

# NUNA NEWS

North University Neighborhood Association



*Bimonthly Updates & Ideas - By the Neighbors, For the Neighbors - [www.northuniversity.org](http://www.northuniversity.org)*

## President's Note

*by Pam Bell*

It has been a busy time since we last met! First, a NUNA Woof! Award to Zula and her friends, and also to Diane Whitmer and Zack Simpson (mom and dad) for hosting a Halloween celebration for our furry friends. Genius to provide a way for our beloved pups to trick-or treat around the park! Check out pictures of the Second Annual All Howl's Eve later in this newsletter.

Next, it was another successful It's My Park Day! Thanks to Mike Marcom for coordinating with Austin Parks Foundation, ordering and supervising the placement of the mulch, providing tools and scooters, setting up the registration tables and more. Mike's lovely wife Alice and her team of Madeline Maxwell and Janet Beinke provided the snacks, checked volunteers in, and distributed T-shirts. I enjoyed helping and meeting our volunteers. Thanks also to Jesse Salinas and Philipp Detscher for mulch delivery scooter service and the Psi Beta chapter of Theta Tau Engineering Fraternity, who joined us and helped. All the mulch was spread in about two hours, and we finished up with Amy's Ice Cream (donated, Thanks Amy!).

The next issue is not so congenial and a continuing problem for our community. Alpha Sigma Phi fraternity held its first (and last) late night party complete with live music, paid admission and alcohol. I have learned a lot from following the long trail of City of Austin and UT contacts, which I'll share at our next NUNA meeting.

On Tuesday, Nov 12, several NUNA neighbors and I attended the City of Austin Watershed Protection zoom meeting about the Adams-Hemphill Park Concept Plan. City staff reviewed the current plans and answered questions. If you haven't taken a moment to complete the survey, go to [AustinTexas.gov/Hemphill](http://AustinTexas.gov/Hemphill) before it closes on December 1. I've invited their staff to present at our February meeting. We still want to know more about how the plan will impact Adams-Hemphill Park. Speaking of the park, a big shout out to Zack Simpson and Patrick Willis for their diligence in quickly covering up graffiti in NUNA. You are making a difference!

### IN THIS ISSUE



Trees and Other Things

Big Adventures in a Small Creek

Correspondence with the City

Review: Honeymoon Spirit Lounge

Holiday Creativity & Reuse

Curbside Address Painting

Dogs of NUNA: All Howls Eve

It's My Park Day Volunteers

There was a little discussion about it at the Watershed meeting, and I requested that if the City wants us to use a specific kind of paint, to please provide it. Meanwhile, carry on!

Finally, the speaker at our December 2nd NUNA meeting will be Courtney Chavez with the Austin Transit Partnership. She and a City staff member will discuss current plans for the Project Connect Orange Line. As you know, Project Connect will have a huge impact on our neighborhood, including our properties, park, and local businesses. The NUNA Executive Committee submitted several questions that we hope will be answered at the December 2 meeting.

Thank you for all the little things you do to make our neighborhood so special. You *are* appreciated! See you Monday night, Dec. 2, at Sparky Park for our bimonthly general meeting!

### THANK YOU, NEWS CARRIERS!

We are pleased to have enough neighbors who graciously set aside a little time to walk this newsletter to your door.

If you see them, say hello and thanks.

## NUNA GENERAL MEETING

Monday, December 2, 2024

6:30 p.m. at Sparky Park Meeting Room



### AGENDA

Welcome

Business: Current Membership Total

Treasurer's Report

It's My Park Day

Update: Neighborhood Fraternity Parties

Speakers: Update on Project Connect

## Trees and Other Things

*by Jill Wilkerson*

After pecans, oaks are probably the most common trees in our NUNA neighborhood. Among tree families, oaks don't have their own family; they are listed under beech. In an index of tree identification, *Trees of Texas, An Easy Guide to Leaf Identification*, Stahl and McElvaney, American Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*) is the only beech listed, along with 33 different oaks (*Quercus*). The final entry for the oaks is the live oak, because its scientific name is alphabetically last among the oaks: *Quercus virginiana*.

