



WootenNews

Serving the Wooten Community

Join the Association!

Wooten Neighborhood Association is open to all that live or work within Wooten Neighborhood.

To join our association, scroll to the end of the newsletter.

Welcome 2026!



As we start the new year and hope for good things ahead, your officers

and the association look back on what we achieved last year. In 2025, WNA stabilized and built for the future. We brought back the newsletter, organized our documents in one place, grew our membership, and encouraged more people to get involved. We're happy to say we reached those goals.

We adopted technology, such as Bitwarden password manager, Zeffy, and Google Workspace, to better manage the association and increase value. We brought back the newsletter and redesigned the website (to learn more, read the great article written by our Vice-President). We also started streaming our meetings!

We continued bringing our

community together. We now hold meetings every month instead of every other month.

We also kept the quarterly Wootenannie tradition going. (Check out the article by our Communication Chair for the latest recap of this event!) We launched the Halloween Decorating and Treat Map and continued the Holiday Decoration contest. We updated our logos and brand. None of this would have been possible without the members' support, as the dues paid and sponsorships have helped us achieve our goals.

In 2026, we will continue to focus on sustainability and begin transitioning officers, since most of our team will be up for re-election this year!

In this newsletter you can expect:

Neighborhood Developments

Website Updates!

Nature Watch

Wooten School Updates

Wooten in the Holiday Spirit

Doggo of the Newsletter

Save the Date: Parks Day

Association Dates and Activities

WNPCT: Advocacy and Community Engagement

Wooten Neighborhood Plan Contact Team (WNPCT) provides input on city planning priorities and recommends amendments to city staff, specifically in rezoning cases. The team seeks representation from property owners, residential renters, business owners, and any neighborhood members who rent or own property in Wooten. The contact team advocates for our neighborhood, ensuring our interests are represented, especially if neighborhood-based intervention is necessary.

There are no membership dues. The team meets on the first Monday of each month, typically at a local eating establishment.

The team has four positions: chairman, vice chairman, secretary, and attendance keeper.

The website provides more information, including contact information and team activities.

Community-Centered Developments: What's going on in Wooten

Toyota Dealer

The Wooten Neighborhood Plan Contact Team is preparing an official response to the rezoning request, and we have several key concerns, including the management of semitruck and delivery traffic, nuisance and light control measures, and parking. Please see the meeting minutes from the most recent WNA or WNPCT minutes for more details or join us at our next meeting! Details on the last page.

Officer Election

Two positions were up for election in the team: Attendance Keeper and Vice Chair. These two positions were held by Brian Mater (Attendance Keeper) and Joe Karnavas (Vice Chair). Both positions were filled again by the current officers.



New Look, Same Great Neighbors: Explore Our Updated Site

The Wooten Neighborhood Association is welcoming everyone online. We're excited to share that our new website is now live. It's like our community's digital front porch, where you can stop by anytime for news, upcoming events, helpful resources, and ways to connect with your neighbors. Whether you've lived here for years, just moved in, or simply want to get involved, this site is for you.

The officers of the Wooten Neighborhood Association are happy to announce our new [website](#). This site is a central hub to help residents stay informed, connected, and involved. You'll find current news, a community calendar, important updates, and easy access to neighborhood resources, all in one place. Whether you want to check out upcoming events, read meeting notes, or find ways to participate, the website makes it simple to stay updated.

Built with residents in mind, the new website is simple to navigate and accessible from any device. It also creates new opportunities for communication and collaboration, helping neighbors share information and strengthen our sense of community. We encourage everyone to visit the site, explore its features, and check back often to stay informed of all neighborhood happenings.

The website was created with help from many community members, from branding to building the new site. Whether residents are new, long-time, or have moved away, their support shows the strong love for our neighborhood and made this website possible.

Let us know what you think!

Nature Watch

By Paul DiFore



[A study published in 2019](#) shocked Americans when it revealed that we had lost more than **3 billion breeding birds** in the last half century. Habitat loss is the main driver of such steep declines, particularly in grassland birds. However, there are other factors much closer to home – literally – that you can address by making simple changes to your daily life.

