



The HPWBANA News

Volume 2, Number 9

September 2006

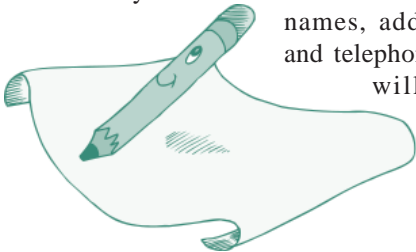
www.hpwbana.org

HPWBANA Essay Contest

The Neighborhood association is sponsoring an essay contest for students in grades 3-8. Twelve winners will be selected, and the winning essays will be published in the HPWBANA newsletter monthly. Winners will also receive \$15.00.

The entrants will write an essay on the subject, "Why I like living in my Neighborhood". All essays must be original works and written exclusively by the entrant. Winners must reside in the HPWBANA boundaries.

Essays must be mailed to HPWBANA at P.O. Box 26101, Austin, Texas 78731 or submitted via email to carrob99@hotmail.com. All essays must be received by October 5, 2006. Essays should include the contestant's name, parents' names, address, age or grade, and telephone number. Winners will be announced at the HPWBANA Annual Meeting in October.



HPWBANA Board Meetings

Please attend our next monthly meeting:

September 25th, 2006

Yarborough Library

2200 Hancock Drive

7:00-8:45 pm

Bull Creek Apartment Zoning Update

In the June newsletter we provided an update on changes taking place on Bull Creek Road just south of 45th Street. Many of our residents are impacted as this area is just outside our neighborhood association boundaries. One change involves the MF-4 to MF-6 rezoning request of the Bull Creek Apartments by Ardent Residential and Post Properties. This rezoning would allow for a larger new structure(s) with more apartment units and additional height. The existing apartment complex is about 40 years old.

The Oakmont Heights Neighborhood Association (OHNA) has been monitoring this rezoning case closely. Several neighborhood meetings with residents and Ardent Residential and Post Properties have occurred. On August 1st the Zoning and Planning (ZAP) Commission approved the rezoning of the Bull Creek Apartments property by a vote of 6 to 3.

Restrictions were added at the request of residents on 44th Street and the OHNA and represent cooperation between the involved parties. Some of the restrictions include:

- The maximum height will be limited to 60 ft.
- Structures will require a setback from the streets of at least 25 ft.
- The total floor-to-area ratio (FAR) is restricted to 2.25:1
- Adding no more than 2,000 extra traffic trips per day
- Primary access to and from the apartments must be from Bull Creek Rd. rather than W. 44th St.
- The total number of apartment units must be capped at no more than 250 (compared to the current 140 units).

The ZAP Commission reviews and makes recommendations on proposed zoning changes, but the city council makes the ultimate decision. Depending on their meeting schedule, the council could consider the Bull Creek Apartments case as soon as the end of August.

If you have question about the topic please contact Tom Whatley, President of the Oakmont Heights Neighborhood Association, at tom.whatley@earthlink.net.

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

Highland Park West Balcones Area

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Austin Citywide Information Center 974-2000
 Emergency Police 911
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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. www.hpwbana.org

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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Davis Water Treatment Plant Initiates New Projects

The Davis Water Treatment Plant is located near the West 35th Street-Foothill Drive-Mt. Bonnell Road intersection. A few years ago the Davis Water Treatment Plant officials were very good neighbors as they discussed project plans with their neighbors and the HPWBANA. Much of the landscaping that graces the DWTP plant grounds was a result of that cooperation.

It is project time again at DWTP. Areas of the plant are over 50 years old and in need of retrofits for reliability and regulatory compliance. In the spirit of working with the community plant engineers called a neighborhood meeting in early August to make the community aware of plant activity that neighbors are sure to notice. About twenty five neighbors who live in the immediate buffer area of the plant attended the meeting and listened to project overviews from the various project leaders. Arturo Monsivais, who lives adjacent to the plant on Foothill Parkway, expressed appreciation for the plant officials in keeping the community informed. Neighbors are very impacted by plant activity and want to know what is happening.

There are two main projects planned that should start in September 2006 and run through May 2007 and two more projects planned from September 2007 through May 2008. All this project work will be contained within the plant gates. What should neighbors expect?

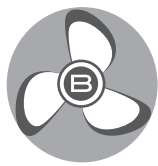
- More contractors will be in the area. Contractor parking will be provided within the plant area with some parking in front of the plant

along 35th street. There will be no contractor parking allowed within any adjacent neighborhood.

