

August Meeting

When: 7:00 p.m.
Monday, August 6, 2007

Where: Hyde Park United
Methodist Church
4001 Speedway

Who: YOU and your neighbors

Note: HPNA general meetings usually take place on the first Monday of each month.

HPNA General Meeting Agenda for August 6th

- ❖ **Meet, Greet and Eat!** (*Strictly Fun - No Business.*) The August Meeting will be a "Bring-the-kids-&-any-dessert-you'd-like-to-share - But-leave-the-dog-at-home" affair.

See you there!

HPNA Meeting Minutes for July:

On Monday, July 9, 2007, the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association held its monthly meeting. President Elaine Meenehan called the meeting to order.

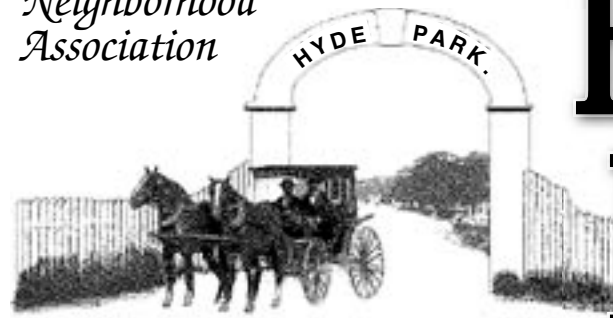
Lorre Weidlich gave an update on the success of the annual **Homes Tour** held on Fathers' Day weekend. She noted that more guests attended the tour this year than last year. She referred the members to the June issue of the *Pecan Press* for more details.

Next, representatives of the Austin Police Department provided information on the **Neighborhood Watch Program** and a report on recent crime in our neighborhood. Officers Ricardo A. Vargas, Matthew Wright, and David Crowder, Jr. gave an excellent presentation and answered many questions.

The officers discussed the Crime Triangle: Ability, Desire, and Opportunity. They pointed out that the Neighborhood Watch Program is designed to eliminate the op-

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*The Hyde Park
Neighborhood
Association*



Pecan Press

August, 2007 • National Register District Neighborhood • Vol. 33, No. 8

Chicken Coop for the Soul: Hyde Parkers Love Their Feathered Friends

First things first: Roosters are not involved in making eggs, only in making baby chickens. Local chicken owner Victoria Goodman says that's one question almost everybody asks. It's a good thing they're not needed, because when one of her chicks turned out to be a rooster, its aggressive disposition and 2 a.m. crowing meant that its days were numbered.

But the four hens occupying the handmade coop behind her home near 45th and Avenue G? Delightful, sweet, companionable, comical and intelligent. And the eggs they produce are "unbelievably delicious," she says.

For Victoria's birthday four years ago, her husband, Mark, bought her six chickens from Calahan's General Store, knowing she had long wished to enjoy the fresh eggs she experienced growing up in England. Little did the couple know they would become smitten with these birds, which they now regard as pets.

"They are chatty and seem to love human company," says Victoria. "When we are gardening, they will come and make lovely little noises and dig around while we are digging."



Goodman chickens enjoy a stroll outside their coop.

Fascinating Fowl

While the number of locals who live with chickens is unknown, the Goodmans are not alone. This may reflect some of the romanticism of Hyde Park's beginnings as a more pastoral community where, along with vegetable gardens, homeowners often kept cows, goats and fowl, says Larry Freilich, who lives near 42nd and Avenue B.

He and his wife Sharon joined this group four years ago after a visit to Boggy Creek Farm, where their daughter, Zoe, then age 3, was fascinated by the birds roaming around. Larry says his view of the birds is "utilitarian" (he sees them as egg layers, maybe even future roasts), but his descriptions of their antics also reveals fascination

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From the President's Desk: _____

Something(s) Bugging Us

For the past several weeks, the mosquito problem has been a huge topic of conversation on our neighborhood listserv. Since it has been so popular and I needed a topic for this month's column, I've done some research on the subject.