I hope that you'll take a moment to engage on these three important issues to promote bird conservation and make Wooten and our city safer for our non-human neighbors.

Prevent window collisions.

Birds have trouble with glass. Sometimes it's so transparent that they can't see it. Most of the time, the issue is reflectivity: that is, they see vegetation reflected in the window and attempt to fly there. The impact always stuns them and often kills them.

This is an issue that cities across the country are mitigating through working with building owners; Austin, in fact, is leading the charge by

considering [code amendments](#) to require bird-friendly glass on certain new buildings, which I'm hopeful District 4 will support.

Your house is just as important, and it's easy to reduce the risk of birds crashing into your windows. Apply patterned stickers (like those from [FeatherFriendly](#)) to help birds distinguish glass from natural surroundings.

Keep your cat indoors.

We love our cats, and they can't help themselves – they love to play, and their instinct is to be a natural predator. But they are a real problem for local bird populations. By [some estimates](#), they kill more than 2.4 billion birds in the U.S. annually. You can help by simply keeping your cat indoors!

Easy on the pesticides.

These days, across our neighborhood, I'm encouraged to see folks transitioning from the old school green lawns that require lots of water and treatment to more native landscapes (Wooten Park, for example, has a lovely native garden!). Leaning into this trend will be suitable for bugs and birds alike. The [chemicals and other poisons](#) we put into the environment have toxic ripple effects throughout our local ecosystem – so please be thoughtful with your yard!

For more resources, look no further than our local chapter of the Audubon Society – Travis Audubon, which promotes [bird-friendly communities](#) here and across Central Texas.

Platinum Sponsors





Wooten Schools Update

Austin ISD School Consolidation Plan

In early October, the Austin Independent School District (ISD) released a proposed plan for school consolidations and district-wide boundary changes. As part of this plan, Austin ISD intends to close 13 schools and modify boundaries for others. These changes are driven by declining enrollment and a resulting budget deficit.

After extensive feedback from the neighborhood and concerned parents, Austin ISD decided to keep Wooten a neighborhood school and to keep some current English/ESL students in temporary programs, rather than fully non-zoning it as initially proposed. Wooten will still become a dual-language campus, incorporating Reilly Elementary's Spanish dual-language program and adding a Mandarin dual-language program.

Welcome back, Wooten students!

After being away for over a year, the Wooten students and teachers returned to their new and improved school on January 6th! Wooten neighbors helped teachers unload and unpack on January 5th, the day before classes started. A big thanks to Claire Simmons and Redeemer for organizing the volunteers. Over 30 neighbors helped Wooten teachers in addition to the Redeemers volunteers.

An open house was held on January 16. Please see [Wooten Website](#) for additional photos and a summary of the event.



Wooten in the Holiday Spirit

Wootenanny

On Monday evening, Dec. 8, a couple dozen Woos down in Woo(ten)ville gathered at the Nosh & Bevvy pub on Burnet Rd. for their annual holiday "Wootenanny." A fun and funny term coined by longtime resident, Hannah, these gatherings have been introducing neighbors to their newest friends for at least the last ten years.

We greeted familiar friendly faces, and said hello to new neighbors and first-timers as well. Rick brought the "Baby Cheeses" and it was agreed that Vassaly had the best Christmas sweater of the night. Neighbors debated who would win the Holiday Decorating Contest as they toasted the season. And hearty congratulations to Carrie for taking the top prize this year!

Four times a year, the Wooten Neighborhood Association (WNA) supplants its monthly meetings with a strictly social event to foster community and have some fun. It's one of several activities within the neighborhood designed to bring Wootenites together. Current WNA president Sandra Menjivar-Suddeath says the value of the Wootenannies can go well beyond just another evening out: "The holidays can be a lonely or depressing time. Having a chance to meet your neighbors in real life can be so rewarding."

Other WNA community-building events in the past have included the Cocoa and Carols sing-along, the Fourth of July musical parade around Wooten Park, the semi-annual It's My Park Day events, block parties and more. The next Wootenanny will be in the spring.



DID YOU KNOW?

