

# June Meeting

**When:** 7:00 p.m.  
Monday, June 2, 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 June 2<sup>nd</sup>

- ❖ Schenken-Oatman House: Catherine Moore
- ❖ Neighborhood Habitat Challenge
- ❖ Judge Nancy Hohengarten and Sergeant Kitty Hicks from Travis County Crisis Intervention Team

**See you there!**

## LHD Corner: Saving Our Heritage, and our Time and Energy

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@mail@sevenseas.com> or 300-2228.

### Now, let's talk about demolitions:

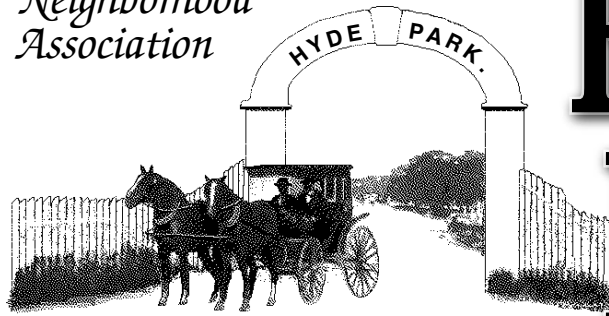
• On May 16, I participated with a group of neighbors in a candlelight vigil for the Gertrude Jones House at 4113 Avenue F. Despite the efforts of many neighbors to save this house, which was eligible for historic zoning, a demolition permit was issued anyway. Across the street and just north of my house at Avenue F and 43rd Street, three structures are gone — one moved off and two demolished. This happened despite the efforts of those of us on the adjoining blocks to save them.

**Continued on page 3**

### Hyde Park Turnout (or lack thereof) in May elections:

See summary, page 14

*The Hyde Park  
Neighborhood  
Association*



# Pecan Press

June, 2008 • National Register District Neighborhood • Vol. 34, No. 6

## Schenken-Oatman House: Neighbors Repolish a Jewel

Lifeless and forlorn, the house at 311 West 41st Street stood vacant for many years before coming to the attention of a pair of Hyde Park neighbors. To save the house from planned demolition, Wanda Penn and Catherine Moore banded together with a group of like-minded Hyde Parkers to purchase and restore the structure.

Renovation is now nearing completion. Thanks to the neighbors' research into the home's architecture and past, the City of Austin has zoned the property historic and it is now named Schenken-Oatman House in honor of its previous owners. On Sunday, June 15, at 1:00 p.m., the historic landmark plaque will be dedicated with a ceremony and open house. Neighbors are invited to attend and tour the restored home.

Descendants of Adelbert and Mary Schenken are arriving from across the United States for the dedication of their family's Austin home. Adelbert Schenken was a printer and was involved in the publication of the *Texas Volks Zeitung* and *Texas Vorwaerts*, both German language newspapers, which circulated throughout Texas. His wife Mary was the daughter of George Justus Thielepape, one of the original settlers of New Braunfels, who lived across 41st Street from the house. They raised their sons Al and Ralph in the home and maintained a large garden.

Built in 1909 by the Schenkens, who were first generation German Texans, the frame house features

**Continued on page 4**



Schenken family descendants visit with Hyde Parkers Catherine Moore, Peter Maxson and Wanda Penn at the Schenken-Oatman House on May 5, 2008, with restoration well under way. Left to right: Catherine Moore, Rudy Schenken, Martha Schenken, Peter Maxson, Wanda Penn, Bruk Schenken, Kathy Schenken. (photo by Catherine Moore)

## Shipe Pool Opening Picnic

*Hosted by Friends of Shipe Pool  
and HPNA*

**Saturday, June 7, 5 to 8pm**  
(the day the pool opens)

Watermelons, drinks, and a grill will be provided. Bring food to share. Bring blankets, chairs, games, kids and friends. Come and celebrate the pool and our neighbors. All welcome!

# From the President's Desk: \_\_\_\_\_

## Hyde Park Sidewalks: No Longer a Side Issue

A few months ago I wrote an article about sidewalks -- or the lack of them -- in Hyde Park. The neighborhood association voted to set aside \$10,000 this year to help create more sidewalks in the neighborhood. I am pleased to share with you that Andrew and Melissa Shea have stepped forward to chair this initiative.

The details of the program are still being worked out, but will likely involve some sort of cost sharing between individual neighbors and the neighborhood association. Several residents have met with city employees recently and have determined that it is cost prohibitive to work with the city to create new sidewalks.

Pouring a new sidewalk is considerably cheaper than tearing out and recreating a sidewalk. Therefore, we would like to con-

centrate our efforts on properties that do not currently have sidewalks. If you are interested in working with the HPNA to get a sidewalk on your property, please contact the Sheas at <shea.andrew@gmail.com>.

