



JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2010

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Task Force Recommends New Boundaries in SW Austin

Travis Country to Remain at OHE Based on Plan By Casie Wenmohs

The Austin ISD Facilities Use and Boundary Task Force (FUBTF) has completed its task of re-drawing the Southwest Austin elementary boundaries. The FUBTF's boundary map proposal, Plan 3, will now go to the AISD Board of Trustees for consideration. The Board will review the proposal at their work session on February 8; they will then vote on the plan at their February 22 meeting. All AISD Board meetings are broadcast live on cable channel 22.

Under the Plan 3 proposal, Travis Country remains zoned to Oak Hill Elementary. Many Oak Hill parents and TC residents are happy about this result as it means continuation of a successful 36-year partnership between TC and OHE.

This pleasant conclusion to the boundary process was not always assured. Throughout the boundary process (which began in October), the idea of moving "Area 49," the planning section of the boundary map that includes Travis Country, to Sunset Valley Elementary had floated around but never really gained traction.

In early January, concerned TC residents took the initiative to make sure their opinions about school boundaries would be heard by AISD. Many contacted the AISD Board of Trustees and the Austin City Council to voice their support for Travis Country remaining zoned to Oak Hill Elementary. This included a unanimous letter of support from the TCCSA Board of Directors to the school board.

In addition to the school board outreach campaign, dozens of neighborhood parents turned out for the January 5 AISD Community Meeting on the boundary map. They either spoke or submitted written comments in support of keeping TC at OHE. Anthony Peterman, TCCSA Board President and OHE parent, addressed the Task Force on behalf of the TCCSA Board.

At the January 12 FUBTF meeting, it became clear that the first item on the agenda for the January 21 meeting would be to consider moving Area 49 (including Travis Country) to Sunset Valley Elementary. This imminent threat led TC to mobilize even more. An online petition was created that received 346 signatures in 72 hours. The petition's message was that re-zoning TC away from Oak Hill to Sunset Valley Elementary would actually de-stabilize both schools. Oak Hill would lose substantial volunteer and financial support while Sunset Valley would not be likely to gain the students and precious parental resources they desired due to transfers or other educational choices.

In addition to its boundary proposal, the FUBTF made a number of recommendations to the Board of Trustees, including a "grandfathering" policy for current fourth-graders. Under the recommended policy, these students and their siblings have the option to remain at their current school should they choose to do so. The final decision for "grandfathering" will be made by the AISD Board of Trustees.

A tremendous **THANK YOU** is owed to Molly Austin and Cathy Cox, Oak Hill Elementary's representatives on the FUBTF. They spent countless hours educating and preparing themselves in order to be effective voices for OHE at the Task Force table. Pat Epstein, who served on the Task Force as the Superintendent's appointee, also gains kudos for her advice, guidance, and dedication throughout this challenging process.

Please watch the TC Message Board for notification about an e-mail campaign to the AISD Board of Trustees in support of Plan 3 during the month of February. Let's continue to make it clear to the School Board that Travis Country supports Oak Hill Elementary and wants to stay!

TC Sports Field Committee Forming Now: *For It? Against It? You're Invited to Be a Decider!*

By Pat Epstein

As reported in the December edition of the *TC Notes*, the Travis Country Board of Directors passed a motion at their November meeting to form a committee to explore the possibility of developing a sports field on one of TC's common areas. Board member Leonard Saenz spearheaded this initiative and will serve as Board liaison to the committee.

Any TC resident interested in joining the Sports Field Committee is invited to the planning meeting on Tuesday, February 9, 2010, 6:30 pm, at the TC Office. If you cannot attend the meeting but are interested in receiving any committee updates or have an opinion as to any possible sports field locations, please email Mr. Saenz at leonardsaenz@hotmail.com, subject line: TC Sports Field Committee.

Happy Valentine's Day!

Love is: *When someone loves you, the way they say your name is different. You just know that your name is safe in their mouth.* Billy, Age 4



TCCSA Board of Directors Meeting Report - January 21, 2010 By: Lynne Fahlquist

This report does not represent the official minutes of the meeting. Minutes are available at the website and in the BV Office.

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Mark Carroll, Kay Colvin, Tom Curran, John McCulloch, Anthony Peterman, Wendy Primeaux, Leonard Saenz, and Paul Salaza.

ABSENT: Janice Smith.

MOTIONS APPROVED OUTSIDE REGULAR MEETING (U=Unanimous)

To authorize the Board President to send letters on behalf of the Board and community supporting TC's remaining together and assigned to Oak Hill Elementary in the AISD boundary plan. (U)

MOTIONS APPROVED AT THE REGULAR MEETING (U=Unanimous)

- To approve the appointment of Richard Cain as an Alternate Member of the Architectural Control Committee.
- To approve Paul Cumings' proposal for an extended fitness program for registered TC swim team members, to be offered the last two weeks of July and the first two weeks of August. (U)
- To approve sanctioning for 2010 for the Travis Country Book Club, Bunco Club, and Travis Country Swim Team. (U)
- To approve the proposed amendment for Section One to amend Part 5, Fences and Part 8, Sewerage Service. (U)
- To withdraw the previously approved amendment for Trailwood Village One and to approve the new amendment to Section 6, Fences and Section 11, Sewerage Service. (U)
- To rescind the July 11, 2005 Board Resolution barring Charles Draper from all future board meetings. (U)
- To establish policies and procedures for accessing the Common Area as it relates to construction on private property with the following changes:
 - The Board shall require a non-refundable fee of \$1,000.
 - The Board shall determine if restoration is complete and how much, if any, of the deposit is to be returned. (U)

COMMITTEE REPORTS (Note: If a Committee is not listed, there was no report.)

