

# January Meeting

**When:** 7:00 p.m.  
Monday, January 5, 2009

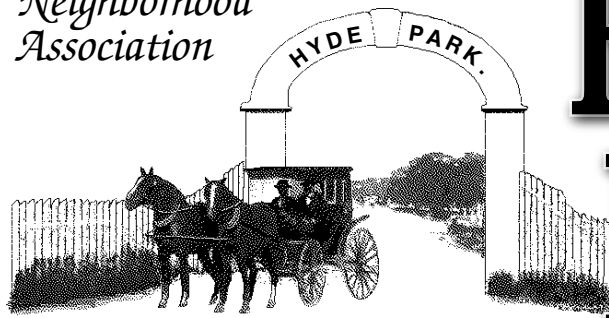
**Where:** Hyde Park United Methodist Church  
4001 Speedway

**Who:** YOU and your neighbors

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

**See You There!**

*The Hyde Park  
Neighborhood  
Association*



# Pecan Press

January, 2009 • National Register District Neighborhood • Vol. 35, No. 1

## Tapestry of Community on Display at Hyde Park Holiday Party

Perhaps Susan Kerr summed it up best: The Hyde Park holiday party is like a tapestry, a richly woven product of the myriad unique threads represented by this neighborhood's residents. And, as Jim Ellinger learned, it's also a great way to get a hot tip on a trustworthy auto mechanic (thanks to Lisa Harris!).

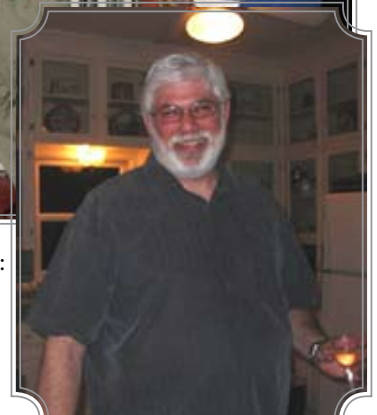
An English teacher and writer, Susan is a self-described "old-timer" of Hyde Park, having lived here since 1975. She has a remarkable memory and can vividly describe the various incarnations of the holiday party throughout the years. The one constant, she said, is the wonderful sense of interconnectedness among neighbors.

She also praised the party hosts, Richard MacKinnon and John Rebok (pictured above left with State Rep Elliott Naishtat, US Rep Lloyd Doggett and Lloyd's wife Libby), who graciously opened their 100-year-old Victorian home at the northeast corner of 42nd

**Continued on page 3**



Season's Greeters:  
Party photos by  
Lorre Weidlich &  
Alice Dewberry



# From the President's Desk:

Hello, I hope everyone had a nice and safe Holiday! I personally want to thank Deaton Bednar and her team of fellow- volunteers in planning the great HPNA Holiday Party and thank our gracious hosts, Rich MacKinnon and John Rebok, for allowing the party to be held at their wonderful home.

Now that the new year is upon us, there are a couple of important neighborhood- related matters to mention:

First, the 2009 HPNA budget is on track to be presented to the general neighborhood association meeting in January.

Second, the HPNA Steering Committee has selected a preservation consulting firm to assist in the Local Historic District (LHD) application process.

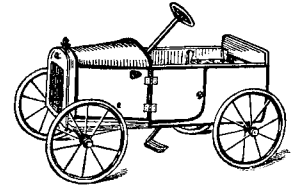
Third, (drum roll), we are only six months away from our 34th Annual Hyde Park Homes Tour! As everyone remembers, the Homes Tour did not occur last year, as we decided to focus instead on laying the foundation for our LHD effort. This event is not only loved by residents and Austinians alike, it is one of our largest fund raising events. So, I'm pleased to report that this year's Homes Tour Committee Chair is volunteer extraordinaire Barbara Gibson. Please let Barbara know if you have interest in volunteering for this wonderful event.

In mentioning fund raising, the HPNA raises money from basically two ways – advertising from the *Pecan Press*, and the annual Homes Tour (ticket sales, ad sales, and corporate underwriting). HPNA is very lucky that we have these fund generators, as other neighborhoods are not so fortunate.