For those of you who have crumbling or deteriorating sidewalks, you may want to contact the city directly about them and request repairs. In May, several neighbors found colored flags in their front yards. It turns out that the city has finally gotten around

to fixing or redoing sidewalks for residents who requested repairs between 2004-2006. I guess it's better late than never!

– 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 15<sup>th</sup> of month preceding publication.

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## Hyde Park Neighborhood Association

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<http://www.austinhdepark.org>

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**Additional Steering Committee Members:** • Wanda Penn • Rob  
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## Hyde Park Neighborhood Association Enrollment 2007-08 Membership

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Address \_\_\_\_\_

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**Dues (per person)**

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All memberships expire on September 30th of each year.

Bring to an HPNA meeting, or send to:

**HPNA Membership**  
 P.O. Box 49427  
 Austin, Texas 78765

Make checks payable to HPNA.



## Local Historic District Corner...

...cont'd from page 1

• At 311 W. 41st Street stands the Schenken-Oatman House. Thanks to the concern of a group of Hyde Parkers who purchased the property, it was saved from demolition, is being restored, and will be designated as a Historic Landmark (see related article in this issue). One saved, four lost – and that's just in the last year or so. Hyde Parkers who care about the 'hood are trying to save it, one house at a time.

Today, when a property owner wants to demolish a structure, the owner applies to the city for a demolition permit. When the structure is in a National Register Historic District (like Hyde Park), the historic preservation officer researches the house to determine whether it has sufficient architectural or historical significance to be designated as an historic landmark. The historic preservation officer makes a recommendation to the Historic Landmark Commission – either the house is recommended for preservation as a historic landmark or it is released for demolition. Interested parties can speak at that time either in support of or against the recommendation. It is rare but not impossible for a house to be designated as a historic landmark over the owner's objection, although the more likely outcome is for the Historic Landmark Commission to postpone a decision in the hope that the interested parties can work out a solution.

The point is that there are only two outcomes: either a house is designated as a historic landmark or



Saved, the Schenken Oatman House (photo by Lorre Weidlich)

it is released for demolition. The practical result of this is that houses that are individually unqualified to be historic landmarks can be purchased, demolished, and replaced one by one, leaving the historic houses surrounding by structures that are totally out of character for them. The look and feel of an older neighborhood are lost.

Most of us are not fortunate enough to live in houses that are historic landmarks, but we love our older houses. We love walking or biking the streets of Hyde Park and seeing the modest bungalows and cottages that recall an earlier time in America.

The point of a Local Historic District is to protect these older - but not necessarily historic - houses. They're known as "contributing structures" because they contribute to the character of a neighborhood. When the Design Standards Subcommittee (the subject of my column last month) began their work, they explored the possibility of protecting the neighborhood from demolitions without having to have design standards or to have local historic district zoning. They found no legal way to accomplish that.

Today, contributing structures are unprotected, and we are losing them, one by one, despite the efforts of Hyde Parkers to save them. By putting a local historic district in place, we can move from trying to save individual structures, one by one, to saving the entire neighborhood. That would also save an awful lot of time and energy that can be put into other neighborhood purposes.

— Lorre Weidlich, LHD Chair



Lost, the Gertrude Jones House (photo by Lorre Weidlich)



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\*Send your poems to:

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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.



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## Neighbors Repolish a Jewel...

...cont'd from page 1

the original pressed metal roof tiles, which have been preserved. The high ceilings of the interior are highlighted by the original ornamental wood trim, doors and windows, which have been restored. Its interior and exterior finishes and detailing give the home a grander and larger presence than its relatively small size might indicate.

In the 1920s, the home was purchased by Pearl Norwood Oatman, a widow, who lived there until her death in 1973. Her daughter, Pearl Oatman Welch, then owned the house until her own death in 2005. Both Mrs. Oatman and Mrs. Welch were long time, dedicated members of Shettles Memorial Methodist Church, which was renamed Hyde Park United Methodist Church and is today the home of the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association's monthly meetings.

During the Oatman-Norwood residence, little was changed in the home and it remained a time capsule of architecture and interiors of life in the early 20th century, before air conditioning and insulation.

The home has been leveled and a new foundation has been built. All the electric and plumbing systems are new. Energy efficient HVAC, insulation and a tankless hot water heater have been installed.

During the renovation, a small addition was made to the rear of the home, creating a master suite and kitchen to accommodate contemporary living. A second bathroom and laundry facilities were also added. Otherwise the home retains its historic configuration with a central entry hall, parlor and dining room. However, the home remains consistent with period style.

When the renovation is completed the group of neighbors, now Restore Hyde Park LLC, plans to sell the home. Neighbors involved in the project include Deaton Bednar, Carolyn Grimes, Carolyn McFarland, Peter Maxson, Terri Myers, Susan Moffatt, Nick Barbaro, John Moore and Jack Taylor, as well as Catherine Moore and Wanda Penn. Square One Construction, owned by Hyde Parker Steve Franke, has been the contractor for the project.

