

January Meeting

When: 7:00 p.m.
Monday, January 7, 2008

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 January 7th

- ❖ Ney Restoration Plans
- ❖ Traffic Circle Discussion
- ❖ Rezoning proposed for the Game Warden Tract on West 51st (vote)

See you there!

Minutes of the December 2007 HPNA General Meeting

President Elaine Meenehan called the Monday, December 3, 2007 meeting of the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association to order at 7 pm.

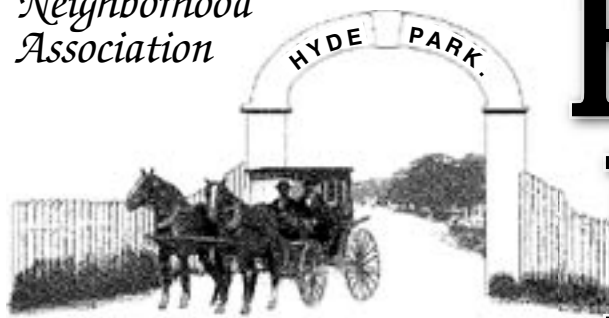
Nick van Bavel, Chair of the **Finance Committee**, reported that the Association had good financial performance in 2007. The Homes Tour in 2007 made more money than was anticipated.

Nick also presented the 2008 HPNA budget. The Finance Committee prepared the new budget based upon information from 2007, and the Steering Committee voted to approve the budget and forward it to the general meeting of HPNA.

The 2008 budget projects a small surplus. The major difference in the budget for 2008 is the addition of a sidewalk incentive program. The Steering Committee is working on the specifics of the program, which would help to create more sidewalks in the neighborhood. For more information, see the November 2007 *Pecan Press*. Also, the Finance Committee recommended that the Treasurer be

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*The Hyde Park
Neighborhood
Association*



Pecan Press

January, 2008 • National Register District Neighborhood • Vol. 34, No. 1

HPNA Holiday Party a Ho Ho Whole Lot of Fun!

The rain and cold weather couldn't dampen the holiday cheer and merriment had by all at the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association's Annual Holiday Party, held on Friday, December 14 at the historic **Woodburn House Bed and Breakfast** at 44th and Ave. D. Owners Kristen and Noel De La Rosa and HPNA President Elaine Meenahan greeted an estimated 250 friends and neighbors as they arrived, including Congressman Lloyd Doggett and his wife Libby, who dropped in to share their continued support of the Association.



HPNA Luminaries Share Yule Cheer with Congressman Lloyd Doggett (l-r: HPNA President Elaine Meenehan, Co-Secretary (and former President) Celeste Cromack, Homes Tour Chair Extraordinaire Lorre Weidlich, and Vice-President Jennifer Berbas) Photo by Jarratt Watkins

Partygoers enjoyed delicious food, catered by **New World Deli**, as well as dozens of tasty treats brought by Hyde Park neighbors. And everyone was abuzz about the champagne, generously donated by **Vino Vino**. Special thanks to the bartenders, Kevin Pape, Ja-

mie Caras, Guy Rochelle and Noel De La Rosa for keeping everyone's cup filled!

Kids of all ages gathered in the Carriage House to feast on pizza, donated by **The Parlor**, and to participate in several activities

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From the President's Desk: _____

Homes Tour '08: Desperately Seeking Someone

Do you like a challenge? Especially if the challenge is enormously rewarding? Do you ever think about volunteering and the lifelong warmth, recognition and friendships that come with it? Are you a great program manager? If so, your neighborhood needs you.

We are six months away from our 33rd Annual Hyde Park Homes Tour. However, we still need a Homes Tour Chair. At least 75% of the sub-committee chairs, house captains and volunteers are willing to continue their duties another year, but we need someone to lead and organize this group.

This event is not only loved by residents and Austinians alike – it is also our largest fund raising event. Running this event is

one of the most rewarding jobs the neighborhood has to offer and you will not be alone: you will be surrounded by a great team of like-minded volunteers, and a great deal of the necessary processes have already been put in place by past chairs. Whilst challenging, this job is also FUN!

If you are interested in chairing or co-chairing this great event, please contact Ann Graham at <annsgraham@gmail.com>.

Happy Holidays!

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



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.

Pecan Press

The Pecan Press is published monthly by the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association in Austin, Texas.
 Note: Each month's ad and editorial deadline is the 15th of month preceding publication.

