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NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

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FEBRUARY 2019

EVENTS CALENDAR

Thursday, February 7: Brentwood Elementary School Welcome Walk at 9 am. Do you know any future bulldogs or families interested in learning about Brentwood? Invite them to one of our welcome walks. During a welcome walk, visitors have an opportunity to learn about Brentwood, tour the campus, and meet Principal Laroche. Contact Brentwood Elementary at 512-414-2039 for more information.

Monday, February 11: Crestview Neighborhood Association Meeting at 7 pm at the Crestview United Methodist Church, 1300 Morrow Street.

Saturday, March 2: Friends of Brentwood Park Spring Work Day – see article on page 5.

Saturday, March 2: Sunshine Gardens Spring Plant Sale from 9 am to 2 pm at 4814 Sunshine Dr. See article on page 4 for more information.

In Memoriam

Glenn Cloud, a longtime Crestview resident and CNA member since 1986, passed away on December 3, 2018. He will be sorely missed.

Ivorine “Ivy” Herm, one of Crestview’s earliest homeowners and a CNA member since 1986, died on January 7th. Our condolences to her family and many friends.

Marye Lynch, less than a year shy of her 100th birthday, left this life on January 12th. An unwavering neighborhood advocate, she had been a CNA member since 1996. She was a great joy to visit as she had an extraordinary memory and a special talent for sharing colorful stories about Crestview and its residents. She will be fondly remembered.

The Results Are In!

CNA’s Survey on the Pilot Call-in Bulk Pick Up Program

By Nancy Harris, CNA Treasurer

From April through December of last year, instead of the regular neighborhood wide bulk pick ups that occur about 6 months apart, customers were instructed to call 311 to arrange up to three bulk pickups if they desired. During the month of December, CNA conducted a survey to find out what people’s thoughts were regarding the city’s pilot call-in only bulk pickups. 45 people answered all or part of the sixteen-question survey.

The conclusions that can be drawn from the results are that most of the responders did not prefer the pilot to the traditional neighborhood wide pickups. While they did not mind some level of a call-in option, they did not for the most part want to replace the neighborhood wide pickups with a call-in program entirely.

Most of the responders (89%) were aware that the pilot was in effect. 58% of them did not use the pilot. The reasons given included they didn’t have a need to use it, they kept forgetting to call, it seemed like too much of a hassle, they didn’t know about the program, they didn’t know how it worked, or they didn’t have enough items.

The 19 individuals who used the program indicated that once a time for pick up had been set with the city, they had to wait anywhere from a day to a couple of weeks for the pick up, with most people falling into the 2 days to a week time frame. 89% said the trucks arrived the day they said they would. Arranging the collection time was not always considered easily done. While about 2/3 of the responders who used the program (68%) indicated they had no problems with the pilot, the other 1/3 had some level of difficulty. These mostly revolved around problems getting call backs from the city to schedule a day after placing their initial call to 311, having to play phone tag, trucks not arriving on the scheduled day, or not having enough items for a pick up.

When these users were asked how convenient the pilot program was compared to the neighborhood wide pickups, 52% felt it was not as convenient, 33% felt it was more so, and 15% thought it was about the same.

A few of the questions tried to address possible concerns that neighbors and recyclers who drive the neighborhood do not have the same opportunity to salvage items before they go to the landfill because of a lack of notice. 77% of the responders felt the pilot did not allow the same chance, and 58% felt more items probably went into the landfill as a result.

Survey takers were asked to rank seven options that described how they would set up the city’s bulk collection program. Three options were some form of call-in only, two were forms of combination call-in and traditional neighborhood wide collections, 1 was the traditional program, and 1 option allowed responders to

See Survey, continued on page 2



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CNA General Meetings are held the second
Monday of every month at 7:00 PM at the
Crestview United Methodist Church,
1300 Morrow St.

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See Survey, continued from page 1

include their own ideas. People were also allowed to mark any choices that they found unacceptable. After the survey platform scored the results, the two most popular choices (with nearly identical scores) were the combination call-in/traditional programs. This was followed by the traditional 6-month apart neighborhood pickups. The three call-in only options came next in popularity.

