

Mesa Park MESSENGER

Volume 18, Issue #2

April/May 2011

Neighborhood Watch Party May 21

By Veronica Crowley

Plan to come meet your neighbors and brainstorm how we can reduce crime in Mesa Park at the Neighborhood Watch Party on May 21, 2011. We'll be meeting at the pavilion in Schroeter Park at 4:30 pm for pizza, discussion and socializing, and hope to wrap up by 6:00 pm.

Take this opportunity to find out what's been going on with your neighbors and voice your ideas about what we can do as a group to reverse the crime trend in Mesa Park. We'll provide pizza and drinks, and we encourage you to bring your whole family to take advantage of our beautiful park and this spring weather.

If you are planning to attend, PLEASE RSVP to mesapark@crowleyhome.net by May 15 so we can have enough pizza on hand. Please indicate how many adult and kid pizza-eaters you'll be bringing. And if you're inclined to share a dessert or two with your neighbors, we're pretty sure it won't be turned away. Hope to see you on May 21!

Fire Ants are Back

AgriLife Extension • Texas A&M System

I was working in the yard pruning roses last week and I got stung by my first fire ant of the season. While I knew it was inevitable, I was hoping that it would occur a bit later in the year. But, it's true. Fire ants have begun to yet again, dot the landscape with their mounds.

Spring time is when people see fire ants swarming. Swarming is a reproductive process that usually occurs on warm spring days after a rain event. Winged males and females leave the mound and fly into the air to mate. After mating, they fall to the ground where the males die and females break off their wings. Females then begin to search for a location to establish a new colony. They dig a small chamber in the soil, lay a few eggs and rear those young until they become mature worker ants. At that point the workers take over colony functions and the queen continues to expand the population of the colony by laying more eggs.

While searching for a new colony location, many mated fire ant queens are killed by lizards, birds, spiders, other ants, and often my shoe stomping them. The queens that survive can be managed by broadcasting fire ant bait over your entire property. New colonies are usually very small and may not have substantial mounds that you would be able to locate to treat individually. The worker ants forage for food, so they would have the opportunity to locate fire ant bait and carry back to the colony to share with others.

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600. Check out my blog at www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com



Mesa Park Crime Increase

By David Crowley

Here are some alarming stories I have heard from neighbors in the last few months:

- House broken into through the back door
- House door kicked in during the middle of the day while neighbor was away for about an hour
- Catalytic converter sawed off of SUV parked in driveway with a hack saw during the night
- Truck storage box locks cut off and items stolen from driveway
- Suspicious-looking man knocked on the door of an elderly woman's home and asked if he could use the restroom

I looked at the crime stats available through the Austin Police Department (<http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/police/crimein->

(continued on page 5)

Save the Date

**MPNA General Meeting
Milwood Library
Wed., April 27, 7PM**

**Neighborhood Garage Sale
Saturday, May 7, 8am-1pm**

**Neighborhood Watch Party
Saturday, May 21, 4:30pm
Schroeter Park pavilion**

**MPNA Watermelon Social
Schroeder Park
Saturday, June 19th,
mkbarber1@gmail.com**

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Email: susanmcv@att.net

Resident of Mesa Park

28 years as a Realtor in Austin, TX

21 years with Coldwell Banker United Realtors

Market report for Mesa Park--Between 2/6/2011 to 4/1/2011. One property "Sold". Six properties under contract, avg. price \$198,908 and eight properties currently on the market, avg. price \$188,335, avg. 99 days on market. Contact me if you need further information.

Do You Have a Child Who Will Attend Davis Elementary as a Kindergartener Next Fall?

If so, be sure to join the Welcome to Davis Club. All incoming Kindergarteners (and their families) are invited to the events, which are designed to help children ease the transition to the school plus meet some future classmates. Mom and Dad get to meet future and current Davis parents and ask/answer questions. These events are helpful and fun!

The Welcome to Davis Club sends periodic e-mails to parents who are interested in keeping up with the activities for incoming kindergarteners. To be included on the mailing list, please send an e-mail to welcometodavis@davisdolphins.org

MPNA NEIGHBORHOOD GARAGE SALE!

Our neighborhood Garage Sale is scheduled on Saturday, May 7th, from 8am-1pm. The cost for each resident is \$5.00. Map will be provided for each house, advertising in the Austin American Statesman and Craigs List. To participate in the garage sale, please contact Teresa Wood at 512-795-0952. CALL AFTER 7pm. Please sign up before May 5th.

the Quarries

ALL MESA PARK NEIGHBORS WELCOME!

