

September Meeting

When: 7:00 p.m.
Monday, September 13, 2010

Where: New Location
Austin Groups for the Elderly
cafeteria
3710 Cedar Street

Who: YOU and your neighbors

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

HPNA General Meeting Agenda for September 13th

- ❖ Krimelabb crime data web resource, Jack Darby
- ❖ National Night Out: October 5th at Shipe Park
- ❖ City-proposed changes to Design Standards in Local Historic District Application (*vote*)
- ❖ Update on pocket park proposed for 3801 Duval

See You There!

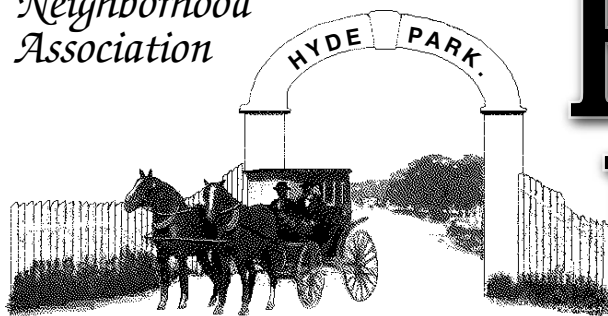
The Saga of Saving Fire Station # 9

The story which follows is a legend retold in celebration of the heroic acts of neighbors who have made Hyde Park what it is today — those people who cared enough to take a stand.

Walter and Dorothy Richter moved to 3901 Avenue G in Hyde Park in the 1960s. A few years later in the early 70s, Dorothy rode her son Gary's bicycle to Fire Station # 9 to register it, as a theft prevention measure. The firemen told her, "It is a good thing you came now. This station will be closed in a week or so." A Fire Station Master Plan, devised by the then-City Manager Lynn Andrews, and approved by the City Council at the time, directed that the work of three smaller inner city stations, including #9, be

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The Hyde Park
Neighborhood
Association



Pecan Press

September, 2010 • National Register District Neighborhood • Vol. 36, No. 9

Who Gives a Hoot? An Update



Owl Together Now...Four, in Fact! Photo by Carol Burton

Note: When last we checked ("Owl the News That's Fit to Print," May 2010 issue), three fuzzy young owlets had recently made their planetary debut in a nest at a still-un-disclosed location in Hyde Park. Since then our faithful cub (well, owl, actually) reporter Amon Burton has been keeping an attentive eye on how the Hoo-Dat household is doing, and he recently filed this report:)

The accompanying photograph shows three juvenile eastern screech owls and their mother perched in a pecan tree in Hyde Park. The juveniles are about three months old, and they have already achieved their full height of 7-8 inches. The father is likely in a nearby tree.

These three owlets left their nest box (or "fledged") during the first week of May — although not without drama. Since a micro video camera exists inside their nest box, we could watch their attempts to leave the nest and enter the outside world. One by one they would crawl up the side of the nest box and peer out the entry/exit hole; then they would drop back down into the box to be with their siblings. Occasionally, they would fight over who got to view the world.

I should mention that the owl- et who first emerges from its egg shell gets the lion's share of food and becomes the largest. When the parents return at night to make food deliveries, it isn't apportioned

Continued on page 6

Landmark Commission Approves LHD for Hyde Park — see story, p. 10

From the President's Desk:

Introducing: HPNA Officer Nominees!

Hello Neighbors, it's that time again for the nominations of the new leaders for the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association. The Nominating Committee has informed me that this is the proposed slate of nominees for the 2010-11 Association Year:

President: *Lisa Harris*

Co-Vice President: *Cynthia Lyon* (returning)

Co-Vice President: *John Williams*

Co-Secretary: *Sam Waring*

Co-Secretary: *open* (working on nominee!)

Co-Treasurer: *I J Aarons* (returning)

Co-Treasurer: *Carol Jackson* (returning)

Steering Committee Members (returning):

Wanda Penn

Mark Fishman

Stan Kozinsky

Paula Rhodes

Dorothy Richter

John Moore

David Conner (Immediate Past President-ex-officio)

New Steering Committee Nominees:

Rich MacKinnon

Eric Stumberg

The election of officers for the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association will take place in the October 4th neighborhood association meeting. We encourage neighbors' enthusiastic support of these nominees. With this sort of excellent leadership, we look forward to an exciting and productive year for the HPNA!