With these funds, the neighborhood association can offer programs that benefit our residents. So, in the next couple of months, I will be writing in the *Pecan Press* about other committees such as Sidewalks, Children's Programs, Beautification and their purposes. However, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate in contacting any HPNA Officer or Steering Committee member. One more thing: I'd like to invite everyone to make one particular New Year's resolution: To become an active member with

the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association! So on behalf of the 2009 HPNA Steering Committee, I wish all our readers a happy and fulfilling New Year!

– David Conner  
 HPNA President  
 <daypaycon@yahoo.com>



## Pecan Press

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Note: Each month's ad and editorial deadline is the 15<sup>th</sup> of month preceding publication.

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## Hyde Park Neighborhood Association

P. O. Box 49427 • Austin, TX 78765

<http://www.austinhdepark.org>

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..... VOLUNTEER NEEDED

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

# Holiday Party: A Tapestry of Community...

...cont'd from page 1

and Speedway. Why were they willing to have an estimated 130 adults and 30 children traipse through their immaculate, three-story home? "Deaton asked us, and you don't say no to Deaton," said John. That was the laugh line, but the truth is they love to entertain guests and often hosted the Hyde Park socials of years past.

Deaton Bednar, of course, chairs the Social Committee of the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association and has helped to organize this event for the past four years. That involves lining up contributors, and, once again, NeWorldDeli proprietors Greg and Sarah Bontempo pitched in with a lavish spread that far surpassed standard appetizer fare. Carefully planned to minimize mess (an effort that Rich greatly appreciates), the menu featured smoked salmon, stuffed mushroom caps, pigs in a blanket, veggie sandwiches and more.

Partygoers raved. "I regret that I had only one cordon bleu; it was excellent!" said cabinet maker Mike Kintner. The desserts were contributed by attendees, who brought cookies and brownies and cakes homemade with TLC. HPNA provided wine, beer and soft drinks.

Continued on page 4



HPNA provided a welcome feast for all including Hyde Park's Mayor-for-Life Dorothy Richter.

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Hyde Park Neighborhood Association Enrollment	2008-09 Membership	HPNA Membership Info
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## 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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**Austin, TX 78751**  
**<hgthomas@youthlaunch.org>**

\*Send your poems to:

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**4001 Duval**  
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## Holiday Party Tapestry

...cont'd from page 3

### Community and Camaraderie

A goal of this event, Deaton said, was to emphasize community and camaraderie — and decidedly *not* to focus on any of the religious (or nonreligious) observations celebrated at this time of year. "It isn't a meeting," she explained. "We're not honoring some historic event. No one has to bring anything."

Nevertheless, bring they did, not only the baked goods, but also gift cards and checks and presents — enough to fill four large trash bags — for the Helping Hand Home for Children at 38th and Avenue B. In keeping with the theme of community, HPNA had encouraged donations for the 115-year-old not-for-profit agency, which offers residential treatment and foster care services for abused, neglected and abandoned youth. "It's a wonderful organization," Deaton said. Our neighbors, with the coordination and encouragement of HHH advocate Linda Pennington, clearly agree.



Generous gifts for Helping Hands Home for Children

Although such generosity is characteristic of Hyde Parkers, it was not a requirement to attend the party. And, despite the "no agenda" policy, prospective HPNA members were welcome to sign up on site. Association president David Conner reported that two people joined and two renewed their membership at the party.

Continued on page 6

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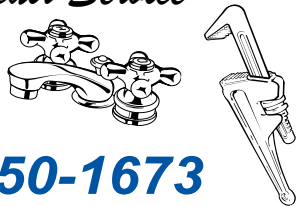
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## Holiday Party Tapestry