Live oaks grow well in Texas - Austin being quite congenial for them. There are large specimens all over the city. Nearby, in the garden of Texas French Bread, for example, and next to the upper pond in Central Park, there are significantly sized live oaks. The branches of the oak in Central Park grow down to the ground.

### KINDLY SHARE YOUR

### WRITINGS, OPINIONS, POEMS, ART & PHOTOS

This is a forum of news and ideas for neighbors of all ages.

Submit for February NUNA News by Friday, January 10.

Email Sarah & Diane: [nuna.newsletter.austin@gmail.com](mailto:nuna.newsletter.austin@gmail.com)

## REMINDERS

**Sunday, Dec. 1:** Deadline to complete the survey on proposed plan for Adams-Hemphill Park at [Austintexas.gov/hemphill](http://Austintexas.gov/hemphill)

**Monday, Dec. 2:** Project Connect update at General Meeting

**Friday, Jan. 10:** February newsletter submissions due to [nuna.newsletter.austin@gmail.com](mailto:nuna.newsletter.austin@gmail.com)

I don't think there are any live oaks in our park, but there are numerous ones in the overall NUNA community. I will research this issue, which entails going for long slow walks through NUNA and discovering all sorts of treasures.

The perimeter of NUNA is about 3 miles. We drove this and got an exact measurement. It extends from Guadalupe to 38th street, across to Duval and down to 27th street, then back to Guadalupe.

In the future I want to look at how unusual our neighborhood is with its mix of nature, and built environment, and within those categories, manicured nature and neglected nature and all manner of businesses and buildings.

The creek running through it is absolutely essential to its character. The University of Texas is planning to pay some attention to Waller Creek as it goes through the campus and treat it as an asset instead of an ignored waterway. A conference is scheduled in April, partly sponsored by UT, with the title "Landscape First", to look at landscape and prioritize it in planning for the future.

Our creek, Hemphill Creek on some maps, is an extension of Waller Creek. Let's hope this same care might be extended through the Presbyterian Seminary and behind the fire station and next to Adams Park and on into Hemphill Park!

In the meantime, perhaps it would be interesting to look for trees in NUNA that can be identified easily: pecan, cypress, mesquite, magnolia, ginkgo (there is one ginkgo in the yard at Speedway and Laurel Lane), bur oak, palm, sycamore, crape myrtle, mountain laurel, mulberry, and hackberry.

### NUNA OFFICERS 2024-2025

Pam Bell,  
President

Barbara Davis,  
Vice President

Mike Marcom,  
Treasurer

Randy Thompson,  
NW Quadrant Rep

Sarah Beck,  
SW Quadrant Rep

Ravine Woods,  
SE Quadrant Rep

Emma Kate Shultz,  
NE Quadrant Rep

# Big Adventures in a Small Creek

by *Walden Smith (age 11)*

If you have a dog, or you're going to a friend's house, or you're just walking around, you've probably noticed hemp hill park and right through the middle is a small creek. At first glance it seems, underwhelming, like only minnows and frogs would ever like there. But if you look closely enough, you'll find it's teeming with life.

My friend and I have caught and seen turtles, frogs, minnows, sunfish, catfish, tilapia, crayfish, mystery fish, snakes, green herons, yellow crested nightshade herons, and vultures. But for some reason we, and by we I mean us humans, just another species think we're so much better than everything else.

So we cut down the creeks' plants, liter in it, bulldoze it, and worst of all, we do nothing to help it. So I think we should stop, realize how much life we take for granted, and try to help turn it back into a healthy ecosystem.



(above) Delilah Ross, Henry Ross and Walden Smith with a sunfish they caught in the creek.

