December Meeting

When: 7:00 p.m.

Monday, December 7, 2009

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 December 7th

- → Judge Olga Seelig intro
- Natural Grocer intro.
- Ney update Robin Camp, Farhad Madani
- Holiday Party update.
- → 2010 Budget (possible vote).
- **⇔** Bylaws Amendment (possible vote).

December 12th: 2009 Hyde Park Holiday Party!



Rich MacKinnon and John Rebok are once again this year opening their lovely home at 4201

Speedway so that we may all celebrate the holiday season together. The Hyde Park Neighborhood Association (HPNA) invites you to join us on **Saturday**, **December 12th**, **6:00 p.m**. Children are welcome until 7:30 p.m.

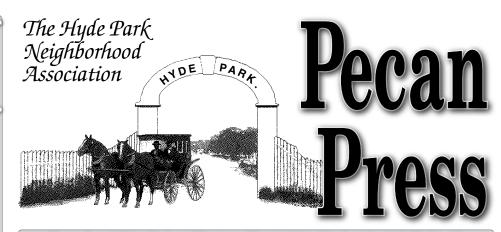
The HPNA will provide hors d'oeuvres and drinks. If you would like to share your bounty from the fall crops, please bring a dish to share or a liquid refreshment.

I. Jay Aarons will be tending the bar and will have a tag to label your gift and there will be tags at the tables to label your dish.

Be sure to include your name on the identifying labels. So often

Continued on page 4

LHD Walkathon; Questions and Answers (see page 12)



December, 2009 · National Register District Neighborhood · Vol. 35, No. 12

Fire Station Festival: A Focus on our Firefighters

The 35th annual Fire Station Festival was, by all accounts, one of the best ever! From the festively costumed parade participants to potluck goodies and free ice cream to the many neighbors laughing and sharing stories, the afternoon was a treat for all ages.

At the heart of it all were the gracious firefighters who each year lead the parade, encourage curious children to explore their engine, and invite the neighborhood to gather at Station # 9 — their home away from home.

Three shifts of five firefighters (four on duty at all times) work at Station # 9, and many of them, like the C shift's Lee Kendrick, requested their assignment

to Hyde Park. Not only does he get to respond to more calls than at his previous assignment, but "it's a closer-knit community than most, and it's nice to see the same people walking by every day."

Austin Fire Department Division Chief Duke Turpin had just completed his cadet class when he was assigned to Station # 9 in 1985. "I quickly learned to appreciate what a great assignment it was," he says. "There is a beautiful mix of people in the neighborhood, and



Four of Hyde Park's Finest (I-r): Fire Fighter Mario Gonzalez, Fire Fighter Danny Marquise, Lt. Lee Kendrick, Fire Specialist Robert Preddy - photo by Patty Mora <www.pattymoraphoto.

most are very friendly toward us. From what I have seen, most fire-fighters assigned to Station # 9 stay for many years unless they promote out."

Station # 9's Lt. Rob Acker, who serves on the A shift, agrees. "I feel like the relationship is closer than any other in the city. We have a lot of contact with the neighborhood through organized events, and people stop by just to say hello or show the engine to their children."

Continued on page 3

From the President's Desk:

Long Overdue: An Office for HPNA!

Hello Neighbors! I'm pleased to report that the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association has now leased an office space at the Austin Groups for the Elderly building located on Cedar Street at 38th.

The purpose is to store and properly maintain historical neighborhood archives, pictures and other documentation and have an official office for committee meetings. HPNA will still hold our general neighborhood meetings at the Hyde Park United Methodist Church. Currently, many neighborhood files have been stored in homes, garages, and storage facilities over the

Pecan Press

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many decades. The members of the Steering Committee will be going through the many files and pictures as they come forward and will be setting up the office. This is long overdue!

As I mentioned in the last Pecan *Press*, I am preparing a listing of Past Presidents of HPNA list, which document the significant events which occurred during their tenure. I have already received a lot of information and will continue with this project. I hope to have this listing ready for the Pecan Press soon. Having archival material along with historical pictures of prior years HPNA events readily available to me in the office, a personal retrospect with this project is occurring. If anyone has any historic pictures of Hyde Park, HPNA would be pleased to have a copies of them and will make arrangements to obtain them.

As I sifted through the many old pictures and newspaper clippings, it became clear that issues that affected Hyde Park in the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s and today are still in play! Many of these issues relate to potential demolitions of houses. Even with the National Register District and the Neighborhood Conservation Combining District zoning overlays, the historic neighborhood still does not have any real protection. For example,

ASH (Austin State Hospital) Volunteer Services Council to Neighbors: HELP!

Namely, help ASH patients have a happier holiday by donating to the Patients' Wish List -- more info at ASH Community Relations, 419-2330

there were old pictures of the three bungalows along the 4400 block of Avenue F. At first, I did not recognize them, but with the help of seeing the Shipe children's pool in the foreground and the houses in the background, I was able to make the determination. As we all know, these houses were demolished a couple of years ago and the lots stand empty today. I trust you'd agree that this is NOT the sort of legacy want to leave our children, and their children.

