

February Meeting

When: 7:00 p.m.
Monday, February 6, 2006

Where: Hyde Park United
Methodist Church
4001 Speedway

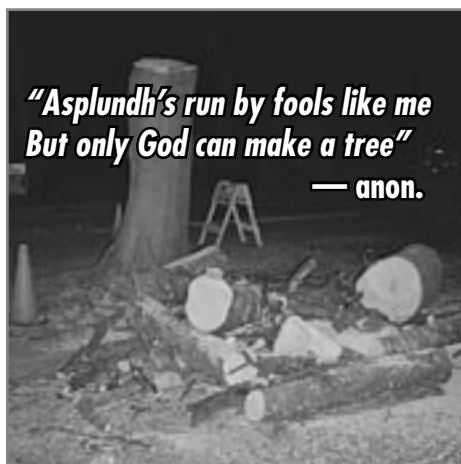
Who: YOU and your neighbors

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

HPNA General Meeting Agenda for February 6th

- ◆ Vote on the request of a parking variance for The Parlor
- ◆ George Wyche to will be honored for his long service as HPNA webmaster
- ◆ Claire Margeison, director of Green Corn Project (see page 5)
- ◆ Tree Task Force Update
- ◆ Bylaws Committee Report
- ◆ Homes Tour Report
- ◆ Finance Committee Update

See you there!

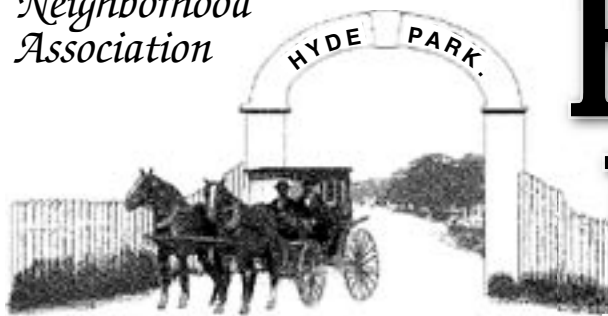


**"Asplundh's run by fools like me
But only God can make a tree"**
— anon.



Sign posted by enterprising neighbor on a beloved but Asplundh-endangered tree (Feel free to copy, neighbors!)

*The Hyde Park
Neighborhood
Association*



Pecan Press

February, 2006 • National Register District Neighborhood • Vol. 32, No. 2

Asplundh "Trimming" Alarms Neighbors, Threatens Trees

THE CRISIS IN SHORT

The pleasant, shady neighborhood we know and love faces a serious new threat—the obliteration of the trees that shelter and embrace our homes. I can hear the chain saws ripping an ugly Z-shaped scar through the very heart of Hyde Park even as I write this. The "fine streets and perfect shade" that Monroe Shipe deliberately designed and advertised, the very essence of Hyde Park, have lasted more than a century; but if Austin Energy (AE) has its way, our historic tree canopy may not last much longer.

After 100 years of pruning trees in its easements here on an as-needed basis, our city-owned utility has adopted what our alarmed neighbors from Hancock who came to our HPNA meeting last month aptly called a "Shermanesque, scorched-earth" approach. Sadly, we have learned this was no overstatement.

With help from Mayor Will Wynn and City Councilman Lee Leffingwell, we have negotiated a temporary halt to this carnage, but it will take determined, organized and sustained resistance on your part to contain the damage. Please attend the February HPNA meeting and be prepared to act in our mutual defense.

Tree clearing practices of AE and its contractor Asplundh—and our justified alarm about them—will be on the City Council agenda soon. It will be important for a convincing number of Hyde Park neighbors to be present when they are addressed. Watch the city web site <<http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/council/>> for Austin Energy's tree trimming prac-

tices to appear on the Council's agenda.

FIRST, THE PANIC

How could this happen here? To the HPNA's January 10 meeting, Hancock residents Carolyn Palaima, Alex Arguello, Joel Cryer and Jay Dupont, as well as others, brought news that those mysterious pink ribbons proliferating on our trees in Hancock, North Hyde Park and all along Duval, meant that AE had marked them for total removal.

