

Bouldin Bulletin

40 Years, Marks the End of the 'Dillo and the Beginning of the BCNA

—Recollections by Matt Coldwell

The Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Association has its fledgling roots in the demise of the Armadillo World Headquarters, the 'Dillo, back in 1980.

I recall in February 1980 that a buzz began over the possible demolition of the 'Dillo. Many Austinites around that time read that the sale of the 7.8 acre tract was contingent upon a zoning height change from 60' to 120'. The greater height allowance would allow a 16-story hotel, a seven-story office building and a 1400 space parking garage on the tract of land known today as One Texas Center, at Barton Springs Road and South 1st Street. That buzz turned to outrage and filtered into the Bouldin Creek neighborhood. It seemed we were about to lose a significant cultural icon plus many other neighborhood businesses that contributed to a local, walkable, South Austin way of life. Those businesses included Skate Palace, Pounds Photographic Lab, Lindsay Auto Electric, Doug Scales Automotive, a furniture store, the World Peace Cafe', and the Southside Food Co-op. In 1980 there was no neighborhood association that could communicate our concerns about the zoning.

Along with the 'Dillo demolition, the Southside Food Co-op at 519 Sth 1st Street was in jeopardy of being forced to either move or close down as a result of the zoning change and impending land sale. Southside Food Co-op was originally known as Woody Hills, a sister to Wheatsville. It was our neighborhood food co-op, just a short walk away. I worked there frequently as part of my co-op membership obligation and I heard the discussions first hand. A few of the members of the Southside Food Co-op lived in the Bouldin Creek neighborhood and a few were residents of the newly formed Sunflower Co-op on S 3rd St. We met at neighborhood homes and discussed strategies. We went to the Planning Commission hearing and afterwards realized that the only chance

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BCNA president Teresa Holum at Sunflower Co-op circa 1980

to stop the zoning change was to create an official, registered neighborhood association as other Austin neighborhoods had already done. We had no experience and no idea how to do it.

With the help and advice of people like Connie Moore of the Zilker Park Posse, Wayne Gronquist from Travis Heights and other residents, we set up the BCNA with the following volunteer officers:

Theresa Holum, President (pictured on page one); Jake Woolsey, Vice president; Mike Emody, Treasurer; and Matt Coldwell, Secretary. Our goal was to throw something together and see if we could mount a strong voice of opposition to the zoning change while organizing a new neighborhood association.

We really were naïve and uninformed about all of the processes involved. We had no by-laws, no type written minutes, and no elections. We chose the boundaries we now have because no other neighborhood association claimed them with the City. We chose the name Bouldin Creek because it ran behind Theresa & Jake's rent house on S 3rd St and we wanted to be more ecologically minded than the other groups that were more business oriented. There were other groups formed before the BCNA - both the South First Street Merchants Association and the South Austin Citizen's Advisory Board were active before and during the zoning change. But both groups felt that they did not have an obligation or mission to provide a voice opposed to zoning issues.

We did not have time to organize very well. The political wheels at City Hall were turning quickly, and by June 26, 1980 the City Council passed the zoning change. Only council members Richard Goodman and John Trevino Jr dissented in the vote.

By the time the 'Dillo closed on December 31, 1980 many of the other enterprises had already moved. The Southside Food Co-op was not so lucky. It ceased and essentially folded back into Wheatsville Food Co-op. As the buildings were demolished the BCNA went into somewhat of a hibernation. Many of the records and minutes have been lost - after all, they were just my handwritten notes. But the action picked up as more re-zoning requests were made along Barton Springs Road. Around 1982 James Austin Pinedo became the president. He was a UT law student who had family roots in the neighborhood. He helped to organize and formalize the BCNA, improved outreach to the Mexican-American community and fought to oppose re-zoning that facilitated the displacement of existing residents.

The Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Association was organized 40 years ago as a volunteer group of neighborhood activists who wanted to protect the residents from the negative effects of run-away development. They were environmentalists who wanted to see our creeks and greenbelts clean and preserved. They were persons who wanted to encourage a sustainable way of life for all residents of the hood.

Healthy Streets Initiative

The first batch of streets to be closed to vehicular traffic as part of Austin's new Healthy Streets initiative will be blocked off beginning Friday May 22.

The streets include Bouldin Avenue, South Third Street and Garden Villa from Bannister Lane to Barton Springs Road; Comal Street from Lady Bird Lake to Manor Road; and the Country Club Creek Trail Extension, which includes part of the trail itself and portions of Wickersham Lane, Ventura Drive and Madera Drive from Mabel Davis Park to Lakeshore Drive.

All three closure areas essentially connect neighborhoods in South Central, East and Southeast Austin to the Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail, or come within a couple of blocks. That gives people more space to exercise, whether they hit the trail or not, while offering a safer route for people commuting to the downtown area on bike or on foot.

The streets will be blocked off with signs, cones or barricades to discourage vehicular traffic except for area residents, emergency vehicles and deliveries, Austin transportation director Robert Spillar said in a memo to the mayor and City Council. "The first batch of Healthy Streets will be closely monitored to ensure they are operating safely and meeting the needs of the community," Spillar wrote.

