopping, Office, Outdoors & Advanced.

Each action is translated into the impact it can have to save money, energy, time, and resources. Embedded videos and URLs share localized tips, including City of Austin resources or programs that can help. Using Rethink/ can save you an average of \$200 a year.

Make it a game! Play with friends from Facebook and Twitter, climb the Leaderboard, fill your Trophy Case. Using Rethink/ helps make Austin even greener.

Find the rethink/ application on Google Play and the App Store.



Cheers To A Great WB Soccer Season!

by Leisha Richardson, Secretary, WBSA

That's a wrap on another incredible season for our growing neighborhood club, Wells Branch Soccer Association! The Club was host to 164 home games this fall with 330 plus community area athletes participating and learning to play the beautiful game of soccer. It's been a fun-filled season for everyone across the recreation and new select and academy teams. And an especially exciting season for two of the advanced teams, the WBSA Tigers U14 DII Girls and the WBSA United U15 DII Boys who both qualified for the STYSA Western District Championships this season. Congratulations to all the players!

A special thanks to all of the volunteer coaches and family volunteers for making it such a successful fall season. Your continued contribution and dedication to our players is what makes WBSA such a great community soccer club. We couldn't do it without you!

Registration is now open for the spring 2017 season and the deadline to register is January 14, 2017. Also, as one of the most family friendly clubs you'll find in the area, WBSA extends each season a multi-player discount for families with more than one player registering to play. The spring season will kick-off on February 25, 2017. Learn more about fees and how to register at www.wellsbranchsoccer.com.

And for all of those that love to keep kicking the ball all year round, be sure to check the website and Facebook pages for updates on special WBSA tournaments, clinics and training throughout the winter months. We look forward to seeing you all back on the fields this spring!



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WB Photo Club Update by Margaret McGhee-Sufke

In December, we are going to offer a session on color theory. Depending on the response and the turn out, we may also offer this presentation as an adult learning session through the WBCL/FOL program. 2017 will bring more topics and meet up sessions. Keep watching the WB Google group, the WBNA website and the newsletter for details as we head into our third year!

As always, our club members will be out in force capturing images for various community events. All images are posted on the WBNA facebook page.

Just a reminder, all our sessions are "drop in" and anyone at any skill level is welcome to attend. The purpose of our group is to share the knowledge and tools of photography. The best reward of this wonderful hobby is to create a lasting image while changing the way you see the world. We hope you will join us. Our group meets the second Tuesday of each month, in the WB Rec. Center, 3000 Shoreline Drive at 6:30pm. Sessions usually last about 2 hours.

Questions? Contact: Margaret at mmsufke@gmail.com.

Do-It-Yourself (DIY) Club by Daniel White

The DIY Club meets on the first Sunday of each month, unless otherwise noted, from 6-8pm in room #103 of the Rec. Center on Shoreline. The meetings are open to anyone and are free. Our last meeting of the year will be on Dec 4 where we'll learn how to make Gift Baskets and Tips for Package Wrapping.

Upcoming Topics:

- Jan 8 • Home Improvements That Add Value
- Feb 5 • Home Security
- Mar 5 • ADA & Home Aids

Wells Branch Garden Guild by Dianne Koehler

Wells Branch Garden Guild will be taking the month of December off this year. Meetings will resume in January, when the Garden Guild will meet with Gwendolyn Johnson, curator of the WB Homestead, to help plan a refresh of the Homestead gardens. The goal is to incorporate native plants and those well adapted to this area. Gwendolyn also hopes to add a sensory garden area with an eye toward encouraging children's interest.

The February topic is All things Butterfly. We will discuss the WB Butterfly Garden, what you can do to provide support for butterflies in your own garden and learn more about the Monarch Project.

The March meeting will feature a speaker to address the best plants for spring and summer gardening, with an emphasis on vegetables you can grow here.

We are a friendly group who meets once a month to discuss gardening! We normally meet every third Saturday of the month at 10:30am for a plant/seed swap and then at 11:00am for the presentation. All are welcome!



