

## New Development Underway on Lamar

For many years, the property at 5117 North Lamar has been a vacant lot overgrown with weeds, decorated by vandals, and occasionally occupied by vagrants. Deacon Shields and Luke Thompson with Ely Properties (long-time owners of the vacant lot) have spent years trying to convince investors to build a fast-food franchise (with drive thru) on this location, but fortunately, that is not what is being built on this very prime real estate.



An artist's depiction of the future mixed-use development at 5117 North Lamar. The wide sidewalks, trees, and pedestrian-friendly street design are all requirements of Austin's design standards.

Instead, construction is now underway on a new mixed-use development. This new development will primarily consist of apartments, aimed at college students who can conveniently take advantage of the many city busses that stop at 51st and Lamar, or the U.T. Shuttles that stop at the Intramural Fields. One or two small businesses will also occupy the 2,692 square feet of retail space on the first floor facing Lamar. Ample parking for the structure will be placed underground below the building (hence the giant hole they're digging right now).

Demand for these apartments is clearly abundant -- according to their website ([www.TexanNorthCampus.com](http://www.TexanNorthCampus.com)), even though the ground is barely broken, all of the apartments have already been pre-leased for the fall.

### Meet the Principals at April 4th Meeting

If you have young children, you are very fortunate to live in Northfield. Our two local elementary schools, Ridgetop and Reilly, have been recognized as two of the best schools in the city. If you would like to learn more about these excellent schools, or if you have questions about Austin education in general, then come meet Anna Garza, Principal of Reilly, and Joaquin Gloria, Principal of Ridgetop. They will talk to us about the great things going on at our neighborhood schools, and how parents and neighbors can be more involved with our local schools.

**April 4th, 7:00 p.m. ~ Dayspring Chapel ~ 5500 Avenue G**

### NNA Officer Elections

Officer elections will be held at the April 4th meeting. Nominees (so far) are:

President: Mike Wong  
Vice President: VACANT  
Treasurer: Annie Ervin  
Secretary: John Jackson & Lisa Wright  
Newsletter Editor: VACANT  
Newsletter Distribution: VACANT  
Keeper of the Green: Cindy Black  
Web Master: Lisa Wright

Neighbors interested in serving the neighborhood as an officer of the NNA are encouraged to attend the April 4th meeting.

# Northfield Neighborhood Watch Program (NWP) Report - Spring 2011

by Scott Johnson, Coordinator, Northfield Neighborhood Watch, 389-2250 (H)

If there are no lights left on inside/outside your house, no vehicle in the driveway or no music playing then you are more likely to be a target of crime. Make a smarter choice by developing a simple plan that gives the appearance of activity while you are away. Also, coordinate with a neighbor and do not leave any items of value outside.

Equip all doors with a dead-bolt lock and use 3" inch screws to secure them.

Also, if your house desperately needs painting, a new roof, has cracked windows, a poorly maintained landscape or items are strewn across your property this, according to APD, can make it more likely that your property will be targeted by criminals. Please help our neighborhood by maintaining your house.

Call 911 immediately when you see suspicious activity such as a vehicle that moves slowly down the street with two or more occupants or circles the block looking at each house. When calling 911 please give as much detail in your description as possible to help APD prevent crime. Use your camera or the camera feature of your cell phone to document suspicious activity.

If you know a neighbor is out of town or at work during the day and an unidentified vehicle is parked there with people entering the home and/or items being removed from the house get the license plate number and call 911.

Please report all crime to APD. Please keep serial numbers for all electronic items in a secure place. Without them the chance of recovering these items is very low.

## NWP Update:

Vehicle burglaries occurred in Feb. on W. 55th-1/2 St. and Link Ave. One or more of the vehicles left their doors open.

Bicycles are being stolen all over Austin and some have been stolen in Northfield when they are left outside. Even bikes locked with a coil or other basic lock can be easily stolen. Please keep items of value inside. By making poor decisions you may be inviting criminals into our neighborhood and threatening the property of others as well.

If you have construction tools in your truck there is an increasing likelihood that your tools will be targeted by criminals. Please secure them or bring them inside.

