

January Meeting

When: 7:00 p.m.
Monday, January 9, 2006

Where: Hyde Park United
Methodist Church
4001 Speedway

Who: YOU and your neighbors

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

HPNA General Meeting Agenda for January 9th

- ◆ A welcome from the owner of Parlor Pizza with free samples.
- ◆ Presentation by AGE (Austin Groups for the Elderly) Development and Outreach Director Susan Frenz-Robinson (related article on page 3)
- ◆ Reports: New By-Laws, Committee heads, Homes Tour, and Guadalupe beautification project.

See you there!

Woodburn House Welcomes Neighbors to the Holiday Christmas Party

See related article on page 2.

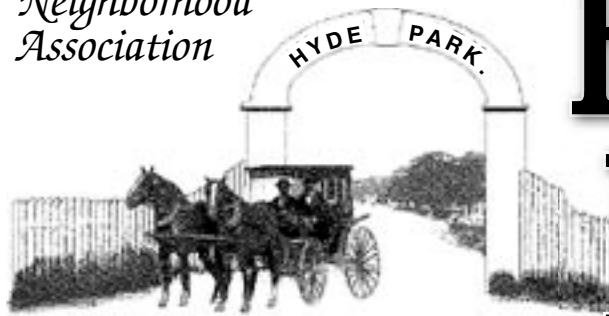


photo courtesy of Larry Freilich

Hyde Parker Spearheads First Night Austin

See page 5

*The Hyde Park
Neighborhood
Association*



Pecan Press

January, 2006 • National Register District Neighborhood • Vol. 32, No. 1

The 2006 Hyde Park Historic Homes Tour: A Celebration of Elisabet Ney



The New Year is upon us, and with it, a new homes tour. The house selection team – Suzee Brooks, Mary Collins Blackmon, Peter Maxson, Alan Marburger, and myself – began in November to select the houses and design the tour route, and our work is close to finished. The focal point of the 2006 tour will be the Elisabet Ney Museum. When planning has become more solid, a list of the featured houses will appear in the *Pecan Press*.

It's now time to assemble the committee. We are fortunate to have a number of experienced returning committee members and some talented new volunteers. We need additional energetic, creative people with a variety of talents. Please look over the following list and decide which task fits your skills and disposition:

- Each house needs a *house captain*. A house captain lines up volunteers to be docents in the house during the tour, provides the docents with information about the house to tell visitors during their tours, organizes a display of pictures of the house for the front porch, and in general serves as a liaison between the homeowners and the homes tour committee.
- The *print publicity coordinator* handles advertising, publicity, and press releases for the *American-Statesman*, the *Chronicle*, and other magazines and newspapers.
- The *display publicity coordinator* arranges for the display of our street banner and handles the printing and distribution of posters and flyers.
- The *electronic media publicity coordinator* arranges for the tour to be publicized on the radio and television.
- The *ticket coordinator* handles pre-sale tickets (printing, distribution, and picking up money for sales) and arranges for volunteers to sell tickets the days of the tour.

Continued on page 4

A High Note for the Holidays

This year's Christmas Holiday Party was perhaps the largest and most spirited in the 30+ year history of the association. Many thanks to all 175+ neighbors who attended, many in holiday attire and many bearing baked goodies. It was particularly gratifying to see the large number of baby strollers parked in front of the Woodburn House,

This highly successful get together didn't happen by itself.

Many thanks are due here:

- To Kristin and Noel de la Rosa, still fairly new to Hyde Park, who opened their spacious, beautifully decorated home and bed & breakfast to so many neighbors they had not yet met.
- Deaton Bednar, in her first year as head of the social committee, who took charge of the plan-

ning and demonstrated great attention to detail.

- Greg Bontempo, the energetic and genial proprietor of New World Deli, who catered the affair.
- Carleen Edgar, who arranged for the drinks.
- Chris Berry, who set up the children's cookie decorating station on the front porch.

Since we never ran out of food, drinks, ice, hospitality or interesting conversation, we must assume everyone did their job.

Thanks also to the many neighbors who brought their best baked goods. Before the party, only five people had offered to bring sweets. So five name cards were prepared and a small table was set aside for them. Then came an avalanche of pies, fudge, and many kinds of festive cookies. As the party drew to a close, Deaton was making a list of three lessons to remember for next year. One was to provide a bigger table for neighborhood baking.