When people were asked if they preferred the pilot to the traditional twice-yearly neighborhood wide collections, 79% of the responses were "No".

The final open-ended question allowed responders to express any thoughts, comments or suggestions they had about the city's pilot bulk pick up program. About 2/3 of the comments were generally negative. These comments included a preference for the traditional pickups because it works fine, people felt guilty for calling out a truck to pick up one or two items, it was more motivating to have a set deadline to clean out the garage or house, and people enjoyed the "neighborhood event" aspect of the traditional pickups. Some felt the call-in pilot was inefficient and probably more costly. Others found it more of a hassle than the traditional pick-ups.

The remaining responses of a neutral or positive nature included suggestions that call-ins be an addition, not a replacement of the neighborhood wide collections and that call-ins allowed for more flexibility and convenience for the customer.

A further analysis of the responses by the users only of the program to the rankings question and the question of whether or not there was a preference for the pilot over the neighborhood wide pickups seemed in order to see how they compared to the overall responses. 77% of the users of the pilot who responded still preferred a combination program over a call-in only program. While the percentage of people who did like the pilot over the traditional pickups was greater among pilot users, still over half (58%) did not prefer the pilot.

Thank you to those people who took the time to take the survey. Understandably, the results of CNA's survey have been condensed for this article. If you would like to see the graphs, charts and comments in their entirety, please go the CNA website at crestviewna.com/2019/01/14/bulky-pickup-pilot-program/ to view them.

The city plans to do its own survey sometime in the future, so be sure to share your thoughts when they do.

Note: As the newsletter goes to press, no neighborhood wide bulk pickup for Crestview has been scheduled for 2019. A call to Austin Resource Recovery revealed that "until further notice" all collections will be call-in only.

Where the Lights are Bright

by Marilyn Querejazu

There is a cure for the ugly parking garage and it's called Tau Ceti, a 10-story mural on the corner of Brazos and 2nd street. Stretching some 103 feet straight up, this mural by Josef Kristofletti claims to be Austin's tallest public artwork. It is vibrant - like what might happen if a pyramid ate a rainbow. Go there, post selfies in front of the mural named for the constellation Cetus, which has a color spectrum like our sun.

And since you're downtown try this: Wanderatx.com is a treasure map for public art/downtown-lovers, a short story collection and a Spanish lesson, all rolled into one. Enjoy!

If you are interested in print art and print making check out Viscosity at Link & Pin. Organized by Flash Collective, Viscosity is a visual art exhibition featuring hand pulled prints by 24 female artists from the United States, Canada and Finland. Link & Pin is a gallery at 2235 E 6th #102. Check <http://linkpinart.com> for hours and days.



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Howdy Neighbor!

by Mike Lavigne, CNA President

I hope you had a happy New Year and have settled into 2019 favorably.

The Texas Legislature is in session, and there are always bills, some good some bad, that could have an impact on our neighborhoods and city. These are a few I know to look out for. The Real Estate Council will likely try again to strike down our tree ordinance. The hotel lobbyists (and mayor) could try to make it harder to spend hotel occupancy tax (HOT) money on anything but convention center expansion instead of parks, small venues and other uses throughout the city. The Short Term Rental (STR) crowd will likely try to supercede any city limitations on these hotels in our neighborhoods.

On the positive side, there could be legislation to make sure that school districts and counties get more say in tax giveaways like the McKalla Place land we seem to be giving to the billionaire from California. There could also be legislation around the scooters that have seemingly populated every sidewalk in our city. It looks like we have fewer than we did a couple months ago, so perhaps some sort of equilibrium has been reached. The legislative session has just begun though, and passing a bill is a lot harder than killing one.

PUSH-UP CHALLENGE

There are no details yet, but I wanted to give you a heads up that some of us on the CNA are organizing a push-up challenge for our neighborhood. We'd like to hold it in early May on a weekend morning. It will probably be simply how many push-ups you can do in three minutes. We'll have divisions for kids, men and women, and small prizes from some of our local businesses. There will be a small entrance fee that will be a donation towards the Brentwood Park enhancements.

Details to come, but we thought it only fair to give you a heads up! The only reason for this is that some of us need motivation to get in some exercise, and it seems like a fun way to do that. My daughter and I are starting to train, and we hope you do too!