Re: Securing against identity theft please visit: <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/microsites/idtheft/index.html>

For more information on Northfield's NWP and/or to join our Yahoo Group site please go to:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/northfieldwatch> or call Scott Johnson at (512) 389-2250 (H).

Our new APD District Rep. is Officer Steven Gordon. Please contact him for advice and to share info at [steven.gordon@ci.austin.tx.us](mailto:steven.gordon@ci.austin.tx.us) or 974-5592 (O).

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## New pub to open on The Strip

Jessica and Mike Sanders have purchased the property at 207 E. 53rd Street, and are in the process of renovating the space to make another neighborhood pub. Celebrated neighborhood architects Rick and Cindy Black were hired to give the building a much-needed facelift. Hopefully this will be as successful and neighborhood friendly as the Tigress on North Loop, which has been getting rave reviews recently as one of the best little hang-outs in the city. Paradoxically, one of the things people love about the Tigress is the small cozy atmosphere, but at the same time, they say that you must get there early or it gets too crowded. Clearly there is demand for little neighborhood pubs like this.

Mike and Jessica's new pub on 53rd will be called "Drink.Well." Jessica and Mike hope to cultivate a warm, "come as you are" atmosphere that adds value and blends well with the overall vibe in North Loop. To complement the drinks they serve, they'll offer a food menu of sandwiches, burgers, and snacks. With 14 parking spaces, Drink.Well. will be well within the city's parking requirements, but Mike and Jessica will install bike racks, arrange for overflow parking, and encourage patrons to walk rather than drive.

Look for Drink.Well. to open in early summer.

## Springtime in the Green

by Cindy Black, Keeper of the Green

This year the evolution from winter to spring has been quite dramatic. The night of **February 3rd** brought a blanket of powdery snow, and three year old JR and I padded across Bruning in the morning to make some **snowmen in the Green**. Would you believe that the following weekend four volunteers were working in beautiful 60-degree weather to cut back and mulch the butterfly garden? Thanks to **Teresa Anderson, Ethan Glawe, Tom Dydek,** and **Rudy Constante** for helping out that day! And a big thank you to **Lotte Vehko** for bringing a truckload of mulch to the Green earlier that week.

In the following weeks, **Louis Redden** pruned all of our 8-year old trees, encouraging growth for spring. Thanks Louis for taking on this tremendous task, as well as donating a truckload of compost to spread around the redbuds!

Luckily, none of our plants were lost to the freeze, and we started to see fresh green buds just in time for our fourth annual 'It's My **Park Day**' on March 5th. Thanks so much to **Ethan, Todd Alvey, Dakota Greenfield, George, Mark & Dana Black** for turning out despite the cold and rain. We were all glad that it turned into a clear, sunny day by noon! Thanks **Teresa** for donating new plants for the garden!

Finally, the temporary **closure of Bruning Avenue** in May will create of a safer, quieter and more pleasant experience at Bruning Green. I hope to see more neighbors enjoying the Green this summer!

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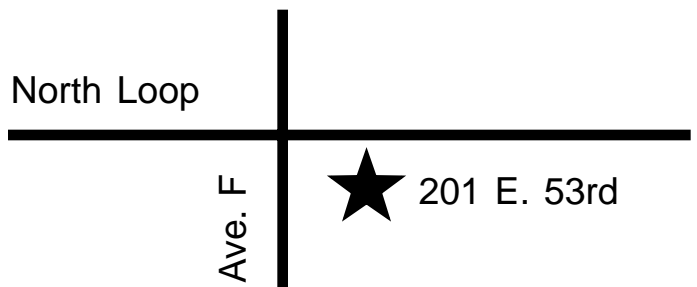


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## NORTH LOOP CAR WASH



## Bruning Avenue to be closed

by Sebastian Wren

The North Loop Neighborhood Planning Team has been working with staff from the City of Austin and with stakeholders from other neighborhood groups in Ridgetop and Hyde Park to address concerns raised by the installation of stoplights along 51st Street from Duval to Airport Boulevard. Traffic back-ups along 51st Street, aggressive driving at the intersection, and excessive traffic speed (trying to catch a light or speeding through the intersection) are all concerns that have been raised.