— Lorre Weidlich

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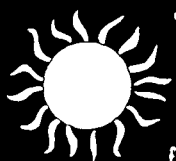
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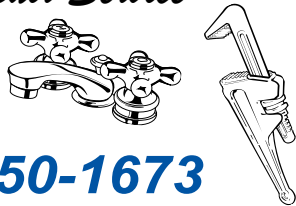
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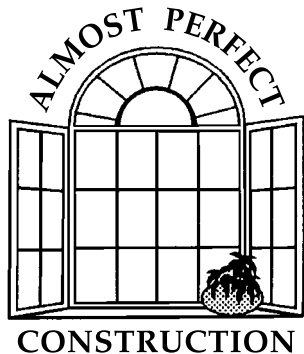
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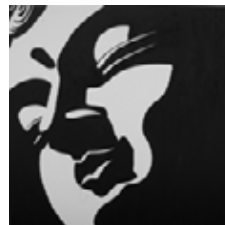
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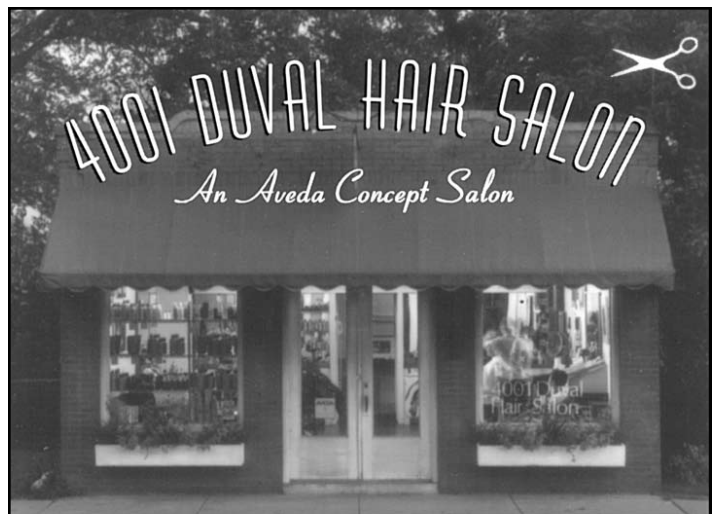
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# Neighbors Hold Vigil for Home Facing Demolition

Holding lighted candles aloft, dozens of Hyde Park neighbors gathered at 4113 Avenue F on May 15 for a vigil memorializing the planned demolition of the the home, which is named the Gertrude Jones House in honor of its longtime owner and first resident. Mrs. Jones was the widow of William Jones and built the home in approximately 1922, owning it until her death in the 1960s. The house is particularly significant because it is a contributing structure to the Hyde Park National Register District. The property has been purchased by Emrobrai Homes, which plans to raze the structure and build a new home in its place. Emrobrai Homes is the same developer who has purchased the properties on Avenue F to the west of Shipe Park and demolished the original houses there with plans to build new homes.



Neighbors say goodbye to home during May 15 candlelight vigil.

A demolition permit for the Gertrude Jones House was issued on Monday, May 11. Hyde Park Neighborhood Association's Development Review Committee has participated in negotiations with Emrobrai Homes, as well as made numerous presentations at meetings of the Historic Landmark Commission in an effort to keep the home from being demolished.

On November 17, the Historic Landmark Commission voted unanimously to recommend historic zoning on the property, which would prevent demolition. After that vote, however, commission staffer Steve Sadowsky determined that since the Commission had not acted within 60 days to recommend historic zoning, that the case was blocked from being heard by the Planning Commission and the City Council, which has the actual power to grant historic zoning.

The candlelight vigil offered neighbors a time to say goodbye to the house and mark its contributions to the history of Hyde Park and to read the names of

**Continued on page 8**





### Nathan Doxsey

- EcoBroker, LEED-AP, REALTOR®, Broker, GRI
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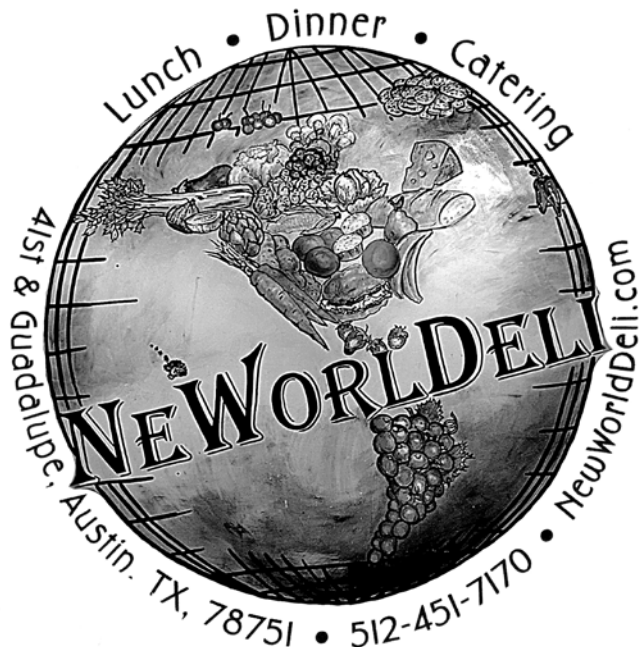
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## Neighbors Hold Vigil...