The explanation AE had given property owners was vague and unsatisfactory. But the pictures Ms. Palaima showed of the mature trees in her alley and deep into her yard on 40th Street east of Duval—trees AE said had to go—told a vividly revolting story. This was to be no mere pruning; this was to be the clearcutting of the rights of way and any vegetation that might come to threaten overhead wires for five years to come!

The shady alleys we prize for walking in summer; the cool backyards where our children play, were to be cut away; the chainsaw crews were already at work in Hancock and more trees were being tagged daily. Duval Street, the graceful, shaded north entrance to UT, filled with as many pedestrians and bicyclists as cars and buses, the pleasant stroll generations of families traditionally take into Royal Memorial Stadium to see the Longhorns, would be stripped of its lovely canopy of green, to become an ugly, sun-parched, starkly-exposed pipeline of noise and pollution.

In the absence of local vigilance, this sort denuding could still be in store for the Hyde Park area. In horror,

Continued on page 4

Crime in Hyde Park

The life of a drug addict is a busy one. Since he must sell stolen goods for far less than their value, and narcotics can be expensive, he must spend his few waking hours stealing and fencing almost continuously between drug fixes. What looks like a crime wave is often the work of a single felon on drugs.

This was the case of with the recent rash of thefts in our neighborhood. In one theft, a transient addict stole a bicycle from the yard in the 4300 block of Avenue B; 30 minutes later he pawned it at a shop near Research and Burnett Road, where he had ridden it. Since the owner had the serial number of the bike, it was soon recovered. Then the thief stole the same bicycle again, this time from a storeroom, and pawned it in South Austin.

One thing different about this crime wave was that for the first time, police photographs of the suspects were distributed via our Yahoo group, allowing an extra 330+ pairs of eyes to be on the lookout for them. As it turned out, a policeman spotted one of the suspects and nabbed him. Detective Kyle with the Austin Police Department is now asking people who have been robbed to contact him at 974-1284 to recover lost items. This underscores the importance of recording serial numbers of your worldly goods.

Neighbors recently learned through our Yahoo group of another serious crime, this one on 43rd Street, just east of Duval. A couple returned from an out-of-town trip to find their home thoroughly burgled. Large and small items had been taken, including two desktop computers, a large wide screen television set, over a thousand CDs, and even tennis racquets and guitars. No fingerprints were left. The burglary apparently proceeded with leisure since there was little of the disorder that often accompanies such thefts. The couple had left their front porch light on and several interior lights. Watchful neighbors had been alerted to keep an eye on their house.

What can be done? A few months back, Elaine Meenehan, Hermelinda Zamarripa and I met with Calvin Smith, a commander with APD, to discuss crime information. He said the department is exploring ways of posting more information about neighborhood crime online. What is being planned seemed pretty rudimentary.

My hope is that some of Austin's technical elite could step forward and devise a richly informative geographic information system that would, for example, allow someone to zoom in on a city map to any neighborhood and choose to see the incidence of crimes in given periods of time, such as the last 48 hours, the previous 30 days, and so forth. Locations of crimes would be indicated on the map. Clicking on a spot would bring up the details. Such a GIS would also allow trends and crime waves to be spotted instantly by everyone. And whoever devised it might make a pretty penny selling to other cities.

Another problem that should be addressed is the fencing of stolen goods. Drug addicts frequently use pawn shops and also try approaching people on the street.

Continued on following page

Pecan Press

The Pecan Press is published monthly by the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association in Austin, Texas.

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7500 Chelmsford Dr. Austin, TX 78736

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

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One day while I was working in my yard, a truck stopped in front of my house and a man asked if I wanted to buy some tools. I walked over and saw an expensive set of tools that he was offering for a pittance. I declined and immediately notified the police.

APD maintains a database of serial numbers of stolen goods. And there is a national database of the same. But the only way it can be checked is if a police officer finds the item and runs a check on it. Thus, a TV stolen in Austin and pawned in San Marcos or Round Rock will not be traced. What about requiring all pawn shops in the U.S. to register serial numbers on this database? Even that would not totally solve the problem, since more sophisticated crooks work through shops that deal in used merchandise or simply with crooks in the business of dealing in hot goods.