...cont'd from page 4



HPNA President David Conner gets to the point with Congressman Doggett

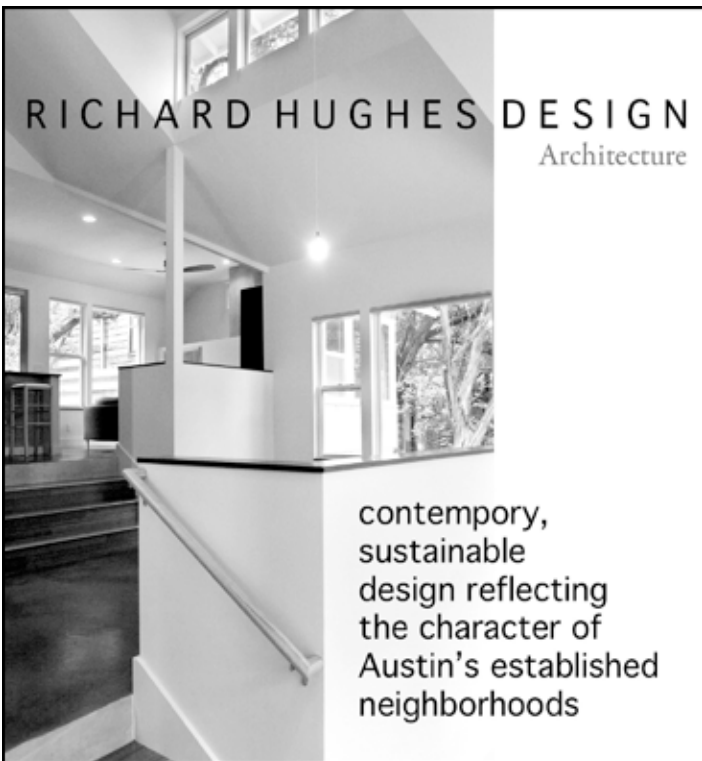
Still, said Deaton, "It is simply a time to come together and enjoy each other." On that count, like every other, the party was a smashing success, with festivities lasting until 11 pm.

Below are glimpses of some of the partygoers.

**The Vernons.** Jerry and Nancy are an amiable couple who relish the sense of closeness they find in Hyde Park, and even more so in the Towne Park Trail development, where they own a town house. "I grew up in a small town," said Jerry, "and even though I've lived all over the world, I love that this feels like a small town within a larger city." Local residents for nine years, the two cited activities such as HPNA meetings, parades and home tours for fostering community ties. "It really builds roots," Jerry said. Both are now retired, but Nancy, an artist, continues to work from a "tiny" studio in her home, and organized the artist exhibition at the past two home tours. Jerry does his part for the area by serving as a Crime Watch Block Captain.

**Sam Waring.** When asked why he attends the HPNA holiday parties, Sam drew from his mental storehouse of quotes. From the lore of mountaineering, "Because it's there," attributed to British climber George Mallory speaking of Mount Everest. Next drawing from his Lyle Lovett songbook, he paraphrased the poet/singer/musician/bandleader: "To see everybody you haven't seen since the last time somebody died." A local resident from 1976 to 1983, Sam was "in exile" until 1997, when he and his wife bought a

Continued on page 8



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## Holiday Party Tapestry

...cont'd from page 6

house at 47th and Avenue H. He enjoys the opportunity to catch up with his neighbors and the folks with whom he served in the Association a few years ago, when he was secretary.



Sam "Because it's there," Waring, being there.

**The Brognans.** When this couple entered the room with their two young children, heads turned. Yes, baby Knox is adorable, but it was 3-1/2-year-old Maeve who really stood out. Resplendent in a frilly white gown complete with tiara, she might have been a visitation from the Sugar Plum Fairy. Nope, "she's a princess in training," explained mom Mireya, who, with her husband, Chris, has lived in the neighborhood for about a decade. Maeve's finery is not only for holiday parties. She changes outfits many times a day and even dresses up for Hyde Park Pre-school. "But she's also a total tomboy and loves to dig in the dirt," Mireya laughed.

**The Firefighters.** It's well-known that Hyde Park loves its fire station. Nearly 40 years ago, the threatened closure of the 1930s building at 43rd & Speedway prompted the community to rally to its defense and led to the founding of the HPNA. Two subsequent threats were also defeated. The brave firefighters and EMTs of Engine 9 return the affection, and four of them, on duty and dapper in their uniforms, came to mingle with the residents they serve. But with walkie-talkies on hand and the engine parked right outside, they were ready to jump to action if necessary.