I hope everyone has a safe and happy holiday season and I look forward to a new and exciting 2010!

David Conner
 HPNA President
 daypaycon@yahoo.com

Hyde Park Neighborhood Association P. O Box 49427 • Austin, TX 78765 http://www.austinhydepark.org

http://www.austinhydepark.org - HPNA Officers/Steering Committee - David Conner daypaycon@yahoo.com Co-Vice Presidents • Cynthia Majors Lyons • majorslyon@homesinaustin.net .. 407-8080 Lisa Harris • Ljharrisus@yahoo.com...... Co-Secretaries • Denise Girard • dmgirard@grandecom.net.. Sally Robey • hotelrobey@aol.com......956-536-1544 Co-Treasurers • Carol Jackson • caroljackson@austin.rr.com I Jay Aarons • ijaarons@aol.com • PO Box 49427, Austin, TX 78765 Additional Steering Committee Members: • Dorothy Richter • Stan Kozinzky • Wanda Penn • Kent Rosivi • Paula Rhodes • Mark Fishman **HPNA Committee/Task Forces** (w/chairs) AISD • Ann S. Graham, 3815 Ave H..... Alley Coordinator • Carol Burton, skywash@austin.rr.com...... Austin Neighborhoods Council Rep. • Lisa Harris, ljharrisus@yahoo.com Beautification VOLUNTEER NEEDED Children's Programs • VOLUNTEER NEEDED Church/Neighborhood Liaison • Niyata Spelman, 3802 Ave. F. 459-8349 Communications/Web • Robin Silberling, robin@wcook.org.....452-1783 Crime & Safety • Carol Welder, cjwelder@msn.com......459-6205 Development Review Catherine Moore, chmoore@austin.rr.com569-1047 Finance • Nick Van Bavel, nvb123@yahoo.com Graffiti PatrolVOLUNTEER NEEDED Homes Tour • Barbara Gibson, bg@ghrdlaw.com..... Membership • Jim & Eileen Genevro, jgenevro@earthlink.net...401-3803 Neighborhood Planning • Karen McGraw, 4315 Ave. C459-2261 Local Historic District • Lorre Weidlich, lweidlich@mail2sevenseas.com Shipe Park • Mark Fishman, mlfishman@gmail.com656-5505 Sidewalks • Michelle Lee, michelle_lee7@hotmail.com..... Social • Deaton Bednar, deatonbednar@grandecom.net..... Tree Preservation • JP Moore, johnpaulmoore@austin.rr.com ... 789-7025 Triangle Development • Cathy Echols, 4002 Ave. C206-0729 Zoning • Dorothy Richter, 3901 Ave. G......452-5117

Fire Station Festival...

...cont'd from page 1

Some regular visitors may have noticed that the station sports a shiny new engine. The 2009 Contender is a bit smaller than the previous engine, so it fits more easily in the station, which is both older and smaller than most. This investment demonstrates the AFD's consideration of the station, which in turn appreciates the neighborhood's support. "The neighborhood has made its feelings known—on more than one occasion—when city leadership was considering closing Station # 9, and that makes us feel wanted and appreciated," says Lt. Acker.

With a true mix of populations in their service area, the team at Station # 9 responds to a wide variety of both medical and fire calls. "The most heartwarming moments are always when you are able to help someone and they appreciate it," says Lt. Acker. "It can be just assuring them that their smoke detector malfunctioned and their home is not burning, or helping someone at a car wreck when they are scared and not sure what to do."

Robert Priddy of the C shift remembers one particular call during his first year at Station # 9. "We responded to a call at an apartment complex from a man having a heart attack. We revived him, and he showed up at the Fire Station Festival a couple of weeks later with a shirt that said 'I Love Station # 9'."

Whether they're talking to folks at the Festival or during other visits, the firefighters try to touch on fire safety as much as possible. "We always try to include safety messages in our talks, so kids will know not to hide from us in the event of a fire, and also so

their parents will keep their smoke detectors working." (Remember, working smoke detectors are the single most important factor for occupants to survive a structure fire!)

Whether you've benefited from the immediate response and support of Station # 9, know someone who has, or simply hear the siren as the firefighters race down the street, you probably feel more secure knowing that the station is close by. The Fire Station Festival celebrates both the station's history and its ongoing presence in Hyde Park, and the firefighters appreciate the neighborhood's unique passion for their station.

While Division Chief Turpin is no longer at Station # 9 every day, he enjoys participating in the Festival when he can. "It gives us a greater attachment to the neighborhood, and we enjoy meeting our neighbors when it is not an emergency situation," he says. "Thank you for caring about us, and thank you for showing it."

Anne Hebert

Thanksgiving = Giving thanks to...

- ...Michelle Rossomando, who has recently joined the Development Review Committee;
- ...LaDonne Lloyd, who has kindly agreed to succeed Celeste Cromack in coordinating mailout distribution of the *Pecan Press*;
- ...Linda Anderson, who has stepped up to oversee *Pecan Press* distribution on Avenue B;
- ...Michelle Lee, who has agreed to chair the sidewalk committee.
- Thanks to folks like these, the volunteer spirit is alive and well in Hyde Park!

