Development stalls on new south high school

No land purchase until district identifies school programming

By Kelli Weldon

Plans for a new high school in South Austin slowed to a halt in May 2013 when voters rejected an Austin ISD bond proposition that would have included funds for a land and feasibility study for the school.

In 2008, voters approved $32 million in bond funds for a land purchase for the proposed school site. In 2013 AISD held community meetings about academic programming for the potential school. Parents and teachers showed up, comments were collected and submitted to the district, and since then, there has been silence, said Carolyn Merritt, a parent who served on the South High School planning committee.

“Here we are in 2014, and there is no movement on the purchase of that land, and until we purchase that land, you cannot build a high school,” Merritt said. “There’s a lot of frustration and concern.”

Paul Turner, executive director of facilities for AISD, said there is a renewed interest in talking about the project. South high school land showed up as a topic on the March 17 board of trustees executive session agenda.

Turner explained real estate discussions are an exception to the Open Meetings Act. As AISD begins holding community meetings in March and April to gain input on developing its facility master plan, or FMP, it is shining a spotlight on how the district determines facilities needs, funds school construction and maintains its buildings—all factors in the discussion about the need for a south high school in the first place.

City purchases Grey Rock

Council approves $9.6M for golf and tennis center to preserve green space

By Joe Olivieri

The city of Austin will soon own Grey Rock Golf Club and Circle C Tennis Center.

On March 20, Austin City Council approved buying Grey Rock from The Golf Club at Circle C LP for $9.6 million.

By a 6-1 margin, City Council passed motions to buy the property, increase the Parks and Recreation Department capital budget and issue bonds to pay for the purchase. Councilwoman Laura Morrison opposed.

The debt will have no added burden on the tax rate, according to city staff.

Coalition wins EPA award for area smog reduction

By Joe Olivieri

Mention the word “ozone” and many people think of the ozone layer, the part of the atmosphere that deflects ultraviolet rays.

Closer to the ground, ozone is the main ingredient in smog. The air pollutant is caused by manmade chemical reactions and can cause respiratory issues.

Experts say the Austin area meets all federal air quality standards but has struggled to stay under the accepted ozone levels.

A group of local governments known as the Central Texas Clean Air Coalition has spent years working on voluntary programs to reduce air pollution. In April, the coalition will receive the 2014 Clean Air Excellence Award from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for its efforts.

Officials say the work to improve Austin’s air is ongoing. The area is still close to the federal ozone limit, and the EPA could tighten restrictions later this year.

“If we fail to meet [EPA] requirements, we face possible loss of federal funding for transportation projects,” Mayor Lee Leffingwell said in March.

City leaders said they were interested in buying Grey Rock to preserve green space in a neighborhood that is now 90 percent developed.

City leaders said they were interested in buying Grey Rock to preserve green space in a neighborhood that is now 90 percent developed.

City leaders said they were interested in buying Grey Rock to preserve green space in a neighborhood that is now 90 percent developed.
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Southwest Austin Market Update

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Average Sold Price

- $327k
- $288k
- $275k
- $300k
- $325k
- $350k

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Paul Qui
Kent Rathbun
Ming Tsai
Andrew Zimmern
and many more!
FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

Golf courses and I do not mix well. It is for the best that I stay far away from the fairways—let’s just say the groundskeeper is not a fan of how I play the game.

Those who love the game may have heard that the city of Austin bought Grey Rock Golf Club and Circle C Tennis Center on March 20. This tract of land is easily one of the most pristine in Southwest Austin and I am optimistic for what the city has planned. What will happen to the private fireworks shows?

Residents near Brodie Lane and Hays County may soon reach the course, and the rest of Austin, much faster. Travis County Commissioner Gerald Daugherty’s campaign promise to build SH 45 SW is coming to fruition. The county is devoting $15 million to the roadway that would connect FM 1626 to MoPac.

There has been a heated debate on whether to build it, but the next step will be—drumroll please—another environmental study, two words that come up a lot here in Southwest Austin.

I think you will enjoy reading our March issue, as it takes an in-depth look at the ongoing changes our area is experiencing. We will keep you posted on the latest developments.

In the meantime, if you do ever see me out on the course, feel free to play through. I may take a while.

Travis Baker
GENERAL MANAGER
tbaker@impactnews.com

NEW HEADQUARTERS

Community Impact Newspaper moved into its state-of-the-art corporate headquarters, located at 16225 Impact Way in Pflugerville, in December. A grand opening celebration that includes city and business leaders of the Central Texas area is set for March 27. Pflugerville Mayor Jeff Coleman and Austin Mayor Lee Leffingwell will speak during the week to celebrate Community Impact Newspaper serving its communities for more than eight years.

Correction: Volume 6, Issue 11
On Page 21, Gourdough’s Public House owner Paula Samford’s name was misspelled as Sanford.

Oak Hill Fitness, an indoor/outdoor gym and obstacle course training facility, held a grand opening Dec. 17 at 7401 Old Bee Caves Road. Personal and group training classes include weight-training, cardio and mixed martial arts classes, according to owner Hank Uhlaender. 512-774-4625. www.oakhillfitness.com. Twitter: @oakhillfitness

The Park on South Lamar opened March 6 at the Brodie Oaks Shopping Center, 4024 S. Lamar Blvd. Open seven days a week with a full kitchen, The Park offers event hosting in addition to lunch, happy hour, dinner and Sunday brunch. 512-731-2077. www.eatdrinkthepark.com. lamar@eatdrinkthepark.com

A new record store called The Sound Gallery opened Feb. 20 at 4930 S. Congress Ave. The 3,000-square-foot shop sells stereo gear such as turntables, receivers and tape recorders and includes an espresso bar. Co-owners Marc Campbell and Mirgun Akyavas also sell fully restored typewriters, telephones and other vintage products. 512-745-7917. www.soundgalleryaustin.com

South Austin Robotics Academy LLC started classes March 15 at The Khabele School’s Brodie campus at 9607 Brodie Lane. Owner Cindy Grooms said the business teaches weekend robotics and computer programming language courses to students. 512-689-2668. www.southaustinroboticsacademy.com

Wellness Med Clinics opened a medical clinic and Injury2Wellness physical therapy clinic March 3 at 5510 S. I-35, Stes. 250 and 240. Owner and CEO Wayne Cadena said it is one of several locations the company plans to open in Texas. Wellness Med: 512-301-1166.

Now Open

1 Boardwalk Fresh Burgers & Fries, a California-based chain restaurant, opened Dec. 30 and will hold a grand opening March 28 at its new location near The Broken Spoke, 3103 S. Lamar Blvd. Assistant Manager Christopher Henry said the menu includes Philly cheesesteaks, BLTs and hot dogs in addition to burgers and fries. 512-394-6848. www.iloveboardwalk.com, www.boardwalkfreshburgersandfries.com

2 Crawfish Shack & Oyster Bar opened a location Feb. 21 in the Southpark Meadows shopping center at 9500 S. I-35, Ste. C. Menu items include charbroiled oysters, boiled crawfish and seafood platters, owner Hiep Nguyen said. 512-280-0816

3 Dan’s Hamburgers reopened March 3 at 4308 Manchaca Road after being closed for renovations since September. The updated location’s features include a drive-thru and a retro diner aesthetic, president and owner Katie Congdon said. 512-443-6131. www.dans-hamburgers.com

4 The Juice Bar opened its second location in late December at 1701 W. Ben White Blvd., Ste. 160. The new location is larger than the one on Slaughter Lane, and its menu offers salads with homemade dressings in addition to its juices, smoothies and acai bowls. 512-243-6543. www.juicebaraustin.com

5 Luby’s Inc. opened two restaurants—a

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**Coming Soon**

11 **Austin Aquatics and Sports Academy** will build a training facility for competitive swimmers and triathletes at 5513 Southwest Parkway by the end of August, said Todd Foley, head coach and general manager. Site plans include an outdoor Olympic-sized competition pool, spin bikes and indoor/outdoor athletic training space, Foley said. www.austinaquaticsandsportsacademy.org

12 **Bruegger’s Bagels** will open a location April 2 at 3425 S. Lamar Blvd. in the same building as The 704 Apartments. Jason Cusick, general manager of the Bee Caves location, said Bruegger’s offers New York–style bagels and Vermont cream cheese in addition to coffee, breakfast sandwiches and salads. 512-394-7174. www.brueggers.com. Twitter: @brueggerson

13 **CrossFit Python** gym will open a location at 6705 W. Hwy. 290, Ste. C-2, in the Oak Hill Centre in April or May. Workouts combine elements of disciplines including gymnastics, Olympic weightlifting and metabolic conditioning. 512-568-8690. www.crossfitpython.com. Twitter: @CrossFitPython

14 **Mage’s Sanctum**, a collectible card game and tabletop gaming store, will open a South Austin location at 2110 W. Slaughter Lane, Ste. 165, in the Tanglewood Village shopping center this summer, according to General Manager Marques Webster. www.mageassanctum.com. info@mageassanctum.com

15 **Painting With A Twist** will open a South Austin location at 6705 W. Hwy. 290, Ste. 501, by late April or early May. The business allows customers to bring wine and snacks to painting lessons and leave with a piece of artwork. http://paintingwithatwist.com/south-austin. studio085@paintingwithatwist.com. Twitter: @PWATSouthAustin

**Expansions**

20 **Country Home Learning Center** finished remodeling its 6900 Escarpment Blvd. location in January. Director Shannon Martinez said the child-enrichment business expanded its lobby and office area, but the renovations did not affect instructional space. 512-288-8220. www.countryhomelearningcenter.com

21 **The Goodwill** at 7100 W. Hwy. 290, Ste. C will expand this summer to include a 10,000-square-foot space between its existing location and the neighboring Planet Fitness. Communications Manager Zubin Segal said the area will house retail space. 512-288-7700. www.goodwillcentraltexas.org. Twitter: @austingoodwill

22 **N’Syle Salon** finished renovations. Feb. 26, owner Teresa Ricchini said. The salon, located at 6800 West Gate Blvd., Ste. 108, added two stylist stations and changed the floor plan to increase usable space. 512-326-4446. www.nstylesalonauustin.com

**New Ownership**

The **Albertsons** grocery chain announced March 6 its parent company will acquire outstanding shares of Safeway Inc., which owns Randalls grocery stores. The transaction is subject to customary closing conditions and regulatory approval, and no store closures are expected as a result of the merger, according to Albertsons. www.albertsons.com

**Anniversaries**

19 **AOMA Graduate School of Integrative Medicine** celebrated its 20-year anniversary with an event held Jan. 31. The school, founded in 1993, offers master’s and doctoral degree programs in acupuncture and oriental medicine and has clinics at 2700 W. Anderson Lane and 4701 West Gate Blvd. 512-454-1188. www.aoma.edu. Twitter: @aoma_austin

**Community Service**

23 Volunteers can help plant native plants in the developing **Luci and Ian Family Garden** on April 17 from 8:30 a.m.–noon and 1 p.m.–3:30 p.m., as well as on April 18 from 8:30 a.m.–noon at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, 4801 La Crosse Ave. 512-232-0100. www.wildflower.org

24 Local food trailer **Ah La Cart** closed at 4418 Pack Saddle Pass, owner Ron Richison said.

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Inside Northwest Hills Eye Care
3808 Spicewood Springs Dr.
Between Hai Kye Cafe & Edis Chocolates

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**Austin Aquatics and Sports Academy** aims to open a triathlete and swimmer facility in 2014.

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News or questions about Southwest Austin? E-mail swanevod@impactnews.com.
Group aims to move ‘Taco Bell Tree’

By Joe Olivieri

A local nonprofit group has raised enough funds to move a live oak tree away from road construction.

As of March 21, the Austin Heritage Tree Foundation has raised $20,000 to move the "Taco Bell Tree" from the southeast corner of the West Hwy. 290/William Cannon Drive intersection to the nearby Beckett Grove, foundation Executive Director Michael Fossum said.