Continued on page 10



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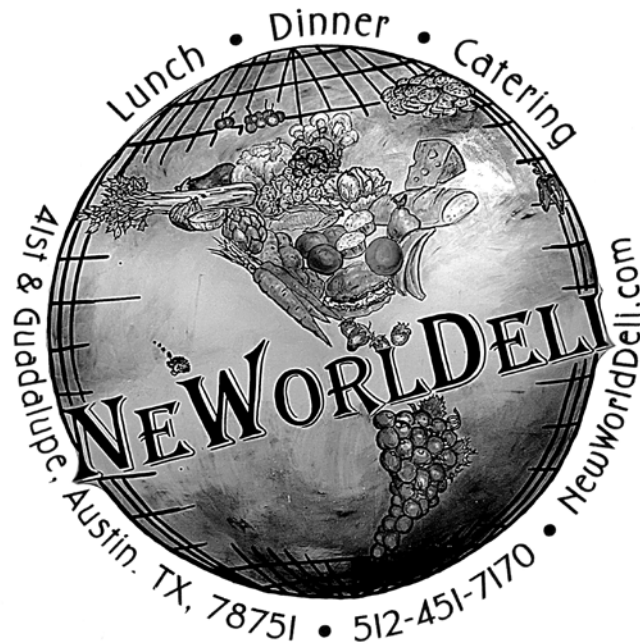
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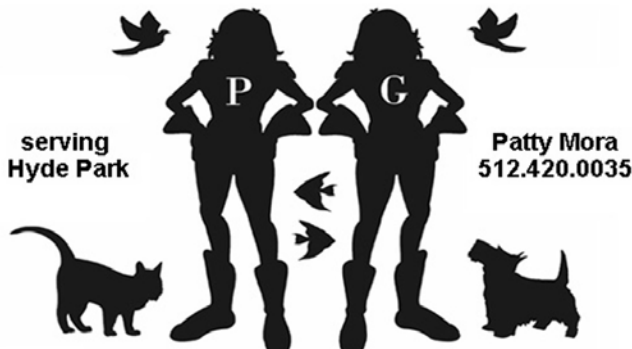
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## Holiday Party Tapestry

...cont'd from page 8

**William Cook.** A thousand residents and/or observers of Hyde Park know William's name, if not his face. A computer sciences professor, he has moderated the Yahoo news group, or listserv, for five years. William likes to "put a face to a name," and the party name tags made that easy to do. Group membership has exploded during his tenure as moderator, from about 20 to nearly 1,100. He attributes that, in part, to simple word of mouth. But also, when he first started, with no experience running such a group, he was anonymous, which he feels upset some people. After he took a more active presence, establishing policies and weighing in as both moderator and neighbor, trust — and activity — grew. Recently he found a co-moderator, which expedites the posting of messages and makes the news group even more valuable.



Putting a face to a name –William Cook

**The Nicholsons.** Taylor and David are excited to be new Hyde Parkers but, a little nervous about attending a party where they knew not a soul, they came fortified with an ice-breaker: a homemade tres leches/vanilla layer cake. Married for five years, the young couple bought a home at 50th and Avenue H in September 2007, but did extensive rehab before moving in last April. The new kitchen with its double oven was worth the wait, Taylor said. They learned about

Continued on following page

the party through the Yahoo news group and were glad to have a chance to make connections in person. Welcome!



Host Rich MacKinnon welcomes new Hyde Parkers

**U.S. Rep. Lloyd Doggett.** What HPNA party would be complete without perennial HP booster Lloyd Doggett? The UT graduate grew up a short distance from the party site and offers high praise for Hyde Park. He noted the diversity of its residents and the ways in which it is unique, and lauds the commitment to preservation of its character and homes. In fact, his two homes, just east of I-35 and in Washington, D.C., are both in lovely old neighborhoods that cherish their residential architecture. The neighborhood also is special to Rep. Doggett because it is here that, as a fledgling politician, he received support from two dear friends, Dorothy and Walter Richter, as he first sought office. With 14 years (to date) of service in the U.S. Congress, and having survived some curious redistricting, he remains a highly popular and valued legislator in the Austin area.

