

Galindo Neighborhood Association News



Hi Neighbors!

As we step into fall, I want to say thank you to all of you who have shown up for your neighborhood this year. From the park folks who participate in It's My Park Day twice a year, to Safe Streets Initiatives from concerned neighbors, and to the dedicated GENA Board who changed how we interface with neighbors on Facebook and Instagram. The nearby neighbors working so hard to keep whatever gets built on the corner of South First and Cumberland from casting shadows on their homes and causing havoc at a major neighborhood intersection.

Thanks to those who call in a 3-1-1 request when something is wrong or a fox needs rescuing. Thanks to those who call our city council member's office to bring attention to issues affecting you and your neighbors. **Every voice counts.**

You've all brought new energy and ideas to the neighborhood and have taken action... THANK YOU!

Please join us for our District 3 Candidate Forum at our regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, September 28th, 2026, at the South Austin Rec Center. It will be a great opportunity to ask the candidates questions and find out more about how you can get involved.

See you there!
Patty

Upcoming Meetings
September 28th
November 16th

7pm, South Austin
Recreation Center

About GENA

The Galindo Elementary Neighborhood Association ("GENA") seeks to improve the quality of life in the neighborhood, representing residents and property owners within the boundaries of Oltorf St (N), Ben White (S), the Union Pacific Railway (W) and S 1st St (E).

Find out more at:

www.gena.org



Above: Oak wilt presentation from Keith Babberney, Education Forester for the City of Austin, at the July GENA meeting.

Meet Your Neighbor: The Woman Behind the Backyard Stage

By Madyson Russell



Bridget Guess, a Galindo resident and the force behind the neighborhood's new concert series, talks about building community through music.

How long have you lived in Austin, and how did you end up in Galindo?

I've been in Austin for 15 years, and in 78704 for the last 12. I lived in Zilker first, then most recently in Barton Hills. I knew I wanted to stay in 78704, and I chose Galindo because I found a house with a stage in the backyard. I was already starting a backyard concert series, so it was an easy choice. I've been in this house since December 2022.

Tell us about that backyard. It sounds like it's become part of your identity.

It's funny to me how it has. It's the fun fact friends love to share when they introduce me. It's a fun thing to be known for. I love hosting concerts and building a community around live music, and I'm grateful for all the support I've gotten from friends and neighbors.

What kind of music do you have at your shows?

I joke that I'm "polyjamorous" because I love so many types of music. For my backyard shows, I'm intentional about picking music I think most people will enjoy, so my neighbors can appreciate it too, even if they aren't at the show. Genres have included indie, rock, Americana, cumbia, funk, and bluegrass. Most of the bands are rising stars or established groups with residencies at the Continental Club, Saxon Pub, and Antone's. Some band members have even played Red Rocks, the Grand Ole Opry, ACL Live, and Moody Theater.

(Spotlight continued from page 2)

What sparked your love of backyard concerts?

I've always loved intimate shows, from garage bands in high school to a band that threw the best house parties in college. The first backyard concert I went to in Austin was hosted by a neighbor in Zilker who hosted on Tuesday nights. I would even love "attending" from my hammock in my backyard. There's just something so sweet about sharing great music with close friends in a backyard. One of my neighbors said coming to my shows feels like getting a big hug.

What inspired you to start producing events?

A trip to Boulder. We were on our way to a hike and stumbled into Porch Fest. At first we thought people were just playing music on their porch, then we realized it was a whole event across multiple homes. I knew right then I wanted to bring something similar to Austin, and I started building a backyard concert series before I even had the stage. This house turned out to be the perfect opportunity to learn how to produce the kind of shows I wanted to attend. For a long time I felt like a consumer of Austin culture, and I wanted to find my way to contribute. There's so much magic in this city, and I feel a responsibility to do my part to keep it alive.

I've also been going to Burning Man since 2011, and I've always been inspired by how participant-driven it is. People spend years building camps and art projects to share with everyone.

You've produced two music festivals. What are they like?

It started because I wanted to go camping for my birthday, and that turned into a music festival. It's in Utopia, Texas, at the same ranch as UTOPIAfest, and the founders of that festival are my co-producers.

This year, about 250 people came. It's intentionally small; I just love curating intimate music experiences and sharing them with my community.

Building a lineup feels like putting together a live playlist. We usually start with a singer-songwriter and let the energy build through the day. I love electronic music and always have a couple DJs, but the focus is live bands. Headliners have included Madam Radar, Henry Invisible, Sisi, and Dirty Texans.

Any moments that stand out?

