

UNIT NEWS

An annual newsletter published by the Tech Terrace UNIT Neighborhood Association

Fall 2020

Published by The Neighborhood Association serving the community bound by University, Nineteenth Street, Indiana and Thirty-fourth Streets, Lubbock Texas

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A message from the President

Welcome to the 2020 fall issue of the UNIT News. I am so very honored to serve as the next president of this organization, I have huge shoes to fill following Grant. A little background on me... I am Maegan Moore and I have had a love affair with the Tech Terrace neighborhood for as long as I can remember. I grew up in Plainview and have been attending the annual Tech Terrace holiday home tour for years with my mom and I walked the neighborhood while attending Texas Tech dreaming of owning a house here someday.

techterraceunit.org

I moved to Houston after graduation to work in the food & beverage industry for the Astros (go 'Stros), Rockets and Texans. I lived there 5 years and transferred with my job to Dallas. After living a couple years in Dallas, I was itching to get back to West Texas and knew exactly where I was going to look for a house. I found the perfect house on 33rd for me and my son Davis, now 5, who is in Kindergarten at Roscoe Wilson. I run almost every day in our neighborhood, it's my happy place. I love looking at all of the houses and their individual character and love the friendly people who reside in them. I currently work as the VP of Sales for a national food brokerage, food and houses are my love language. I enjoy spending my free time with Davis, traveling, being creative and working on our house. I am very passionate about this magical neighborhood and look forward to working hard to make a difference. I am so excited about the upcoming Tour de Dance event, coordinated by our very own Melissa Grimes on September 26th. It is the first event of its kind in our community that will take the audience on a scavenger hunt around our neighborhood while being entertained with music and dance performances by Flatlands Dance Theater. (flatlandsdance.org/tour-de-dance) Please don't hesitate to reach out with anything you need, hopefully we can host our next association meeting in person so I can meet everyone face to face. Until then here is a virtual fist bump, stay healthy neighbors!

Maegan Moore

Sadly, due to the uncertainty of COVID-19, the Holiday Home Tour and Afterglow have been shelved until next year. We apologize for the inconvenience.

Dr. Clint Boal, Profiler of Unique Neighborhood Winged Residents



Dr. Clint Boal & Sarah Fonville at work in Wagner Park

The man attired in the canvas hat and shorts with a camera dangling from his shoulder encountered standing stock-still in Tech Terrace and Wagner Park, with his head craned back and his arms held up to support a pair of binoculars aimed intently above at the sky or a tree, will be Dr. Clint Boal, of TTU. The focus of his rapt attention are the gray birds soaring high aloft on thermal currents arising over the two parks, nesting in Cottonwood, Elm or Locust trees, or perched high on dead branches which provide ideal lookout points. Dr. Boal is an ornithologist who, after joining the TTU Dept. of Natural Resources Management faculty in 2000, has banded and observed 40 to 60 Kites in Lubbock neighborhood parks.



Photo of Mississippi Kite by Dr. Boal

Mississippi Kites are classified as Birds of Prey, Dr. Boal explained, in the same category as Hawks, Eagles, Ospreys. At first glance Kites might look like White-winged Doves, because they seem to be the same color and size. Both are gray, but he said a Kite uniquely has “a dark grey upper body; light gray underbody; light gray head; black tail feathers

and wing feathers; and hard-to-see but distinctive red markings on their wing feathers, visible only when the wings are spread in flight.” He noted that compared with Doves, “Kites are larger, about 14 inches long, with a wingspan of over 2.5 feet/30 to 32 inches, and longer wing and tail feathers. They weigh less than you would expect – only 300 grams/10.5 oz.—due to their

extensive feathers and plumage.” Their heads are somewhat larger in proportion to their body than a Dove’s. When seen in profile, though, the hooked beaks of Kites immediately give their identity away as raptors. When seen flying overhead, Kites exhibit an aerodynamic silhouette. Kites are built for speed, because their diet consists mainly of live winged insects and small birds that they snatch out of the sky when in flight, or swoop upon unexpectedly, low to the ground.

Dr. Boal noted that their diet consists 70% of winged insects, such as locusts, cicadas and dragonflies. Beginning in the mid-morning, after the day has warmed up enough to provide thermal updrafts, you will see them soaring high in the sky, riding the upwardly spiraling air to seek winged insects and small birds flying aloft there. In the Tech Terrace neighborhood, with its two sprinkler-irrigated parks, Kites also are attracted to the dragonflies helicoptering over pooling surface water. When asked, “How fast can they fly?” he replied, “Too dang fast for me to get a well-focused picture! Really, we just don’t know.”

Seasonally, he has observed that Kites arrive to our area the last week of April. After summering here, they depart by September, and it is thought that they winter in northern countries of South America. After their arrival here each spring, Dr. Boal keeps watch on the breeding pairs that nest in the parks, those in residential areas that fly and forage over the parks, and all the non-breeders that roost nearby. Of nesting pairs this year, Dr. Boal counted 3 to 6 in Tech Terrace Park, but lately only 1, sometimes 2, in Wagner, a number that has dropped from the 4 he used to see each year. He attributed this decline to an increase in squirrels, which invade and take over nests, throwing out or eating unattended eggs and possibly nestlings. As for non-breeding birds, he has counted over 30 in Tech Terrace Park before, and noted that during spring or fall migration, “there can be far more.” He has discerned that Kites generally pair bond, but if one dies, the survivor will mate with another: “They lay one egg and raise one fledgling, and rarely, if there are sufficient food sources – two.”