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Hyde Park Neighborhood Association

P. O Box 49427 • Austin, TX 78765
 http://www.austinhypark.org

– HPNA Steering Committee –

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Additional Steering Committee Members: • Wanda Penn • Rob Clinchard • Dorothy Richter • Alan Marburger • William Cook • Stan Kozinsky

HPNA Committee/Task Forces (w/chairs)

AISSD • Ann S. Graham, 3815 Ave H.....458-8096

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Beautification • Larry Freilich, lmf@earthlink.net.....

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Crime and Safety Chairman • Carol J. Weider, 4101 Ave F.....459-6205

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Zoning • Dorothy Richter, 3901 Ave. G.....452-5117

Hyde Park Neighborhood Association Enrollment 2007-08 Membership

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All memberships expire on September 30th of each year.

December Meeting Minutes...

...cont'd from page 1

able to approve single expenditures up to \$300 that are within the budget. Currently, the Treasurer is allowed to approve up to \$200. Nick moved that the 2008 budget be adopted and that the Treasurer's approval limit be increased as discussed. Wanda Penn seconded the motion. The motion passed 18 to 0.

Catherine Moore reported that City Council was not going to proceed with the proposal for an anti-solicitation ordinance. Catherine also reported that the City Council had voted to deny the waiver requested by **El Dorado Market** at 5001 Airport Boulevard. The waiver would have allowed the sale of alcoholic beverages at the location which is within 300 feet of Ridgetop Elementary School.

John Paul Moore noted there were reports of more **burglaries** in the neighborhood. Neighbors discussed exploring possibilities to deter these crimes, including hiring a private security patrol. Elaine agreed to talk to the APD District Representative regarding the neighborhood's concerns.

Dorothy Richter mentioned the **City of Austin building inspection** is not catching errors in applications for building permits. She suggested we bring this issue to the Austin Neighborhoods Council to explore possible solutions to the issue. Catherine Moore stated that the Development Review Committee is happy to help anyone planning to build or remodel in the neighborhood.

There being no more business, Elaine adjourned the meeting.

— Pam Whittington HPNA Co-Secretary
<pamw46@yahoo.com>
452-9776

HPNA Holiday Party...

...cont'd from page 1

— including making gingerbread houses and Kwanza calendars. A highlight of the party was to see kids from throughout the neighborhood playing chase across the lawn! Special thanks to Judy Pape, Robin Cook, and Page Caras for organizing the fabulous kids' activities!

Special thanks to Jennifer Rochelle as well, for organizing the charity drive for Helping Hands Home for Children. Thanks to generous donations from Hyde Park residents, the children will enjoy a warm holiday season with new sheets, towels and comforters.

As chairs of this year's HPNA Holiday Party, we are especially proud of the camaraderie among all the neighbors and businesses who attended and/or supported this year's holiday party. It is events such as this that remind us how fortunate we are to live in such a unique and cherished community such as Hyde Park.

Happy Holidays!

— Kristen and Noel De La Rosa
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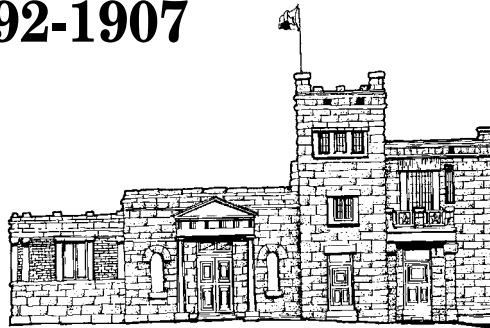
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From our earliest youth, we dreamed of an idyllic existence amidst woods and prairies... surrounded by the unspoiled beauties of nature... where, aided by the influence of art and science, each individual was to develop, unhampered, according to his own nature.

– Elisabet Ney to Bride Neill Taylor of a dream shared by Ney and her husband Edmund Montgomery

Formosa, the last studio created by sculptor Elisabet Ney in 1892, in the then "rural" suburb of Hyde Park, Austin, Texas, is considered Ney's abiding dream of "an idyllic existence amidst woods and prairies... surrounded by the unspoiled beauties of nature" made fully manifest.

Located on the northeast corner of Hyde Park, with native Texas plains extending far beyond, *Formosa* originally comprised not only the well known limestone castle we see today, but six acres of native Texas prairie and wildflower meadows along the banks of a wide and full Waller Creek. Ney purposely purchased the land for *Formosa* for its "remote, romantic" qualities.