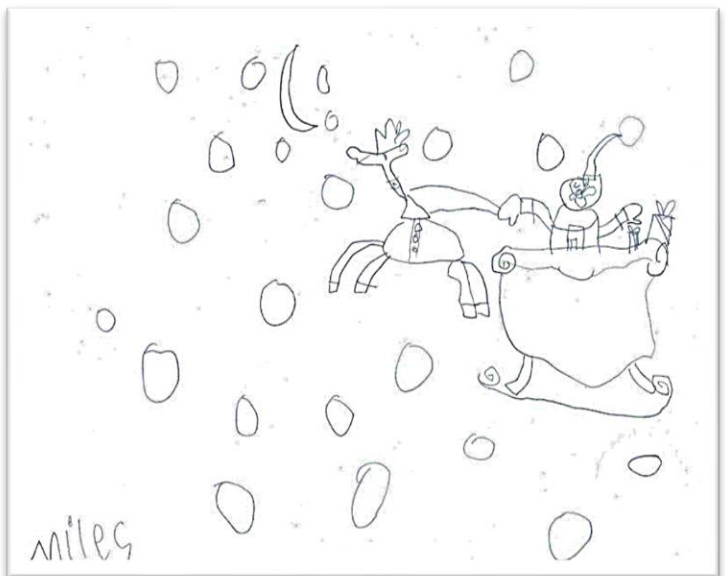
(upper right) Holiday themed pencil on paper by Penny Tucker, age 8

(lower right) Holiday themed pencil on paper by Miles Tucker, age 6

**CAN YOU FIND ALL 10 WORDS?**

Harvest  
Sunlight  
Celebration  
Festival  
Bonfire  
Ritual  
Solstice  
Reflection  
Light  
Spirit

B E F L E C T I O N S P  
U F S K P Z Y I A O I R  
I T E T I L B R E T A I  
T L E S O L S T I C E T  
U A L T N I G H T E V U  
A N H E O I R W R I A A  
L I S E B N E A N T B L  
Y T I V I T S E F I F A  
C E L E B R A T I O N N  
S I R I T S U L E H E W  
A H A R V E S T M T K B  
F E S T I V A L R J Y P



"The best way to spread Christmas cheer  
is singing loud for all to hear."  
-Buddy the Elf

# Correspondence with the City

From: Janet Beinke  
Sent: Saturday, August 24, 2024  
To: Lott, Stephanie  
Subject: Work in Hemphill Branch of Waller Creek

Good Afternoon,

I live near Hemphill Park. Many neighbors are asking what I've heard about the 33rd St. bridge reconstruction and the detention ponds slated for Adams Park. Also recently there has been work in the creek bed between 32nd and 33rd Streets.

An update on that portion of the Hemphill/Adams portion of Guadalupe Street Flood Risk Reduction project would be appreciated. One rumor I've heard is that the project's costs have exceed expectations and that the Adams Park portion might not be done or done as nicely as suggested in the past. I have no idea if that is true or not.

Regarding the creek bed work, I've attached a photo of the activity. Neighbors are concerned that any sizeable rain could cause massive erosion of the creek banks as they were left after the scraping. Is this a Watershed Protection project? If so, what is proposed for the banks? Another comment I hear is that the creek was a refuge for birds, snakes, turtles, and other small creatures. Now it will look more like a drainage ditch. Is there a plan to plant native flora in the creek area, if not in the creek bed proper?

Thanks for any info you can provide.  
Janet Beinke

From: Stephanie Lott  
To: Janet Beinke  
Sent: Friday, August 30, 2024  
RE: Work in Hemphill Branch of Waller Creek

Good afternoon,

Thank you for reaching out to us and sharing this info with your neighbors.

Starting with the recent activity, Watershed Protection has scheduled this area to be mowed three times a year. Please note that Parks and Recreation also mows in the park. Our mowing contractor was out there in early August. Afterwards, we received a 3-1-1 call from a neighbor who was concerned about the mowing and that the mowed vegetation was left in the channel.

NUNA News

On August 23, our crews responded and removed the mowed vegetation and some sediment from the channel. I think this is what your picture was of. This is not a project, but maintenance that is scheduled to occur three times a year.

Vegetation along creeks has a number of ecological benefits, and we encourage it as much as possible. However, the need for flood conveyance can be a competing priority, and in this case, there are eight homes at risk of flooding nearby. There has been some high-level discussions about ecological restoration near 33rd St, but at this time, we do not believe that vegetation should be encouraged in or along the channel between 33rd and 30th.

The channel between 33rd and 32nd has a deteriorating concrete lining. Vegetation could further damage the concrete. Between 32nd and 30th, the channel has Civil Works Administration-era walls with a later, non-historic concrete bottom. We believe this area should be kept free of vegetation as well to extend the life of the walls. It does not appear that any of this area is on a "no mow" list for Watershed Protection.

