



# Rattan Creek Neighborhood News

Serving Milwood at North Austin MUD # 1 since 1983

Distributed Every Other Month By The Rattan Creek Neighborhood Association, Vol. 18, No. 6

December 2003/January 2004

## Around Milwood

### New RCNA Board:

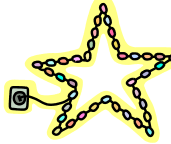
President: Eric Freeman	947-5204
Vice-President: Chris Villalpando	996-8380
Secretary: Dallas Hall	257-3494



**A new Head for Newsletter Distribution is needed!**

### Holiday Lights Contest:

Plan your decorations and talk to your neighbors about possible "street themes". December 1st through December 16th you can email your nominations to [holiday-lights@rattancreek.org](mailto:holiday-lights@rattancreek.org) **We need more nominations this year!!** Judging will take place on Thursday Dec. 18th, so be sure to have all your lights on! We will publish all the nominees on this site for everyone to enjoy by December 21st.



### Caroling In The Park:

**Rattan Creek Park - December 14th at 6:00 PM**

Join us and sing carols around the bon fire Bring a flashlight to see your songbook!

**Don't miss SANTA...** The Jollyville Fire Department will be bringing Santa from his sleigh to our park to meet with each little boy and girl who would like to see Santa before Christmas. He should be arriving about 6:30 PM.

**MOM & DADS: Bring your camera!** Here is a great photo opportunity for you to get pictures of the children with Santa, at no charge!



### Christmas Tree Pickup:

Beginning Saturday, December 27th through Saturday, January 17th.

- Pickups will occur on regular trash days and on some special days (still to be determined).
- Trees must be in lengths of 4ft. and bundled on the curb.

**NO DUMPING TREES IN THE PARK, please!!!**



## EVENTS

### December



**Dec 1-16 Holiday Contest Nominations**  
**Dec 14 Caroling in the Park Don't Miss Santa!**  
 Rattan Creek Park, 6pm  
**Dec 17 MUD Meeting, 6pm**  
 9511 RR 620 North  
**Dec 18 Holiday Lights Judging**  
**Dec 18 RCNA Meeting, 7pm**  
 13207 Darwin  
**Dec 19 - Jan 5 RRISD Off**  
**Dec 20 Hanukah**  
**Dec 25 Christmas**

### January



**Jan 1 New Years Day**  
**Jan 6 RRISD starts**  
**Jan 15 RCNA Meeting, 7 pm**  
 13207 Darwin  
**Jan 19 MLK Day (RRISD Holiday)**  
**Jan 21 MUD Meeting, 6 pm**  
 9511 RR 620 North

### February

**Feb 14 Valentine's Day**  
**Feb 16 RRISD Day Off**  
**Feb 16-Feb 29 POOL CLOSED**  
**Feb 18 MUD Meeting, 6 pm**  
**Feb 19 RCNA Meeting, 7 pm**



RCNA Board of Directors  
P.O. Box 200584  
Austin, Tx 78720-0584

Website: [www.rattancreek.org](http://www.rattancreek.org)

**RCNA Board of Directors:**

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Dallas Hall 257-3494

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POSITION OPEN

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Stephanie Doherty 249-0253  
email: [thedohertys@austin.rr.com](mailto:thedohertys@austin.rr.com)

**Yard of the Month:**

Jon and Gina Martin 331-1109

*The Rattan Creek Neighborhood News welcomes your letters and guest columns. Letters must have a verifiable signature. Guest columns and letters will be printed on as space available basis. Neither the Rattan Creek Neighborhood News nor the Rattan Creek Neighborhood Association accept responsibility for the opinions expressed in editorials, letters or guest columns. The Rattan Creek Neighborhood News reserves the right not to publish any submissions and the right to edit all submissions. Mail to the following address: Jo Jones, RCNA Editor, 13119 Green River Trail, Austin, Tx 78729 or e-mail: [JRJones@austin.rr.com](mailto:JRJones@austin.rr.com)*

**Volunteers needed for Newsletter Delivery**

A Block Captain delivers newsletters door to door on a specific street for a range of house numbers.

**Block Captains are needed for:**

Earp Way Tovar Kingman  
Portland Trail Varcella Trail  
Tamayo (13000 block) Margit Trail(12700 block)

The Section Head sorts the newsletters and delivers to the houses of the block captains, on streets close to yours. It is mostly car work.

**A Section Head is Needed for: Tovar Area.**

Thank you,  
Dallas Hall  
257-3494



**Girl Scout Holiday Bazaar**

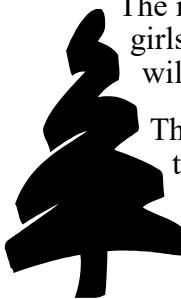
The Girl Scouts are having their annual Holiday Bazaar on Saturday, December 6th, at Pond Springs Baptist Church gymnasium on Pond Springs Road from 1:00-3:00 p.m. Come out and let your children do their Holiday gift

shopping.

*Nothing costs more than \$2.50 and the proceeds go to Kids Helping Kids*, an organization that provides eyeglasses, shoes and other important items to children in our school district whose families can not afford these things.



The items to be sold are gifts and crafts that the girls made, many of whom live in the neighborhood. There will also be free gift wrapping.



The entry fee is 1 non-perishable food item to be given to Hill Country Ministries.

Please come and help support these wonderful charities.

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**Ask Me How! Jon 331-1109**

Website: [innerlight.com/jonmartin](http://innerlight.com/jonmartin)  
Email: [jonmartin@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jonmartin@sbcglobal.net)

## President's Notes

Friends and neighbors:

Forgive me in advance for the length of this column. I get talkative when I get ornery. And I get real ornery when I find out that someone wants to raise my neighborhood's taxes again.

You may have heard the recent news about the possibility of the new stretch of 183N (from McNeil to Lakeline Blvd.) being converted into a toll road. This proposal was quietly floated by the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority (CTRMA) and the Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT). Their plan is to raise taxes/tolls on users of 183 and other existing roads in our area to pay for new road building elsewhere. Obviously this plan, if carried out, would have a huge impact on our neighborhood, and all the neighborhoods and businesses along 183 North. The CTRMA has proposed this conversion with little concern for taxpayer support, economic impact on local business, and traffic impact on adjoining neighborhoods.

A little background on the issue: In 2001, the Texas legislature, at the urging of our State Representative, Mike Krusee, established a brand new class of governmental authority – Regional Mobility Authorities (RMAs). Conceived as a regional transportation department (a mini-TXDOT, if you will), the RMAs were supposed to bring regional coordination and faster timetables to the perpetually slow road building process in Texas. Local knowledge and cooperation across a region was supposed to help accelerate the building of roads for our congested area. The RMA had the authority to build new toll-roads, plan and build other local roads.

Following the lead of the law's sponsor, Williamson County and Travis County established the CTRMA as the first RMA under this law last year.

An (unelected) board of directors was picked by our county commissioners to guide the CTRMA; just recently, our County Commissioner Mike Heiligenstein was named to be the first executive director of the agency. The CTRMA focused on the plan to build a toll-road parallel to 183 to ease congestion heading out to Leander.

It all sounds good on the surface: cooperation, focus, speed. But several serious problems exist with the CTRMA.

First, the RMAs were granted the authority to convert existing roads into toll roads, with the funds being used for other projects, even projects outside of the CTRMA. This allowed both TXDOT and the CTRMA to float the proposal – with little or no publicity – of converting several stretches of 183 from free roads into toll roads in order to pay for new construction on 183A.

It doesn't overstate my concern to say this toll-conversion proposal could seriously hurt our neighborhood. 183N, when finished out past 620, was going to finally relieve traffic congestion on the roads leading into – and through – our neighborhood. By charging tolls, that congestion will not be relieved, and cut-through traffic and usage of Parmer Lane as a 183 alternative is bound to increase. Needless to say, despite being on the CTRMA and TXDOT's short-list of projects, there have not been any public studies released on the traffic impact of tolling 183 upon alternative routes. But common-sense suggests that tolling 183 from McNeil to Lakeline means living with the frontage road congestion and slow-going along the frontage roads and the main roads well into the future.

The impact is not just traffic either: local businesses along 183 and Parmer suffer from the continued construction and

congestion; air pollution in the neighborhood increases along with traffic; and the number of accidents and pedestrian injuries goes up as commuters use Dallas, Tamayo, and Amasia as ways to shave time off their commutes.