...cont'd from page 6

the many Hyde Parkers who lived there. It was a recognition that the home was a part of the history of Hyde Park and of Austin, when it was a young city, and was an opportunity to appreciate the house before it goes under the bulldozer. In addition to Hyde Park neighbors, television stations KEYE and KXAN were present, as well as the *Austin Chronicle*. Historic Landmark Commissioner Joe Arriaga also paid his respects.

The house is a Craftsman bungalow of a style unique in Hyde Park. Although the house has a badly sagging foundation, HPNA has urged Emrobrai to renovate the structure, keeping its unique architectural features, not to raze it. Such renovations have been successfully accomplished in the neighborhood and historic properties have been returned to a useful life. This particular house occupies a corner lot at 42nd and Avenue F, on one of the most completely intact blocks of original homes in the National Register District. Its loss will affect the character of that block, as well as of the entire neighborhood.

Significantly, the property will no longer be a contributing structure to the proposed Hyde Park Local Historic District, work on which is ongoing by HPNA's Local Historic District Committee, chaired by Lorre Weidlich, and its Design Standards Committee, chaired by Michelle Paris-White (see related article in this issue). One of the important protections provided by local historic district status is higher standards that must be met for a demolition permit to be granted.

Hyde Parker David Conner has placed a sign in front of the home which reads "this place matters." Although the demolition permit has been issued and the owner may raze the home at any time, HPNA pledges to continue to work with Emrobrai Homes in the hopes of keeping the Gertrude Jones House and bringing it back to life in a way which retains its unique architectural features and continues its life as a contributing structure to the National Register District.

— Catherine Moore

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# Minutes of the May 2008 HPNA General Meeting

Elaine Meenehan, President, called the May 5, 2008 General Meeting of the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association to order at 7 p.m. **Laura Morrison**, candidate for Austin City Council, Place 4, introduced herself and encouraged everyone to vote in the election on Saturday, May 10, 2008.

Karen McGraw presented the plans for the development of the **6.6 acres on 51st Street** currently owned by the State of Texas and occupied by **Texas Parks and Wildlife**. These plans have passed the first reading of the Austin City Council. The neighbors and the developers have met several times to discuss the proposed development. Also, HPNA had voted to support the development plans. Recently, the developer changed the plans to add more multi-family units and would not commit to providing parking on the property for guests. These issues led the neighbors on Rowena, who are the most affected by this development, to request that the development not have connecting streets or walkways to Rowena. The concern was that all the visitors to the area would park on Rowena, causing problems for the residents of that street. Also, these neighbors requested that HPNA rescind its previous support for the development.

Many issues were raised in the discussion. Some wanted to have only single family homes developed on the property. Others wanted the property converted to a city park. Concerns were raised about the addition of traffic to 51st Street and about flooding.

After lengthy debate, Andy Jones made a motion that was amended by Bill Finch that HPNA rescind the last vote of the HPNA supporting the project and ask the City Council to postpone the second and third readings to allow time for a traffic study, a flood study, and a determination of the specific site plan committing to the number of units and guest parking. V. R. Whittington seconded the motion. It carried 39 to 0.

Next, Ann Graham reported on **floodlines 2008**. This production is the performance installation created by Austin artist Jaclyn Pryor. For additional information, please see page 18 of the May 2008 issue of *Pecan Press* or log on to <[www.jaclynpryor.com](http://www.jaclynpryor.com)>.

Catherine Moore encouraged everyone to vote in the City Council and School Bond elections on Saturday. HPNA hopes to help get out more voters for this election.