The City and the neighborhood stakeholders believe that closing Bruning Avenue might alleviate some of these problems. Turning the confusing 5-way intersection at 51st Street and Duval into a more standard 4-way intersection will decrease the wait time and congestion at the stop light, decrease confusion for bicycles and pedestrians, and hopefully increase safety.

The North Loop Neighborhood Plan, adopted almost 10 years ago, included a plan to close Bruning Avenue for many of these same reasons. The installation of the traffic light at 51st and Duval combined with the lights at Clarkson and the safety measures taken at the rail crossing closer to Airport have exacerbated the problems to the point where the City now recognizes the wisdom of the plan proposed by the neighborhood in 2002.

As a test, the city has agreed to temporarily close Bruning Avenue to through traffic. Residents in the area will still be able to access their homes through north-south and east-west streets, but Bruning would be closed at each end.

Gary Schatz, Assistant Director of the Department of Transportation for the City of Austin, organized a community meeting on Thursday March 10th to share plans and gather feedback from the community. Schatz brought a dozen representatives from the police and emergency services, Capital Metro, Solid Waste Services, and other stakeholders to describe the potential impact of planned changes both to Bruning and to 51st Street signalization. All of the proposed changes are designed to both increase safety, decrease confusion, and improve traffic flow along 51st Street.

Unfortunately, while neighbors from Northfield and Ridgetop entered the meeting well informed, neighbors to the south in Hyde Park came into the meeting confused and frustrated. Many of the Hyde Park residents present objected to the closure of Bruning Avenue saying that they used Bruning as a cut-through to quickly drive from their homes in Hyde Park

**Continued on Page 5**

## Join the Neighborhood Discussion On Line

*Do you really know what is going on in your own neighborhood?*

If you don't like feeling left out, just join the Northfield Neighborhood Association Discussion List (NNADL).

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## Bruning Avenue (continued from page 4)

to Airport Boulevard without having to deal with traffic delays on the arterial streets. Some said the inconvenience of closing Bruning would be unreasonable given that they make the trip along Bruning as many as 10 times per day. While some representatives from Hyde Park had been involved in meetings with Gary Schatz for months, the Hyde Park residents in attendance on March 10th were adamant that they were not adequately informed of plans. Those complaints dominated the meeting well into the night, so little time was left to answer questions or provide city staff with guidance and feedback moving forward.

However, Schatz' plan is to only close Bruning Avenue temporarily for now, so there is more opportunity to fine-tune actions and address concerns as they arise. If the closure of Bruning has the desired effects, then the city may be willing to permanently close Bruning to through traffic, and may even work with the neighborhood in the future to create a bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly promenade. Schatz encouraged neighbors to call 3-1-1 with any concerns as the City moves forward with congestion and safety improvements along 51st Street.

After the March 10th meeting, members of the North Loop Neighborhood Planning Team, Northfield Neighborhood Association, and Ridgetop Neighborhood Association wrote public letters commending and thanking Gary Schatz for his leadership and communications through countless e-mails, phone calls, and after-hours meetings to keep concerned neighbors informed and listen to citizen concerns.

## What do you know about Northfield History?

The history of the Northfield area is fascinating. (At least we think it is.) If you have a good story about the neighborhood or an old picture of your house or other sites in and around Northfield, we would love to add it to our collection. We will carefully scan your artifact and return it to you, and the photo or document will be put on the History of Northfield website with grateful thanks to you for generously sharing your historical treasure.

Please Contact Sebastian Wren at 459-4144 or [swren@gmail.com](mailto:swren@gmail.com)



70 years after this photo, the old "Doc" Haile airport hangar still stands at the corner of 56th & Ave. F

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## Neighborliness in Northfield

by Scott Johnson

Getting to know your neighbors benefits you, the Northfield Community and our Neighborhood Watch Program (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/northfieldwatch/>). So please put down the TV remote or the computer mouse and get to it.

