



Neighborhood News

News and information for the residents of Wells Branch.
Vol. 29, Issue 1, January/February 2021

WBNA Annual Meeting & Elections

Thursday, March 4, 2021 | 7:00pm

Via ZOOM! Please check the WB Google Group
or visit our Facebook page to sign up for the meeting.

All residents (both in-district and out-of-district) are invited and **encouraged** to attend this meeting. Membership must be current in order to vote in the election or run for office. There's a self addressed envelope inside and membership form available on page 12, or you may join at our online Square link: <https://squareup.com/store/wbna-inc/>. It's quick and easy! Please be sure and enter a valid email address.

In February of 2016, the membership voted to adopt two year terms and assign place numbers. Odd numbered places are to be elected during odd years; even numbered places are up for election in even years. This February, we'll be selecting board members for Places 1, 3, 5, and 7. During 2020, the WBNA organization witnessed several significant changes, to say nothing of the issues brought on by the COVID19 pandemic. As governed by the WBNA Bylaws, suddenly vacant roles within the organization were filled by appointees pending ratification at the next general meeting. **Places 2 and 4**, held by **Darci Marter** and **Juli Thatcher**, respectively, will be up for ratification at the meeting. **Place 6** is held by **Pamela Woodward**.

In addition to these places, the following current board members are willing to continue serving the neighborhood in 2021/22 and will be seeking re-election. They are:

Place 1 - Lara Bennett

Place 3 - Donna Malone

Place 5 - Jon Klekman

Place 7 - Margaret Sufke

Additional nominations will be taken from the floor.

Learn more about our existing Board on pages 2-4.

Help Shape YOUR Community! Get Involved!

The WBNA is quite literally a labor of love. It was created by and is run by VOLUNTEERS. **We need your membership, but more than that, we need you!** Please consider joining the WBNA and volunteering your time and talents. Newsletter skills? Great at fundraising? Ideas for new events, educational seminars or activities?

Join WBNA and help make a difference in our community!

Coming THIS SPRING! The WBNA Bunny Hop

Saturday, April 3 • 10am-1pm

In March of 2020, the entire Wells Branch community was required to lockdown. The Easter Egg Hunt was one of the first events to be cancelled. While limited to COVID19 restraints, we'd like to help the community celebrate spring this year with the WBNA Easter Bunny "Hop-Along". Family groups will "hop along the bunny trail" (a drive-by route), stopping to view the Easter Bunny on his decorated Easter "float". Each child will receive a small bag of wrapped treats. (There will be some reserved treats for smaller children or food allergies). Online registration is required and will be posted in advance to our Facebook page and the WB Google Group.

Coyote Safety Reminder

It's breeding season again for our resident coyotes. That, on top of all the current construction surrounding Wells Branch, increases their activity and the likelihood that you may encounter one on your walks, or even in your yard. Please visit the sites listed below and make sure you're following all their suggestions. Both sites cover tips on deterring coyotes and discuss how to best protect your fur babies. Most of all, keep an eye on small pets and keep them leashed when on the trails. **Be safe, not sorry!**

- austintexas.gov/departments/coyotes-central-texas
- humanesociety.org/animals/coyotes/tips/coyotes_pets.html

It is important to report coyote activity so that Animal Protection Officer Emery Sadkin can monitor behavior. If you have any questions or wish to report a sighting, please contact Officer Sadkin at emery.sadkin@austintexas.gov or call 311 (512-974-2000).

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WBNA Membership Renewal on Page 12.
Envelope Inside. Please Join!

To the Our Wells Branch Friends and Neighbors—

During the 2020 pandemic the WBNA board elected to suspend publication of the **WBNA Neighborhood News** newsletter. There were several contributing factors for this decision; the safety of the delivery volunteers, reduced content and event coverage, advertising cut backs, and production costs vs. limited fund raising.

Rest assured that the WBNA board members heard the concerns throughout the neighborhood that the **WBNA Neighborhood News** newsletter was sorely missed. As 2021 unfolds the board will continue to evaluate the on-going safety concerns, but at this time, we're pleased to be back on your doorsteps!

The **WBNA website (wbna.us)** is currently down, pending renovation. The site was taken down a few months ago with technical and logistical issues that were outstripped by the pandemic. During this down time all the other social media sites have been used to communicate the necessary updates and news. Much like the newsletter, as the pandemic situation changes, the board will bring the website back online and is looking forward to providing neighborhood news, advertising and event updates.

We appreciate the continued support and interest from the entire Wells Branch community, we have missed serving you.

We look forward to seeing everyone at our first ZOOM meeting of the year on March 4, at 7pm. We'll have more on the link via email and Facebook this weekend. And now, we'd like you to meet our current WBNA Board.



Hello, I am **Donna Malone** and I became a WBNA board member about a year after I moved to Wells Branch 10 years ago. I first met the board at my favorite WB event, the 4th Fest Silent Auction! The board was so warm and inviting, informing Paul and I about everything our neighborhood, neighbors and local business had to offer. We still believe

that we live in the best neighborhood around and what makes it so special is everyone that lives here.