In 1892, Ney designed the small studio resembling a small neo-classical temple. In 1902, she added additional modeling space, living quarters and a romantic tower study for her husband, Edmund Montgomery.

Ney also built living quarters for her help (first Ben, then Horace) and a traditional barn for her beloved horses (Asta followed by Pasha). Her friend, Colonel Mabry, supplied a tent she placed behind the building overlooking Waller Creek. Outfitted with a hardwood floor, cots, rocking chairs and oriental rugs, Ney and Montgomery often slept in the tent to be close to nature. Ney fenced the surrounding fields with wire and rough-hewn cedar posts.

Visiting Formosa 1892-1907

Arriving at *Formosa*, via carriage, horseback or on foot, friends would enter through a double fenced gate and follow a carriage drive looping from the gate to the building. They would

Continued on following page



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be simply served, most often by the lake, or under the live oaks or building porte-cochère. When entertaining the granddaughter and great granddaughter of Sam Houston, Ney served them tea outdoors on a hand-made table of rough hewn cedar planks covered with brown burlap. On this rudely constructed table, Ney placed a tablecloth of fine linen and served tea from a silver tea service and fine porcelain cups.

There is also the enduring story of Monroe Shipe driving to *Formosa* to show Miss Ney his new Stanley Steamer and accidentally backing over the picnic table sending all the plates, glasses and cups flying, to which Ney reacted with great laughter.

Significance

Formosa, now only a remnant of Ney's 1892-1907 compound, was not only the place where Texas's first outstanding sculpture was created. It was also a place of "legendary gatherings" at the turn of the century where Ney and her many friends talked of the possibility of a "new Texas" rich in arts and education. According to Ney's friend, Bride Neill Taylor, *Formosa* was the chief social center of culture in the city... and the privilege of a welcome there had come to be an honor eagerly coveted... About [an] al fresco table conversation played back and forth between the artist and her guests on subjects dealing mostly with the larger aspects of life, which gave many a listener a broadening of intellectual vision, a human livening up of already acquired knowledge...

Following Ney's death, her friends established the Elisabet Ney Museum and Texas Fine Arts Association (now Arthouse). They also helped establish the University of Texas Art Department and the Texas Commission on the Arts; all institutions supporting the arts in Texas that continue to this day.

— Mary Collins Blackmon
Curator, Elisabet Ney Museum

(Continued next month: Ney Restoration Plans.)

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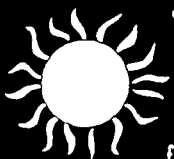
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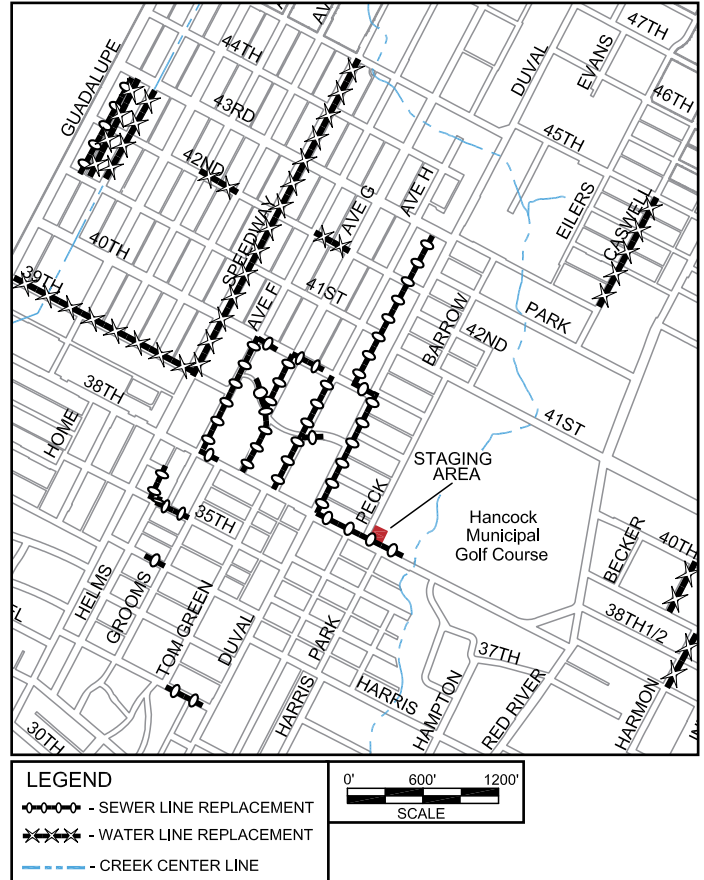
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Hyde Park Water & Wastewater Line Improvements

The work will occur primarily in an area bounded by 45th St. on the north, 32nd Street on the south, Guadalupe on the west and IH-35 on the east; a small portion of work will be performed on French Place which is east of IH-35. The project is scheduled to start in February.