Catherine Moore also led the discussion about the rezoning request that **Twin Liquors** has pending before the City Planning Commission. Twin Liquors currently has a small store in the **Hancock Shopping Center** and the owners plan to move the store to the former Old Navy space in that shopping center. Ron

**Continued on page 12**

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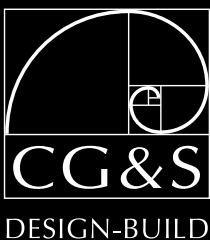
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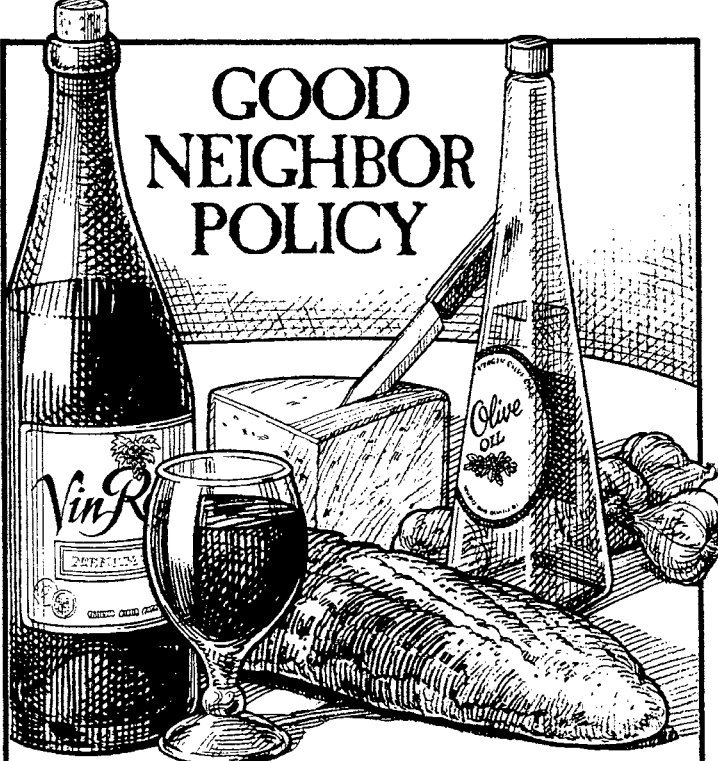
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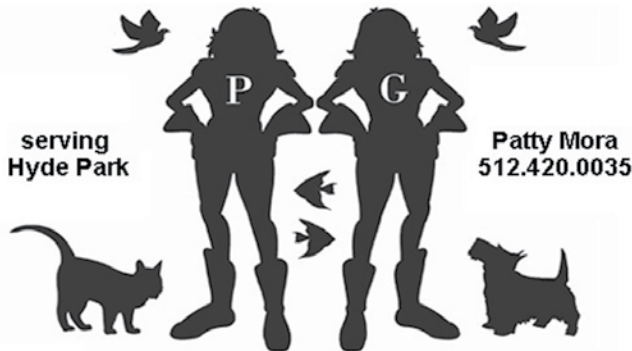
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## May Meeting Minutes...

...cont'd from page 10

Thrower, representing the owners of the shopping center, was available to answer questions. He has also been working with the Hancock Neighborhood Association. Many concerns were discussed, including additional traffic, proximity to the schools, and crime. Ann Graham moved that HPNA not take a position on the Twin Liquors matter at this time. If, after the Hancock Neighborhood Association votes on the matter, the HPNA President feels a vote by the HPNA is necessary, she will call a special meeting of the HPNA before the May 13 meeting of the Planning Commission. Lisa Harris seconded the motion, and it carried 28 to 0.

John Paul Moore provided an update on **City of Austin tree trimming** in the neighborhood. Several trees on Peck near the golf course will be removed as they are creating a traffic hazard and are nearing the end of their life spans. New trees will be planted.

Catherine Moore noted that the home at 4113 Avenue F has a pending demolition permit and she expects the permit to be released soon.

Prior to adjourning the meeting, Elaine Meenehan stated that at the June meeting of HPNA we will discuss the problem of **tire slashing** and have an update on the **McMansion Taskforce**.

– Pam Whittington HPNA Co-Secretary  
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# Crime Report



by Carol Welder

Although crime is not a thing of the past, a recent reduction in crime does seem to suggest that reporting criminal activity produces results. There has been more police presence in Hyde Park over the last year, resulting in questioning of suspicious persons and, in some cases, arrests.

I would like to remind neighbors that we do have a **Neighborhood Watch Program** in Hyde Park. At this time, we have 45 block captains who are liaisons to the Austin Police Department and are a good resource for your questions and concerns. If you are interested in becoming a block captain or in knowing if there is a block captain in your area, please contact me at <cjwelder@msn.com>.

Summer is an excellent time to get neighbors together for a meet and greet. Some block captains have organized socials and have developed a contact list for their neighbors. This has been an important component in keeping crime under control. When neighbors get to know one another, they tend to take on more of a responsibility to one another. If we all work together with the police force, criminals will quickly see that Hyde Park is not the place for them.

On a less encouraging note, I should mention that over the past couple of weeks a few disturbing incidents have happened. In one, a woman was assaulted while walking late at night. She was hit on the head and knocked out by someone in a passing vehicle. She was robbed, but her purse, with all of its contents, was found not far from the incident. There were reports of a vehicle's windows being smashed late at night and the cd/radio unit stolen, that a bicycle was stolen from a shed, that a washer and dryer were stolen from a garage and lawn equipment was taken from the back of a truck. All of these criminal activities serve to remind us to stay alert, try to walk with someone at night, keep valuables out of sight, and lock your doors and windows when you leave the house. Another reminder is that, when you purchase new items for your home such as a computer, tv, or other valuable items, keep the boxes out of sight until you break them down for trash day.