— *David Conner*

HPNA President

<daypaycon@yahoo.com>

Pecan Press

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I Jay Aarons • jjaarons@aol.com • PO Box 49427, Austin, TX 78765

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HPNA Committee/Task Forces (w/chairs)

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

Alley Coordinator • Carol Burton, skywash@austin.rr.com.....

Austin Neighborhoods Council Rep. • Lisa Harris, Ljharrisus@yahoo.com

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Triangle Development • Cathy Echols, 4002 Ave. C 206-0729

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

All memberships expire on September 30th of each year.

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	Make checks payable to HPNA.	

The Saga of Saving Fire Station # 9...

...cont'd from page 1

handled by larger stations with ladder trucks. Thus the Hyde Park station at Speedway and 43rd Street was scheduled for closure. Upon reading the minutes of that council's decision, Dorothy Richter discovered that there had been no public hearing and very little discussion by the council, hence no public awareness of their decision.

An assistant fire chief provided Dorothy with a map of the Master Plan. (As luck would have it, the fire chief, an advocate of the plan and reputedly uncooperative, was out of town, hence unavailable.) In reviewing the plan, contradictions became apparent that had been overlooked by the planners and decision makers. The three larger stations designated to provide service to the Hyde Park area were prohibited from doing so by regulations stated in the plan — the mandated three minute response time, aka the so-called barriers.

Regarding Station # 3 on 30th Street : The route that Truck #3 would take to reach Hyde Park via Speedway was prohibited from traveling up the steep incline on one-block-long University Avenue, but alternate routes would not be timely... Prohibited.

Regarding Station # 12 on Hancock : The route would cross major arterials such as Burnet Road, Lamar Boulevard and Guadalupe, with inevitable traffic delays... Prohibited.

Regarding Station # 14 at 4305 Airport : The route would necessitate crossing railroad tracks... Prohibited.

The firemen at Station # 9 helped by testing "running time," and thereby determining that it would be impossible for any of the three designated stations to respond to emergencies in Hyde Park within the mandated three minutes. They also informed Dorothy that the question of the station's closing had been placed on the agenda for the next City Council meeting by Betty J. Peterson, who operated a day nursery at 4112 Avenue D.

With just two weeks to go before the scheduled meeting, a plan of action began to take shape, with publicizing the issue a priority. When Dorothy contacted the Austin American-Statesman, however,

the editor — a golf buddy of the City Manager — said, " There is no story." (Good ol' boyism at work in Austin?) Undeterred, Dorothy proceeded to stage a newsworthy demonstration, undeniable in its charm and simplicity. A parade of children on tricycles and bicycles circled round Station # 9 displaying signs bearing the message " Councilmen, councilmen, save my station!" — a variant on "Firemen, firemen, save my child!" And she made sure the news media were present. Photographs and stories appeared in the newspaper and on television. The children's crusade received good coverage from a young reporter on the Statesman by the name of Ben Sargent, who went on to become a Pulitzer Prize-winning editorial cartoonist. Soon thereafter, a well-attended town meeting was held at the Hyde Park Baptist Church. Those in attendance received contact information for members of the City Council which they were encouraged to use. Walter Richter also had 1000 flyers printed, which were distributed at the meeting and throughout the area with the help of a retired policeman.

On the day of the council meeting, Station #9 advocates overflowed the small auditorium of the old council chambers on 9th Street. The three appointed speakers were Dorothy, wearing a borrowed fireman's hat, who announced, " If Station #9 closes, our Hyde Park neighbors will have to become firemen and put out their own fires"; Miguel Gonzalez-Gerth of 4109 Avenue G, an accomplished poet and professor of Spanish at UT-Austin; and Forest Edwards of 4309 Avenue G. With no handicap access, Edwards, a paraplegic, had been carried in his wheel chair up several flights of steps to the council chamber. He related that he and his German-born wife, Agnes, had moved to Hyde Park to be near to Station # 9 , having had a fire scare in another location. Agnes, a skilled statistician, did invaluable research for the cause. The mayor, Roy Butler, then announced that the council had met in a work session the night before and voted not to close Station # 9. Council members Dryden, Lebermann and Nichols were especially sympathetic. A newspaper editorial the next day reported that "the

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OPEN HOUSE December 9th, 5:30-7:30 (also January 30th, 9-12)



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Saving Fire Station # 9...

...cont'd from page 3

council had buckled under to citizen protest." But editorial or no, Station #9 remained open!