The group had secured a city grant for some of the costs, but needed to raise $20,000 by March 24 to prevent the tree from being removed by the Texas Department of Transportation.

AHTF is still raising money to cover unforeseen costs associated with the relocation, Fossum said.

TxDOT is widening West Hwy. 290 to build a continuous-flow intersection at William Cannon Drive to temporarily alleviate traffic in the area. At CFIs, lanes are moved to allow a driver to turn left while a driver on the opposite side of the intersection can drive straight ahead.

Oak Hill reopens youth sports fields

The Round Rock Express helped repair damage from 2013 floods

By Joe Olivieri

Five months after flooding decimated its playing fields, the Oak Hill Youth Sports Association held opening days for baseball and softball in March.

Former Houston Astros outfielder Lance Berkman threw out the first pitch during the baseball opening day March 22. Olympic gold and silver medalist Cat Osterman threw out the first pitch during the softball opening day March 23.

The opening days capped off several months of community fundraising and reconstruction efforts, OHYSA President Stephen Bega said.

In October, heavy rains caused severe damage to the fields.

“We were told when it first happened that it would cost $100,000 to $150,000 to put everything back together,” Bega said. “That was just a contractor going around, eyeballing [the damage].”

When OHYSA received more precise estimates, the bill was more than $150,000, he said.

The cost of what seemed like smaller projects—repairing fences or the parking lot—added up quickly.

“It seemed like everything we touched was $20,000. That was the magic number,” he said.

OHYSA narrowed the scope of repairs based on fundraising projections.

The Round Rock Express stepped in and gave $73,000, Bega said. It also coordinated rebuilding efforts with local companies to make the fields playable again.

The Oak Hill community also supported the repair efforts, eventually raising $36,500—bringing the grand total to more than $100,000, Bega said.

OHYSA also fixed its scoreboards, built batting cages and added a playscape for children, he said.
**Easter Celebration for kids**

Egg hunt, train and a bounce house, etc. 19th of April

**NEWS**

**Easter Sunday Services**

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**New garden set for May 3 opening**

By Joe Olivieri

Contractors are finishing work on the new Luci and Ian Family Garden at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center.

The garden will feature several areas intended for play and the exploration of nature.

The project is named for Luci Baines Johnson and her husband, Ian Turpin. The center will open the garden to members May 3 and the public May 4.

See more construction photos of the new family garden at impactnews.com.

**In the Luci and Ian Family Garden, the Hill Country Grotto’s design shows how water re-enters the earth.**

**Garden features**

- Dinosaur creek
- Dry creek overlook
- Giant birds’ nests
- Hill Country Grotto
- Metamorphosis maze
- Nature’s Spiral
- Nectar garden
- Play lawn
- Robb Family Pavilion
- Stumpery
- Watering holes

Source: Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

**What’s in the bond?**

- $55.7 million New elementary and middle schools  
  would be built next to each other on Sawyer Ranch Road
- $14.75 million Multipurpose competition stadium  
  includes more parking and bleachers
- $7.51 million Bond inflation cost  
  accounts for future cost increases
- $4.05 million Maintenance improvements  
  includes HVAC and roof work
- $3.8 million New baseball/softball complex  
  to replace facilities the district leases
- $3.55 million Technology upgrades  
  such as better wireless Internet and replacing computers
- $1.65 million Fieldhouse/locker room upgrades  
  will expand facilities to allow more students to participate
- $1.4 million Infrastructure  
  A new access road connecting Dripping Springs High School to East Hwy. 290

**TOTAL: $92.41 million**

Source: Dripping Springs ISD

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**Dripping Springs school board calls $92M referendum**

By Joe Olivieri

Dripping Springs ISD will ask voters in May to consider approving $92.41 million in bonds to build two schools, among other projects.

The district’s board of trustees unanimously approved calling a bond referendum during its Feb. 24 meeting.

According to a DSISD statement, the bond would amount to a 5 cent increase to the tax rate if approved. An owner of a home valued at $258,584—the district average—would pay $129.29 more per year in property taxes.

Spokeswoman Dale Whitaker said DSISD will hold public forums at 6:30 p.m. March 27 and 8 a.m. April 10 in the district’s administration building at 510 W. Mercer St., as well as 7 p.m. April 14 at Rooster Springs Elementary School, 1001 Belterra Drive.

Early voting takes place April 28 through May 6, and election day is scheduled for May 10.

For more information, visit the district’s bond page at [www.dsisdbond.net](http://www.dsisdbond.net).
Commissioners approve $15M to build long-delayed roadway

By Joe Olivieri

For years, the debate about SH 45 SW has centered on two big questions: how would the controversial roadway affect the environment, and how would it be funded?

The Texas Department of Transportation is researching the first question—it will finish a new environmental study on the project in early 2015. If the study supports building the roadway, Travis County leaders have an answer for the second question.

On March 18, Travis County Commissioners Court voted 4-1 to partner with Hays County and the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority to fund SH 45 SW. Commissioner Ron Davis opposed.

Commissioner Gerald Daugherty, who ran his 2012 campaign on building SH 45 SW, said construction would cost $70 million–$100 million to make the road as environmentally friendly as possible.

Background

SH 45 SW is a proposed four-lane, 3.6-mile tollway connecting MoPac to FM 1626 in Hays County.

It was first discussed in the 1980s as part of a loop concept encircling Austin. In 1997 Travis County voters approved funds to buy rights of way with the expectation that the road would be built.

The project has been stalled for environmental, funding and political reasons.

Supporters emphasize the 1997 vote and say SH 45 SW would reduce congestion on Brodie Lane. They cite a 2011 green design presentation that the road would be built.

Environmentalists claim SH 45 SW would damage the Edwards Aquifer, Barton Springs and the Balcones Canyonland Preserve. They also say voters did not vote for a tollway in 1997 and that funding for the road would be better spent elsewhere.

Public comment

David Foster, state director of Clean Water Action, urged the court not to approve a funding agreement before the environmental study was completed.

“It seems like we are playing dice with the Edwards Aquifer. We are playing dice with Barton Springs,” he said. “We are not going to make a new aquifer. If we lose Barton Springs, it’s gone forever.”

Roy Waley, vice chairman of the Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club, said the county’s $15 million would be a large help if instead applied to Lone Star Rail.

Bill Bunch, executive director of the Save Our Springs Alliance, questioned whether the deal violated the county’s debt policy. County Budget Director Jessica Rio said the policy is more of a guideline and that it addresses long-term debt.

“Voters 17 years ago approved $3 million [for rights of way]. They did not approve $15 million [for construction]. There is no voter approval here,” Bunch said. “They certainly never approved $15 million of taxpayer funds to bankroll a toll road.”

Former Travis County Judge Bill Aleshire said his neighborhood of Shady Hollow has been “devastated” by the failure to build SH 45 SW.

“No matter who sits on this court in the future, the issue of ... just the existing traffic making its way to and from Hays County from FM 1626 to MoPac will still have to be dealt with,” he said. “The ostrich position has not worked. It will not work now and will not work a year from now. I caution against another delay.”

Where is the money coming from?

$15 million Travis County  
$5 million Hays County  
$32 million Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization grant  
$48 million Regional Mobility Authority via the State Infrastructure Bank

$70–$100 million

Next Steps

The Texas Department of Transportation is working on a new environmental study. An Environmental Impact Statement is expected to be completed by early 2015, according to Travis County.

If the EIS recommends a no-build situation, SH 45 SW will not be built. If the EIS supports construction, SH 45 SW will be built to mitigate any environmental issues.

Travis County cannot make substantial progress on project design until the study is complete.

Proposed SH 45 SW

SH 45 SW would connect FM 1626 to MoPac, providing drivers with a faster way to get from Hays County to Austin. Planners are considering a four-lane tollway for the project.

Tell us what you think. Comment at impactnews.com
AISD OKs 3-year employee contracts
In split vote, trustees approve change starting in 2014–15 year

By Kelli Weldon

Some Austin ISD employees, including teachers, librarians and administrators, will be eligible for three-year contracts in 2014–15 following a 5-4 board of trustees vote Feb. 24 to change contracts from one year to three years.

More than 5,900 employees will be affected, according to the district.

“They have earned the respect of a three-year contract,” said Ken Zari-fis, president of AISD employee union Education Austin, which gathered 700 signatures in support of the change.

“Tonight, let’s begin reclaiming the promise of public education for teachers and the future of all of our students.”

For many years, AISD offered three-year contracts, Superintendent Meria Carstarphen said. In June 2011, Education Austin, along with the Austin Association of Public School Administrators, agreed to transition to one-year contracts for “professional employees.”

Most area school districts offer one-year contracts, Carstarphen said.

AISD has discussed contracts and the district’s financial conditions annually with the parties involved. The AAPSA still supports one-year contracts, but in January, Education Austin and the AISD administration reached an impasse regarding contract duration, trustee Tamala Barksdale said.

A board subcommittee recommended keeping one-year contracts after hearing feedback from Education Austin and the administration.

Trustees Barksdale, Gina Hinojosa, Jayme Mathias, Robert Schneider and Ann Teich voted to reinstate three-year contracts, and trustees Cheryl Bradley, Amber Elenz, Lori Moya and board President Vincent Torres opposed.

“We have no facts to support changing to a three-year contract at this time,” Elenz said. She added she did not oppose three-year contracts but thought trustees needed more information.

Bradley suggested waiting to vote until after a judgment is issued on the ongoing state school finance lawsuit.

Fiscal responsibility should be a priority, said Kimberly Reeves, vice president of talent alignment with the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce.

“I wish this was an argument about the value of our teachers. It’s not,” she said during citizens communication. “We are in a difficult financial situation that has not turned itself around. We as a chamber have supported tax increases for teacher pay raises, but we came into this year with a $33 million shortfall, and that’s not going away.”

In a budget update, AISD Chief Financial Officer Nicole Conley said AISD will probably need to hold a tax ratification election, or TRE, in 2015 to gain revenue.

Torres said the Feb. 24 contracts vote will not serve AISD well if the district tries for a TRE next year.

Teacher James Fulbright said educators have taken on more responsibilities.

“I don’t need to walk into that classroom worrying about whether or not I’m going to make my car payment or I’m going to have a job next year,” he said.

Tell us what you think. Comment at impactnews.com

Angela Drury, D.P.M, F.A.C.F.A.S.

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Call today for more info, and I look forward to seeing you on the trails!

Angela Drury, D.P.M, F.A.C.F.A.S.
Focus on the long term, local investors say

**INTERACTIVE** Austin investors Krishna Srinivasan and Rosa McCormick answered entrepreneurs’ questions and gave insight into startup culture March 9.

Srinivasan said too often entrepreneurs are focused on the initial public offering and the potential payday it can bring. He reminded them to stay focused on the long-term viability of the company.

“Don’t obsess about valuation,” he said. McCormick, who is an investor in software firm VolunteerSpot, agreed.

**NSA leaker Snowden extols cybersecurity**

**INTERACTIVE** National Security Agency whistleblower Edward Snowden appeared via teleconference March 10 to discuss national cybersecurity and issues that have been raised in light of his leaking of classified documents relating to mass surveillance of American citizens.

Speaking from Russia, Snowden took a defiant tone in explaining his actions, which he said only occurred because he saw the U.S. Constitution being violated.

Snowden alerted his NSA superiors about his concerns before the leaks, panelist Ben Wizner said.

Snowden said the U.S. government has not prioritized cyber defense, choosing instead to focus on offensive operations.

“If you find somebody to put money into your company at a ridiculously high valuation, then you probably haven’t taken money from someone who is a very experienced investor,” she said.

Srinivasan, a founder of Live Oak Venture Partners, said a question of where the next revolution in tech would come from demonstrates a focus on the short term.

“It comes down to the entrepreneurs and the insight they bring to the table. … That’s how great companies are built.”