Six 1 week day camps for kids entering 1st-6th from 8:00am to 4:00pm.
*Junior High Camp only, those entering 6th-8th.
Extended hours (4:00-6:00pm) available for additional cost.

QUARRIES
CAMPS


Register Now!

at www.hpbc.org/quarries
or see back for more information.

Quarries Summer 2011 Camps

QUARRIES
CAMPS

Check out our website to see more of what we have to offer!

 www.hpbc.org/quarries



Special Fitness Membership Rates

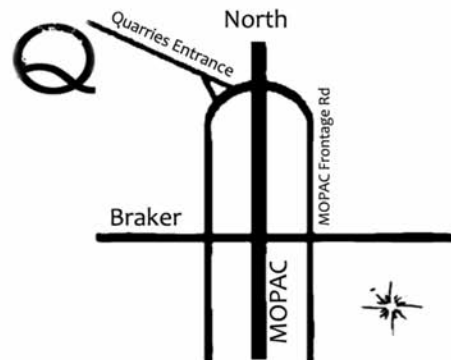
for our Mesa Park Neighbors!

Just bring this ad in for

\$25/SINGLE MONTHLY RATE

\$45/FAMILY MONTHLY RATE

with no processing fee!



Walking Directions:

The Quarries walk-in gate is located at Spotted Horse and Mesa Woods Drive.

Driving Directions:

From Braker go north on the service road. The service road will turn to the left under Mo-Pac Expy and you want to be in the right hand lane. Immediately after crossing under Mo-Pac, take the first right into The Quarries. The Fitness center is toward the back of the complex behind the fields.

MPNA Crime Reports from APD for Mesa Park Neighborhood

Crime	Address	Date	Time
ASSAULT W/INJURY-FAM/DATE VIOL	117XX SPOTTED HORSE DR	1/3/11	12:08
ASSAULT W/INJURY-FAM/DATE VIOL	46XX BEAVER CREEK DR	1/3/11	17:13
BURGLARY OF RESIDENCE	115XX ELK PARK CIR	1/5/11	20:13
FAMILY DISTURBANCE	117XX NATRONA DR	1/5/11	18:46
FORGERY AND PASSING	53XX DUVAL RD	1/7/11	18:21
FOUND PROP	117XX BIG TRL	1/8/11	11:52
LOST PROP	X BIG TRL	1/8/11	12:06
SUSPICIOUS VEH	116XX RESEARCH BLVD SVRD NB	1/12/11	0:47
BURGLARY OF VEH	116XX RESEARCH BLVD SVRD NB	1/13/11	16:35
THEFT	116XX RESEARCH BLVD SVRD NB	1/13/11	15:09
THEFT	115XX RESEARCH BLVD SVRD NB	1/17/11	15:38
FAMILY DISTURBANCE	46XX GRAY FOX DR	1/24/11	9:46
STRUCTURE FIRE	52XX THUNDER CREEK RD	1/26/11	22:58
LEAVING THE SCENE CRASH/ACCIDE	5XXX DULL KNIFE DR	1/27/11	13:43
DISTURBANCE/OTHER	53XX DUVAL RD	1/30/11	13:42
THEFT	116XX RESEARCH BLVD SVRD	1/30/11	8:24
ASSIST COMPLAINANT	X	2/1/11	21:40
DISTURBANCE/OTHER	116XX RESEARCH BLVD SVRD	2/3/11	22:02
THEFT FROM BUILDING	53XX DUVAL RD	2/3/11	11:54
ASSAULT W/INJURY-FAM/DATE VIOL	53XX THUNDER CREEK RD	2/9/11	2:08
DECEASED PERSON	53XX DUVAL RD	2/9/11	20:12
FAMILY DISTURBANCE	116XX NATRONA DR	2/12/11	19:39
BURGLARY NON RESIDENCE	116XX RESEARCH BLVD SVRD	2/14/11	14:30
BURGLARY OF RESIDENCE	43XX STEVE SCARBROUGH DR	2/19/11	1:00
BURGLARY OF VEH	114XX MOPAC EXPY SVRD	2/20/11	14:27
BURGLARY OF VEH	51XX DULL KNIFE DR	2/22/11	8:26
THEFT	116XX RESEARCH BLVD SVRD	2/22/11	3:57
THEFT	116XX RESEARCH BLVD SVRD	2/22/11	6:45
THEFT	116XX RESEARCH BLVD SVRD	2/23/11	10:28
CRIMINAL MISCHIEF	116XX BIG TRL	2/26/11	10:41
SUSPICIOUS PERSON	52XX THUNDER CREEK RD	3/3/11	16:00
THEFT	116XX RESEARCH BLVD SVRD	3/3/11	16:47
THEFT OF AUTO PARTS	116XX SPOTTED HORSE DR	3/4/11	7:49
THEFT CATALYTIC CONVERTER	117XX SHOSHONE DR	3/5/11	8:27
UNAUTHORIZED USE OF VEH	117XX SPOTTED HORSE DR	3/6/11	3:42
RECKLESS DAMAGE	116XX ANGUS RD	3/7/11	14:38
DECEASED PERSON	43XX RED CLOUD DR	3/8/11	13:20
CRIMINAL MISCHIEF	115XX ANGUS RD	3/15/11	1:54
HARASSMENT	115XX RESEARCH BLVD SVRD	3/16/11	17:45
LEAVING THE SCENE CRASH/ACCIDE	52XX DUVAL RD	3/17/11	16:36
FORGERY AND PASSING	42XX RED CLOUD DR	3/23/11	15:04