When we moved here our oldest son was 9 months old, since we have grown as a family and now have 2 boys and 1 girl ages; 9, 7 and 3. Our family enjoys all aspects of WB such as; the Library, Pioneer Pals, Scouts, Tennis, Soccer, Disc Golf, Swim Teams, our amazing trails and all the events that happen here. The cool thing is that our neighborhood is designed to grow with us and to be perfect for all neighbors. As my kids grow there are more fun activities for them as well!

One more fact about me is that my husband Paul and I started our company here in WB with our neighbors about 7 years ago! After having my 2nd son, the taste of coffee was no longer good, my pregnancy had heightened my senses. So, Paul and I went on a quest in search of the perfect cup of coffee. One day he came home and said, "we're going to roast our own coffee!" and so we did. It was amazing, so of course we shared with our neighbors and started selling our coffee beans and delivering the beans to our neighbors doorsteps. With amazing drive, great coffee and our backgrounds being in Graphic Design, Fine Arts, Business and Marketing we had all the tools to start what you all know as Malone Specialty Coffee!

I am very happy to live in Wells Branch and be a part of the WBNA, my favorite part is meeting all of my neighbors!



Howdy! I'm **Margaret Sufke**, a Wells Branch resident since 2013. I have been active in the community for several years; A current WBNA board member, serving for the past six years. I also served one term as secretary on the WB Friends of the Library board. In addition, I established and chair the Wells Branch Photo Club, now in it's 7th year. I've played an active role in community program development and support of the WB Eco Fair, Cultural Diversity Fair and the WB Community Calendar photo contest. I maintain active participation in many on-going WBNA, FOL and MUD community events including guest speaker for several community programs such as the FOL Adult Financial Series, Disney's First Star and the Solar Project Planning program.

Building Community Together. The WBNA motto says it all. Working together for the benefit of the entire community fosters fellowship and strengthens the sense of community within Wells Branch. Each community member's individual contribution is what makes Wells Branch great. I would like to offer a personal commitment to help build that spirit of community.

In my professional life, I'm a Senior Program Manager, Instructional Designer, Technical Instructor and Quality Process Engineer with strong technology-based and photographic skills. And of course, a true sense of fun and imagination. Please feel free to contact me at mmsufke@gmail.com or 512-341-0428.

My name is **Pamela Woodward**. I moved from Central Austin to the Wells Branch community in 2008. I raised my youngest daughter in the neighborhood beginning with kindergarten at Wells Branch Elementary. She is now a senior at McNeil HS. I've had the pleasure of volunteering at many of the neighborhood MUD and WBNA functions, including Fourth Fest, the Luminary Festival, the Easter Egg Hunt, Neighborhood Night Out, and the quarterly bulk waste disposal. I especially enjoy soliciting items for the Fourth Fest silent auction, working at the arts and crafts tables at the Luminary Festival, and judging the Christmas light contest. For a number of years, I worked as a surgery scheduler in medical office and hospital settings. I halted my career to care for my daughter during recovery from surgery for Chiari malformation and scoliosis. In the last year, I worked at various Travis County elections as an election clerk. In my free time, you're likely to find me enjoying my main interests, gardening and cooking.



I've seen how special this community is, not only first-hand, but through the eyes of my daughters and three grandchildren, for whom Wells Branch has been a home-away-from-home. My entire family has enjoyed the Wells Branch festivals, parks, pools, and trail system, and we have all experienced the unique feeling of community that is so strong in the Wells Branch neighborhood.

Prior to the pandemic, I was elected to the board of the Wells Branch Neighborhood Association. I am looking forward to working for the benefit of the Wells Branch community. Working together, the neighborhood will emerge from the pandemic and continue to be a wonderful place to work and live.



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Hello Wells Branch! I'm **Lara Bennett**.

I've been involved with the WBNA since 2000 when I ran my first Easter Egg Hunt for the neighborhood. The WBNA Easter Egg Hunt has always been a family affair with my son as the Easter Bunny for several years and now my husband. I have so enjoyed the events that involve the kids. I love seeing the joy on their faces during the Christmas Hayride and the Pumpkin Painting. Working for a wonderful community like Wells Branch as part of the neighborhood association has been a happy time for me. I look forward to many more Easter Egg Hunts and Hayrides!



Hi Neighbors! I'm **Darci Marter**. I moved to Wells Branch about 3 years and I fell in love with this community instantly. The neighborhood reminds me a lot of my childhood in Georgia. I spend a lot of time at Katherine Fleischer park with my 3 year old boy and 5 year old daughter. WBNA events have made special memories for my family. Our favorite events are the 4th of July fest, pumpkin painting, and the holiday crafts. Before moving here, I taught art for 11 years in Omaha, Nebraska. I have a degree in Art Education. When I'm not being mom, I'm a visual artist and jewelry designer. I design copper jewelry through an art process called Electroforming. I have always had passion for creating and a love for teaching. As a member, I look forward to planning crafts and activities for the events. And most importantly, I look forward to getting to know everyone.



Hello Wells Branch! My name is **Juli Thatcher**. I am honored to be serving on the Neighborhood Association Board! For the past 8 years, I have been a parent, community member, and small business owner in Wells Branch. I own a fitness franchise for moms called FIT4MOM Pflugerville. We provide outdoor fitness and wellness classes for every stage of motherhood and strive to build a tight knit mama village. We hold classes in Pflugerville and Wells Branch. Work out with us, Mama!