Thank you to the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association, its many committees, our extraordinary Social Chair Ms. Bednar, and the neighborhood residents and businesses that made this party a great success.

— Jaime Shimkus  
<jshimkus@grandecom.net>



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*Letters Dept.* 

**Austin State Hospital to Hyde Park: Thank You!!**

Dear Neighbors,

As we all know, the recession has affected every one of us, but this story is about neighbors coming together to share their holiday spirit with those who need it most.

The Community Relations Department of the Austin State Hospital was in dire need of gift donations for the child and adolescent units. This has never been a problem before, as we have always received many donations for the children in the past. In an attempt to gather gifts for the children, the Community Relations office sent an S.O.S. to the Hyde Park neighborhood, and the response has been amazing. Not only did the neighborhood respond with gifts, but through networks of friends and family far and wide, others have been responding with gifts for the children as well.

The spirit of the holidays is alive and well in the Hyde Park neighborhood! Thank you to the Hyde Park neighborhood and all your friends for helping. It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas for the children at the Austin State Hospital, and it's all because of you!

Community Relations and everyone at the Austin State Hospital wish you, your families, and your friends a holiday filled with love and happiness.

Thank you for all you do for the patients of the Austin State Hospital!

— Debbie Trammell,  
Assistant Director for  
Community Relations,  
Austin State Hospital

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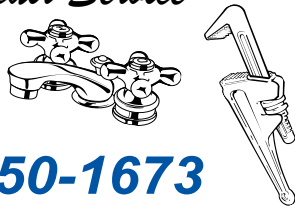
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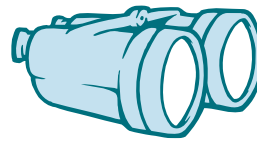
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**The Local Historic  
District Corner**

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](mailto:lweidich@mail2sevenseas.com) or 300-2228.

I am pleased to announce that the Steering Committee has chosen a consultant to assist with the preparation of the Hyde Park Local Historic District application. Preservation Central, Inc., under the leadership of former Hyde Parker Terri Myers, will be leading the work of inventorying neighborhood structures, determining which of them are contributing, and compiling the necessary historical and architectural information.

Field work will begin after the start of the year. So if you see someone studying and photographing



your house or your neighbor's house, don't panic! It won't be a robber casing the joint; it's all part of the local historic district effort.

**Welcome to the Team...**

I want to welcome Lloyd Cates to the Local Historic District team as the official mapmaker. Our application to the city will require two carefully prepared maps that indicate boundaries and contributing structures. Lloyd did the maps for the Hyde Park NCCD and graciously volunteered to do the same for the Local Historic District.

**Block Captains Needed...**

I'm still looking for volunteers for block captains. If you're willing to serve, contact me. Alternatively, if you think your neighbor would be a good block captain, please pass on his or her name to me. I promise I'll never identify who did it!

— Lorre Weidlich, Chair,  
LHD Committee



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## December HPNA Meeting Mini-Minutes

There was no HPNA formal meeting for the month of December. The Hyde Park neighborhood holiday party on Friday, December 19th served as the meeting for the month. Many thanks go out to all of those involved in organizing, planning, and pulling off yet another fabulous neighborhood party.

Have a happy holiday and a great new year, and we'll see you in January 2009!

— John A. Williams  
Co-Secretary



## HANDLE WITH CARE

## Recycling Pick-Up Dates for Hyde Park

Neighbors, now that every household in Hyde Park has received its very own new, blue, and demonstrably bigger recycling container, just a friendly reminder that the City has now switched to an every-other-week schedule for pickup of recyclables. Unless/until we're informed otherwise, Friday is recycling pick-up date for Hyde Park, and you should plan to have your recycling container out and ready for pick-up on these dates:

### RECYCLE PICK-UP 2009

January 2, 16, 30
February 13, 27
March 13, 27
April 10, 24
March 8, 22
June 5, 19
July 3, 17, 31
August 14, 28
September 11, 25.

