



The HPWBANA News

Volume 1, Number 7

September 2005

www.hpwbana.org

President's Message

By Frances B. Allen

WORKING TOWARD BEING GOOD NEIGHBORS

The monthly HPWBANA meeting on August 22 at 7pm at the Yarborough Library will begin with a round table discussion between neighbors and invited participants Alan Ware and Patrick Terry. Varsity Properties managed by Alan Ware and property owned by both Ware and Terry are turning single-family residences into housing for UT students, with 5 to 6 UT students per residence. At this date we are aware of UT Student Housing on Highland Terrace West, North Fresco and 2 on Westfield Drive across the street from each other. The purpose of the discussion is to bring thoughts of both property owners and neighbors in order to have a workable relationship with 6 active young adults. Please take a look at www.varsityproperties.com to see their listing of premium UT rental houses and condos.

A member of the COA City Planning department has been invited to attend the meeting to give clarification to code and zoning issues. Also he should be able to give the neighborhood association a timetable of the neighborhood planning project for 2006.

Once again, I hope you will plan to attend the August 22 meeting at 7pm at the Yarborough Library.

HPWBANA Annual Meeting "Picnic in Perry Park"

Join the neighborhood association for a fun picnic in Perry Park.

Meet the 2006 Board Members.

Bring your own picnic goodies,
and HPWBANA will provide drinks & other snacks.

Listen to live music provided by
HPWBANA neighbor singer/songwriter Lurleen Ladd!

Kids—wear your Halloween costumes
and receive a HPWBANA treat!

Sunday, October 30

3:00-5:00 pm

Perry Park

Call any board member for more information.

**View the Highland Park West Balcones
Area Neighborhood Newsletter
each month online at
www.PEELinc.com**

HPWBANA Board Meetings
Please attend our monthly meetings:
August 22
September 26
Yarborough Library
2200 Hancock Drive
7:00-8:45 pm



City workers began installing sidewalks on Balcones Dr, from 2222 to Perry Lane, in June.

Highland Park West Balcones Area

2005 HPWBANA Board of Directors

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 Carolyn Robinson carrob99@hotmail.com, 302-5417

The HPWBANA Board meets on the 4th Monday of each month except December. Meetings are held from 7:00 – 8:45 p.m. at the Yarborough Library, 2200 Hancock Drive. All neighbors are invited to attend.

HPWBANA is bordered on the north by 2222, on the south by 35th St., on the west by Mt. Bonnell Rd., and on the east by MoPac and by Bull Creek Rd. between Hancock Dr. and 45th St.

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Helpful Phone Numbers

Austin Citywide Information Center 974-2000
 APD Dana Munguia, Central West District 974-5440
 Emergency Police 911
 Non-emergency Police (coyote sighting, etc.) 311
 Wildlife Rescue 24 Hour Hot Line 210-698-1709

Mystery Cactus at Hancock Bridge

Thanks go out to the person who planted the spineless cactus at the Hancock Bridge perennial bed. Plantings on medians must meet City code which restricts plant size. The cactus was moved to the large median on Ridge Oak Dr. where there is space for it to grow.

Yarborough Library News

It seems likely that the next City budget will allow for additional staff and hours at branches. This could mean that Yarborough would again be open on Thursdays, possibly starting in late fall. Keep tabs on City Council votes in September!

Starting possibly in September or October, Yarborough's parking lot may be affected by the Hancock Creek project which will involve excavation and pipe installation. Fortunately, some of our lot will still be useable and there are several quiet streets near the library where folks can park.





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Become a Member!

The *HPWBANA News* is the official publication of the Highland Park West Balcones Area Neighborhood Association. Your annual membership ensures that you receive the newsletter, plus provides funds for our free neighborhood events:

Spring Egg Hunt
July 4th Picnic and Parade
Annual Meeting
Candidates' Forums

We need your support! Please renew your membership or become a new member of HPWBANA today. Send \$10 for one adult or \$15 for two adults in the same household to:

HPWBANA, PO Box 26101, Austin, TX 78755.

Name _____ Name of second adult _____

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You may also join online with PayPal at www.hpwbana.org.

Questions about membership? Contact Carolyn Robinson at 302-5417 or Susan Rauch at 419-9710.



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Introducing Friends of Perry Park (FoPP)

By David Seaton and Nadene Morning

There seems to be a lot of interest in Perry Park these days. Tennis players see new nets, backdrops and benches, the wooded area is being cleared of dead wood and ligustrum and some of the flooding/erosion issues are starting to be worked on to improve the trail. All of this is the result of involved residents trying to keep Perry Park a great place to visit.

To help unify the groups working on improvements at the park and Highland Park Elementary, a new community-based group has formed. The **Friends of Perry Park (FoPP)** is a collaborative effort between the community and organizations interested in the overall preservation and improvement of the Perry Park area. Coach Dave Woods, Tom McClure, David Seaton and Nadene Morning met late July to organize and get things moving after discussion with other residents.

Who is involved in FoPP?

Highland Park West Balcones Area Neighborhood Association
Highland Park Elementary (AISD)
Highland Park Elementary PTA
Interested Residents and Businesses
City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PARD)

Our mission is to improve the overall safety, usability and quality of Perry Park through community involvement and feedback from residents, the school and PARD. To see a list of various improvements FoPP is considering visit www.hpwbana.org and click on the Perry Park/Friends page.

Funding for some of the projects is being explored and we have commitments from both HPWBANA and the Highland Park PTA for some funds. We also applied for a grant from Austin Parks Foundation for benches and are exploring a grant from a tennis association for lighting upgrades.

For more information contact David Seaton at ds@tc-tx.com.



Highland Park Elementary News

As you are reading this, the first bell of the 2005-2006 school year should soon be ringing. Drivers, please be aware of safety zones and buses who might be loading and unloading children.

