

November Meeting

When: 7:00 p.m.
Monday, November 3, 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 November 3rd

- ❖ Local Historic District Update
- ❖ Looking Back: Fire Station Festival in review
- ❖ Looking Forward: HPNA Christmas/Holiday Party

See you there!

The Local Historic District Corner

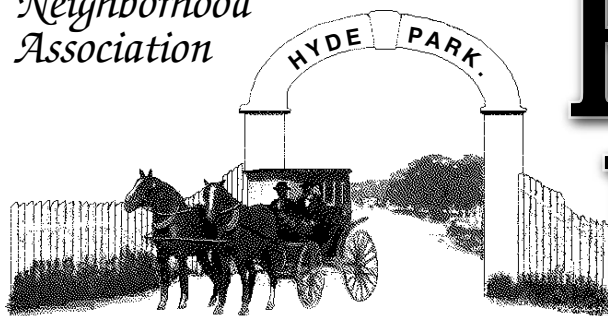
Writer's note: This column will appear regularly while the Local Historic District project is underway. If you have any questions or concerns about local historic districts that you would like addressed, please get in touch: <lweidich@mail2sevensseas.com> or 300-2228.

About 40 people attended the Design Standards workshop on October 6, bringing their questions and concerns. Concerns raised all related specifically to the Design Standards:

- Don't allow wood-framed chimneys.
- Add a few more examples of roofs.
- Put in more specifics on sidewalk creation.
- Add more detail in porch section; make sure it stipulates that the porch can be occupied.
- Clarify when a project becomes "new construction" under the current code and include that information in the document.
- There is a need for more information and clarity about SDUs/alley flats.
- There is an issue with hierarchy in the document.

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The Hyde Park Neighborhood Association



Pecan Press

November, 2008 • National Register District Neighborhood • Vol. 34, No. 11

34th Annual Fire Station Festival: The Best Ever?!

As reflected in the photos in this month's issue, HPNA's 34th Annual Fire Station Festival was a roaring success! Lorre Weidlich, multi-talented neighborhood photographer, winked life into permanence during the event, allowing us to relive those special moments. How is such a special event created and brought to life? Dedication, hard work and the sheer creative genius of your Fire Station Festival committee, neighbors and friends who assisted in myriad ways, and support from local businesses and community friends.

The fun began with the Parade from Shippe Park organized and led by Jeff and Kate Baker. At the fire station, a banquet was set before us by Carol Jackson while children's activities were created and managed by Joan Yamini. The music and perfect surroundings were arranged and set up by Linda van Bavel and Trina Flores. Many helping hands were engaged in each activity, building on the "neighborhood as partners" theme.

We were graced by the presence of a number of elected officials, including U.S. Rep. Lloyd Doggett, City Councilmembers Sheryl Cole and Lee Leffingwell, and State Rep. Elliott Naishtat. We were also graced by a number of notable neighbors who received well-deserved awards in appreciation for their service to



Pipe Dream: ESPADA (Emergency Services Pipe and Drum Association) Sets the Tone for Paraders.

the Association. Recognitions included "Excellence in Communication" awards to retiring Co-Secretaries Celeste Cromack and Pam Whittington; a "Community Outreach" award to retiring Vice-President Jennifer Berbas; and the "Walter and Dorothy Richter Good Citizen" award to Lorre Weidlich, whose selfless and excellent service has included chairing the Homes Tour (twice!), serving as HPNA co-Treasurer, and most recently, chairing the Local Historic District Committee. Finally, and appropriately, outgoing HPNA President Elaine Meenehan received a well-deserved Presidential Appreciation Award from incoming President David Conner, in recognition of her two years of exceptional service.

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From the (New) President's Desk:

Hello, Neighbors!

Hello neighbors, it's an honor to serve as the President of the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association. I would like to tell you a little about myself. I have lived in Austin for more than 14 years now (originally from New Orleans), this being my second time living in Hyde Park. Prior to living in Hyde Park I lived in the Highlands neighborhood, and more recently in far north Austin. As soon as I moved into my current house in May 2006, I volunteered in the 2006 Homes Tour and became interested in working on the Local Historic District (LHD) project.