When you throw a house or lawn party please invite all of your immediate neighbors to it. This should already be second nature. They will hopefully return the favor to you. Also, if your party lasts until after bed time your neighbors will know you are having a party so there will be more

understanding whether they ask you to lower the noise level or not.

Also, by knowing your neighbors better you can tell them about any construction projects you may be starting so they can plan for the noise/falling debris and may be more tolerant of it. Getting to know you neighbors and effectively communicating with them demonstrates respect.

Please remember, some neighbors will not speak up if your dog is left outside to bark at all hours or your musical group is practicing inside so it is up to you to use common sense while remembering our small lot sizes in order to live in harmony with them.

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# Why is Northfield called Northfield?

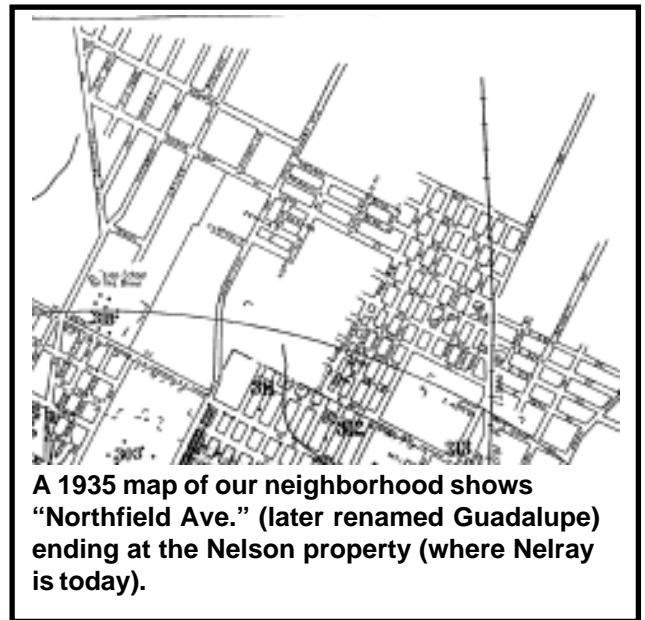
By Ethan Glawe

Why was the name “Northfield” chosen to describe the neighborhoods contained within the present neighborhood association boundaries? Why do official documents list our homes as being in Northfield, The Highlands, Murray Place, and Koenig Place? In order to attempt to answer this question it is helpful to go back in time and trace the step by step development of the area.

Maps from the early 1920’s show a very different picture. Of the four present-day NA boundaries, only Lamar existed. Koenig Ln, Airport Blvd, and 51st St were absent, as were key roads Guadalupe and North Loop. The area was open land with very few trees and was well to the north of the city limits. Lamar was the main route to Dallas (I-35 was decades away) and two other key roads led to the north. Cameron Rd was one of them and the other was Fiskville Road. The Fiskville road led from the vanishing historic farming community of Fiskville (located near present day Lamar/Payton Gin area) south along a route which today is covered largely by the Interstate. Only broken segments of this historic road remain, including a small portion in our neighborhood. This early route crossed the railroad tracks and took a diagonal cut through an existing (but still developing) grid of streets known as The Highlands and connected to Duval at present day 51st St, the route continuing to town via Duval. This diagonal section of the Fiskville Road (later renamed Bruning Av) likely existed before The Highlands came about. The Highlands subdivision was characterized by a grid-like pattern of streets forming 48 short rectangular blocks. Alleys running north-south cut through each block much in the same way that alleys cut through the blocks of Hyde Park. Twelve of these blocks south of present day 51st St now fall under the Hyde Park NA, though they are still officially referred to by the original “Highlands” name. Most of the original street names of the Highlands were later changed. Only Eilers, Martin, Evans, and Duval retained their original names.