## Neil deGrasse Tyson talks space exploration

**INTERACTIVE** Neil deGrasse

Tyson took the stage March 8 to discuss science, technology, education and what he called “the cosmic perspective.”

Tyson, an astrophysicist, stars on “Cosmos,” a science program on Fox. The original program, which was hosted by the late astronomer Carl Sagan, aired in the 1980s. The new iteration explores science and the origins of the universe.

During his keynote session, Tyson touched on topics ranging from space exploration to popular—and frustrating—misconceptions about science and the natural world.

“My personal definition of science literacy is, ‘How much do you still wonder about the world around you?’” Tyson said. “What is your state of curiosity? To me, that is the essence of science literacy.”

Tyson highlighted the importance of instilling curiosity in children.

When a child is banging on pots and pans, they are performing auditory experiments, he said. When they play with an egg and it inevitably breaks, they are learning about brittleness.

Tyson said he believes educators are most responsible for instilling curiosity in children. He joked that the good teachers in the world need to be cloned.

Tyson has also been an outspoken proponent of space exploration and programs such as NASA.

Space exploration and the future-focused mindset it brings is the key to innovation, he said.

“If your best innovative thought is ‘What best app I can put on my smartphone?’ rather than tackling huge challenges that face our civilization—transportation, energy, health, security—these are major branches of our civilization that I don’t see us giving attention to,” Tyson said.
Southwest Austin Edition • March 2014

NEWS

13

Compiled by Peter McCrady, Lyndsey Taylor, Brett Thorne and Kelli Weldon

Educator explains community school concept

EDUCATION

Strategies to save schools at risk of closure should involve talking with teachers and community members, said Allen Weeks, executive director of Austin Voices for Education and Youth on March 3.

Weeks spoke as part of a panel on achievement gaps and educational equality called “Reclaiming the Promise Through Community Schools.”

The community school strategy involves talking with teachers, parents and principals to determine what is and is not working and then partnering with local groups for support, Weeks said.

Recently Austin Voices has worked to help Austin ISD plan improvement strategies for Eastside Memorial High School and the now-vacant Allan Elementary School campus in East Austin.

Weeks said some other school improvement strategies seek to place blame for schools’ struggles, but the community school strategy does not.

Rhodes: Autonomy can boost student success

EDUCATION

Leaders in higher education say collecting real-time data about students and empowering them to be autonomous when it comes to their education can improve their likelihood of graduating from college.

Programs such as DegreeMap can help students, said Austin Community College President Richard Rhodes at a SXSW Edu panel March 3. He explained the program offers students scholarship information and other college resources.

“We need to put this [technology] in the hands of the students because they can use it very effectively,” Rhodes said. “Some students need some strong advising, and they need some help and guidance. … Other students are self-motivated and driven and need almost no help whatsoever.”

Rhodes noted the Math Emporium at ACC’s Highland Campus, expected to open this fall, will serve as a space for students to learn math at their own pace.

EDUCATION

Meeting high-stakes accountability standards cannot be a school district’s sole focus, Austin ISD Superintendent Meria Carstarphen said March 4 during a panel called “Social and Emotional Learning Can Change the World.”

“You have to, yes, be accountable for academic outcomes, but we also have to be accountable to children and help them develop [social and emotional] skills, and if we’re not doing it, I believe it’s educational malpractice,” Carstarphen said. “Without doing those two things together, you’re not developing children who will be prepared for life, career and college.”

Timothy Shriver, Special Olympics board chairman, said research has shown that social and emotional learning-enriched education can help improve academic achievement, reduce behavior problems and promote supportive school environments.

Carstarphen cited statistics including a 9 percentage point decrease in behavioral problems and an 11 percent increase in academic performance in AISD with the implementation of SEL education.

When she joined the district in 2009, African-American students and students in special education were being placed in disciplinary programs because of their behavior, she said.

“What was sobering for me coming into Austin was we had a lot of disproportionately placed student subgroups into things that were pathways to prison,” she said.

SEL can help change that, she said.

“Without [developing academic and social skills] together, you’re not developing children who will be prepared for life, career and college.”

—Meria Carstarphen, Austin ISD superintendent

AISD head focuses on social, emotional learning

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Austin ISD Superintendent Meria Carstarphen speaks during SXSW Edu Education Expo.

Sen. Wendy Davis, D-Fort Worth (right), speaks during the panel “Great Schools: A Vision for the Future” on March 5 during SXSW Edu.

“Without [developing academic and social skills] together, you’re not developing children who will be prepared for life, career and college.”

—Meria Carstarphen, Austin ISD superintendent
Austin high-speed Internet market among most competitive nationally

Austin only U.S. city with multiple gigabit-level service providers

By Joe Lanane

A competition to provide Austinites access to gigabit-level Internet speeds is creating options for many residents who previously had only one.

Three companies have plans to provide 1-gigabit-per-second access to customers throughout Austin, while a fourth is making significant speed upgrades. There is not another city in the U.S. with such a competitive high-speed Internet market, said Ron-della Hawkins, a telecommunications and regulatory affairs officer assigned by the city to work directly with broadband providers.

“We've had multiple providers in Austin, we've not really had true competition,” Hawkins said, explaining that little overlap previously existed among service providers. “We are now the envy of many communities.”

Google Fiber's announcement last April to develop its fiber network in Austin started a wave of other activity before its service goes live later this year. San Marcos–based Grande Communications struck first in February by offering gigabit-level speeds in parts of West Austin. AT&T plans to upgrade customers to gigabit speeds starting in June, at which point Time Warner Cable will begin boosting its top speeds from 50 megabits per second to 300 mbps.

“We're really lucky that with Google Fiber the market reacted, and we've seen an increase in broadband and Internet speeds,” Hawkins said. “This reaction from existing providers in Austin has been a benefit for the customers.”

On a national level, Austin will be the third city to gain Google Fiber services and the first to access AT&T GigaPower—Dallas will be the second. There are 20 to 30 other U.S. cities with 1G access but none with the selection of providers Austin has, said Heather Burnett Gold, president of Fiber-to-the-Home Coalition, a fiber Internet advocacy group.

“What stands out about Austin versus other cities is the fact you're going to have three providers,” she said. “That's just bound to be an enormous catalyst for change.”

What competition brings

Being the little guy has its advantages, said Grande Communications CEO Matt Murphy, who admits that Google's pending entry into the Austin market was “a bit of a wake-up call” for his Central Texas company. Grande reacted, he said, by implementing plans to become the city's first gigabit provider Feb. 18.

“Compared to the other folks we're small, but at the same token we're a good-size company, so we're in a unique position to be a lot more nimble than the bigger guys,” Murphy said. “We're putting a stake in the ground and really deciding to be the fastest-speed provider in any of our markets.”

Google Fiber started construction on its fiber network late last year, said Jenna Wandres, Google Fiber communications associate. She did not comment on where initial installation efforts are being concentrated, explaining only that Google separates Austin into “fiberhoods” that receive service based on demand. All fiberhoods are eligible to receive service, she said.

“Installing fiber at the same time would be so much work that it would be hard to do all at once,” Wandres said. “The reason we do fiberhoods and the gradual rollouts is so we can focus on one area of the city at a time and blitz that area by focusing all of our efforts there.”

AT&T plans to double its Austin coverage area, said Dahna Hull, AT&T vice president and general manager–Austin. Similar to Google Fiber, residents are urged to visit AT&T's website to express interest in receiving 1G service in their neighborhood. While she could not confirm what neighborhoods have the most votes, she said tens of thousands of people have provided feedback so far.

“We are reviewing those results and modifying our build based on that interest,” Hull said.

Residents uninterested or unable to gain access to gigabit speeds also stand to benefit. Grande is planning to upgrade all its users to 15–110 mbps. TWC is performing a similar upgrade for its customers, with standard speeds jumping from 15mbps to 50 mbps.

“We're confident these speed enhancements will more than meet the needs of our residential customers,” said Melissa Sorola, TWC director of public relations in Texas.

AT&T has not altered its standard services, but its high-speed GigaPower option connects users at 300 mbps until an anticipated 1G upgrade in mid-2014. Google Fiber is likely to offer an alternative 5 mbps plan, charging a one-time installation fee of $300.

What connectivity means

Austinites use 15 to 20 percent more data than average Americans, according to AT&T data from Hull. Her company took note of those Internet consumption habits by making Austin its pilot city for GigaPower services. More immediately, the construction of AT&T and Google Fiber networks—the companies have an agreement to share the same utility poles—could result in many temporary jobs, said Rick Usher, Kansas City, Mo., assistant city manager who helped facilitate Google Fiber's pilot launch. He said more than 1,000 construction workers were hired in Kansas City during the initial rollout in 2012. Google Fiber officials could not confirm if more or fewer workers will be necessary in Austin.

Austin joins Kansas City and Provo, Utah, as the first cities to receive Google Fiber services. Google announced Feb. 19 that 34 cities in nine metro areas are under consideration to receive access to fiber Internet. As part of Google Fiber's rollout, they agree to provide free service to 100 community centers of each city's choosing. The program proved successful in Kansas City, Usher said.

"On the marketing side, that got school principals and library folks going door to door talking about not only the importance of fiber to the home, but if you sign up it'll benefit this school, this library," Usher said of the Kansas City launch.

Some cities such as Chattanooga, Tenn., have launched a publicly funded gigabit network. Every Chattanooga residence and business in the city has access to the $313 million, 600-square-mile Internet network, which is responsible for adding more than 1,000 jobs to the city's economy, said Ed Marston, vice president of communications for the Chattanooga Chamber of Commerce.

"To have a comprehensive community connection like that allows us to be a living laboratory where entrepreneurs and companies can come and test out applications for ultra broadband that cut across demographics," Marston said.

This map identifies neighborhoods such as Tarrytown, Old Enfield, Old West Austin, French Place and Mueller that either have access or will soon have access to gigabit-level Internet speeds. Grande Communications is the only Internet service provider currently providing such speeds, while Google Fiber and AT&T plan to follow suit later this year. In the meantime, the city of Austin has identified at least 100 community centers that will receive a free Google Fiber connection once their area qualifies for service.

Source: AT&T, Grande Communications, city of Austin.

Map not to scale

Find related stories at impactnews.com. Keyword Search

Google Fiber, Grande, AT&T, gigabit
City narrows down plans for 60th anniversary
Events could include festival featuring Donkey Dash, carnival

**SUNSET VALLEY** Council members voted unanimously March 18 to approve a preliminary plan for how to celebrate the city’s 60th anniversary this fall.

Now that City Council has approved the plan, the community and economic development committee, or CED, can hash out details, said Sara Wilson, assistant city administrator.

“When this budget line item was funded back in September, the council said, ‘We just want to know before you spend any money what you want to do,’ so we put that rough plan together of what we want to do within our budget,” she said. “I’m working with some really fantastic people, and I think that we can pull together a pretty fun day.”

In addition to a public reception and dedication on the actual anniversary, Sept. 17, the celebration plan includes an event Sept. 20 featuring a food and music festival, the Donkey Dash and Doggy Dash, and a carnival and market.

The site is not yet determined. The CED will likely present updated plans to the council in mid-April, she said.

Wilson said potential collaborators include local restaurants and members of the Uchi organization, which is planning to open a restaurant called St. Philip in Sunset Valley this summer.

The city has budgeted a total of $20,000 for the celebrations.

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**Austin City Council lowers occupancy limits**

Austin Four unrelated adults will be allowed to live in single-family zoned property after Austin City Council passed an ordinance March 20 to changing the city’s occupancy limit. The motion passed 6-1; Councilman Bill Spelman opposed.

“A new restriction has put on people being able to live together in single-family houses are going to [affect] ... ordinary folks that don’t have very much money and have decided to double, triple and quadruple up to share the costs of single-family housing,” he said.