My husband, Todd, and I have lived in many places together, across several states. Neither of us grew up in Austin, but Wells Branch has become Home. I left a career I loved when my husband's company moved us to Austin, contrary to my own career plan. I was scared, we didn't know a soul here, and we had a 6-week-old baby. Wells Branch took us in and gave us a true family in a new place. This neighborhood means so much to my family. My children attend public school in this neighborhood, we work, live, and play in this neighborhood, and I run the trails on a regular basis when I need some tranquility. We've attended almost every event by now. We've enjoyed getting to know so many of you and I'm excited to get to know those of you that I haven't met yet! I'm looking forward to building community through future events and can't wait to see what we can do together!

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Hello neighborhood, I'm **Jon Klekman**, and am super honored to continue my work bringing together this beautiful, talented and diverse community. In organizing driveway Jazz performances during the pandemic, I had a great opportunity to meet so many of you and your families. We've had conversations about what you love about the neighborhood and what's important to



you and how you'd like to participate in its progress. I can't wait to help bring us together to share our talents and visions. Here are a few projects I hope to work on (some of which already exist and are on pandemic pause) with the support of the team and neighborhood: Civics classes (virtual and in person when safe), Communication of local government resources/updates via social media, Litter Pick Up Events, Senior Events geared towards camaraderie, updates to Welcome One-Pagers for new Wells Branch residents with links and resources, WB Small Business guild (including business spotlights/networking), Performances (poetry, music and art), Wellness Committee, Neighborhood sourced Public Safety Improvements and support and promotion of our WB Photography Club.

A little about me: I was born in New York and moved to Austin in 2008 at the height of the recession with only my bass and a suitcase. I have lived in South Austin, East Austin and finally Wells Branch since then. I met my wife during one of my visits to Austin and we have been together ever since + 1 toddler now. My day job is working for the Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS), and I also lead and manage my Jazz group which plays public and private shows, many shows geared towards local non-profits.

WB Photo Club: Pandemic Update by Margaret Sufke

The start of 2021 brings fresh hope and the start of the 7th year of our neighborhood photo group. The 2020 COVID19 pandemic shook the world and the Wells Branch community was certainly impacted. With the forced closure of the WB Rec Center, all regular club meetings were effectively canceled.

Several club members, notably Rob White, Dave DeVore and Candice Noble, along with many other community members, posted some amazing photos to the WB Facebook page. A heartfelt thank you to those who contributed, your efforts were greatly appreciated.

Normally those images would have been showcased during the annual WBNA calendar contest. Efforts were made to try and host the contest and produce a 2021 calendar. Regrettably, logistics and production issues overtook the program.

Moving forward with optimism, there will be a WBNA calendar contest this year, producing a calendar for 2022. The logistics are currently being reviewed. We've already received a commitment from Malone's Coffee to host the "winner's gallery" again. Look for more information in the next month or two and start capturing your favorite images.

Big news on the photo "education and technique" front, we were able to obtain some extra lighting gear and have collected some additional studio equipment, such as lighting booths, a back drop stand and various reflectors. The goal is to share the equipment with the club members, via some sort of check out process. Look for more to come on this program soon.

As winter wanes and spring blossoms, please head out onto the trails and gardens and enjoy all our community has to offer, albeit with safety in mind. Happy year and happy snapping!

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It's Girl Scout Cookie time! by Emily Berver

Due to COVID 19, the cookie sale looks different this year. However, there are lots of Girl Scouts in Wells Branch that are out there still selling cookies! Be on the lookout for door hangers or flyers with ordering information that a nearby Girl Scout might leave at your door. Many girls have signs in their yards with a link and/or QR code to their online cookie store. This contactless delivery method works much like if you were to buy cookies from her at your door, the sale goes to the girl, and she'll be responsible for the delivery if you have selected Girl Delivered.

There are no extra fees to order girl delivered cookies. After you enter your contact information and place an order, the girl's parents will receive an email and can confirm if they have the required cookies and can deliver. This year's cookie line up is Thin Mints, Caramel Delites, Peanut Butter Patties, Lemonades, Peanut Butter Sandwiches, Shortbreads, GS S'mores and the brand new Toast Yay Cookie!

The Girl Scout cookie program will continue through February 28, 2021. Thank you for supporting Girl Scouts!



**The Wells Branch Kite Festival
has been cancelled for 2021, due
to COVID Stage 4 in Travis County. We will
be back with more kite flying fun in 2022!**

Garden Guild News by Heather Johnson

The Wells Branch Garden Guild is holding an online seed and plant exchange on the Wells Branch Garden Guild Facebook page. Please feel free to join!

WB MUD Bulk Trash

March 13 • 8am-2pm

13905 Thermal Drive

**Must be WB MUD Resident*

**Bulk Trash & Metal Recycling ONLY*

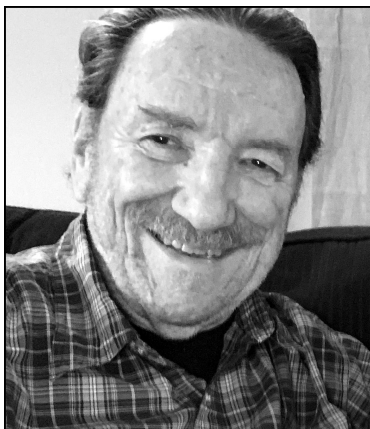
**Must unload your own vehicle—assistance NOT available*

Need help transporting your Trash & Recyclables?