Moving on to the Guadalupe St. Flood Risk Reduction project, which includes replacing the culverts at 33rd St. and the proposed detention basins in the park as well as significant infrastructure improvements to the north. We are planning to send out the latest version of the concept plan for the park this fall. Previously, we had presented two versions and asked for feedback on them. We have taken the survey data and comments into account and believe the new version will be a good compromise between those who would like the park to stay the same and those who would like to see some additional amenities.

The project does have funding issues, and we currently do not have funding for construction of this project. The entire project is estimated to cost more than \$100 million. We have divided the project into phases and are seeking external funding. We are in the process of applying for state funding and will investigate any other funding opportunities that arise. We obviously cannot start construction until we have funding for the first phase, so there may be a delay in starting the construction and it may extend the time it takes to complete all phases of the project, but the funding issues won't affect the quality of the project!

I hope this helps answer your questions. Please let me know if you have any other questions.

Stephanie Lott  
(sbe/ber/bers)  
Public Information Specialist Senior – Communications Office  
City of Austin | Watershed Protection Department  
O: (512) 974-2799 | Media: (512) 974-1450  
[www.austintexas.gov/watershed](http://www.austintexas.gov/watershed)  
[www.facebook.com/austinwatershed](https://www.facebook.com/austinwatershed)

December 2024



# Restaurant Review: Honeymoon Spirit Lounge

by Julie Willis

**H**oneymoon Spirit Lounge is worth visiting any time of year, but especially now that it's finally pleasant to walk the few blocks from our neighborhood to 624 W. 34th Street and dine al fresco at this Instagrammable gem of a restaurant. Long-time residents who remember this location as Salvation Pizza will hardly recognize the place now, refashioned as a vibey restaurant with a great cocktail menu (plus wine and beer) – or a vibey cocktail lounge with great food, either way.

Although I admittedly did not take time to verify it, the restaurant's backstory is as charming as its aesthetic. According to the Austinite101 blog, Honeymoon opened in 2022 by a local couple whose wedding and honeymoon were scuttled by Covid. They (literally) made limoncello out of lemons by redirecting their energy into this passion project - and their passion shows in everything from the décor to the craft cocktails to the high-end comfort food.

The generous front patio and side garden are visible from 34th street. The first time I visited with my husband, we were pleasantly



surprised by the more secluded back garden. Meanwhile, there's a smaller, eclectic indoor dining room and full bar with a velvety Parisian aesthetic. I returned to Honeymoon twice over a six-month period and

sampled all three spaces with groups of various sizes; each has its own energy and the service was terrific every time.

The cocktail menu is short but creative, with combinations to appeal to a range of preferences from the classic Honeymoon Marg to the smokey Latest Fashion to the watermelon refresher He's a Catch. If you are looking for light bites, the ceviche, burrata and goat cheese & beet salad were fresh and perfectly proportioned - each around \$20. Larger entrees are \$30+ and rotate over time but usually include a great burger, steak, fresh fish and offerings like the current Seoul Hot Fried Chicken (or Mushrooms). They have midweek specials, happy hour and a weekend brunch.

Spoiler alert: The bill comes with a postcard you can address to anyone in the world and Honeymoon will even mail it for you - a memorable way to mark your visit to this lovely destination.

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# Holiday Creativity & Reuse

Have you heard of a local non-profit called Austin Creative Reuse? It's the perfect place to stop by before and after the holidays. Come in beforehand for a wide range of decorations, traditional and creative gift-wrapping supplies, holiday cards and fantastic gifts - or even a gift card for the creative folks in your life. After the holidays, donate gift bags, working holiday lights, bubble wrap, packing material and gift boxes or tins.



Austin Creative Reuse (ACR) is on a mission to rescue art, craft, fabric, notions, school supplies, office supplies and other useful stuff from the landfill. To date, ACR has saved 3 million pounds of useful items from the landfill. Donations are sorted, repackaged and offered for sale at deep discounts at their Center, located in the Windsor Park neighborhood at 2005 Wheless. ACR accepts donated items from businesses and individuals, so you never quite know what you will find.