A low-tech solution is suggested by a poll taken of thieves incarcerated in Ohio. When asked what they would do to protect their own homes against thieves, the first thing, they all agreed, was to get a dog. The victim on 43rd Street did not have one. It might be argued that since they were out of town, a dog would have been boarded at a kennel or left with friends. True, but any one casing the neighborhood beforehand would certainly take note of a barking dog, even a chihuahua.

I know that on my own block there have been at least 3 break-ins in the past 30 years and none of the victims had a dog. These days, seven houses on our block have dogs. Anyone walking through our block, whether on the sidewalk, the street, or in the alley, has his presence announced by a chorus of canines. It seems to help.

— John Kerr
<jfkerr@yahoo.com>

PP Crime Reporter: No Vacancy!

Many thanks to Carol Welder of 4101 Ave. F, who has kindly agreed to take on the role of Crime Reporter for the *Pecan Press*. In that role, she will be the primary point of contact for crime-related information from/about Hyde Park, and will help educate neighbors not only about “bad news” pertaining to crime that has happened, but also about “good news” concerning effective crime prevention strategies. Neighbors can and should contact Carol with their information and/or concerns at <cjwelder@msn.com>, or 459-6205.





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

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.

SAVE YOUR TREES

When it comes to the proposed trimming or removal of trees by Austin Energy contractors, as a resident-owner or tenant—you have rights, including, but not limited to, the list below:

YOU HAVE RIGHTS

You have the right to refuse removal of mature trees* from your property.

You have the right to an on-site meeting with the Asplundh arborist to review the proposed treatment of your trees.

You have the right to have any third party present at this meeting—professional arborist, neighbors, attorney, elected representative, others.

You have the right to review plans for the trimming of trees at your home, cut by cut, limb by limb, BEFORE any trimming occurs.

You have the right to request modifications to these plans.

You have the right to a written work order memorializing these decisions.

You have the right to be present at the time trees are trimmed, also with the Asplundh arborist present, as well as any other third party, and to review the work to be done, tree by tree, with the arborist and crew leader.

You have the right to due process in opposing or supporting a permit issued by the City of Austin to remove or excessively trim a mature tree.

You have the right to work with your neighbors in formulating alternatives to the proposed trimming/removal of trees on a block-wide, neighborhood and city basis.

You have the right to join with your neighbors in demanding that the importance of our trees to the value of our property, to the character of our homes and neighborhoods, to our quality of life be given every due consideration in the formulation of an approach that will bring credit to our entire city and ensure its continuing attraction as a special place to live and work.

You have the right and are encouraged to make your expectations for a fair, balanced resolution of this issue known—to the Austin City Council, Austin Energy, the Austin Urban Forestry Board and others.

* Generally with a trunk diameter of greater than eight inches, measured 48" from the ground.

**Joint Hyde Park-Hancock-Eastwoods
Neighborhood Association Tree Task Force**
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HPNATreeTaskForce/>

Trimming Alarms Neighbors...

...cont'd from page 1

HPNA agreed to join with Hancock Neighborhood Association in forming a task force to react quickly and decisively to this Asplundh assault. HPNA President John Kerr asked me to represent Hyde Park on this group. Our charge: Working together, to stop this assault before the irreparable wounds spread further; to determine and assert our every right as residents; and to find a better way.

SPREADING THE ALARM

Tuesday morning, January 11, we started burning up the wires with frantic cries for help. We were joined by representatives from Eastwoods and assisted by many influential neighbors. Between calls for help, we began trying to untangle just what was behind the Austin Energy/Asplundh assault.

The City of Austin, a recognized national leader in municipal green energy, in preserving significant historical features of our community like the Moonlight Towers, like Hyde Park itself, was among the first to recognize the important role of the shade canopy in conserving energy. The heritage we enjoy from former Councilmember Margaret Hoffman, "the tree lady," is one of the nation's strongest tree preservation ordinances.

This was the good news we discovered. The bad news is that although enlightened policies, programs and funding for preserving our urban forest run through nearly every city department, there is not an over-arching urban forestry management plan to coordinate these efforts in a coherent way. There are other tags on trees in Hyde Park unrelated to the trimming, tags that AE employees cannot definitively explain but about which we have come to fear the worst.