Let's start with why they bite us. Only females bite humans or animals. They locate us by the carbon dioxide, odors and heat that we emit. They do not feed on us, but need the protein in blood for their egg development. Mosquitoes feed on flower nectar and fruit juices. Females can lay up to 300 eggs at a time. Most mosquitoes breed in stagnant water such as tree holes, old tires, gutters, birdbaths, etc. — anywhere that water is not being emptied. Eggs can hatch between 4-7 days after being laid.

Worldwide, mosquitoes are responsible for more human deaths than any other living being. In Texas, they spread encephalitis, dog heartworm, malaria and West Nile Virus. In 2005 and 2006, the Department of Health captured mosquitoes at Sunshine Community Garden (about a quarter mile from the west side of Hyde Park). Many were found to be carriers of the West Nile Virus. If they are there, they are in Central Austin. Mosquitoes typically travel within a mile from their breeding site. A study was not done this year.

The best way to combat the problem is by using common sense. Empty or remove any object in your yard that holds water. Fill holes in trees with sand or mortar after checking with an arborist to make sure you do not harm the tree. Clean your gutters. Drain water from pet dishes, pots, buckets, birdbaths, etc. weekly. Drill holes in the bottom of trashcans. The Asian tiger mosquito loves laying its eggs in decaying debris, so clearing out your rotting leaf pile is a good idea. Limit outdoor activities to avoid prime feeding time: dawn and dusk. During the heat of the day, adults like to rest away from the elements; so keeping your grass cut can help prevent being bit in the middle of the day. They also rest in plants such as cast iron plant, ivy, bushes and bamboo, which can be treated with garlic granules or organic sprays. Wear protective loose clothing such as long sleeve shirts or use mosquito repellants.

Some neighbors have suggested constructing purple martin or

bat houses. Although these animals do eat mosquitoes, they prefer larger insects whenever they can get them. Years ago, a Dr. Wald claimed that purple martins eat 6,660 mosquitoes a day. No one knows where this data came from, but Dr. Wald sold a not-insignificant number of purple martin houses.

Although mosquitoes are bad every year, this year seems particularly bad due to the heavy amounts of rain we've had. Several residents have complained about the garbage men leaving the lids on our trashcans open after being emptied. They were told that this was a neighborhood choice because residents wanted to know when their cans have been emptied so they know when to remove

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Pecan Press

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Hyde Park Neighborhood Association

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Shipe Park • VOLUNTEER NEEDED

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them from the curb or alley. While I understand the convenience of being able to look out a window to see if trash has been picked up, it seems to pale in comparison to having standing water in our trashcans. We have many houses that are vacant or have neighbors that do not close the lid on their trashcans for several days. Since eggs can hatch in as little as four days, these receptacles are contributing to our growing mosquito problem. After weighing the convenience factor against a possible health risk, I have officially begun the process of requesting that the city begin closing the lids on our trashcans.

Here are a few other bits of information that I found that may or may not be true.

- Wearing Bounce fabric softener on your belt helps repel mosquitoes.
- Mosquitoes prefer blondes and children to adults.
- They also prefer people who eat bananas or chocolate.
- Wear white or muted colors – mosquitos are attracted to vibrant colors.
- Scented lotions, perfumes and hairsprays can attract more mosquitoes.
- If all else fails, try to stop breathing or sweating – that should do the trick!

– Elaine Meenehan
 HPNA President
 <elaine.meenehan@gmail.com>



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All memberships expire on September 30th of each year.		
		Make checks payable to HPNA. Bring to HPNA meeting, or send to: Doris Coward HPNA 4810 Red River St. Austin, TX 78751

HPNA Membership Info

All memberships expire on September 30th of each year.

Membership in HPNA is open to all residents aged 18 years or older who reside within the boundaries of Hyde Park or within 300 feet of the designated boundaries.

New members, and members who lapse in dues for over six months, are eligible to vote at HPNA meetings 30 days after receipt of dues.

We Welcome Your Submissions to Pecan Press

Send in your articles, letters, and photos (but not your poetry*) by the 15th of each month to:

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Chicken Coop for the Soul ...

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and fondness. "They are incredibly accurate when going after insects and can pluck a fly out of the air."