According to Wikipedia, the term "hootenanny" was coined in the Appalachian area of the United States in the early 1900s and was a placeholder for something that didn't have an official name. Synonyms included "thingamajig" and "whatchamacallit."

The first use of the word to describe an event was documented by Pete Seeger in 1941, who reported that a political club voted to use it to describe their musical fundraisers. It just barely beat out the term "wingding" which is defined by Merriam Webster as "a wild, lively or lavish party."



Doggo of the Newsletter

In Memoriam: Sophia

Usually, we introduce you to a current resident dog, but this time, we want to honor Sophia, a black lab mix who was part of our neighborhood for 12 years. If you walked in the mornings, you probably saw Sophia greeting everyone she met. She loved meeting other dogs and getting attention from people. Besides her daily walks, Sophia joined playgroups, walked with other dogs, and made many friends here. It feels right to celebrate her life in this newsletter. Her mom, Sandra, shares some memories of this sweet pup and the difference she made.

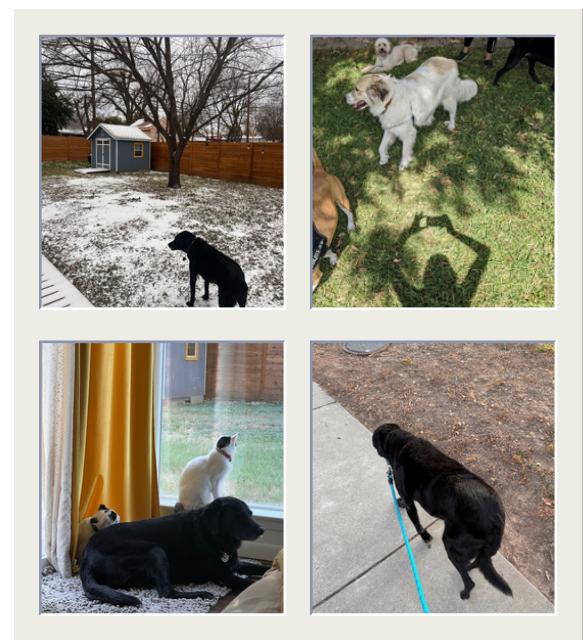
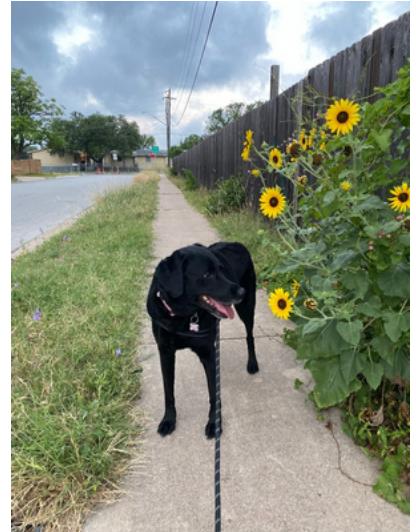
Since moving to Wooten, my mornings have followed the same routine. I'd wake up, put on my glasses, change into walking clothes, and grab the leash. If I wasn't up by 7 am, Sophia's wet nose would nudge me until I got out of bed or she'd change her strategy by jumping on the bed to bother my husband—licking, nudging, or making him move—until he woke me up.

We'd start our walk on Fairfield Drive, and depending on her mood, head toward Ohlen or Kromer. At first, we walked three miles, then two, and near the end, about three-quarters of a mile. Those walks meant a lot to me and were a highlight of living in Wooten. They helped me explore the neighborhood. I got to see the beautifully decorated house on Polar and Beckett during the holidays, the house on St. Carlos with its decorations during COVID, neighbors tending the park beds, and all the changes in the houses around us.

Those walks also gave me the chance to meet many wonderful neighbors and hear what was happening in their lives, along with neighborhood concerns—like why some people walk their dogs off-leash at the park. These connections led me to get involved in the neighborhood association.