Hyde Park Neighborhood Association Enrollment	2009-10 Membership	HPNA Membership Info
NamePhone		All memberships expire on September 30th of each year.
☐ I wish to be notified via email of HPNA meetings and events.	Bring to an HPNA meeting, or send to:	Membership in HPNA is open to all residents aged 18 years or older who reside within the boundaries of Hyde Park or
Dues (per person) ☐ Standard - \$5/year ☐ Senior Citizen- \$1/year	HPNA Membership P.O. Box 49427	within 300 feet of the designated boundaries.
☐ New Member ☐ Renewing Member	Austin, Texas 78765	New members, and members who lapse in dues for over six months, are eligible to
Payment: ☐ Check ☐ Cash Date All memberships expire on September 30th of each year.	Make checks payable to HPNA.	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:

Editor, Pecan Press
4106 Avenue F
Austin, TX 78751
<hgthomas@youthlaunch.org>

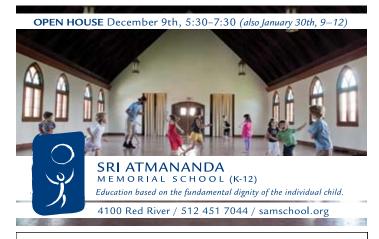
*Send your poems to:

Nancy Taylor Day 4001 Duval Austin 78751

Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return of your materials.

<poemmom@gmail.com>

Note: The *Pecan Press* will not publish unsigned/unattributed poetry. All poems (even if written under a pen name) must carry a name and address or phone number for identification and verification purposes.





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Holiday Party, December 12th ...

...cont'd from page 1

another neighbor is delighted by the dish and wants to compliment the giver.

We have an interesting, diverse, beautiful, caring neighborhood. I know first hand that our reputation as a great neighborhood has spread to the East Coast. There are many reasons we have a great neighborhood. One important reason? You are "great" people. Collectively, we have even more power to do what is right for our neighborhood and for our city. If you aren't a member of HPNA, please join. Bring \$5 and as you pick up your name tag at the front door, let them know you want to join.

The historic homes in our neighborhood are the visual representation of our great neighborhood. The Local Historic District designation is designed to protect and enhance existing historic structures to preserve our past. I think of this as moving the past with us into our future as a part of a great neighborhood. You will have the opportunity to sign in support of this effort. More information may be found here <www.austinhydepark.org>. Lorre Weidlich and other HPNA members will also be there to answer your questions.

Gifts are a part of any holiday celebration and we again want to ensure that the boys and girls at Helping Hand Home for Children in Hyde Park have a wonderful holiday. Linda Pennington obtained their wish list for us, which is printed below. Please giftwrap the item and write on the outside of the package what is hidden inside to help the staff at the Home sort the gifts. Now, to the list:

- New, not used Children's DVD's New releases or Disney movies
- New, not used Children's CDs child-friendly such as Kidz Bop or soothing sounds
- Shower Radios
- Large Duffle Bags
- Child-friendly Posters nothing provocative, violent, or scary (for example, no monsters)
- Night Lights
- Stuffed Animals
- New, not used Children's Dress-up Clothes/Costumes
 Please do not include cosmetics.
- Child-friendly Board Games and Puzzles of fewer than 100 pieces
- Coloring Books and Washable Markers
- Personal portable CD players & over-the-ear type headphones
- Razor-type Scooters
- Target or Wal-Mart Gift Cards

Please let me know if you need additional information. I so hope to see you at the party!!

Deaton Bednar, HPNA Social Chair <deatonbednar@grandecom.net>

Large Tree on Caswell Mowed Down

I probably should have been more vigilant, but I really didn't think it would come to this. On the morning of November 4, a developer and his team of workers gathered outside his property and began the final destruction of a large tree that had survived the recent removal of a small residential home.



Before - photo by Doris Coward

With the house gone, I had a clear view of the destruction that had occurred in the back yard. Trunks, limbs and brush blanketed the property at 4810 Caswell Avenue in North Hyde Park. The only green standing was a large tree that stood in the middle of the back yard. It had survived the removal of the house, but its branches had been severely butchered.

Thinking the tree might meet the same de-

mise as the others, I called neighbor Doris Coward on my way to work and asked her to come and take photos. She did. Her photographs are probably the only reminder of a tree so large that Doris said she couldn't completely get her arms around it.

At work, I connected with the tree folks with the City of Austin. They e-mailed me the permit and dispatched an inspector to the premises. The permit confused me as the owner was not Gil Lohr, but the previous one. Further, it indicated the new structure would be an expansion of the original house, which had been removed the previous day.