- ACC:** Requested Board name new alternate to the ACC. Candidates: George Stokes, Richard Cain, and Britany Winfrey. Board voted to appoint Richard Cain.
- Communications:** TC Office and CC continue to update the online directory.
- Grounds:** Leonard Saenz asked about thinning cedars, firewise concerns. GC supports such actions in general, but all require time and money. Reported that the overall GC budget came out okay; Treasurer Paul Salazar concurred. New mowing contractor GC is optimistic, but there will be a learning curve. GC is focusing on tree removal and replacement.
- Pool:** Met with and got bids from two vendors (Family Swim Gym and Lifeguard for Hire). PC recommends making a vendor change to LFH; however, this would require switching to a liquid chlorine system. There would be one system for each pool. \$18/hr lifeguard fee for LFH, slightly more than FSG. TCCSA responsible for cost modifications. LFH lifeguards are Red Cross certified (as opposed to Ellis certified/FSG). PC feels a change is needed because of ongoing issues, cleanliness concerns, and a general lack of maintenance. Point of order: Approving a big change/contract >\$10K when it does not appear on the agenda. Special meeting to approve new contract will be called as this is a time-sensitive issue. PC requests a thorough investigation into pool equipment at HT, e.g., plumbing work-arounds, pumps, drains, filters, etc.

Paul Cumings feels the facilities are underutilized and proposed an extended swim exercise program which would take place the last two weeks of July and the first two weeks of Aug., 8:30-10:30am. The program would only be open for kids on the swim team this time around, and they would be charged a flat fee. Participants would register at April registration; anticipates about 40. There would be a Fun Meet. Might need to need to move Adult fitness and Swim Team exercise.

- AISD:** Final FUBTF meeting was taking place during the TC Board meeting.

- TC Forum:** Meeting the Tuesday following the Board meeting each month.
- Firewise:** Meeting to be held January 27 at 1 pm.

VISITING HOMEOWNERS' COMMENTS

George Stokes: TC needs to "bite the bullet" and fix the HT pool. There have been problems since day one, and the pool builder is no longer in business. Concerned about how amenities are being used, i.e., kids who are not on the Swim Team and adults not having access during times allocated to the Swim Team. **Frank Krystopher:** It is the BOD's job to enforce the covenants; efforts are much appreciated. It has been over a year since BOD directed GC to create Landscape MasterPlan; when will it be completed? Parking issues along RoT. Residents may be willing to work on cedars if BOD approves. The land around the lift station is being discussed in Executive Session: Don't spend too much if TC makes an offer. Bring BV pool into regulation to relieve HT situation. There are 3 BOD seats coming up for election; it is not too early to notify community. **John Hawkins:** Lived in TC for 32 years, and the fence location and height is the same as it was then. If it is lowered to six feet, neighbors will be able to see into the bedroom. Requests to be allowed to leave fence as it is; all he did was replace the pickets, and did not realize he needed a permit to do this. Provided statements from neighbors requesting fence remain at 8-feet, permit from previous owners, site plan. Now waiting for Board approval; willing to answer questions. Board will need to discuss.

BOARD COMMENTS

Leonard Saenz: An invitation to residents to join the committee exploring a Sports Field for Travis Country will appear in the *TC Notes* and the website.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The budget looks much better this year; TC is \$76K ahead of last year. Good moves last year included signing a cheaper landscape contract, a cut back on attorney fees, and overall closer scrutiny of expenses. There will be sizeable outlays in January, e.g., curbing, key card system, HT maintenance, etc.

MANAGER'S REPORT

WFP Curbing: There have been a number of hold-ups with CoA; now they want flagging at \$750/day. Manager hopes the CoA will reconsider based on Tom Curran's traffic control plan (lane shift). **Parking on RoT:** Up to 10 cars from Regents students daily. Urge people to call 3-1-1 and request no parking signs for the area. Constables helping with other solutions, e.g., added danger of mailboxes, people make U-turns. Manager spoke to the school, but they are not interested in helping. They want TC to install a sidewalk. Lynne Fahlquist will speak with our Regents contact; Board President may contact them as well. **Copier:** Manager found a cheaper copier, but we may need to break our lease on the current copier. **Club Sanctioning:** Book Club, Bunco, Cub Scouts, Swim Team all returning and approved.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Restrictive Covenants: See motions.



TCCSA Board of Directors



PRESIDENT: Anthony Peterman **VICE PRESIDENT:** Leonard Saenz
SECRETARY: John McCulloch **TREASURER:** Paul Salazar
 Mark Carroll, Kay Colvin, Tom Curran, Wendy Primeaux, and Janice Smith
 Travis Country Office: 892-2256 Emergency After Hours: 289-1616
 FAX: 891-9554 Board Email: board@traviscountry.com
 Travis Country General Email: TC Office@traviscountry.com
 Website: www.traviscountry.com

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Sheets of ice topped Blue Valley Pond on January 11, 2010.

Freeze Warning! By Jim McNabb

Living here in paradise, sometimes we don't pay as close attention to the weather forecast as we should. Some winters, we don't see a freeze at all, and certainly not single-digit temperatures. In fact, Austin and Central Texas have not seen single-digit temperatures in 20 years -- at least until the winter of 2010.

It came as somewhat of a surprise the first week of January when the thermometer tumbled through the teens to around nine degrees at the McNabb home just west of Blue Valley. Given that Central Texans are not familiar with temperatures more suited to a deep freeze, most of us were not prepared.

Pipes froze at several Travis Country homes. Unfortunately, homeowners are not usually aware of the break until the thaw when water begins to flow everywhere. Between January 8-11, the City of Austin reported a record number of calls -- more than 600 -- for frozen or broken water pipes. The City prioritized the calls and subsequently, at customer requests, disconnected the water at 243 homes around Austin in order to stop the flowing water while residents waited for a plumber. City crews also had to deal with 45 water main breaks wreaking havoc in the streets. The Austin Fire Department responded to approximately 1,000 calls to mitigate water damage caused by burst pipes.

So exactly how cold was it? Cold enough for sheets of ice to form on the Blue Valley pond, although the ice melted before "No Skating" signs were required. According to TC Manager, Bill Sigler, Travis Country experienced five water breaks in the Blue Valley and Hilltop park areas. The breaks were of such a nature that it required completely shutting off the water supply to both areas.

Should an Arctic blast blow through again, remember the phrase oft recited by forecasters: "Protect pets, people, plants, and pipes." Wrap exposed pipes. Disconnect hoses. Let the outside faucets drip. There were and will be helpful tips on the City of Austin Water Utility web site, <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/water/newsreleasecoldweather.htm>.

