

# The Front Porch Flyer

Mueller Neighborhood Association Newsletter

October 2008

Volume 1, Number 1

## Mueller's Night Out, October 7

by *Dusty Harshman*

On the evening of October 7<sup>th</sup>, Mueller's Night Out will have a little something for everyone. As Mueller residents, you're invited to share in interactive storytelling and performance art. You will laugh with neighbors on your block and share stories\* with fellow Muellerites. You will have the opportunity to donate food for Capital Area Food Bank and shake hands with McGruff the Crime Dog.

Mueller's Night Out is organized around the National Night Out campaign to build community and improve public safety. The Mueller Neighborhood Association is hopeful that this celebration will become a hallmark of our community. Scheduled events include:

**5:30-6:30:** Move Your Tale, a local performing arts outreach, will be holding one of their signature story-building sessions at the Lake Park Amphitheater. This will be a child-oriented event, but all ages and imaginations are welcome.

**6:00-6:45:** The Mueller Neighborhood Association encourages each block to organize a "meet-and-greet" where residents can introduce themselves, share stories\*, and trade contact information. Be creative.

**6:45-7:15:** Residents are encouraged to stroll the neighborhood and meet neighbors on other blocks, some of

whom will be on their front porches, sharing stories... and stories\*.

**7:15-8:00:** At Ella Wooten Park, Catellus is coordinating a presentation on neighborhood safety with representatives of the Austin Police Department including that old paw detective, McGruff the Crime Dog. Desserts, such as ice cream or popsicles, will be served. Residents are encouraged to bring non-perishable food donations for the Capital Area Food Bank's campaign to assist the evacuees from Hurricane Ike.

So on October 7<sup>th</sup>, get out on your porch, meet your neighbors, stroll the neighborhood, and meet up at Wooten Park for this storied\* event.

*\* "Stories" refer secretly to grilled foods, baked goods, and libations.*

## MNA Grows from Coffeehouse Roots

by *Karen Zabreznik*

### History

The Mueller Neighborhood Association (MNA) started as an informal meeting of folks interested in moving to Mueller or learning about the airport redevelopment. The first meeting was held at Genuine Joe's Coffeehouse off Anderson Lane on September 16, 2007, long before any of us moved to our new neighborhood. It was the first time most of us met, although we had been communicating via email and the Mueller Yahoo group for some time. Various Mueller Pioneers, including Joe Denton, Betsy Hilton, Tal Tversky, Jenna Martin, Steve Lopez, Cliff Spinac, Kim Wine, Ashley Fisher, Katherine Schmid, David Frank, Felicia and Michael Adams, and Mueller legend Jim Walker, attended the first meeting.

*(continued on back cover)*



**Ella Wooten Park**, photograph by *Dusty Harshman*

**Mueller Neighborhood Association  
Steering Committee**

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Vice Chair: Drew Harris  
Secretary: Karen Zabreznik  
Treasurer: Dusty Harshman  
Members: Elizabeth Butman, Kerry Fisher, Bobby Gierisch, John Guest, Jerry Perkins, Wilson Robertson, Rod Ruoff, Cliff Spinac, and Kim Wine

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*Let us know if you are interested  
in contributing an article or  
underwriting our next issue!*



**Neighborhood children enjoy the first annual Fourth of July parade,**  
*photograph by Steve Butman Photography*

## **Gardens and Greenery: *When is Grass a Weed?***

*by Janelle Dozier*

When Bermuda grass is in our flower beds or under our trees, it is a weed. Bermuda grass is not a native plant. It originated in Africa and is used in lawns because it is an aggressive grower. It spreads three ways: by seeds, by rhizomes (underground stems), and by stolons (above ground stems).

When facing a Bermuda invasion, there are multiple ways to tackle the problem.

The simplest means of eliminating Bermuda is to pull it up by hand when the soil is moist and loose. When you do this, get every little sprig and root because it can regrow from the tiniest leftover. Rooting out Bermuda is tedious, but effective if you keep at it.

To prevent Bermuda from spreading into beds, deprive it of light. Loosely applied mulch is not effective; you need to put down a barrier. Pull all of the mulch and Bermuda runners out of the

bed, and lay down about one-half inch of newspaper, wetting it with a hose as you go. Leave large gaps around the plants so they can get water. Put the old mulch back on top, and add a deep layer of new mulch so the papers will not be unsightly or blow away.