A related and more recent example of Dorothy's vigilance and tenacity concerned the ancient pecan tree in front of Station # 9 on 43rd Street between the fire engine egress and the alley — a tree which even then bore a metal marker as a City of Austin Registered Tree (1976). In order to provide eight parking spaces for the firemen, a bulldozer was at work excavating two to four feet down to prepare a base for the parking area when Mrs. Richter arrived on the scene. Cutting down the tree was not part of the plan, but its death would have been assured, since its roots would be covered with impervious material. She asked the operator of the bulldozer, "How do you expect this tree to get nourishment?" He replied, "Lady, I have a job to do." Her reply was, "I go with the next scoop!" She held her ground until the noon lunch break, when she was able to phone City Hall. By one o'clock persons of authority had assembled and another tragedy was averted. The existing parking lot off the alley was built to the design of Dorothy Richter. Because of this incident, shortly thereafter the City Council passed a tree preservation ordinance which had long been advocated by Councilmember Margaret Hoffman.

The need for vigilance persists. Station # 9 has been on the "chopping block" several times since these earlier incidents — most recently saved by the firemen, who accepted a salary cut rather than be transferred. The annual Fire Station Festival in October (see next month's issue for more details) is an opportunity for Hyde Parkers to express their pride and appreciation for their station and, at the same time, send a message to the City Council each year at budget adoption time. Let us all say thank you every time we hear Engine # 9 go forth to help one of our neighbors in need. Where would we be without them?

— Mary Carolyn George

(Note: A related article by Mary Carolyn, telling us more about the long, proud history of Station #9, will appear in next month's issue. We thank her for her excellent research and reportage, reminding us of the instrumental role that the vigilance of Dorothy and other neighbors has played in the Station's survival and success.)



Crime Report

by Carol Welder

This year, **National Night Out** will be on **Tuesday, October 5th**. Please mark your calendar now to join your neighbors for a community event at **Shipe Park from 6:00 8:00 pm**.

National Night Out is designed to heighten crime and drug prevention awareness, generate support and participation in crime efforts, strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community relations and send a message to criminals letting them know that our neighborhoods are organized and fighting back.

As part of the evening, there will be information on how you can get involved in our **Neighborhood Watch Program**. Come visit with **Block Captains** about how you can help raise awareness of crime prevention in our community. Beginning at around 6 pm, neighbors will gather at Shipe Park for pizza, drinks, and lots of fun activities for adults and kids. We plan to have music, hula hoops, giveaways for those who attend, and crime prevention information available for you to take home. We have requested a visit from APD, Austin Fire Department, EMS and Code Compliance and hope to get representatives to come by and visit for awhile. This evening is a great opportunity for citizens and law enforcement to partner up against crime. It is time to show the criminal element that we are not going to just sit back and let crime occur in our neighborhood.

From 8:00-9:00 we are asking neighbors to **walk the avenues** Please plan to bring a flashlight. Turn your porch light on, lock your doors and spend the evening with us in and around Hyde Park. As always, be aware of any suspicious activity and call 911 if you witness something out of the ordinary. Our **new APD District Representative is Josh Metteauer**. His email is <joshua.metteauer@ci.austin.tx.us> and his phone number is 974-8124.

– Carol Welder, Chair, HPNA
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Who Gives a Hoot?...

...cont'd from page 1

equally. It is first come, first served. And "first come" means whoever is largest. The last owlet to hatch is lucky to survive, and very often doesn't.

The largest owlet fledged one evening in early May shortly after dark. It peered out the entry hole and then jumped onto a nearby tree limb. After looking around it began climbing up the limb to a cluster of leaves high in the pecan tree. I later learned that one of the parents was probably up there encouraging it to come on up and hide in the leaves. At the time owlets fledge they still cannot fly; or if they can it is only for a very short distance.

The following night the middle sized owlet decided it was time to leave. However, the next morning we found it under a bush five yards from the nest tree. It had tried to fly and glided down to the ground. It was lucky to find cover under that bush and avoid the neighbor's cat. We returned it to the nest box to rejoin the smallest owlet who had been alone all night for the first time. By the afternoon both owlets in the nest box were doing a head bobbing routine, a practice we had previously observed. Not sure why, but owlets jive.