Additionally, tolling a few specific roads to pay for district wide projects, out-of-district projects, and for CTRMA administrative expenses, amounts to an unfair new tax on commuters and homeowners in our area. For many commuters in Cedar Park and Round Rock, the new tolling and conversion tolling would amount to up to \$700 a year in new taxes, and more for businesses and families needing to go back and forth on these routes. A gas tax would be hugely unpopular, and rightly so; but it would be far fairer of a way to spread the burden of road usage throughout the CTRMA.

Yet more, using CTRMA and TXDOT created tolls to pay for roads is a way of raising our taxes without taking the responsibility for it. Our elected representatives are bemoaning that we don't have enough money to pay for the roads we need – but don't have the personal responsibility or political courage to raise the taxes to pay for it. Thus, they have been pushing the toll-conversion route, so unelected, faceless commissioners within the CTRMA and TXDOT can "enhance revenues" (read: raise taxes) to pay for roads, and the elected officials don't have to pay a political price. That is a cowardly way of avoiding the consequences of raising taxes on commuters and voters.

We need to make it clear as neighbors and voters that our elected officials ultimately do have the responsibility for the decisions of the CTRMA and TXDOT. We need to make it clear – through words and through actions – that our County Commissioners and State Representatives can't hide behind the unelected CTRMA and TXDOT when raising the taxes on our neighborhood.

(To make matters creepier, our elected officials have carefully been changing their language to use the term 'tax roads' to describe roads that any regular person would call a free road. Perhaps it's their cute way of trying to make us realize that roads cost money to build. It only makes it clearer that the toll-conversion is a new tax upon us, and that our elected officials are trying to hide their eagerness to raise our taxes.)

Fortunately, this proposal is not yet finalized. At a CTRMA board meeting in early November, in the face of public questioning, the CTRMA board backpedaled on the issue of 183, but did not take the proposal definitively off the table.

*(Continued on page 23)*

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# Around Rattan Creek

## New Neighbors and Babies:

### New Neighbors:

Rene & Viviana Regalado  
7012 Dallas



Stephen Hui  
12904 Adak Cove

Lisa and Matt Henke  
and children Mark, Blake, Kate & Kyle  
7603 Windrush Drive

Jeffrey and Elizabeth Mitchell and children Joshua,  
Alexandra & William  
8125 Osborn

### New Babies:

Jefferson Freeman  
Born September 30, 2003, to Eric and Stephanie  
Freeman and siblings Madison and Jackson  
13207 Darwin



Christian Michael Villalpando  
Born October 6, 2003, to Chris and Rebecca  
Villalpando and brother Joshua  
6504 Shiner

Mark Graham  
Born September 25, 2003, to Lisa and Matt Henke  
and siblings Kyle, Kate and Blake  
7603 Windrush Drive

Peter Joseph Lenz  
Born May 19, 2003, to Sharon and John Lenz  
7600 Windrush

*If you know someone has just moved into the neighborhood, or just had a baby, help us to welcome the new folks and/or congratulate our neighbors on their special event.*

*Please contact Terri Olsem at 219-7931,  
Or email to her at [terriolsem@aol.com](mailto:terriolsem@aol.com).*

## Milwood Parent Activities



**Looking for a playgroup for your little ones?  
Here are three to chose from:**

- 1) **Babies born** between July 2001 and July 2002 - call Angela at 336-9067.
- 2) **Babies born** between January 2002 and December 2002 - call Jennifer at 257-9383.
- 3) **Babies born** after August 2002 - call Jackie at 257-2230.

**Play group for children with birth dates in Fall 1996 and Summer/Spring of 1997:** Call Candance Kreiling at 331-9773.

### Are you interested in a group activity not listed?

*There may be others interested in the same activity. Call Marcie at 335-6960 to get your name listed for a new group.*

### Milwood Parents.....

Please contact Marcie De Oliveira for updates, new groups, changes or reports on activities at 335-6960 or by e-mail - [mdeoliveira@austin.rr.com](mailto:mdeoliveira@austin.rr.com)

10/17/03

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**Recipe Corner**

**Bourbon Pecan Smashed Sweet Potatoes**

Prep Time: 5 minutes    Cooking Time: 20 minutes  
 Servings: 4

- 3 medium sweet potatoes, peeled, cut into chunks
- 3 tablespoons butter, cut into small pieces
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans, a couple of handfuls
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar
- 2 ounces bourbon
- 1/2 cup orange juice
- 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
- Salt and pepper

Bring a medium pot of water to a boil. Add sweet potatoes and cook 12 to 15 minutes until very tender. Drain sweet potatoes in a colander. Return pan to medium heat. Add butter to the pan. When butter melts, add nuts and toast for 2 minutes. Add sugar and let it bubble. Add bourbon and cook out alcohol, 1 minute. Add orange juice and the cooked sweet potatoes. Smash with a masher and season the sweet potatoes with nutmeg, salt and pepper.

**Roasted Garlic Mashed Potatoes**

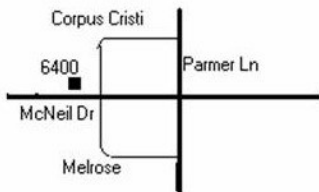
Prep Time: 5 minutes    Cook Time: 50 minutes  
 Servings: 4

- 6 cloves garlic
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 1/2 pounds all purpose potatoes
- 5 tablespoons butter
- 1/3 - 2/3 cup warm milk
- 1/2 cup parmesan, grated
- Salt and Pepper

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Place garlic cloves on a small square of aluminum foil and drizzle with olive oil. Wrap foil around garlic and bake in oven for 20 minutes or until golden. If you prefer, peel the potatoes. Quarter potatoes and cover with water in a large pot. Bring to a boil and simmer until tender, about 15 minutes. Drain the potatoes and return to hot pot and mash with masher or hand held mixer. Mash in the roasted garlic. Mix in butter, milk and salt and pepper. Transfer mashed potatoes to an oven proof dish and sprinkle top with parmesan. Bake in oven for 15 minutes or until top is golden.

Anyone interested in submitting a recipe: please send it to Stephanie Doherty at [thedohertys@austin.rr.com](mailto:thedohertys@austin.rr.com).

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## Fire Safety at Christmas

**REAL CHRISTMAS TREES** can be dangerous if not properly handled. For several years in the US approximately 500 fires each year have started with Christmas trees. Follow these precautions if you use a real tree inside your house or apartment.

Look for and purchase only a tree that is fresh. The needles on a fresh tree will be shiny green and pliable. Needles should not come off when you run a tree branch lightly through your hand. If needles are shedding or brittle, the tree is not fresh. Cut off approximately 1/2 inch of the base of the trunk to expose new wood and capillaries before placing the tree in the stand.

- The tree stand **MUST** allow for the bottom of the tree trunk to be in water. A gallon or more capacity is recommended. The tree may use a gallon of water in the first few days inside a dwelling. Add water as necessary.
- Decorative lights should bear the label of Underwriters Laboratory(UL®). Follow the light manufacturer's instructions. Do not connect more lights together than the manufacture specifies. If you string too many light strings together they will overheat. Replacement bulbs should be the correct wattage

as specified by the manufacturer.

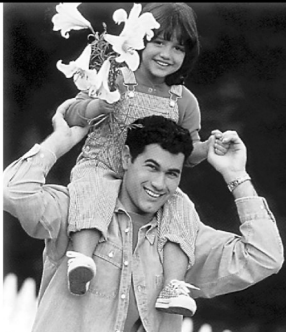
**BURNING CANDLES** are dangerous if not properly handled. Several fires are started each year in this area by candles. Some fire codes or rules prohibit the use of candles in multifamily dwellings (apartments). If you live in an apartment, check with the manager before using candles. If you do use candles, please follow these precautions:

- Use candles sticks or holders that are designed to hold candles upright and are made of noncombustible material (metal, glass or ceramic). Do not melt wax into a saucer or dish and stick the candle to it. These candles tend to fall over and may continue to burn.
- Never place a candle near a real Christmas tree or tree boughs used for decorations. Never place combustibles such as bows, plastic wreaths or garlands at the base of burning candles. Keep candles away from curtains, drapes, or any other combustibles.