If you're planning a trip this summer, ask your neighbors to keep an eye on your house and give them a contact number while you are away. Remember to report any suspicious activity to the police. Call 311 if it is something that has already happened or 911 if a criminal act is in progress. Stay safe and have a wonderful summer!

— Carol Welder  
HPNA Crime and Safety Chair  
<cjwelder@msn.com>

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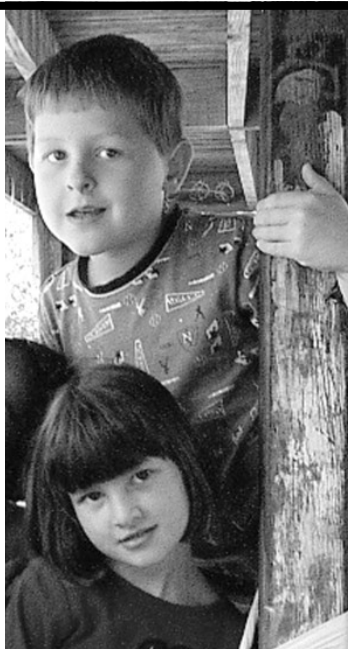
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## May Elections: Room for Improvement in Hyde Park Turnout

This year the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association sponsored a Get Out the Vote effort for the the May 10 City Council, AISD school bonds, and Austin Community College Trustees election. The results are in.

The not-so-good news is that Hyde Park's voter turnout provides plenty of opportunity for improvement. Better news is that Hyde Park's voting turnout percentages in this election were slightly higher than Hyde Park's turnout in the 2006 City of Austin election, in which Precinct 136 had voter turnout of 8.08% and Precinct 275 had turnout of 9.37%. However, the results present a dramatic contrast to turnout in the March 4, 2008, Democratic Primary, which was 40.83% in Precinct 136 and 42.02% in Precinct 275.

The best news is that we have another immediate chance to show how much we care about good government and to improve our turnout by voting in the June 10 Runoff Election in the Place 3 City Council race between Laura Morrison (38%) and Cid Galindo (29%). (Early voting for the runoff is June 2 to June 10.)

The not-so-impressive news is that Hyde Park's precincts voted in numbers only slightly higher than the City of Austin's overall average voter turnout of 8.45% of registered voters. Since Hyde Park is generally rumored to be discernibly more interested in and aware of local government and politics than than other parts of Austin, these results are, frankly, disappointing. An informal sampling of other central Austin precincts revealed that Hyde Park turned out at rates about the same as Bouldin Creek and Travis Heights, slightly less than the rates in Travis Heights, but about 10% less than in Tarrytown.

Kudos to neighbors who voted in the early voting and on election day. They are most appreciated. May their numbers increase!

### Hyde Park voter turnout numbers follow:

**Precinct 136** (Ridgetop School) - 8.91% of registered voters # of registered voters: 4, 936

Total vote: 440, Early vote: 179 (40.68% of total vote)

Election Day vote: (59.32% of total vote)

**Precinct 275** (Baker School) - 10.35% of registered voters #of registered voters: 3, 537

Total vote: 366, Early vote: 118 (32.24% of total vote)

Election Day vote: 248 (67.76% of total vote)

*In every contested race, Hyde Park vote results favored the candidates who ultimately were elected, or led into runoffs in the overall election results. Hyde Park voters voted for the AISD school bonds at a rate least 10 percentage points higher than the district-wide results.,*

**City Council Place 1** (Precinct 136 and Precinct 275 %ages)

Lee Leffingwell\* 64.81% 76.38%,

Allen Demling 14.81% 9.91%,

Jason Meeker 23.31% 13.70%



**City Council Place 2**

Jennifer Kim 30.28% 33.90%  
Randi Shade\* 65.26% 63.84%  
Ken Weiss 4.46% 2.26%

**City Council Place 3**

Cid Galindo\*\* 16.63% 17.54%  
Laura Morrison\*\* 54.70% 57.02%  
Ken Vasseau 0.72% 0.88%  
Jennifer Gale 4.10% 4.09%  
Sam Osemene 2.41% 1.75%,  
Robin Cravey 21.45% 18.71%

**ACC Trustee Place 1**

Time Mahoney\*\* 64.52% 62.65%  
Harrison Keller\*\* 24.73% 28.79%  
Michael Reed 10.75% 8.56%

\*elected, \*\*in run off

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– Catherine Moore

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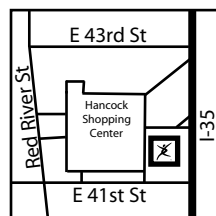
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## NIMBY: NNB?\*

\*("Not in My Back Yard": Not Necessarily Bad?)