Venture Crew 1409 is here to help!

The young men and women of our WB Venture Crew will be offering trailer transportation of larger items to the Bulk Trash event on March 13 for a minimum donation of \$20. Please tip accordingly. All monies received will be used for future Venturing endeavors.

Transportation is limited to WB MUD In-District residents only. Please schedule your pick up with Daniel White by Friday, March 12. You may reach him at 512-413-0097 or danwhitewb@gmail.com.



Chuck Walters

Chuck's strong sense of community and friendship helped to shape and define the true spirit of Wells Branch. Please take a minute to remember him as you enjoy all the benefits of our wonderful community in the coming months. We all agree, he will be missed but his contributions will not be forgotten.

It's worth noting that

Chuck's presence touched nearly everyone in Wells Branch in some way. Over the years, he held many positions within the community, WB MUD Board President, WB Armada President, WBNA Vice President, Homestead Board President, WB MUD ACC Board Chair, role model and District Representative for the various scouting programs, active participant in the WB FOL (Friends of the Library), as well as his tireless efforts for our community and his constant presence and on-going participation in the various neighborhood events. Chuck was a wealth of knowledge, a strong ally and a true friend. He is missed.

Now Hiring!

Wells Branch MUD is seeking to hire lifeguards. They offer flexible scheduling and a safe work environment.

Please visit wellsbranchmud.com/jobs for details and how to apply.

They will also be offering American Red Cross Lifeguard Training this spring. For more info, please call or email Katie at 512-516-2621, khutcheson@wellsbranchmud.com.

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Free and Fair Elections?

Wells Branch: YOU ARE HERE

US House District 17 Map

Partisan gerrymandering is NOT FAIR!

Speak Out!

Public Hearings via Zoom: Jan 25 - Feb 27

Email Testimony: senate.texas.gov/redistrictingcomment

Are you tired of being gerrymandered?

by Jeaneane McNulty, WB Resident

Are you tired of being gerrymandered? Did you know Wells Branch's US Congressional District #17 stretches north past Waco, east into Leon County, and includes just a tiny sliver of the counties that Wells Branch actually belongs to? Now is your chance to be heard by the TX Senate Redistricting Committee, who will redraw our US Congressional District, as well as state districts this year! With the loss of federal redistricting oversight in 2013 ("pre-clearance"), public input is vitally important to ensuring an open process that results in fair boundaries that are non-partisan and non-discriminatory. The last three regional virtual hearings (via Zoom), including the one for the Austin area have been postponed due to the winter weather crisis. Keep checking the links below or follow Wells Branch Dems, WBNA and/or Wells Branch Melting Pot on Facebook for new dates as they are known. **You may speak at any hearing.** Testimony is limited to 2 minutes. You may also submit written testimony if you prefer - or do both!

Redistricting Testimony Resources:

Submit written testimony: senate.texas.gov/redistrictingcomment

Redistricting Committee website: <https://senate.texas.gov/cmte.php?c=625>

Scroll down the Committee website above to access the "2021 Regional Hearings" link and sign up to testify via Zoom.

Non-partisan testimony guides: fairmapstexas.org/testimony-guides, mapsbythepeople.org/create-a-testimony/

Non-partisan virtual testimony training: <https://bit.ly/3bl2GVp>

Silver Branchers 2021 Information

Like most social activities, the Silver Branchers have been on hold since last March. We generally meet Thursdays from 1 to 3 PM at the Wells Branch Rec. Center, 3000 Shoreline Drive, to visit and play games. Our current plan is to meet when we have enough members who are fully vaccinated. We will be in contact with each other and the MUD to see when we can resume this activity. If you are not currently a member and would like to be kept up to date, please email Glen Garey at glennoe@att.net or call him at 512-461-1665. We also have socials and take day trips to local places of interest from time-to-time. Watch for updates!

Help for Wells Branch homeless: Texas Bungalows hotel to become supportive, permanent housing

by Jeaneane McNulty, WB Resident

It is Friday afternoon, and my kids and I are heading up I35 to get "boba tea" - a weekly reward for completion of schoolwork and chores. We stop at the light on Grand Ave, and as usual, a man stands on the thin center strip with a sign asking for help. Today I happen to have a coupon for a free sandwich at a store within walking distance of this corner, so I mask up and hand it to him out the window. He thanks me. The exchange lasts only a second, but as the light turns and we pass under the freeway, my mind stays with this man, and with the larger issue of the tent community of homeless people who shelter there. How long has he lived there? Does he have mental health problems? Is he an addict? A veteran? Where is his family? Where does he go to the bathroom? Who will clean up the trash that the tent city accumulates? Did my coupon really help at all?