The character and landscape of inner-city neighborhoods seemingly were being shaped by AE's operational agenda alone, with little apparent oversight, planning, or respect for property owners.

THEN CAME THE PAUSE

By Friday the 13th, AE had agreed to a moratorium on any further cutting (with some wounding exceptions—more on these later), and to attend a community meeting held Tuesday, January 17 at the Methodist Church.

Unfortunately, this issue is not new: Looking back historically, the *Austin Chronicle* has amply documented the outrage other areas of our city have expressed at the same kind of Asplundh onslaught we are facing, going back at least five years, but to little effect. We, the task force, were determined that our confrontation would be more than just another gripe session. After an intensive week of meetings with Austin Energy and Asplundh, together with a good deal of research, we presented a range of more enlightened alternatives to their usual "scorched earth" approach. We also produced and distributed the recitation of resident rights when dealing on a front-porch, block by block, basis with AE and Asplundh that you will find elsewhere in this issue of the *Pecan Press*.

The crowd of about 70 of your neighbors from Hyde Park, Hancock and Eastwoods who showed up looking for answers to their questions—questions that should have been answered the minute AE's proposals were brought to their door, but weren't—helped us make our case that inner city neighborhoods where mature trees have co-existed with power lines for generations demand a different approach. In addition to the

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The Green Corn Project: Don't Panic, It's Organic!

The Green Corn Project (GCP), a featured topic at our February HPNA meeting, is an Austin-based non-profit organization that educates and assists Central Texans in growing organic food gardens. GCP's programs are two-fold: 1) They help build gardens at homes, community centers, and schools for people who lack access to nutritious food due to income, disability, age, etc.; and 2) They provide educational presentations on the benefits and methods of organic gardening and hold biannual skills workshops open to the public.



Last year, GCP built twelve new gardens at homes in Austin, and started school-gardening programs at Metz Elementary and Blackshear Elementary schools. In 2006, they hope to expand their capacity to bring nutritious, affordable food to folks all over Austin by building 20 new gardens each season.

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Trimming Alarms Neighbors...

...cont'd from page 5

healthy attendance from our neighbors, we were also gratified to see Matt Curtis, Mayor Wynn's top assistant; Councilmember Lee Leffingwell with his chief aide, Andy Mormon; and Urban Forestry Board Chair Tim Mahoney. The gravitas that these officials' presence added to the meeting was considerable.

RESULTS

Part way through the meeting, Councilmember Leffingwell stepped forward to say he had long been seeking an airing of the kind of issues we were raising before the full City Council (and that hearing will be set soon, possibly as early as the Council's Jan. 26 meeting, maybe in February). Further, Leffingwell and the Mayor agreed that the current moratorium should continue indefinitely. With Councilman Leffingwell and Mayor Wynn's aide still present, Austin Energy proposed that a task force involving other city departments be formed to work through the issues of how best to protect our urban forest while accommodating the needs of Austin Energy. We agreed to work with them on this task force to formulate more reasonable plans for a more balanced approach going forward, provided this would not be a mere public relations exercise, but would result in real accommodation of our arboreal preservation needs.

In short, the joint neighborhood task force got what we asked for. And now the chainsaws would stop and real work would begin. Or so we believed.

AN UGLY EXCEPTION

An exception Austin Energy asked to the moratorium was for what they said was a necessary Capital Improvement Project (CIP) and to continue some work around Hyde Park Baptist Church, as agreed to by the church. Representatives of our utility said they had and would do the best they could to ameliorate the effects of this CIP work with steps including taller poles with arms to get wires away from our trees. The route of this CIP project is from Grooms west on 38th to Speedway and then North on Speedway to 45th, (mostly in the alleyway between Speedway and Avenue F) and then west again on 45th to Guadalupe.

As the neighbors along this route have learned to our sorrow, this Z-shaped route extends well outward from the alleys. Unless you have walked this route on a summer day, tracing it now will reveal little, save for the stark wounds of what is left of many old pecans. There is really not much to see. When Asplundh takes a tree out, they go all the way to the ground. What will be apparent come spring is that the shade that made these alleys so inviting to pedestrians and so important to back yards is gone, and it won't be back, not for a long time, if ever.