Although Kites reach adult plumage the second summer after they hatch, Dr. Boal thinks they do not fully mature until about 5 to 7 years. So typically, he said, you will see more Kites hanging out together, perched in trees or on high power lines, than there are nesting pairs among them. He noted that they are unusual in the Raptor world because, “They are social and like to nest in close proximity, roost, and then go hunting for insects together.

To sustain Kites in our neighborhood, Dr. Boal advises to give them space: “Mississippi Kites typically are not aggressive, but if venturing too close to the site/trees where their nests are sited, they may swoop down low to startle intruders; and very rarely, strike.” As Kites like to nest in mature Elm, Locust and Cottonwood trees which already are present in Tech Terrace and Wagner Parks, it might encourage them to return annually if we do what we can to maintain and replace such trees when necessary.

The TTUNITNA will be sponsoring an outdoor event next summer which will feature Dr. Boal as keynote guest speaker and urban wildlife expert. Check our website for updates.

Community Contact List

On page 4 is a list of city resources to contact when the need arises. If you see something that is amiss (suspicious activity, dogs off leash, trash in yards, dangerous drunken behavior, etc.) please do report it and share it. The call contact list is useful for notifying the police and city agencies. There is also our *Facebook* page and the *Nextdoor* blog where neighbors share information as well.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Texas Tech is taking social distancing seriously. If you see a large student gathering that is sponsored by a sorority or frat, the Center for Campus Life wants to know! Contact them at campuslife@ttu.edu

2020 Census Count

The census has been extended to September 30th. Each person counted is worth \$1,578 in federal funds allotted to our district based on population. That’s almost \$16,000 over 10 years! It is crucial that everyone, especially Tech students, participate in the census. It can be done quickly on-line and it is strictly confidential. The information is restricted for 72 years.

LP&L Mural Project

The McCollough Sub-station Mural Project is still on track. COVID-19 has played a role in its delay. In the meantime, Lubbock Power & Light and Texas Tech are squaring away some legal details that when resolved, we should be ready go, pending the pandemic. The teachers at Hutchinson Middle School and faculty at Tech are on standby and ready

to go. I want to thank Professor Andrew Martin at Tech’s school of Art, Principal Heidi Dye, Art Teachers Stephen Puente and Jessica Borkenhagen at Hutch for their patience and perseverance on this project.

UNIT Meeting Dates

The Tech Terrace UNIT Neighborhood Association meets each quarter. They occur on the third Thursday of the first month of the quarter. Our meetings are held at Forrest Heights United Methodist Church 3007 33rd Street. Our meetings are open to the public and usually last an hour. We cover a variety of topics that are germane to our community.

- ✓ Thursday October 15th 6 pm
- ✓ Thursday January 21th 6 pm
- ✓ Thursday April 15th 6 pm
- ✓ Thursday July 15th 6 pm

We thank Forrest Heights United Methodist Church for graciously allowing us to meet in their fine facility.



Many thanks to the kind folks at Benchmark Business Solutions who graciously donated the printing of this publication! benchmarkyouroffice.com

TECH TERRACE TIPS: HELPFUL INFORMATION FOR INITIATING CITY SERVICES

Emergency Responders	EMS/Police/Fire	For immediate medical, life-threatening, or criminal matters	911
Lubbock Police Department	Dispatch	To send patrol officer for non-emergency matters of general public safety, concern & parking violations on the street	775-2865 753- 2533 311
Lubbock Police Patrol	Captain Nathan White	nwhite@mylubbock.us Can coordinate patrol watches of problem areas if notified in advance	775-2865
Lubbock Police Chief	Floyd Mitchell	fmitchell@mylubbock.us When calling ask for voicemail of Chief	775-2865
LPD Homeless Outreach Team	Steve Bergen	sbergen@mylubbock.us	775-2975 831-5575
City Councilman District #3	Jeff Griffith	JGriffith@mylubbock.us	775-2023
City Mayor	Dan Pope	DPope@mylubbock.us	775-3000
City Manager	W. Jarrett Atkinson	jatkinson@mylubbock.us Coordinates city departments and policies	775-2003
Deputy City Manager	Bill Howerton	bhowerton@mylubbock.us Community development, inspections	775-2300
Chief of Staff	Bob Goodwin	bgoodwin@mylubbock.us supports mayor & city council-related business	775-2052
Code Enforcement	Stuart Walker	swalker@mail.ci.lubbock.tx.us Code violations on private property, trash, clutter, unkempt houses, overgrown yards/alleys	775-2111
Planning and Zoning	Bryan Isham	bisham@mylubbock.us	775-3029 775-2108
City Asst. Manager: Parks	Brook Witcher	bwitcher@mylubbock.us	775-3086
Director Parks & Recreation	Colby VanGundy	cvangundy@mylubbock.us	775-2673
Animal Services & Interim Director	Steven Greene	sgreene@mylubbock.us	775-3036 775-2057
Solid Waste/dumpsters/ discarded furniture	City Main Switchboard	When calling, report specific alley address location	775-3000 or 311
Graffiti	City Main Switchboard	When calling to report, give specific street address/location	775-3000 or 311
LPL: Electricity	Emergency		775-2509
LPL: Water Service	Emergency		Day 775-2588 Night 775-2587