During the planning stage, there was a discussion of what activities to provide for the children. We had no idea how many would attend. When the number of children multiplied, the de la Rosas courageously threw open their private family room to the younger set. The children flooded in and quickly turned it into a highly kinetic romper room. At a time when our society worries about the next generation becoming enervated, obese couch potatoes, it was heartening to see so many beautiful children fully capable of entertaining themselves royally.

One of the inescapable lessons of the party is that Hyde Parkers really enjoy coming together to meet and talk with one another. In the interest of fostering community spirit, we are planning to introduce more of the personal element into our monthly meetings. Beginning soon, we will start devoting the final 12 minutes or so to neighbors willing to share photographs of interesting travels they have taken or projects they are involved with. We've already had offers on visits to the Galapagos Islands and Mexico's Copper Canyon. Former association president Larry Gilg is working on a presentation about "peak oil" and how he is preparing for it.

On behalf of the steering committee, I wish all our readers a peaceful, prosperous and fulfilling New Year.

— John Kerr
<jfkerr@yahoo.com>

Hyde Park Neighborhood Association P. O. Box 49427 • Austin, TX 78765 <http://www.austinhypark.org>

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 Vice Presidents • Denise Girard, • girard.d@att.net 454-6584
 • Elaine Meenahan • elainemeenahan@austin.rr.com 323-9772
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 PO Box 49427, Austin, TX 78765

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 Homes Tour • Lorre Weidlich, lweidlich@mail2sevenses.com 300-2228
 Membership • Doris Coward deward@mail.utexas.edu 453-2476
 Neighborhood Planning • Karen McGraw, 4315 Ave. C 459-2261
 Shipe Park • Joe Jernejcic 302-4074
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 Triangle Development • Cathy Echols, 4002 Ave. C 206-0729
 Zoning • Dorothy Richter, 3901 Ave. G 452-5117
 Austin Neighborhoods Council Rep. Volunteer needed

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Editor

Grant Thomas 450-0464 <hghthomas@youthlaunch.org>

Associate Editor

Sarah Sitton 459-4530 207 E. 39th St.

Poetry Editor

Nancy Taylor Day 892-0127 <Nancy@ciphersbyritter.com>
4001 Duval (Salon) 78751

Crime & Safety Chairman

Volunteer Needed

Advertising Director

Carmin Way 310-6594 <carmin.way@photomask.com>
P.O. Box 49427, Austin, TX 78765

Production Manager

Robert M. Farr 731-0617 <bobfarr@austin.rr.com>

Mail Ads to:

Print Deluxe

7500 Chelmsford Dr. Austin, TX 78736

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Contributors

Glen Alyn, Candy Gray Becker, Cynthia Beeman, Laurence Becker, Mary Collins Blackmon, George Bristol, Chris Brown, Sharon Brown, Lewis Brownlow, Kathryn Bryn, Mark Burkhardt, Amon Burton, Martha Campbell, Mike Capochiano, Inga Marie Carmel, Josephine Casey, Nicole Caspers, Kitty Clark, Carol Cohen Burton, William Cook, Susan Crites Krumm, Celeste Cromack, Rob D'Amico, Herb Dickson, Avis Davis, Don Davis, Barbara Daywood, Lynn Denton, Pam Dozler, Russell Duke, Cathy Echols, Merle Franke, Gregory Free, Larry Freilich, Robert Garrett, Eugene George, Mary Carolyn George, Larry Gilg, Susan Gilg, Ann S. Graham, Carolyn E. Grimes, Rachel Hector, Ben Heimsath, Sandi Heimsath, Susan Holman, Albert Huffstickler, John Kerr, Susan Kerr, Bo Kersey, Susan Kirk, Anna Kotecki, Mary Lehmann, Dennis Lensing, Karen McGraw, Sharon Majors, Alan Marburger, Peter Maxson, Brook Meggs, Elaine Meenahan, Fred Meredith, Susan Moffat, Jack Nokes, Jill Nokes, Wanda Penn, Cecil Pennington, Peter Pfeiffer, Dorothy Richter, Walter Richter Sheree Scarborough, Cathy Short, Sarah Sitton, Thad Sitton, Julie Strong, Kathleen Strong, Lao Tzu, Jennifer Vickers, Katie Vignery, Sandra Villalaz-Dickson, Lorre Weidlich, Joe Wiseman.