Newspaper will keep most of the Bermuda grass from growing in the beds, although you will still have to pull out above ground runners. In a few months, the newspaper will have decomposed and you can hoe it into the soil along with the mulch. Today's newspaper ink is made from vegetable sources, so it is not toxic and will add needed micronutrients to the soil.

Landscape cloth can be used instead of newspaper, but it still needs mulch on top of it. You cannot plant anything where the landscape cloth lies, and unlike newspaper, it does not biodegrade.

If you are really serious about blocking the underground rhizomes, you can sink a metal barrier 8 to 10 inches below ground between the turf and your beds.

Some Mueller residents have opted to replace their turf with beds or with rocks. This level of landscape redesign requires approval from the Mueller Modifications Committee. Contact Alliance Association Management for more information.

As a last resort, the chemical way to eliminate Bermuda is to use Round-Up or another weed killer with glyphosate. Use these products only according to the directions.

For assistance in identifying weeds and choosing the least toxic options, call the Cooperative Extension office at (512) 854-9600.

# Public Input on the Mueller Town Center *by Gareth Wilcock*

*Identity, connectivity, walkability, convenience, diversity, authenticity.*

These are the six principles that will guide the design of the Mueller town center, which is envisioned as a pedestrian-oriented district for retail and entertainment in the heart of our new urban village, right off Aldrich Street. On August 13, 2008, Catellus hosted a town hall meeting to kick off the design phase of the Mueller town center planning process. Mueller residents were out in force at the meeting, all hoping to be heard and share their ideas.

Catellus' presentation started with a brief history of the Mueller redevelopment, from its conception with Citizens for Airport RElocation (CARE) in 1984 through the formation of the Mueller Neighborhood Coalition and the appointment of Catellus as the master developer.

Throughout the development process, plans have been subject to change from the input and voices of the stakeholders.

The meeting introduced ELS Architecture and Urban Design and Live Work Learn Play as consultants who will help shape the design of the town center. ROMA Design Group,

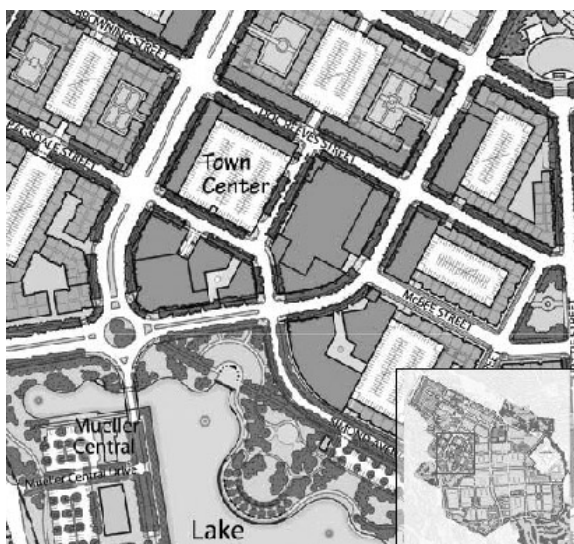
author of the Mueller master plan, also contributed to the presentations. When introducing the proposed design themes of the town center, many of the photos were from California, for example, Santana Row in San Jose. Perhaps this showed the influence of the designers' California roots – ELS is based out of Berkeley and ROMA out of San Francisco. Other photos were of Austin favorites, such as South Congress and West Sixth Street, and of international public spaces.

The six principles for the town center design were shared before the meeting attendees split into facilitated groups.

These breakout sessions were lively and animated – if the future town center sees tables of residents and visitors talking with such excitement, then I would deem it a success! Summaries made by the group facilitators strongly echoed certain themes (see insert).

It will be interesting to see how the plan

develops and public input is integrated. Economic factors may play against the desire for things to do other than just shop. The main observation I made at the meeting is that there are many people who feel very strongly about the environment that's being created at Mueller, and want their say. More power to us!



