

The FRONT PORCH FLYER

The Mueller Neighborhood Association Newsletter

July / August 2024



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Neighborhood Association by
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Cover photo by Saamiya Seraj

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Contact information:
csc@muellerneighborhood.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

JULY 20 | MNA GENERAL MEETING
10 AM.
AUSTIN ENERGY

AUG 13 | MUELLER COMMISSION MEETING
6 PM.
AUSTIN ENERGY

AUG 17 | MNA GENERAL MEETING
10 AM.
AUSTIN ENERGY

SEPT 21 | MNA GENERAL MEETING
10 AM.
AUSTIN ENERGY

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

- Attend MNA meetings or events
- Become a block captain, or help the network
- Join MNA committees or run for the Steering Committee (SC), which is the executive board
- Help the MNA organize events like Fall Fest
- Write for the Front Porch Flyer

SIGN UP FOR THE MNA AT:
WWW.MUELLERNEIGHBORHOOD.ORG/MEMBERSHIP



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Welcome to the Blazing Hot (100°F) Edition of the Front Porch Flyer

By Sarah Seraj, FPF Editor and MNA Chair

Summer was already underway when we had the last edition of the FPF but now we've finally reached 100F days, which have been growing in number in the last few years. Stay hydrated, folks!

What's in store from the MNA the rest of the year? By the time you receive this in your inboxes, our July 4th Parade and Festival event will have recently passed. We don't have any other major events planned for the summer, but we're starting to think about our events and budget for next year. If you have suggestions for 2025 events or initiatives, come chat with us at one of our meetings which are on the third Saturday of every month (sometimes moved around to accommodate events). Check out the event calendar on Page 2 for meeting dates.

Community Snapshots



May the 4th Block Party, hosted by the Block Captain Network and sponsored by the MNA. Photos by Taylor Youngblood and Saamiya Seraj.



Music concert for neighbors at Moreno Street by Ivan Trevino, who is a Professor of Percussion at the Butler School of Music. Photos by Francis Favis, Sandy Shary, and Ellen Muskin.



Journalist Megan Kimble at the book talk event hosted by MNA Transportation and Urban Planning Committee.
Photo by Kaz Wojtowicz.



The Block Captain Network hosted a story time featuring Asian American Pacific Islander authors to celebrate AAPI Heritage Month in May. Photo by Zeba Seraj.

Near Miss on Two Wheels: Why Our City Needs a Transportation Makeover

By ML Vong

The cacophony of the city faded as the screech of tires replaced it. One minute, I was humming along to my after-work bike ride playlist; the next, I was staring up at a dented car door, my handlebars a pretzel. Thankfully, I came to with a bruised ego and a warped wheel, but that sunny Friday afternoon left a lasting impression. It wasn't just about my misfortune; it was a stark reminder of the City of Austin's shortcomings.

Our streets, designed primarily for cars, create a transportation system that excludes a significant portion of the population. Imagine an 80-year-old navigating a six-lane highway to get groceries, a wheelchair-bound person trying to take their pet to the park, or a parent wrestling two kids on bikes through rush hour traffic. It's not just about safety; it's about accessibility. This isn't some utopian dream. Cities worldwide are prioritizing multi-modal transportation—a network that seamlessly integrates walking, cycling, public transit, and yes, even cars. Wider bike lanes protected by curbs become safe corridors for cyclists, scooters, and skaters of all ages. Dedicated bus lanes and light rail systems whisk people across town quickly and efficiently, reducing traffic congestion and pollution.

Think of the benefits! Imagine vibrant sidewalks bustling with pedestrians, parks doubling as bike pit stops, and a quiet hum replacing the roar of engines. Not only would this improve public health and the environment, but it would also create a more livable, connected city. So, how do we get there? The good news is change starts with us, the residents. Contact your city council members, attend planning commission meetings, and make your voice heard. Support local businesses advocating for multi-modal infrastructure. Organize community bike rides or walking tours—show them the city you want to live in!