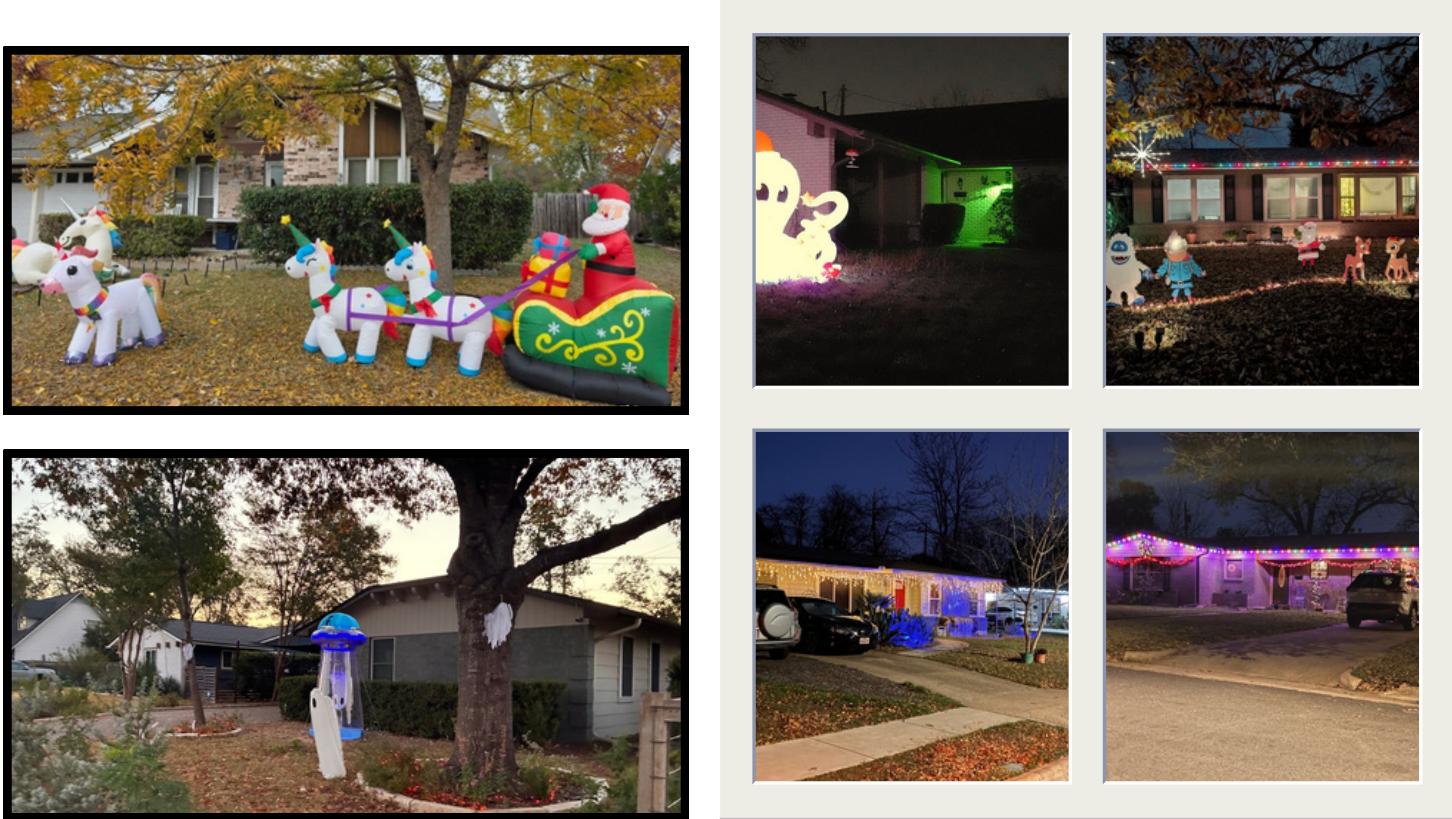
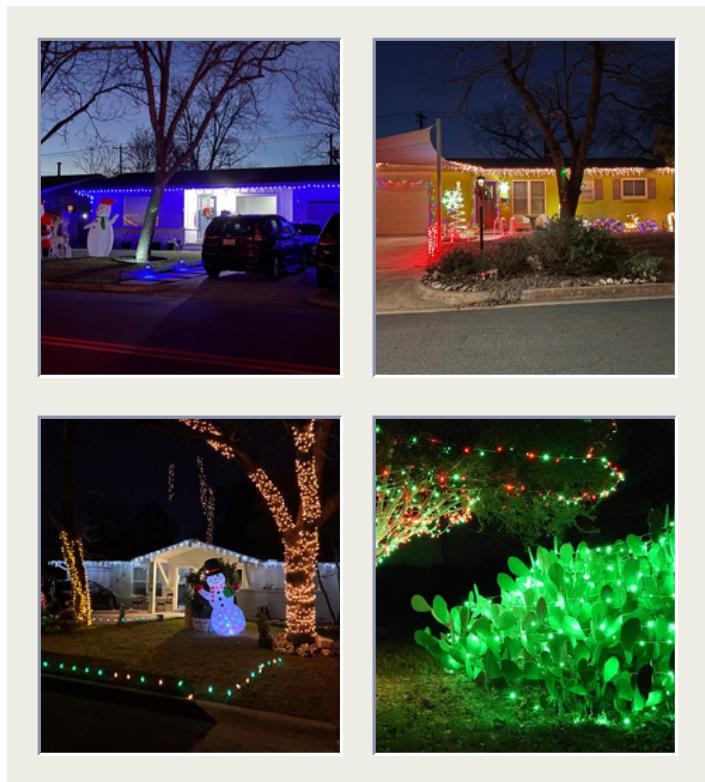
Her love of dogs led me to join doggy playgroups that were organized by neighbors. Even though she didn't play as much, she enjoyed watching the others and being the elder statesman, giving out 'vibes'.