A block away on Avenue C, Carla Siegle always wanted to keep chickens, and now she has two, which she purchased at a poultry auction near Temple, TX. Because the chickens were older, they did not imprint with their human hosts as chicks generally do and so the attachment isn't quite as strong. "Some chickens are affectionate and will even sit on your lap, but mine don't like to be touched," she says. Next time, she will outfit her coop to accommodate chicks.

Carla did her homework, reading books she picked up at Callahan's to learn about chicken raising. Even so, she wasn't sure what was wrong when one of her hens wouldn't leave the coop for two weeks. She took it to the vet and learned it was simply a case of brooding, normal for some birds. After seeing the vet bill, her husband Dan calls this "the \$300 chicken."

Life With Chickens

All of the birds discussed in this article were given pet names, such as Diamond and Dirt (Zoe Freilich), Chickenitza and Chocolate (Victoria Goodman), Lizzy and Ruby (Carla Siegle).

The owners agree that once the coop is set up, day-to-day life with chickens is easy: You let them out in the morning and secure them when they return in the evening. The birds are very resilient and can withstand cold and wet weather, so no heating source is needed in the winter. They eat lots of insects and plants (even the garden produce if you're not careful), but this is supplemented with chicken feed.

While fresh eggs are a good reason to get a chicken or two, production fluctuates by season and stops during the winter and on very hot days in the summer. Hens also produce fewer eggs as they age, and eventually will stop laying altogether. On the other hand, during the peak spring and early summer months, the egg supply is a quiche-lover's dream, Larry says. Different types of chickens lay eggs of different colors, including green and blue, but the taste does not differ.

Socially, there is a definite pecking order among chickens. When one of Carla's hens died and she introduced a replacement, she learned the true meaning of "henpecked." "Ruby chased the new bird all over the yard and would not give her any peace when she ate. It quieted down after awhile, but I felt sorry for her."

More serious dangers lurk, too. With all of these chicken owners, their first group of birds did not stay intact for long. Predators have plagued all of them, with reports of hawk, possum and even dog attacks.

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Larry's chicken recently survived (and is thriving) after a possum attack that left her bloodied and, he thought, missing an eye. Apparently it had been pushed deep into the socket because two days later it popped back into place.

Carla is not surprised by that story and points out recent scientific findings that chickens share DNA with Tyrannosaurus rex. "They are tough little birds."

— Jaime Shimkus

Editor's Note: Ms. Shimkus, a (fairly) recently-arrived down-the-street neighbor on Avenue F, has kindly offered to provide us with occasional profiles of particularly interesting and noteworthy people, places, and things (including chickens!) to be found in and around the 'hood. Many thanks, Jaime!




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July Meeting Minutes...

...cont'd from page 1

portunity for crime to occur. Neighbors organize by block to watch out for each other. A volunteer block captain recruits neighbors to participate and maintains a list of the neighbors on the block. Participants are encouraged to be more observant, to get to know their neighbors, and to report appropriate information to the police. If you are interested in participating in the Neighborhood Watch Program, contact Carol J. Welder, Chairman of the HPNA Crime and Safety Committee (459-6205).

The Officers noted that the number of burglaries in the Hyde Park, Ridgetop, and Hancock neighborhoods had increased in the past few months. Four arrests have been made. They provided tips on making your home more secure:

- Make sure that all doors and windows are locked.
- Check the locks to ensure they are working properly.
- Install a monitored alarm system.
- Provide sufficient exterior lighting.
- Trim shrubs and trees away from the windows.
- Install second locks on sliding glass doors.

In addition, you can request a free home security inspection from APD. Contact Officer Vargas at <rick4579@yahoo.com>. The Officers also noted that the area has had higher incidences of burglary of a vehicle and theft of a vehicle. They offered the following suggestions to help protect your vehicle:

- Lock your vehicle.
- Remove all valuables.
- Park in the driveway or garage, if possible.
- Use your car alarm.
- Take your keys when you park your vehicle.
- Park in well-lit areas.
- Never leave your vehicle running and unattended.

Lastly, the Officers addressed the graffiti problem. You should call 311 to report graffiti. Generally, it will take about seven to ten days for it to be cleaned up. However, if you see graffiti being placed on property, you should call 911.