If we get complacent or compliant, Col. Shipe's vision for Hyde Park will vanish on our watch.

If this is the best Austin Energy and Asplundh can do, it is not, can not, and will not be nearly good enough. The outcome is up to us.

WHAT CAN WE DO NOW?

1. Come to the February HPNA meeting. We are planning organized action steps for each neighbor to take and we will again review the task force's recommendations.

2. Contact the Mayor and Council, (their phone numbers are on the city web site).

Continued on following page

3. Call and/or email the Austin Energy representative, Michelle McAfee at 322-6932, michelle.mcafee@austinenergy.com

4. For the latest news, and to report any crew working outside the CIP area, join the un-moderated discussion list at <<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HPNATreeTaskForce/>>.

- 5. Plan to attend future City Council Meetings.
- 6. Stay vigilant and involved.

– John Paul Moore
Chair, HPNA Tree Preservation Task Force
<johnpaulmoore@austin.rr.com>, 789-7025

PS: A PERSONAL NOTE

In addition to Carolyn Palaima, the Hancock representative on the Task Force, who has been absolutely tireless in this defense, and my better half, Catherine, who's indispensable to any and everything I ever attempt – and who pushed me in front of this bus – I would be remiss in not giving special mention to several other individuals: Alex and Nicky Arguello, Nicky Bishop, Inge Marie Carmel, Joel Cryer, Jay and Mandy Dupont, Carleen Edgar, Lisa Harris, Karen McGraw, John Scott, Grant Thomas, Susan Warren and Del Womack have been the true stalwarts of this effort. To those whose names I left out, please accept my apologies and my promise to mention you next time, because there will almost certainly be a next time. – jpm



Abilio Muñoz, M.D.

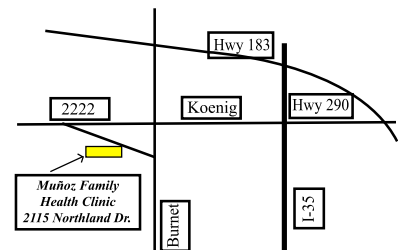
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Reflections: First Night Austin 2006

Wow!

What else can I say? The best weather of the year and a public hungering for a way to come together as one in celebration of the new year, brought over 100,000 to downtown Austin for *First Night Austin 2006*.

This inaugural event did indeed meet the two criteria for success that I had shared. Somehow, going into the event, those criteria seemed speculative and in the far distant future. But on Saturday, December 31, 2005 at the stroke of midnight, they were realized. For those of us present, sharing in the energy and creativity of the moment, there was no place we would have rather been. And, the next day and beyond, those who missed the celebration were remiss... "I wish I could have been there!" they said.

December 31st already seems light years past. As I'm caught up in the aftermath of post-event deskwork, I'm trying to remember the light, the sound, the sense of celebration, the joy, the sheer number of people, the overwhelming number of children. My recollections are a series of powerful and inspiring images. I'm visualizing people lying on the First Street Bridge drawing with chalk in a hoped-for-record-setting linear drawing, children dancing across Barna Kantor's mirrored sidewalk in front of One American Center, the never ending surprises of the Grand Procession, the 11 story film by Luke Savisky on the wall of the Radisson Hotel punctuated with the "rock" climbers of Central Texas Mountaineers, crowds gathered around slam poetry, Bollywood dancing, mimes, a jazz ensemble or a giant black eyed pea...all of these reflections and many more culminating in pyrotechnics over Town Lake whose energy was mirrored in the drumming on the bridge that literally flexed the concrete underfoot.

And maybe what I remember even more is the look of appreciation and excitement from the public hungry for the opportunity, the reason, the excuse to come downtown and to experience being part of a community that is eager and open minded about watching or better yet, participating in the creative process of making art in a public setting.