They also offer classes in embroidery, origami, quilting, painting, and more. There are lots of ways to get involved in this fast-growing nonprofit. Volunteer opportunities include donating your unused items, sorting donations, and even teaching classes. If you have a special creative skill, ACR would love to host a meet up for you.



Douglas Plummer

Learn more about specific items to donate, upcoming classes, and scheduling meetups on their website: [AustinCreativeReuse.org](http://AustinCreativeReuse.org). Follow ACR on social media: [facebook.com/austincreativereuse](https://facebook.com/austincreativereuse) or [@austincreativereuse](https://twitter.com/austincreativereuse). If you would like to donate items without driving to the center, connect with our neighbor Carole LeClair [caleclair@gmail.com](mailto:caleclair@gmail.com).

## Curbside Address Painting

If you are a regular walker in the neighborhood, you may have noticed homes along Hemphill Park and 33<sup>rd</sup> Street with spruced-up address numbers on their curbs or steps. Don't be jealous; these too can be yours! Cole Willis is a high school sophomore with the design skills and materials to get it done in about 45 minutes. He offers number painting on either your front curb or front stairs for \$25, or both front curb and front stairs for \$40. You can choose white or black stenciled numbers and black, and white or no background. To ask questions or schedule a project, text 512-761-0151; Cole will reply within 1-2 business days.



### Hey Neighbors!

If you need a recommendation for a good realtor or lender please let me know. We work with some of the very best realtors in the city!

Douglas Plummer  
35th Street Resident  
Owner of Midtown Title



[www.midtowntitle.com](http://www.midtowntitle.com) | 512-459-1110 | 3009 N Lamar Blvd. Austin, TX 78705



# Dogs of NUNA Winners of All Howl's Eve

by Diane Whitmer

On October 30th, 2024, Hemphill Park celebrated its second annual "All Howls Eve." This festive, dog-centered event welcomed neighbors of all ages, who came together to enjoy a unique spin on trick-or-treating—with treats for dogs at various houses around the park.



the previous newsletter. Dutton is also a two-time champion, having won "Best Large Dog Costume" last year.

**Funniest:** Bogey (lower left), from the Willis family at Hemphill Park, won over the crowd in his hilarious Charmin toilet paper roll costume to show off his tubular figure.

**Most Adorable:** Fern (center right), dressed as a hippie, stole the show with her flower-powered look. Fern, a family member of Sam and Celine from W 33rd St., matched her family, who also dressed to suit the theme.



Many thanks to the set of families around the perimeter of the park, who handed out treats - Carole LeClair and Jim Miller, Rachel Lomas and Andy Bowman, Melissa Wiginton and David White, Trisha and Meyer Shepard, Alice and Mike Marcom, Sarah Pietsch, Philipp Detscher - and Erin Beck for her photography. Look for flyers next year for the 2025 rendition of All Howl's Eve!

The event concluded with a lively dog costume parade along the W. 32nd to W. 33rd stretch of Hemphill Park and a costume contest. Judges, chosen from non-dog-owning neighbors, are selected annually and have the creative freedom to establish categories for the costume contest. This year's judges, Paul Russell and Zula Whitmer (upper left), awarded prizes in three categories.

**Most Creative:** Charlotte and Dutton (center left), the dogs of Grace and Sydney on Wheeler St., dazzled in their homemade costumes as a rainbow and pot of gold. They may have taken inspiration from last year's "Best Homemade Costume" winners, Butter and Bean, featured in NUNA News



## It's My Park Day Volunteers

On Saturday, November 2nd, neighbors gathered to mulch our beloved trees in Hemphill Park. Mulching helps to insulate roots for the winter, retain moisture, and add nutrients to the soil. If you enjoy walking through the park, it's nice to know you've helped to care for it. Thanks to all who came out.





# HYDE PARK, HANCOCK & NORTH UNIVERSITY



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## 4506-B AVENUE B

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## 3823 DUVAL STREET

Ideal duplex investment property in the heart of Hyde Park. Each unit features 1BR, 1BA plus large sunroom. Rear deck overlooking fenced backyard. List price: \$750,000.

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## Suzanne Pringle

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