- During the 2006/07 work, large equipment will be moved using an extended-boom forklift, while the 2007/2008 work will likely require an overhead crane for a portion of the work.
- Noise from construction activities is expected to be minimal and should be limited to safety backup alarms from equipment (required by federal regulations) and to sandblasting operations. Although all planned sandblasting will be conducted with plant structures, the equipment must be located outside.
- No height changes to any buildings or changes to the base plant footprint are planned.
- A plant security assessment is currently ongoing to assess plant perimeter fencing and onsite lighting. A subsequent meeting with neighbors will be scheduled to discuss improved security recommendations prior to any implementation.

The Alfred R. Davis Water Treatment Plant is an interesting and important city asset. This plant provides over 50% of the drinking water to Austin residents and runs at over 90% capacity during the summer months. Security and reliability are top priorities. Water is processed from Lake Austin and pumped to various reservoirs including the Highland Park West Pump Station and Reservoir located

(Continued on page 4)



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Highland Park West Balcones Area

Davis Water Treatment- (Continued from Page 3)

at Ridge Oak Drive in the northern part of our neighborhood.

Throughout the next several years neighborhood meetings will be planned as future projects occur. Plant personnel are also developing an email list of neighbors for an opportunity to communicate with neighbors between meetings. Please contact James King, Plant Engineer to be added to this email distribution list. Mr. King is also available to answer any questions regarding the plant and its project. Contact him by email at james.king@ci.austin.tx.us or by telephone at 972-1794.

By Nadene Morning, Carolyn Robinson and review by James King.

<p>Murals, Portable Murals, Floor Cloths (Hand Painted Rugs), & Other fun things!</p> <p>ARTIST & DESIGNER Kay Hughes of Knott Garden 512-573-8177 www.knottgarden.com</p>	
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Perry Park Running Track History

The running track at our local Perry Park has been in place since the fall of 1989. It started out as a rough track and was upgraded with a rock surface in the mid 1990's by AISD with funds from the Highland Park Elementary PTA. Most of the running track is actually on city property and the City of Austin Parks and Recreation gave permission to allow installation of the track with the understanding that all maintenance would be provided by AISD or the Highland Park PTA.

The running track is configured in a figure eight with a distance of approximately ½ mile. HPE uses the track for the PE classes to keep the students fit. Each year students perform a mile run test and the student pass rate is usually around 85-96%. Other classes are often seen during the day doing a loop. The track is also used by the community.

Over the years rain and erosion have taken their toll on the track, especially at the intersection of the figure 8 and high slope areas. Maintenance occurs almost yearly to patch the problem areas. The Highland Park PTA took a more active role in the track maintenance after it became clear that some repairs actually make the track more vulnerable to erosion. Neighborhood activist Tom McClure and Coach Woods were the two responsible parties for this effort. They coordinated many workdays with volunteers. Rain bars were installed to help divert the water runoff although these were not adequate for heavy rainfall.

In 2002 efforts began to find a permanent solution. Many possible solutions were discussed. The PTA dedicated a portion of the funds needed for a permanent fix. Things picked up again in late 2005 when AISD agreed to fund a drainage study. That drainage study is complete.

Wes Amberboy, Highland Park parent and active PTA volunteer, stepped up to coordinate the track repair project, working closely with Cathy McHorse, PTA President, and Kevin Gollhofer, PTA Vice-President. Currently, discussions are ongoing among the PTA, AISD and Austin Parks and Recreation. HPWBANA is also involved in the discussions to represent the community interest. Several projects may be impacted by the track repair.

Thanks to Coach Woods for his dedication to the track and for all the hard work provided by volunteers throughout the years in making a track available to the school and community.

Perry Park is located at 4900 Fairview Dr behind Highland Park Elementary.

Did You Know - Coach Woods records student usage of the running track. During 1989 through 2005 approximately 9,500 students ran a total of about 400,000 miles!!!! That represents a lot of healthy K-5 hearts!

By Nadene Morning

Newsletter Help Wanted!

Are you are interested in writing articles for the newsletter? Do you have a suggestion for subjects you would like to see covered in the newsletter? Are you a student interested in covering topics at your school? Contact Carolyn Robinson 302-5417 or email carrob99@hotmail.com

Gardening with Rain

by Pam Penick, HPWBANA Beautification Committee Member

While nursing my garden through Austin's arid summers, I tend to go a little ga-ga over things like rain barrels, rain chains, and just rain in general. Now I'm excited about rain gardens. I have one, actually, but didn't know it until I read the Summer 2006 issue of Native Plants (soon to be renamed Wildflower), the quarterly publication of the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. Inside, author Julie Bawden Davis promotes rain gardens as a "green" way to reduce pollutants in the ground water, reduce runoff, reduce the need to water your garden, help prevent flooding and erosion, and create habitats for wildlife (when planted with natives). What's not to like?