An article titled "The Social Function of NIMBYism" by Matthew J. Kiefer in the Spring/Summer 2008 issue of *Harvard Design Magazine*, places efforts by the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association into a broader context. The term — an acronym for "not in my back yard" — is so well known that it merits an entry in the *OED*. The author first offers an overview of opposition to new developments which originally focused on large infrastructure projects and now targets ordinary developments.

Balancing the benefits of development in the form of jobs, satisfying housing demands and real estate revenue with the impact on abutting homeowners — traffic, noise and other impacts — Kiefer states that "in a world in which personhood is paramount, it does not warrant support from the abutters. Furthermore, these opponents are only trying to protect their private domain from an unasked-for-risks from which they will derive little benefit." In conclusion, "...developers can only address NIMBYism by appeasement, control and compensation. (1) Neighbors must be invited to actually influence development outcomes within the bounds of feasibility, which often leads to creative solutions; and (2) Compensation from project proponents which might include enhancement of a neighborhood park or support for crime-watch efforts.

"NIMBYism serves many social functions. In a democratic way, it distributes project impacts, forces mitigation measures to be considered and adopted, protects property values and helps people adjust to unwelcome change in their surroundings."

These observations place past and current efforts in which the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association have been engaged in a broader context.

The epic challenges to our borders began when, in the final decades of the twentieth century, the state legislature decreed that lands assigned to agencies such as the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation must be developed to generate the highest profitability. Lands bounded by Guadalupe, 38th Street and Lamar — part of the grounds of the Austin State Hospital since its opening in 1861 — would now become a mixed-use development known as Central Park. The developers, Barshop and Oles, did offer a measure of control and compensation to the four neighborhoods which are impacted by Central Park. As stated on their web site:

Each neighborhood had its own concerns, including traffic, flooding, aesthetic and environmental issues. The Barshop & Oles Team met weekly with the neighborhood associations, including them in the planning process. Many of their ideas were incorporated into the final design: a traffic barrier to limit congestion in the Rosedale neighborhood, ponds to control flooding in the North University area, interior parking within the apartment community to give the area a more residential feel, and a focus on saving and utilizing native trees.

Continued on page 18

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## NIMBYism: NNB...

...cont'd from page 16

The second parcel of state lands — bounded by 45th, Guadalupe and Lamar — is now known as the Triangle. This grassy, park-like field was up-for-grabs, and a succession of real-estate deals was, happily, doomed to fail. A strip mall mentality defined their proposals — including a football field-sized Randall's superstore and a 16-screen movie complex, all surrounded by vast paved parking lots. While deals were being made and broken, the adjoining neighborhoods were pressing for better solutions and lobbying the City Council to join in the effort.

Leading the HPNA's efforts to reconceptualize the Triangle's future were Susan Moffat, Jennifer Vickers and Suzee Brooks. Joining in were the remarkable siblings Sabrina and Charles Burmeister, then UT students, who organized the residents of Northfield. All were galvanized into a highly effective political force. Finally, the neighborhoods and the City Council agreed to hire noted urban planner and "New Urbanism" pioneer Peter Calthorpe of San Francisco. The resulting mixed-use development with a grid of streets is still being realized. Imperfect perhaps, but ever so much better than what was originally proposed, thanks to thousands of volunteer hours. And what will be the outcome of the crisis-in-progress involving the Texas Parks and Wildlife property on 51st Street?

While the singular activism of Hyde Park is sometimes criticized, one can wonder if other Austin neighborhoods being diminished by inappropriate development might wish they had followed Hyde Park's valiant lead.

— Mary Caroline George

Note: Sabrina Burmeister completed her Ph.D in Neuroscience and is now on the faculty of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her brother, Charles, is an award-winning film maker.



### Hyde Park UMC Book Club reads Anna Karenina

The Hyde Park UMC Book Club will next read Anna Karenina by Leo Tolstoy. The novel is an exploration of romance, passion and the effects they have not only on the lovers but on those around them. We will meet at 4pm on June 1 in the Parlor at Hyde Park United Methodist Church, located at 4001 Speedway. Everyone is invited. Study guides will be available. Please contact the church office at (512)453-4206 or <[office@hydeparkmethodist.org](mailto:office@hydeparkmethodist.org)> to request a copy of the study guide. Hope to see all you novel lovers!



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# QLS

## Rainforest Partnership: More of the View from Peru

(The latest in an ongoing series of reports by former HPNA Co-President Niyanta Spelman about her and her family's eco-adventures in points considerably south of their home on Avenue F.)

Drive into the past, glimpses of the future...

