

GREAT HILLS PARK NEWSLETTER

Neighbors ~ Nature ~ Fitness ~ Friends ~ Family ~ Fun ~ in Northwest Austin

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Shirley Hooper

It is with great sadness that we tell you that Shirley Hooper passed away on February 11. Shirley was one of the original neighbors in the park neighborhood and helped in the effort to bring the park to the neighborhood. If you enter the park through the concrete walk at the playscape, you will notice the small garden to your left. This, we call Shirley's Garden. When the playscape was finished, it came without any landscaping and cried out for something. Shirley recognized the need and planted her garden, which she tended for many years. If you did not know Shirley, you may have seen her walking the neighborhood with her little black dog, Sassy. Shirley was a kind lady who always told it like it was in a way that was often helpful as well as funny. We could use a lot more people like Shirley in this world. Thank you Shirley. We will miss you.

Winter Park Meeting Summary

The Winter Park meeting held on January 27, 2018 was well attended by Park Committee Chairs and neighbors. The following topics were discussed:

Playground Project Update

Donations for the Playground Project to date total over \$14,400—amazing! Unfortunately, we have been informed that the play equipment and installation costs have risen over the past year, and we

now need to raise \$20,000. We are fast approaching our April deadline! We have added a goal tracker at the park that will be updated as donations continue to come in. Thanks to all who have donated so far! Please encourage fellow neighbors and friends to contribute to this wonderful new playground if they enjoy using this part of the park. For an updated list of donors and progress, see page 3.



Easter Egg Hunt

The Easter Egg Hunt will be held on Sunday, March 24 at 11am, rain or shine. Target will be donating the eggs and volunteers are needed to help fill eggs ahead of time and also to hide eggs on the day of the event. Signs for this event have faded and we need a few volunteers to trace over the letters with fresh markers. If anyone is interested in volunteering, please email us at GreatHillsPark@gmail.com.



It's My Park Workday—Spring

A few spots are still available for It's My Park Day at Great Hills Park! Sign up now to get your free t-shirt and participate in our biggest volunteer event of the year. The event will be held on Saturday, March 3, from 9am-noon, rain or shine. All ages are welcome and snacks will be provided. Meet at the pavilion to sign in.

We will be clearing away winter damage and welcoming Spring. Our park is beautiful in the early Spring with the first trees in our canyon just starting to bud and leaf out. We will be doing general maintenance on our beautiful trails. Trash pickup will be a big job this time—numerous pieces of furniture were dragged into the canyon and need to be removed. One group will remove invasive plants. Several people will be cleaning out chimney swift towers, which needs to be done before the birds return. At the playscape we will be spreading mulch and cleaning up. (If you bring children this is the best place to work, but they can also help with trash pickup.) The morning always passes quickly with nice people, good snacks, and doing work that counts. Visit www.GreatHillsPark.org or follow us on twitter @GreatHillsPark for more information. To register, go to austinparks.givepulse.com/event/69171-Great-Hills-Park-Spring-Refurbish.

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Kite Flying on Sunday, March 4

Love the Zilker Kite Festival but dread the trek down to Zilker Park? Join us at Great Hills Park instead. Bring the kids and the kites and enjoy the day at our neighborhood park!

Spring is Almost Here!

Mexican plums and quince flowers are in bloom and bluebonnets are starting to come in—looks like spring is on its way!

For a list of many plants found in the park visit www.GreatHillsPark.org or www.inaturalist.org/places/great-hills-park

Spring Trail Walk

Our annual park Trail Walk will be held on Saturday, May 5, at 9am. This will be a fun and dare-we-say educational walk through the trails with David Stalker and Steve Schwartzman. We will be learning lots of cool stuff about rocks, birds, fish, bats and other wildlife and some interesting history about the park. Bring your notebooks and cameras if you are so inclined—there is much to discover! We'll meet at the pavilion—all ages welcome. We hope to see everyone there!



Birds in the Park

In early February, a beautiful Red-shouldered Hawk was spotted in the park! Other birds spotted so far in February include Cedar Waxwings, European Starlings, Orange Crowned Warblers, Goldfinches, Ruby-crowned Kinglets and several varieties of woodpeckers! More than 150 species of birds have been seen in the park and in adjacent neighborhoods. The latest sightings can be found on the Great Hills Park page at ebird.org. You can also register on the site and report your own observations, and be part of the largest and most successful citizen-science project in history!



4th of July Parade

We are looking for ideas to expand the 4th of July Festivities. For suggestions or to volunteer, please email GreatHillsPark@gmail.com

Illegal Dumping

the City of Austin spends \$250,000 per year cleaning property where furniture, tires and junk have been illegally dumped. Aside from it being illegal to dump trash in city parks, it damages our watershed, springs and ecosystem in the park. Please call 311 if you see anyone dumping trash/bulk collection items in the creeks or in the park.