There were many lessons learned about this first event, mostly centered around underestimating the sheer number of people who would show up and fill the streets of downtown. Too many people saw the backs of heads, waited in line or couldn't find a




Continued on following page

print program. These are things we can hope to improve upon as we look forward to Year Two. More art, more programming, more content, richer experiences...and more public services. But those concerns pale in the overall success of the event and how the face of New Year's Eve has been transformed for Austin. From here on, every time you go downtown and reflect on what you saw on New Year's Eve...but isn't there now, or every time you see Nick Barbaro driving a delicious pink Subaru around Hyde Park, smile and think about the power of art and creativity to strengthen and unite community.

— Ann S. Graham, 3815 Ave. H
Executive Director, First Night Austin

(Ann is a former HPNA Co-President, and has also played a key role with our Children's Committee.)

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January Meeting Minutes

Whether anyone could see the urban forest for them, trees were the central talking point at the January meeting. About sixty members and guests gathered in the cozy (some might even say cramped) church parlor at Hyde Park Methodist on January 9th.

Prior to the start of the meeting, County Commissioner candidate Sarah Eckhardt and district court judge candidate Charlie Baird introduced themselves and talked with members of the group. Ms. Eckhardt is running for the Precinct 2 seat currently held by Karen Sonleitner and Judge Baird is running for the 299th District court, an open seat currently held by retiring judge Jon Wisser.

President John Kerr called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM.

The meeting began with an introduction and samples from the owners of **The Parlor**, a pizza restaurant located on North Loop across the street from Room Service and Ararat. They will be opening a second location in Hyde Park on 43rd Street, in the other half of the building now occupied by The Movie Store. They intend to offer a more extended menu than at the North Loop location. Their planned February opening has been delayed by difficulties in sorting out parking, but they hope to have this resolved soon. They concluded the presentation by serving samples of several of their specialty pizzas. (The chicken and gorgonzola was particularly intriguing).

Homes Tour chair Lorre Weidlich announced that six houses have been identified as candidates for the 2006 tour. Transportation issues are being worked on at this time. Lorre is still looking for volunteers in several key positions, particularly a publicity chair. (See elsewhere in the Press for details).

Susan French-Robinson of **Austin Groups for the Elderly** invited Hyde Park residents to become involved with AGE and the 26 groups operating under its umbrella. AGE is located in the former Confederate Widows' Home at 38th and Cedar, just south of Hyde Park. Launched by Willie Kocurek and Bert Kruger Smith, who personally signed the note to purchase the building, AGE has become not only an umbrella organization but an incubator for groups including SeniorNet, Elderhaven, the Caregiver Resource Center, and others. Susan noted that one of the neighbors in attendance had recently been assisted by AGE in researching options for an elderly parent who is moving to Austin soon.

John Kerr announced several **committee appointments**. Nick van Bavel has volunteered to lead the Finance Committee, and they plan soon to have a new budget ready for adoption. Catherine Moore is chair-

Continued on following page

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ing the Bylaws Committee. The committee meets every two weeks, and they are working on a complete overhaul of the HPNA bylaws. When the new bylaws are presented, a two-thirds majority vote of the neighbors present at the meeting will be required for passage. Notice will be given in the *Pecan Press* when the new bylaws are completed. Larry Freilich will lead the Beautification Committee. John noted that Austin Energy will be contributing up to \$100,000 for beautification on the recently-completed pylon and substation project.

The **Avenue G street closure** proposal, while still being talked about, is not ready to move forward. Both the formal debate and the financing for the project have not happened. A group consisting of Jennifer Vickers, Karen McGraw, Elaine Meenahan, Suzee Brooks, Carolyn Burton, and Mary Carolyn George are doing some preliminary groundwork to determine the feasibility of closure, and whether the neighborhood wants it to happen.