***Do not leave candles burning in a room if an adult is not present.***

**FIRES IN FIREPLACES** can be dangerous if not properly managed. Numerous fires are caused each

*(Continued on page 7)*



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(Continued from page 6)

year in this area by improper use of fireplaces or improper ash disposal. When using a fireplace, the following precautions should be observed:

- Keep furniture, combustibles and firewood at a safe distance from the fireplace.
- Make sure the chimney flue vent is open before lighting the fire.
- Close the fire screen after lighting the fire.
- If commercial, pressed fire logs are used, the instructions accompanying them should be followed and only one log at a time should be burned. Do not cut these logs into smaller sizes.
- Do not use the fireplace as an incinerator to burn paper, cardboard, packing material, etc.
- Never use the flammable or combustible liquid as a fire starter.

Fireplace ashes can remain hot enough to start a fire for 24 hours or longer. Do not attempt to collect ashes until 24 hours after the fire has burned out. Ashes should only be put in metal containers and then not placed on or near combustibles. Do not put ashes in outside plastic containers until at least 48 hours after the fire has burned out.

**CHIMNEY FIRES** - If a fireplace is used often, or over a period of time, a buildup of tar and soot called creosote will condense and collect on the inside of the chimney. This creosote will burn. If it gets thick enough and hot enough, it will ignite inside the chimney. A chimney fire will usually be noted by a loud, roaring noise that may last several minutes. These fires can be damage the chimney and may cause cracks in the masonry flues. They may throw sparks and flames out the top of the chimney. If you think you have, or had, a chimney fire call the fire department immediately by dialing 911.

**HOW CAN YOU PREVENT A CHIMNEY FIRE?** By having the chimney periodically inspected and cleaned, if necessary, by a professional chimney sweep. Do not build unusually large or hot fires and observe the precautions in d, e, and f above.

Each household should have a portable dry chemical FIRE EXTENGUISHER readily available. The recommended size and type should be rated by UL as 2-A:10-B:C or larger numbers (approximately a 5 pound size). The very smallest extinguisher for practical use should be rated as 1:A10-B:C(approximately 2 1/2 pound size). The "A:B:C" rated designation is important. It means the extinguisher chemical is effective on ordinary fires (Class A fires such as paper, wood, cloth, etc.), on flammable liquids (Class B fires such as

oil and grease fires), and it is safe to use on energized electrical equipment (Class C fires). Read the instructions printed on the extinguisher **BEFORE** they need to be used. Report the fire by dialing 911 before using the extinguisher. If the fire is on or in a stove, turn off the heat as soon as safely possible. When using a fire extinguisher keep your back to an exit. Avoid breathing smoke. If the fire becomes too large, get out and close the door behind you.

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## December & January Yard Activities, Frost Protection & To Prune or Not?

**Preventative maintenance** is the name of the game in the winter, with several items listed below. The obvious ones have to do with preventing frost damage. First, a real preventative is to spray plants with liquid seaweed monthly to harden the plants and help them hold moisture. Another method of sealing in the winter moisture is spraying with an anti-transpirant product called Cloud Cover.

**When a freeze is forecast** (overnight temperature below 25 degrees) there are several ways to minimize damage. Covering cold-tender plants with cloth or plastic will hold in the ground heat and keep the cold wind from the plants. Plants like bougainvillea, plumeria and hibiscus are common non-native cold tender plants that can be harmed by freezing weather. If they are blooming well, after a few days under 40 degrees, they will decline and it is time to move them to store. Prune back the bougainvillea and stack the containers on top of each other in a room or shed protected from freezing temperatures. Oriental hibiscus do need light and water every 2 weeks to survive the winter. Citrus in containers can be moved inside if not too heavy. Plants that cannot be moved inside can be protected by building a temporary structure around them. A wooden frame with plastic across it works well. Use a mechanics light or even Christmas tree lights for a heat source on especially cold nights.

The cloth coverings are best because they do not conduct the heat away from the plants and if not removed the next morning, the plants will be OK. Plastic coverings are cheap and easy to apply and dry out quickly **but:** the plastic conducts heat away from plants touching it killing the foliage and next morning, plastic coverings must be removed quickly so the sun will not scald the plants. Plastic draped over a blanket works well or a cardboard box works well.

Another easy preventative to minimize freeze damage, is a good watering periodically. Spraying with water in the evening does not work well. If plants look frozen, spray in the morning so the plants will thaw gradually. If plants turn brown after freezing, cut this material off and discard it so it doesn't rot and attract bugs and fungus.

**Remember to water thoroughly**, if we continue to have a warm windy spell, the plants need moisture all winter long. Mulching will conserve soil moisture and mulching also helps protect the roots from freezing. Even if the top growth dies, plants with a strong root system will quickly recover in the spring.

**Winter is the time to prune.** While the trees and shrubs are dormant, it is time to cut off broken branches and prune to shape. The Texas Department of Agriculture says "pruning is only helpful to remove dead or diseased wood, for periodic thinning, or for removing branches growing toward and hitting the house." Topping trees is generally not recommended if the tree is growing too fast and out of shape, remove it now and plant a better mannered native tree.

**Pruning cuts should NOT be flush:** they should cut just outside the branch collar, leaving a small stub. The branch collar is the wider area of bark growth where the branch is attached to the trunk. Leaving the collar promotes proper healing by the branch bark over the small stub. Do NOT use pruning paint, it can slow down the healing process by harboring moisture, insects and pathogens and excluding oxygen.

**An exception to the no-paint rule is the live oaks**, where the paint may discourage insect vectors, or carriers, of oak wilt disease. These trees should be pruned in late fall, or winter when the vectors are inactive. (More on that below)

**Live oak trees require special care.** Oak wilt disease is still a serious problem in the Austin Area. We have had several groups of trees in our neighborhood infected that were removed and ditched around to keep it from spreading through touching root systems. The good news is that our trees have been here for hundreds of years and survived many passings of the live oak wilt. It is just another of Mother Nature's way of thinning out too dense populations and providing more diversified plants. This is why the Austin Releaf and TreeFolks groups encourage use of many different varieties of trees to assure on-going vegetation after the cyclical invasions of bugs and blight.

**Oak Wilt shows as:** Large areas of leaves dying very quickly. A red oak can die in two weeks. In a live oak tree, the leaves turn brown in symmetrical patterns. This infectious fungal disease is spread by sap-feeding beetles bringing the fungus from an infected tree to your freshly-cut wound. Also the fungus is spread from infected trees through interconnected roots. If you make a cut with an infected saw blade or do not immediately paint fresh cuts, your tree can become infected by the beetles attracted by the fresh sap at the wound.

**To help reduce oak wilt infection**, follow these precautions when trimming live oak trees.

- Never prune live oak trees in the spring or fall

*(Continued on page 9)*

(Continued from page 8)

when beetles are active. Prune in the dead of winter before the flush of growth in February or in the heat of July or August.

- Always disinfect your saws and clippers before and after cutting each tree. And paint wounds immediately with pruning sealer.
- Always purchased fully seasoned and dry firewood as oak wilt can be spread by beetles living in green wood. Cover any firewood with clear plastic and bury the edges. Use up all stored firewood by February 15th.
- The safest way to prune live oaks is to hire a professional to do the work with sterile saws and who will haul off all limbs.

**Remember to water all trees and shrubs** if we have a long dry spell, healthy trees will withstand frosts and diseases better. To strengthen live oak trees, fertilize under and around an area which is 1-1/2 to 2 times the drip zone and water well during December through February when the trees are actively growing and are: dropping leaves, blooming, dropping husks and blooms, and spreading yellow pollen on our cars. This is a critical time for watering and fertilizing your live oak trees. Water in the night or early morning to reduce brown patch and other fungus in lawns.

**For more information about Oak Wilt** call the Travis county Agricultural Extension agent or call the Texas Forest Service at 266-9535, they will come and inspect any suspected trees at no cost.

**Prune shrubs now while dormant**, if done too late in the spring, a spurt of new tender growth in an unseasonable warm spell may be frozen by a late frost.

**Crepe myrtles** can be trimmed to shape or down to pencil sized branches as desired up through mid February. They bloom on new wood so pruning much later in the spring reduces blooming.

**Bright colors from annual plants** can brighten up the entire landscape. Select a few sunny spots and add some flowering annuals like the pansies, flowering kale, calendula, dianthus, snapdragons, and sweet alyssum. Prepare for spring color by adding bulbs such as hyacinths, daffodils, ranunculus, and gay feather.

Keep tulip bulbs in the refrigerator at 45 degrees for 45 days or until mid December.

