

PARKS PRESCRIPTION

An Austin Parks and Recreation Health Promotions Program



Heart health is where we start our year. Especially relevant to the month of February with all the hearts we are seeing around this month. The first known depiction of a heart-shape as a symbol of love was in the 1250's French manuscript the *Roman de la poire*, in which a young man holds his vaguely pine cone-shaped heart up towards his lady love. Ancient philosophers believed the heart was the seat of the soul and the emotional center. The heart is in charge of our cardiovascular system, it keeps our body alive! It is the constant feeling we have and hear in our bodies, the pumping of our heart. So it may be of no big surprise that our heart and the earth are connected. Nature is constantly moving, as are we.



Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death worldwide. Studies have also shown that being in nature has a positive effect on our bodies by reducing cortisol levels, muscle tension, and demands on our cardiovascular systems (lowers heart rate and blood pressure). Being out in nature often may lead to lower rates of heart disease. There are studied and proven facts on ways we can treat our hearts with love.

Below is a list of studies to check out that outline the benefits of nature for our hearts.

- [How Nature Improves your Health](#)
- [For green spaces to be most beneficial to health, they need to be walkable.](#)
- [National Library of Medicine: Associations between Nature Exposure and Health: A review of the evidence.](#)

We are big fans of the convenience of an app for our busy lives. Sometimes we need encouragement to go outside, sometimes it needs to be something fun that doesn't feel like a chore. We have already decided with our nature resolution that we are intent on spending more time outdoors, so how do we go about that? Listed are a few apps that may encourage you to hang outside for a bit, seriously y'all 20 minutes a day 6 times a week. We can do this!

- [Pokémon Go](#) - If you're a fan of Pokémon, you'll love getting outside to meet people in the real world who love Pokémon as much as you do!
- [Merlin Bird ID](#) - An app developed by Cornell Labs to help ID bird species.
- SkyView or any constellation viewing app. No one said our outdoor time couldn't be at night.
- [Geocaching](#) - Join the world's largest treasure-hunting community with the official app for geocaching.

February Highlighted Outdoor Events

[Calendar](#)

<https://www.umlaufsculpture.org/programs>

Tuesday, February 6th
6 PM - 8 PM
Umlauf Sculpture Garden
605 Azle Morton Rd. Austin, TX, 78704

UMLAUF After Dark is the every-other-month event designed to connect musicians and artists with the public for an all-around good time!

Every other first Tuesday of the month, 6PM-8PM.

Get ready to usher in the Lunar New Year with an unforgettable evening of art, culture, and celebration at UMLAUF After Dark! Our Lunar New Year Extravaganza promises a night filled with vibrant experiences that honor traditions, showcase contemporary art, and embrace the spirit of new beginnings.

The UMLAUF PRESENTS:

- LIVE MUSIC FROM AUDIO TELEPATHY
- Aaron has led a musical life since an early age, starting with the drums at age 4 and guitar when he was 15. At around 12 years old, he saw Ravi Shankar playing on TV and immediately fell in love with the instrument and the music, having no idea what or who it was at the time. Aaron finally began his journey with the sitar in 1997 in Houston, TX after a chance meeting in a music store. He eventually went to India to study intently with master sitarist Atmaram Sharma from Hyderabad, India, where he studied music alongside meditation and yoga for several months. In India he also was initiated on the santur by the great Shivkumar Sharma, the internationally acclaimed leading exponent of santur. The sitar and santur are both instruments used in North Indian (Hindustani) classical music. In the USA, Aaron has also had the good fortune to study with maestros Indrajit Banerjee, Zakir Hussain, Abbas Kosimov, Glen Velez, Steve Smith and others.
- DRAGON + LION DANCE BY TDDT
- ASIAN AMERICAN RESOURCE CENTER
- ART BY LIAN SOY
- OPEN BAR

Tickets can be purchased at the door

Coffee with A Ranger

<https://www.austintexas.gov/department/park-rangers>

Every Saturday
9 AM - 11 AM

Zilker Caretaker's Cottage and Park Ranger Station
2105 Andrew Zilker Rd, Austin, TX 78746

FREE

FREE COFFEE? Yep, you read that correctly! Join for Coffee with a Ranger! It's the Rangers longest running weekly program. They have unique educational themes for the whole family each Saturday. Wildlife ID, seedball making, Leave No Trace, Guided Hikes, Salamanders, Aquifers...No CWAR is the same. Collect them all...or you know...show up every week. You know you want to. See you there!

*occasionally they have to relocate - check the [Facebook page](#) for venue changes

February is...

AMERICAN HEART MONTH

The month of January is designated as National Blood Donor Month in the United States. Due to holiday celebrations, inclement weather, and cold and flu season, the winter months are often a time of reduced donations and an increased risk for blood shortages. National Blood Donor Month celebrates blood donors during this critical time and reminds people of the importance of donating blood.

Help ensure that this lifesaving resource is readily available to patients during this time. [Find a location](#) to give blood and schedule your life-saving donation appointment today.

[Learn More](#)

Get into Nature with the Austin Parks and Recreation Department.

- Lamar Senior Activity Center**
- Conley-Guerrero Senior Center**
- South Austin Senior Activity Center**
- Tennis**
- Golfing at Golf ATX**
- Softball, flag football, Basketball leagues**
- Disc Golf**
- Pickleball**
- Trail Directory**
- Skate Parks**
- Zilker Botanical Garden**
- Pools**
- Playgrounds**
- Picnic Sites**
- Austin Nature Science Center**

Other Organizations Around Austin with Upcoming Outdoor Events:

- Texas Farmers Market at Lakeline**
- SFC Farmer's Market Downtown**
- Mueller Farmer's Market**
- Boggy Creek Farm**
- Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center**
gardening, yoga, etc.
- Nature Rocks Austin**
Find Activities in Green Spaces & Parks in Your Community
- Austin Parks Foundation**
Movies in the Park
- Texas State Parks**
- Tree Folks**
Volunteer & Calendar of events
- Peace Park Conservancy**
- Waterloo Greenway and Moody Amphitheatre**
- Austin Public Library**
Outdoor Storytime

Keep a look out for our monthly newsletter highlighting our around town events and fun facts on how nature can benefit your health.

Click the logo for more information on our website.