Congratulations to Jane Knowles, principal, and all the teachers, staff and students at Highland Park Elementary for being one of only 4 AISD schools to receive an Exemplary rating. Way to go, Scotties!

A Great Way To Meet Neighbors (National Neighbors Night Out)

By Kathy Sederholm

About 15 years ago, Westfield Drive had a large kindergarten-and-under population. When their parents heard that police officers, firefighters, and EMS technicians would bring their vehicles out to promote community building through the "National Night Out" program, everyone was eager to bring their starry-eyed cherubs to meet our community helpers.

Immediately, we as a community of neighbors knew we were on to something bigger than just a field trip through a fire truck, ambulance or police car. We bonded as neighbors, sharing concerns about our neighborhood (noise from MoPac, speeding on our street, petty theft of our vehicles, graffiti – to name a few.) **We put faces with houses, which brought us true community.**

Throughout the years, faces have changed and concerns have changed but National Night Out has strengthened our bond with each other, heightened our awareness of neighborhood, and established a good relationship with APD.

Every August we have survived the sweltering heat or hovered in carports during thunderstorms to see the faces of neighbors on Westfield Drive.

This year we had good attendance and enjoyed meeting old and new neighbors. We recommend this to everyone for community building. Try it, you'll like it!



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Highland Park West Balcones Area

Less Lawn, Less Water, More Beauty

By Pam Penick

When T.S. Eliot wrote that April is the cruelest month, he obviously never knew about August or September in our heat-stressed city. Summer in Austin means scorching heat, drought, and sky-high watering bills to keep those water-loving lawns lush and green. It's time to retreat to the air-conditioned house and plan for fall gardening.

If a thirsty St. Augustine lawn dominates your yard, perhaps you're thinking of ways to reduce your water bill next summer and give your landscape a more distinctive and Texan look. Too often we tend to live with the builder's original mix of lawn, solitary shade tree, and overgrown line of evergreens along the front of the house. If you're dreaming of something different, go for it! Carve out a section of your yard that receives blistering sun, and plant a sun-loving xeriscape garden like the one installed by HPWBANA's Beautification Committee along Hancock Dr. on the east side of the bridge. Or take out the struggling lawn under your live oak, and grow a shady oasis of native woodland plants that will attract songbirds and hummingbirds. Using plants native to central Texas or adapted to our unique conditions will decrease your water bill, require less work than dainty species from other parts of the country, and connect your garden to the beauty of our region.

When my husband and I moved into the neighborhood five years ago, we inherited a yard devoid of shade, interest, or wildlife. I knew I wanted something pretty to look at, plants that could take the heat and drought, and a garden that would be attractive to birds, butterflies, and, most important, my family and me.

The back yard, like the front, began as an expanse of water guzzling, boring St. Augustine lawn. As you can see in the "before" photo, taken in the fall of 2000, your eye travels straight across the lawn to the

back fence. Great for a game of soccer, maybe, but not what I wanted to look at every day. The markings indicate where we planned to remove grass in order to install a path and a playscape for the kids. Three years later, in April 2004, this is how our back yard looked. No longer does the lawn dominate—in fact, the lawn is gone. In its place are a stone patio, a play area for the kids, a curvy path, and lots of native and adapted plants. While I sometimes miss having a grassy area for the kids to play on, I don't miss the mowing, fertilizing, edging, or extra watering that a St. Augustine lawn requires. Plus, the variety of plants that grow in its place attract birds, butterflies, toads, and bees, and offers natural beauty.

I didn't tackle these changes all at once. My husband and I installed the playscape first, removing half our lawn in the process. Little by little over the next couple of years, I dug out more garden beds until finally I just ran out of room. This kind of gardening is easier on the back and on the budget than doing it all at once. And not everyone wants to eliminate the lawn completely. Even reducing the size of your lawn by 25 percent can significantly alter the look and watering needs of your yard.

Of course, even a native garden needs to be watered, especially the first year. However, if you plant in the fall (October through

(Continued on Page 7)

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Highland Park West Balcones Area

Less Lawn, Less Water - (Continued from Page 6)

December is best) and water regularly, your new plants will grow deep roots all fall and winter. By the following summer, they will be better prepared to survive the heat than specimens planted in the spring. Watering deeply (about 2 inches) every 10 to 14 days during the hot months will ensure your new garden's health and encourage deep root growth.

Growing native plants is rewarding, and it connects you to the land you live on. This summer, while your lawn crisps and your sprinkler runs, sketch some ideas on paper. Come fall—and it's bound to come eventually—start digging and planting. By next spring you'll be

enjoying your new native garden and eyeing the rest of your lawn with sketchpad in hand, wondering how much lawn you *really* need.

Resources:

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center www.wildflower.org

City of Austin's free publication, "Native and Adapted Landscape Plants" www.growgreen.org



The Penicks' yard before native landscaping



The Penicks' yard after native landscaping



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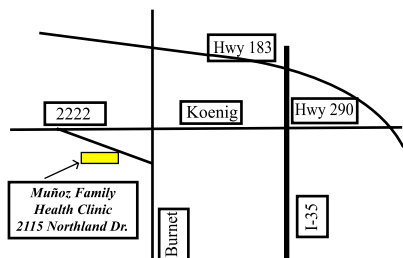
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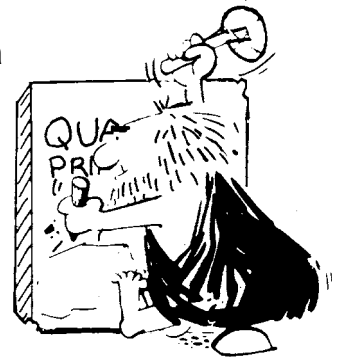
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