If there is no rainfall, it is important to water in the winter. Water in the mornings to prevent brown patch in lawns and other fungus.

(Continued on page 10)

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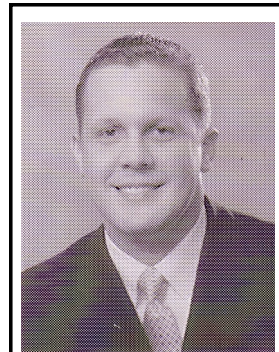
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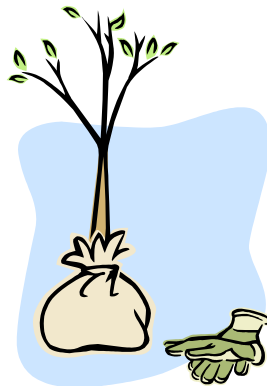
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(Continued from page 9)

**Now is the time to plan shrubs and trees.** Success with planting in November and January is the highest of any time of the year.

**Happy gardening,  
Chuck Simms  
e-mail: charlesvsi@aol.com**



Junior Girl Scout Troop 1428 would like to thank everyone who contributed to their food drive for the Capital Area Food Bank.

Thank you!



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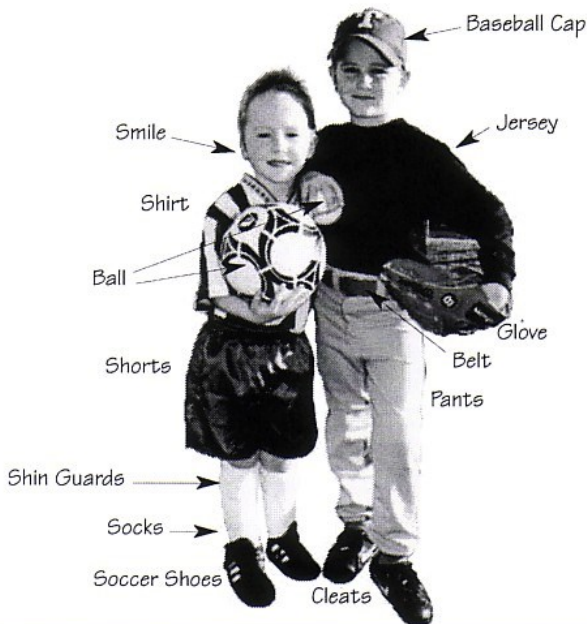
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[www.southernlivingathome.com/veronicahaig](http://www.southernlivingathome.com/veronicahaig)

Your Rattan Creek neighborhood consultant!

**PLEASE READ ALL INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY  
BEFORE COMPLETING APPLICATION**

- All members receiving ID badges must be listed, with birthdates, for the application to be considered complete. (Children under three attending the pool do not need to be listed.)
- Guest admittances can only be purchased by a member of the pool. All guests must be accompanied by a pool member.
- Three guest admittances will be assigned with each ID badge purchased. Six admittances will be assigned with each annual pass. (Complimentary admittances are not issued with ID badges purchased for replacement of a lost or stolen badge.)
- A check made payable to North Austin M.U.D. #1 (NAM1) Pool must accompany the application to be processed.
- A check for pool ID badges, tennis key and/or RCNA **must be mailed separately** from the payment for the NAM1 water bill.
- Replacement fees for lost or stolen ID badges are as follows:  
Summer / Winter Badge: \$5.00 each                      Annual Badge: \$10.00 each
- If purchasing a combination of summer only / winter only and annual ID badges, please specify for whom the annual ID badges are to be assigned to, as each ID badge can only be assigned to **one** person.
- ID badges can be picked up at the pool (during the summer session) on Wednesdays and Saturdays, 2 PM to 8PM, after your application is processed at ECO Resources. **Each** person for whom an ID badge is purchased (ages 3 and older) will need to have their picture taken at the pool office before the badges will be issued. No additional paper work will need to be completed at the pool, but identification will need to be shown. (If registering prior to the summer session, ID badges may be picked up March 1<sup>st</sup> – April 30<sup>th</sup> on weekends, Noon to 6PM.)
- Members registering by 5:00 PM on Tuesdays will be able to pick up ID badges at the pool beginning on Wednesday. Members registering by Noon on Fridays will be able to pick up ID badges at the pool beginning on Saturday.
- Annual ID badges are good from the beginning of the summer session until the end of the winter session of the same year and not necessarily a year from the date of purchase. (i.e. valid from May 2003 to April 2004)
- Tennis court keys are good from (approximately) the first of May until the end of April of the following year. New keys will need to be purchased at this time every year. **Only ONE key can be issued per household.**
- ID Badges, guest passes and tennis court keys are not pro-rated at any time.
- Please make sure you are filling out the appropriate application for the ID badges, etc., that you are requesting. (The application should state the year and session being registered for above the listing of fees.)
- If your child will be three years of age *PRIOR to opening day* of the session being registered for, he/she WILL need an ID badge purchased for him/her.
- Only ID badges will be available at the pool. All applications and payments must be submitted by mail or in person to ECO Resources.

**Receipts will not be accepted for admittance into the pool – NO EXCEPTIONS.**

ALL INCOMPLETE OR INCORRECT APPLICATIONS WILL BE RETURNED WITHOUT PROCESSING

**RATTAN CREEK NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS**

**NORTH AUSTIN MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT NO. 1 - RATTAN CREEK PARK POOL**

Application to Use Recreational Facilities and Release of Liability

**PLEASE READ ALL INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE COMPLETING – INCOMPLETE APPS. WILL BE RETURNED  
APPLICATION FOR Fall/Winter- 2003**

NAMUD #1 Water Bill Account No. _____ Home Telephone Number _____ (Application will be considered incomplete without account number)	
Name: _____ (As it appears on NAM1 bill)	
Address: _____	ZIP _____
Emergency Contact: _____	Telephone Number: _____

I have made application for use of the District's recreational facilities on behalf of myself and the listed members of my family and our guests. I understand that the District's recreational facilities are for use of authorized persons only, and agree that all use by me, my family and our guests shall be in accordance with the District's "Rattan Creek Park Pool, Court Rules and Regulations." I agree that the District does not, by the providing of recreational facilities, assume any responsibility or liability to our guests or us. We assume all responsibility for , and waive any claim against the District for accidental injury, property damage or death arising out of the use of these facilities by any of our guests or us. We agree to indemnify and hold harmless the District, its directors, agents, employees and consultants whether paid or volunteer, from any and all claims by us or our guests which may arise out of use of the District's recreational facilities. If this application is on behalf of any minor children, the application represents that the applicant is the legal guardian of said children and fully responsible for such children, and authorized to execute this application and release on their behalf. I understand that the children, if under ten (10) years of age, must be accompanied by a person fourteen (14) years of age or older when using the District's facilities. *I further understand that I am responsible for any damage to District facilities caused by my family, my guests or myself.*

Applicant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
(Application will be considered incomplete without signature)

**Household Members Attending Pool:** (All members receiving badges must be listed below)  
(Badges required for ages 3 and up) Date of Birth

	/ /
	/ /
	/ /
	/ /
	/ /
	/ /

**NO REGISTRATION FORMS WILL BE TAKEN AT THE POOL.**

<b>2003 Winter Fees:</b>	<b>Make Checks Payable To North Austin M.U.D. #1 Pool</b>	
Quantity		
_____ Winter In-District ID Badge	@ \$20 per badge	\$ _____
_____ Out-of-District Membership (Up to 4 ID Badges if needed)	@ \$200 per household	\$ _____
_____ Additional O.D. ID Badge	@ \$20 each additional badge	\$ _____
_____ Guest Passes (only with ID badges)	@ \$2 each (one time use)	\$ _____
_____ 10 Guest Passes (only with ID badges)	@ \$15	\$ _____
_____ Tennis Court Key (In District Only)	@ \$15 ( <b>ONE KEY PER HOUSEHOLD</b> )	\$ _____
_____ RCNA Membership (In-District Only)	@ \$20 per household	\$ _____
All Winter/Annual 2003 ID BADGES & PASSES VALID THRU 04/30/04		
Check MUST accompany this registration form to be processed.		
	<b>Total</b>	\$ _____

Mail or Deliver to ECO Resources, 9511 Ranch Road 620 N., Austin, Texas 78726

## Rattan Creek Park, Pool and Court Rules and Regulations

Rules are established and adopted by the North Austin Municipal Utility District #1 Board of Directors  
Pool Identification tags and tennis court keys must be purchased through the District Manager  
ECO Resources 9511 RR 620 N, Austin, Texas 78726-2908

### Pool Rules and Regulations

#### Identification

1. Pool is available to District residents who have paid tag fees and their guests. Out of District memberships are available. Only individuals with tags may enter pool area.
2. Identification tags must be worn by swimmers at all times.
3. Report lost or stolen I.D. tags to the pool manager. Replacement tags can be purchased through ECO Resources for a \$5.00 fee.
4. Use of pool I.D. tags by any one other than the swimmer listed on the current year's registration form will lead to forfeiture of that I.D.