John then introduced Joel Cryer, Carolyn Palaima, and Bart Whatley of the Hancock Neighborhood Association, who had come to express their serious concerns over recent **Austin Energy tree-trimming** proposals in the area covered by both associations. Carolyn showed photographs of a number of major trees tagged for complete removal by **Asplundh**, the

Continued on page 12

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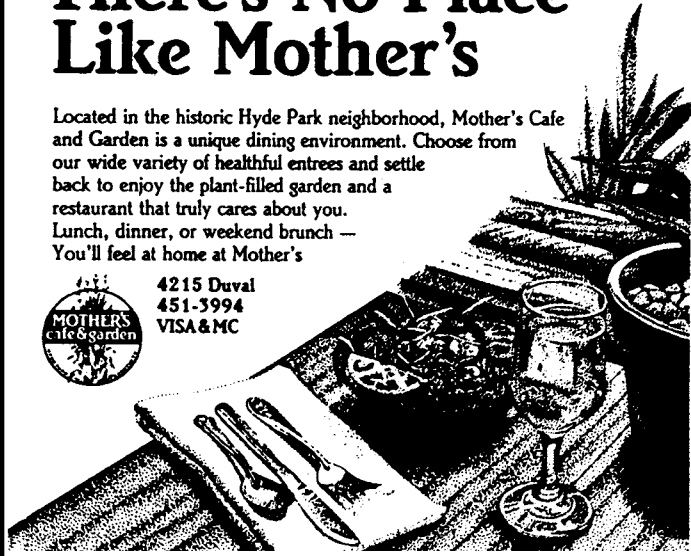
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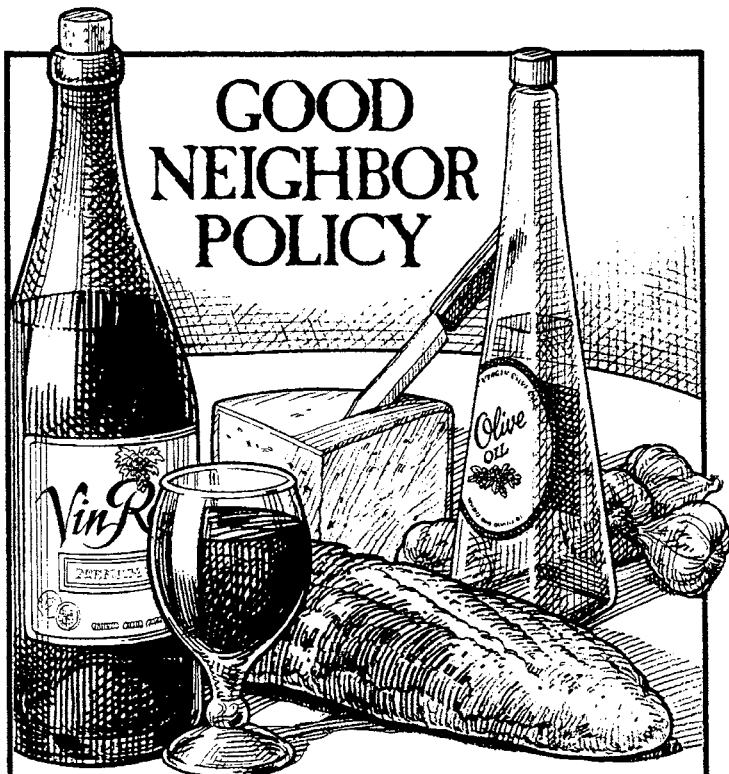
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January Meeting Minutes...

...cont'd from page 11

City's contractor. Many of the neighbors expressed shock, alarm, and outrage at the extent of pruning and cutting proposed, and at the perceived inadequacy of Austin Energy's concern at or response to the amount of urban canopy the cutting would remove. Pam Whittington said that fact sheets and rules about what electric utilities may legally do for line clearance are available at the Public Utility Commission Web site, <www.puc.state.tx.us>. Carolyn requested that HPNA and HNA form a joint task force to meet the threat to our neighborhoods' amenities. John Moore moved that such a task force be created, seconded by Pam Whittington. The motion passed unanimously.

Karen recommended that HPNA and HNA representatives should contact Roger Duncan at Austin Energy and the Mayor and City Council members' offices at once, to try to get cooperation from the utility and Asplundh to reduce the amount of cutting proposed.

Susan Warren presented a proposal to begin a **Hyde Park Market Days** event, where neighbors could bring collectibles, upscale stuff cluttering garages and attics, arts and crafts, and similar items and offer them for sale. Susan asked for suggestions for location, mentioning the Baker School or a church as possibilities, or the Avenue G area if it is eventually closed. Dorothy Richter pointed out that Hyde Park had a similar spring festival at Shipe Park in prior years, which eventually ran down and stopped from a lack of volunteers. Susan will investigate further possibilities.