Living on Duval (north of 45th) is fun but can be challenging at times. Daily, I sit on my porch steps and enjoy watching the walkers, the runners, the bicyclists, and enjoy talking with my close neighbors without having to leave my front porch steps. This is a wonderful characteristic of this neighborhood which, in my opinion, should continue for fu-

ture generations. On the other side, I quickly became aware of neighborhood drag racing, loud music, over-occupied rentals, kick-ins, graffiti, and illegal demolitions. So, I decided to get more involved. In addition to working on the LHD project, I soon joined the Development Review Committee, where I learned about the city permitting process, ordinances, and zoning rules. (I am still learning!). Being a member of the Development Review Committee is somewhat an unpaid part-time job (unpaid full-time for some of the members!), since a lot of time is spent meeting developers and neighbors who want to build in the neighborhood; monitoring new city building and remodeling permits; reviewing site plans; researching houses up for demolition; reviewing rezoning and variance requests; and, speaking at various city Boards and Commissions and City Council meetings.

In attending, listening, and speaking at the City Council and at various board and commission meetings, I realized how some our elected officials and commission members rely on and respect the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association. I do believe they understand that the Hyde Park neighborhood, along with other central city neighborhoods, is committed to retaining its historic fabric and iconic characteristics. However, they must be constantly reminded.

Again, I am happy to serve as the HPNA President along with the new officers and the Steering Committee members. Our wonderful outgoing HPNA President Elaine Meenehan and I will be leading the parade at the Hyde Park Fire Station Festival on October 26, 2008. I look forward in meeting you at the monthly HPNA meetings, but please feel free to email or call if you have any issues or questions. My email address is <daypaycon@yahoo.com> and cell-phone is 512-627-0813.

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

Pecan Press

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Hyde Park Neighborhood Association

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<http://www.austinhdepark.org>

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Meenehan • Mark Fishman

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34th Fire Station Festival: The Best Ever!...

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Banner Day! Incoming (David Conner) and Outgoing (Elaine Meenehan) HPNA Presidents Lead the Way (Fire Station Festival photos by Lorre Weidlich)

For assistance, support and encouragement, we thank Book Austin Music, Fresh Plus, Galaxy Café, Grande Communication, Hyde Park Bar and Grill, HPNA, Hyde Park United Methodist Church, Jeff and Kate Baker-Realtors, Judy Fowler, Mother's Café, NeWorlDeli, Pronto Food Mart, Quacks, Ruby's BBQ, and Wheatsville Food Co-op. And a special thank you to Robin Silberling for all her help on the website for us!

Thank you all for celebrating our partnership with you, Fire Station #9, our neighbors, friends and the new HPNA leadership. See you next year!

– Deaton Bednar,
HPNA Social Chair

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Hyde Park Neighborhood Association Enrollment	2008-09 Membership	HPNA Membership Info
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LHD Corner...

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Questions, on the other hand, were about the entire Local Historic District. Here are the ones that arose and their answers:

When is the Local Historic District going into effect?

It will be sometime during 2009. Design Standards are only the first step in the process. We need to file a lengthy application, including an inventory of all neighborhood houses, with the city. That will require the assistance of a professional. The document must also include documentation that owners of 60% of the property in Hyde Park are in support.

If a house is beyond repair, what are the exceptions? Who decides? How do you balance what is worth saving and what is not?

Mary Carolyn George has dealt with that issue as part of her work toward the preservation of the Bradford-Nohra house, so I asked her to address the question. Her photographic display of heroic rescues will be on exhibit at the November HPNA meeting, to illustrate just how rare "beyond repair" actually is.

When is demolition justified and who decides?

"If (the house in question) is in the National Register Historic District, the review process will involve the following: (a) HPNA Development Review Committee (b) City of Austin Landmark Commission (c) on down the line (through the remainder of the City of Austin process). A decision will be made based on stated criteria: (a) Importance of the house and date (b) Historic relationships and family connections (c) How will it be useful in the future if restored?"

How do you balance what is worth saving?

"(a) Engage the services of a professional who can advise you. Sorting it all out involves detective work - reading the clues. To do this requires training and experience with the historic fabric. (b) The homeowner can and should undertake research at the Austin History Center and the Center for American History at U.T. The librarians are very helpful."

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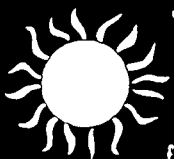
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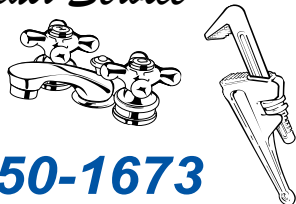
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LHD Corner...

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Let me add this to Mary Carolyn's remarks: There are houses in Hyde Park that were once condemned. Now they have Historic Landmark markers.