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Birding in Wells Branch

by Wanda Holcombe, Sharon Richardson, Heather Johnson, Karen Hagemann

Wells Branch Hosted Bird Walks meet the 2nd Monday & 3rd Saturday each month at 8am at the Mills Pond Gazebo off Wells Port Drive, weather permitting. Check the WBNA Calendar for any updates or changes of location or cancellations. If you would like to be on the WB Birding Email Group, contact Wanda Holcombe: wandah70@gmail.com. To participate in the Purple Martin Care Team, contact Karen Hagemann: khallhagemann@hotmail.com

Ten Simple Tips for Successful Winter Bird Feeding

As it gets colder you can make a huge difference in the care of the birds that live and migrate here by what you feed or "don't feed" them for the winter. For instance: **DO NOT FEED THE MIGRATING DUCKS ON THE POND** so that they can leave healthy enough to make the long flight back to their other home.

Backyard bird feeding can make a real contribution to their survival and even help them to thrive during the winter months. Here are ten pointers for a successful winter bird feeding season:

1 - Put out feeders with good size capacity: And/or use multiple feeders to provide ample food.

2 - Provide nutritious winter seed foods: For most birds these often include seed mixes of black oil sunflower seed, hulled peanuts, niger seed and white millet seed.

3 - Offer fatty food too: Birds need to burn more calories in the winter just to stay warm. Suet is considered a high energy food because it consists of fat that has 9 calories per gram compared to 4 calories per gram for carbohydrates or protein. Peanut Butter is also popular with our flying friends. Suet feeders are a favorite of woodpeckers and other insect-eating birds.

4 - Keep your feeders full: Winter birds need to stock up on calories especially for those long, cold winter nights.

5 - Be consistent and keep feeding through the winter: Birds grow accustomed to your feeders especially in severe weather when the snacks you offer may mean their very survival.

6 - Remember water: Birds can become dehydrated in winter even if surrounded by ice and snow. Putting out a pan of water near the feeder on warmer days is a terrific idea.

7 - Care for ground feeding birds: Ground-feeding birds such as dark-eyed juncos, doves and many sparrows will be able to gather up the seed that drop from the feeders.

8 - Hang feeders in cat-safe locations: Place bird feeders in locations that do not also offer hiding places for sneak-attacks by cats and other predators. Think of placing the feeders ten to twelve feet from shrubs or brush piles. This gives the birds some time to react.

9 - Remember feeder cleanliness: Feeders will need to be cleaned with some hot water and dried a few times during the season.

10 - Save some money and stock up on seed: It is best to stock up on birdseed in the Fall when many lawn and garden centers are discounting it to make way for winter merchandise. Stored properly, (in cool dry places) seed can easily last for months, particularly seed mixes and sunflower seeds.

Transportation Forum Update

by Sherrie Lindig

The WBNA would like to thank the residents that came out for the Transportation Forum held on November 10 at the WB Community Center. Travis County Traffic Planning and Texas Department of Transportation were present to discuss their plans over the next 30 years. The meeting was live streamed, so if you missed it, you can always watch the video on our Facebook page. In addition, presentations from both Travis County and TxDOT are available on the WBNA website under the Construction tab.

Travis County has a survey to help them develop their transportation plan through the year 2045. The survey can be accessed at www.surveymonkey.com/r/tctranplanb if you would like to provide your input.

The Texas Department of Transportation is holding an **Open House on December 6** at Walnut Creek Elementary from 5:30pm to 7pm. TxDOT will have maps and personnel on hand showing the currently proposed designs for the I35 stretch between Louis Henna Blvd/SH45 and Grand Avenue Pkwy. The currently proposed changes are estimated to cost \$3.2 million and be completed winter 2019/2020 (pending funding).

The Open House will also have maps for the proposed changes at the Parmer Lane and I35 intersection. The proposed cost for these changes is \$25 million and proposed to be completed summer 2020 (pending funding). There are also proposed changes for the Wells Branch Parkway / I35 / 1825 intersections; however, these changes will NOT be presented at the Open House. The proposed cost is \$31.6 million and estimated to be completed summer 2022 (pending funding).

If you cannot attend the Open House, but want to see the changes, TxDOT will also have a virtual Open House from December 6 – 20 at www.mobility35openhouse.com. You can also sign up for updates from TxDOT at www.my35.org/capital.

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