“It’s My Park Day”

By Phil Coleman

Over 30 volunteers, most from the Mesa park area, worked to refurbish Schroeter Park’s interior trails Saturday, March 5, 2011. Adults and children hauled and spread bark mulch on the trails. Workers also lined trails with rock and picked up trash and dead underbrush.

The 9 am - 1 pm event, co-sponsored by the Mesa Park Neighborhood Association, the Austin Park Foundation, and Wheatsville Coop, was part of the city-wide “It’s My Park Day!”

Working side-by-side, participants made new friends or got reacquainted with neighbors. Many had participated in previous “It’s My Park!” events at Schroeter Park.

The Austin Parks Foundation and Wheatsville Coop provided snacks. Austin Parks also provided tools. Many volunteers also brought their own tools.

Among the volunteers were the Girl Scout Troop 1450 (Summit Elementary) and Boy Scout Troop 165, Round Rock. The Girl Scouts, first graders, used five-gallon plastic buckets to haul mulch to the trails.

Acacia Hernandez, who lives near Lakeline Mall, represented her grandparents who live on Beaver Creek Drive. Acacia used to play in the park as a child while visiting her grandparents. She was glad to have the opportunity to help upgrade the trails.

If you haven’t already, we suggest you visit the park to see the results of this event.



Crepe Myrtles Bloom with Minimal Pruning

By Susan McVicker

(information from numerous sources)

Crepe myrtles can bloom all summer year after year. Crepe myrtles have a natural shape that needs minimal care and little or no pruning. Light tip pruning or snipping off old blooms will encourage more flowers. Heavy cutbacks (sometimes called “crepe murder”) in late winter or early spring is never a good idea. Many people engage in heavy pruning because they see their neighbors doing it or the tree trimmer needs a pay check. This ruins the natural shape of the tree. As a rule of thumb, only remove old seed pods and old stalks that are thinner than a pencil.

To help crepe myrtles develop properly, gardeners need to exercise care and prune carefully, not to destroy the beauty nature intended. When you cut the top of a crepe myrtle down to a nub, it will send out several long, vigorous shoots at the spot where the pruning cuts were made. This will produce a cluster of new branches that gives the plant a wild, unkempt look.

Know a crepe myrtles mature height before you plant it. Crepe myrtles range in height from 2 ft to 30 ft. Trees such as ‘Natchez’ or ‘Tuscarora’ reach 25-30 ft. in height. ‘Sioux’ and ‘Regal Red’ are medium size selections that will grow only 12-15 ft. tall. A number of trees grow less than 3 ft. tall. Google the information below for more information on the many crepe/crapemyrtles available.

www.usna.usda.gov/PhotoGallery/Crape-myrtleGallery/CrapeTable.html

How to Make Your Home Greener

Source: www.greenbuildersinc.com

- Insulate your attic. By adding insulation, you will reduce your utility bills.
- Tune up your HVAC systems. If you insulate your heating and cooling equipment, it won't have to work as hard.
- Install low-flow toilets and shower heads.
- Switch to low consumption fluorescent lighting and fixtures.
- Weather strip your windows and replace them with thicker paned windows.
- Replace old windows with energy-efficient low-E insulated windows.
- Switch to native and drought-resistant landscaping.