The growing issue of homelessness has come to roost in Wells Branch. As a community, we are no longer able to turn a blind eye to the growing population of housing insecure people as it spills from Austin into our neighborhood. "We never used to see so many" I've thought, and it is true. The number of homeless people is growing in outdoor habitable cities across the US. It is an issue that the city of Austin has recognized, and with the help of a redistribution of city funding, is trying to address head on. On Jan 28th, city council approved the purchase of Texas Bungalows Hotel. The 3-year old, 65 room property is located on the northbound frontage of N. Mopac between the Wells Branch and Scofield neighborhoods. According to local news reports, the city intends to transform it not into a shelter, but into 60 units of permanent, supportive housing designed to get chronically homeless people off the street and keep them housed. Residents of the new housing will be connected to services such as medical, dental, mental health care and work reintegration.

Wells Branch has a long history of helping our neighbors in need. While increased homelessness in our neighborhood is cause for concern, there is much we can do as a community and as individuals to help address it. The first step is to become informed. The more I learn about the actual causes of homelessness, the more I have been able to move past my initial gut reaction (fear, annoyance, anger, guilt) towards compassion and real solutions. The next step is to get involved! City leaders and other local organizations committed to solving homelessness need involvement from Wells Branch so that solutions have the best chance for success here. We know our neighborhood best, and we live here every day. I have listed resources below to help our community learn more about homelessness in our area, and to engage effectively so that solutions reflect our values as a community and ultimately reduce homelessness.

Austin's Homeless Strategy: austintexas.gov/homelessness

Causes of homelessness: austininnovation.wixsite.com/solveforhomelessness/current-state-of-the-system

Austin's Homeless Coordinator is Dianna Grey. Email: austin-texas.gov/email/health

Resources for those currently experiencing housing insecurity: austintexas.gov/department/safety-net-resources

Welcome Back!

Numbers to know

January statistics of existing home sales in Wells Branch, comparing January 2020 vs. 2021

According to the ACTRIS* MLS system:

2020	1-Story Homes	2021
\$194 = Median PPSF**		\$236 = Median PPSF**
6 = Homes Closed		6 = Homes Closed
21 = Avg DOM**		8 = Avg DOM**

2020	2-Story Homes	2021
\$158 = Median PPSF**		\$231 = Median PPSF**
4 = Homes Closed		2 = Homes Closed
24 = Avg DOM**		5 = Avg DOM**

*Austin Central TX Information System, homes closed. E-mail Pam for Full Stat Sheet **PPSF=price per Sq Ft/DOM=Days on Mkt

What does this mean?

WE HAVE AN INVENTORY SHORTAGE!

There are currently NO active properties in Wells Branch (as of 2/5/21 and not including newer areas beyond Cadoz/Grand Ave. extensions.)

INTEREST RATES ARE AT HISTORIC LOWS!

This means buyers have more buying power, YOU have more buying power on your next home -OR- if you closed on a home in 2020 or prior, there's a good chance you could save money by refinancing to a lower interest rate. I have a great list of lenders that would be happy to help!

Homes are getting THOUSANDS over asking!

There's never a guarantee, but the current inventory shortage combined with other factors has resulted in homes going for crazy amounts over asking, IE: one home in Round Rock got 97 offers and sold for \$171k over asking! Having an experienced agent that knows how to handle the intricacies of that many offers and is able to assist you in determining the offers that have the highest chance of getting to the closing table is crucial!

Would you like to keep up with YOUR stats?

Call or e-mail today and ask to be set up on a Market Watch for your specific area.

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4 Ways to Naturally Boost Immunity *by Morgan Simon, WB Resident*

Fostering a healthy immune system is, understandably, top of mind for everyone right now. In addition to a global pandemic, we're also in the middle of winter which naturally sees a spike in seasonal illnesses like cold and flu. (1) Thankfully, there are many things we can do to naturally boost immunity - several of which can be done without spending a penny or leaving your home!

Sunshine

It's well known just how important Vitamin D is for health, but the protective benefits for illness make it even more important in our current environment. A 2016 meta-analysis found that optimal Vitamin D levels reduces the risk of acute respiratory tract infection, and more recent studies have found that vitamin D deficiency is far more prevalent in patients with severe cases of COVID-19 requiring ICU admission. (2, 3)

One easy, completely free way to get your fill of Vitamin D is to simply head outside and soak up some sun! When skin is exposed to sunlight, it uses our body's cholesterol to produce the ever-important Vitamin D. It is best absorbed when larger areas of skin are exposed; namely the stomach, back, and thighs. Additionally, timing matters - around noon tends to be the most effective time for absorption, though Apps like D Minder can give optimal timing for Vitamin D based on location. (4)

And of course, sunburn should *always* be avoided. Individuals with lighter skin will need less time in the sun to produce adequate Vitamin D, while those with darker skin will require more sun. (5, 6, 7) If you suspect you may be low in Vitamin D, work with your health care provider to test serum levels to determine if supplementation is necessary.

Ample Water Intake

What does water have to do with immunity? Well, quite a lot as it turns out! Water carries oxygen to cells, transports nutrients, regulates body temperature, and eliminates toxins from the body. When water content in the body drops by even 2%, it can cause health problems. (8) Specifically, not being able to optimally eliminate toxins and transport nutrients can make the body more susceptible to infections - something we are all hoping to avoid. (9)

While water requirements vary largely person-to-person, a good starting point is to divide your weight by 2 and drink that amount of ounces as a daily minimum. Additional water should be added to account for diuretic beverages (coffee, alcohol, juice, soda, etc.) as well as activity level and external temperature.