Each one has been special in its own way. Last summer we held a fundraiser for a family in Kerrville who lost everything in the floods. About 50 people came, and between ticket sales and a raffle, we raised almost \$4,000 that night. Combined with another show at a recording studio, we were able to surprise the family with almost \$10,000 from complete strangers. Crowd-surfing in my backyard at the last show stands out too!



What do guests say about your parties?

Longtime Austinites tell me it feels like they're in Austin again. That's my favorite compliment to receive. Newer residents say they finally understand what people mean when they talk about "Old Austin" culture. Five people have built stages in their own backyards after coming to one of my shows.

Tell us about Galindo Groove.

It's been on my mind for a couple of years to bring music to the park. My friend Jane lives in the neighborhood, also hosts backyard concerts, and co-led the first trial event with me. Her husband is a contractor who's remodeled several beautiful homes in the neighborhood, and they co-sponsored it with me. This first gathering was word-of-mouth; we provided pizza and drinks, neighbors showed up and had a jam session, sharing music together. There were a lot of families with young kids, and it was fun to sing along as a group.

We're planning a larger, more produced event for the spring, and we'll definitely do another neighborhood jam in the meantime now that we have it off the ground. People can follow @GalindoGroove on Instagram to stay in the loop.

What do you hope Galindo Groove does for the neighborhood?

We have a special neighborhood full of wonderful people, and I want more neighbors to know each other. Community is so important, and I think a lot of people would love to know more of their neighbors. Music and nature have a special way of bringing people together, so I want to help foster more connections and build a neighborhood environment we all love. I feel deeply tied to this neighborhood. Whenever I walk out the door, I usually run into someone or meet a new friend. I'm grateful to people like Patty, GENA's president, who have protected and advocated for the park for many years, and I want to build on that.

What advice do you have for someone who wants to start something but doesn't know how?

Lean into what you're passionate about, even if it doesn't make sense to other people. Start small and make it as easy as possible. My mantra for new projects is: make it exist, then make it better.

My first backyard concert was with a friend's bluegrass band. I bought some snacks and drinks, made a fire, and told people it was BYOB and to bring a chair. It was magical, and it made the series real.

What show are you most excited about next?

[Madam Radar at Pershing Hall on September 26th](#). I'm one of their biggest fans, and I genuinely believe they'll sell out Red Rocks one day. Definitely a local band to check out.

Galindo Spotlight: Ishani Art

By Paul Dietz

The Galindo Spotlight celebrates interesting Galindo residents who do fascinating things. This Spotlight focuses on [Ishani, a professional artist](#) who transforms inspiration into fascination through her paintings. She moved from Oregon to Galindo in December with her husband, Enrique, and their dog, Ofelia.

I am amazed at how quickly she has adapted to Austin life, from her May participation in the South Austin Art04 Studio Tour to planting tomatoes in February for a summer harvest, something I've tried and failed to do for many years. She has also embraced the Galindo community, or you could say the community has embraced her! Case in point: my first question to her was interrupted mid-sentence by her doorbell. A neighbor had stopped by to give her some herb plants for her garden. The joy on Ishani's face instantly told me what she was about to say as she closed the door: "I just love authentic connections with the people around me." As I nodded in agreement, she continued, "And that's a big reason why I love art. It gives people the same feeling I just experienced. Art is a way to bring joy and connections to everybody." More on this later, but first I want to share my own thoughts about art and artists.



Ishani in Her Studio During the Art04 Studio Tour in May 2026.

As digital technology continues to shape our culture, art is more important than ever in protecting our human needs for self-expression, interpretation, and imagination. Art is also one of the few things worth keeping: it doesn't depreciate or become obsolete. It never ages, because each time you look at it, you see or think something new. This is why we love artists and celebrate when they live among us!

Tell me about your paintings and your artistic style!

Ishani smiled and said, "Let me show you my studio." We walked into what felt like a museum of oil paintings: large and small, bright colors and soft pastels, detailed and abstract, finished and unfinished. As I scanned the paintings arranged across the walls, she added, "A lot of my art blurs the boundary between reality and fantasy." I recognized that! Her paintings seem to capture the crescendo of a dream: the most important snapshot of the most important moment, the one we always struggle to remember. Ishani continued, "I think abstractly. I'm very dreamy and magical, but I'm also grounded, and that's why I use shapes and forms in my art. My paintings transform my ethereal sensations into figurative art that is disrupted by abstraction and inspired by spirituality, presence, and an awareness of the moment."



Ishani in Her Studio.

Editor's Note: In May, Ishani participated in the Art04 Studio Tour, which generally includes artists within South Austin's 78704 zip code. It was a huge success, and she got to know each visitor, saying, "Austinites love art, and that's why I want to continue these Studio Tours." Ishani will open her studio again during the famous city-wide Austin Studio Tour in November, saying, "I have new ideas!"