What are the incentives for a Local Historic District?

Financially speaking, there are tax abatements for the restoration of a contributing structure or for the restoration of the historic appearance of a potentially contributing structure. In addition to that, those of us who were attracted to Hyde Park because of its historic character have the assurance of knowing that its historic character won't be eroded. You won't wake up one morning to discover that the bungalow across the street is gone and about to be replaced by a structure that is out-sized and out-of-character.

Will these design standards be mandated?

Yes, after the Local Historic District officially goes into effect.

Would the new apartments and the new Shipe Park houses meet the new standards?

I can't answer this in relation to the apartments, because I can't determine what apartments were the subject of the question. With regard to the Shipe Park houses, the current version of the proposed design standards specifically states, "Contemporary design for new construction is appropriate." The final version of the standards is still being formulated.

Why shouldn't we let people tear down?

For this question, I requested responses from two Hyde Parkers: long time neighborhood activist Karen McGraw and new activist Hannah Jacobs Wiseman, who has devoted considerable time recently to the preservation of the Bradford-Nohra house.

Hannah's answer:

As technology advances at a rapid pace, so too does the pace of life. Humans can increasingly travel places, build new structures, and produce and access information more quickly and more efficiently. But in the rush to progress, it is increasingly easy to forget where we came from. The stories that shaped life as we know it today fade. While we may preserve piecemeal historic artifacts in a dusty museum case or a book or web page, these memories become mere shadows without preservation of some of the real originals. As the National Trust for Historic Preservation describes it, the loss of an historic structure is the loss of "irreplaceable architectural . . . heritage" (National Trust for Historic Preservation, America's Most Endangered Historic Places, available at <<http://www.preservationnation.org/issues/11-most-endangered/listings.html>>). And as one resident puts it, when you tear down the old and build replicas, "you have lost the history, the building designs, the ma-

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LHD Corner...

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materials, the methods and energy embodied in those buildings."

Hyde Park is a truly unique neighborhood – a rare gem. As the city's first streetcar suburb and now a lively central neighborhood, it is a tourist destination both for people visiting from out of town and for people from other neighborhoods within Austin who enjoy walking their dogs along the pleasant streets. Above all, it seems that it is loved by its residents. As another neighbor puts it, the people of Hyde Park are perhaps so active in its maintenance, upkeep, crime prevention, and more not just because of a conscious decision to do so, but also as "a byproduct of living in such a cool environment." Hyde Park is what it is today largely because of its originals. It is a living history, not a dusty museum case or a neighborhood full of fake replicas. Sure, everything has been modified to one degree or another, and some has been lost. But without preservation of a good deal of the original fabric, the story is lost: the neighborhoods' roots and memories become increasingly weak. If the recent pace of tear-downs continues, the ghost of Monroe Martin Shipe will no longer travel along the avenues on quiet nights when the moon shines through the pecan tress, and where one can almost believe that the world has returned to an earlier time. (Hannah would like to hear your responses: <hannah.wiseman@yahoo.com>.)

Karen's answer:

The Historic District designation is intended to preserve the actual Historic Fabric - meaning the actual early buildings (as opposed to replicas) - of the neighborhood. These buildings not only are irreplaceable but they embody the actual history of both the buildings and its occupants and events that happened there. In general, a historic district is NOT designated solely at the will of its current occupants - but as an act of the City to preserve some of its history and historic fabric. Without the early buildings it cannot be called a historic district. When you build replicas - which is permitted in conservation districts simply because they cannot prevent demolition - then you have lost the history, the building designs, the materials, the methods and energy embodied in those buildings. If we scrape our older buildings, we can no longer convey to future residents how things were built and with what materials. It will no longer matter who lived in the home or what events took place there. The history in essence is lost.

A neighborhood like Hyde Park, being the city's first streetcar suburb, always attracts many visitors and former residents due to its essence - its historic buildings, its streetscape, the scale of buildings,