Sophia was a wonderful dog. She loved her three cat siblings, her people, water (even the white stuff), and food. A few months before her 14th birthday, we said good bye to her. We miss her very much, especially during our morning walks now.



Decorations, Decorations!

Whether its Halloween, Hanukkah, or Christmas, our neighborhood loves decorating! Here are some of our favorite neighborhood decorations we saw over the past few months!





SAVE THE DATE

Our next **It's Your Park Day** is right around the corner.

We'll be taking care of our lovely park on March 7th.

More details to come!

FIND US ONLINE!



WOOTENNA.COM



WOOTENATX



WOOTEN--AUSTIN--TX



Upcoming Neighborhood Meetings

All neighbors and businesses are welcome to participate! We have moved to a **monthly** meeting schedule for both meetings. Neighborhood meetings are streamed.

Wooten Planning Neighborhood Contact Team Meeting

- February 1, 2026
- Time: 7:00 - 8:30 pm
- Location: Nosh and Bevvy , 8440 Burnet Rd #100, Austin, TX 78757

Wooten Neighborhood Meeting

- February 8, 2026
- Time: 7:00 - 8:30 pm
- Location: Redeemer Lutheran School 500 W Anderson Ln., Austin, TX 78757 or Stream It: [Link](#)

Thank you for reading!

BECOME A MEMBER

Be a part of our inspiring mission to inform, connect, and beautify our community. Memberships are just **\$5** per person per year.

Submit the form to the right or Pay online via Zeffy: [WNA Membership Sign Up](#)

BECOME A SPONSOR

Sponsors support the community and help sustain the association and create events that connect our neighborhood.

Participants will receive complimentary advertising in our quarterly newsletter, on our sponsorship page, and on our social media channels. Learn more on our website: [Sponsorship Program](#).

Submit the form to the right or Pay online via Zeffy: [WNA Sponsorship](#)

SUPPORT OUR PARKS

Supporting our Park through donations is a wonderful way to contribute to the well-being of our community and the environment.

Submit the form to the right or Pay online via Zeffy: [Park Fund](#)

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO WNA AND MAIL TO:

P.O. Box 10171
Austin, TX 78766



WOOTEN NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP FORM

Annual Membership - \$5

Extra Donation - \$_____

Park Fund - \$_____

WNA Sponsorship:

Bronze - \$250 **Silver - \$450**

Gold - \$600 **Platinum - \$1000**

Name: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Company Name: _____