"DIY" PLAYSCAPE? By Jim McNabb

The acronym "DIY" did not even exist until this century. But in these recession-laden days, many Travis Country homeowners are opting to "Do It Yourself" when it comes to household chores and projects. The whirl of circular saws and banging of hammers can be heard across the neighborhood on most nice weekends.

In addition, many Travis Country streets are in transition. Longtime residents are downsizing. Younger families are moving in, and their children need a place to play. Many take advantage of our Travis Country playgrounds, which conform to prevailing safety requirements and are a maintained by the Association. However, some parents envision a play area in their own backyards, and the more creative among them may decide to DIY. While this may be a great family project, the DIY'er must balance creativity with reality - **and safety**. Furthermore, residents must remember that the TCCSA covenants include sections concerning playscapes and tree houses. In fact, some plans must be submitted to the ACC for approval. For example:

- Playscapes are not allowed in a "set back" area or utility easement.
- Playscapes should be consistent with the overall appearance of the house and constructed with the similar materials.
- Playscapes, like the house, should be kept in good repair.
- A permanent playscape will need approval from the Architecture Committee.
- Sandboxes and little wading pools with a depth of less than 24-inches do not need a permit.
- The height of any play structures should not exceed six feet or be too close to the property line as defined in the covenants. They should not be visible from a neighbor's property. Viewing from a playscape that is too tall could also lead to invasion of privacy concerns.
- Tree houses exceeding six feet in height must have the approval of the Architecture Committee.

Architecture Committee member Frank Krystopher points out a few things relating to playscapes: "Some structures being 10-feet high [causing] the invasion of a neighbor's privacy, and the use of canvas tops on play gyms" are prohibited. Canvas is not allowed because it deteriorates due to neglect.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission also offers guidelines to cut down on playground injuries:

- Consider its location. Could kids slide into a wall or a fence?
- Think about the slope of the yard. Could a steep slope lead to an injury to a toddler? Does it lead to a ditch that could fill with muddy water after a spring shower?
- Think about whether it is shaded from the scorching summer sun.
- Select age-appropriate equipment. Consider creating a playscape that can grow with the child.
- Watch out for sharp edges that could cut or catch clothes.
- Consider railings or corners that could entrap kids if they stuck their heads in them, which they will.
- What sort of surface will be under the equipment? Pea gravel, sand, and shredded tires are recommended. Surprisingly, grass is not, nor are asphalt and dirt.

Finally, it is probably best to avoid some of the things that were part of the playground equipment now passé, e.g., dangling ropes, some tire swings, rings on chains, and heavy metal swing seats. Come to think about it, it's a wonder we survived! These are just a few possible considerations for the DIY'er who chooses to build a playscape. A detailed safety booklet can be downloaded in PDF form from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission at <http://www.cpsc.gov>.



The Blue Valley (pictured above) and Hilltop playgrounds meets safety standards.

Groundhog Day Whimsy



TCCSA COMMITTEE REPORTS

All TCCSA Committee meetings are open to residents. Please see the Community Calendar on Page 11 for meeting dates, times, and locations.

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE (ACC). Submitted by Frank Krystopher
Of 136 permits logged by the ACC during 2009, 124 were approved.

December 9, 2009 ACC Design Review: Eleven projects reviewed and approved: two patios, two roof replacements, two fences, two pools, one new wood gate, one covered patio, one basketball goal, and two house paintings.

January 10, 2010 ACC Design Review: Six Projects approved; four fence replacements, one roof, and one portable basketball hoop on the owner's property. Discussion followed about the parking along Republic of Texas.

January-February Tip: To obtain CoA information and/or permits, call the Development Assistance Center at 512-974-6370. To lodge a complaint if work is being done without a permit, call 3-1-1, and the complaint will be assigned to an inspector. Center website: https://www.ci.austin.tx.us/devreview/a_queryfolder_permits.jsp. Contact the TC Manager to verify Association approval.

There is a need to amend older covenants to allow equal treatment of newer innovations of fencing and construction materials.

Please log permits into the TC office prior to the ACC meeting night. Next Design Review meeting: Wednesday, February 10.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE. Submitted by Lynne Fahlquist

Online Directory: Lynne Fahlquist is working with office staff to update the online directory so it more accurately reflects the families in Travis Country.

GROUNDS COMMITTEE. Submitted by Lynne Fahlquist

Budget. The GC exceeded its 2009 budget in landscape beds due to incorrect invoicing of projects to that category. New mowing contract in FY2010 will reduce grounds maintenance budget by over \$12,000. **Works in progress.** Exploring appropriate signage for Hilltop; getting bids to replace walkway edging along BV Drive; update landscaping by BV tennis courts, Overlook sign, BV wall; and getting separate bids for removal of dead oaks and invasive chinaberry trees in BV. **Wildflower Preserve.** There was an accidental meeting during holidays with a non-resident who planned to remove plants from the WFP; he was told not to do so. Eagle Scout candidate finished the WFP project; unexpected cost associated with traffic control needs to be approved by Board for curbing at WFP.

Greenbelt Access. Policy is being developed to address construction activities on private lots that require greenbelt (common area) access. To be discussed at the January Board meeting. **Oak Wilt.** "Do Not Trim Oaks Now" signs are confusing residents. Need to be replaced with "Trim Oak Trees Now." **Arbor Day.** The GC was especially appreciative of TC Office help in preparation for TC Arbor Day.

POOL COMMITTEE. Submitted by Cindy Salazar

The Pool Committee met twice in January to hear presentations from the two bidders for pool and lifeguard services.

1/14/10: LifeGuard 4 Hire presentation. Chain of command:

Owner/Aquatics Director/Supervisor/Manager/Assistant Manager/Lifeguards. There is one person in charge of each: life-guards/maintenance/repairs. Supervisors check on lifeguards two times/day, and may stay 30-60-120 minutes, depending on the situation. Lifeguards have a daily checklist to complete; reports are done online. \$25/hour for private parties per guard; one guard per 25 people. Twenty- minute rotations on the chair. Lifeguards receive three-part training: Red Cross, training with the owner, and orientation at the facility. Three-fold commitment: lifeguards, chemical/cleaning/maintenance, and repairs (except plaster jobs). They use a liquid chlorination system called Aquaol Controllers which would be installed at both pools, free of charge. A 300 gallon tank will be put in the pump rooms and filled every two weeks in the summer and every three weeks in the off season. The system produces no fumes.