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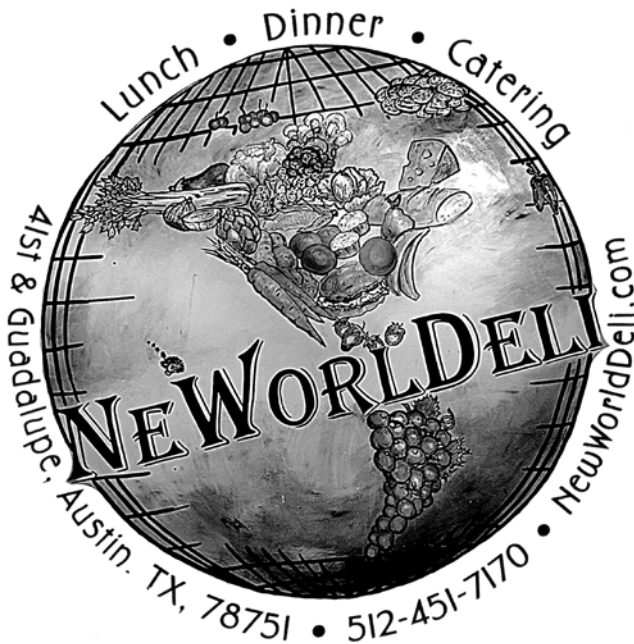
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LHD Corner...

...cont'd from page 8

the layout of the lots, the pattern of driveways and parking and sidewalks, the width of the streets, the heights, color, style and character of buildings, and the rhythm of building elements like gables and porches along the streetscape. An old pine window with wavy glass and rope pulleys gives a different impression from the street than a modern window no matter how much like the original someone claims it to be. The same goes for vinyl or cement-board siding - it's not the same as old pine. New buildings never convey the same information as the originals.

So the decision to designate a local Historic District lies in whether to preserve this slice of history for future generations. I know that many visitors to Hyde Park remember a relative who lived here or living here themselves or visiting someone at an earlier time. When the buildings are gone that connection is gone. So the question really is "which areas should we preserve as historic? For the benefit of Austin's citizens"? I think anyone would put Hyde Park at the top of that list.

Won't this be just another layer of added regulation?

It is another layer of regulation, but the regulation has a specific purpose: to preserve the historic character of Hyde Park. The review process for changes, restorations, removals, and demolitions will go through the same city departments, so there should not be a significant slow down in the review process.

What will happen to property values?

The common belief is that property values will rise. I did some on-line research to see if I could confirm that. After discarding various real estate sites that I assumed had the purpose of selling houses, I located "Historic Preservation and Residential Property Values: An Analysis of Texas Cities" by Robin M. Leichenko, N. Edward Coulson and David Listokin (Urban Studies, Vol. 38, No. 11, 1973-1987, 2001). I quote from the conclusions:

"Results suggest that historic preservation generally has a positive impact on property values and that historic designation is associated with average property value increases ranging between 5 per cent and 20 per cent of the total property value. Results also suggest that type of historic designation - whether national, state or local - tends to have a mixed effect on housing values. In Lubbock and San Marcos, nationally designated historic properties had significantly higher values than did locally designated historic properties. By contrast, in Abilene, this effect was not statistically significant. These results suggest that local housing market conditions and variations in local historic zoning rules within each city determine whether

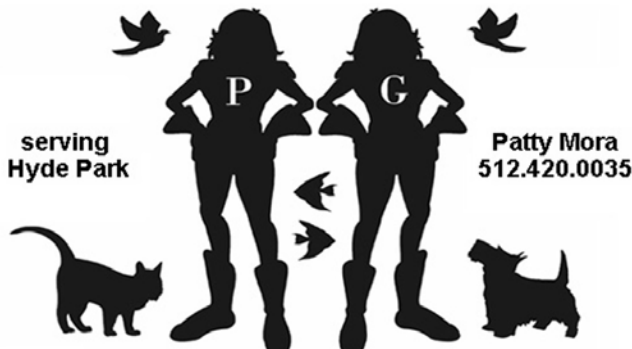
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national or state designation has a significant effect above and beyond the effect of local designation.

There are a number of important implications to our findings. Critics of historic preservation often charge that designation negatively impacts property values. While that surely could be the case on an individual basis; overall, it was not true for the Texas cities. The evidence from Texas suggests just the opposite: designation enhances value."

What exactly is a contributing structure? What are the criteria?

The ordinance is specific about this: "CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE means a structure that contributes to the historic character of a historic area (HD) combining district, was built during the period of significance for the district, and which retains its appearance from that time. An altered structure may be considered a contributing structure if the alterations are minor and the structure retains its historic appearance and contributes to the overall visual and historic integrity of the district."