The contractor will install approximately 10,000 feet of 8", 12" and 16" water pipes. The project also includes abandoning and plugging 6,800 feet of 6" and 8" diameter wastewater pipe so that the pipe no longer carries wastewater and installing 10,450 feet of new 8" diameter wastewater pipe as well as the relocation of seventy-two (72) private service laterals AT NO COST to property owners.

Private laterals are small diameter sanitary sewer lines that lead from each residence to the City's wastewater collection system. The portion of the lateral that is between the residence and the property line is owned and maintained by the property owner. However, improvements to the main sewer system make it necessary for these private laterals to be reconnected in a different location on the wastewater collection

Continued on following page

line, so the City's contractor will work with each property owner to make this reconnection successful. The private lateral will be tested to make sure it is operational after the contractor's work is completed. Property owners with private lateral relocations have already been notified.

Additionally, the project will include the restoration of pavement and vegetation affected by the construction effort.

The water line replacements will improve the water pressure and fire flows.

The wastewater line improvements are part of the work that must be undertaken in response to an Environmental Protection Agency Administrative Order, which requires replacement of specific portions of the City's wastewater infrastructure to prevent future sewer overflows. The overall deadline set by the EPA for the wastewater line improvements is June, 2009. If the City does not meet the deadlines, the financial penalty is \$27,500 per overflow per day. Please call 684-3204 for more information.

— *Crispin Ruiz*
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without land for a cradle.

— Robert Elzy Cogswell
November 2006

The Costume

She wears red Crocks
and a big-brimmed hat
a woman as slender
as orchid stems
I would say she dresses for
comfort, but we all dress
for comfort, even She Who
Must Be Beautiful.

— Nancy Taylor Day
September 2007

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Mind swirls, cinnamon clumps
in a to-go cup,
today I'll leave no footprints.

— Nancy Taylor Day
August 2007



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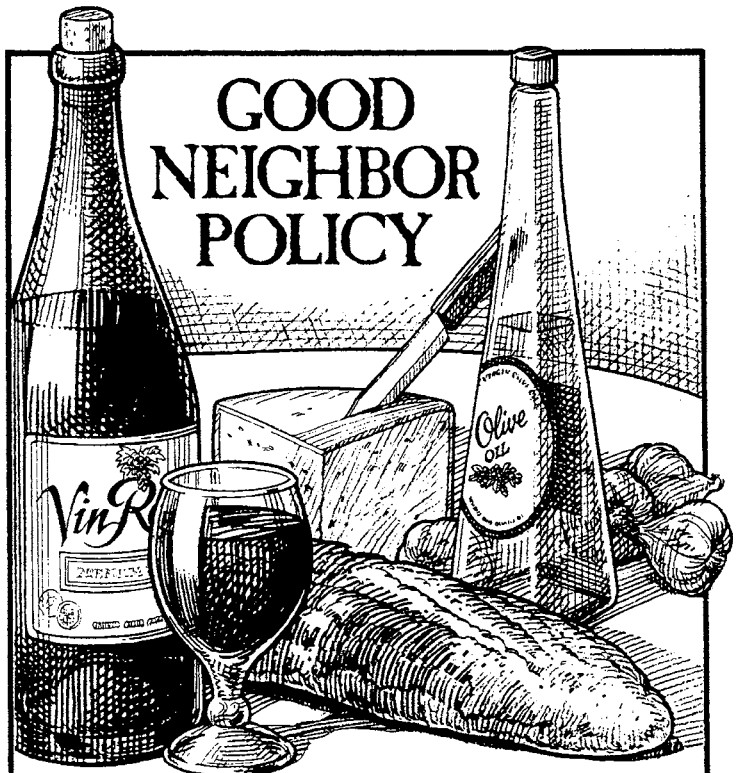
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Save The Ney, Wall and All

Dear Editor,

Last year, in response to urgent requests after the Ney was removed from the parks bond program, I joined many of you in contacting city council members and staff to have funding for the project restored.