Councilman Mike Martinez said the ordinance is a way to deal with the issue of stealth dorms. Previously, city code allowed up to six unrelated adults to live in homes and six unrelated adults per side in two-family homes and duplexes.

The ordinance also includes grandfathering existing structures under the higher limit. Homes reconstructed within a year after a natural disaster to keep its previous occupancy limit.

Councilman Chris Riley said he hopes council members and the public will continue to focus on the bigger picture as it pertains to incorporating new housing types throughout the city rather than waiting for the new land development code to address the issue.

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**County talks tax rate**

**TRAVIS COUNTY** Commissioners reviewed key issues in the planning of the 2015 fiscal year budget during their March 18 meeting.

In a 4-1 vote, Commissioners Court directed staff to prepare the FY 2015 budget assuming a 1.5 percent increase to the effective tax rate, the rate it would take to raise the same amount of money as the previous year, Commissioner Gerald Daugherty opposed.

The county plans to publish a preliminary budget July 28 and adopt the budget Sept. 23.

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**Attorney general to weigh in on bag bans**

**SUNSET VALLEY** Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott will issue an opinion in September regarding whether single-use bag ordinances violate the Texas Health and Safety Code.

State Rep. Dan Flynn, R-Canton, asked Abbott to weigh in on the ordinances in a Feb. 27 letter. The cities of Sunset Valley and Austin have single-use bag ordinances. City staff briefed the Sunset Valley City Council at its March 18 meeting.

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**Officials to develop sobriety center idea**

**TRAVIS COUNTY** City and county leaders will develop an implementation plan for a sobriety center.

During its March 11 meeting, Travis County Commissioners Court approved a resolution authorizing staff to work with the city of Austin on the project.

Austin City Council approved a similar resolution as part of its consent agenda on March 20.

“The sobriety center concept was first implemented in the 1950s to provide intoxicated individuals a safe haven from the risks of being intoxicated and vulnerable in public,” according to county documents.

The center would act as a tool to divert some people arrested for public intoxication away from the jail system. During the 2013 fiscal year, more than 3,700 people were arrested for public intoxication in Travis County.

“Our hope is that by looking carefully at what other cities and counties have done, we will be able to figure this out in a way that enables the city and county to work together and deal with intoxication offenses in a way that is not only more effective and humane but also costs less to the taxpayer,” Austin City Councilman Chris Riley said.

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**Meetings**

- **Austin City Council**
  Meets Thursdays at 10 a.m.
  Austin City Hall, 301 W. Second St.
  512-974-2876 • www.austintexas.gov/departments/city-council

- **Travis County Commissioners Court**
  Meets Tuesdays at 9 a.m.
  700 Lavaca St., Austin
  www.co.travis.tx.us/commissioners_court

- **Sunset Valley City Council**
  Meets April 1 and 15 at 6 p.m.
  Sunset Valley City Hall, 3205 Jones Road
  512-892-1383 • www.sunsetvalley.org

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**Primary election results**

Primary runoff is May 27. Election day is Nov. 4.

- **Governor:**
  - Wendy Davis (D)
  - Greg Abbott (R)

- **Lieutenant governor:**
  - Leticia Van de Putte (D)
  - Runoff election for Republican candidate

- **Attorney general:**
  - Sam Houston (D)
  - Runoff for Republican nomination

- **Comptroller of public accounts:**
  - Mike Collier (D)
  - Glenn Hegar (R)

- **Land commissioner:**
  - John Cook (D)
  - George P. Bush (R)

- **Agricultural commissioner:**
  - Runoffs for Democrat and Republican nominations

- **Court of Criminal Appeals, Place 3:**
  - John Granberg (D)
  - Bert Richardson (R)

- **Court of Criminal Appeals, Place 4:**
  - Kevin Patrick Yeary (R)

- **U.S. senator:**
  - David Alameel (D)
  - John Cornyn (R)

- **U.S. representative, Dist. 21:**
  - Lamar Smith (R)

- **U.S. representative, Dist. 25:**
  - Marco Montoya (D)
  - Roger Williams (R)

- **U.S. representative, Dist. 35:**
  - Lloyd Doggett (D)
  - Susan Narvaiz (R)

- **State senator, Dist. 14:**
  - Kirk Watson (D)

- **State senator, Dist. 25:**
  - Daniel Boone (D)
  - Donna Campbell (R)

- **State representative, Dist. 48:**
  - Dona Howard (D)

- **State representative, Dist. 49:**
  - Elliott Naishat (D)

- **State representative, Dist. 51:**
  - Eddie Rodriguez (D)

- **Travis County judge:**
  - Sarah Eckhardt (D)
  - Mike McNamarra (R)

- **Travis County commissioner, Pct. 2:**
  - Sarah Eckhardt (D)
  - Mike McNamarra (R)

- **Travis County commissioner, Pct. 4:**
  - Sam Houston (D)

- **Travis County commissioner, Pct. 4:**
  - Margaret Gomez (D)

This list is not comprehensive. Follow ongoing election coverage at impactnews.com/vote-2014.

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March

27 through April 6
Thomas Carnival
The spring event features a variety of carnival rides, family attractions, games and food vendors. Times vary. $20 for wristbands. Toney Burger Center, 3200 Jones Road, Sunset Valley. 512-282-4442, www.thomascarnival.com

27 through April 15
Free tax preparation
Community Tax Centers, a program of Foundation Communities, provides tax preparation services for low- to moderate-income Central Texans. Households making up to $50,000 annually are eligible for free tax preparation, with slightly higher incomes allowed for households of five or more. Hours are Mon.–Thur. 9 a.m.–8 p.m., Fri. 1–5 p.m., Sat. 9 a.m.–5 p.m and Sun. 1–5 p.m. Free. Community Financial Center, 2600 W. Stassney Lane. 512-610-7374. www.communitytaxcenters.org, taxes@foundcom.org

30
Wagathon Walkathon 2014
The walk is 2.7 miles long and begins on the east end of the Hill Country Galleria Amphitheater. There are shade tents with watering stations along the path, and proceeds go to Austin Pets Alive and other Austin-area pet rescue groups. Each registrant receives a swag bag that includes a T-shirt. The event intends to raise more than $10,000 and raised $12,825 at last year’s walk. Noon–2 p.m. $30. Hill Country Galleria, 12700 Hill Country Blvd., Bee Cave. www.wagathonwalkathon.com

31
Deadline to enroll for health insurance
Per the Affordable Care Act, uninsured individuals must sign up for health insurance either through the Health Insurance Marketplace or a private provider before March 31, or they will be charged a fee when they file their federal tax returns. For information about eligibility and local organizations that can help with navigation and enrollment, visit http://localhelp.healthcare.gov. 1-800-318-2596. www.healthcare.gov

April

01 through 2
Austin ISD facility master plan meetings
Austin ISD seeks public feedback on preliminary options as part of its facility master plan. April 1, Free, Akins High School, 10701 S. First St. April 2, 6:30–9:30 p.m. Free, Bowie High School, 4301 Slaughter Lane. 512-414-1700. www.austinsisd.org

03
Oak Hill Business and Professional Association luncheon
At the group’s monthly membership luncheon, speaker Nicole Boynton presents “The Power of a Post: Social Media Marketing For Your Business.” 11:30 a.m. $20. Mandalia’s Italian Market, 4301 W. William Cannon Drive. www.ohbpa.org

09
South Austin Business Association meeting
Business owners and professionals network and hear from speakers. 8 a.m. Free. Casa Garcia, 1901 W. William Cannon Drive. 512-971-9343. www.southaustinbusiness.org

10 through 13
Old Settlers Music Festival
The music festival includes performances by Jeff Bridges and his band, The Abiders; Robert Randolph and The Family Band; and Sarah Jarosz. $530 (four-day platinum pass with camping), $250 (four-day wristband with camping), $230 (three-day wristband with camping), $160 (three-day wristband without camping), $74 (Fri. and Sat. wristband without camping), $35 (Sun. wristband without camping). Salt Lick Pavilion and Camp Ben McCulloch, 18300 FM 1826, Driftwood. 888-512-7469. http://oldsettersmusicfest.org

11 through 13
Spring plant sale
A sale for members only takes place April 11; the public sale happens April 12 and 13. Almost 300 species of plants are available for purchase. Members 1–7 p.m., Public 9 a.m.–5 p.m. $9 (adults), $7 (seniors and students), $4 (University of Texas faculty, staff or students with identification), $3 (children ages 5–12), free (children younger than 5 and members). Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, 4801 La Crose Ave. 512-232-0100. www.wildflower.org/plantsale

19
Sixth Annual Funky Chicken Coop Tour
Presented by the nonprofit Urban Poultry Association of Texas, the self-guided tour aims to encourage Austin residents to raise chickens by showcasing how coops can be incorporated into a person’s property. The event also promotes sustainable living. 10 a.m.–4 p.m. $12. Tour headquarters located at Sunshine Community Garden, 4814 Sunshine Drive. www.austincooptour.org

25 through 27
Austin Food & Wine Festival
The three-day event features panels, hands-on grilling classes and demonstrations by local chefs such as Tyson Cole, Aaron Franklin, Jack Gilmore and Paul Qui. Times vary. $850 (three-day Savor Pass), $250 (Taste Pass). Butler Park, 1000 Barton Springs Road and Republic Square Park, 422 Guadalupe St. www.austinfoodandwinefestival.com

26 Eyore’s Birthday Party
The 51st annual birthday celebration of the fictional donkey from the “Winnie the Pooh” series benefits local charities. The rain date is May 3. There is no parking at the park. Shuttle buses pick up participants on Colorado Street between 16th and 17th streets, 11 a.m. Free. Pease Park, 1100 Kingsbury St. 512-448-5160. www.eyores.org

26
Sunset Valley ArtFest
The city of Sunset Valley hosts its eighth annual arts festival. The event offers live music, activities for children, local food vendors and various forms of art ranging from paintings and sculptures to jewelry. 9 a.m.–4 p.m. Free. Toney Burger Center, 3200 Jones Road, Sunset Valley. www.sunsetvalley.org

Online Calendar
Find more or submit Southwest Austin events at impactnews.com/swa-calendar
To have Southwest Austin events considered for the print edition, they must be submitted online by the second Friday of the month.

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Ellis & Salazar Garage & Body Shop

Customer care a goal for one-stop auto repair shop

By Kelli Weldon

There have been myriad changes in the automobile industry since Ellis & Salazar Garage & Body Shop first opened its doors for auto body repairs in 1953, President Jack Nash said.

“It used to be a car came in, it was made out of heavy metal and you’d pop the metal back out and put a lot of Bondo [auto-body filler] on it and repaint it and send it down the road. And now … it’s just technically advanced,” he said.

New technology in cars ranges from computer controls to frame-mounted machines equipped with collision repair systems that measure where every part is supposed to be inside a vehicle, he said.

Ellis & Salazar is an Austin-based automotive repair business offering auto body repair, mechanical services, collision repair and painting. Its owners grew up in Austin’s car business, working for body shops and dealerships.

Nash purchased the company along with co-owner Wayne Burklund in 1989 from Chester Salazar. Joseph Lewright joined the business in 1990 and became a co-owner 10 years later.

“We’ve always tried to stay true to our roots,” Lewright said.

The company now operates four Ellis & Salazar locations, including a shop in Buda that opened in 2013.

Competition from national chains has increased significantly during the past several years, Lewright said.

“The company has survived, Nash said, because Ellis & Salazar has remained steadfast in its core values for the past 60 years—performing quality repairs, treating customers fairly and taking care of employees.

“We’re not in the tire business, but if a customer comes in here and wants tires we’ll find the best deal on the tires and get [them] put on for them because a lot of times they’d rather not have to go to three locations,” Nash said.

Ellis & Salazar aims to serve as a one-stop shop, Burklund said.

“I have customers that I’ve worked on their car back in ’83 that have followed me and are still doing business with me today,” Burklund said.

Nearly half of Ellis & Salazar’s business is repeat business, Lewright said.