John stated that the **Homes Tour needs seed money** to begin production work for 2006, and requested \$2,000 to begin. Karen McGraw moved approval of the appropriation, seconded by Dorothy Richter. The motion passed unanimously on a show of hands.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM.

— Sam Waring
HPNA Secretary
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11:30-1:00						Basics	Vinyasa
5:00-6:30	Mixed	Hatha	Mixed	Vinyasa	Mixed		
7:00-8:30	Vinyasa	Mixed	Basics	Hatha			

The Tree Tender

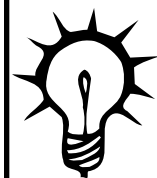
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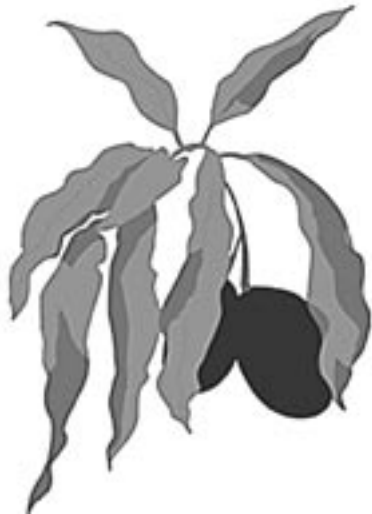
Certified Arborist
Nickey Bishop

Hyde Parkers Honored as Outstanding Philanthropists

Congratulations to Jennifer Vickers and Lee Walker of 4002 Avenue H, who were recently honored by the Association of Fundraising Professionals as "Outstanding Philanthropists" for 2005 at the Austin AFP's 16th Annual Philanthropy Day Awards Luncheon at the downtown Hilton on January 24th. The award recognized the dynamic duo's involvement in and assistance to multiple worthy local causes, including Westcave Preserve; the Lance Armstrong Foundation; Envision Central Texas; Capitol Metro; Community Investment Corporation; the Sustainable Food Center; and, last but hardly least, the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association -- for which Jennifer has ably served as HPNA Vice-President, and for which both have been major leaders of and participants in the altogether positive prowlings of HPNA Alley Cats cleanup crews. Good on ye, neighbors, and keep up the good work(s)!



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Burglary on Speedway

Dear Neighbors,

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— Sincerely,
Alison Riemersma

Councilmember McCracken on Asplundh "Trimming"

Dear Editor,

I completely agree with the concerns that you and other neighbors have expressed about what you characterized in your message as "Assplundholes running amok in north-central Austin." I admire Austin Energy's clean energy progress, but a utility absolutely cannot call itself "green" when it systematically cuts down and renders impossible the planting of urban trees. I'm on this (as I know the Mayor is, too). I am highly dissatisfied with the utility's practice of placing a higher value on grotesque above-ground power lines than property values and protection of older historic trees that provide shade and character to neighborhoods. Here is one idea I have: if Austin Energy thinks above-ground power lines are such a great deal, then they should fully compensate property owners for their property loss (typically, a mature tree adds \$20,000 to property values).

— Best,
Brewster McCracken



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Yet Again Hope Emerges

The way it was
curtains of sorrow
tassels of grief
darkness
yet the Light shone
flickering its hope

the way it was
and is

war's hobnail boots
squash tender shoots
of peace
wailing walls
mushroom overnight
in Bethlehem
et al
yet lonely doves
wing through flak

the way it was
and is

the long promise road
stretches beyond time
tardy fulfillment
yet green blades of hope
spring from dry sands

the way it was
and is

from the murky swamp
of fear
hope emerges
yet again
and again

the way it was
and is

creation breathes
long heavy sighs
pain and grief
sorrowing the wreckage
awaiting redemption
and still
and still again
hope emerges

the way it was
and is

the Light shines
and the darkness
has not overcome
nor fear nor grief
hope emerges

the way it was
and is

— Merle G. Franke 2004

(Franke is a former HPNA President.)



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