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Jason Meeker with *RG4N (Responsible Growth for Northcross)* thanked HPNA for supporting their efforts regarding the proposed Wal-Mart to be located at Northcross Mall. He was especially appreciative of the HPNA Resolution for the Citywide Boycott of Wal-Mart. Jason also noted that there are two lawsuits pending on the matter and that neighbors are protesting the development every Saturday from 11:00 a.m. to noon at the site.

In other business, Lisa Harris, HPNA's Austin Neighborhoods Council Representative, reported that Meals on Wheels needs volunteers. Stefanie Collins, a neighbor and law student, discussed the Save Kenneth Foster Coalition. Elaine then adjourned the meeting.

— Pam Whittington HPNA Co-Secretary
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Crime Report



by Carol Welder

If you are not a member of the neighborhood yahoo group, you may want to join. This discussion group has proven to be a valuable asset by informing neighbors on many topics. Over the last few months, crime seems to be on the rise. The yahoo group has provided information on locations and what types of crimes are being committed in our area. To join, go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HydeParkAustin/> and click the "Join this group" button on the right.

Lately, there have been reports of people knocking on doors looking for work or selling something. Please be on alert because they may be checking to see if anyone is at home. There have been some burglaries where front doors were kicked in and valuables taken.

At the July HPNA meeting, the Austin Police Department made a presentation on Neighborhood Crime Watch. The Association plans to revive the Crime Watch program and needs your help to get it started. We are looking for volunteers who would serve as block captains or help in organizing the program. Please plan to attend the HPNA general meeting on August 6th to sign up and get more information. Neighborhood signs will be ordered and distributed throughout the area to raise awareness of suspicious behavior.

August 7th is National Night Out. Plan to get out of the house and meet your neighbors to discuss how to lower crime in our area. As always, remember to lock your doors and windows and keep your valuables hidden from sight in your vehicles. If you have an emergency or witness a crime, call 911 or if you are reporting a crime after the fact, call 311. Officer Rick Vargas is our APD District Representative. To contact him, call 974-5801 or email him at ricardo.vargas@ci.austin.tx.us

— Carol Welder, HPNA Crime and Safety
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Cool at the pool: Ouch, that pathway hurt when going from the big pool to the little pool! So, for a fun Father's Day civic project, the Paul Smith family installed stepping stones at the Shipe Park pool. Many thanks!



EarthArt has moved from the little orange house at 7th and Lamar to 211 North Loop, next to Epoch

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Local Historic Districts in Austin

Austin's historic buildings and neighborhoods create the unique character and heritage of our city. In December 2004, the Austin City Council adopted an ordinance authorizing the establishment of local historic districts to recognize and protect those areas with particular historical significance to maintaining Austin's rich heritage.

Local historic districts provide several tools for preservation, starting with a greater appreciation and understanding of the development and history of a neighborhood and its buildings. Historic district nominations contain a detailed history of the district, an inventory, photograph, and history of every building in the district, and an evaluation of which buildings are contributing to the historic character of the district.

Local historic districts provide a higher "bar" for evaluating the demolition or relocation of important buildings in a neighborhood. Currently, the City Historic Preservation Office and the Historic Landmark Commission review applications for demolition or relocation permits to determine whether a building meets the criteria for designation as a historic landmark. The determination is made according to objective criteria, but designed to protect those buildings with exceptional significance to the city because of their architecture and historical associations. Buildings which are contributing to a local historic district may not qualify as individual historic landmarks. The establishment of local historic districts will help protect those properties which are significant to the neighborhood for their architecture ("contributing" to the historic character of the district) but which do not meet the high standards necessary for designation as a historic landmark.

Local historic districts also provide design standards for new construction within the district. The Historic Landmark Commission currently reviews applications for building permits within National Register Historic Districts, and provides recommendations to the property owner to make the new construction more compatible with the historic character of the district. While the Commission encourages the property owner to revise his or her plans to help preserve the historic character of the neighborhood, there is no requirement that the property owner do so. Local historic districts will have mandatory design standards, providing property owners and builders parameters for the design of new construction as well as providing neighbors the comfort of knowing that new construction will be required to follow accepted design standards based upon the existing architecture within the district. The district design standards will be individually tailored to meet the needs of the particular district, and may address building materials, height limits, and setbacks for new construction within the district. Additions to contributing buildings and new construction will require a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic Landmark Commission prior to receiving a building permit.