It seems that "runaway rain," as Davis puts it, surges out of everyone's gutters and then right out to the storm drains in the street. During heavy rains, very little water has a chance to soak into the lawn or planting beds before flowing out of your yard. Moreover, as rainwater courses across your driveway, patios, and over-fertilized and -"pesticided" lawn, it picks up all those pollutants and carries them right into your local creek, damaging the natural ecosystem in local waterways. If you can slow the flow of rainwater across your property by diverting it into a rain garden, Davis argues, you can keep those pollutants out of the creek because the plants themselves will filter much of the nasty stuff right out of the water. By the time the water seeps down into the aquifers and groundwater, it's clean again. Natural filtration at work.

Creating a rain garden is as simple as



digging a 3-4" swale where rainwater naturally flows, like near a downspout or next to a driveway or patio. For gardeners with clay soil, Davis suggests amending your soil to avoid hard-packed areas that won't soak up the water. You don't want a swamp. Put in plants that can take a little extra water now and then, and voila!—you've made a beautiful new garden bed that will require less watering from you and that is helping keep your local creek clean.

As I read the article, I realized that I already have a rain garden in my back yard. The City of Austin frequently offers rain barrels for sale for as little as \$65 and I've hooked up one to collect water off the back of my roof. I use the rainwater to refill my little container pond every few days. But when we get a good rain, the rain barrel overflows in a matter of minutes. So I dug a shallow trench at the base of the rain barrel, lined it with weedblocking fabric, and filled it with river

rock. When it rains, the overflow pours into the dry streambed, runs under a stone-slab bridge, and sluices into what I now know to call my rain garden.

And now I realize why my young cedar elm has grown so fast. It's getting an extra-deep soaking every time it rains. The other plants in my rain garden also appreciate the extra water. Like the cedar elm, they're mostly natives, so this is a great garden for attracting wildlife too. I'm growing Turk's cap, Texas betony, Lindheimer muhly grass, Southern wax myrtle, salvia guaranitica, oxalis, heartleaf skullcap, spiderwort, columbine, and coralberry. Birds, bees, and butterflies love it.

I can't feel completely virtuous, though. When we moved into this house, we noticed that water was standing under the front porch. An inspection revealed that rainwater was backing into that area rather than running away from the house. My husband, through backbreaking labor, installed a French drain along the front porch that collects the rainwater and funnels it to a sump pump at the corner of the house. From there, yes, it is flushed out to the street in a pipe that runs beneath a garden that might like an extra drink now and then. What were we thinking, I now wonder, when I see that rainwater flowing out at the curb. That water should be in my garden! Well, live and learn.

Pam is a member of the HPWBANA beautification committee. She designed and helps maintain the Hancock bridge median.



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Casis Elementary School News

Casis welcomes all students back to school for 2006-2007! Parents are encouraged to attend (without children) Parent Information Night.

EC-Grade 2: August 21 at 6:00 p.m

Grade 3-5: August 24 at 6:00 p.m.

Make plans now to attend the Casis fall carnival, "Wild About Casis" on Friday, October 27. Visit the Casis website for more details @ www.mycasis.org

HPWBANA Newsletter staff needs a volunteer parent or student from Casis to supply information about school events. Email to carrob99@hotmail.com



Highland Park Elementary News

Please welcome the following staff members at Highland Park!

Principal: Tammie Workman
Assistant Principal- Monica Flores
Counselor Laura Reed-(returning)
Special Education -Chris Purkiss
Special Education -Timothy Lin
Kindergarten- Margaret Williams(HPWBANA resident)
First grade- Melissa Goldsmith
Third grade- Morgan Schlegal
Fourth grade-Anna Doyle
Art- Michale Stubbs
Music- Cheryl Waggoner
PE- Lori Moon
SKIP (Scottie Kids in Preschool) Erica Sederholm
Spanish -Sylvia Muir.

September's special events will be a Back-to-School Family Picnic and an International Day Celebration.

Highland Park Elementary is Looking Great!



Kevin Gollither and Sean Compton tame the landscape beds at Highland Park Elementary.

As you drop your children off at Highland Park Elementary this fall you will notice that the school landscaping is looking very well groomed these days. HPPTA volunteers along with a Travis County Work crew spent a couple of mornings in early August at Highland Park Elementary helping tame the flower beds. This was all in preparation for the students starting their fall classes.