Remember, the key is to be persistent, but not pedestrian (pun intended)! Let's turn our frustration into fuel for a transportation revolution. Because a city that prioritizes people over cars is a city that's truly moving forward. Who knows, maybe one day I'll be cruising down a safe bike lane belting out tunes, minus the near-death experience. Join the movement, and let's make our cities places where everyone can get around, safe and happy, on two wheels, two legs, or even eight if you're feeling particularly adventurous.

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Mueller Property Owners' Association Transition Update

by Gary Jacobson and Preston "Ty" Tyree

Note: The following update is a summary of the Property Owners' Association (POA) transition meeting that occurred at the Austin Energy building on Saturday, June 22.

The Mueller development will soon seek bids from a specialized management company to run the neighborhood. The announcement was made by Karen Sharp, chair of the Mueller POA Transition Committee, at a community meeting on Saturday, June 22, attended by about 150 Mueller residents.

After a review of management models by the transition committee, a specialized company approach scored best, getting high marks for affordability, quality, risk and time to implement. The specialized transition will take two to three months to implement, Sharp said.

The other management arrangements studied were self-management, hybrid self-management and portfolio management companies.

Bid proposals will go out to two or three specialized companies in the next couple months, Sharp told the attendees.

Currently, Associa Hill Country manages Mueller for the POA and Catellus Development Corporation, the project developer. But neither of these two organizations will be on the proposal list.

The Mueller Transition Committee has been studying the transition for five years, preparing for the handover from the developer to the POA this coming December.

Sharp said we won't know the cost of the new management arrangement until the proposals are returned. She does expect it to be similar to current costs.

Brian Dolezal, Catellus vice president for Mueller marketing and communications, said his company has agreed to remain involved for another three years because there are some projects that have been delayed. But the management responsibilities of the community transfers to the POA in December.

Beginning in 2025 control of the Mueller Master Board of directors will rotate between a developer/commercial

representatives and residential property owners majority every year.

Attendees at the Transition Committee meeting had many questions in several small breakout sessions discussing the Mueller POA budget (\$8.2 million for 2024), suggestions for neighborhood improvements, goals for the future, and recruitment of future POA committee members.

Because of our recent storms, for example, insurance premiums for Row Homes are \$1.8 million this year, 54 percent of the row home budget. That's up from about \$1 million five years ago.

Asked if the community could manage those large insurance increases, Joe Ristuccia, general manager of the Mueller Master Community (POA) acknowledged that it will be a challenge and said much will depend on future weather here.

An official video of the meeting was posted in the Town Square portal on Friday, June 28.



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Roll into Fun with Pétanque at the Browning Hangar!

By Jeffrey Brown

Have you ever strolled past the Browning Hangar on a sunny afternoon and wondered why everyone is having such a blast tossing metal balls around? Welcome to the lively world of pétanque, a game that's sweeping the Mueller community off its feet (and onto the gravel). If you're curious about what makes this simple yet captivating game so beloved, read on. Better yet, come join us and discover firsthand how pétanque is not just a game—it's a way to build friendships, enjoy the outdoors, and have a ton of fun!

What is Pétanque, Anyway?

Pétanque (pronounced pay-tonk) is a French game that's similar to bocce ball or lawn bowling. The aim is to toss your metal ball (called a boule) as close as possible to a smaller wooden ball (the cochonnet, or "piglet"). Sounds simple? Well, add in a bit of strategy, a sprinkle of friendly competition, and you've got the recipe for a perfect pastime.

Why Pétanque is Perfect for Everyone

One of the best things about pétanque is that it's incredibly accessible. Whether you're young or young-at-heart, a seasoned player or a complete newbie, pétanque is easy to pick up. The rules are straightforward, and the game can be as relaxed or as competitive as you want it to be. It's this flexibility that makes it ideal for the Mueller community. Plus, pétanque doesn't require fancy equipment or special attire—just bring your enthusiasm and a willingness to have fun!