Continued on page 12




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Local Historic Districts...

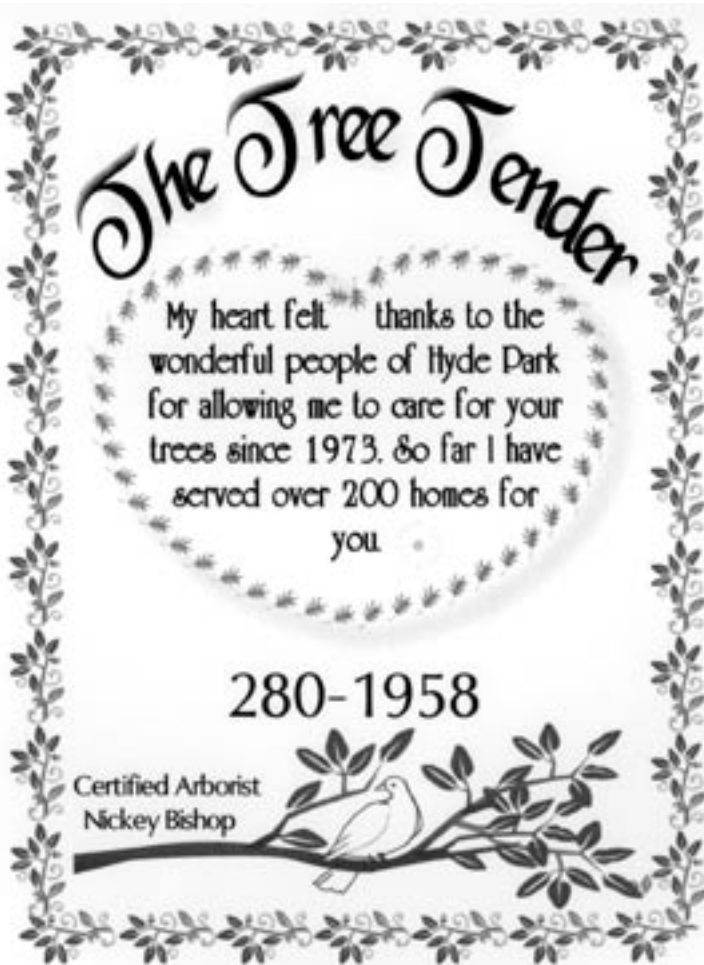
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For those who fear that local historic districts will result in onerous burdens and long delays in approval of projects, rest assured that the Historic Landmark Commission meets every month (usually the fourth Monday of the month). As long as an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness is filed in time to provide legal notice (generally 21 days in advance of the Landmark Commission meeting), the Commission will hear and review a case the same month that the application is filed. The City Historic Preservation Office may approve minor projects which comport with the district design standards, such as one-story rear additions, rear decks and porches, and pools without a hearing before the Historic Landmark Commission, streamlining the process further.

Finally, local historic districts will enable a new provision to provide a City property tax incentive for rehabilitating buildings within the district. The building must be contributing to the district to qualify for the incentive, or if it is non-contributing, the rehabilitation project must restore the building to contributing status by removing those unsympathetic architectural modifications which made the building non-contributing. An owner-occupant of a contributing or potentially contributing residential property must reinvest at least 25% of the value of the structure in "qualified rehabilitation expenditures", with at least 5% of the value of the structure spent on exterior rehabilitation. The Historic Landmark Commission will review rehabilitation proposals and certify the project upon completion, at which time the owner is eligible to receive a City property tax abatement on the added value of the project for 7 years. For example, if the owner of a \$100,000 house invests \$30,000 in rehabilitation work approved by the Landmark Commission and the value of the property jumped to \$150,000 after the completion of the project, the city property tax assessment would be "frozen" at the \$100,000 value of the house for 7 years. The owner of an income-producing contributing (or potentially contributing) property must re-invest at least 40% of the value of the structure, with at least 5% of the value of the structure in exterior rehabilitation to be eligible for a City property tax abatement on the added value of the project for 10 years.