Coming of AGE:

Austin Groups for the Elderly

(Note: Our guest speaker for the January HPNA meeting will be Susan Frentz-Robinson, development director for Austin Groups for the Elderly (AGE), just south of Hyde Park at 3710 Cedar. Susan was kind enough to provide us with some basic information about AGE and its services, and will tell us more about those services, and volunteer opportunities for neighbors, when she joins us on the evening of the 9th.)

Austin Groups for the Elderly (AGE) was formed as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit in 1986 to provide supportive services and direct care programs for frail elders and adults with disabilities in the greater Austin area. AGE's mission is to empower caregivers, the elderly and their families through education, advocacy, resources, and support. AGE programs include operation of the Caregiver Resource Center (CRC), Elderhaven (the only licensed adult day care program in Austin), SeniorNet® Computer Learning Institute, and tenancy/management of the AGE building,

AGE's program objectives are:

- To provide a "one-stop shop" for caregivers and seniors seeking assistance and referral; services include situational assessment, information, and loans of durable medical equipment; and initiation and coordination of support groups and education workshop for caregivers. All services are provided free of charge.
- To provide a safe, stimulating and nurturing environment for adults who need assistance with daily living skills, as an alternative to early nursing home admittance (open Monday

through Friday). This program also provides respite for caregivers.

- To provide seniors with education and training in computer skills and usage, geared to their learning pace. All courses developed and taught by volunteers.
- To offer office space and shared space and equipment to young, emerging non-profit organizations at less-than-market rates to encourage and enable their growth (15-20 organizations always in residence).

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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.

Homes Tour 2006...

...cont'd from page 1



- The *neighborhood booth coordinator* arranges for volunteers to man the neighborhood booth, which sells neighborhood products (T-shirts, posters, etc.).
 - Each house needs a *researcher* and/or *writer*. Researching a house is historical detective work, and several committee members can give you guidance on where to start.
 - Because the Elisabet Ney Museum is the focal point of this year's tour, we're planning musical entertainment to take place on the grounds of the Ney. We need a *music coordinator* to line up and schedule musical acts and arrange for a PA system.
 - We also want *coordinators for other activities on the grounds of the Ney* – crafts? writers? children's activities? or perhaps something entirely new and different! If you have an idea and the willingness to carry it out, we want to hear from you.
- If none of these positions appeal to you but you'd like to join the committee, get in touch. We'll find the right position for you.

– Lorre Weidlich
Tour Chairman
300-2228
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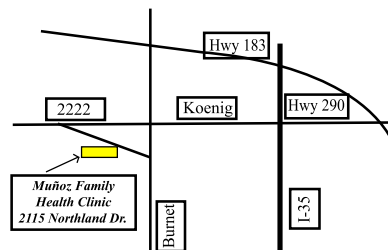
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Mystery Machine: Whose car is this, and for what? (answer in next month's issue)



austinwoman: Hyde Parker Ann S. Graham

Congratulations to long-time neighbor and former HPNA (Co-)President Ann S. Graham of 3815 Avenue H, whose smiling face graced the cover of the December '05 issue of *austinwoman* magazine. Inside the cover was a feature article on Ann's instrumental role as catalyst for and Executive Director of First Night Austin, whose inaugural event took place on New Year's Eve '05. The origins of the Austin event can be traced to First Night Boston, which was founded by a group of Boston artists in 1976. Ann and her husband Dr. Arlen Johnson were graduate students in Cambridge MA in the '80's, and became keenly aware of the power of the First Night concept to transform and energize a community.

Thus as the *austinwoman* article points out, Ann was uniquely well-suited to realize the concept here in Austin. What will it look like? "A New Year's Eve celebration of the arts....Spanning Congress Avenue at Ninth Street to Town Lake, Cesar Chavez to City Hall, and from First Street Bridge to Auditorium Shores, the festival will -- for one day and one night -- transform Austin into a canvas for artists, and for the entire community to enjoy." And how will First Night Austin's Executive Director gauge its success: "First, that at the stroke of midnight, you feel that there is no place you'd rather be; and second, that when you bump into friends or acquaintances who were not at First Night Austin, they think, 'Wow, I really missed something special. I should have been there too.'"

In the February issue of this newsletter, Ann has kindly agreed to offer some reflections about the degree to which the event lived up to the high aspirations that she and so many others held for it. Here's hoping, and predicting, that they'll be extremely positive reflections!