#### General Requirements and Conduct

1. Conduct by any person deemed to be dangerous, unwarranted, or offensive is grounds for discipline by the lifeguards. Offensive behavior in particular, will be dealt with on an individual basis and could result in suspension from the pool. Any individual suspended three times may also lose all pool privileges for the season.
2. Running, jumping, skipping, or any activity other than ordinary walking in the pool area is strictly prohibited.
3. Bicycles and skateboards must be walked in front of the pool entrance for safety. No motorized vehicles are permitted in the park. No pets are allowed in the fenced pool area. Pets must be on a leash while in the park.
4. Pool may close for five (5) minutes each hour as a safety precaution
5. Floating devices are not allowed in the pool. Water wings or swim rings for non-swimming children may be used if accompanied by parent or approved baby-sitter.
6. Glass containers of any type are not allowed inside the fenced area or in the bath house area.
7. No cutoffs or street clothes are allowed in the pool.
8. Only lifeguards are to be on the lifeguard stands.
9. No person shall talk to, shout at, or in any manner distract a lifeguard while on the lifeguard stand except in the case of an emergency.
10. Only masks approved by the Pool Manager will be allowed in the pool.
11. One lane will normally be designated for lap swimming at all times, additional lanes may be added at the discretion of the Pool Manager.
12. No smoking or alcoholic beverages are allowed in the fenced pool area.

#### Adult Supervision

1. Children under ten (10) years of age must be accompanied by a parent/guardian or authorized baby-sitter at all times while inside the fenced pool area, unless approved by Pool Manager.
2. Parents are required to provide written authorization naming a specific approved baby-sitter to attend their children under 10 years old at the pool. The baby-sitter must be fourteen (14) years of age or older and be a pool member or have a valid guest pass.

#### Guest Policy

1. Guest(s) must be accompanied by a registered pool member and submit a valid guest pass for admission. Pool members must accept responsibility for their guests.
2. Guest(s) must register with the gate keeper upon admission to the pool facility and sign a waiver of liability.

#### Private Parties

1. Adults eighteen (18) years and older holding a pool I.D. may make reservations to use the pool for a private party when the pool is not open for regular operating hours. All parties must terminate (all participants departing the facility) by 11:30 p.m.
2. Reservations must be made at least four (4) days in advance with the Pool Manager. Reservations are confirmed by a \$50.00 deposit. A reservation is not confirmed until the Pool Manager receives the deposit. The cost for rental of the pool is \$10.00 per hour

plus lifeguard fees.

3. Persons responsible for any parties must hire lifeguards. Lifeguards must be those guards that are under contract with the District.
4. Any damages resulting from a private party will be the responsibility of the lessee.

#### Wading Pool

1. Children taller than a height set by the Pool Manager will not be allowed in the wading pool.
2. Lifeguards will not monitor the wading pool. Children in the wading pool must have a parent or baby-sitter present at all times.

#### Pool Hours (as posted at the pool)

##### SUMMER SCHEDULE

Weekday hours are 11 a. m. to 9 p.m. Saturday hours are 11 a. m. to 9 p. m.; and Sunday hours are 12 Noon to 9 p. m..

##### WINTER SCHEDULE

Weekday hours are 12 noon to 1 pm and 4:30 to 8:00 pm. Saturday Sunday and Holidays 12:00 to 8 pm. Winter Maintenance closing will be posted at the pool.

#### General Information

1. At the discretion of the Pool Manager and as approved by the District Manager, certain periods of the normal open hours may be set aside for specialized activities such as, adults only swim, swim lessons, swim meets, and other special events.
2. Hours may be shortened before and after school starts, and during swim team season. Check the Pool Bulletin Board for scheduled events and scheduling changes.

### Tennis/Sports Court Rules and Regulations

( In District Members Only )

1. No dangerous or offensive conduct will be allowed on the courts.
2. No pets, bicycles, skateboards, or motorized vehicles allowed on the courts
3. No alcoholic beverages are allowed inside the fenced court area.
4. No glass containers are allowed inside the fenced court areas.
5. A playing time limit of one hour (60 minutes) will be observed when other members are waiting to use the facilities.
6. Tennis courts one and two are subject to reservation by tennis leagues, not to exceed five (5) hours a week as posted at the courts.
7. A member may have a maximum of four (4) guests at a time on the sports courts.
8. At the discretion of the District Manager, certain specialized activities on the courts may be arranged.
9. A maximum of (4) players are allowed per tennis court at any time.
10. Soccer tennis is strictly prohibited.

### Questions or Problems

Contact the Pool Manager or  
Bill Burke at 331-7066.

# North Austin Municipal Utility District No. 1 Rattan Creek Pool Spring/Summer Schedule 2003



***Rattan Creek Pool  
is Managed by  
Clearwater Management***

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**Manager - Tony Watt  
Pool phone - 257-8175**

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**Clearwater Management  
Phone - 331-7066**

**NOTES:**

See other pages for Membership  
Application for Pool Use.

**Applications MUST be  
submitted  
by mail or in person at:**

ECO Resources  
NAM1 Pool Tags  
9511 Ranch Road 620 North  
Austin, Texas 78726

**ALL HOURS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. TO VERIFY HOURS, CALL 257-8175 (POOL).**

Spinal Issues In Our Children

Jenny is a 12 year old in 7<sup>th</sup> grade who has had on-going neck and upper back pain that has not been responsive to aspirin or Tylenol. Her mother was concerned about her child being on medication too long and brought her into my office for evaluation.

Jenny is an active child. She plays select soccer and enjoys swimming and riding her bike. When asked about her backpack, she admits to carrying it on one shoulder. I had her mother weigh her backpack before she came in. It weighed 15 lbs. with her books. Jenny weighs 120 lbs. Backpacks should weigh no more than 10% of the child's body weight. I recommended she take out a book or two to help lighten her load.

A recent study done in the *Archives of Disease and Childhood*, 2003, stated that there were 10,000 cases of backpack related visits to ER's in the U.S. last year. This does not include trips to chiropractors or massage therapists.

An examination of Jenny's spine revealed a subluxation in her mid-thoracic spine and her lower cervical spine. A subluxation is an area in the spinal column that is not moving in a normal manner and has become tightened, putting pressure on sensitive spinal

nerves. In her health history, Jenny admits to having taken many falls and spills while growing up. One of these or perhaps an accumulation of these events can cause a subluxation. It was also noted that Jenny's left hip was higher than her right hip and that she had a mild dropped arch of her right foot. These alignment issues can also contribute to the formation of subluxations in a developing spine.

Treatment consisted of adjustments to these tight, mis-aligned areas in her spine. The treatments are extremely safe and highly effective in correcting the root of her problem, a misalignment in her spine. Her symptoms disappeared in four visits, which is typical with children. The healing abilities of a child is much quicker than adults.

Early detection and treatment of subluxations can help young spines become healthy spines into adulthood. Good alignment of the spine helps promote good posture and healthy hearts and lungs.

A sedentary lifestyle (too much TV, electronic games), poor diets (fast foods and sodas) and the dropping of P.E. from school curriculums are

(Continued on page 16)



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Milwood Resident/RCNA Member

RCNA Event Sponsor

*(Continued from page 15)*

contributing factors to not just back problems, but to early heart disease, diabetes and arthritis.

Keeping a child active in these formative years will help the body develop strong bones and a healthy musculo-ligamentous system which will prevent back problems in adulthood.

Should you have any questions regarding your child's health needs or would like your child screened for a subluxation, please call my office at 451-4006.

**Dr. Jackson is a resident of Milwood.** He has been a practicing chiropractor in Austin for the past sixteen years. **His office is located at 1910 Justin Lane in north central Austin.**

He is a member of the Texas Chiropractic Association, American Chiropractic Association and the International Pediatric Chiropractic Association.