By the mid 1930’s a wave of significant growth occurred. North Loop was extended east of Lamar and went across open land to connect with Satsuma St (present day 53rd) at Prairie Av (now Ave F) in the Highlands. A new subdivision called Northfield Acres began developing off this new stretch of North Loop and eventually contained Franklin, Nelray, Chesterfield, and Northfield Ave (later renamed Guadalupe). This new area linked to the Highlands via North Loop and Link Av and went no further north than Nelray. Link Av was a dividing line with houses on the east side of the street being in the Highlands, houses on the west being in Northfield. Around that time Northfield Av was extended south and the Murray Place subdivision was laid out on land owned by the Murray family just south of North Loop and east of Lamar. It contained short segments of Zennia, Genard, Huisache, and Charles (later became a part of 51st). Adjoining tracts of land owned by H.F. Murray were later developed into Koenig Place and the Brownstone Apartments. By decade’s end Guadalupe was extended north of 45th St across the State Dairy Tract connecting with Northfield Av in Murray Place and the city limits moved north to take in much of the rapidly developing area.

The early to mid 1940’s brought further changes. 51st St was constructed from Prairie Av (Ave F) west to Lamar. The short



**A 1935 map of our neighborhood shows “Northfield Ave.” (later renamed Guadalupe) ending at the Nelson property (where Nelray is today).**

**Continued on Page 8**

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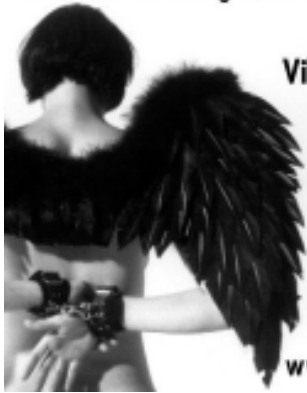
## History of Northfield (Continued from Page 7)

diagonal stretch of Fiskville Road was renamed Bruning Av and all of the east-west street names in the Highlands were converted to numbered streets. Prairie, Heights Av, and Capitol Av became Ave's F, G, and H. "Doc" Haile had opened his airfield at the northern end of Prairie Av (where Howard's Nursery used to be) in 1939 and began giving flying lessons using a small fleet of aircraft coinciding with WWII. Construction began on State Highway 29 (Airport Blvd) and Northfield Av was renamed Guadalupe. Zennia and Genard were continued east into a new subdivision called Koenig Place (the eastern-most Murray tract) to the newly added Leralynn St. Northfield added one-block segments of 55th, 55th ½, and 56th Streets between Guadalupe and Chesterfield.

By 1950 Airport Blvd was completed, though much of the section running next to the Highlands wouldn't be urbanized until the early 60's. By 1952 Koenig Ln was extended east of Lamar to the emerging Skyview subdivision. By 1953 construction of the Interregional Hgy (I-35) had started and the eventual dismantling of the old Fiskville Rd route commenced. Once finished, Lamar would lose it's designation as a US Highway but would continue to serve as a business route into the city. In 1953-54 Link Av was extended north and two extra blocks of 55th and 55th ½ were added, the final phase of new street construction within the present NA boundaries. In the mid 1950's DPS constructed it's sprawling headquarters and by 1960 Koenig Lane was pushed east across the tracks to connect with Hgy 290 E.

The effort to gather historic information pertaining to our neighborhood is an ongoing project. Future articles and additions/revisions to our website are possible. Comments and any other items of historic interest may be submitted by email to ethanglawe@yahoo.com.

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An aerial photograph taken above the old Haile Airport in the early 1940's shows the two hangars and landing strips (in fields) where Koenig Lane and Ave. F exist today. View is southeast with railroad tracks and Airport Blvd visible on left. Haile Airport continued to operate until around 1950 on land owned by the Campbell family, eventually making way for Koenig Lane, Skyview, and part of Highland Mall.

## NORTHFIELD NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

### MEETING DATES

The NNA meets on the First Monday of each month (except holidays) at 7:00 p.m. at the the Dayspring Chapel, Corner of Ave. G & 55th

**Monday April 4**

**Monday May 2**

**Monday June 6**

**Monday July 11**

### ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

**President:** Mike Wong

**Vice-President:** Will Bown

**Treasurer:** Annie Ervin

**Secretary:** John Jackson

**Web Master:** Lisa Wright

**Keeper of the Green:** Cindy Black

**Newsletter Distribution:** Jan Seward & Mary Patrick

**Newsletter Editor:** Nobody (and this may be the last one)

### WEBSITE

[www.northfieldna.org](http://www.northfieldna.org)

### PO BOX

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