When night arrived, the second owlet who had unsuccessfully tried to fledge the previous night once again departed out onto a limb--this time successfully. The smallest owlet was alone again that night and all the next day. After it became dark this little owlet kept going up to the hole expecting mother to appear with food. She didn't come. Finally, the owlet gave up and dropped back down into the nest box. In fact, the parents often try to force the owlets to fledge by withholding food. To our surprise, just before dawn the smallest owlet quickly jumped out of the nest box onto the same limb that the other two owlets had used. A few hours later we saw it in the top of the tree with one of the parents by its side.

After fledging, owlets stay with their parents for several months. One day in July we discovered the three owlets and mother roosting in a nearby pecan tree and we took this photograph. Each morning they returned to roost all day, and just before dark the owlets would fly around our backyard for 5-10 minutes hunting for bugs or mice. One morning in mid-August they didn't appear. They had dispersed to find their own separate territories in which to live. Now, only the mother appears in the morning and sits alone in the tree, waiting in the safety of the pecan tree shelter until night when she can resume hunting.

— Amon Burton

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Hazardous Waste Collection

First English Lutheran Church to Serve as Hazardous Waste Collection Site on Oct. 2

Hazardous waste is present in nearly every household, and most people are aware of the fact that such waste needs to be disposed of in ways that do not harm the environment. The city of Austin provides a facility for such disposal, but its location and limited open hours make it difficult for many people to use the facility.

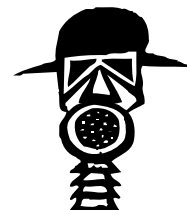
The Task Force for the Environment of First English Lutheran Church (one block east of Trudy's Restaurant), is planning an event that will assist the congregation members — and neighbors of First English — to dispose properly of their household hazardous waste. On Saturday, October 2, from 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. people are invited to bring their hazardous waste to the church's parking lot, where pickup trucks will haul it safely to the city's facility. Items must be brought only between the hours of 8:00 and 10:00 a.m. on that day, since the congregation cannot store any hazardous materials. The Task Force will welcome volunteers to assist in loading the trucks. All who participate will be greeted with coffee and refreshments.

The city collection facility will receive items only from residences in Austin and Travis County. For this initial outreach project by the congregation, we ask that items be limited to the following: batteries, oil, paint, and antifreeze only. No medical waste. All items must be labeled, and must be secure in their containers to avoid spillage.

This is an early notice so that people may have time to take stock of unused hazardous materials and be ready to dispose of them safely on October 2. Please note the date and time on your calendar. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me at 452-0414, and/or <merleginna@att.net>

— Merle Franke

(Editor's Note: Good Neighbor Franke, a former HPNA President and Pecan Press editor, served for twenty years as Pastor of First English Lutheran.)



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The Local Historic District Corner

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

Another Red Letter Day for Hyde Park

On August 23, the Historic Landmark Commission voted unanimously to support the Hyde Park Local Historic District.

It was quite an evening. The meeting began at 7, but the public hearing for our district did not begin until around 9:30. Speaking in favor were myself, Merle Franke, Wanda Penn, Mary Carolyn George, Deaton Bednar, Lin Team (speaking for the Heritage Society of Austin), David Conner, and Dorothy Richter. Several people spoke in opposition, including some who wanted blocks removed from the proposed district because of low owner support on those particular blocks. Our rebuttal was that those blocks were included because of their high percentage of contributing structures. Laurie Limbacher, chair of the Commission, was in agreement. Boundaries are not drawn based on owner support but based on historic and architectural considerations; owner support is accumulated over the entire district.

This victory followed a busy month. Our first appearance before the Historic Landmark Commission, in July, was postponed for a month due to a notification error on the part of the city. We also had a meeting with city staff about our design standards. In order to make them legally airtight, the city attorney required some changes. We made the minimum changes required.

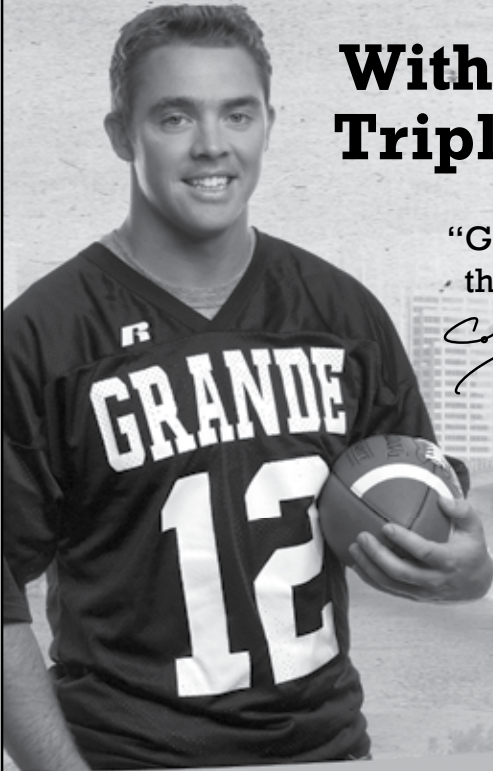
We are now anticipating our appearance before the Planning Commission and City Council. In the meantime, talk to your neighbors. If they haven't yet signed in support, ask them to do so. The more supporters, the better!