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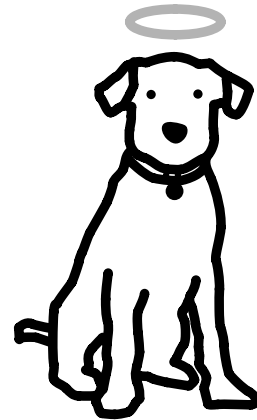
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Rescued from the Attic: Notes on a Legendary Texas Artist, Elisabet Ney

Following are excerpts from a speech circa 1930 on Elisabet Ney that is being re-printed on the occasion of Elisabet Ney's Birthday Month. The speech is by Jessie Ramsey Murray, daughter of F.T. Ramsey, owner of the former Ramsey Nursery located at 45th and Avenue B. Mrs. Murray had known Elisabet Ney when she was a little girl and Miss Ney was a frequent visitor in the Ramsey home. Included in the speech is a poem written by F. T. Ramsey circa 1905, when a member of the School Board, to accompany a Texas flag that schoolchildren gave to Elisabet Ney. Mrs. Murray's children, Frances Murray Leggett, Annabel Murray Thomas, Margaret Murray Bailey and Dr. Vincent Murray very kindly donated the hand-written speech to the Elisabet Ney Museum this summer after discovering it in one of their mother's trunks found in her attic.

Elisabet Ney

Among Texas artists Elisabet Ney stands preeminent. As Texans we are proud of the fact that she spent so many of her best years in our midst, and immortalized with her chisel many of our great men. She was an artist in every respect, learned, cultured, and yet best of all a true woman and a good friend. So not only because of her genius and her rank among the artists of the world, but also because of her close association with us, we all feel, I am sure, a keen interest in Miss Ney.

Miss Ney was born in Westphalia. Her father was a nephew of Napoleon's great marshal. While yet a child, she startled her parents by announcing her determination to study art and especially sculpture. In conservative Germany it was looked upon as impossible for a girl to invade the sacred realms of the sculptor's studio. Yet in spite of what seemed insuperable objections the young girl carried her point, studied at Munich, and finally went to Berlin, and was accepted as a pupil of the far-famed Rauch. By the time she was twenty, fame and fortune had smiled upon her. She was commissioned to execute busts and statues of Von Humboldt, Liebig, Jacob Grimm, Schopenhauer, Garibaldi and Bismarck. This last was considered a special honor, as King William of Prussia, desiring to show his great gratitude for the prime minister, selected from the brilliant array of talent Elisabet Ney to execute his commission. While the young artist was at work upon the statue of George V. of Hanover, the illustrious Kaulbach painted her portrait, which now hangs in the Gallery of Hanover. A copy of this portrait may be seen here. She is robed in black satin, while at her side may be seen the bust of the King. While doing this piece of art Miss Ney was of course often at the castle. One day the King asked her when her birthday was, to which Miss Ney re-

Continued on following page

plied, "Your Majesty, I have no birthday." The King said nothing, but secretly sent to the town of her birth and found the date from - the church record. Miss Ney never noticed her birthdays. She had forgotten the day when she received a summons to the castle. As a rule Miss Ney was received in the private apartments, and therefore she was surprised on this evening to be escorted to the halls used for large entertainments. There she found the King and Queen waiting to receive her, there was a table of flowers, and a magnificent gold bracelet which Miss Ney always wore and greatly prized - and Joachim - the great violinist, who shortly before had played for the King's birthday, was there with his orchestra to do her honor.

After her coming to Texas Miss Ney did much work. She made the statues of Ste-



Elizabet Ney circa 1896

phen F. Austin and of Sam Houston which now adorn both our state and national capitols. At the St. Louis Exposition the recumbent statue of Albert Sidney Johnston was given a place of honor in the Building of Fine Arts. Someone in viewing said it was worth \$50,000 rather than the \$10,000 which was paid for it by Mrs. Dibrell. Busts of Governor Sayers, Lubbock, and Roberts, Judge Reagan, President Prather, William Jennings Bryan, and many others are to be seen in the studio. Her art probably reached its culmination in the wonderful Lady Macbeth which alone would place her high among the sculptors of the world.