## Christmas Tree Pick-up

Beginning Saturday,  
**December 27th**  
through Saturday,  
**January 17th**



**Pickups will occur on regular trash days** and on some special days (still to be determined)

- **Trees must be in lengths of 4ft. and bundled on the curb.**
- **NO DUMPING TREES IN THE PARK!!!**

# Your Milwood Team

JD Summers at Arboretum Realty and First American Title are there to help you with all the details when you buy or sell a home. JD has more than 18 years of experience helping Milwood families make the right decisions about selling and buying. First American was named #1 Title Company by the Austin Business Journal and is the only Fortune 500 Title Company. *When you need help, call the experts!*



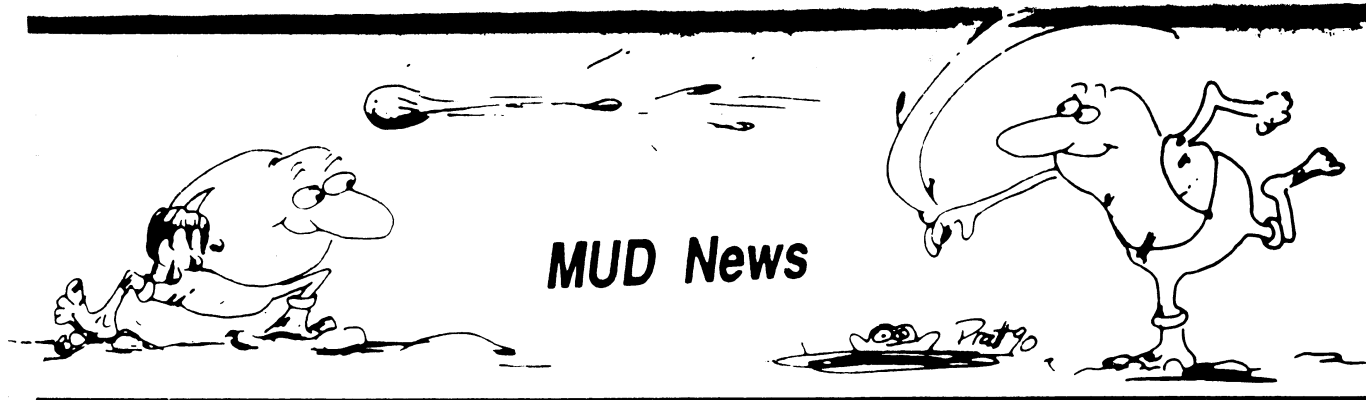
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**North Austin Municipal Utility District #1 Board of Directors Report on Commercial Development, Parks, and Pool Activities:**

**Our contractor for inspections of Restrictive Covenant Violations,** The Treasure of the Hills Senior Citizens Community Center, Inc. April activity included: 5 new complaints, 1 call for advice, mailed 2 first letters, sent none second letter, and turned no cases over to the MUD attorney. There were four cases closed (violations corrected) They have a new person in training Lynda Enders, who will help the others keep the inspections and monthly reports up to date

**District Water Pressure:** At the Board meetings since April, District Manager Gary Spoons and District Engineer David Malish have reported that the City of Austin (COA) recently has had trouble maintaining water pressure in our section of town. Gary connected a recording water pressure meter to our line. At the August 20, 2003 Board meeting Mr. Malish provided a chart showing the pressure declines on a two-day interval to a low pressure of approximately 31.0 psi.

The COA met with our folks several times and has an alternative plan to use an existing 24" line located under McNeil Drive to bring intermediate pressure water to our MUD, Motorola, and McNeil High School. See, we were not the only ones hav-

ing water pressure! The COA has given us a contact person so they can ensure the project assessment is not delayed as of 11/3/03. The original plans are being rounded up, then the line will be pressure and leak tested. Still being discussed is the cost sharing, and " if the City may want to integrate some of its long-range planning aspects into the project". If all goes well this would provide water from the tank and pump station on McNeil and #183 at higher than our normal pressure, and be connected to our existing Master Meters along McNeil and Parmer.

This could be a fairly fast solution to our pressure problems. Negotiations continue. Note the comments above in quotation marks, for possible delay issues. We continue to work with the COA staff to minimize the effect of the low pressure in our District.

**Deed Restriction Violations:**

**Deed restriction violations must be submitted in writing to:**

**Senior Citizens Center  
408 Ridgewood  
Cedar Park, Tx 78613**

**Be sure to include the address in question, nature of your concern and your name and address.**

*(Continued on page 18)*

(Continued from page 17)

**Homeowners Insurance Rate Decrease?** As the result of the RCNA and NAMUD#1 Board, meetings with the Jollyville Volunteer Fire Department (JVFD) Fire Chief John Kiracofe, the Board, and District Manager Gary Spoons committed to work together to develop the actual gallons per minute flow from all fire hydrants. Chief Kiracofe is also working to update the rating for their equipment. This data will be submitted to the national board that rates fire protection capability that results in the insurance company rates for our homeowners insurance costs. In November, Fire Chief Kiracofe reported that the JVFD has completed the inspections of all the apartment complexes in the District and they are currently working on fire pre-plans of all commercial properties. He has requested a detail report from the Insurance Services Office of their original report and will be submitting their improvements after they receive the original report. This will be a long process, I'll keep you updated as it progresses.

**Rattan Creek Park Pool:** The pool has moved to the fall schedule.

The McNeil High swim meet at the pool brought

them luck, they won. The heaters are on and were inspected with minor repairs. There are triathlon swimmers exercising in the pool during lunch and weekends. The drainage project near the playscape has been completed as well as the stonework on the South West side to fix a steep slope problem.

**Rattan Creek Playscape:** The Board and the RCNA neighborhood association are looking for volunteers to help in re-designing and replacing the playscapes next year. Contact Directors Don Conklin or Alan McNeil to be added to the committee which will guide this major project next year.

**Rattan Creek Greenbelt:** The Lake Creek Tributary remediation project for the North West side of Rattan Creek upstream of the Tamayo Bridge is continuing pending the Army Corps of Engineers approval of the mitigation plan. The goal is to have planted a strip of trees and shrubs along the North bank of Rattan Creek. It has been designed to meet the criteria for the Best of Texas Backyard Habitat described below.

**Best of Texas Backyard Habitat certification** is being considered for several of the natural areas in the greenbelts. This program is a merging of the National Wildlife Federation Backyard Habitat and

(Continued on page 19)

A subsidiary of Southwest Water Company



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**Utility Maintenance**

335-7580

**General Manager**  
**Gary Spoons**

*Mailing Address:*  
P.O. Box 2647, Cedar Park, Texas 78630-2647

**NA MUD #1 Board of Directors:**

Place One - **Keith Collins,** 258-6244  
Ass't Secretary/Treasurer (5/04)  
kcollins@northaustinmud1.org

Place Two - **Don Conklin,** 331-7669  
Treasurer (5/06)  
dconklin@northaustinmud1.org

Place Three - **Terry Ripperda,** 512-793-2160  
President (5/04)  
tripperda@northaustinmud1.org

Place Four - **Alan McNeil,** 219-8719  
Vice President (5/06)  
amcneil@northaustinmud1.org

Place Five - **Chuck Simms,** 331-9630  
Secretary (5/04)  
csimms@northaustinmud1.org

*Website: [www.northaustinmud1.org](http://www.northaustinmud1.org)*

the Texas Parks and Wildlife Wildscapes designation for backyards, parks, and natural areas that meet the requirement of providing food, water, and protection for birds and other wildlife. The two programs have been merged in Texas under the Best of Texas Backyard Habitats program.

In our District, the 3 areas being considered are:

(1) The Rattan Creek Recharge area that is marked by the white poles marked as Nature Area where we stopped all maintenance several years ago (saving money). And this area is a now a habitat for the Great Blue Heron, crowduads, occasional egrets, and much other wildlife.

(2) The Robinson Park area North of the Gypsy oak and the trail between Anderson Mill Road and the Northern soccer field.. This area contains springs and the East Tributary of Lake creek runs through it so it is a true natural area already that I've been told has a herd of 8 deer living in it.

(3) The new Rattan Creek Groves tree planting mitigation area is being designed as a natural area with native trees and shrubs to be planted, and of course the creek and riparian vegetation already provide wildlife cover, food, and water.