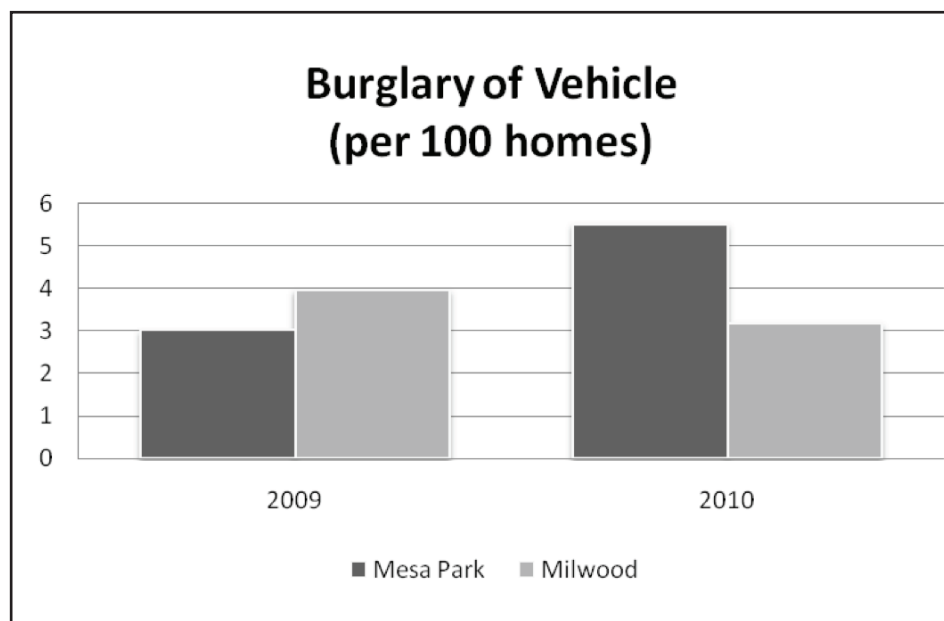
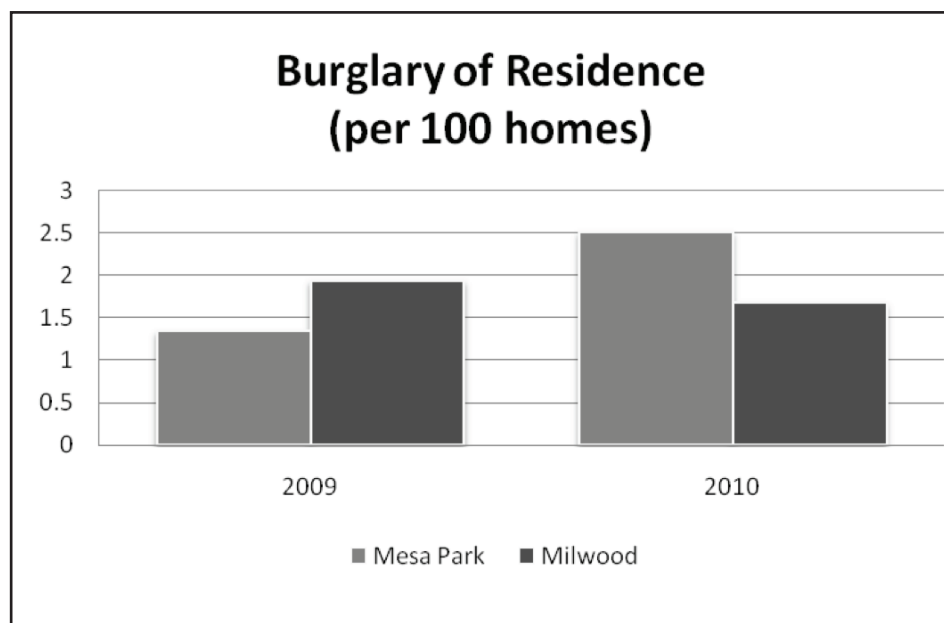
Crime Increase

(continued from page 1)

formation.htm) and it turns out that between 2009-2010 burglaries of residences in Mesa Park have increased 90%; burglaries of vehicles have increased 80%.