These past few weeks have been a glimpse into the lives of so many different people who live such diverse lives themselves. Going into the jungle allowed us to move further away from human development and the effects of modern life, but last month's travels, mostly in central Peru, were like traveling back in time.

Ten to twelve hours' drive from Lima, as the roads get increasingly dicey, one reaches communities that are progressively a retreat into times past. Even an hour or two in driving distance is enough to create this regression. The mannerisms, the body language, the clothes people wear, the way they relate to outsiders and to each other, it all feels like a telescopic view back in time.

We started with the Satipo Road area, three women, visiting eight cloud forests down to lowland Amazon forest communities in five regions in central Peru. The town of Satipo itself reminded me of my home town of Tabora, Tanzania. It feels in part like a frontier town it likely once was, but now it has modern conveniences amidst mostly dirt roads.

Continued on page 22



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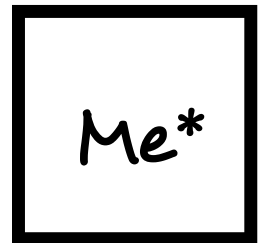
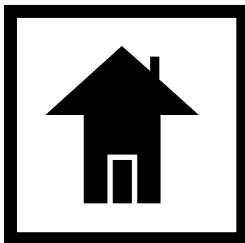
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## More Views from Peru...

...cont'd from page 20

Two hours away from Satipo up towards the cloud forest, Mariposa is just a one-street town. But they have internet, a restaurant, bus service to Satipo, and a regular town meeting — in the middle of the street. Exhausted after our long travels, for our meeting with the community we accepted chairs beside the mayor, who also had a chair. Everyone else — the old and young, women with children — stood in a circle throughout the meeting. The men did most of the speaking, but the women were part of the circle and talked just a little.

Apaya, another couple of hours further away, got electricity two months ago. It now has a TV bringing in the world to their lives, as well as a community telephone. Until Apaya got its satellite phone, the only way to transport sick folks or get messages out quickly was to use the communally owned motorcycle.

Finally, in Ullimarca (oo-jee-MAR-cah), a further hour away, we came to a place untouched by electricity, TV, even telephones. Most cannot read, and most have never left the village. As we talked with the community members — all of them men — the women silently came along but sat just outside the circle, carding wool and making thread. We asked the women what they thought, but none of them would say. One suggested that they'd tell us when we returned. Perhaps they didn't know what to do with us — a Limeña (our young Peruvian intern, Lucia Eslava), an Indian (myself), and a Scot (my Rainforest Partnership board chair and fellow Austinian, Hazel Barbour). We made quite a trio.

What was most amazing was that these communities, with not much in possessions (the best building in the community the school, and a health center if there was a second one), little if any formal education, and limited communication with the world outside their villages, were far more aware of climate change than we are.

They have a lifetime's experience of the weather and the land. One of them told us, to general agreement, that he'd seen decreasing rainfall in the last few years and wondered how to deal with it. He wondered about the effects on his children. They knew that their world is changing and they are concerned. Almost without fail, every community talked about the need to protect their headwaters, and when asked, most linked their desire to preserve their forests to preserving their water supply.

A couple of the communities we met with have self-imposed bans on cutting trees. One indigenous community of Chazuta near Tarapoto created a large community-owned protected area and a patrol squad to enforce the protection. They are now looking at sustainable harvest of a local palm for making brushes. Yet another is preventing people from the nearby large town from taking away orchids and butterflies for sale.

*(to be continued next month)*

— Niyanta Spelman



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French Place classic. Tastefully remodeled home in the heart of French Place features fully updated kitchen and bathroom, beautiful hardwoods, designers colors, versatile 3rd bedroom or 2nd living room, standing seam metal roof, and private backyard with deck.

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Address: **3910 Avenue H**

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Completed in 2004 this classic Arts and Crafts home in the heart of Hyde Park features 3046 sf 4/3 configuration., bright open floorplan, gourmet kitchen with granite counters and stainless app., river stone fireplace/oak mantle, double insulation, & amazing garden.

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Address: **708 Harris Avenue**

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Classic Arts and Crafts home on a 50' X 141' corner lot. Large 3/1.5 floor-plan with an additional 500 sf+ of large attic space waiting to be finished out. Recent exterior paint, roof and electrical upgrading. Separate 2 car garage with a fenced yard only a block from award winning Lee Elementary.

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Address: **113 West 33rd Street**

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## 4203 Avenue A

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## 4602 Avenue G

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## 5312 Evans Avenue

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## 5509 Avenue G

New home in North Hyde Park with vintage finishes. 4BR, 3.5BA.  
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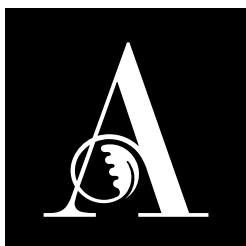


## 606 West 31½ Street

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