Those of us who knew Miss Ney remember well her peculiar dress. Around the studio she wore leggings, short bloomers, a close-fitting

Continued on page 8

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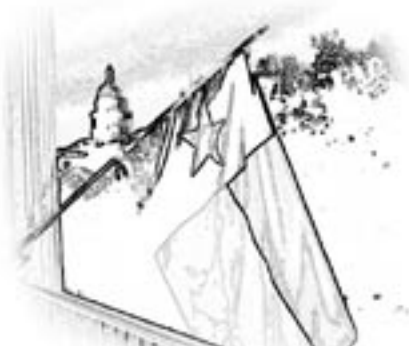
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jacket, and always wore her hair short - or at least just to her neck. When going out she donned a large loose robe or cape, and a small round cap or toque. This strange dress gave rise to many direful rumors among the small folk of the neighborhood, and even caused her friends some distress. . . . Perhaps the best anecdote of all can be told on some ladies of our city. They wished Miss Ney to attend a large entertainment they were giving in her honor, but in truth they wished to see her more handsomely robed than was her habit to dress. So a committee visited her and after many tactful approaches of the subject and many hasty retreats they finally told Miss Ney that they would be much honored if she would allow them to present her with a robe to wear on that occasion. She was very gracious and said she would be delighted, but first she wished them to look at some garments which she had and perhaps would do. Then she displayed a trunk full of most gorgeous creations that she had worn at King's functions - and the ladies had nothing more to say.

Many of us remember with much amusement Mr. Shipe's first and last attempt with an automobile. There was an afternoon gathering on the lawn at the studio. Automobiles then were rare curiosities, so as a special treat, Mr. Shipe, who was present at the festivity, invited Miss Ney to ride with him. Motor cars are not entirely dependable now, but at that time they were even more treacherous. The thing wouldn't start. Mr. Shipe caused the engine to whirl. Miss Ney complained of an uncomfortable sensation of heat where she was sitting. But with characteristic persistence Mr. Shipe said he would start it soon -- and start it did, but backward and right across the lawn. A table quickly turned somersaults to get away, and the passage was clear to the lake. Every heart stood still. Then fate was kind and sent a nice big oak tree to stop the runaway. Smoke and flame were coming forth from the rear. Both Mr. Shipe and Miss Ney had lost all fondness for automobiles.

An afternoon could easily be given to the telling of stories about this wonderful woman. As she had peculiar ways of her own, she was often misunderstood. In fact, we are ashamed to say that she has been cruelly slandered by some. But this matters not. She towers high as a great genius, a wonderful intellect, a noble character. She was honored by great men and kings, and as she was once a neighbor of ours let us especially seek to give her due honor. In closing let me read a little poem, written by my father for the occasion when the city schools presented Miss Ney with a flag of Texas of which she was passionately fond.

Continued on following page



I

We, Daughters of Texas, love our state and her heroes,
And the chief of our joys, is to honor the men
Who laid down their lives on liberty's altar.
Let the story be told again and again.
For principle's grander than ever before
Declared or defended by free men or King,
For right and for Texas, their weapons they bore
The best of our songs, for them we shall sing.

II


We faire would make Texans grow kinder and nobler
When the Alamo, Goliad, stories they hear;
How they were remembered at old San Jacinto.
Shall the stories strike faintly posterity's ear?
Your marble will last when our songs are forgotten
When our lips are all still and the ink has grown pale;
Your marble will prompt the child as he gazes
To ask of his mother to tell him the tale.

III

We give you this flag as a sign that we love you
For the work you have done for history and art.
You will know where it waves triumphant above you
We rejoice in its waving with a patriot's heart.
Because you love Texas we you the better
Wave, wave the Lone Star, wave red white and blue.
Wave emblem of freedom, wave flag of our fathers.
Wave flag of our Texas forever for you.


— F. T. Ramsey

(Many thanks to Ney Museum Director Mary Collins Blackmon for sharing this historical transcript with us.)



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Update: Demolitions On Avenue F?

Those of you who attended the August meeting of the Neighborhood Association will remember voting on a resolution to oppose the demolition of the houses at 4400, 4402, and 4404 Avenue F. The resolution passed unanimously. When the demolition permits came up at the Historic Landmark Commission meeting in August, at least 15 Hyde Park neighborhood representatives attended the meeting to oppose the demolitions; many people had also written letters of opposition to the Commission. As a result, the Landmark Commission postponed the decision for 30 days to enable neighborhood representatives to meet with the owner in the hope that some resolution or compromise could be reached.