**Robinson Park Soccer Fields:** The Fall top dressing and fall overseeding are completed. To

the 2 soccer fields. The extra watering to help germination of grass seed should be stopped soon, changing to the normal winter watering schedule.

**Rattan Creek Park:** The Fall top dressing the berms and turf in the park and the fall overseeding. The extra watering to help germination of grass seed should be stopped soon, changing to the normal winter watering schedule

**Easement along Lake Creek behind the Bluffs sections 40A and 40B:** As a part of the Board's goal of getting all property ownership transferred from Milburn Company and the Joint Venture to our District, the parcel of 21 acres of greenbelt of the East Tributary of Lake creek from the Anderson Mill bridge that goes West and then North to under Parmer Lane is to be transferred to the District. The main channel of Lake Creek will continue to be controlled by Williamson County and possibly in the future after our area is annexed, transferred to the COA.

The District's easement will not allow Williamson County to change this about 100 foot deep strip of land adjacent to homeowners property lines without District approval. The Board's goal is to protect the trees and wetland and to preserve the

*(Continued on page 20)*



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*(Continued from page 19)*

property values of the adjacent homeowners. Final agreement has been held up by COA Parks Department. Negotiations continue.

**Robinson Park Humphrey access road is in place: No change.** The final payment is being held until repairs are made and the project is given final approval by our District Engineer David Malish. The contractor has agreed to honor the warranty and will repair or replace the material.

**Wastewater Lines Inspection;** The TV inspection of sewer lines has been completed.. Our District Engineer is reviewing the tapes and recommended repairs as needed. The repairs should be completed before year end.

**Water and Wastewater service for the #620 Turnpike:** Planning continues for the connections and relocated master meter for the water service for the Turnpike tollbooth area. Negotiations with the COA and Williamson County and Turnpike Authority continue. So far the plans for the #620 turnpike are progressing as planned.

**Toll Road Turnpike activity for #183 and #183A are creating questions:** The Neighborhood Association of Southwestern Williamson County (NASWC) has been very active lately working against the proposed plan by the CTRMA ( Central

Texas Regional Mobility Authority) to change the status of #183 from McNeil and #620 to a toll road.

Per the Austin American Statesman, CTRMA is contemplating “toll conversions” on U.S. 183 from RM 620 to MoPac Boulevard (Loop 1) and also to other sections of U.S. 183 and Texas 71, and U.S.290.

For more information about this subject, and the large area neighborhood association see <http://www.naswc.org> and for information about the Regional Mobility Authority see <http://www.ctrma.org> If you work or do shopping to the West of McNeil along U.S. 183, this could effect your travel costs and time greatly. Again these changes to toll roads are in the early discussion stage, but could become reality without some dissenting input from those of us that will be effected.

**NAMUD #1 Recreation Center building:** We are going forward to try to get the COA approval of a building to house a community center and a Williamson County EMS substation on the “fire station designated” lot on Dallas Drive between the dental office and Tutor Time buildings. Directors Keith Collins and Chuck Simms are the Board committee and we are looking for suggestions so go to the NAMUD#1 web site to e-mail your thoughts

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**Emergency** 9 - 1 - 1  
 Administrative 258-1038

**Sheriff: Emergency** 9 - 1 - 1  
 Williamson County  
 Administrative 943-1300  
 Travis County  
 Administrative 854-9285

**Crime Stoppers** 1-800-253-STOP

**County Commissioner**  
 Williamson, Precinct 1  
 Mike Heiligenstein 248-3238  
 Travis, Precinct 2  
 Karen Sonleitner 854-9222

**Dept of Homeland Security** 1-800-BEREDAY

**Poison Control** 1-800-POISON 1  
 (1-800-764-7661)

**Mail:** Balcones Post Office  
 11900 Jollyville Rd. 331-9802

**Schools: RRISD** 464-5000  
 Elementary  
 Jollyville 428-2200  
 Pond Spring 464-4200  
 Live Oak 428-3800  
 Middle School  
 Deer Park 464-6600  
 High School  
 McNeil 464-6300

**Utilities:**  
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 City of Austin 494-9400  
 Gas  
 Southern Union 1-800-700-2443  
 Water/Wastewater: NA MUD #1  
 Eco Resources 335-7580  
 Phone  
 SBC 1-800-464-7928  
 Trash/Recycling/Large Item Pickup  
 Waste Management 272-4341

**Before U Dig:** (call 48 hrs before you dig)  
 Texas One Call 1-800-545-6005

**Pack 173 in the Community**

Cub Scout Pack 173, chartered by Pond Springs Church of Christ, is a very active pack. You will see these very energetic young boys helping in the community. They will be out in force picking up trash for the Adopt-A-Street program and collecting cans of food for the needy during the holidays. Pack 173 is proud to lead the faculty, students and guests of Live Oak Elementary in a special Veteran's Day ceremony. These dedicated boys also relive a part of Texas history as they participate in the Live Aboard program on the U.S.S. Lexington aircraft carrier in Corpus Christi, study Texas history, and participate in various other programs and events.

Pack 173 is made up of forty families throughout the neighborhood and is experiencing a tremendous amount of growth. The cub scouts of Pack 173 are looking forward to continuing community service, as well as fun scouting events such as the Pinewood Derby and Rain Gutter Regatta.

**Dorothy Romero**  
**Cubmaster, Pack 173**  
**336-0697**

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## New Tax Laws Expand Your Investment Opportunities From the Edward Jones office of Todd Holubec

You've probably seen a lot of headlines on the Tax Relief Act of 2003. This legislation, recently signed into law by President Bush, will affect virtually everyone in the country. As an individual investor, you've got reasons to cheer the new tax laws. Many people will find that their taxes will decrease 5 percent or more under the new tax laws.

Let's review some of the tax act's key areas and see what actions they might suggest:

**Lower dividend taxes-** If you've invested in dividend-paying stocks, your dividends were taxed at your individual tax rate (e.g., 27 percent, 30 percent, 35 percent or 38.6 percent). But under the new laws, the tax rate on dividends will be cut to 15 percent. And if you're in the 10 percent to 15 percent bracket, the dividend tax rate drops to 5 percent. These new, lower rates are effective retroactively to the beginning of 2003 through 2008. In 2009, dividend taxes are scheduled to revert to the old, higher rates.

Should you be interested in stocks that have a history of paying dividends, there are certain considerations to take into account. First, it's nice to get the dividend checks. (Keep in mind, though, that stocks do not offer a fixed rate of return and may not distribute dividends. Stocks are subject to market risks, including the potential loss of principal invested.) Also, when a company pays dividends, it can be a sign that the business is well-run and concerned about the needs of its shareholders. Conditions can change at any time, but stocks with a track record of paying dividends tend to be more steady performers relative to non-dividend-paying stocks that have a limited track record.

Another advantage to dividend-paying stocks: Investors can consider reinvesting unneeded dividend income into additional shares of stocks.

**Lower capital gains taxes-** The long-term capital gain rate has been reduced to 15 percent from 20 percent for many taxpayers. Taxpayers in the 10 percent and 15 percent ordinary income tax rate brackets will see a decrease in capital gains taxes from 10 percent to 5 percent. All of these reductions are effective for sales of securities after May 5, 2003. As is the case with dividend taxes, the new rate will remain in place until 2008.

If you've held some stocks for many years, and they've appreciated significantly, then the cut in capital gain taxes may benefit you greatly. Previously, you may have avoided selling these stocks- even if your diversification needs have changed- because you didn't want to face a big tax hit.

Now, however, with the new, lower capital gains rate, you'll find it much more affordable to sell these stocks and make the changes you need to properly balance your portfolio. But talk to your tax professional as

tax considerations should not be the driving factor for making investment decisions.

Other beneficial changes in the tax laws include:

**Lower tax rates-** Earlier tax law changes lowered tax brackets for 2006, but the new legislation has sped up the timetable, so that the new rates are retroactive effective on January 1, 2003. The 10 percent and 15 percent rates remain unchanged, the 27 percent rate drops to 25 percent; the 30 percent rate drops to 28 percent; the 35 percent rate falls to 33 percent; and the 38.6 percent rate drops to 35 percent.

**Reduction of Marriage Penalty-** Married couples who claim the standard deduction should benefit from this accelerated reduction of the marriage penalty tax. The standard deduction for married couples is increased to double the amount of the standard deduction for single taxpayers in 2003 and 2004.