Please visit:
<http://www.austintexas.gov/HealthyStreets>

Stay informed on neighborhood meetings, events, street closures, and more at Bouldincreek.org

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President's Message

Just Don't Bring Nothin' Home

— Jesse Moore, BCNA President

"I'm just a little down tonight, but believe I'll make it." - (me, quoting James McMurtry, "Restless")

It's the night of Wednesday, May 27, 2020 and James McMurtry won't be starting later over at the Continental Club. He hasn't played there since March 11, the club is still closed due to Covid-19, and the future of the Continental and any music establishment in Austin cannot be taken for granted. Also, he has some great new songs but can't finish production on his album, and none of the Youtube bootlegs of his recent shows managed to get that new earwig with an eerily relevant chorus where the husband of a doomed, unfaithful trucker expresses his undying yet soon-to-die commitment and begs that she "just don't bring nothin' home." (Yeah, too soon, right?)

James can sound a little cynical. But there's humor in the darkness. When NPR asked about why he writes about unhappy people, he explained that they're more interesting. Although the verses he wrote in "Ain't Got a Place" lovingly describe rivers and skies, he can't start the chorus without the disclaimer "none of that means a damn to me." That sort of droll modesty exemplifies the man. He may sing that his lines are bull, but that's bull. McMurtry cannot hide his reverence for other art - you can catch him nodding to the New Testament or Prufrock in his lyrics, or briefly strumming some Beethoven while re-tuning.

And he is not afraid to address politics, which takes guts since a sizeable portion of his fan base admires the knowledge his songs display about bucolic matters such as agriculture, fishing, and firearms, and may not understand that he's not being complimentary when he sings up a character who "don't trust the news," "hates alternate views," and "tells you it's tough to be white." He first caught my own attention in 2002 when he wrote "the ghost of William Jennings Bryant still whispers every night" on the great plains despite the current ascendancy of the right wing there. One critic called "We Can't Make it Here Any More," a song that explained back in 2005 everything you needed to know about how a misguided populist backlash could get a President like Trump elected, the "song of the decade." Another

critic called "Choctaw Bingo" a "work of prophetic genius" for describing "subprime mortgages and meth-crazed good ol' boys back in 2002" when it was released.

But James seems only political insofar as politics are unavoidable in the accurate portrayal of the human condition, especially the current condition of far too much of working class America, which James clearly loves despite its deep flaws and troubled state. And he does not seem partisan when he asks whether we should "hate the people who have our jobs today," or "hate the men who sent the jobs away." It would be utterly foolish to interpret him as endorsing the Democratic Party's official platforms on trade and the economy over the past 30 years.

And, looking past James' uncompromising realism, which does come across as cynical because, well, look around, you can see that he is simply a great artist. He reminds us, as Faulkner put it when describing the purpose of art, of the courage and honor and hope and pride and compassion and pity and sacrifice which have been the glory of our past, and helps us all believe that we will not merely endure, but prevail.

Look forward to seeing everyone at the Continental soon enough. We'll have us a time.

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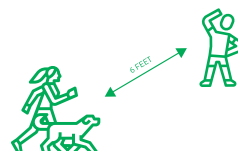
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<http://www.bouldincreek.org/sector-map/>

BCNA Officers as well as your sector rep and his/her information are always listed on the back page of the Bulletin. Or here: <http://www.bouldincreek.org/contacts/>

South Congress Parking Strategy - Videos and survey

More info at bouldincreek.org and <https://downtownaustin.com/what-we-do/socoparking/>

Rare Bird sighting in Nicholas Dawson Park

— From neighbor Suzanne Kho:



Nicholas Dawson Park is now Austin's hottest birding destination (at least for the moment).

The bird I found is a Groove-billed Ani. It had only been seen in Austin several times before and was last seen in 2003.

Editor's Note: The usual range for this species is equatorial up to South Texas. (photo Dean Anderson)



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Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Association Meeting Schedules

General Association:

2nd Tuesday every other month, 6:45 pm at The High Road on Dawson (700 Dawson Rd)

2020 Dates: June 9 (Watch the BouldinForum and Bouldincreek.org for Notice of online meeting time)

Steering Committee:

1st Monday of each month, subject to change for Holidays, etc. (same time/place as General Association meetings)

2020 Dates: May 4, June 1, July 6, August 3, September 7, October 5, November 2, December 7.

Zoning Committee:

2nd Monday of each month, subject to change for Holidays, etc. (same time/place as General Association meetings).

2020 dates: May 11, June 8, July 13, August 10, September 14, October 12, November 9, December 14.



OFFICERS

President – Jesse Moore jtmooore624@yahoo.com

VP Neighborhood – Kate Francis - kmfrancis@gmail.com

VP External – Paul Strange strange20@msn.com

Communications – Mimi Martinez McKay - pinkhouseiphone@gmail.com

Treasury – Ronnie Dittmar - treasurer@bouldincreek.org

Secretary – Matt Coldwell - e.bouldinfriend@icloud.com

Zoning Chair – Paul Strange strange20@msn.com

Parks Chair – Ingrid Weigand parkscommittee@bouldincreek.org

Traffic Chair – Thom Parker tnkparker@aol.com

SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES

Blue – Angelika Sauer - angie.sauer94@gmail.com

Brown – Stephanie Scholten stephanielscholten@gmail.com

Green – Nick Sargologos nick.sargologos@gmail.com

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The Bouldin Bulletin, published every two months, is hand-delivered by your neighbors to approximately 2500 households. Please reach out if you would like to contribute to the distribution effort or if you would like to place an ad. (Ads are due one month prior to the GA Meeting.)

MEMBERSHIP

If you would like to join the Neighborhood Association to be able to vote or pledge a candidacy, please send your name, address, phone, and email to:

Ronnie Dittmar treasurer@bouldincreek.org

BCNA Treasurer

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Austin TX 78764-3683

If you would like to make the optional dues payment, please include \$25 payable to BCNA.

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