1/18/10: Family Swim Gym (FSG) Presentation and regular PC meeting. Discussed Hilltop pool's past pump, filters, and cloudiness problems. FSG used a new enzymatic cleaner in late August that appeared effective against the cloudiness issue. Only the filters - not the main drains - are pulling water through, which FSG said is a builder's error in the plumbing. Gunnite is exposed at HT; apparently the replastering completed three years ago was inefficient. A patch job needs to be performed, requiring the pool be drained. Timers exist at both pools, but all the wiring is missing. Life Guards: FSG proposes HT and BV have one manager combined, with an assistant manager at each pool. FSG trains all lifeguards through Ellis training. They would use a database system with all records kept online and emailed to TC Management and PC members. (Incident reports have been an issue with FSG, i.e., lifeguards failing to complete them.) FSG states that the contract has required they clean the pools two times/week, but they have more often cleaned them three times/week at no extra charge. The PC decided to make the following recommendations to the TC Board:

1. Contract with LifeGuard4Hire for the 2010 season.
2. Hire a qualified professional to conduct a thorough investigation of the plumbing issues at Hilltop. Based on that report, solicit bids for reworking Hilltop's continuing plumbing problems.
3. Investigate the timers at both pools, i.e., why were they installed, why were they disconnected, is it beneficial from a cost standpoint to use them in the off-season?
4. Approve Paul Cumings' proposal for an extended fitness program.

TENNIS COMMITTEE. Submitted by David Garrison

Projects: Management and staff have scheduled most of the projects for this winter, e.g., benches, landscaping, etc. **General maintenance:** Gap in HT fence needs repair; kids are crawling through. Light on Court 2 is out. **Community:** Family Day went very well; TC would like to be involved again next year. **2010 Tournaments:** Would like to do a youth/adult round-robin tourney. The month TBD. **2010 Recommendations:** To BOD that Brian Smithart remain the TC Tennis vendor; Brian needs to have a consolidated yearly report completed by the end of the year. **2009 Goals:** Good progress seen; will add a color brochure to bulletin board and a real estate box with black/white handouts from Brian. **2010 Goals:** Getting shade structure with gates done; Ladder for singles (at least), but possibly doubles, as well; explore adding card keys for the tennis courts. **Yahoo Group:** Connect with neighbors who play tennis at http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/tc_tennis/. **Clinics:** Individual and group lessons offered for residents. Contact Brian Smithart@hotmail.com, 444-7040, or see the Yahoo calendar. **Questions:** tennis@traviscountry.com.

TC Tennis Committee Seeking Volunteers By David Garrison

Enjoy tennis? Want to meet more neighbors and serve your community? Consider joining the Travis Country Tennis Committee. Just look over the information below, and join us at our regularly scheduled meeting (see the Community Calendar on page 9) at any time.

The Tennis Committee is a TCCSA-supported committee with three major goals: 1) growing the overall TC tennis community, including teams, socials, lessons, etc.; 2) working with TCCSA management to maintain and improve our tennis court facilities; and 3) support a vendor program to provide a broad set of quality group & individual lessons.

These goals are accomplished by: 1) monthly meetings on the last Tuesday of each month, either at the TC Office or a Committee member's home; 2) developing an agenda prior to each meeting to which all members are free to add items; 3) communication via meetings and email to gain consensus on major issues and projects relating to the TC Tennis Program; 4) working closely with TCCSA management to guarantee implementation of our goals; 5) working with the TC vendor to accomplish program goals and follow through on improvements; 6) providing status reports and plans to the Board and *TC Notes* each month; and 7) working with the Board liaison to facilitate communication with Board.

Member Commitment: 1) read/respond to email discussions in a timely fashion. When the Committee conducts polls, everyone needs to provide their thoughts and help the group reach consensus; 2) attend at least half or more of the Committee meetings; 3) volunteer some time and energy in two or more areas, based on your interests (we are seeking active participants); and 4) have a positive attitude toward the program's goals and those with whom we all work.

Travis Country Tennis Program's 2009 Accomplishments

- Resurfaced Blue Valley Courts 5-6.
- Added a new planter (with plants) at Blue Valley.
- Added a bulletin board at Blue Valley with an updated calendar.
- New tennis marketing and schedule materials.
- Hosted Family Day tennis events.
- Continued to improve quality and quantity of vendor programs (led by Brian Smithart).
- Implemented inspections process with the TC office.
- Initiated a major update to bathrooms.
- Held several tennis socials.
- Finished design and started selling tennis t-shirts and hats.



2010 Tennis Committee Goals

- Resurface Hilltop Courts.
- Add a bulletin board at the Hilltop Courts.
- Add benches at Blue Valley Courts.
- Add a picnic table at Blue Valley.
- Enhance plantings at Blue Valley.
- Update wood borders and railings at Blue Valley.
- Add covered shade structure between BV courts 4 and 5.
- Add gates to covered shade structure.
- Implement a tennis ladder.
- Improve communications through Yahoo groups.
- Continue to improve vendor marketing, scheduling, and policy information
- Update tennis web content at traviscountry.com
- Hold a summer tournament.

To connect with neighbors who play tennis:

http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/tc_tennis/

For More Information: tennis@traviscountry.com



Registration for TC Sharks Swim Team to Open in April

New Extended Season Option to Be Offered By Pam Losefsky

It's hard to believe, but summer is just around the corner, and so is swim team. We expect on-line TC Sharks Swim Team registration to open on April 1. Previous swim team members can access the site with their passwords from last year (look for an email in March with important information regarding registration). Our regular Blue Valley Pavilion registration day is set for Sunday, April 11 from 2-4 pm. for new swimmers as well as for those technophobes among returning team members.