Tip: Don't forget about electrolytes! Optimal hydration can't be achieved without proper electrolyte balance. I love adding a pinch of Himalayan pink salt and a squeeze of lemon to my water as a natural electrolyte solution.

Get Moving

A healthy movement routine is vital for a well functioning immune system. Studies have shown that exercise helps diversify bacteria in our gut, flushes bacteria from airways, and supports healthy regulation of stress hormones which may correlate to increased immunity (10). A healthy movement routine looks different for everyone, but one great way to incorporate regular physical activity is to simply walk, jog, or bike our beautiful neighborhood trails!

Eliminate Refined Sugars

I saved this one for last, though it is arguably one of the most important! To keep it short and simple: refined sugars essentially suppress the immune system. Sugar reduces how cells perform, specifically white blood cells which play a key role in fighting infection. One study showed a decrease in white blood cell effectiveness of up to 50% after consuming sugar, lasting up to 5 hours! (11)

One easy way to help mitigate the amount of sugar you consume is to do a few simple swaps in the kitchen! Opt for marinara sauce, salad dressings, and BBQ sauces that don't contain added sugar (which is often sneakily added to these products!). For baking and cooking, swap out refined white sugar for coconut sugar, honey or maple syrup. (Don't, however, opt for artificial sweeteners, which have been shown to be even more harmful than sugar).

Overwhelmed by all of the options? My suggestion: pick one immunity booster to work on! Even small changes can have a profound health impact when done regularly. Know that your neighborhood nutritionist is cheering you on this year!

Note: Everything stated above is for educational purposes only and not intended as medical advice. Consult your healthcare provider before beginning any new supplement/health protocol.

About the Author: Morgan Simon is a Functional Nutritional Therapy Practitioner (FNTPT). She works with individuals and families to help them address imbalances within the body, adopt a nutrient-dense lifestyle, and reduce environmental toxins. A 7-year Wells Branch resident, you can often find her on the WB trails with her two kids or checking out books from the WBCL. You can find her on her website at www.wellthymed.com or on Instagram @wellthymed.

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Joe Lee Johnson Elementary is excited to announce Garden Clubs for 2021!

We have a Joe Lee Johnson Virtual Garden Club! All JJJ remote learners can sign up on the Joe Lee Johnson website under the student tab, at Garden Club. We have supplies to go home with remote learners, and online weekly meetings.

We also have a Joe Lee Johnson On-Campus Student Led Garden Club! This is very exciting! We have two 4th grade boys who are planning to offer a Gardening Acceleration Club on Tuesdays from 9:45-10:45 for 2nd graders. It is like a student led enrichment cluster! For more information, contact Lacy Bartlett • lacy_bartlett@roundrockisd.org



WBSA Soccer Spring Season

We are happy to announce that registration is now open for the 2021 Spring Season at Wells Branch Soccer Association. Following appropriate established COVID-19 protocols, the Executive Board and the team of volunteers are excited to get another season under way. Visit wellsbranchsoccer.com to register or to find out more information on the best valued soccer program in the area.



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Financial Advisor

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WE MISS YOU!

The library building is closed to the public for everyone's safety. Library staff are working regular hours to bring you virtual and contact-free programs and services during the pandemic.

WHAT'S NEW

Library of Things: Go beyond books - now you can check out board games, armchair traveler kits, electronics such as WiFi hotspots, and more with your library card! See our website for more information.

Black History Month Reading Challenge: Celebrate all through February. Log your reading and complete challenges to earn raffle tickets, while exploring centuries of Black history. Also browse our booklists online to discover great Black authors! <https://www.wblibrary.org/Black-History-Month>

Dial-A-Story: Call 737-255-9100 to listen to recorded stories, poems, jokes, and library news!

Free Help for Job Searchers: With Brainfuse JobNow, you get access to live job coaching online, resume writing help, interview prep, and even unemployment assistance – free with your library card. Looking for a personalized resume review? Our librarians offer proofreading by email. Contact staff@wblibrary.org to request a review.

Virtual Learning & Homeschooling: Get free homework help & tutoring from live tutors through Brainfuse HelpNow. Assistance available for a variety of subjects at all grade levels. Now includes free, live Chess instruction!

For more virtual resources, visit the library website or log into these services at <https://www.wblibrary.org/digital-library>. We offer resources for Language Learning, auto repair, and so much more.

CONTACT-FREE SERVICES

Pick up books, movies, and more - contact-free!

Reserve items online through the library catalog & pick up during regular service hours. See website for current check-out limits.

Mobile Printing – Print from anywhere. Submit a document through the library website or use the PrinterOn app, then pick up during regular service hours. See website for details & instructions.

BookFlight Bundles- Need suggestions on what to read next? Request your personalized BookFlight Bundle, with books selected just for you by our librarians. Visit wblibrary.org/bookflight-bundles.