BRENTWOOD PARK

Congratulations and thank yous are in order! The Friends of Brentwood Park recently won a \$50,000 grant from the City of Austin to get some of the planned park improvements underway. It's not a 350 million dollar tax giveaway, but it's not bad for a middle class neighborhood! This project is the brainchild of Nancy Barnard and a handful of others who have been working tirelessly to make progress. A number of local businesses have chipped in as well and for that we are so grateful. If you see her in the hood give her a high-five whydontchya.

As always, if you have questions, concerns or encouragement, I'm easy to find. Please drop us a line.

Finally, please go to <https://crestviewna.com/join/> and renew your family's CNA membership. Teamwork makes the dream work!

Free Income Tax Help Available

Foundation Communities will be providing free tax help for low-income families and individuals in Austin. Assistance will be provided until April 15 at the Community Financial Center at 5900 Airport Blvd. For hours and days of operation, visit CommunityTaxCenters.org or call 211 for more information, to schedule an appointment and find out what to bring. The service is free for individuals and families who make less than \$55,000 annually; income eligibility increases by \$5,000 for each additional person for families with more than four members.



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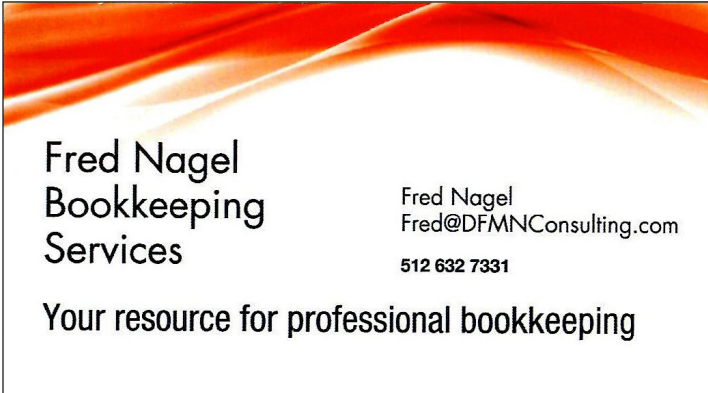
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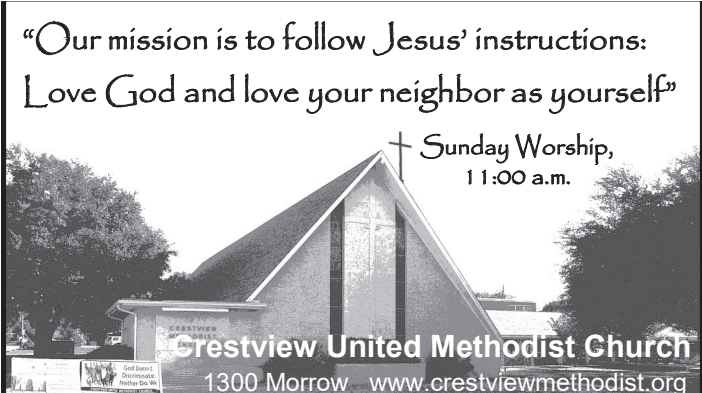
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Love God and love your neighbor as yourself"**

✝ Sunday Worship,
11:00 a.m.

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Sunshine Gardens Annual Plant Sale

On Saturday, March 2nd, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., you can fill your spring garden with organic and heirloom vegetable starts and medicinal and culinary herbs from Sunshine Community Garden's plant sale. Choose from over 120 colorful varieties of tomatoes, 80 varieties of peppers, eggplants, and tomatillos. Also a wide selection of flowers and ornamentals such as skullcap, butterfly weed and agaves will be available. Visitors can also purchase a bag of rich compost to get their garden started. The sale is a family-friendly gathering with live music, entertainment for the children, a silent auction, booths, and the opportunity to stroll through the gardens.



Sunshine Gardens is located at 4814 Sunshine Drive next to the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Parking is available in the state parking garage nearby. Visit <http://www.sunshinecommunitygardens.org/index.php?p=plantsale/index> for more information.

Brentwood Elementary Used Book Sale

Brentwood Elementary School needs your book donations!