As you're planning for vacations and summer camp, keep in mind that the season runs from May 3, when practices start, through the end of June. This year, for the first time, we will also be offering an "Extended Season" option for those of you who would like your kids to continue exercising throughout the summer. The extended season will consist of four weeks of coached swim from mid-July to mid-August, ending with a short and fun relay meet at the end, all for only \$45. You may select this option during registration.

Swim team is open to all TC residents ages 5-18 as of May 1. Please note that first-time swimmers must be able to get across a length of the pool without assistance in order to be eligible. An eligibility test will be administered at the time of registration.

WANTED: Community Volunteers

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE: Assist with the Travis Country website and other communication venues in the neighborhood.

Contact: communications@traviscountry.com



GROUNDS COMMITTEE: Work with and advise the Board of Directors about common area issues and concerns and the use of good maintenance practices. **Contact:** grounds@traviscountry.com



Beautiful seasonal color from TC Notes contributor Jim McNabb's lovely oaks.

PREVENT OAK WILT in TC

Trim Trees in January and February

If you have a question about Oak Wilt, please call the TC Office at 892-2256 or email tcoffice@traviscountry.com.

2010 Census Cautions

Provided by the Better Business Bureau

The TC Notes ran a similar article in December; however, this one is more thorough and was verified at Snopes.com and Truthorfiction.com.

With the U.S. Census process beginning, the Better Business Bureau (BBB) advises people to be cooperative but cautious, in order not to become a victim of fraud or identity theft.

The first phase of the 2010 U.S. Census is underway as workers have begun verifying the addresses of households across the country. Eventually, more than 140,000 U.S. Census workers will count every person in the United States; they will also gather information about every person living at each address including name, age, gender, race, and other relevant data.

The big question is: How do you tell the difference between a U.S. Census worker and a con artist? The BBB offers the following advice:

- If a U.S. Census worker knocks on your door, they will have a badge, a handheld device, a Census Bureau canvas bag, and a confidentiality notice. Ask to see their identification and their badge before answering their questions; however, you should never invite anyone you don't know into your home.
- Census workers are currently only knocking on doors to verify address information.
- Do not give your Social Security number, credit card, or banking information to anyone, even if they claim they need it for the U.S. Census. The Census Bureau will not ask for Social Security, bank account, or credit card numbers, nor will employees solicit donations. Any one asking for that information is not with the Census Bureau.
- While the Census Bureau might ask for basic financial information, such as a salary range, you do not have to answer any questions about your financial situation.
- The Census Bureau is not working with Acorn to gather information. No Acorn worker should approach you saying he/she is with the Census Bureau.
- Eventually, Census workers may contact you by telephone, mail, or in person at home. However, the Census Bureau will not contact you by email, so be on the lookout for email scams.
- Never click on a link or open any attachments in an email that are supposedly from the U.S. Census Bureau.

REMEMBER: NO MATTER WHAT THEY ASK, YOU REALLY ONLY NEED TO TELL THEM HOW MANY PEOPLE LIVE AT YOUR ADDRESS.

Sunset Valley Farmers Market Not Moving Until March 2010

By: Pat Epstein

To paraphrase Mark Twain, "Reports of its move have been greatly exaggerated,"... at least for now.

Last December, the Sunset Valley Farmers Market announced it had lost its lease with Austin ISD and would be moving from its current location at the Tony Burger Center (U.S. 290) at the beginning of January 2010. According to reports in the Austin American Statesman, the group received additional time from the school district to make their moving arrangements.

The move is now slated to take place by March 1. The Market is moving just up the road from its current location to a strip of land owned by the City of Sunset Valley. This area also fronts U.S. 290.



What's Happening at OHE?

Family Fun Reading Night

February 5 - 6:30 pm - OHE Cafeteria

OHE Helps Haiti Deadline: February 5 (See below)

AISD Parent Fair - February 6 - 10 am

See the OHE website calendar for the most up-to-date information.

OHE and Haiti Earthquake Disaster Relief

Haiti has been struck by a natural disaster of unprecedented proportions. In the past, OHE has responded to the Tsunami Relief Campaign and Hurricane Katrina Disaster by raising, \$7,702 for UNICEF and American Red Cross. This is in addition to our annual Trick or Treat for UNICEF campaign. Our campus has determined that the best way we can provide immediate help for Haiti is to collect donations for the American Red Cross.

The school will accept donations until Friday, February 5. Students may bring cash donations on a daily basis. Please **DO NOT** make checks payable to Oak Hill Elementary.

Join us as we teach our students how important it is to help those less fortunate than themselves. Any and all donations of any size are welcome. Thank you!

The Oak Hill Elementary Staff



2010 Annual Travis Country Home & Garden Tour

April 24, 2010 - To Volunteer Your Home or Landscape

Contact Sherri Williams at 771-7082 or Sherri@SherriWilliams.com



TRAVIS COUNTRY REAL ESTATE CORNER

Travis Country had 83 home sales in 2009 and the market is starting to really explode.

In 2009, homes sold anywhere from \$184,900 to \$469,000 with the average home being approximately 2,374 sq ft. (low of 1,182 and high of 4,136sf).

The average per square foot price was \$142.78 which did include both the older section and the newer one.

All indications are that home sales will continue to rise, and with the low inventory now in Travis Country, homes priced well and in good condition should sell quickly. At this writing, there are only ten homes on the market, and four that are pending.

The interest rates continue to be below 5%. With the current tax incentives due to expire at the end of April, potential buyers are looking to take advantage of the great opportunities.



Groundhog Day Whimsy



Soaking Up Some Rays

TC Lifestyle

Large Brush Collection February 8

LIFE AND LIVING IN TRAVIS COUNTRY

Do you have an idea for our TC Lifestyle section?
Email tcnotes@traviscountry.com.



Holiday Lights Contest Winners

Celestial nights filled with celestial lights! That would best describe Travis Country and its dazzling array of color and light this past holiday season. *Many thanks* to all residents who took the time to strand lights and pull out yard decorations for everyone in TC to enjoy. Most importantly, a huge TC thank you goes out to Holiday Lights Contest coordinator, **Susan White** and our 2009 judges: Roger, Susan, Lindsey, and Jamie White; Erin Marens and Leonard, Rudy, and Lucia Saenz; Pat, Jessica, and Grayson Epstein; and Lisa Leonard, Austin Coffey, David and Stephanie Jourdan. These individuals doubled as our photographers this year as well.