“We try to develop a relationship with our customers … We want the customer to be here by choice,” Lewright said.

Under the hood

1953 Year Ellis & Salazar was founded

Every 100,000 miles When to get a car tune-up

Run your air conditioner for 5 minutes when you start your car to help seal in air properly

Get an oil change Every 5,000 miles

Source: Ellis & Salazar Garage & Body Shop

Check tire pressure Temperature changes can greatly affect tire pressure

Giving back

Employees at Ellis & Salazar Garage & Body Shop volunteer their time to a different charitable organization each month as part of its DoGooders effort.

Started about six months ago, the program has benefited organizations and events including the Fiesta Fun Run in Kyle, the MLK Day of Service and Ronald McDonald House Charities.

Additionally, Ellis & Salazar co-owner Joseph Lewright has coordinated for the past 12 years with businesses and local organization Child Inc. to help provide refurbished vehicles to families in need.

The company also partners with local schools and civic organizations.

1 Joseph Lewright, Ellis & Salazar Garage & Body Shop co-owner, stands with President Jack Nash and co-owner Wayne Burklund outside the company’s location at 4501 S. Congress Ave.

2 Lewright serves up food with staffer Lisa Lefco-Gray at The Cowboy Breakfast to kick off Rodeo Austin.

3 Employees at Ellis & Salazar Garage & Body Shop have volunteered their time to charitable organizations including Ronald McDonald House Charities as part of its DoGooders program.

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Crema Bakery & Cafe

Caterer says Brodie Lane spot like an invitation to her home

By Joe Olivieri

Jessica Forkner said she noticed something was missing in Southwest Austin.

“I knew we needed a place like Crema [Bakery & Cafe]—a local cafe where people could get a great sandwich, cup of coffee or pastry, hang out and feel at home,” she said.

Forkner had experimented in the kitchen from an early age.

She taught herself how to make cake balls before the confection became trendy, and her friends encouraged her to sell them. She started a catering company, Objects of Confection, and made wedding desserts.

“[Objects of Confection] was a way to make a business from my passion for baking, but I’ve always loved to cook as well,” she said. “Crema is just another way of me inviting people into my home.”

Crema opened on April 20, 2013, off Brodie Lane.

Forkner aimed for a “shabby chic” style with mix-and-match furniture and hand-lettered chalkboard menu.

Forkner said the cafe has become known for its cupcakes, cake balls, cookies and custom cakes.

“During brunch, customers really love our eggs benedict with fresh hollandaise sauce, and the Crema French Toast, which is challah bread soaked in a vanilla rum custard before being browned and baked,” she said. “It takes a few minutes, but it’s well worth the wait.”

Crema Bakery & Cafe

9001 Brodie Lane, Ste. B3
512-282-1300
www.cremabakerycafe.com
Twitter: @cremabakerycafe
Hours: Mon.–Sat. 7 a.m.–9 p.m., Sun. 7 a.m.–6 p.m.
For more than 30 years, B.L. “Chubby” May had dressed up as Santa Claus for various civic events. “He would arrive in a police car or fire truck. He went by helicopter. One time he even drove a team of mules,” his son Bill May said. “Fortunately he knew how to do that from growing up in the country.”

Playing Santa was one of the ways the Austinite gave back to the community during his favorite time of year.

After May died in 2001, Bill and some friends were thinking about ways to honor his memory. Someone had casually referred to Chubby as a saint, and the name stuck, Bill recalled. They thought of hosting a golf tournament and using the funds to help families in need at Christmastime.

They formed a nonprofit and quickly started planning their first event. For a logo they picked a Santa Claus with a halo and a golf club.

This year the Southwest Austin–based charity will host its 14th annual St. Chubby Golf Classic on April 26 at Plum Creek Golf Course in Kyle. The event in scramble format. Four players on a team hit a ball, and the team advances along the course based on the best shot of the four.

The charity awards prizes to the top three men’s and women’s teams, the longest drives and closest ball to the pin.

St. Chubby has an agreement with US Hole in One; a golfer who hits a hole in one during gameplay wins $10,000.

A dinner, raffle and auctions are planned after the golf tournament.

Bill said the charity makes its proceeds from the various advertisements and sponsorships the event provides.

St. Chubby uses the proceeds to help families. The nonprofit researches each potential family’s needs to see how it can help, Bill said. It typically donates toys and clothes.

In 2013, the charity donated to the Central Texas Children’s Home, the Settlement Home for Girls, Austin Achieve School and the Austin Police Department’s Amigos En Azul/Shop with a Cop program. It responded to families after the 2013 Halloween floods, which had done significant damage in the Onion Creek area.
ARTS CAMPS

D’Ette & Co. Dancers camps
The dance company offers a variety of camps for different age groups with themes including ballet, tap and jazz.

The Art Garage camps
School, 1911 San Antonio St. 512-478-4795
Script to Screen. Filmmaking 101, Claymation and of weeklong classes including in June for its annual program Filmmakers Program, returns by Austin Film Festival’s Young Summer Film Camp, presented 12th Annual Austin Film Festival www.austinfilmfestival.com

The Art Garage
512-442-8773, ext. 107 www.creativeaction.org/camps

Drum Set Camp for beginners
At Oak Hill Drum Studio camps each week, participants learn music fundamentals, basic rock beats, fills and can play along to popular rock and pop music in one week. No experience is necessary.
Age 9 and older. May 19 – Sept. 13. $350 per week or $100 per day. Oak Hill Drum Studio, 7003 Pinto Cove. 512-964-6778 www.oakhilldrumstudio.com

Sacred Arts Studio and Gallery camps
Attendees make their own art projects at themed weeklong camps for two age groups, ages 4–7 and 8–12. Daily activities include two hours of art and one hour of art-related games with prizes. Space is limited to 12 artists per camp.

Tapestry Dance Company camps
Camps are offered for various age groups and styles of dance, ranging from beginner ballet camps for ages 4–8 to senior intensive camps.

Austin Hipster, Fairyland Art Camp, and Sculpture & Glass Art. Activities range from drawing, painting and pastels to pottery, ceramics and tie-dye.

Lone Star School of Music summer program
Camps at the Lone Star School of Music offer music lessons in an atmosphere conducive to the learning and sharing of music. The program includes several one-week camps that teach children to play instruments, as well as rock camp, in which students write their own music and perform in a rock show.

Camp Monet Summer Art Camps
Children can learn pottery basics and paint their own pieces. Three types of weeklong camps—clay, painting and mixed media—run all summer.
Age 6 and older. June 23–Aug. 15. $175 per week. Cafe Monet Westgate, 4477 S. Lamar Blvd., Ste 500. 512-892-3200 www.cafemonet.org

Creative Action camps
Attendees participate in hands-on, collaborative opportunities for students to stretch their imaginations and use the skills they learn to create original works. Each week is a different theme and ends with a performance for friends and family.

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ZACH Theatre camps
The performing arts school at ZACH Theatre provides opportunities to explore, develop, apply and refine expression through performance. Themed camps include Triwizard Tournament and Half-Blood Heroes. Theater skills camps for grades 3–8 teach fundamental acting skills. Preprofessional camps are available for ages 4–12.
Ages 3 1/2–18. June 9–Aug. 21. $90–$325 per week, $600 for five-week rehearsal camp. ZACH Theatre, 1510 Tooney Road, 512-476-0594, ext. 236 www.zachtheatre.org

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Attendees make their own art projects at themed weeklong camps for two age groups, ages 4–7 and 8–12. Daily activities include two hours of art and one hour of art-related games with prizes. Space is limited to 12 artists per camp.

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per week for half days. SoccerZone
South Austin, 9501 Manchaca Road.
512-336-5425
www.lonestar-sc.com

Kuk Sool Won of Oak Hill Martial
Arts camps
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512-280-2244
www.kswoakhill.com

including SoccerZone South, 5716
tournament.

Road.
512-336-5425
www.kswoakhill.com

Mu Soo Won Martial Arts
of South Austin camps
Students in several weekendlong half-
day camps can learn traditional
Korean mu sool won skills including
hand striking, kicking, grappling,
aerobatics and self-defense.

Ages 5–15. June 9–Aug. 18, $185
per week. Mu Soo Won Martial
Arts of South Austin, 1901 W.
William Cannon Drive, Ste. 121.
512-299-1873
www.muówn.com

SoccerZone South Austin sports
 drilled, and go home with a customized
Lego minifigure or a special Lego
accessory pack at the end of each
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Ages 5–13. June 2–Aug. 15, $139
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Center, 7817 La Crosse Ave.
512-388-9003
www.bricks4kidz.com/atx

Camp Explorations
With a curriculum focused on issues
that affect the Earth and the
Environment, Camp Explorations helps
children learn about science,
nature, creative art and music.
Weeklong camps have themes
such as performing arts, chefs and
superheroes.

Ages 3–6. June 2–Aug. 22, $275
per week. Bright Horizons Family
Center, 6111 Davis Lane.
512-301-9449
www.brighthorizons.com/oakhill

Experiments, cooking, field trips,
chess tournaments, sports and the
Young Entrepreneurs and
Philanthropists project.

Ages 5–13. June 2–Aug. 22. $600
per month. Several locations
including Stepping Stone School,
9405 Brodie Lane.
512-459-0258
www.steppingstoneschoo

Girlstart Summer Camps
Weekly science, technology,
engineering and math, or STEM,
programs are offered for girls.
Camps combine formal and informal
educational strategies with STEM
curriculum.

Grades 4–8. June 9–Aug. 1. $300
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www.girlstart.org

Grade Power Learning summer
programs
Summer programs for different
student age groups include Little
Readers Academy, Math Camp,
Summer Study Skills Workshop and
a GPA 5.0 SAT Prep Class.

per month. Grade Power
Learning, 4301 W. William Cannon
Drive, Ste. B20.
512-892-7323
www.gradepowerlearning.com

The Greenwood School camp
The private school offers several
weeklong summer camps featuring
activities including art, gardening,
water play, yoga and sculpting.

Ages 4–9. June 2–Aug. 29, $81–$251
per week. The Greenwood School,
6319 Haskel Drive.
512-394-9171
www.greenwoodschool.net

Growin' Together camps
Several one-week Growin' Together
camps feature hands-on
activities related to theater, geology
and agriculture.

Ages 5–12. June 7–July 26. $249
per week. EcoSchool camps, 4105
Manchaca Road.
512-537-0955
www.growintogether.org

Jobs in De Niños Interlingua
Summer Camp
One-week Spanish immersion camps

Ages 8–12. June 4–Aug. 15, $175
per week for half days, $275
per week for full days. Jardín de Niños
Interlingua, 5070 Mountain Crest
Drive.
512-299-5731
www.austinbilingualschool.com

KidSensations camps
KidSensations offers occupational
therapy treatment, which focuses
on helping people achieve
independence in all areas of their
lives. Three weeklong summer camps

$150–$200 per week. KidSensations,
2301 Riddle Road.
512-233-4000, ext. 2
www.kidsensations.com

Knitting Nest Kids Stitch Clinics
On Monday mornings and
afternoons, participants can learn
knitting and crocheting skills to make
potholders, scarves and hats.

per month. The Knitting Nest, 8708 S.
Congress Ave., Ste. 570.
512-291-8866
www.theknittingnestaustin.com

Mad Science camps
Camps at Mad Science offer in-class
discovery and exploration, outdoor
games and physical activities, and
hands-on applications of scientific
principles.

Ages 4–12. June 2–Aug. 22. $160
per week for half days, $260
per week for full days. Southwest Mad
Science Office (Oak Hill), 6120 W.
Hwy 290; Southwest Lake Pointe
Clubhouse, 11700 Sonoma Drive;
Sweetwater Clubhouse, 5348
Pedernales Summit Parkway.
512-892-1143
www.madscience.org

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RECREATIONAL AND MISCELLANEOUS

Camp Bethany
Six one-week Bible study camps teach children about Scripture. Children play games and participate in sports, music and the arts.