I still support restoration of Ms. Ney's studio, but I never signed on to the previously unthinkable profligate, wasteful and disrespectful proposed destruction of the Violet Crown wall that has recently come to light.

Having only recently learned about this proposal, apparently made by eminent consultants from Vermont, I feel I was sold a pig in a poke. I sincerely hope, and will work to see, that this short-sighted folly can be remedied as the restoration plans go forward.

We have been told the handful of remaining members of the Violet Crown Garden Club, few if any of whom were involved in the erection of the wall in 1939 or reside in Hyde Park, have meekly assented to this revisionist destruction.

But I have heard from the children and grandchildren of VCGC members and a number of other neighbors who feel, as I do, that removing this wall erases an important expression of civic reverence for Ms. Ney, her work and her influence on this community and the world.

Having been fooled once, I am now quite skeptical of the plans, motives and agendas of those who would dismiss this wall as some barrier to appreciation of Ms. Ney, rather than what it is – an historic, full-throated expression of reverence and affection, and a tangible, historic tie to our most visionary forebears.

I will avail myself, and urge my neighbors who agree with me, to use every process and forum afforded me to find a way to save, in place, BOTH the wall and the studio.

After all, when you build a rock wall at a special, revered place, with a stone plaque designating its provenance, you are making a tribute to last the ages. As the descendants, literally and figuratively, of the makers of this tribute, we owe it to their memory to defend it. I suppose if Austinites had felt less reverence for Ms. Ney and her legacy, they would have just put up another wire fence.

Sincerely,

— John Paul Moore
<johnpaulmoore@austin.rr.com>

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Zoning Proposed for Game Warden Tract on West 51st Street

Neighbors have now met several times with CIS, the potential developer of the state Game Warden Tract on W. 51st Street, and on December 18 came to a substantial agreement regarding the specifics of the zoning required for this state land to be sold to a private developer. The proposal we have seen has about 100 dwelling units on 6.6 acres and is slightly more dense than our existing neighborhood. The proposal will be submitted to the Hyde Park list-serve by the time you read this so look for it there. The basic agreement is for the part of the tract that backs up to the homes on Rowena Street to be zoned MF-2-NCCD and the rest of the tract will be zoned MF4-NCCD. The use will be "Condominium" with the units likely looking more like townhouses. Those close to Rowena homes will be limited in height to 30' and 2.5 stories matching the current NCCD and will front to the west and have a 25' vegetative buffer that separates them from the existing homes. The remainder of the property will have some townhouse-looking units and one larger 4-story building near 51st Street that will slightly exceed the compatibility height limit (52'); however, this building will be several feet lower than the homes on Rowena Street due to the sloping terrain. The Hyde Park Planning Team and the HPNA Development Review Committee have hosted these meetings and will be bringing this proposal forward for general approval. The case has been filed at the City and will move through hearings in the coming months.

— Karen McGraw
 Chairman, Hyde Park Planning Team

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Blower Complaints Mount

Hyde Park homeowners are being asked to request that their lawn care companies stop using blowers due to the high-decibel noise nuisance and far-reaching dust, allergen, and gasoline-related air pollution that they cause. Blowers have big drawbacks and few benefits. In the words of one Hyde Park resident, "Since when do we need to blow off every paved surface in sight?"

Meanwhile, research is growing on the negative health and environmental effects of blowers, including the psychological, social, and physiological effects of the loud noise they generate. As a result, a number of cities around the country have banned blower use altogether. Mary Lou Serafine of the 4000 block of Ave. D is heading up an effort in Hyde Park to address this issue. Anyone who wishes to help or who has experienced problems with near-by blower use is asked to contact her at <Sonata0516@yahoo.com>. Look for a more detailed article on this issue in next month's *Pecan Press*.

— Mary Lou Serafine



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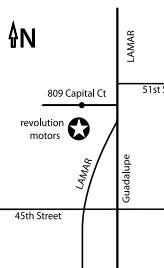


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Films That Make You Think Dept.:

THIRD WARD TX

Neighbors, please join the Hyde Park United Methodist Church's Social Justice and Action Committee, film director Andy Garrison, and film producer Nancy Bless, for a screening of *THIRD WARD TX*, Friday, January 18th at 7:00 p.m. in the church's Fellowship Hall located at 4001 Speedway, Austin.