1040 Tax Forms – Available 24/7 in the library breezeway, along with information on free tax assistance in the area.

Digital Library– Borrow books, music, comics, movies, audiobooks, and magazines directly from home using Overdrive & Hoopla. Let the kids watch a book on Tumblebooks or visit our Digital Storytime Room to choose a favorite program presented by our librarians.

Library Programs go Virtual: Join us online for a multitude of virtual programs through Facebook & Zoom. We've got something for everyone: Virtual yoga, Writers Guild, Craft Nights, Book Clubs, Storytimes, Wacky Science, Lego Lab, Alphabuddies for early literacy, and more! See the full calendar of events at www.wblibrary.org.

To see everything happening at the library, check out our website and event calendar at **WBLIBRARY.ORG**.



SCAN ME

COVID Food Supply Heroes: Locked down but not out! by Margaret Sufke

During the early stages of the COVID19 lockdown, basic food stuffs and household goods were hard to come by. Many folks were scrambling to find the essentials like flour, eggs, fresh produce, toilet paper and cleaning supplies. Several local area small business owners stepped up and went above and beyond to help our neighbors get what they needed most.

This is our first chance since the lock down began to showcase these local heroes, shining the spotlight on Wells Branch businesses that demonstrated a real sense of community spirit: Branch BBQ, Dream Bakery, Four Seasons Chinese Restaurant and Oasis Pizza & Café.

Branch BBQ, Chris Carby, Owner: (512) 990-5282
Located in Wells Branch Plaza, branchbbq.com

Chris and his team used their rationed restaurant resources and bought large quantities of eggs, milk, flour, toilet paper, paper towels and other basics. Chris would then post messaging to the various neighborhood social groups that supplies were available and to stop by and collect what you needed—**at no charge**. He would accept donations, they were not required. All he asked was that each community member take only what was really needed. The program worked very well.

"We are so grateful for the community support we have received over the years, we were glad to help out." — Chris Carby

Dream Bakery, Karen Fry, Owner: (512) 219-1235
Located in Wells Branch Medical Center, dreambakery.com

Dream Bakery provides not only delicious traditional baked goods, but offers a complete menu of gluten-free and keto treats. Karen provided an order/pick up service for basic food ingredients, which included some healthy alternatives which were gluten free. There was an easy order system and prices were reasonable.

This is an amazing community! The support we have received from everyone has helped us grow our business. It was an honor to give back to the families in Wells Branch. — Karen Fry

Four Seasons Chinese, Tracy Yuan, Owner: (512) 251-0827
Located in Bratton Square, fourseasonschinesetx.com

Tracy took an innovative approach to helping feed people. She offered hot, ready to eat take away meals loaded with fresh vegetables and tasty meats—the meals were enough to feed 3 people. She targeted single working parents who were struggling to shop and prepare food for their small family. The meals were free, and were offered several days a week, just in time for an early dinner. Tracy and her staff also sold a reasonably priced package of PPE faces masks and she had those on hand when no one else did.

Oasis Pizza & Café (now closed) hosted: **The Produce Project**
Livia Pope, Program Chair and Local Small Business Owner
All Dolled Up Make-up and Hair: www.AllDolledUpAtx.com

Oasis Pizza and Café, originally owned by Angela Williams partnered with Livia Pope and Karen Fry to provide fresh produce through a unique online ordering system and with store front pick up. This was a huge help to WB neighborhood families. The community-minded café owner shared the restaurant store front during tough times. Livia Pope contacted local produce wholesalers, such as Sysco Foods and Restaurant Depot and developed a short-term produce delivery program. The program only lasted 6 weeks, then sadly the café was forced to shut its doors. Livia is now continuing with her beauty product business as people are beginning to host functions once again.

BRANCH BAR-B-Q & CATERING

Chris' Weekly Specials

Wednesday

Chili

Thursday

Homemade Meatloaf

Friday

**Chicken –n– Dumplings
Collard Greens & Candied Yams**

**1779 Wells Branch Pkwy., Austin, TX 78728
(512) 990-5282 • branchbbq.com**

I was just so frustrated at not being able to find fresh produce. With so many things shut down, I had time to help and could see a real need, so I used my creativity and marketing skills to help the Wells Branch community. — Livia Pope

As the pandemic continues to rage on, community members have settled down into what is now a familiar pattern of getting by and doing a lot more meal prep at home, these local businesses also offer a great way stretch your menu by offering a wide variety of tasty to-go menu options.

Please continue to patronize these truly amazing local area businesses; they are one of the many things that make the Wells Branch community GREAT!

Austin State Hospital Fundraiser

Austin State Hospital (ASH)'s nonprofit organization, the Volunteer Services Council (VSC) has a mission to enhance the quality of life for people hospitalized at ASH and the staff who serve them. The ASH Dash 5K Bunny Run is the VSC's largest annual fundraiser. Every penny raised goes to patient programming and staff appreciation. Usually, we welcome hundreds of visitors to the ASH campus; but we've now converted it to a virtual 5K. After signing up, you complete the run in the park, by the lake, on a treadmill, etc...