The Brentwood Elementary PTA is holding its annual Used Book Sale March 11th - 15th. Take advantage of this opportunity to jump-start your spring cleaning and donate:

- Books (children and adult)
- CDs, DVDs, and VHS Tapes
- Puzzles or board games
- School supplies, new or gently used

• Magazines

Items are priced very affordably, from \$0.25 to \$2.00, so everyone has the chance to buy some great books. Proceeds from the sale will help purchase new books and materials for the Brentwood Elementary School library. Last year, we earned over \$1,700.00 for our library and put books into the hands of the students and community at Brentwood. This year our goal is to collect and sell even more! Donation boxes are located just inside the front doors of Brentwood Elementary, next to the front office. Please drop off your donations by Friday, March 1st. Need someone to pick up your items? Email Candace Pruett at kandachu@gmail.com.

\$50,000 Grant Goes to Brentwood Playground

Brentwood Playground Improvement Committee and Friends of Brentwood Park were recently awarded a grant of \$50,000 provided by the Austin Parks Foundation. The grant funding will go toward the first phase of the new playground project. This multi-phased project will include additional climbing playscapes, equipment for a wider age range, and curbing and sidewalks for accessibility. These grant funds will be used in combination with other monies raised by ongoing fundraising events such as Oktoberfest.

Cap Metro ROW Update

Major construction activities for the railroad double tracking project have been completed. There still remains some signal work, approximately one weekend day of ballast (rock) work, site cleanup and testing. Machinery noise and some dust can be expected. Capital Metro would like to thank our neighbors and area residents for their patience during the course of the construction work!



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Walls - An Exhibit by Melanie Hickerson

Recently the idea of a wall has become topical. The political conversation in this nation has suddenly become energized by the idea of walls. Maybe people are enamored of the illusion of a physical barrier as only protection. Walls also imprison.

Local artist Melanie Hickerson has created more than 150 paintings with concrete blocks as an element of the imagery. The image of walls and blocks first appeared in her work in February 2001. After her father's death and 9/11, the wall image increased its presence in her work. Nineteen of these paintings will be on exhibit at the Seton Cove Spiritual Center, 3708 Crawford St. through Feb. 22, 2019. The exhibit is open most days, Monday through Friday, 9-5, whenever Seton Cove Spiritual Center does not have a special event scheduled.



"Mom and Me" by Melanie Hickerson

Melanie was born near Oklahoma City and grew up in the "oil patch" of Texas and Oklahoma. One of 8 children, her creative mother encouraged music, dance and painting. Melanie has lived in Italy, New York City and Austin. She received her Master of Fine Arts from the University of Texas in 1985,

and has taught art at Austin Community College.

Melanie says of her work, "Painting is my self-indulgent pursuit, my curiosity reaching. It has led me around the world... I'm trying to express with paint and shapes something about being human — not all of it, but something of it that is recognizable."

Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out
— from "Mending Wall" by Robert Frost

Calling All Park Lovers!

By Diane Larson, Friends of Brentwood Park

Spring 2019 It's My Park Day (IMPD) is scheduled for Saturday, March 2nd from 9am till noon. This is one of two great workday opportunities to be outside with your neighbors and give Brentwood Park some love.

IMPD is a city-wide service day organized each spring and fall by Austin Parks Foundation and Austin Parks and Recreation. We appreciate the sponsorship of local businesses that provide breakfast tacos and coffee to volunteers who will spread mulch and clear root collars, weed flower beds, and maintain the volleyball court. Friends of Brentwood Park (FOBP) has organized these volunteer maintenance projects for IMPD at Brentwood Park each year since 2010.

Over the next month, FOBP will send out emails about this spring's IMPD with information about how to register and what to bring. (Online registration begins in Feb.) Information will also be available through our Facebook page. If you would like to get involved with FOBP's leadership team or with park projects please let us know! We can be reached through our group email address: friendsofbrentwoodpark@gmail.com



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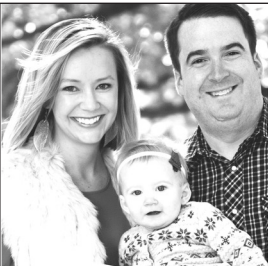


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