**Preliminary map of Mueller town center,**  
from [muelleraustin.com](http://muelleraustin.com)

## Calendar of Events

### Mueller Community Association Q&A

October 2, 6:30-8:00 PM; Location to be determined

### Mueller's Night Out

October 7, 5:30-8:00 PM; See front cover for details

### Mueller Neighborhood Association Meetings

Second Saturday of every month, 10:00-11:00 AM  
October 11, November 8, December 13  
Ronald McDonald House, 1315 Barbara Jordan Blvd.

### Mueller Commission (RMMA-PIAC) Meetings

Second Tuesday of every month, 6:00-9:00 PM  
Waller Creek Center, 625 E. 10<sup>th</sup> St.

Visit [muellercommunity.com](http://muellercommunity.com) for updates.



# Meeting the Mueller Stakeholders by Dusty Harshman

Our neighborhood is the dynamic result of many stakeholder-organizations. As such, it can be confusing to grasp the many players and the purview of each organization. Below is a list of the larger players and how you may contact them.

## Mueller Neighborhood Association

This organization, comprised of Mueller residents, both property owners and renters, represents the neighborhood to the surrounding community. They hold informational meetings on the second Saturday of each month, publish the Mueller *Front Porch Flyer*, and host social events. Meetings and other MNA events are publicized on [muellercommunity.com](http://muellercommunity.com). The MNA is governed by a 13-member steering committee that can be contacted at [steering@muellercommunity.com](mailto:steering@muellercommunity.com).

## ROMA and Catellus

In 1997, the City of Austin contracted with ROMA Design Group to conceptualize and coordinate Mueller's design guidelines. In 2002, after the *Mueller Design Book and Plan* were established, the City contracted

with Catellus to be Mueller's master developer. ROMA and Catellus have worked with the various Mueller stakeholder-organizations to abide by the *Mueller Design Book*. General inquiries to Catellus regarding the Mueller Redevelopment can be sent to [contactus@muelleraustin.com](mailto:contactus@muelleraustin.com).

## RMMA-PIAC

In 2000, the City convened the Robert Mueller Municipal Airport Plan and Implementation Commission (RMMA-PIAC), a group of Austinites charged with keeping the Austin City Council apprised of Mueller's progress. The commission meets monthly, and brings together a variety of stakeholders in a lively discussion. If you would like to attend the RMMA-PIAC's meetings or learn more about the greater Mueller community, please consider joining

the RMMA-PIAC's Yahoo Group at [groups.yahoo.com/group/mueller\\_redevelopment](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/mueller_redevelopment).

## Mueller Community Association

The Mueller Community Association was created to both maintain the amenities at the Mueller Redevelopment and manage the community governance functions set forth in recorded covenants of Mueller. Alliance Association Management was selected to manage the operations of the Mueller Community Association. Alliance collects dues from property owners and administrates the policies of the Mueller Community Association. Alliance's primary representative to Mueller stakeholders is Jennifer Harvey, who serves as the Mueller Community Manager. She can be reached at [jharvey@allianceonline.net](mailto:jharvey@allianceonline.net).

## MNA Grows from Coffeehouse Roots, continued from front cover

### Name

Although the group has always gone by the name Mueller Neighborhood Association, it was not until May 2008 that bylaws were put in place. A steering committee and officers were elected in June 2008, and in July, MNA was registered as a non-profit. The steering committee members are Grant Fisher (Chair), Drew Harris (Vice

Chair), Karen Zabreznik (Secretary), Dusty Harshman (Treasurer), Elizabeth Butman, Kerry Fisher, Bobby Gierisch, John Guest, Jerry Perkins, Wilson Robertson, Rod Ruoff, Cliff Spinac, and Kim Wine.

### Goals

The MNA is a non-profit, non-partisan organization within which the residents of the neighborhood can promote their common interests with regard to preserving and enhancing

the quality of life, safety, residential characteristics, and property values of their neighborhood in particular, and in all neighborhoods generally.

### Join

Any person residing within the neighborhood can become a voting member of the MNA by paying the \$10 annual dues. If paid now, dues will be good through the end of 2009, providing over a year's membership benefits. Get involved!

Going forward, this column will provide highlights of the MNA meetings since the previous newsletter. All MNA meeting minutes and steering committee minutes are available on [muellercommunity.com](http://muellercommunity.com) in the Pages section for your review.

## The Front Porch Flyer is presented by the following generous underwriters:

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