Thanks for your cooperation, and here's to the goal of helping Austin become the "greenest" city in the country!

ps: Henceforward, the city does accept old phone books for recycling, so just toss 'em in with your other recyclables.

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# Hyde Park Poets

## Fourth Thursday Open Microphone Sessions

Dear Hyde Park Neighbors,

The Austin Poetry Society sponsors an open microphone each Fourth Thursday at Hyde Park's NeWorldDeli, 4101 Guadalupe. This month, at 7:00 p.m. on January 22nd, the session will feature two poets: Neil Meili, a well-published poet/rancher who splits his year between Canada and Austin, and Marcelle Kasprowicz, author of Organza Skies (De Lodis Publishing, 2005).

— Robert Elzy Cogswell  
<poetryplease@mail.  
utexas.edu>

PS Following are two poems by one of our featured poets:

Do you have  
**Real Estate Questions?**

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## Oregon in Winter

The big plane slows, mists rise to meet it  
droplets begin to play along the windows

My body, mostly water  
falling through clouds, mostly water

I have been traveling some

The water in me comes from  
the limestone caverns of Austin  
the rivers of Upstate New York, and  
million year old glaciers in the Rockies of Alberta

The clouds have been around the world  
rising and falling as river, air, and sea

Quiet now, as I am  
I can feel them meeting again  
hear them, telling stories

— Neil Meili



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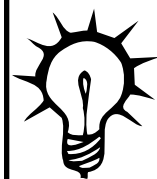
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# Hyde Park Poets —

## Calgary, Early Morning, Early Winter

The neighbors called  
as neighbors will

To report Roberta  
age four  
in the front yard  
making a snowman

A reasonable thing to do  
as quickly as possible  
after seven inches  
of new wet snow

And dressed adequately  
for the task

High boots and warm mitts  
and nothing else

— Neil Meili

## R.I.P., 2008

As years go, it's clear that '08  
Has been anything other than great;  
But you won't find us moping -  
Au contraire, we'll be hoping  
That in '09 we'll recuperate!

— anonymous



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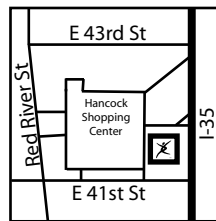
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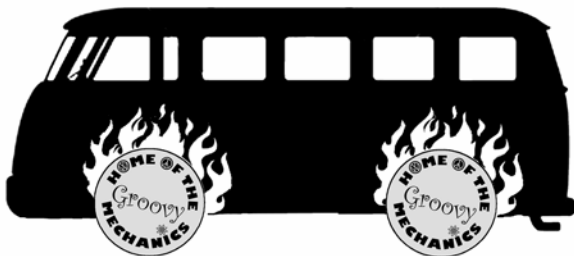
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## Hyde Park Poets —

Brevity  
that flash in a mirror  
as you run past on  
the way to, from, with  
we load our days with  
prepositions and verbs  
dragging a bag full of  
holiday musts through  
city streets, jostled  
by all the others trying  
to meet a deadline  
all the while bodies sink  
into the afterlife and hair  
grows and stomachs get  
upset and cedar pollinates  
and skin roughens itself,  
scaling off in black silk  
underwear, and dispositions  
fail humane tests  
but for a brief slot a poem  
squirts out, black condiment  
on white onion skin,  
and all is well in the chaotic  
world of peace on earth

— Nancy Taylor Day  
December 17, 2008





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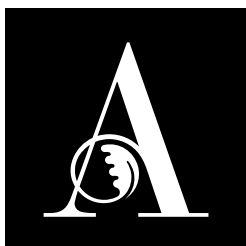


## 606 West 31½ Street

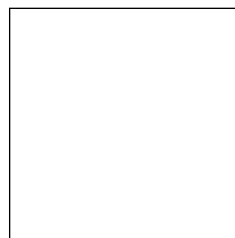
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