

RESIDENT COUNCIL NEWS

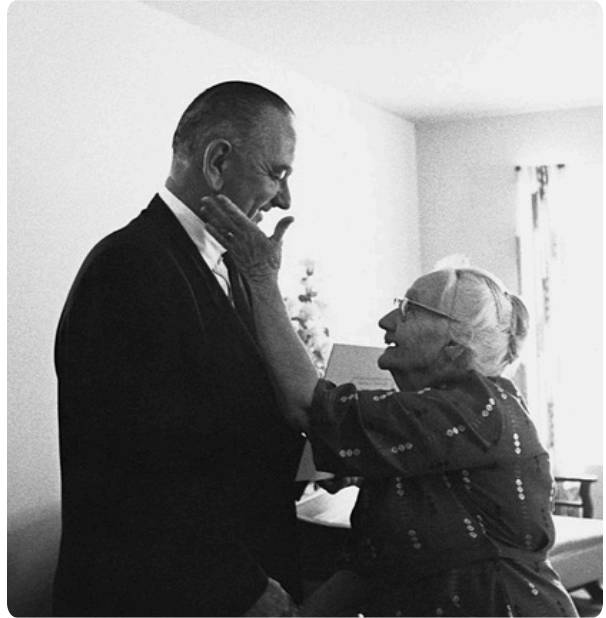
MAY IS OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

On April 10, 1965 President Lyndon B. Johnson signed a declaration honoring the month of May as Senior Citizens Month, carrying on a tradition started 2 years prior by President Kennedy. In Johnson's proclamation he declared,

"the needs of older Americans are a matter of utmost concern to all of us, and must be met by all of us so that we may enrich their lives today, our own lives tomorrow, and the lives of our children in the decades to come."

The needs of older Americans were a particular focus of the Johnson Administration. The April 1965 proclamation was the opening act for what was soon to be a flurry of legislation passed under the Great Society initiative. Two months after the Senior Citizens Month proclamation, President Johnson signed into law the Older Americans Act. This legislation became the foundation for healthy aging in America, and millions of older adults are better off as a result. The list of programs is long: transportation, a range of social services, the national network of Area Agency on Aging, nutrition programs, housing, and too many others to mention.

A mere two weeks after signing the Older American Act, President Johnson signed into law the Medicare and Medicaid Act and presented former President Harry Truman the first Medicare beneficiary card.



President Johnson's concerns about the needs of older adults and his vision to build a village for them directly led to the creation of RBJ Senior Housing and the construction of the RBJ Tower. President Johnson's enduring legacy continues today with the addition of The Lady Bird and the re-opening of The Rebekah.

"It made me so happy to know first-hand how you are liking living at the Rebekah Baines Johnson Center. I'm delighted you are pleased with your apartment and took the time to tell me so."

Lyndon Johnson in a letter to RBJ resident, Mrs. Hutchison in apt. 905, September 1972

MEET THE RESIDENT COUNCIL STEERING COMMITTEE



Willie Fletcher has lived at the Lady Bird since 2022. He is a very familiar face in Serafina Pantry, hosting cooking classes, and he is someone you will see out and about among neighbors. He came to the Lady Bird in search of a 55 and older apartment in a great location by Lady Bird Lake. As a resident, he always encourages good times and as a member of Resident Council he wants to make our community the safest and most beautiful it can be.



Mary Apostolou has lived at the Lady Bird since 2023, and she chose to live here because she was impressed with location, building and amenities. It also reminded her of growing up in the neighborhood as a child. She has observed many of the challenges the community has faced and decided to join Resident Council to make a difference. She brings 6 years of experience serving on the Housing Authority of City of Austin Resident Council. She is a lifelong advocate!



Sharon Stewart has lived at the Lady Bird since mid 2023, and moved to Austin from the North Texas area near Denton. She was drawn to the Lady Bird's beautiful gardens, parks and trees; its affordability; and by the opportunity to be part of an active and friendly senior community. She believes that with the development of the Resident Council, citizens of the Lady Bird and soon the Rebekah are bringing together resident voices which will guide and influence the quality and health of their lives, and of life in general at RBJ properties.



Janet Roberts has lived at the Lady Bird since 2022 and before that lived at the RBJ tower for 9 years. She views Resident Council as a vital part of her life and is interested in doing everything possible to help residents. She has seen growth in the past few months and thinks it is remarkable!



Ludy Zambrano has lived at the Lady Bird since 2022. In earlier years, Ludy's work responsibilities had brought her to visit residents at the RBJ Tower, so this place has always felt like home. Once retired, she was looking forward to a friendly, supportive, and active community. At the Lady Bird, the gardens were a magnet and the trail along the lake sealed the deal. As part of Resident Council, Ludy wants to help residents be heard and get their needs met.

WEEK AT A GLANCE: MAY 25TH - MAY 31TH

Here are a few highlights of upcoming events happening at The Lady Bird.

- **Monday May 26th** - Memorial Day - Management & RBJ Staff Offices Closed. Food Pantry has reduced hours (8 AM - 10 AM). Resident Bingo at 4 PM.
- **Tuesday May 27th** - There is a new resident-led bible study group at 6 PM in the community room. Meets again Friday May 30th at 6:30 pm.
- **Wednesday May 28th** - AGE Technology Learning Lab instructor Gus Davis will be on-site to host a class focused on Email Basics at 2 PM in the theater. Previous classes have not been well attended, and we are hoping to increase participation.