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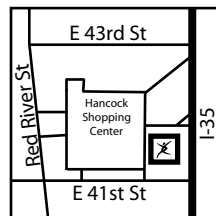
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Neighborly Naturopathic Health Tips

Dear Neighbors,

I am very grateful for the opportunity to introduce myself to you in the Pecan Press. I am a Naturopathic doctor, new to the 'hood, and want to share some tips on staying healthy during the upcoming cold and flu season. As a Naturopath, I try to stimulate the body's own healing mechanisms by using medicinal herbs, nutrition, and homeopathy, thereby minimizing the need for pharmaceuticals or OTC drugs. This way, we deal with side benefits instead of side effects.

Here are some suggestions:

- Hand washing helps prevent the spread of the viruses that cause colds. Instruct all your family members and get the little ones to make a habit of washing their hands frequently. This very simple habit is also very easy to forget!
- Decrease the amount of refined sugar and carbohydrates in your family's diet. Sugar puts your immune system to sleep, so to speak. Eat brown rice or quinoa instead of bread and pasta.
- Increase medicinal mushrooms in your diet. Shiitakes, for example, are excellent immune boosters. Add them to soups, stir-fries, or sautee them in olive oil with an onion and garlic. Mushrooms absorb whatever they grow on, so these are important to buy organic.
- We all know about vitamin C, but did you know zinc is also crucial for the proper functioning of your immune system? Zinc lozenges are an easy way to add some extra zinc into your system this time of year, and work wonders on sore throats as well.
- Stress can negatively affect our immune systems. Make sure you incorporate some stress-relieving activity into your daily life, such as deep breathing, meditation/ prayer, laughter, or exercises such as tai chi or yoga.
- Get outside! Make sure you are exposed to sunshine on a daily basis as this is the best way to get your vitamin D.

You can learn more about Naturopathic medicine in general at www.naturopathic.org . If you have a specific question for me, I can be contacted at thenaturaldoc@gmail.com .

— Vanessa Fritz, ND

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Minutes of the October 2008 HPNA General Meeting

The October 6, 2008 HPNA Meeting was called to order at 7 pm by President Elaine Meenehan.

The first item on the agenda was the election of the **2008-2009 HPNA Officers and Steering Committee members**. Alan Marburger presented the names of all the nominated members, and asked for a vote of the full slate of all nominated members. The full slate of members was voted in unanimously. The new 2008-2009 HPNA Officers and Steering Committee members are:

- **President** – David Conner
- **Vice President** – Michelle Paris-White
- **Co-Treasurers** – I.J Aarons and Carol Jackson
- **Co-Secretaries** – John Williams and Kristen Remeza
- **Steering Committee Members: First Term** – Mark Fishman and Cynthia Lyon;
Second Term – Stan Kozinsky, Dorothy Richter, Wanda Penn, and John Paul Moore*

This concluded the official business on the agenda for the October 2008 HPNA General Meeting.

At that time, a discussion began on the progress of the **Hyde Park Local Historic District (LHD)**. Michelle Paris-White gave a general overview of what the LHD committee discussed over the past year. The committee decided that the main goals of the LHD are to make demolitions of contributing structures in the neighborhood more difficult, and to provide a formal review process for renovations in the neighborhood for exterior work. Lynn Osgood then summed up the committee's primary objectives, which are to prevent teardowns, and to preserve the neighborhood fabric. Lynn concluded by saying that the committee has decided that the only truly effective way to prevent teardowns in the neighborhood is to attempt to form an historic district.

Then everyone broke away into smaller groups, and committee members of the LHD led a roundtable discussion of the "Semi-Final Version" of the Hyde Park **Local Historic District Design Standards** document. The roundtable discussion allowed everyone to review the document, and to discuss any concerns or ask questions within their groups. The LHD committee members leading the roundtable discussions took notes on concerns of the smaller groups, for later review and discussion at future LHD committee meetings.

Having no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

– John A. Williams,
HPNA Co-Secretary
<jawilli@grandecom.net>

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Letters Dept.

More on Community

Dear Editor,

Re your recent reflections on the sense of community in Hyde Park:

In his book Awakening the Buddha Within - Tibetan Wisdom for the Western World, Lama Surya Das writes:

"There is a Tibetan saying: 'Only the snow lions among us can go into solitude in the wilderness and achieve enlightenment alone.' Most of us depend upon being part of a sangha. The word sangha is translated as 'virtuous community'. It represents the spiritual community, our fellow seekers, kindred spirits, and soulful friends we rely on and trust. Historically, it referred to the ordained, monastic community of monks and nuns.