Second place kudos go to the families at 4306 Sendero Drive, 5320 Moon Shadow, 5728 Republic of Texas, and 4445 Sacred Arrow.

Third place winners are the families who live at 4711 Cap Rock, 4201 Sun Spirit, 3850 Sendero Dr., and 4904 Canyon Crest.



First Place Winners



Edwin & Bobbie Thompson
4184 Travis Country Circle
Icicles, Christmas trees, and snowmen draped in light accentuate the beauty of a traditionally decorated home.



Thomas & Jane Coefield
5224 Crystal Water Dr.
A light-filled cactus anchored the "riot of color" making this yard a joy for all to partake.



Beverly Beavers
4805 Senora Creek
A Texas Longhorn football player led the way for the characters in this whimsically decorated yard. So much fun for kids from one to 100!



Lance & Darla Jones
4005 Eagles Landing Cove
Bevo stands guard over hearth and home against a backdrop of dazzling glitter in this Travis Country yard.

You really shouldn't say "I love you" unless you mean it. But if you mean it, you should say it a lot. People forget. Jessica, Age 8

Tailgaiting in Iraq: Shuttin' down the aerial attack!

Information Provided by Mark Carroll

Lt. Col. Darrell Debish, son of Travis Country resident Carol Debish, calls this photo, "Shuttin' down the aerial attack."

"The last time the Horns went to the BCS I was deployed, and this time I am deployed," he wrote in an email to News 8 Austin. This is Lt. Col. Debish's tailgaiting, "Iraqi Style." Even though the Horns didn't bring home the National Title, this is proof-perfect that Longhorn pride is felt around the world.

Travis Country sends a huge "Thank you" to Lt. Col. Debish - and his family - for their sacrifice to our country's freedom.



When my grandmother got arthritis, she couldn't bend over and paint her toenails anymore. So my grandfather does it for her all the time, even when his hands got arthritis, too. That's love. --Rebecca, Age 8

Travis Country Friends Continue to Rally For Family

By: Former Travis Country Resident Jen Whitney

Dear TC Residents. Many of you have asked for an update on RyanCole Weldon-Carroll who was diagnosed with T-cell Leukemia last September. RyanCole, now 11, is going through the last of four rounds of high dose chemo. After this, he has two more months of intensive chemo as well as cranial radiation. This will be followed by three years of maintenance chemo before he reaches the finish line. This is such a long and difficult road, especially for an eleven-year-old. Please keep your good thoughts and prayers coming.

The family is quickly approaching the lifetime limit on their medical insurance, and the monthly co-pays and medicines have been a huge expense to the family, ranging from \$500-\$2,000 a month. One month of medical bills with hospital stays can cost as much as \$300,000, so it's difficult to imagine what will happen after the insurance is maxed out. Travis Country neighbors, friends, and friends of friends want to support RyanCole and give him a lift in spirit by running for him. Our goal is to raise \$2,000-\$4,000 to help this family with one to three months worth of out-of-pocket expenses. If you are interested in donating to help support the Weldon Carroll Family, please visit helpryancole.blogspot.com. If you can email this link to your friends and contacts, or post it to your Facebook page, we would greatly appreciate it.

Our first race took place on January 24, 2010 at the 3M Half Marathon. Runners included Katy Bourgeois, Leslie Evans, Tom Ducote, Jennifer and Ryan Whitney, Brian Julian, Lisa Moe, Becky and Seth Waltman, and J'ne Byckovski. From experts to novices, we thank all who showed support for RyanCole.

The next race is the Austin Half and Full Marathon on February 14. At this time, Ryan Whitney, Mike Brooks, Brian Julian, and J'ne Byckovski are running. If you plan to run this race, please email kirsten@kirstenbrooks.com so she can add your name to the RyanCole's race blog. Unfortunately RyanCole cannot attend the events because he cannot be around a lot of people right now, but he and his family truly appreciate the support. *Run the distance!*



*Love is when you kiss all the time. Then when you get tired of kissing, you still want to be together and you talk more.
My Mummy and Daddy are like that. They look gross when they kiss. - Emily, Age 8*



She Did It Again!

By: Pat Epstein

In the December *TC Notes*, we told you about Travis Country resident Charlene Janiak running 75 miles in the Cactus Rose 100-mile Trail Race, as part of her training for the Bandera 100K.

Well, this month we can report that she did it again! Charlene finished the Bandera 100K in 16:22 hours.

"We started with a cold 11 degrees, and it didn't warm up beyond the low 40's the entire day," reports Charlene. "There was ice on the ponds, and the grass was layered with white ice crystals. I thought, 'What a great background for a unicorn to coming running by.'"

Congratulations to Charlene on accomplishing this amazing personal quest!



"Local Girl" Named One of Austin's Top 10

By: Pat Epstein

When Lisa Schickel Hickey was a little girl, she would dance to Willie Nelson records atop her father's steadily moving feet. In 2006, her life came full circle as she took a few turns on a makeshift dance floor with her husband backstage at the Austin City Limits Music Festival - a circle that included almost a decade of hard work as one the first employees of the company that would soon become C3 Presents. This superpower event planning and production company is the one behind ACL, Lollapalooza, more than 800 annual shows nationwide... and even President Obama's inauguration.

Lisa, an Austin native and the daughter of Travis Country resident Laura Schickel of Canyonbend, was recently named by Tribeza as one of "10 of Austin's Finest." Her first show to promote was the first ACL Festival in 2002; from there, it's all for the history books. Congratulations to Lisa for this great achievement.



Many a wonderful conversation was had with Grace by her beautiful hibiscus.