BOOK CLUB

A group of residents are interested in starting a book club, and we want to spread the word! We want to invite you to add your name to the interest list if a book club is appealing to you. The sign up list is in the Resident Services office. Thank you Katie Jones for suggesting this new resident club!

APD COMMUNITY CONNECT MEETING

In April, APD hosted a Community Connect meeting at the Lady Bird and provided updates on crime stats in the neighborhood and how they are handling the response. APD described some of the staffing challenges they continue to experience, but they are hopeful that the new police chief will implement changes to increase neighborhood policing and response times. There were several helpful tips shared by APD:

- When placing a call to 9-1-1 provide specific details about what is happening, locations, physical descriptions, times, quotes, etc. You also have the right to request a callback and if none is received ask to speak with a supervisor.
- There are helpful resources offered by Victim Services post-incident including counseling. Call (512) 974-9090 or visit with the Resident Services team to learn more about Victim Services.

Helpful tips shared *continued*:

- Disclose events to property management in a timely manner. This may include providing a copy of the police report, case number, or any other pertinent information.

One APD officer pointed out that the Lady Bird would benefit from more overnight coverage to address specific concerns at the property. According to property staff, the details of this still need to be worked out. In the meantime, management maintains an increased presence of private security provided by Ranger Protection Agency. APD committed to hosting future events at The Lady Bird including quarterly Community Connect meetings and coffee with a cop events where residents can meet with officers and other APD staff. A date has not been finalized, but there are plans for APD to conduct a crime prevention assessment of our property in the near future.

FOR REBEKAH MOVE, GARAGE SALE IS PROPOSED AND PLANNING GROUP IS NEEDED. SIGN UP IF INTERESTED.

Another great idea came through the suggestion box from resident Nancy Mael – host a garage sale! A garage sale has multiple benefits. It reduces moving stress by providing a way to downsize and earn money. It gives us an opportunity to advertise an event around the neighborhood and increase our visibility. Plus, if we are going to have a garage sale then we might as well cookout.

To make it happen, there are a few details to be worked out and it calls for an invitation to form a planning group. We are looking for approximately 5 - 10 residents, who can commit to a few meetings where the dates and logistics can be worked out. If this sounds like the kind of project you would like to contribute to, then we ask you to sign up and join us!

RESIDENT COUNCIL CHARTER

The Resident Council is a tenant-led group whose mission is to improve the lives of residents living at The Lady Bird. All residents who hold a lease at The Lady Bird are members of the Resident Council and can attend and participate in Resident Council meetings, events, and activities. In addition, a steering committee of five appointed residents take on additional responsibilities to help plan, coordinate, and support the continuity of Resident Council.

Our Duties / Why We Are Here

1. Communicate problems and other needs of the fellow residents to the RBJ Senior Housing Board of Directors.
2. Identify property improvements that may be needed.
3. Make recommendations to the RBJ Senior Housing Board of Directors for the types of services the nonprofit should be providing for residents.

Group Agreements

Group agreements are essential for creating a safe, productive, and collaborative environment. Resident Council members are expected to uphold our group agreements during meetings:

1. Raise your hand to speak.
2. Respect differences in opinion.
3. Try to be brief with your remarks to allow others time. Avoid interruptions.
4. There are no dumb questions. Ask for clarification when you do not understand.
5. Be open to new ideas, possibilities, and ways of thinking.

NEW METHOD TO COLLECT FEEDBACK



RBJ staff introduced a new way for residents to submit their feedback and suggestions for improvement. Simply open the camera app on your smartphone, allow the barcode to come into focus, and click the link that appears.

ECC NEIGHBORHOOD GROUP REACHES OUT, ASK FOR RBJ RESIDENTS TO ATTEND.

This neighborhood group meets on the 3rd Wednesday of every month 6 pm at KMFA studios, just behind Lady Bird.

RBJ SEEKS \$245,000 FOR AGING SERVICES GRANT WITH AUSTIN PUBLIC HEALTH

RBJ staff submitted a grant proposal in response to Austin Public Health's request for proposals to provide aging services. The proposal would expand case management services, food pantry programming, and provide 1 full-time staff to improve options for on-site events and activities. Decision expected in June.

CTFB UPDATES ON BUDGET CUTS, SOME IMPACT AT SERAFINA PANTRY

The Central Texas Food Bank recently updated partner agencies that current Trump budget cuts to food aid will not impact the volume of donations, however it may impact the variety of food types provided. Food sources such as protein and milk may be substituted with more fruit and nuts in the coming months. CTFB will continue to provide updates as changes occur.

HATCHERY PARK CLOSES TEMPORARILY

Hatchery Park is closed for safety until further notice due to construction of new apartment complex The Embry.

THE NEWSLETTER OF RESIDENT COUNCIL

Steering Committee Members

Janet Roberts, Ludy Zambrano, Mary Apostolou, Sharon Stewart, Willie Fletcher.

RBJ Staff Support

Aly Tharp, Dylan Lowery

We want to hear from you!

Submit your letters, feedback, and essays to Dylan Lowery. Email to dlowery@rbjseniorhousing.org or deliver material to Resident Services office.

Issue I.