– *Lorre Weidlich*
Chair, Hyde Park Local Historic District



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A Neighborhood Treasure: Helping Hand Home for Children

This month we highlight the good work and new programs made possible by our support of the Helping Hand Home for Children. The home is on 3804 Avenue B, right in our neighborhood. The facility provides 24-hour care, supervision and treatment for 40+ children ages 4-13 who have been abused, neglected or abandoned. Your generous donations each year at the HPNA's annual Christmas Party have allowed the home to expand services.

This summer the Helping Hand Home introduced a variety of new recreational activities. According to Julie Freeman, Development Director, the children have had few normal recreational experiences so they provide ample opportunities "just to be kids". With funding received from individuals, corporate donors and foundations, the children have been introduced to activities such as yoga, cooking and art classes, music lessons, Spanish classes, gardening, swimming, running club, sign language classes and therapeutic equestrian activities.

Funding from the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) accounts for approximately two thirds of the Helping Hand Home's operating budget, but pays only for the basics for the children such as food, shelter, clothing, basic child care, and medical services.

Our community support, corporate donations and grants provide funds for the crucial supplemental services that set The Helping Hand Home apart from other treatment centers. Please continue to keep the children on your Christmas shopping list. For more information about the Home, and about the way(s) you can help support their work, please contact Ms. Freeman at <jfreeman@helpinghandhome.org>, 600-7891.

— Linda Pennington



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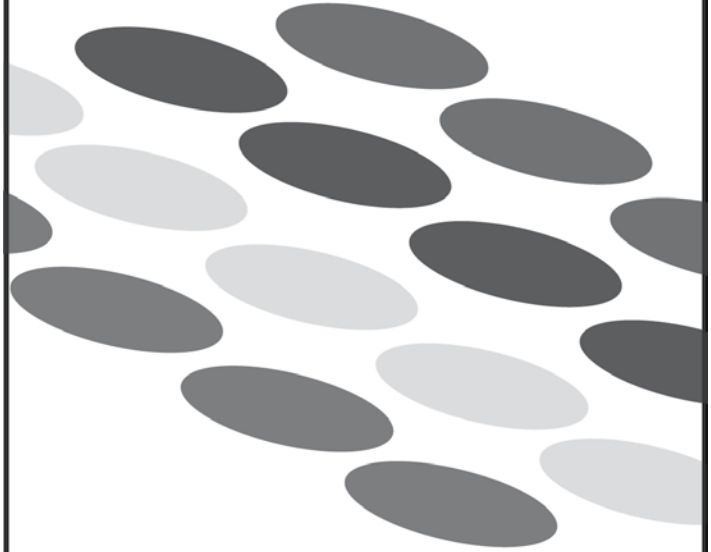
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Spring Planting at Helping Hand Home. Photo by Taylor Minicucci

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HPNA General Meeting: August 2, 2010 Minutes

Neighbors gathered in the cafeteria at Austin Groups for the Elderly for the HPNA August meeting.

It was very little business and mostly pleasure, as ice cream with toppings, mix-ins and cookies were provided on one of the first 100 degree days of summer 2010. Representatives of the proposed rehabilitation hospital at the 45th and Guadalupe corner of the Triangle development were available to answer questions and talk about their plans for neighbors who were interested. We are awaiting confirmation of the rumor that all neighbors in attendance were provided with second helpings of ice cream.

– Denise Girard, HPNA Co-Secretary,
<dmgirard@grandecom.net>




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Hyde Park Poets —

Dear Readers:

One day last month I received an email from Kate Dowdy with a lovely haiku enclosed. Kate inspired me to ask others to send me these small bits of evocative verse.

Responses follow with thanks from me.