A conversation with the city arborist

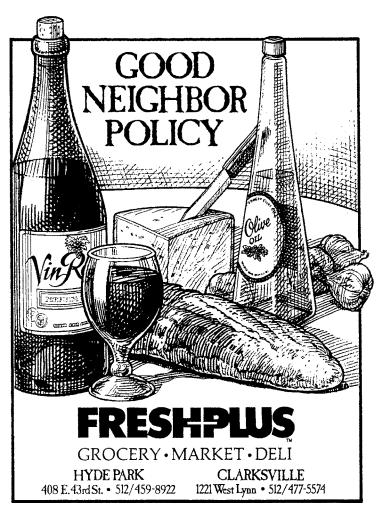


After - photo by Hermelinda Zamarripa

the following morning suggests the owner may have violated permit conditions to save the trees. What the City's final report says remains unknown. What I am certain of, though, is that the trees were sacrificed for development purposes ... again.

What can one do to stop this? Obviously I don't have the answer since it happened right under my nose. It just doesn't seem right.

- Hermelinda Zamarripa









"Where Families Grow Together"

9:15 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Morning Worship

Hyde Park Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

610 East 45th Street (512) 452-2596 www.hydeparkcc.org

Youth Groups

1-12 Grades, meet on Sunday evenings. We will meet from 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.



HPNA November Meeting Minutes

The full moon shone for attendees arriving at the HPNA November meeting.

The lead speaker, Linda Cox, Program Coordinator for **Pandemic Flu Preparedness** Austin/Travis County Health & Human Services Dept., came to share updated information on the H1N1 virus and its prevention. H1N1 is a pandemic virus meaning that it has occurred worldwide and that its effects are generally unknown because of its recent appearance, unlike a seasonal virus which is more localized and generally relatively mild. Seasonal flu symptoms include coughing, sneezing, body aches, sudden onset of fever over 100 degrees (that hit by a truck feeling). H1N1 has the same general symptoms as seasonal flu but often also has gastrointestinal symptoms. At this time it seems that the groups of people most adversely and severely affected by the H1N1 virus are pregnant women, the old, the very young, and those of any age with a chronic health condition. When you sneeze or cough and are infected with the virus, the droplets spread 3-6 feet and can live up to 48 hours, depending on the environment on which they land. The best way to curtail the spread of flu is to STAY HOME if you are sick.

Refer to <www.texasflu.org> and <www.flu. gov> for up-to-date information about the pandemic and for information about local vaccine availability and what population groups are eligible. Pregnant women, those ages 6 months to 24 years, those with chronic illnesses and caregivers for those less than 6 months will be the first groups to receive vaccine.

Our next speaker was John Paul Moore, chairman of the Hyde Park Tree Task Force. He came with upto-date information on the City of Austin's proposed **Heritage Tree Ordinance**. He outlined the work the task force has performed since the initial draft ordinance was presented in Spring, 2009. John Paul explained the process and noted the participation and recommendations of the Environmental Board and the Urban Forestry Board. The Austin Neighborhoods Council has already adopted a resolution supporting most of the language of the draft ordinance. Mr. Moore proposed a HPNA Resolution on Heritage Tree Ordinance and asked the HPNA members present to approve it. The resolution incorporates provisions that are both specific to Hyde Park concerns and also show solidarity with the language of the the Austin Neighborhoods Council recommendations. In his estimation, the most pressing need for the ordinance is in dramatically increased mitigation rates for removal of heritage trees, as well as the issue of public notice, input and appeals so that others besides the ones who seek to remove these trees have some standing. At-

Continued on following page

tendee Mark Fishman made the motion to support and Lisa Harris seconded. The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions. HPNA President David Conner closed the meeting by reminding everyone of the **HPNA Holiday Party Saturday, December 12 at 6 pm**. All are welcome. There will be food and drink as well as opportunities to join HPNA for \$5 or renew your membership for another year. Those who own property south of 45th within the proposed Local Historic District will also be able to pick up and sign the forms to support the District.

Denise Girard, HPNA Co-Secretary, <dmgirard@grandecom.net>

Hyde Park Poets——

What Matters in a Poem

The meter is what matters.
Don't bother with the meaning.
That comes later with the reader.
First you greet her.
Then you seat her.
Then you tell her
you're a writer.
Could you read her
what you wrote her?
It won't work
without the meter.

 Elzy Cogswell, President and Museletter Editor, Austin Poetry Society (512) 452-4314 <poetryplease@mail. utexas.edu>

Letters Dept.

"Mayor" Richter to Neighbors: THANK YOU!

At the recent Fire Station Festival I was given a lovely bouquet when I was introduced to give the Walter and Dorothy Richter award. That was so unexpected and surprising that I don't think I properly showed my appreciation. So, to the person who came up with this idea to present me with the flowers and to those who agreed, I would like to say a Big Thank You.

Seeing all the children in the parade and at the fire station was a big thrill. Hyde Park was a dying community when we moved here in the 1960s. It was hard for me to find 20 kids to demonstrate at the station in order to get the newspaper coverage that the station was going to be closed.

So, for someone who has been here nearly 50 years and to have witnessed the wonderful changes and to selfishly think I might have had something to do with it, naturally makes me proud. I could not and did not do it alone. So. thanks to all!