THIRD WARD TX powerfully documents artists as catalysts for community renewal and personal transformation. It explores how Houston's left-for-dead Third Ward neighborhood was transformed by a group of visionary African-American artists led by painter Rick Lowe. Initially intending a temporary "drive-by" exhibition, their responsiveness to the voices and needs of the neighborhood instead led them into new realms. Their "Project Row Houses," has become an unprecedented model for community and personal renewal that has gained international notice. Project Row Houses provides new approaches for working with the "invisible city" struggling in the wake of thriving urban metropolises.

After the screening, there will be a discussion facilitated by the filmmakers and Hyde Park resident and arts producer, Ann S. Graham. Garrison, Bless and Graham are organizing the *THIRD WARD TX* Symposium to be held in Austin, April 4, 2008, to empower the Austin community with lessons learned from Project Row Houses.

This is part of HPUMC's "MoviesThatMake-YouThink Series." Admission is free and light refreshments will be provided.

For more info on the film, visit:
<www.thirdwardtx.com> or email <thirdwardtx@gmail.com>.

— Ann S. Graham

Hyde Parker Publishes New Book

Congratulations to noted horticulturist and landscaping design consultant Jill Nokes of 4200 Ave. F, whose latest book, *Yard Art and Handmade Places*, recently hit the shelves to widespread acclaim. More info about the book, and a sampling of the many positive reviews, can be found at:

<http://humanflowerproject.com/index.php/weblog/comments/yard_art_toiling_for_paradise/>



Yard artists; Mr. and Mrs. Sam Mirlez in front of their wonderland of birdhouses in San Antonio

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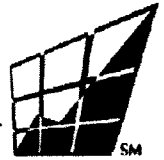
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HPNA Launches New Committee to “Go Green”: First Meeting January 16th

Neighbors, are you ready to be “Better OFF” – ie., to rediscover near-sustainable living through community action?

Are you interested in sharing ideas and methods for living “near off-grid” in an urban setting like Hyde Park? If so, I’m pleased to report that HPNA is forming a new committee to help neighbors lower their reliance on regional resources by learning to “go green” within our own neighborhood. This is a little different from other HPNA committees; anyone interested would simply meet on some regular schedule to discuss a particular topic of interest to the group. The group structure would be very loose – all HPNA members may attend meetings, propose a topic, get involved in demonstration projects, invite an outside expert, give a presentation, etc. No one would be expected to implement any of the topics discussed. Organizational details will be left to members who become involved.

Continued on page 18

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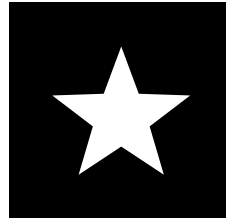
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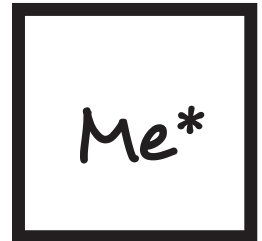
“Go Green” Committee Meets January 16th...

...cont'd from page 16

To get the ball rolling, Scott Harris of Treefolks will attend the first meeting – 7:00pm on Wednesday, January 16 at the Hyde Park Presbyterian Church (40th and Ave. B) to discuss back-yard orchards - planting fruit and nut trees, types of trees that should do well in Hyde Park, how to prepare the soil, how to maintain the health of the soil, pruning and maintaining mature fruit and nut (esp. pecan) trees, etc.

My goal for the committee is to remind ourselves of the satisfaction and rewards of local production of the essential elements for a good life in an urban environment. My belief is that there can be personal growth, better health, wiser choices and a deeper sense of community when we are involved in spending our brainpower, our labor and our own local resources instead of relying on regional or national institutions for this. And it should be fun!

– Larry Gilg <gilg@dieproducts.org>
(Larry is a former HPNA President)



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Address: **912 East 37th Street**

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Listed For: **\$419,000**

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Address: **301 East 38th Street**

FOR SALE

Listed For: **\$359,000**

Stunning restored duplex. Both 2/1 units upgraded but still w/historic charm. Live in one, home office/rent the other. Both rent for \$1250+/m. Huge lot backing the new "Sparky" park. Both units - hardwood flooring/central heat and AC/total kitchen upgrades/period detailing/separately fenced yards.



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