Spiritual energy is healing energy; when any group gathers with a dedication to something greater than one's finite, individual self, the accumulated energy is almost palpable. When Jesus said: 'Where two or more are gathered in my name, there shall I be also,' he was affirming the miraculous spiritual power, the delightful synergy of sangha."

My short meditation on this was:

While this reading references both Buddhist and Christian forms of community, to me it says that doing something with a community adds meaning to that endeavor. Many of us find community in friends and family. To some it may be neighbors or work or church or yoga class. Whatever the case, our communities inspire and motivate us to do better and to be better people.

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Tapestry Singers Weave Magic

Dear Editor,

Folks in Hyde Park may already know about the Tapestry Singers, since we practice in the Austin State Hospital chapel every Monday night, and twice a year, at Christmas and in the spring, we serenade the patients. In any event, we'd like folks to know about our upcoming concert – Traditions: A Celebration of Folk Music and Poetry – scheduled for November 15, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. at the Hope Presbyterian Church, 11512 Olson Drive. Please join us!

— Dr. Juli Fellows,
Tapestry Singers

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Fire Station Festival Photos Continued: "Look Ma, Both Hands!": Young Auditioner for Station #9 Crew

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For every ton of paper we recycle, the school will receive much-deserved and much-appreciated money. There are only a few items the company does not accept: Please, no cardboard, cereal/soda cartons, food wrappers/containers, tissue products, phone books, plastic or glass. Otherwise, if it's paper and it rips, it can go in the dumpster. They will allow us to throw in stapled papers because they can handle sorting those out. The estimated resource savings from recycling but one ton of paper will be 4,102 kWh less electricity, 60lbs less air pollution, and 7,000 gallons less water.

What a way to help our environment and make every page count. Thank you for recycling, and thank you for supporting Lee Elementary!

— Wren Nokes Willeford

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Fire Station Festival photos continued: Hot Mama Pushing Family Values

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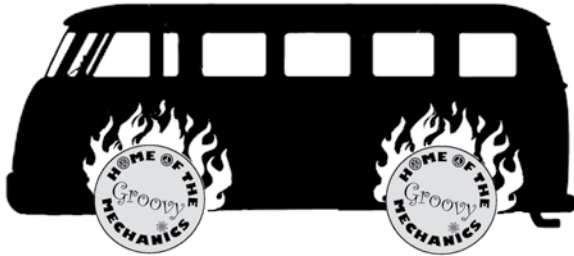
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— Nancy Taylor Day
August 27, 2008

Certain Burdens

Things we carry
a story that made my
heart ache and swell
and I think of women
who are not soldiers
in the sense of the story
who are soldiers in
the sense of loving and
caring, struggling to
balance on a see-saw
the other end unseen
the other end loaded,
unloaded, no way to
keep equilibrium by
sight, only by the ever
so slight shift, the feel,
the communication through
soles, by which of course
we mean souls,
what we carry is the burden
of life, even as we age,
even as grandmothers
and somehow that burden
makes us smile

— Nancy Taylor Day
August, 12, 2008



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FOR SALE

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HYDE PARK HOMES GALLERY



503 East 41st Street

1920s Victorian-style with pool on oversized lot. 3BR, 3.5BA and 4Liv. Listed at \$599,000



4213 Avenue C

Hyde Park bungalow-style duplex with 2BR, 2BA and 3BR, 2BA, cash cow. Listed at \$534,000



4602 Avenue G

New Arts & Crafts home, ±3,400 sq. ft. per builder. 4BR, 3BA and 3Liv. Garage. Listed at \$849,000



4706 Evans Avenue

Classic 1940s traditional with recent master suite addition. 3BR, 2BA and 3Liv. Listed at \$449,000



602 East 46th Street

Charming updated bungalow with luxurious master. 3BR, 2.5BA and 3Liv. Listed at \$599,000

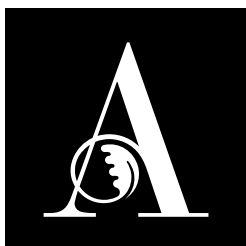


4113 Avenue F

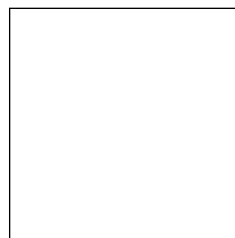
New construction in the center of Hyde Park historic district. 4BR, 2.5BA and 2Liv. Listed at \$799,900

Your Hyde Park Real Estate Expert

Call Suzanne today for a free market analysis on your home or investment property. Over 15 years experience marketing and selling Hyde Park!



**AvenueOne
Properties**



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