— Dorothy Jean Richter

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HPNA Approves Resolution on Heritage Tree Ordinance

Note: Hyde Park representatives, along with those from the Save Our Springs Alliance, Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance, Austin Neighborhoods Council and the Austin Heritage Tree Foundation have been working toward stronger protections for our treasured canopy of mature shade trees. Some version of a new Heritage Tree ordinance is now scheduled to go to the City Council in January and we hope a convincing crowd of Austinites will show up at City Hall in favor of the strongest possible protections. Climate change is rendering these trees irreplaceable and they need much more effective protection from destruction by developers, droughts and the city itself. To that end, members of the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association approved the resolution below.

WHEREAS members of the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association value the essential contribution to our quality of life of the mature trees that shade our yards, streets and alleys and;

WHEREAS we recognize that changes in our climate will mean many of the heritage trees we so value today can never be replaced and;

WHEREAS we note with alarm the number of significant mature trees that have succumbed to drought, development pressure and the operation of municipal departments are rapidly depleting the urban forest that is so essential a part of our neighborhood.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association recommends that the proposed Heritage Tree Ordinance be adopted with the following provisions:

- 1. Any variances to the ordinance that contemplate removal of a Heritage Tree 24" DBH or above should be subject of widely disseminated public notice, be reviewed publicly by an appointed board or commission rather than approved administratively, and any appeal rights should apply both to applicant and objecting parties.
- 2. Variances allowing Heritage Tree removal should only be granted when their preservation prevents all reasonable property uses, rather than simply the desired use in a particular site plan, and subjective criteria such as "dying" should not be allowed to justify removal.
- 3. The method of calculating the diameter for Heritage Trees should be consistent with the method currently applied by the City in its Protected Trees ordinance.
- 4. No city department should be exempt from provisions of the ordinance as applied to the actions of citizens and homeowners.
- 5. A comprehensive mitigation and compliance incentive program higher than that currently applied to Protected Trees should include an explicit mitigation formula, such as 3- or 4- to 1, and/or be based on the basal area of the removed tree, and should include penalties sufficient to serve as a strong deterrent to non-compliance with the application and permitting process.
- 6. In addition, the City should consider protecting additional native species that are important to the region's natural heritage but that may never reach 24" DBH.

Hyde Park Neighborhood Association
Adopted by unanimous vote of members present November 2, 2009

(Thanks to HPNA Tree Preservation Chair John Paul Moore for passing on this information.)

Don't get mauled

You have a choice! Shop local this holiday season The North Loop IBIZ District makes your decision easy with so many special deals!

Apparition Skateboards 1/28: Buy 1, Get 1 half-price clothing and shoes. First week of December-20% off

clothing and shoes.

Austin Amplifier

Sat. 11/28: 10% off on Ampli-fier Sales and reduced rates

Blue Velvet

Vintage Bring in this ad for 20% off throughout December.

Counter Culture Vegan

Follow Counter Cul-ture Vegan's holiday sales on their new website.

Musical Exchange

Buy one set of guitar strings, get one free with this coupon for the month of December. Limit one discount per customer, per coupon.

Sandra's Boutique Ministry

Sandra's Boutiques Ministry alway offers new and used designer clothes for free!

Forbidden Fruit

Fri 11/27: 20% off store-wide sale, plus free hot cider, spiced wine and holiday treats. Free gift for first 50 shoppers spending \$10 or more. Sat. 11/28 and Sun. 11/29: Store-

Monkey Wrench Books

Play it Again Music Center Good through 12/31/09.

Room Service Vintage

Room Service totebag free with purchase of a \$35 gift certificate throughout the holiday season.

Smart Concepts

Throughout the holiday season, get keys made at half price and get 20% off on remodelling jobs!

Get Hip to the Strip!

23 locally owned businesses on North Loop Blvd. between Chesterfield and Martin have holiday delights waiting for you. www.twitter/northloopibiz

small business

www.facebook/northloopibiz www.ibuyaustin.com

Wassail

a Solstice Christmas family celebration



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> 5:30 pm, Dec. 20, in Hyde Park at Sri Atmananda School 4200 Red River 78751

Help raise funds for Kids for Kids, to help children in Sudan.

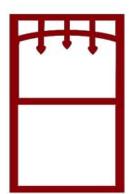
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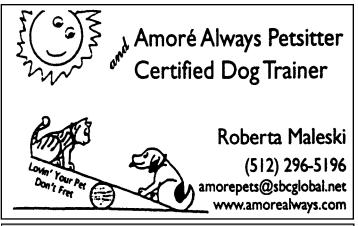


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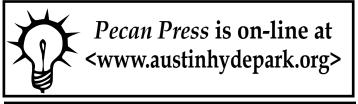
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On the Intelligence of Turkeys

(Editor's Note: Since it was Turkey Day not all that long ago, and many of you will be eating some additional turkey(s) over the holidays, we are pleased to share this delightful piece by the late Walter Richter, whose "Corner on Politics" column was a staple of the Pecan Press for many years. Our thanks to his wife and our "mayor-for-life" Dorothy, who discovered the piece in her archives and brought it to our attention.)

ou cannot tell by looking at a turkey that **I** he has a brain, but I am here to tell you he has, even if he is likely to loose his head about this time of year.