Looking through the crime data, many neighborhoods have seen an increase in crime over the last few years, probably due to the economic conditions, but some neighborhoods have seen a reduction in crime. Milwood—located between Duval Rd, Amherst, Parmer, and the RR tracks—has actually been able to achieve a decrease in crime between 2009-2010. The charts below show a crime comparison between Mesa Park and Milwood. Milwood has about twice as many homes, 1140, compared to Mesa Park, 600, so I normalized crime per 100 homes.

So what has Milwood done to decrease crime (burglary of residence by 15%, of vehicle by 20%) while Mesa Park has increased by over 80%? They have an active neighborhood association and a neighborhood watch program. You can help to reduce crime in our neighborhood by becoming involved. Show up to the Neighborhood Watch Kick-off party May 21 4:30PM at Schroeter Park (see “Neighborhood Watch Party” article on page 1) and get involved with MPNA by showing up to our next general meeting on April 27 at 7PM at Milwood Library.

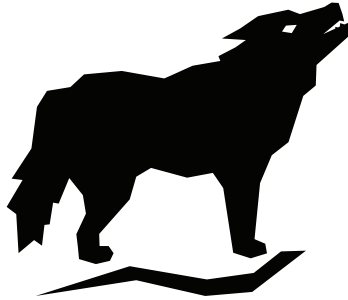


Urban Coyotes

By Claudia Ullrich

There have been several coyote sightings in Mesa Park over the last few weeks. Please read this for more information.

- The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department provides expertise and advice on urban wildlife issues, but does not implement nuisance coyote control.
- Texas Wildlife Services, in partnership with local governments, does provide nuisance coyote control services in some urban areas. In some cities, such as Austin, Texas Cooperative Extension assists with coordinating nuisance coyote control and public education. Call the main Texas Wildlife Services office in San Antonio at (210) 472-5451 to get the number of the local office nearest you.
- Urban and suburban coyotes, like urban deer, are symptoms of a broader issue. People continue to expand housing subdivisions and other human development into what used to be open range wildlife habitat, especially on the expanding fringes of large metropolitan areas. This is increasing the potential for encounters and conflicts between people and wildlife.
- Trapping and similar nuisance control actions cannot eliminate urban coyote problems, although this can be part of the solution in some situations.
- The real solution and the greater need facing Texans right now is public education. We need to inform and empower people to take steps to coexist with coyotes and other urban wildlife.

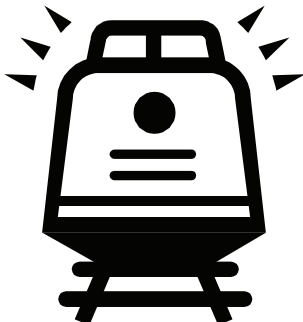


- There are some common sense precautions people can take to manage coyotes:
 - Do not feed coyotes! Keep pet food and water inside. Keep garbage securely stored, especially if it has to be put on the curb for collection; use tight-locking or bungee-cord-wrapped trashcans that are not easily opened.
 - Keep compost piles securely covered; correct composting never includes animal matter like bones or fat, which can draw coyotes even more quickly than decomposing vegetable matter.
 - Keep pets inside, confined securely in a kennel or covered exercise yard, or within the close presence of an adult.
 - Walk pets on a leash and accompany them outside, especially at night.
 - Do not feed wildlife on the ground; keep wild bird seed in feeders designed for birds elevated or hanging above ground, and clean up spilled seed from the ground; coyotes can either be drawn directly to the seed, or to the rodents drawn to the seed.
 - Keep fruit trees fenced or pick up fruit that falls to the ground.
 - Do not feed feral cats (domestics gone wild); this can encourage coyotes to prey on cats, as well as feed on cat food left out for them.
 - Minimize clusters of shrubs, trees and other cover and food plants near buildings and children's play areas to avoid attracting rodents and small mammals that will in turn attract coyotes
 - Use noise making and other scaring devices when coyotes are seen. Check with local authorities regarding noise and firearms ordinances. Portable air horns, motor vehicle horns, propane cannons, starter pistols, low-powered pellet guns, slingshots, and thrown rocks can be effective.

Quiet Zone Established

By David Crowley

Trains have almost stopped blowing their horns. The quiet zone was established Feb 22, 2010. Union Pacific has 30 days to update its signage and train its drivers to comply with the quiet zone. The railroad crossing should be without train horns after March 24th. If you hear train horns after this date please contact Raquel Espinoza with Union Pacific Railroad at (281) 350-7771. Many thanks to the city staff and city council member Chris Riley and staff for getting the Duval Rd RR quiet zone completed.