Camp on the Move
The field-trip-based day camp picks up participants and visits different places each day in charter buses and vans. Camp attendees go to Schlitterbahn twice per week. Tuesdays and Thursdays are theme days, and attendees go to GattiTown and the movies on Fridays.


Camp Roadrunner
Eight weeklong themed sessions offer a variety of recreational activities, including theater, field trips, swimming and hands-on art projects in a Hill Country setting.


Dittmar Recreation Center Camp
Ten themed one-week camps offer enrichment, crafts, swimming, active play and educational field trips. Youth camp is for ages 4–10, and teen camp is for ages 11–14.


Dream of Hopes Ranch Inc. Summer Camp
The camp and Special Olympics facility serves children and adults with special needs.


Hindu Family Camp
Families come together to learn about Hindu philosophy through interactive learning sessions and participate in yoga, dance, stage performance, sports, service projects and more.

Ages 7–18. June 28–July 12. $100 per week. Radha Madhav Dham, 400 Barsana Road. 512-288-7180, ext. 332 www.radhamadhavdham.org/youthcamp

Oak Hill United Methodist Church camps
A variety of summer camps are offered including Cub Camp for preschoolers and a music and drama camp, or MAD Camp. Care is offered for camp participants who need all-day care.


Regents Summer Camps
Activities include meeting new friends and developing artistic and artistic skills at Regents’ 35 weeklong fine arts and athletics camps.


The Summer Circuit camp
Local child care, preschool, and after-school center Xplor Circle C offers recreational weeklong camps with themes including “X Files,” “Invert Tomorrow” and “Movers & Shakers.”


Texas Power Athletics camps
The business offers several weeklong summer camps with themes including Safari Fun, Adventures with Science, Nature Time and Wild Wild West.

YMCA of Austin Summer Camps
At YMCA day camps, campers make friends while learning the values of diversity and cooperation. Children have the opportunity to build self-confidence, independence and creativity.

Ages 4–14. June 9–Aug. 22. $160–$215 per week. Theme Camp at Baranoff Elementary School, 12009 Buckingham Gate; Theme Camp at Cowan Elementary School, 2817 Kentish Drive; Adventure Camp at Bailey Middle School, 4020 Lost Oasis Hollow; Kinder Camp at Oak Hill United Methodist Church, 7815 W. Hwy. 290; Sports Camp at Fulmore Middle School, 201 E. Mary St. 512-238-8822 www.austinymca.org

TIP: Ask about discounts—many camps offer sibling and membership discounts as well as discounts for registering by a certain date or attending multiple weeks. This list is not comprehensive. 

Visit impactnews.com to view more summer camp guides for our other Central Texas coverage areas.

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Activities include:
• Schlitterbahn twice a week
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• Schlitterbahn Galveston ...and so much more!!!

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Making investments for your water service

The water professionals at Austin Water have been proudly providing water services for more than 100 years. Austin Water provides a wide array of water services to Austin, most of which are largely out of sight to most citizens. So we thought we would take the occasion of this report to describe some of the value provided by the rates you pay.

These are challenging times for water utilities nationwide and particularly in Austin where we are in the sixth year of a historic and ongoing drought. To provide effective services, utilities must address four major overlapping areas: water supply, infrastructure, conservation and rates. I want to report where Austin Water stands on these fundamentals.

Austin planned ahead on water supply and the City has water rights and long-term contracts that amount to more than twice as much water as we are currently using. During the drought Austin has had to work hard to protect our water supply, but absent those rights and contracts the water supply situation would be much worse.

Nationwide, water utilities are coping with aging infrastructure and Austin Water is no different. For example, we have water treatment plants that are 45 and 60 years old. Many of our water lines date back to the 1950s and even further. However, Austin has sought to address this challenge with the soon to open Water Treatment Plant 4. We have completed major upgrades to our water distribution network and sewage collection system, along with a number of other initiatives in recent years, needed improvements which of course increase costs.

On conservation, the citizens of Austin have responded resoundingly to calls to decrease water use since the City Council strengthened conservation programs in 2007. That response strengthened even more as the drought intensified and Austin Water called for further reductions. Without these savings the lakes would have already reached the lowest levels in their history.

This brings us to the fourth major issue for utilities, rates. Our current rate structure has a mix of flat customer charges coupled with charges based on the amount of water you use. That model has served well for many years but recently has fallen short since expenses necessary to keep good quality water flowing to all our customers continue to increase while our successful conservation program, along with drought response, has driven down consumption. We need to change our business model and associated rate structure to reflect these challenges and our ongoing community-wide efforts to conserve this precious resource. We will be tackling this critical challenge in the upcoming months.

Still, we understand that we need to keep rates as low as possible and we want you, our customers, to know that, every day, Austin Water employees work hard to deliver services to you in the most affordable, efficient and environmentally sound way possible.

Greg Meszaros  Director  Austin Water
Exceptional Value and Reliability

Water Source
Austin Water treats your drinking water to the highest standards providing value and reliability. The Colorado River, in the form of the Highland Lakes, is the source of all of Austin’s drinking water. We treat the water, removing harmful contaminants, soften it and then pipe it to homes and businesses through more than 3,000 miles of underground water lines. Austin Water collects the wastewater from our customers and treats it to a standard higher than what is required. Water downstream of Austin’s wastewater discharge is rated exceptional under Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Texas Council on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) standards.

Water Infrastructure
The pipes running below our streets carry the very lifeblood of our community. Tap water keeps us healthy, fights fires, supports our economy and provides us with the high quality of life we enjoy. Aging water infrastructure is one of our nation’s top priorities. Austin Water is responsible for processing and dispatching about 5,000 water and wastewater infrastructure repair requests per month. In addition, we provide operations and maintenance repair services to the water distribution and wastewater collection system in order to ensure reliable service to our customers every day.

Water Treatment Plant 4 (WTP4)
WTP4, Austin Water’s newest water treatment plant, will be completed later this year. The plant, which is located on Lake Travis, will be capable of treating 80 million gallons of water a day (mgd) with room to expand to 300 mgd. WTP4 will add reliability by giving utility customers an additional plant that draws from Lake Travis instead of Lake Austin. This will allow for continuous service during shutdowns and repairs for the other treatment plants and aging pump stations.

Renewing Austin
Austin Water is protecting our water infrastructure for the future by investing in upgrades and repairs now. Renewing Austin is a five year, $125 million program to upgrade aging water lines. This initiative will replace water lines with a history of breaks, targeting areas throughout the city with the greatest need.

Wildlands
Austin Water proudly acts as the steward of the Wildlands which filter the water that flows through them and protect the animals that call them home. Now, more than 43,000 acres of preserve lands, purchased with voter approved funds and/or through voter approved programs, provide valuable habitat for endangered species, wildlife and native plants while protecting watersheds that help provide safe drinking and recreational water to the public. Management of these lands protects 22% of the recharge zone for the Barton Springs segment of the Edwards Aquifer and provides open space which adds to Austin’s quality of life and reputation as a community that deeply values its natural environment.

Leak Response and Repair
Austin Water conserves water by maintaining the integrity of our water distribution system. In the past two years, The Utility has used acoustic technology to inspect more than 1,500 miles of water lines for leaks. Last year we completed a five-year program of inspecting the entire water distribution system. Austin Water has also initiated an accelerated leak response and repair program that has proven highly successful. Since 2006, Austin Water has reduced repair response time by almost 66% with most leak repairs completed on the same day as reported.

Water Conservation Programs
Austin Water is working to protect your water supply during this historic drought by engaging area leaders to promote sound water management. Working with the citizens of Austin, the Utility’s conservation programs reduced per capita per day water use by 17% in the last five years. Total water use has remained below 2006 levels each year even as Austin has continued to grow. The Utility is also expanding its reclaimed water program to supply non-potable water for business, industry and parks—tapping into an existing, renewable resource using new technology and infrastructure while conserving precious drinking water. Reclaimed water is highly treated wastewater that can be reused in activities that don’t require fully treated drinking water. Using reclaimed water conserves about 1.8 billion gallons of drinking water per year.

For more information please visit our website, austinwater.org
Caring for an Aging Parent?
Concerned About Insurance & Money Issues?
Considering Care Options?

You Have Support in the Community

A leading Austin health care services provider will be hosting an informal group meeting to offer information and support for community members caring for aging loved ones. This month’s topic: Care Options for Your Loved One.

**Tues April 29 5:30-6:30pm**  
**South Austin**

Attendance is free, but you must contact Blake at (512) 767-2909 or Blake@phcc.us for location and to reserve your place.

This event is not intended or organized to promote sales; our goal is simply to provide support and serve as a community resource.

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If your pain is interfering with your daily life, make an appointment today to see one of our caring, compassionate and experienced providers.

Everyone knows “Wellness Starts Here.”
In Southwest Austin and the surrounding area, a number of planets and stars can be viewed in the night sky, according to Joyce Lynch, outreach chairwoman with the Austin Astronomical Society. The AAS hosts monthly star parties open to the public, and groups such as the city of Sunset Valley and Austin Community College have hosted stargazing events in the past. In February, the International Dark-Sky Association designated the city of Dripping Springs as the first International Dark Sky Community in Texas for its efforts to use “smart lighting” to protect night sky views. “When people enter the Dripping Springs area at night, many of them notice something is different—the skies over the city are not spoiled by light pollution,” Dripping Springs Mayor Todd Purcell said in a news release. “This is evidence that the city and the people who live in and near the city value the natural environment, including the beauty of the Hill Country and high quality of the night sky.”

From about April 16 to 25, the Lyrid meteor shower will occur, Lynch said. Stargazers can search for the constellation Lyra in the northeast. The peak morning is April 22, but the last quarter moon in the sky during the peak might subdue the number of meteors this year, she said. Lynch recommends using red flashlights while viewing the night sky so that eyes stay adapted to the dark.

“Meteor showers are always best seen after midnight, when the radiant point from which many seem to come is high in the sky,” she said. “They can be seen earlier and in other parts of the sky, but later is better.”

**Area star parties and upcoming events**

**MARCH 21—MAY 3**

Painter Hall Telescope viewing—Every Friday and Saturday while The University of Texas is in session, the Department of Astronomy hosts free public viewing on the Painter Hall Telescope. 8:30—10:30 p.m. Free. University of Texas, 103 W. 24th St. http://outreach.as.utexas.edu/public/ painter.html

**MARCH 29 AND APRIL 19**

Austin Astronomical Society monthly public star parties—AAS members share their telescopes with the public to observe objects in the sky, including planets, galaxies, star clusters and nebulae. 7:30—11 p.m. Parking fee per person $5 (13 and older), $2 (seniors and people with disabilities), free (12 and younger). Canyon Lane. www.girlstart.org

**APRIL 3**

Girlstart Starry Nights—On the first Thursday of every month, Girlstart’s new science, technology, engineering and math, or STEM, Studio and Mini-Planetarium allows families to explore astronomy. April’s event will include lunar star shows. 6—7 p.m. Free. Girlstart STEM Center, 1400 W. Anderson Lane. www.girlstart.org

**APRIL 4**

Austin Community College Star Party—ACC gives the college and community an opportunity to stargaze from the Round Rock Campus observation deck and view family-friendly science exhibits. 5:30—9:30 p.m. Free. ACC, 4400 College Park Drive. www.austincc.edu/astro/starparty.html

**APRIL 29**

Kayak camping trip—Members of the Southwest Austin–based organization Hill Country Outdoors take a camping trip for intermediate-level kayakers and canoeists. The group also hosts nighttime hikes and stargazing events throughout the year and participates in a Full Moon Yoga class each month. Times vary. Costs vary. Locations vary. www.hillcountryoutdoors.com

**APRIL 30**

Southern Skies Social—The Austin Planetarium holds a networking event held at House Wine so South Austinites can try food and wine and learn about the planetarium without having to leave their neck of the woods. Austin Planetarium Executive Director Torvald Hessel said. 5—9 p.m. Free. House Wine, 408 Josephine St. http://austinplanetarium.org

This list is not comprehensive. Details are subject to change because of weather and other factors; call ahead to RSVP.