I am sure not many people are particularly interested in the intellect of a turkey, just like they do not care if Marilyn Monroe ever got past the third grade. Some things when you have them do not need

But since this is the season when the succulence of the Noble Bird is a matter of considerable moment to us, I feel obligated to pay him some small homage.

My respect for the turkey's brainpower dates back to the days of my boyhood in the hills and sticks of Burnet County when, for some reason or other, our family raised a few turkeys. I express uncertainty about our objective because I am reasonably sure we never made any money at it.

The variety of turkey we raised had only a token attachment for our farm establishment and asserted his independence by roaming and roosting far afield. It was my lot to locate the nests of the hens during the proper season — once a year — and then make daily trips to pick up the eggs.

The procedure was to lock the hens up until they indicated their anxiousness to produce an egg by madly pacing up and down. There is a knack to knowing when a turkey hen can hardly wait any

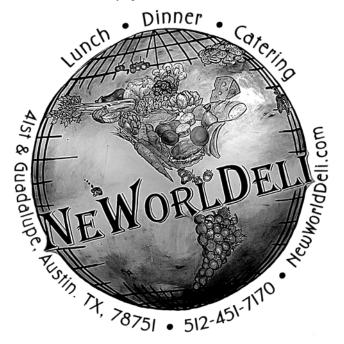
Even so, only if you have ever tried to follow a turkey hen to her nest can you know how shrewd and clever this critter is. She ducks and dodges, feints and fakes like an All-American quarterback. A favorite trick is to sit down in a suitable spot and con you into the notion that this is the place. As soon as you leave, up she hops and away she goes, and you have it all to do over again.

Yes sir, say what you will, the turkey is a pretty bright bird. And frankly, it sort of chokes me up each Thanksgiving when I think that I am eating someone who is probably smarter than I am.

Walter Richter

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The Local Historic District Corner

Writer's note: This column will appear regularly while the Local Historic District project is underway. If you have any questions or concerns about local historic districts that you would like addressed, please get in touch: lweidich@mail2sevenseas.com> or 300-2228.

I want to thank the participants of the Hyde Park Local Historic District Walkathon that was held on Sunday, November 22 to collect support signatures and the Hyde Park Local Historic District Block Captains: John Paul Moore, Catherine Moore, Karen McGraw, Paula Rhodes, Sharon Majors, David Conner, Mary Carolyn George, Carol Burton, Carol Jackson, Carolyn Grimes, Jack Evins, Sharon Brown, Sally Robey, Martha Campbell, Michelle Paris, Marie Carmel, Nick van Bavel, Alan Marburger, and Celeste Cromack. Good work, everyone!

By the time you read this, every resident homeowner in Hyde Park will have been contacted, either by a block captain or by a walkathon participant. If you are a resident homeowner and you haven't been contacted, please get in touch with me. We don't want to miss anyone!

During the collection of support signatures, we have encountered various questions and concerns. I realize most people have not read the ordinances. If you want a copy of these documents, contact me and I will get them to you. I'll also address the questions and concerns in this column.

Q: Will the local historic district force me to paint my house certain colors? (This is the most common concern I encounter.)

A: NO, NO, NO! The design standards do not even mention color!

Q: If Hyde Park becomes a local historic district, will the "demolition by neglect" ordinance apply to us?

A: The demolition by neglect ordinance applies to all of Austin. It doesn't matter whether a house is in a local historic district or not.

Q: Will becoming a local historic district allow the city to force us to make repairs or restorations?

A: No. Your house as it exists is grandfathered. As David Conner has stated, "The ordinance will not require homeowners to make any changes to their contributing or non-contributing structures. If you want to return non-contributing structures to contributing status when those structures are non-contributing due to alterations, there are tax benefits that will be granted to you as long as you meet the requirements. This is a great incentive for the homeowner, and, to be very clear, has nothing to do with government take-over or "the taking" of property."

Continued on page 14

JUST A FEW PHOTOS TO REPRESENT THE MANY NEW SIGNERS OF SUPPORT!

ADDITIONAL SIGNED SUPPORTERS

OF THE HYDE PARK LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

(SINCE THE JULY PECAN PRESS PHOTO)



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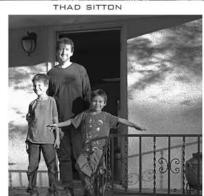


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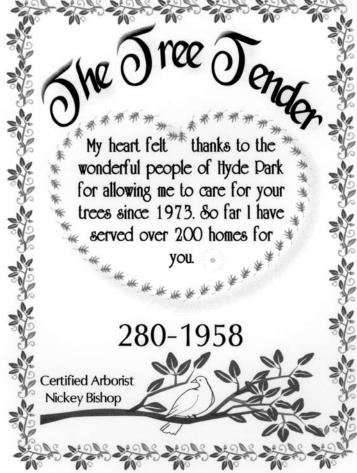
GARLAND TURNER & ANNE HEBERT

SUPPORT THE HYDE PARK LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT!