How do you come up with ideas on what to paint?

"Coming up with ideas is always guided by my desire to connect people to their inner selves and their boundless spiritual realms. Any life experience can trigger an image to paint. For example, one day a neighbor friend who owns a chicken coop stopped by to talk. I love chickens, and I really enjoyed our conversation, which naturally led me to think of beautiful chicken images. I painted them in watercolor and gave them to her as a way to say, 'Thanks for being a great neighbor!' I later learned that the blue-gray chicken I painted in the middle and elevated above the others, as if to suggest its 'specialness,' was called 'Queen Ann' by its owner: the queen of the flock!"



The Chickens.

"Sometimes my decisions on what to paint have affected my life. Years ago, while living in Oregon, I painted a portrait of a woman, and it set off what I call a 'journey of abstraction' within my life. It started when the portrait was displayed in a fine art gallery for a global auction. After many rounds of bidding, it came down to two rival bidders: a Spaniard and an Austinite. The Austinite lost the bid. Five years later, I moved to Austin because of my husband's job relocation. Things started to become mystical when I took a part-time job as a paralegal at an Austin-based law firm that helps immigrants overcome legal challenges. It was there that I learned the firm's owner was the Austinite who had lost the bid many years earlier! What are the chances? After learning this, I wanted to make up for his disappointment, so I sketched a woman in red pencil for his birthday. He was overjoyed, saying, 'This is the best present! You made me feel loved, and you are loved.'"

Ishani turned the man's loss into a gain, closing her artistic "journey of abstraction" on a positive note, where destiny overpowered improbability.

How would you describe your creative process?

Ishani took a deep breath before answering this difficult and, admittedly, lazy question from me. I thought, "This is what happens when a non-artist asks questions of artists!" But she responded gracefully: "Sometimes I get ideas when I relax on the couch with my drawing pad and sketch whatever comes to mind." I asked Ishani to work on a sketch so I could see "art in motion," and I almost gasped at the precision and speed of her pencil, as if it were directly connected to her imagination. She continued, "At other times, an image will appear at random moments, and I'll try to document these ideas as much as I can through a written description on my iPad. Later, I'll go through these images and descriptions to choose one to paint."



"My urge to create must come naturally; it can't be forced. I start with a concept sketch, and as I begin to paint, I often enter 'autopilot,' going into a mental flow and losing track of place and time, as if my arm were controlled by something else. Maybe 'intuition' is a good word for it. Anyway, I

don't resist this. It often causes me to diverge from the initial image and create several details that I call 'hints,' little sparkles of detail within the painting that help create a path toward a concrete message."

Do you have time for hobbies while being a professional artist and paralegal?

"I love to garden. I created a sunroom inside my back porch for my tomatoes. I've extended planting into the backyard, where I've planted the herbs my neighbor gave me as well as chiles and peppers. In fact, I call my garden a 'zoo' because it's visited by bees, lizards, birds, and squirrels. They all come to the garden to eat and drink. The garden is going very well in the summer heat, and all I do is give them love and water."

On behalf of the GENA community, I want to thank Ishani for bringing her talents and love for community to Austin!

Join friends and neighbors for It's My Park Day on November 7th in South Austin Neighborhood Park!

The Fall 2026 It's My Park Day volunteer event is happening on Saturday, November 7th, in Galindo's beloved South Austin Neighborhood Park!

We'll take a nature walk to learn about the park's unique, diverse ecosystems. The walk will be led by Sara Hilgers, a Galindo resident, environmental educator, and longtime park advocate and activist.

Participants will learn how to identify and remove invasive non-native species that reduce biodiversity and crowd out native trees and plants in the wooded, riparian areas along West Bouldin Creek. We'll also scatter wildflower and riparian seeds and share tips on fossil hunting in the park and along the creek!

The number of park users, both inside and outside the neighborhood, is growing rapidly, and so is the need for people to work together on ongoing park improvements. This event is meant to build community and encourage neighbors to get involved in year-round improvements and future volunteering.

The proposal for the Park Day event is pending review by the Austin Parks Foundation and Austin Parks and Recreation. Once it's approved, **we'll post the registration link on the GENA site and GENA social media.**

Galindo residents have long been active participants in Park Day volunteer events, and we hope to see you there on **Saturday, November 7th, from 10 AM to noon!**

Update: Help Stop the 8-Story High-Rise at 600 Cumberland & S. First

We now have legal cause to file an injunction against the 8-story high-rise planned for 600 Cumberland Road and S. First Street, and we're ready to do so unless the developer is willing to come back to the table. Based on our last conversation, they expect to break ground this month or next, so we're watching closely and will be ready to file as soon as construction begins.