HPPTA Landscape Chairperson Sean Compton coordinated the event which mainly including much needed trimming, weeding and mulching of the beds and trees. Sean has creative school landscape ideas and will be planning more projects throughout the year.

Thanks go the volunteers who got out there in the heat to keep our local school looking great! Volunteers on the first work day included Sean Compton, Kevin Gollither, Graham Jones, Principal Tammy Workman, Nadene Morning and Cathy and Leo McHorse.

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Highland Park West Balcones Area

Message from the Board

By Lurleen Ladd

As we welcome fall-- at least the *idea* of fall-- some neighbors might like to consider volunteering. There are many opportunities in and around our neighborhood for volunteering your time and expertise.

Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic, located at 1314 W 45th Street relies on many volunteers to provide services to those with print disabilities. In addition to reading, volunteers participate in setting up textbooks, operating recording equipment and quality control checking. And, if you have a special area of expertise, or speak a foreign language, you may qualify for their specialty reader program. Check out the website at www.rfbd.org. For specific questions about volunteering contact Gigi Franklin at gigi@rfbdtexas.org.

The Austin Museum of Art, Art School at Laguna Gloria, located at 3809 W. 35th Street, utilizes adult and teen (13-18 years of age) volunteers for various activities related to art classroom instruction. You don't have to be an artist to volunteer. Enjoying art and working with children are the primary requirements. Training is provided and volunteer opportunities are scheduled on weekdays and weekends. You can download a volunteer application at www.amoa.org.

And don't forget your neighborhood association! HPWBANA always needs volunteers to help with events and increasing our membership. Some committees that would welcome your help are beautification, crime and safety, membership, and events. Your time would make your neighborhood an even better place to live!

Look for more articles in the newsletter that highlight volunteering opportunities in and around Highland Park West and Balcones Area neighborhood.

REMINDER – January is

HPWBANA dues renewal month.

Become a HPWBANA Member for 2006

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 neighborhood activities: Spring Egg Hunt, July 4th Picnic and Parade, Annual Meeting, Beautification Efforts

We need your support! Please renew your membership or become a new member of HPWBANA today.

Send \$15 for a Household membership or \$10 for a Single Member Household membership (only one adult in household):
HPWBANA, PO Box 26101, Austin, TX 78755.

Name _____

Name of second adult _____

Address _____

Home phone _____ Email _____

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

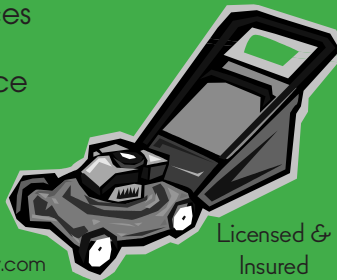
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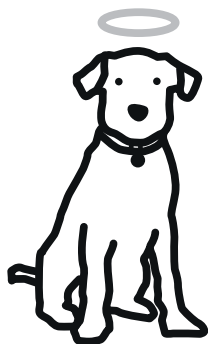
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Highland Park West Balcones Area

Neighbors Encouraged to Call in Traffic "Trouble Spots" to APD Tip Line 974-4440

Speeding and traffic accidents on Austin's roads have been an increasing problem. Last year the Austin Police Department set up a phone line so motorists can report speeding cars and other traffic hazards. Callers are asked to leave a message on the line by calling 974-4440. Twice a week an APD officer will review the line's messages.

All neighbors are encouraged to call the line often with their concerns. People can make a difference. APD will consider callers' information when planning where to conduct special initiatives. Trouble spots reported by a large number of callers are likely to receive higher consideration than areas reported by only one or two people. The HPWBANA uses this tip line when problem areas and intersections are brought to our attention.

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Highland Park West Balcones Area

It's Time for Alternatives

By Congressman Lamar Smith

Everyone who drives a car knows that gas prices are near an all time high. In 2005, American households spent \$287 billion on gasoline.

Our addiction to oil affects our wallets and our foreign policy. How can America be energy independent when 65 percent of our crude oil comes from other countries? Foreign oil imports are projected to rise 60 percent by 2020.

There is an environmental impact as well. Emissions from car engines go into the lower-level atmosphere where they are broken down by the sun's heat and turn into smog.

The good news is that there are alternatives to gasoline. Today, automakers are producing vehicles that run on cleaner burning, less expensive fuels. One such example is the plug-in hybrid car.

Conventional hybrid batteries recharge by capturing energy released during braking or through a generator attached to the combustion engine. Plug-in hybrids offer the additional option of recharging batteries by plugging the vehicle into an electrical outlet.