The Historic Landmark Commission is currently developing the nomination form, a template for developing design standards, and a list of qualified rehabilitation expenditures to qualify for the property tax incentive. They are meeting regularly throughout the summer and expect to have all of the documents for administering local historic districts this fall.

— Steve Sadowsky
City of Austin Preservation Officer



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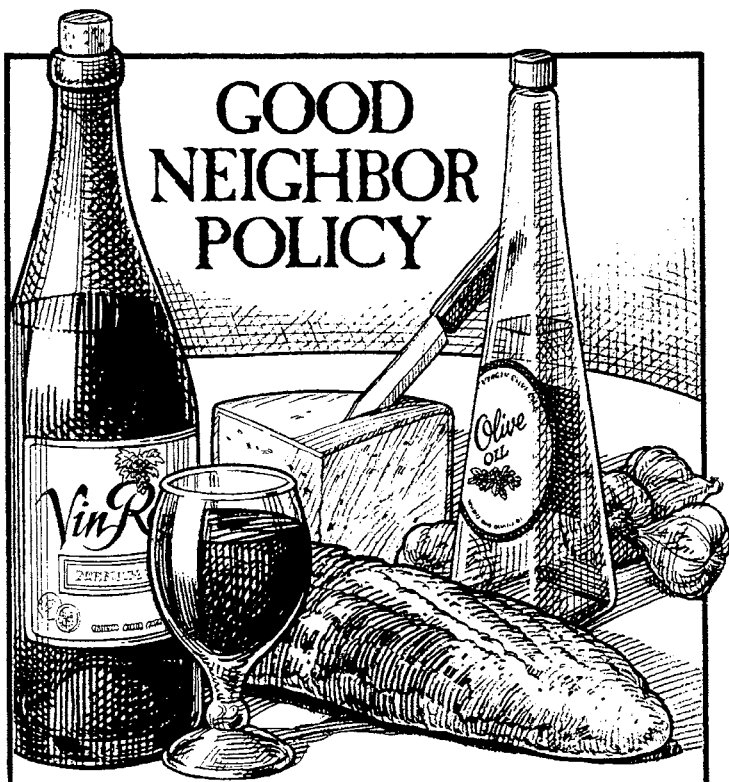
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Mark believes that his leading strength is an ability to creatively solve problems. He also brings a B.S. in Communication from the University of Texas and over a decade of experience in customer-centered business to the table. When partnering with home buyers and sellers to achieve their real estate goals, Mark knows it is essential to spend the appropriate time preparing a foundation for success. He credits his clients' achievements to good communication, the use of technology and a mutual enthusiasm for real estate. Call Mark for an exciting consultation!



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Letters Dept.

AFS Seeks Host Homes for Foreign Exchange Students

Dear Neighbors,

You may be familiar with AFS Intercultural Programs. We send thousands of American students to study in countries around the world as well as welcome thousands of foreign students to families and schools around the United States. We feel that citizen diplomacy is one of the best ways to work towards a peaceful world.

This year, we have a record number of students arriving in August and are looking for some good host families in the Austin area. Below is an announcement about our hosting program. We hope you will help us in our host family recruiting efforts by disseminating this information to your members and your community. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Best wishes,

— Marlo Goldstein
AFS-USA Intercultural Programs Info Center
800-AFS-INFO (800-237-4636) ext. 1504
<mgoldstein@afs.org>
<www.afs.org/usa>

About the Program

Promote peace and learn about another culture by opening your home and your heart to a foreign exchange student!

This summer, high school foreign exchange students from around the world will arrive in the Austin area. We are looking for loving host families to participate in this cultural exchange.

For 60 years, AFS has been matching host families with high school students from all over the world. Host families welcome exchange students into their home and lives, provide a bed and meals, and the same guidance, love, and support as they would to their own children. It's a rewarding experience for everyone!

AFS Volunteers based in your community will make arrangements for the student to attend your local high school. They also provide guidance and support throughout the year to both the families and the students to ensure that all will gain the most from the hosting experience.