SHADOW: Grace Biediger Hitzfelder, formerly of Devine, passed away peacefully at her Travis Country home on January 4, 2010. She was 79 years old. Preceded in death by her husband of 56 years, Alex Hitzfelder Jr., she is survived by her daughters, Esther Hitzfelder of Travis Country, and Dr. Nancy Hitzfelder Hokamp, and her sons Michael and James Hitzfelder of Austin, as well as siblings, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and numerous relatives and friends. Grace will be missed by so many people, including her TC Bunco and Book Club friends. Esther said that Grace instructed that her body be donated to UT Houston Medical School with the classic Grace-ism, "In my next life, I'm going to teach medical school." The family asked that anyone wishing to honor Grace's life do so with memorial contributions to the Wildflower Building Fund, P.O. Box 40395 Austin, TX 78704; or to the Fred Hokamp Memorial Library at Low Birth Weight Development Center, 345 Calumet Ave., Dallas, TX 75211.



TCCSA CLUB UPDATES

B♥♥K CLUB Author Bill Minitaglio will join the TC Book Club at its February meeting to discuss his latest book, *Molly Ivins: A Reel Life*. This month's meeting will be held on February 18 at the home of Debbie Lauderdale and Dan Felps, 3977 Sendero, 7 pm. The Book Club is open to all TC residents, whether you've read the book or not. Questions: Kate Burgess at 891-0707.

Love is when your puppy licks your face even after you left him alone all day. Mary Ann, Age 4

BUNC♥ CLUB Welcome back, one and all! February Bunco at the TC Office continues to meet on the first Monday of the month at 7:30 pm. Would love to see more friendly faces join us in our frivolity and snacks! Come on down! Questions? Lindy at 892-3116.



Love is when Mummy gives Daddy the best piece of chicken. - Elaine, Age 5



February Events Calendar

Compiled By: Ruth Schwab



EVENT	DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Architecture Committee	2/10 (Wed.)	7 pm	TCCSA Office
Bd of Directors Meeting	2/18 (Thurs.)	6 pm	TCCSA Office
Book Club	2/18 (Thurs.)	7 pm	3977 Sendero
Bunco Club	2/1 (Mon.)	7:30 pm	TCCSA Office
Communications Committee	2/4 (Thurs.)	7 pm	TCCSA Office
Grounds Committee	2/3 (Wed.)	7 pm	TCCSA Office
Pool Committee	2/8 (Mon.)	7 pm	TCCSA Office
Tennis Committee	2/9 (Tue.)	6 pm	TCCSA Office
TC Forum	2/23 (Tue.)	7 pm	TCCSA Office
TC Notes Deadline	2/12 (Fri.)	5 pm	tcnotes@traviscountry.com
TC Notes Delivered	2/27 (Sat.)	N/A	Delivered to Block Captains

Travis County Master Gardeners Association Events

The **Travis County Master Gardeners Association** is a volunteer arm of the Texas A&M and Travis County AgriLife Extension Service. Their events are free to the public and do NOT require a reservation. For more information: 512-854-9600 or <http://www.tcmastergardeners.org>

The seminars below will all be held at the AgriLife Extension Office of Travis County, 1600-B Smith Rd, Austin TX 78721



EVERYTHING'S COMING UP ROSES

Saturday, February 27, 2010 9:30-11:30 am

Roses aren't just for Valentine's Day. They can bring color and sweet smells to your garden year round! This seminar will cover site selection, soil amendments, and bed preparations plus showcase a number of Earth Kind Roses worthy of consideration in your garden. Earth Kind is a designation given to select roses by the Texas A&M Agriculture program, indicating the variety has been through rigorous testing and found to possess a high level of landscape performance and outstanding disease and insect tolerance/resistance. There will be a hands-on demonstration of pruning roses in the Extension Demonstration Garden after the seminar.

GROWING YOUR OWN POTATOES

Saturday, February 13 9-11am

Grow your own potatoes? Yes, you can! This hands-on demonstration includes planting potatoes in the ground and in baskets, recommended varieties, and tips for success.

SPRING INTO ACTION: STARTING YOUR VEGETABLE GARDEN RIGHT

Friday, March 12, 2010 9-11am

Learn about soil amendments, the correct way to prepare and handle transplants, and how to prepare and plant seeds.

It's My Park Day - Saturday, March 6

From Frank Krystopher

Support your neighborhood park.

Travis Country volunteers will participate in Austin's "It's My Park Day" at Gaines Creek Nature Park.

Learn more at: www.austinparks.org/itsmyparksponsor.html
TC Coordinator: Frank Krystopher - bluesky2u@austin.rr.com

Love is when my mummy makes coffee for my daddy, and she takes a sip before giving it to him, to make sure the taste is okay. Danny, Age 7

Welcome to TC's Newest Residents!

By: Bill Sigler

- Paula Baltisberger 4708 Mesa Oaks
- Dianne Bennett 29 Mission Oaks
- Deanna & Frank Bryan, Jr. 4800 Fawn Run
- Jerry Galvan 4405 Mesquite Springs Cove
- Dr. Jody & Stephanie Hooten 5709 Hero Dr.
- Debra Hutchins 4404 Travis Country Cir., A4
- Nathan Kirmis 4800 Cap Rock Dr.
- Daniel Mercado 5412 Travis Green Ln.
- Charles Sack 5223 Moon Shadow Dr
- David & Misty Smith 5721 Republic of Texas Blvd.
- Beverly Soucy 4601 Trail Crest Cir.
- Timothy Turk 4707 Canyonwood Dr.
- Leo & Nancy York 4440 Sacred Arrow Dr.
- Donald & Laurie Zahn 5400 Travis Green Ln.

THE TRAVIS COUNTRY WELCOME PACKET
www.traviscountry.com



CLASSIFIEDS

Just say, "I sold it in the *TC Notes!*"

CLASSIFIED AD POLICY

The Classifieds are open to TC residents only. To list services, you must be 18 or under. The service cannot be conducted on TC Common Property or use TC facilities.

ADS MUST BE RENEWED MONTHLY.

Non-service ads can be run for a maximum of three months. We reserve the right to edit ads. Services provided by adults can be placed on the website under **Classifieds**, or you may ask the TC Office (892-2256) to add your name to the list they maintain.

Questions or to advertise: tcnotes@traviscountry.com.

WANTED

Broken, unwanted jewelry or miscellaneous beads/jewelry pieces. 892-2246 or cody0463@yahoo.com.