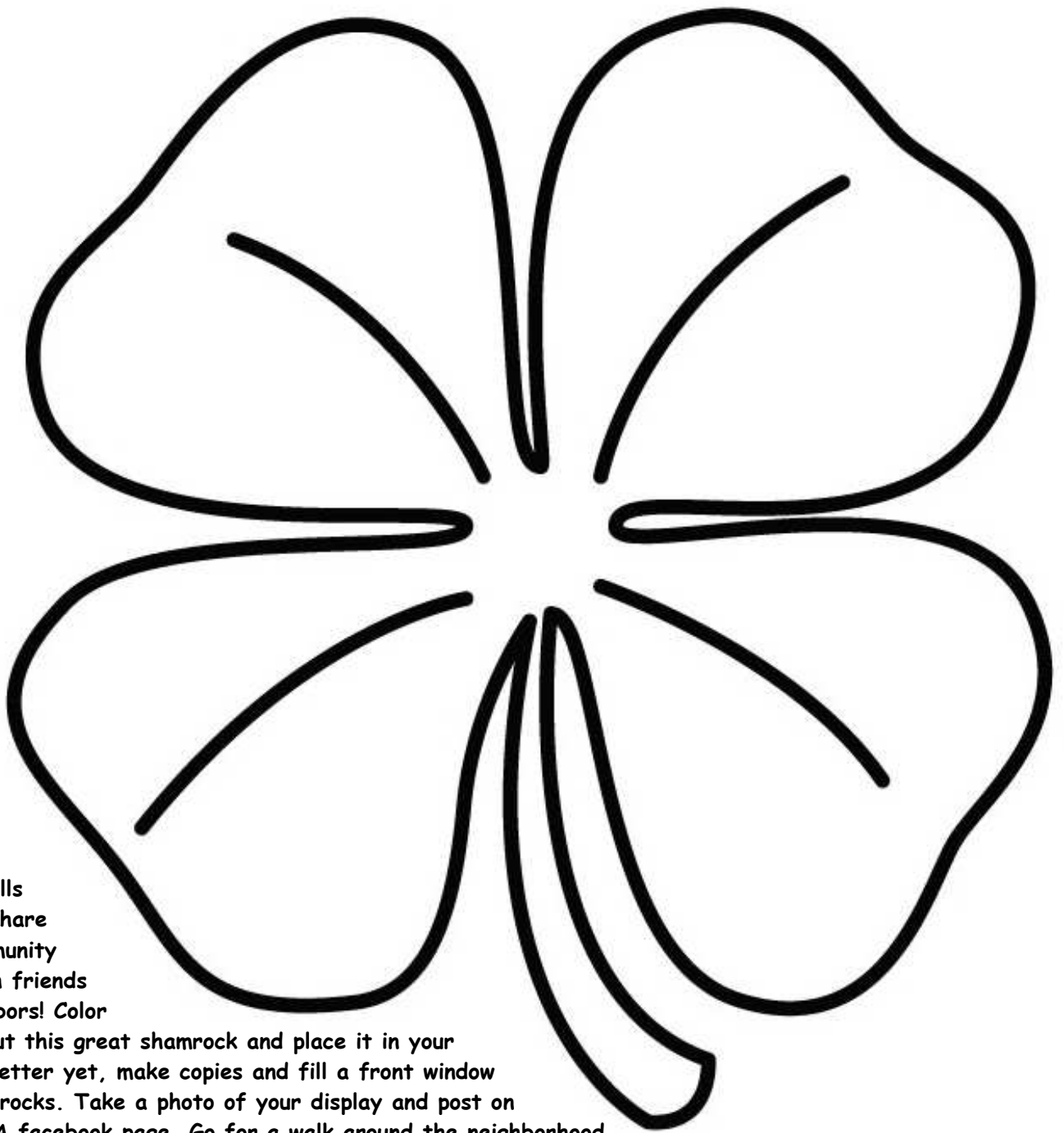
Go to ashvolunteers.org for more information on how you can help mental healthcare in Central Texas.

FOL News!

Friends of the Library (FOL) believes charity begins at home. For this reason, we have chosen the Wells Branch Buy Nothing page to gift the treasures from the 2020 Annual Garage Sale, which was cancelled due to COVID.

Be on the lookout for the heading "FOL GIVES" on the Buy Nothing Facebook page. We will be offering decorative, practical and just-for-fun things.

If you'd like more information on joining the Friends of the Library, head to <http://wbfriends.org/> - we'd love to have you join us as we support the Wells Branch Community Library!



We are LUCKY to live in Wells Branch. Share your community spirit with friends and neighbors! Color and cut out this great shamrock and place it in your window. Better yet, make copies and fill a front window with shamrocks. Take a photo of your display and post on the WBNA facebook page. Go for a walk around the neighborhood and count how many shamrocks you can find. Show off your Wells Branch spirit!

OFFICE USE ONLY

Support your Neighborhood Association

Date: _____ by joining the WBNA and continue to make Wells Branch great!

Check: _____ Here is my check (made out to WBNA) for \$20 annual dues for 2021.

I am: _____ renewing my membership _____ a new member

Name(s) _____ E-mail: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

I/we want to help with: _____ Newsletter Delivery _____ Crime Watch _____ July 4th

_____ Easter Egg Hunt _____ Nat'l Night Out _____ Luminary Fest

MAIL TO: WBNA Membership, 2104 Klattenhoff, Austin, TX. 78728