During that 30 day period, several neighborhood representatives (Gene & Mary Carolyn George, Alan Marburger, Karen McGraw, George Wyche, Bill Barbee, and Lorre Weidlich) met with the owner, David Peck. He agreed to put the demolition permit applications on hold for 90 days. During that 90 day period, Alan Marburger met with him several times to explain economic advantages of preserving the houses and to show him drawings of possible ways to preserve the houses. After the conclusion of the 90 days, Mr. Peck said that, although he was unlikely to tear the houses down, he still wanted the option of demolition available to him.

At that point, the Landmark Commission initiated historic zoning applications for the houses. This is the customary procedure when owners of houses with potential historic significance apply for demolition permits. Historic designation is apparently the only way to preserve houses against demolition. The news that these houses were on the agenda again circulated in Hyde Park only a few days before the Landmark Commission meeting. Because of that, there was no time to round up a large neighborhood contingent to speak in favor of historic zoning, and only a few Hyde Parkers attended (George Wyche, Mary Carolyn George, and Lorre Weidlich).

The researchers on the city staff found that these three houses neither had any associations with historic personages nor were architecturally significant; as a result, the staff recommended against historic zoning. Mary Carolyn George and Lorre Weidlich spoke

Continued on following page

out in favor of historic zoning and Wells Teague, the representative of the owner, spoke out in opposition. Ultimately, the Historic Landmark Commission voted in favor of issuing demolition permits, with only Commission member Jean Mather in opposition, although several other members of the Commission made supportive comments.

At this point, the homeowner, David Peck, still has no concrete plans for the houses, but he now has the right to demolish them if he so chooses.

— Lorre Weidlich



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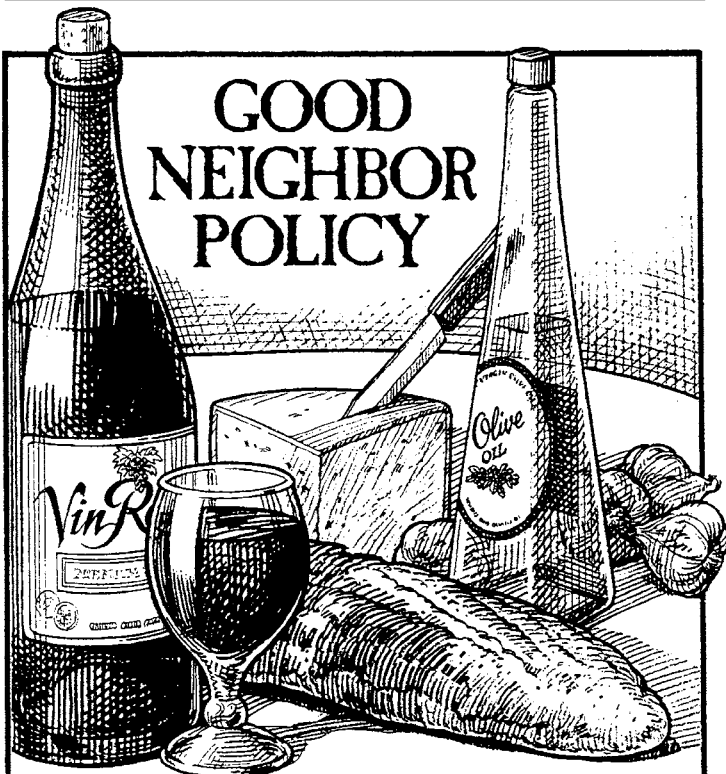
Hyde Park Poets —

Sara

Sara sits bemused.
She is waiting for
life to tell her the thing
she needs to know in
order to get on with it.
She sits very still.
She doesn't want to
miss the message, the
cosmic utterance of
her secret name, the
booming silence that
reveals her essential self.
Sara sits bemused.
Nothing will stir her
but that one clear voice.

— Albert Huffstickler
June 19, 2000

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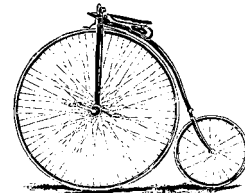
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6:30-8:00	Vinyasa	Mixed	Basics	Hatha			

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Since February 2005, mayors of more than 190 cities representing more than 40 million Americans have signed the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement pledging to move their communities toward the greenhouse-gas reductions laid out in the Kyoto Protocol. A number of those cities have taken the first steps toward reducing their global warming emissions by implementing policies and programs that expand renewable energy development. These cities have established incentive and rebate programs, franchise agreements, revenue bonds, and commitments to municipal use of renewable energy technologies.