Don't Mess With Texas—it's a max fine of \$2,000.

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Fundraising Campaign

While fundraising at the park is ongoing, we began a focused fundraising campaign in Fall of 2017 specific to raising money for the new playground. See graphic below for specific costs and all the equipment we will be getting! It would include a playscape, and climbing net, a real working telescope, musical instruments, a spinning seat and an excavator for the pea gravel area!

Donations

Many thanks to our faithful and generous friends and neighbors who have contributed to date! We still have a long way to go and we need your help!

Donations are accepted online or by mail (see www.GreatHillsPark.org for more information). They are tax-deductible and 100% of your donation goes directly to Great Hills Park.

ALL DONATIONS ARE VERY MUCH APPRECIATED!



Donations of \$150 or more can be recognized with a personalized (business names are allowed, dates are not allowed) brick paver on the walkway at the Sierra Oaks kiosk.

Donations of \$50 or more receive a "We LOVE Great Hills Park" sign!

If you would like one, or would like to gift one, please visit www.GreatHillsPark.org for more information or to donate.

Thank you to the following generous friends and neighbors for their donations:

Heritage Oak (\$1,000+)

Halloween Carnival Mom's Group
Beef and Pie Film Productions

Majestic Elm level (\$500-999)

Eric Gross
Marie Laing
National Instruments Matching Donation
John and Chondra Novak
Jordan Scalo
Brad and Tami Shuey

Mountain Laurel level (\$200-\$499)

Alison Driscoll Chang
Brenda Cohen
Charles Ice
Arjun Kandhari
Brett Nabors
Brandon and Alicia Phipps
Mary Lou Rizzo
Anonymous

Bluebonnet level (\$100-\$199)

Desiree Barnett
Rachel Brown
Mary Etter
Mark Johnson
Mark Puzdrak
Anonymous

Lantana level (\$1-\$99)

Gary and Amy Bennett
Karen Brouse
Mary Gazell Call
Theresa Cameron
Stephanie Coates
Sarah Dineen
Shireen Fatehi
Tom and Pat Meserole
Amy Nebrat
Eve Panzer
Nancy Rooney
Krista Sheffield
Robert Sparks
Ryan Sparks
Renato Kichise Takaasi
Lee Yee Yong
Anonymous

*We are now on Twitter!
Follow us @GreatHillsPark*

***Thank you to our donors who have shown your love for Great Hills Park!
We can't do this without you!!***

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Family Activities in the Park?

If anyone is interested in getting together in the park for some family fun, email us at GreatHillsPark@gmail.com. Some ideas to consider are—

- Bug hunting
- Cloud Watching (yes ~ there is such a thing!) www.cloudappreciationsociety.org
- Nature photography / sketching
- Tree ID—www.treefolks.org
- Frisbee / Games

Other ideas? Email us at GreatHillsPark@gmail.com

Volunteering

Great Hills Park is always looking for volunteers!

- Help with trail maintenance
- Help with gardening and watering on Friday mornings from 7:30-9:00am
- Help with planning special holiday events
- Help with raising and lowering the flag each day
- Help with revitalizing the Play Group

Email us at GreatHillsPark@gmail.com if interested in volunteering.

General Park Information

- Park address is 10801 Sierra Oaks.
- There are no restrooms in the park.
- Park hours are 5am-10:30pm. Anyone in the park after hours is subject to a fine.
- Call 311 for maintenance issues, trash collection or non-emergency concerns. For emergencies, call 911.

Great Hills Park is an “on-leash only” park

Remember that all dogs in the park must remain on-leash at all times. This is for the safety of all park users as well as the safety of the dogs. APD officers can issue tickets that can cost hundreds of dollars.

Pocket Trail Maps

Pocket trail maps are available for a \$1 donation to the Playground Project. Maps show all trail markers and mileage, along with neighboring streets and general park information. Maps are available on Friday mornings from 7:30-9:00am, when volunteers are working, or by special arrangement. If you would like a map, please email GreatHillsPark@gmail.com.

“We Great Hills Park” shirts

Park shirts are available for \$20 (not a tax-deductible donation). Shirts are navy blue and are short-sleeve. Men's shirts are crewneck, sizes S-XL. Women's shirts are v-necks, sizes M-XL. All proceeds go directly to help fund the Playground Project!

Follow us on Twitter [@GreatHillsPark](https://twitter.com/GreatHillsPark)

*For more information visit www.GreatHillsPark.org
For questions, email GreatHillsPark@gmail.com*