Because of their greater ability to operate on electric power, plug-in hybrids have the potential for significantly greater fuel economy than other hybrid cars. In some experiments these cars achieved fuel economy in excess of 100 miles per gallon. And they emit almost no emissions. This means fewer trips to the pump and cleaner air.

Plug-in hybrids shift emissions from the tailpipe to the power plant. Proponents argue that the overall emissions level of the most common pollutants is lower from plug-in hybrids than from standard automobiles, even accounting for emissions at the power plant.

Widespread use of plug-in hybrids would allow high population areas that suffer from air pollution during morning and evening commutes to shift emissions away from the city during nighttime hours. This shift would reduce people's exposure to harmful ozone levels and tailpipe pollutants.

Unfortunately, plug-in hybrids aren't always affordable or accessible to the average car buyer.

This year, I unveiled legislation called the "Plug-In Hybrid Electrical Vehicle Act of 2006." The bill encourages government and private industry to work together to develop new technologies that will make plug-in hybrids more cost effective. Through research and development grants, scientists will focus on producing cars made of light-weight materials and longer-running batteries. The bill also establishes a pilot program that will award 25 grants to help local governments purchase fleets of plug-in vehicles.

Plug-in hybrids save money, conserve energy, protect the environment and reduce America's dependence on foreign oil. For economic, environmental and strategic reasons, it makes sense to encourage automakers to go beyond their already popular hybrid vehicles and to develop and produce plug-in electric hybrid vehicles.

The City of Austin is doing just that. The City Council and Austin Energy are leading a national campaign called "Plug-In Partners" to demonstrate to automakers that a market exists today for plug-in hybrids. Plug-In Partners encourages local governments across the country to express interest in purchasing fleets of plug-in vehicles.

From Georgia to California, dozens of local cities and counties have pledged their support. I'm glad to see Texas setting an example for the rest of the nation on energy independence. You can learn more about Plug-In Partners by logging onto their website at <http://www.pluginpartners.org/>.

If you would like more general information about alternative fuel cars, you can log onto the Department of Energy's Fuel Economy website at <http://www.fueleconomy.gov/>. The site allows you to compare fuel economy of various cars and offers a description of each type of hybrid car on the market.

I hope to see the "Plug-In Hybrid Vehicle Act" and other alternative fuel measures approved by Congress in the months ahead. America must be creative in order to overcome our addiction to oil. The future of our environment and our economy depends on it.



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The Sesame Street characters Bert and Ernie were named after characters in the film "It's a Wonderful Life."

Highland Park West Balcones Area

Let's Help our Highland Park Scotties!

There are a couple of ways to help fund the many activities of the Highland Park PTA which is dedicated to our little Scotties:

The school participates in a grocery card purchase program with both Randall's and HEB. Families purchase pre-paid cards monthly and both grocery's provide a percentage back to the school. If you, or any interested neighbors would like to support the PTA by purchasing these cards, please visit the Highland Park PTA website www.hppta.org or contact Kathy Graves (krg2705@yahoo.com or 374-9713.)

The HPPTA also has its' own Randalls Good Neighbor Program number: #470. Sign up at the Randalls courtesy booth and a percentage of you purchases will be donated to the Highland Park PTA. The money donated is used for landscaping and special projects around the campus.

Help the Scotties improve their school and keep our neighborhood a great place to live!

My Favorite Summer Movie

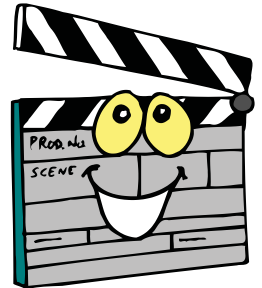
By Caroline Ladd

I saw many movies this summer, but the one I liked best one was Hoot. It is about three kids who work to protect burrowing owls that are an endangered species in Florida. The main character has to move and change schools a lot because of his dad's job. On the first day of school, he sees a barefoot kid running on the sidewalk. That kid and his sister become his good friends. They tell him about a Mother Paula's Pancake House that's being built right where the owls live. The kids work very hard to stop them from bulldozing the nests.

I liked it because it was about animals and because it had great songs with the movie. It was a very happy movie, and it was about adventure. You should definitely rent this movie when it comes out on video.

My mom said it was really good, too, because Jimmy Buffet sings some of the songs and he's even in the movie. He plays a biology teacher!

Caroline Ladd, HPWBANA resident, attends the Girls School of Austin and will be in Grade 3 this fall.



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