The Energy Freedom Challenge seeks to inspire U.S. cities to hasten their transition from polluting fossil fuel based power to clean, renewable energy. The nationwide contest challenges cities to obtain more than half of their electricity from clean renewable energy sources like wind, solar, and bioenergy. Cities will compete for the coveted title of Clean Energy Capital of the U.S. In addition to curbing global warming pollution, deploying more renewable energy at the municipal level will boost local economies by creating jobs, saving consumers money, spurring new capital investment, and generating payments to rural landowners.

Earlier this year, the Department of Energy's (DOE) Million Solar Roofs (MSR) Initiative <www.millionsolarroofs.org> awarded funding for the challenge. Solar Austin, a nonprofit organization that has helped spur renewable energy deployment in Texas, will administer the campaign. The Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) will provide technical support by establishing a system to track each city's commitment.

On December 1, Austin Mayor Will Wynn announced that his city would accept the challenge and urged other cities to enter the competition. The campaign will launch its official recruitment process in

Continued on following page

A decorative advertisement for "The Tree Tender". The title "The Tree Tender" is written in a large, cursive font at the top. Below it, a circular frame contains the text: "My heart felt thanks to the wonderful people of Hyde Park for allowing me to care for your trees since 1973. So far I have served over 200 homes for you". Below the circle, the phone number "280-1958" is displayed. At the bottom, it says "Certified Arborist Nickey Bishop" next to a small illustration of a bird perched on a branch.

January 2006. At that time, we will provide cities with detailed information about tracking of renewable energy commitments, resource eligibility, and competition categories based on city size. UCS and Solar Austin invite mayors across the country to take the next step in confronting global warming by accepting the Energy Freedom Challenge.

To learn more about how your city can participate, visit <www.solaraustin.org> or contact Joni Gilton at 512-306-0898, <jonigilton@yahoo.com>.

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This large estate adjoins the property above on the cliff over Shoal Creek: 1913 Craftsman-style house remodeled in 2001 with new roof, wiring, plumbing, central heat and air, refinished floors, inside and outside paint, kitchen, and rebuilt garage. The 3478 sf house has original woodwork with grand style, generous spaces and many built-ins. There is also a third-floor bonus room and full basement.
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Hyde Park Poets —

Seasons

You have sweated until
your slick tennies slipped off
and grew mushrooms
on the insoles.

You have slid on frosty
grass, retrieving your
morning paper the
last Tuesday before
Halloween.

You have hauled in
cord wood, then smoked your
living room, forgetting
to open the damper.

You have dug a trench
around your house
so fifteen days of rain
could run into the
street, into the creek,
to Town Lake.

The same grubby shoes
clinging to your feet.
You shelve them.

When someone suggests you
toss them, you hold them,
crunchy and stinky,
against your chest and say,
these are my garden shoes.

But you know better.
They are your poetry.

— Nancy Taylor Day
October 23, 2005

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Love Stories

The restaurant overflows,
booths crowded,
tacos overstuffed,
bacon and coffee, the duet
of morning.
I don't know him, the
customer in a red T,
he comes to our booth
with coffee, tops off our
cups, says good morning.
He's a stranger. He's kindness.

The line stretches,
people lean against the wall,
black bags stuffed,
the homeless man's
carry-all.
I don't know them, the
ones who camp under the
bridge. I groom them,
tending to weary souls,
gently sending hair onto the floor.
They are strangers. I am kindness.

Encounters await, kind and strange,
they are the gifts, the opportunities,
strange and kind, waiting.

— Nancy Taylor Day
October 28, 2005

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Hyde Park Poets —

Stealing

(my favorite line from Maxine Kumin)

Inching into morning
the cats and I,
each at a window,
confirm this day
safe.

Benevolent blue air
of October,
laced by cedar elms,
promises a tranquil
walk.

It holds us, broken
out of the night,
carries us on its
back toward
winter.

The cats take one
of their 120 reported
daily naps, I feed on
the gold, the blue
preparing

for days too short
of breath, too long
on melancholy,
wishing I could seal
now in a jar.

— Nancy Taylor Day
November 7, 2005

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