The students arrive in August, live with a family while attending the local high school, and return home in late June or early July. This year we are expecting students from more than 40 different countries. Host families will attend an orientation session prior to the students' arrival.

To find out more, please contact us at 1-800-AFS-INFO (1-800-237-4636). You can also learn more and see some sample bios of students at <http://www.usa.afs.org/usa_en/view/4536>

Thank you for your consideration.

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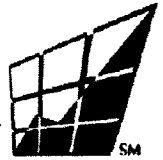
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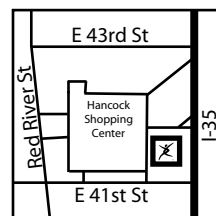
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Hyde Park Poets —

Texas Goodbyes

All of my yellow roses have dropped their petals, sweet, a slight peachy glow at their tips, elegant around the base of that cut-glass vase. There are thorns on stems, cutting, shockingly painful to the inexperienced, stems themselves as sturdy as ancient oaks. But the glow of those blooms, you just want to touch them, to draw in their glorious scent, to hold their perfection in your palm, against your cheek. Cultured for another age, my yellow roses remind me of all that is elegant, proper, strong, and exemplary.

— Nancy Taylor Day
for Mabel, Ann, Molly and Claudia

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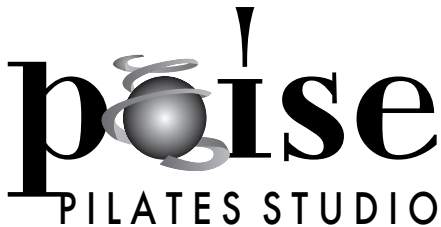
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Hyde Park Poets —

Walking on the Edge of Memories

Across a darkened highway,
 I watch
 Bright neon lights flash ephemerally
 On and off—On and off—On and off
 In my darkening mind
 Lucent impulses fire periodically
 Illuminating close companions, family
 But they are faraway... unreachable.
 Then the images fade:
 Bright colors to sepia; sepia to ebony.

Neuronal pathways become frozen rivers
 Upon which stilled memories chaotically slide
 And, like fine porcelain,
 Shatter easily and fall softly, irretrievably, into secret recesses.
 Where once a vibrant landscape
 Of names, faces, people, events flourished
 Now lies a vast, sandy desert where occasionally,
 A cactus bursts into bloom
 And then... is gone,
 As brief as the phosphorescent flash of a firefly.

Like a moth desperately beating its wings against the engulfing
 darkness

— Not finding exodus —

Its dreams fatally trapped in a tightly woven tapestry
 That refuses to unravel,
 I find myself blindly strolling

Though stretches of time

Amidst the fraying remnants of my life

-Not finding exodus-

Walking on the edge of dreams
 Walking on the edge of memories.

— Andrea Lasseter
 Dec. 11, 2006

PS. My neighbor Beverly Spicer suggested I send this poem to you for possible publication in the Pecan Press. I wrote it after dreaming about my cousin Irma who has Alzheimer's. In the dream I found her crawling across a rain-dampened street toward neon lights that lay just ahead. She was wearing a yellow crocheted sweater. When I asked her if she needed help, she instructed me to remove a key from her pocket that would unlock the secret. As I did this, I awoke never knowing what the secret was. This poem was written in response to that dream. Recently I saw the movie "Away from Her" and it struck me how similar in tone the movie and my poem were, at least to me. This led me to share it with a few close friends with whom I felt less vulnerable. I understand if the poem is too sad or depressing for the Pecan Press or simply not all that good. My friends may be overly supporting. Anyway, here is the poem.

— Sincerely,
 Andrea Lasseter



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Address: **608 East 46th Street**

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Charming Remodel on a 60' wide lot. Lee Elementary, Bright sunny home with a great front porch, new designer kitchen, beautiful hardwoods, period detailing, updated bath and a seperate sound studio/home office/or guest bedroom.



Address: **4519 Depew Avenue**

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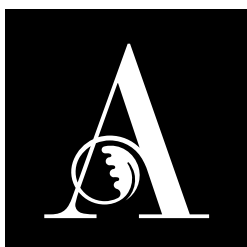


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