FOR SALE

Men's right-handed golf clubs, including Ping Eye 2 through sand wedge, 4 and 5 woods, Golfsmith Driver, and navy Ping bag. \$125. Tan 1930's bag and a few clubs, \$45. Various drivers including Taylor and Penick brands, starting at \$2. Other miscellaneous clubs, \$3-\$5. 512-497-4295 or milessoftexas@hotmail.com.

Brown suede, 3-piece L-shape couch. Small section has a recliner on each end and a cup holder/storage container in the middle; large section has recliners on each end; small wedge connects. \$1,195. Tan suede L-shape couch with sleeper sofa on the long end and recliner on the smaller end. \$750. Computer desk, \$150. Leather office chair, \$60. Oak dining table, leaf and six chairs, \$250. TV stand, \$60. Magnavox 18" TV, \$10. Black bookcases, 5 shelves, \$15. Black lambskin leather, ladies long M/L elegant coat, \$79. 797-4311.

Three-quarter sized, Scott Guan, handmade violin. CA Model STV017A 2005. Includes a full size Bobelock case. No bow. \$500. 899-1723 or dml_e_austin@yahoo.com.

Four fabric-covered parsons dining chairs; cream colored with sage ties in the back. Photos available upon request. \$250 for all 4 chairs. 891-9464 or email dtaborn@austin.rr.com.

BABYSITTING

Kaylyn Remsing (17) available to baby-sit your child(ren) ages three+. CPR, first-aid certified; taken the Seton Baby-Sitting Course. References available. 892-2246.

Responsible, experienced babysitting Sisters @ Your Service. Lauritzen sisters: Blake (17), 785-1440, Lindsey (15), 527-4288, and Tessa (12), 284-2120. All of us have experience & would love to entertain your children. 891-0527 or klauritzen@austin.rr.com.

Six years of babysitting experience (18). Seeking college money. Love kids. 694-6307 or jellybean535@aol.com.

Samantha Curran (15) will care for your children while you spend some time together or just take an hour or two for yourself. Great with kids. Earning money for Olympic Development Soccer Camp. Soccer training, no extra charge. Call Sam at 925-8694.

Need a babysitter? Call Sarah Escobedo (15). Experienced sitter (including with three younger siblings and two cousins). Raising money for school fieldtrip. Available most weekends, some week nights. 892-2935.

Need a babysitter this summer? Heather Hugman (13), Red Cross Certified and love to play with kids. Very responsible. Reasonable rates. 891-0263.

Taylor Parker (18), experienced and available to watch your kids weekdays and weekends. All ages. Call 826-3391.

Angel Bottera (16) would love to baby-sit your children. Red Cross and CPR certified; love children of all ages. Experienced. References available. 589-0208.

Need a date night out, time to work out, or simply have a cup of coffee? Elysa Wolf (12) would love to entertain your kid(s) so you can have a break this summer. Completed the Red Cross Babysitting course, has two younger siblings, and takes care of babies and older at church. 263-5146 or elysawolf@austin.rr.com.

Rita Ostrander (16) available to watch your children. CPR and First Aid certified. Experience with all ages. 892-0820 or rjostrander@yahoo.com.

Ally Salazar (11). Need a break or just an extra hand? Available daytime hours on weekends to care for kids ages two+. Would require coaching for younger children. allysalazar@gmail.com.

Kelly Avant (15) would love to babysit your child(ren). A lifeguard with CPR and first aid training. 906-4641.

Summer Salazar (15) is available to help with your children on weekends (am/pm). Experienced with 8-months and up. Saving for a HS international trip. Please call or text 919-9449.

Claire Levatino (14). I am raising money to go to camp this summer and would really appreciate helping you to help me. I love kids. Contact at clevatino@austin.rr.com, 891-0325(H) or 512-850-3732(C).

LAWN/PET/PLANT CARE

Experienced and affordable lawn care you can count on. I have mowed lawns in Travis Country for the past year and look forward to maintaining your lawn. William Larkam (17). 358-8877.

Karyn and Jaclyn (13) would love to watch your pets and plants while you are away. Five years neighborhood experience. Parental supervision. 892-2246 or cody0463@yahoo.com.

Alicia Hill (12). Pet service--love animals and have experience caring for cats, dogs, and other small animals. 892-3878.

Twin Pet & Plant Sitting. Eight-year-old twin TC girls offering pet sitting, plant care, and dog walking services. Reasonable rates, excellent service, parental supervision. 891-5351.

3Rs Critter Care. Responsible, Reasonable & Reliable sisters to care for your pets and home while you're away. Experienced with all kinds of animals. Will walk, play, feed, and love your pets; water your plants & check your mail, also. Tessa Lauritzen (12) and Lindsey Lauritzen (15). Parental supervision. 891-0527, 577-0527, or klauritzen@austin.rr.com.

Let us "doo" your dirty work! "Pick up Poo." One time: \$8/one dog, \$2 each additional dog. Weekly: \$5, one dog, \$2 additional dogs. We pet-sit also. John (15) and David (16) Walter. 892-5531.

Angel Bottera (16) will care for your home and pets while you are away. Will water plants in addition to walking, feeding, and playing with your pets. 589-0208.

8th-grade Regents student will care for your pets/plants, pick up your mail, mow your lawn while you're away. Last minute calls okay. Four years experience petsitting in TC. Also babysit. 512-301-7702, 512-769-0353, or tbkuhn@gmail.com.

Keith McBrayer (11) will take care of your small pets while you are away! Specialize in small critters, such as reptiles, and rodents, etc. 5 years experience. 891-8103 or 388-8395.

Aaron Primeaux (13) will care for your critters while you are away. Experienced with all manner of furry, feathered, and scaly creatures. 891-9724 or 944-2895.

If you need someone to take care of your pets while you are away, call Claire Levatino (14). She has experience and loves animals. Contact at clevatino@austin.rr.com or 891-0325.



TC NOTES



Produced by and solely for communication within the TCCSA.

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Many thanks to this month's contributors to the *TC Notes*.

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DISTRIBUTION: 60 AMAZING TC residents. The 100+ volunteers who prepare and deliver the *TC Notes* each month thank you for supporting our local newspaper.

Printed on Recycled Paper by Oak Hill Printing.