Your poetry editor,
Nancy Taylor Day

The Horses of the Wind


The beating of hearts
The wind calls the horse's name
Horses run wildly

— *Kate Dowdy (Age 10, Lee Elementary)*

Colors

Creativity
my body is a canvas
new ideas, new art

— *Bridget Wolfe*



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9:15 a.m. Sunday School
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Source: PBS, Public School Review

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A Table Outside of Dolce Vita

Four haiku for Huff

Here you sat. Here you
wrote. Here you hoped for something
to fill days, a page.

We traded verses,
face to face, and soul to soul.
Minds still talk today.

To be a poet,
you watch, you wait, you bum smokes
and a steaming cup.

We always tumble
into good conversation.
Poems soar above.

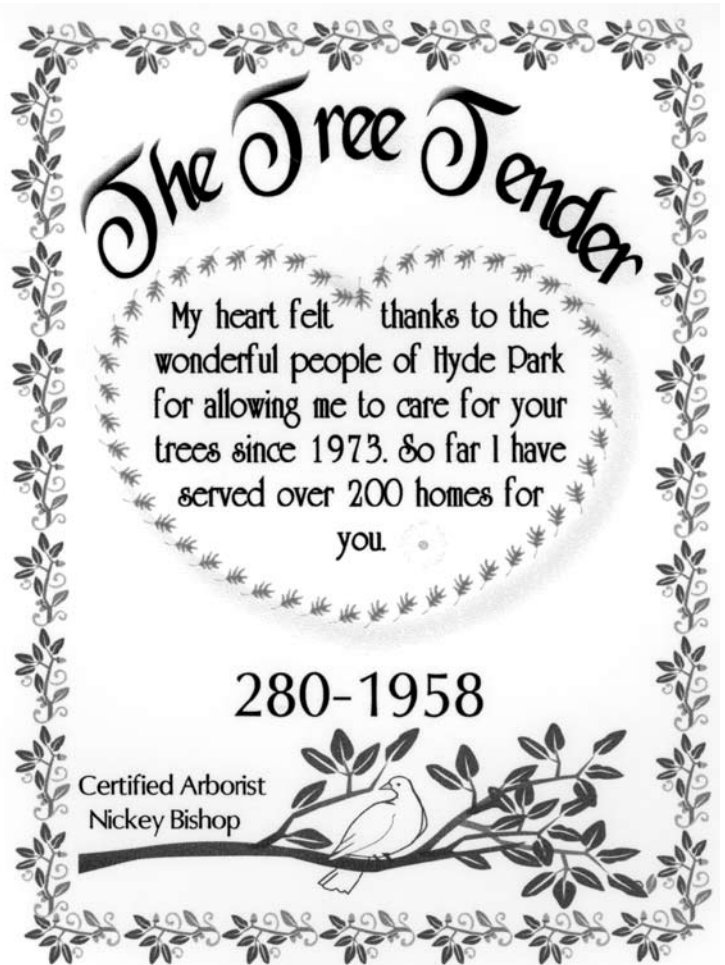
— *Elzy Cogswell*

Xeriscape

Orange lantana—
here and there in the oak trees
a cardinal pair

Trying to blossom
once more before summer ends
the mutabilis

— *Nancy Taylor Day*



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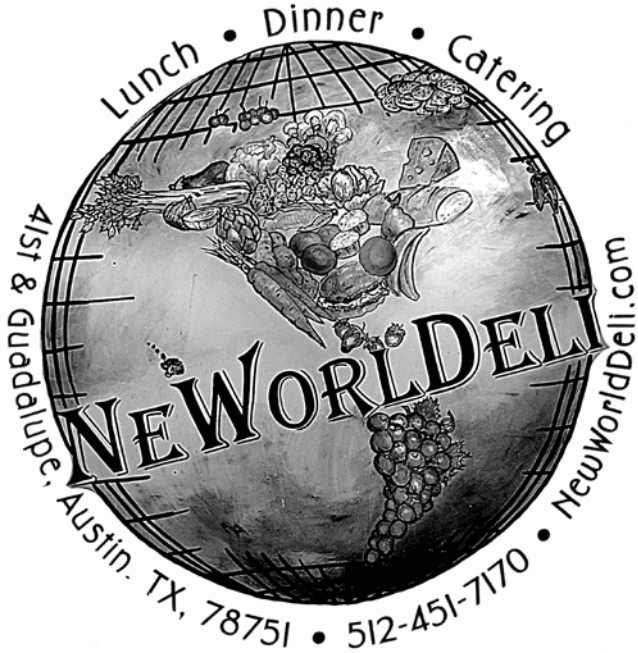
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Hyde Park Poets —

Hank

The pup stays silent
as he explores my friends' feet
the smells of the world

— Adam Callaway

Break Time

Microwave popcorn
on the deck sun tea brewing,
a crossword undone

— Nancy Taylor Day

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Season

looking at the trees
waiting for fall to arrive
wishing for a breeze

— Heather Weddle

Dusk

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strong arms, beauty light
calmness comes

— Carol Wagner

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Letters Dept.