NOTE: PICTURED ARE A FEW MORE OF THE NEIGHBORS WHO HAVE SIGNED ON AS SUPPORTERS OF THE HYDE PARK LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT. A LISTING OF THE NEW SIGNERS OF SUPPORT (SINCE THE LAST PECAN PRESS LISTING IN JULY) IS PRESENTED ELSEWHERE IN THIS ISSUE. REFER TO YOUR JULY ISSUE OF THE PECAN PRESS TO BE REMINDED OF THE INITIAL ROUND OF SIGNERS.

(PHOTOS & COMPOSITE ARTWORK BY CAROL COHEN BURTON)





Hyde Park Poets.



Wisdom Speaks to Youth

Looking back, I hear my years rattle. I grin at a stripling like you. Seven decades have taught me little. and what's next offers nothing new.

The years congeal into piles. My body starts withering away. Best make hay while the sun smiles. The best part is always today.

 Elzy Cogswell, President and Museletter Editor, Austin Poetry Society (512) 452-4314 <poetryplease@mail. utexas.edu>

Local Historic District Corner...

...cont'd from page 12

- Q: Will this give more power to the city or city bureaucrats?
- A: No. It will give more power to Hyde Park to control its future, to protect its historic structures, and to avoid the visual pollution of inappropriate development.
- Q: Do the design standards apply to existing commercial and apartment properties?
- A: Yes, there are specific sections of the design standards that address those categories of property. There are also general standards that apply to all types of property.
- Q: Will this add an extra layer of "red tape" to getting permits?
- A: No. Most of Hyde Park already has an extra layer of review by the Historic Landmark Commission, because most of Hyde Park falls within either the Shadow Lawn or the Hyde Park National Register Districts. The only thing that will change is that the review by the Historic Landmark Commission will be more than advisory.
 - Q: Why do we need this?
- A: In David Conner's words, "Historic and contributing structures can be demolished unless the neighbors or the association fight and file expensive lawsuits. The neighborhood cannot afford to file lawsuits anytime a developer comes in and wants to change the historic fabric for profit. Drive by the block of 4400 Ave F and other lots within the neighborhood where contributing structures once stood and which are now empty."

And as Catherine Moore succinctly puts it, "The LHD is the only mechanism available in Austin to preserve the historic character of Hyde Park."

Lorre Weidlich Chair,
 Hyde Park Local Historic District

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Letters Dept.

Speaking Out Against the Local Historic District

I want to voice objection to declaring Hyde Park a "Historic Area Combining District." This re-zoning is a bad idea. Much like giving to someone a gun that can easily be used against them, the new "HD" gives us little protection against tear-downs, but gives unprecedented powers to City bureaucrats—unelected, serve-for-life people in power—who, as a result of the new ordinance, will take control of even our doors, windows, driveways, garages, and porches and porch lights, not just our houses.

This ordinance does not apply only to developers and their new construction. It applies to everyone and to even minor remodeling and repairs. It is hard enough now to get a permit for even a seemingly small thing. With the new ordinance, there will be an entirely new layer of red tape, certificates, delays, investigations, hearings, and expense, even before we can legally get a permit, for even minor remodeling or changes we now can undertake. We already pay contractors to stand in line waiting. There will be weeks-worth of delay under this ordinance.

And under the new ordinance, the design regulations will not even apply to existing commercial and apartment properties! Or to property owned by the City itself. And possibly not to the churches. How convenient for them! The apartment properties, meanwhile, can sign the petition (and they'll be more heavily weighted because they own more land), and they will enjoy the historic atmosphere that we'll provide their tenants, without themselves being bound by any new restrictions.

While the new ordinance will give the City new power to stop many changes we now can make to our homes, it will also, at the same time, strengthen the City's power to force us to make the repairs and restorations the City wants to be made. (Yes, that has already been passed). Effectively, also, the City can force financial disclosure on those who refuse. "But City government will be reasonable and compassionate," some will say.

The losers in the new LHD are the homeowners. Hyde Park, under the new HD, will be transformed into a suburban-type HOA-a home owners' association that tells you what you can and cannot do, even on relatively minor things like screening in a porch, or the outdoor lights. With one twist. Unlike the HOAs, the regulators won't be us, as residents. The regulators, for Hyde Park, will be City bureaucrats, with the power of criminal penalties.

People should not sign this petition. Those who have signed should withdraw their support, and I will assist anyone, and provide a document, for those who wish to do so.

At a minimum, we should take more time to look at this. There has been widespread mis-information about what this LHD ordinance actually will do, virtually no understanding of what the ordinance actually says (I have not met one person who has read it, before signing), and too much facile talk about how signing on to this flasco will "protect" Hyde Park.

I plan to follow up with more information and organize some meetings so that we will know what we are doing before the train that's leaving the station gets further down the track.

— Mary Lou Serafine 220-5452 <sonata0516@yahoo.com>

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Speck Photography by Cindy

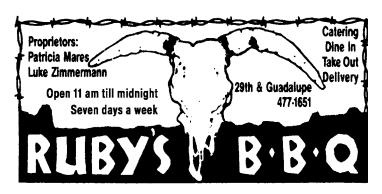


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Local Historic District Designation is Key to Preserving Hyde Park

Creation of a Local Historic District (LHD), overwhelmingly voted the Number One Priority of the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association by our members, is at long last nearing fruition.