Filing the injunction is within reach. Sustaining the fight over the long term is the harder part, and that's where your support matters most. We're still raising \$10K, and every dollar helps.

[Donate here](https://gofund.me/6bdf84cff) (gofund.me/6bdf84cff), or share this with your network if you can't give.

Save South First!

Other News

District 3 City Council Candidate Forum



The poster features the Galindo logo at the top, with a small green circle containing the number 04. Below the logo, the text "District 3 Candidate Forum" is displayed. The event details are listed: "This Monday", "Sept. 28", "7 PM", and "South Austin Rec Center". Five candidates are shown in circular portraits: Brock Skinner, Eduardo Romero, Gavino Fernandez, Jr., José M.A. Velásquez, and Neha Shah. Below each portrait, their names and contact information are provided, along with their attendance status.

Candidate	Contact	Status
Brock Skinner	vote4brock.com	*attendance confirmed
Eduardo Romero	instagram.com/eduardoromero	*invited, unconfirmed
Gavino Fernandez, Jr.		*invited, unconfirmed
José M.A. Velásquez	District 3 Rep, Incumbent	*attendance confirmed
Neha Shah	nehaforabx.com	*attendance confirmed

Join GENA on **Monday, September 28 at 7 PM at the South Austin Rec Center** for a District 3 City Council Candidate forum. Come ready with questions for the incumbent, José M.A. Velásquez, and his challengers, Neha Shah (*attendance confirmed*), Brock Skinner (*attendance confirmed*), Gavino Fernandez, Jr., and Eduardo Romero.

Reminder: the last day to register to vote is October 5 for the November 3rd election.
In-person early voting runs from Oct. 19 to 30.



Meetings

General Member Meetings are open to the public and held every other month at **South Austin Recreation Center**, 1100 Cumberland Rd.

Dues are \$20 per household per calendar year to be a voting Member. You do not need to be a voting member to attend.

Upcoming Meetings:

- September 28, 2026
- November 16, 2026

GENA Officers (2026)

Board

President: Patty Sprinkle
Vice-President: Heather Nelson
Secretary: Lisa McGiffert
Treasurer: Lori Perry
Communications: Madyson Russell
Austin Neighborhood Council Representative: Van Wilson
Zoning: Ryan McCarthy

Committees

Parks: Sev Coursen

Contact

Let's get in touch! To share input, ideas, or feedback:

W: www.gena.org

E: newsletter@gena.org

A: PO Box 41232 Austin, TX 78704



Scan the QR code to join the neighborhood Facebook group!

www.gena.org

Upcoming Events

- **Monday, September 28th:** GENA General Meeting and D3 Candidate Forum, 7 PM, South Austin Recreation Center. D3 City Council Candidates will be in attendance to answer questions about their campaign platform for Galindo neighbors.
- **Sunday, October 18th:** Zilker is starting a small farmers market, hoping to launch on Sunday, October 18. The events will be held at Zilker Elementary near Little Zilker Park. Learn more about the market at zilkermarket.org. They are still looking for vendors!
- **Tuesday, November 3rd:** Election Day, South Austin Recreation Center. Your last day to register to vote is October 5th; early voting will run from October 19 to 30. Check your voter registration status at vote411.org/check-registration.
- **Saturday, November 7th:** [It's My Park Day](http://austinparks.org/impd/) (<http://austinparks.org/impd/>), various locations. We will be conducting a nature walk to learn more about the unique, diverse ecosystems in the park. The nature walk will be led by Sara Hilgers, a Galindo neighborhood resident who is an environmental educator and longtime park advocate and activist.
- **Tuesday, November 10th:** The City of Austin's 14th Annual Youth Career Fest is coming up, offering networking and career exploration opportunities for students in grades 8 – 12. The event will be at the Palmer Events Center from 9 AM – 12 PM. Register [here](#).

Renew or Start Your Membership Today!

Membership in GENA is open to all residents within the Galindo Elementary Neighborhood boundaries for \$20 per household per calendar year.

We can't do it without your support! We rely entirely on member dues to fund essential operational costs such as our website, PO Box, newsletter, signage, and more.

You may join on our website at gena.org or by scanning the QR code to the right. Alternatively, you may bring cash or a check to a GENA meeting, or mail a check to PO Box 41232, Austin, TX 78704. Questions may be directed to treasurer@gena.org.



Let's Stay in Touch

Do you want to stay up to date on what's happening in the neighborhood? We keep neighbors updated through our website at gena.org, our Facebook group (see left), and our **e-mail list** (send an e-mail to newsletter@gena.org to be added or subscribe at gena.org).

See You in the Neighborhood!

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