On SUVs and Leafblowers

Dear Editor,

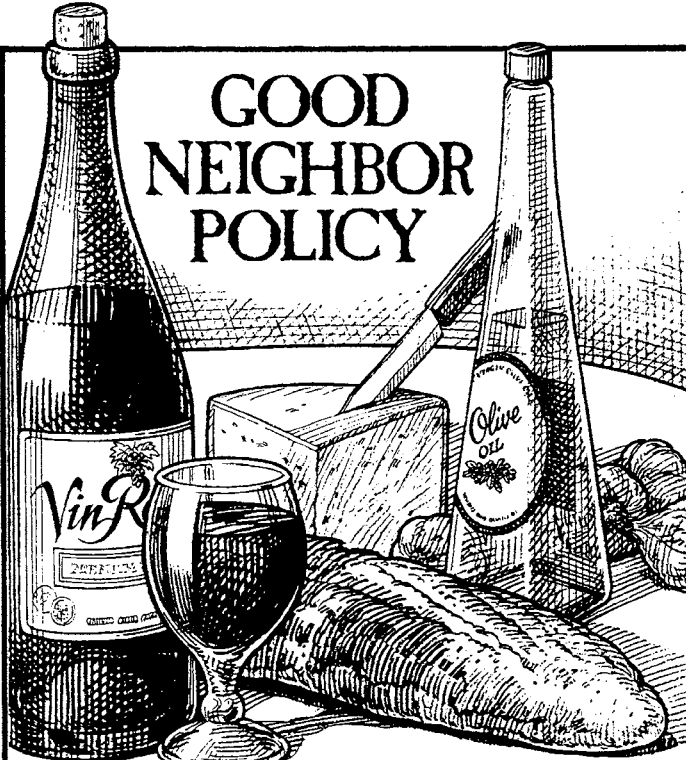
Hello. I have lived in Hyde Park for roughly 10 years now. I love it here. Though I am not a home owner, (I am still a full-time college student) I plan to be one some time in the near future and I hope that I find a great house here in Hyde Park.

The reason I am writing this email is because I read the Pecan Press every month and I always see things written about gas-powered leaf blowers and how they are bad for the environment. I agree 100%; however, as I was riding my electric (super green) moped to school the other day, I couldn't help but notice all the SUVs in front of Hyde Park Baptist School. Tons of neighborhood people, driving GAS GUZZLING SUVs. Did I mention that 85% of them only had one person inside and only had one child they were picking up? Now, I realize that the leaf blower thing is a problem, but don't you think it's rather hypocritical to complain about something like that when half the people in this neighborhood are driving vehicles that emit an insane amount of carbon monoxide into the atmosphere?? I am forwarding this letter to Austin American Statesman and also to the Chronicle. People should know, and I am sure they do, that we all need to start being more conscientious about what we are doing to our planet. I have talked with several home owners in the neighborhood and we have come to the conclusion that the real reason people don't want leaf blowers here is because most people are too lazy (or too "good") to do their own yard work, therefore they have to hire landscapers. Most of these workers are Hispanic and they are hard-working individuals. We firmly believe that the reason the HOA wants leaf blowers gone* is because of racial issues. If you really cared about the environment, you would address the vehicle issue as well. There is NO reason why a person needs to drive an SUV by themselves unless they have a huge family or they are hauling things around. Don't you think this is a problem?? I sure do and everyone on my block does as well.

I hope that you can take the time to look over the vehicle situation and maybe bring it up and make people more aware. I would hate to think that the HOA is racist.

Many thanks,
Tiffany Barron

* (Editor's note: To our knowledge, the HPNA has not taken an official position on leafblowers.)



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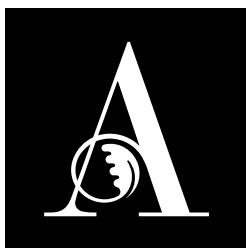


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