**Austin Planetarium looks to open temporary science museum location in 2014**

A local nonprofit organization’s plan to build a science museum and planetarium are moving forward, according to Austin Planetarium Executive Director Torvald Hessel. Hessel said the project has been in the making since April 2003, when he decided he wanted to build a planetarium in Austin. He formed the nonprofit Austin Planetarium, which held numerous fundraisers and events to support the project. Last year the group went back to the drawing board from building a planetarium and museum in the Capitol Complex, Hessel said. The group started looking for alternate sites where it can build a temporary location.

“We’re starting a campaign [this spring] that will be a public push to raise funds to make the building a possibility,” he said.

Hessel said the project has been in the making since April 2003, when he decided he wanted to build a planetarium in Austin. He formed the nonprofit Austin Planetarium, which held numerous fundraisers and events to support the project. Last year the group went back to the drawing board

More information about the pilot facility will likely be released in May, Hessel said, noting his goal is to open the temporary facility before early 2015.

“It will most likely be north of the river but in or near downtown,” he said. “We’re still thinking about the location. We’re moving slowly and we feel very confident that we’ll have something open by the end of this year.”
More than 1,000,000 Eyes of Texas are upon us

With a total monthly distribution now more than one million, more people in Texas receive Community Impact Newspaper than any other newspaper in the state.
On the bus: MetroRapid
Capital Metro launches new bus service

By Amy Denney

Striving to offer faster service and high-tech amenities such as free Wi-Fi, Capital Metro officials hope its new MetroRapid service—also known as bus-rapid transit or BRT—will elevate the experience of riding the bus.

Planning for BRT started after the failed light-rail bond in 2000 that would have put rail in part of the same corridors that MetroRapid uses. In 2010, Capital Metro received a $38.1 million grant from the Federal Transit Administration for the new service, and President and CEO Linda Watson said that is when planning went into high gear. The first route launched Jan. 26 on North Lamar Boulevard and South Congress Avenue, and the second route rolls out this summer on Burnet Road and South Lamar.

Watson said the goal of MetroRapid is to provide better service to existing riders and attract new riders who could use it to travel to work or school or enjoy dining, shopping and entertainment options. “Part of it is you don’t have to drive and deal with the traffic,” Watson said. “You get a trip that is faster than the service we [provided], and you can do things while you’re on the bus [with the free Wi-Fi].”

Even though MetroRapid does not fit the FTA’s full definition of BRT, Watson said it is the best BRT the agency can offer. “It’s not the full-fledged bus-rapid transit that’s been developed in other cities in dedicated right of ways because we don’t have the right of way, … but I’m not convinced that we might not be able to do more eventually and over time,” she said.

As for faster service, Capital Metro officials won’t know how much time riders save with the new service until it has been in operation for a few weeks. This is because it is hard to compare the previous service to the new service, Watson said. “I’m confident we’ll have some kind of savings,” said Dan Dawson, vice president of marketing and communications. “Even on those days where we don’t because of something outstanding that has happened, the customer still gets a premium experience.”

What is bus-rapid transit?

Bus-rapid transit, or BRT, is an enhanced bus system that operates on bus lanes or other roadways and combines the flexibility of buses with the efficiency of rail, according to the Federal Transit Administration. Although Capital Metro’s MetroRapid system is not a true BRT, it did fit the FTA’s criteria for a Very Small Starts grant by offering 10-minute frequency, signal priority, special branding, operations of 14 hours each day and new transit stations.

FTA criteria for bus-rapid transit

- Bus lanes: A dedicated lane for bus use only; MetroRapid only has bus lanes in downtown Austin between Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Second Street
- Fare collection: BRT has a system that speeds up the process of collecting fares
- Signal priority: Gives BRT priority at intersections by extending green lights
- Transit stations: This includes distance between stops and which side of the intersection the stop is located; the design of the BRT shelters should be consistent throughout the system
- Vehicle design: Includes an increased number of doors to allow for faster passenger entry and exit

Mobile app

Capital Metro introduced its first mobile app with the launch of MetroRapid. Available on iOS, Windows and Google platforms, customers are able to plan a trip and review schedules or maps. To buy or use tickets through the app, customers must first create a profile and input payment information. Ticket options include a single fare for $1.50, a day pass for $3, a seven-day pass for $13.50 and a 31-day pass for $49.50. Customers may also save their favorite routes and buy tickets for other non-MetroRapid bus routes or MetroRail.

Transit talk: MetroRapid

- 17,000 current daily riders with a goal to increase ridership by 10% in 2 years
- 192 apartment complexes, 58 condos and 39 hotels within a 1-mile radius of the first route
- 269,000 daily commuters to the city’s core waste 40 hours each year per person because of congestion
- MetroRapid has 77 stations and will offer 10- to 12-minute frequency during weekday peak hours and cover 37.5 miles
- Capital Metro received a $38.1 million federal grant to fund the $47.6 million project
- The 60-foot, accordion-style buses can carry 101 passengers

Source: Capital Metro, Federal Transit Administration
South Austin awaits relief

Strategies to help address overcrowded and under-enrolled schools will be a focus as part of the FMP process and are part of the FMP guiding principles the board approved in 2013. South Austin needs another high school to provide relief for Bowie, Austin and Akins high schools, which are over capacity, said Robert Schneider, the AISD trustee for District 7 in Southwest Austin.

“Absent funding, you don’t really have a way to get to a good relief strategy for any of the high schools,” he said.

Turner said the potential schools’ academic program must be decided before a land purchase is made.

“The next step in the process is to decide whether this is going to be a comprehensive high school or a specialty high school of some kind,” he said.

That has been the “next step” for about a year. Schneider said the lack of progress on the south high school is frustrating.

“I don’t think there’s any effort by the administration at all right now to actually do something about this, and as I’ve said before, it’s a really unforgivable failure on their part,” Schneider said.

Overcrowding

Akins has about 2,500 students and 40 portable classrooms on its campus, Principal Daniel Girard said. He said he doesn’t mind the portables, but another high school in the area could provide relief.

“There is a need,” he said. “In the south-east area especially and the south central area, I believe that there is a lot of anticipated growth, which would perhaps warrant the need for more facility availability for kids.”

Girard said AISD should be realistic and perhaps reconsider school boundaries.

“I think all options need to be considered, just as a constituent. … By examining the boundaries [AISD] may be able to satisfy the issue around overcrowding,” he said.

Overcrowding and the south high school were among concerns residents cited to the League of Women Voters, which works with AISD to hold community conversations about relevant issues, said Nancy Oelklaus, the league’s vice president and Education Working Group chairwoman.

District 6 and 7 residents can share input on overcrowding and why voters opposed bonds that might have alleviated overcrowding at a March 29 community conversation at the Travis High School Institute of Hospitality and Culinary Arts, 1211 E. Oltorf St.

“We looked at the voting pattern and discovered that these two districts overwhelmingly rejected all of the bonds. … We wanted to understand why,” Oelklaus said.

Merritt said there are more program options at AISD schools in north Austin.

“I think that one of the messages South Austin was sending to the district when the bonds were voted down was that we are tired of being ignored,” she said.

Land and academic programming

The community consensus is for a comprehensive high school with career and technology; science, technology, engineering and math, or STEM; band and fine arts; and athletics programs, Merritt said. Residents said regardless of programming, AISD needs to buy the land so it has the space for a comprehensive high school, Merritt said.

Construction is not cheap, Schneider said.

“It’s going to be awhile before [the district] asks for another $120 million to build a school,” he said. “The last timeline I saw in terms of the actual development and building the school was even if they got money for the engineering studies in the 2013 bond, it was going to be the 2019–20 or the 2020–21 school year before you’d be looking at even opening the school.”

Merritt was a member of the Citizens Bond Oversight Committee from 2004–12.

“Land prices in the 2004 bond had jumped exorbitantly, and that was why we fought so hard to get the land purchase into the 2008 bond, specifically saying you need to buy it now because it’s either going to disappear, or it’s going to be prohibitively expensive,” Merritt said.

Merritt said the high school should provide relief for both Bowie and Akins.

“I think that South Austin is unified in that we want something easily accessible for all of south Austin,” she said.

AISD is working to develop the district’s facility master plan, which will outline how AISD buildings are used, guide future capital improvements and support planning for future bond elections.

Paul Turner, executive director of facilities for AISD, said the south high school is part of the facility master plan, so community members are welcome to voice their concerns about it at upcoming meetings.

“The south high school part of the discussion — is whether or not there is a need to move forward with the construction of the south high school at this point,” Turner said.
Golf
Continued from | 1

parks-deficient area of town.
A statement from The Golf Club at Circle C LP reads that the course’s owners were delighted when negotiations began.
“We were told the city was interested in Grey Rock because it wanted this area to remain green, undeveloped and wanted to add a high-quality golf course to [its] inventory,” it states.

The statement also says the city has promised to maintain “the same high standards we have tried to employ.”
“We expect the conditions and playability to be as good in the future as [they have] has been during our stewardship,” it states.

Terms of purchase

The 18-hole golf course was built in 1992 as part of the Circle C Ranch master plan. The property also includes eight tennis courts, three maintenance facilities, a driving range and a clubhouse.

Under the approved contracts, the city will pay $8.5 million for the facility and $1.1 million for related expenses such as an environmental assessment and small capital improvements.

According to a third-party appraiser, the purchase price and the additional funds are below the current fair market value. The city has not developed a golf property since the Roy Kizer Golf Course in 1994.

Council discussion

City documents state it would cost Austin $18 million to build and develop a property such as Grey Rock.

Morrison took issue with spending $9.6 million on a single golf course after City Council has told other neighborhoods that there were no funds for their projects.
She added that she did not know where the course ranked as a priority citywide.

Sara Hensley, Parks and Recreation Department director, said golf is a learning activity for children and a sport for all ages.

Kevin Gomillion, the city’s Golf Division manager, said the property is in the Edwards Aquifer recharge area and includes open space that could be used for nature trails.

Greg Canally, the city’s deputy chief financial officer, said course revenues would cover half of the city’s debt service.

Staff said that Grey Rock’s owners would redevelop the property into residential housing if the city did not buy the land. The site could support 90 estate lots.

City staff said they were interested in operating the property in the most environmentally sustainable fashion possible.
“I don’t mind if you want to reduce the number of water hazards and save money on that. That is fine with me,” Mayor Lee Leffingwell joked before the final vote.

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What do you think about the city’s potential purchase of Grey Rock Golf Club and Circle C Tennis Center?
his State of the City speech Feb. 25. “If traffic congestion continues to grow like this, we’ll reach it soon—and pay a price when we do.”

Acceptable levels of ozone
Every five years the EPA is required to review the National Ambient Air Quality Standards as part of the Clean Air Act.

In 2008 the EPA lowered the national eight-hour ozone average standard from 85 to 75 parts per billion of total gas in the air. How the EPA measures ozone is that cities such as Austin can exceed the standard three days a year, said Andrew Hoekzema, air quality program specialist for the Capital Area Council of Governments.

“They use the fourth-highest readings each year and average that across three years,” he said. “If the three-year average of the fourth highest [readings] is above 75 parts per billion, the area is considered in nonattainment.”

If the EPA declares an area is in non-attainment, the state must enact a State Implementation Plan to meet the standards. Securing federal funding would become more complicated, Hoekzema said.

“The region’s transportation plan is required to be consistent with its air quality plan,” he said. “There’s a cap on road emissions, and the transportation plan must stay under the cap.”