**Increase in Child Tax Credit-** The amount of the child tax credit is increased to \$1,000 (from \$600) in 2003 and 2004. Beginning this summer, the increased amount of the child tax credit will be paid in advance based on information in taxpayers' 2002 tax returns.

Small business owners also will benefit as a result of the tax act.

**Increase in Small Business Expensing for New Investment-** This tax act quadruples the maximum amount of investment in equipment that small businesses can expense from \$25,000 to \$100,000. This will encourage small business owners to purchase the technology, machinery and other equipment they need to expand.

**Increase in First-year Bonus Depreciation-** This deduction increases from 30 percent to 50 percent for qualified investments which are placed in service after May 5, 2003 and before January 1, 2005.

You may want to invest your tax savings by setting up a bank authorization that moves money automatically, at a set interval, from your bank account into the investment of your choice. Since systematic investing does not assure a profit, nor does it protect you against losses in declining markets, it's best to consult with your investment representative and tax advisor to see how you can adjust your investment strategies in response to the new tax laws. But take action soon- this legislation has given you some great possibilities, and you'll want to take advantage of them.

(Continued from page 3)

At a neighborhood forum sponsored by the 183North Council of Neighborhoods and Business (183NCNB) – a new coalition of neighborhood associations in our area – representatives of the CTRMA tried to distance themselves from the proposal, but wouldn't bar the concept of toll conversion on 183 ("It's really up to TXDOT, not us").

But the threat is still there, and will be there unless we make ourselves heard. This conversion proposal was slipped through quietly into the proposal hopper. Through the RCNA and the 183NCNB, we will continue to press our elected officials to 1) involve residents in these decisions; 2) take open responsibility for the taxes they are proposing; 3) to keep our freeways free. Please help me by making your concerns heard by our elected officials.

Eric Freeman  
 President, Rattan Creek Neighborhood Association  
 eric.freeman@acm.org

**TRASH DISPOSAL INFORMATION:**

**FOR BULK PICKUP:**

That means large items like old sofas, washers, dryers, etc.

Call Waste Management at 272-4341

**FOR LIMB AND BRUSH PICKUP:**

All tree limbs and brush must be cut into 3' to 4' lengths, tied and bundled together, and placed at curbside for pickup by Waste Management on your regular garbage pickup day.

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**Seth Brown, 12** - I can watch your pets anytime you need them watched and when you come back, they will be happy. I can come to your house to take care of them or, if they are kept in a cage, I will keep them at my house. I will do whatever is needed for them, at extremely cheap prices. I am very responsible and have many references. Call 335-0207 to reach me. (12/03)

**Ashley Foust, 16** – I’m a certified and experienced babysitter! I’m wonderful with kids, and I’m available 7 days a week. I’m very responsible and trustworthy. So if you need some extra time away from the little ones feel free to call anytime. 809-9535. (2/04)

**Matthew Wilson, 16** – Lawn mowing, house and pet sitting. Call 335-6667 for estimates. Can mow, weed-eat, edge, clean up. Responsible pet owner, will care for your pet like they are my own. (12/03)

**Meg Pevoto, 12** – I am a certified baby-sitter with lots of experience in all age groups. I love kids and I’m very responsible, caring, and trustworthy. I know the Heimlich maneuver and CPR. I am available night or day. 331-8493. (12/03)

**Fernanda Cardoso, 14** – Looking to spend some time with your husband or wife this weekend? Need somebody to watch the kids? I’m who you’re looking for. I love playing games, watching movies and best of all I love kids. I’m responsible, experienced and bilingual (Portuguese and English). Call 219-8305. I’ll be waiting for your call. (2/04)

**Amanda Sampson, 15** - Wishing for a night out on the town, but not sure what to do with the little ones? Or maybe you’re just looking for a few hours to yourself. Whatever it is you need, I’ll be happy to help! I’m a sophomore in high school who loves children. I'm certified in Babysitting and I look forward to spending time with your kids. Call my home phone, 258-5481 or my cell phone, 627-1501. (2/04)

**Keely Lallier, 13** - I am a girl scout and an experienced babysitter, certified at Seton Northwest hospital. Rates: \$4.00 a hour; \$6.00 a hour for two. Available for weekends and nighttime sitting. Call

335-5365. (2/04)

**Stacy Baker, 14** – Certified, experienced babysitter. I’m great with kids! I’m responsible, dependable and hard working. I love to play games with kids. I know CPR and the Heimlich maneuver. I can baby-sit in both Milwood and Forest North subdivisions. I can also watch your pets while you are away. I will walk your dog, bring in the newspaper, the mail and water your plants. References available. 918-0201. (4/04)

**Sean Brown, Alec Vantilburg, and Adam Ranal-lo, 15** - Does your lawn need some work? Asleeacn Lawn Services offers quality lawn management that won't empty your wallet! We will mow, edge, and weed-eat your front and back lawns for only \$20, regardless of size. Or, we will mow, edge, and weed-eat one side of your lawn for just \$15. Call 335-0207 (Sean), 762-57370 (Adam). You can also email us at asleeacn@excite.com. (2/04)

**Melanie Bivone, 11** - I love animals! I will check on your pets every day. I will make sure to have fun with them. They will be very happy when you get back! I will check the mail for you and bring in the newspaper. I will also water your plants. I was voted Student Council President of my school. I am very responsible. I made this promise to you and I will keep it! Ask for Melanie at 331-5240. (4/04)

**Tyler Ray, 16** - Babysitter and Tutor 632-1781 I love working with kids, whether it's watching them, helping them with any core class, or even both. I can tutor in math, reading, writing, history, science and French; from 1st grade to 8th grade. (4/04)



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[www.ebcleaning.com](http://www.ebcleaning.com) (12/03)

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**Mary Kay** – Julia Hall 257-1067 or 796-7718, email: [juliahall@austin.rr.com](mailto:juliahall@austin.rr.com) website: [www.marykay.com/juliah](http://www.marykay.com/juliah). Milwood Resident discount. (2/04)

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## Holiday Precautions

If the Weather Bureau issues a Freeze Warning, Remember to follow these guidelines to help prevent frozen or busted pipes:

- KEEP YOUR HEAT TURNED ON AT ALL TIMES! Do not turn your heat off even if you plan to be out of town for a few days. Just set your thermostat on at least 60°.
- OPEN ALL CABINET DOORS UNDER THE SINKS to allow heat to circulate and keep the pipes warm.
- ALLOW ALL FAUCETS TO DRIP with a small steady stream of water. (running water does not freeze) Don't forget to remove any sink stoppers!!
- WRAP YOUR EXTERIOR FAUCETS or cover them with the faucet nipples (you can buy



them at the hardware store).

- MAKE SURE YOU HAVE METAL HOSES AT THE WASHING MACHINE, no matter whether your washing machine is located.

### Other items not to forget:

- DON'T FORGET THE PETS!!
- DON'T FORGET TO STOP THE MAIL AND NEWSPAPER.
- ASK A NEIGHBOR / FRIEND TO CHECK ON YOUR HOME.

These are just a few precautions that may save you some headache and heartache after you return.

*We, at the RCNA, wish you safe travel and happy holidays to you and yours!*



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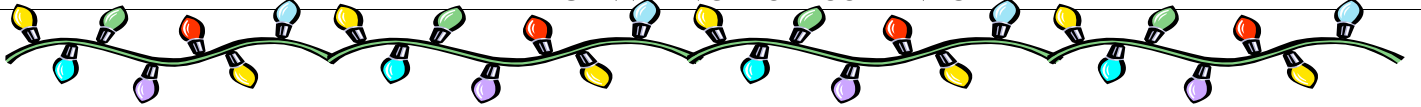
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# Holiday Lights Contest



- Plan your decorations and talk to your neighbors about possible "street themes".
- December 1st through December 16th, you can email your nominations to [holidaylights@rattancreek.org](mailto:holidaylights@rattancreek.org)



*need more nominations this year!!*

Judging will take place on Thursday Dec. 18th so be sure to have all your lights on!

We will publish all the nominees on this site for everyone to enjoy by December 21st

We



*Join us and sing Carols  
around the Bon Fire!*

Don't forget a flashlight to see your songbooks!

*Sunday December 14th at 6:00 pm*

***Be sure not to miss Santa...***

He should arrive about 6:30 PM.  
*Please do not to rush the firetruck this year.*

***MOM AND DAD's:  
Don't forget your cameras!!***