Save Your Empty Aluminum Cans

Cindy Lindsey



Don't forget to save your empty aluminum cans to donate to the Blue Santa project. This is an ongoing project, not just for Christmastime.

The cans are redeemed, the money going to purchase toys, so that not one needy child goes without a toy at Christmas. This program is sponsored

by the Austin Police Department, and is another way our crime fighters work to make our community a better place to live.

It is easy.....just save your aluminum cans and drop them off at 11703 Shoshone Drive. There are receptacles by the garage just waiting to be filled.

RISING TO EASTER

HYDE PARK BAPTIST CHURCH // THE QUARRIES CHURCH



Dr. J. Kie Bowman

SUNDAY, APRIL 24 . 9:30AM
THE QUARRIES CHURCH

Hyde Park High School Leadership Hall
11400 North Mopac

THEQUARRIESCHURCH.COM



Austin Civic Wind Ensemble

In Tune with Austin Since 1975

2011 Spring Concert

Conducted by Robert Laguna

Featuring Works by: Eric Whitacre

David Holsinger, John Williams, And Robert Smith

Friday, May 13th 7:30pm
at Covenant United Methodist
Church 4410 Duval Road

*** Free Admission**



Mesa Park House for Sale

11617 Natrona Drive

\$181,980
3 bedroom/2 bath
SS appliances, new roof, tiles, doors
Landscaped backyard, covered patio
Updated and upgraded!
Come by and grab a flyer!

<http://bit.ly/efrg89>



SUNTEX LANDSCAPE

Lawn Maintenance. Tree Trimming.
Installation.

Brian Boehm

*Serving Mesa Park for 8 years & Former Resident
(512) 461-5909*

Thank you for your Donations!

MPNA Board of Directors continues to work for you on a volunteer basis. All residents of Mesa Park Neighborhood are members of Mesa Park Neighborhood Association, whether you rent or own your home. If you receive this newsletter, delivered at your door, you are a member. Mesa Park does not charge annual dues, unlike most other neighborhood associations, but we do accept donations.

Donations pay for the "Mesa Park Messenger" newsletter, gift cards for the Holiday Lighting Contest, neighborhood garage sale, "Its My Park Day", the Annual Police Appreciation Event, and other events. We really need your help to keep the newsletter going.

We want to thank all the residents that have donated for the past few months. We really appreciate your generosity.

If you would like to make a donation, please complete the form below and include your check. A minimum amount of \$5.00 would be greatly appreciated.

Donation for MPNA \$ _____

Name: _____

Phone and Address: _____

Email: _____

Mail check to MPNA, PMB 104, P.O. Box 200255, Austin, TX 78720

Helpful Numbers

- Police Headquarters
Main Switchboard 512-974-5000
- Homicide tip line 512-477-3588
- Robbery Hotline. 512-974-5092
- Sex Crimes tip line 512-974-5095
- Auto Theft tip line 512-974-5096
- Abandoned Vehicle
tip line. 512-974-8119
- Northwest Area
Command 512-974-5591

All the messages are available on-line at
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Mesa_Park_Neighborhood/messages

Neighborhood contacts:

President/Quarries Representative: **David Crowley**, mesapark@crowleyhome.net or 586-9583
 Mail donations to MPNA, PMB 104, P.O. Box 200255, Austin, TX 78720
 Newsletter Editor, Treasurer & Volunteer Coordinator: **Susan McVicker**, susanmcv@att.net or 917-3018
 Neighborhood Meeting Coordinator: **Melissa Conant**, celestembrown@gmail.com
 Board Members: **Cindy Lindsay**, 346-2232, TreeTopProp@prodigy.net; **Gina Mattiza**, gmattiza@austin.rr.com; **Terry Tevis**,
 736-8469, mpnapres@yahoo.com; **Claudia Ullrich**, claudia.mpna@gmail.com; paulp.mpna@gmail.com,
Mary Kay Tiernan, mkbarber1@gmail.com
 Mesa Park Messenger design: **Julie Kennedy**, julie@digitalcitydesigns.com

Emergency: 911

Police Non-Emergency: 311

NW Austin Police District Representative: SPO Michael J. Whetson #5381, michael.whetson@ci.austin.tx.us, 512-974-5553

Reminder: The MPNA is not an HOA (Homeowner's Association). If you have a complaint or need to report a violation, please contact the appropriate city official for assistance. Thank you!