Hyde Park has been a National Register Historic District since 1990, but this designation alone does too little to protect our homes from demolition. This requires local authorization now enjoyed by more than 2,300 LHD's created in other communities across America since 1931. Until recently Austin was the largest city in the United States that had not authorized such local districts.

This year, with the support of Hyde Park and the Austin Heritage Society, the City Council approved a new historic preservation ordinance, somewhat easing the still-very-stringent requirements for new LHD's and including provisions to limit "demolition by neglect" that already govern Hyde Park and the rest of our city, with or without LHD designation.

The City of Austin has been imposing zoning requirements for such things as building permits and setback requirements and city inspectors, since 1939. Adoption of the LHD will not mean any new bureaucratic hoops to jump through for such permits and remodeling, but will give greater authority to the city's Historic Landmark Commission (which already reviews projects inside the National Register District), to prevent demolitions.

This new authority will be granted by owners of property within Monroe Shipe's original Hyde Park by the workings of a Preservation Plan and Design Guidelines painstakingly researched, debated, crafted and refined by a broad-based group of your Hyde Park neighbors over more than a year.

The aim is to preserve the historic patterns for the neighborhood, such as peaked roofs, vertical windows, front doors facing the street and front porches. There is plenty of room for creative design within the standards. For example, the standards do not dictate paint color, roofing material or the brand of anything. These standards do not affect interior changes to structures in the district, in general cover nothing that is not visible from the street and do not dictate any change whatsoever to existing structures.

Getting this far has already been a monumental task, involving two years of fundraising, consensus forming and the detailed cataloguing of every structure in the neighborhood.

The HPNA would not have undertaken this considerable effort if we were not convinced it represents the only available mechanism in Austin to preserve the irreplaceable historic character of our community.

Recently, as growing numbers of neighbors read the plan and design standards and sign their support for the LHD, some individuals who for whatever reasons elected not to participate in the planning effort, have raised some misinformed, rather hysterical claims about their effects.

As our late neighborhood leader Senator Walter Richter used to say, "Folks are down on what they're not up on."

Continued on page 20





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SANDERSELLE, SUSAN
SANDERSELL

Letters Dept. contd from page 18

I urge everyone to read the plan and standards available for inspection on the HPNA website at http://tinyurl.com/LocalDistrict

If you still have questions, please contact LHD project chair Lorre Weidlich, HPNA President David Conner, any member of the steering committee or anyone who participated in our homegrown planning, including me. Chances are pretty good one of these people lives on your block.

This is not something being imposed by the city. It is a preservation option many of your neighbors worked very hard to develop.

John Paul Moore
 HPNA Steering Committee

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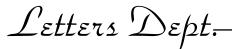


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Ban Leafblowers? An Alternate View

Dear Editor.

Recent issues of the Pecan Press have included calls by local resident Mary Lou Serafine to ban leaf blowers in Hyde Park. We're writing to express an alternate view.

While we agree that leaf blowers are a nuisance, we can't see the logic for banning them while allowing other similar devices. Power lawn mowers, edgers, weed eaters and chain saws are all noisy, create airborne particulates, and have low-tech quieter alternatives. It is not reasonable or legally defensible to ban only one on the list.

An additional concern about such a ban is its failure to take into account the varying situations of our neighbors. Some longtime residents of Hyde Park have physical limitations on their ability to rake leaves. Some have reduced incomes, limiting their ability to hire a yard service. Some neighbors simply have more deciduous trees in their yards, increasing the quantity of leaves. These differences don't indicate a lack of neighborliness or disdain for others but instead illustrate that a one-size-fits-all proposal doesn't work for everyone.

Further, leaf blowers are legal in the city of Austin and, in fact, do not violate any city ordinances. Perhaps it is the ability to create new categories of illegal items that led Ms. Serafine to suggest recently that Hyde Park secede from Austin. But as things now stand, leaf blowers are legal and cannot be singled out to be banned.

We suggest a different point of view. One of the facets of Hyde Park's character we value most is that it is a vibrant community, full of life. Rather than living in a museum — a slice of the past that is peaceful and quiet — we are blessed with children laughing, dogs barking, residents coming and going in cars and on bicycles, people tending their lawns and talking to the neighbors as they stroll along the sidewalks. It is the sheer life in Hyde Park, not the architectural facades, that truly give it the character we love so much. Because we enjoy living in such a vibrant area, we tolerate our neighbors and are grateful they tolerate us.

We urge the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association to refrain from taking any part in this issue, given its divisive nature. Instead, we suggest Ms. Serafine and the HPNA support projects that promote a sense of community. High on that list should be urging and aiding residents to install or repair their sidewalks. Their current broken or entirely absent states discourage our neighbors from pushing a stroller or walking with their toddler down our sidewalks. Other neighborly projects include support for Meals on Wheels, the Food Bank, and Big Brothers/Big Sisters. We think any of these would be more productive and more character-building than dealing with leaf blowers.



Kate Graham, Cindy Agee, Maureen Kilpatrick, Jenny Lobato

Tis the season... Happy Holidays!



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