The Magic of the Browning Hangar

The Browning Hangar isn't just a historic landmark; it's a hub of community activity. And when pétanque is in full swing, it becomes a place of camaraderie that's hard to find these days. Picture this: the gentle clink of boules, the cheer of a well-aimed throw, and the warm Texas sun lighting up a group of friends, old and new, all enjoying a shared pastime. The spacious,

shaded area provides the perfect setting, whether you're playing or spectating.

Health Benefits Disguised as Fun

While you're having a great time, you're also sneaking in some light exercise. Pétanque involves walking, bending, and strategic throwing, which can improve your hand-eye coordination and keep you moving. It's a fantastic way to stay active without even realizing you're exercising. And let's not forget the mental benefits—strategizing your throws and engaging in friendly banter is excellent for keeping your mind sharp and spirits high.

Come Join the Fun!

We'd love for you to join us at the Browning Hangar for our regular pétanque sessions. Whether you're looking to make new friends, enjoy the outdoors, or just try something new, pétanque has something for everyone. No experience? No problem! Our friendly community members are always happy to teach newcomers the ropes. We usually meet on Friday evenings and Sunday afternoons.

Pétanque at the Browning Hangar is really more than just a game. It's a celebration of community, fun, and the simple joys of life. So, next time you see us playing, don't be shy—pick up a boule and give it a try. Who knows? You might just find your new favorite pastime and a new circle of friends.

Players form games at the Hangar at various times throughout the seasons. However, you can always find the latest schedule, an overview of the rules, and links to instructional videos on the French Legation Boules Club website at legationboules.com.

See you at the Hangar!

Composting Tips: Save your greens to save green.

By Taylor Youngblood

Almost half of Austin's trash may be compostable. By using a curbside compost cart you can shrink the size of your trash can and save money. If you live in an apartment or condo, your neighbors may be willing to share their curbside compost cart with you. Post on Mueller Neighbors or the Mueller Neighborhood Association Facebook to connect with someone who might be willing to share.

Make collecting food scraps easier with a kitchen collector.

A coffee can, food storage container or any other reusable container can be used as a mini compost collector in your kitchen. Collect food scraps in this container to easily set aside material for your green composting cart.

Keep your kitchen collector in a convenient location in your kitchen, such as on the countertop, under the sink or in the freezer.

While cooking or cleaning up, place leftover food scraps and food-soiled paper into your kitchen collector as you go.

Empty the contents of your kitchen collector into your green cart before you set out the cart each Thursday evening. Carts should be out for Friday 5:30 AM collection.

Keep everything clean!

- Follow these tips to help reduce odors, moisture and pests in your green cart and kitchen collector.
- Sprinkle baking soda inside of the green cart and kitchen collector.
- Collect food scraps in a BPI-certified compostable bag, paper bag or small cardboard box; or wrap food scraps in a paper towel or newspaper to absorb moisture and manage odors.
- Consider freezing food scraps like meat, poultry and

fish in your kitchen collector or another reusable container, paper or BPI-certified compostable bag until it's time to place scraps in your green cart.

Keep these OUT of your green cart:

Unaccepted items do not break down naturally and cause significant problems for the composting process. Some items also cause a safety hazard for collection and material processing crews. It's important to keep unaccepted items out of your green cart so they do not contaminate the compost or cause injury.

- Aluminum
- Animal carcasses
- Ceramics
- Cigarette butts and ashes
- Clothing (whether they're cotton or other natural fibers, our commercial system cannot break them down so don't put them in the carts, please)
- Cotton balls and cotton swabs
- Diapers
- Glass Glossy paper
- Hazardous waste
- Kitty litter
- Liquids (including fats, oils, grease)
- Medical waste
- Metal
- Pet waste (no poop from anything, including rabbits)
- Plastic of any kind (bags, bottles, containers, straws, etc.)
- Rocks
- Styrofoam
- Trash
- Tree stumps
- Wine corks
- Wood that is treated or painted (popsicle sticks, kabob sticks and chopsticks are accepted)





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- Member of original wave of Mueller residents in 2008
- Former Chair of the Mueller Neighborhood Association
- Current member of the Mueller Commission
- Current elected resident member of the Mixed-Use Board of the Mueller Property Owners Association



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