Meeting the standards
CAPCOG’s Central Texas Clean Air Coalition comprises Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, Travis and Williamson counties and 13 city governments. From 2008 to 2013, the coalition enacted the Eight-Hour Ozone Flex Plan.

The coalition secured voluntary emission reduction commitments from local government entities on items such as reducing commutes and vehicle fleet efficiency measures, according to CAPCOG.

The award-winning plan brought the average readings down from 74 to 73 parts per billion as of 2013, Hoekzema said.

The flex plan has since evolved into a fourth version, the Ozone Advance Program, that expands on what types of emission reduction commitments are possible, Hoekzema said.

“The region is poised to be in a position to meet a new ozone standard if it is set as high as 70 parts per billion by 2018 but would be challenged to meet one as low as 65 parts per billion,” according to the program’s action plan.

Meanwhile the EPA had not completed its review of the 2008 standards by the end of 2013. It is roughly halfway through the process, EPA Region 6 spokesman Joseph Hubbard said.

“The city expects the EPA to issue stricter standards by December, Environmental Program Coordinator Pharr Andrews said. She said the area’s population growth is a big issue and that the city and its partners are taking steps to address it (see sidebar).

“There is no real silver bullet, but all of these efforts add up to cleaner air for Austin,” she said.

Environmentalists
Neil Carman, clean air program director for the Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club, said the organization advocates stricter standards for vehicle tailpipe emissions and industrial smokestacks.

The Sierra Club supports telecommuting, carpooling, public transportation and bicycle riding as ways to address the issue. Carman called the federal 75 parts per billion standard inadequate to protect human health and said the standard should not exceed the 70 parts per billion that was recommended by the EPA’s advisory group.

Activist Scott Johnson said vapor recovery for gas stations should be a priority.

He advocated restricting vehicle idling, reducing industrial emissions and promoting cleaner fuels for construction equipment. He said the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality has limited resources to implement these programs.

“Look at construction equipment,” he said. “Cumulatively there are hundreds to even the thousands of pieces of equipment [in Austin], and that’s very consequential for ground-level ozone.”

In recent years, the city of Austin has made more than 45 commitments to improve area air quality, Environmental Program Coordinator Pharr Andrews said.

“One of our largest commitments is to work with improving the efficiency of our [vehicle] fleet and using alternative fuels,” she said.

The city’s rapid growth is a big challenge, Andrews said. Demographer Ryan Robinson has said Austin has a net gain of 110 new residents each day.

The city is planning more public outreach to try to reduce residents’ number of single-occupancy car trips, she said.

Andrew Hoekzema, air quality program specialist for the Capital Area Council of Governments, said replacing older vehicles with newer, more fuel-efficient ones will make a big difference in pollution reduction.

“By a significant measure, cars now are 95 to 98 percent cleaner than they were a decade or two ago,” he said. “[Trends of emissions reductions in new vehicles] will continue through at least the middle to late part of the 2020s decade.”

Tell us what you think. Comment at impactnews.com
Austin Energy began its Plug-In Electric Vehicle Program in 2008 and now has 122 charging stations at 64 area locations, Conservation Program Specialist Cameron Freberg said. As of March 20, the program claimed 41,630 charges network-wide resulting in a savings of 28,984 gallons of gas used by nonelectric vehicles, he said.

“[employees] drive hybrids and some electric vehicles as they become more cost-effective.”

Source: Austin Energy

Public charging stations

1. Milwood Branch Library (2 stations)
2. Howson Branch Library (2)
3. LifeWorks (2)
4. Animal Services Center (5)
5. St. David’s Episcopal Church (2)
6. Austin Convention Center (3)
7. Palmer Events Center (3)
8. Hampton Branch Library (2)
9. Pearson Education (2)
10. ACC Northridge (2)
11. ACC Service Center (2)
12. ACC Highland (2)
13. ACC Eastview (2)
14. ACC Riverside (2)
15. ACC Rio Grande (2)
16. ACC South Austin (2)
17. Toney Burger Center (1)
18. ACC Pinnacle (2)
19. Research Park Plaza (1)
20. Rutherford (3)
21. Technicenter (3)
22. Austin City Hall (2)
23. One Texas Center (3)
24. Austin Energy, Town Lake Center (2)
25. Chase Escalade (2)
26. Lost Parrot Cabins (1)
27. Wyndham Garden Hotel (1)
28. Dell Children’s Medical Center (3)
29. Walnut Creek Park (2)
30. Northwest Recreation Center (4)
31. Rosewood (2)
32. Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center (2)
33. Zilker Park Bathhouse (2)
34. Zilker Park Polo Field (2)
35. Dittmar Recreation Center (2)
36. M Station Apartments (1)
37. AMLI on 2nd (1)
38. Gables Park Plaza (2)
39. Gables Pressler (2)
40. Gables 5th Street Commons (2)
41. Denny’s Lakeline (2)
42. Walmart 620 (2)
43. Denny’s North (2)
44. Walmart North (2)
45. Rockwood Village (2)
46. Walmart Anderson (2)
47. Morrison Supply (2)
48. Central Market North (1)
49. H-E-B Hancock Center (1)
50. H-E-B South Congress (1)
51. Central Market South (1)
52. Sam’s Club 290 (2)
53. Walmart 290 (2)
54. H-E-B Brodie (1)
55. Hill Country Galleria (2)
56. Livestrong Foundation (1)
57. City of Austin Neighborhood Housing (1)
58. AXO Group LLC (1)
59. TIG Real Estate Services (1)
60. Austin Energy, Kramer Lane (1)
61. Brandywine Realty (1)
62. Westminster Retirement Community (2)
63. Electric Reliability Council of Texas (2)
64. Sustainable Food Center (2)

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²ATM fee refunds are awarded on next statement cycle after qualifications are met. Member FDIC

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**Featured Neighborhood**

**Village at Western Oaks, 78749**

**Overview**

**Build-out year:** 2005  
**Builders:** Includes Centex Homes, Legacy Housing  
Meritage Homes, Millburn Homes, Newmark Homes,  
David Weekley Homes  
**Square footage:** 1,332–3,388  
**Home values:** $269,000–$419,000  
**HOA dues (estimated):** $170 annually, mandatory  
**Nearby attractions:** Dick Nichols Park, Goat Cave Karst Nature Preserve, Grey Rock Golf Club, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, Veloway

**Property taxes (in dollars):**
- Austin ISD 1.2420  
- City of Austin 0.5027  
- Travis County 0.4946  
- Austin Community College 0.0949  
- Central Health 0.1290  
- Total (per $100 value) 2.4632

**Homes on the market (As of March 20)**

- No. of homes for sale 5  
- No. of homes under contract 10  
- Average days on the market 25

**Annual home sales (March 2013–Feb. 2014)**

- No. of homes sold 134  
- Square footage (low/high) 1,332/3,125  
- Selling price (low/high) $194,000/$399,000

**Featured homes**

- **5513 Kayview Drive**  
  3 Bedroom / 2 Bath  
  2,037 sq. ft.  
  $299,000  
  Agent: Karen Audino  
  512-560-8746

- **5711 Pecanwood Lane**  
  3 Bedroom / 2.5 Bath  
  2,992 sq. ft.  
  $338,000  
  Agent: Jennifer Archambeault  
  512-743-9060

- **8616 Neider Drive**  
  3 Bedroom / 2 Bath  
  2,186 sq. ft.  
  $299,000  
  Agent: Dominic Audino  
  512-560-8746

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**Must close by May 31st**

**BEST DEAL NOW SALES EVENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Floorplan</th>
<th>Beds/Baths</th>
<th>Garage</th>
<th>Sq. Feet</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preston</td>
<td>4/3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2,540</td>
<td>$443,035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savannah</td>
<td>4/3.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3,434</td>
<td>$477,530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landry</td>
<td>4/3.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3,380</td>
<td>$549,990</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sorrento</td>
<td>5/4.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4,197</td>
<td>$565,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florence</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4,257</td>
<td>$599,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Landry</td>
<td>4/3.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3,753</td>
<td>$607,831</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Please call your Internet Home Consultant Heather Fox at 512.845.7350 for more information.**

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### Market Data

#### Recent Property Listings

**On the market (February 2014)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Price Range</th>
<th>Number of homes for sale</th>
<th>Average days on the market</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than $150,000</td>
<td>2/20</td>
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<tr>
<td>$150,000–$199,999</td>
<td>2/16</td>
<td>2/16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$200,000–$299,999</td>
<td>1/10</td>
<td>1/10 3/28 1/12 2/18 27/28 7/31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$300,000–$399,999</td>
<td>3/102</td>
<td>3/102 2/48 1/16 2/20 7/18 23/2 6/18</td>
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<tr>
<td>$400,000–$499,999</td>
<td>7/57</td>
<td>7/57 1/39 30/79 14/83 2/82 5/105 1/24</td>
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<tr>
<td>$500,000–$599,999</td>
<td>- 2/215 7/118 3/68 - 3/79 -</td>
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<tr>
<td>$600,000–$799,999</td>
<td>- 2/24 3/55 1/103 - 2/24</td>
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<tr>
<td>$800,000–$999,999</td>
<td>3/107 7/119 1/146 1/45 - - 1/113</td>
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<tr>
<td>$1 million +</td>
<td>39/107 2/202 2/210 - - - 1/113</td>
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</table>

**Monthly home sales**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>78735</th>
<th>78736</th>
<th>78737</th>
<th>78738</th>
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<th>78740</th>
<th>78741</th>
<th>78742</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 2014</td>
<td>15/427,000</td>
<td>7/232,900</td>
<td>21/335,990</td>
<td>20/418,250</td>
<td>30/218,500</td>
<td>56/233,750</td>
<td>38/298,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2013</td>
<td>23/335,000</td>
<td>11/359,000</td>
<td>20/338,250</td>
<td>27/360,000</td>
<td>36/190,125</td>
<td>64/184,950</td>
<td>39/237,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 2014</td>
<td>8/463,075</td>
<td>5/260,050</td>
<td>15/323,760</td>
<td>19/386,000</td>
<td>36/202,750</td>
<td>38/222,500</td>
<td>24/257,500</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2013</td>
<td>19/390,000</td>
<td>12/252,383</td>
<td>26/356,120</td>
<td>19/385,000</td>
<td>55/219,900</td>
<td>51/210,000</td>
<td>41/288,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 2013</td>
<td>17/425,000</td>
<td>9/280,000</td>
<td>15/363,000</td>
<td>24/374,500</td>
<td>53/210,000</td>
<td>61/210,000</td>
<td>32/293,125</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 2013</td>
<td>10/401,500</td>
<td>15/237,200</td>
<td>32/367,080</td>
<td>20/392,800</td>
<td>61/299,900</td>
<td>75/198,500</td>
<td>28/295,500</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2013</td>
<td>19/425,000</td>
<td>11/224,000</td>
<td>32/356,500</td>
<td>32/386,500</td>
<td>60/214,500</td>
<td>62/225,500</td>
<td>49/278,000</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>August 2013</td>
<td>25/461,500</td>
<td>21/251,400</td>
<td>38/380,000</td>
<td>34/365,450</td>
<td>70/268,925</td>
<td>91/202,850</td>
<td>63/280,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 2013</td>
<td>33/437,500</td>
<td>6/189,000</td>
<td>38/384,600</td>
<td>44/371,350</td>
<td>54/200,000</td>
<td>79/215,000</td>
<td>63/285,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### ZIP code guide

- 78735: Oak Hill / Southwest Parkway area
- 78736: Oak Hill
- 78737: Circle C area
- 78745: South of Ben White, Sunset Valley
- 78746: Shady Hollow / Manorcha area
- 78749: McPac / William Cannon area

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Residential real estate listings added to the market between 2/18/14 and 3/18/14 were provided by the Austin Board of Realtors, www.abor.com. Although every effort has been made to ensure the timeliness and accuracy of this listing, Community Impact Newspaper assumes no liability for errors or omissions. Contact the property's agent or seller for the most current information.
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