

Hyde Park United

JUNE 2008

A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

A publication of the Hyde Park United Civic Association
P.O. BOX 66422 • HOUSTON, TX 77266-6642
www.hydeparkunited.org

President's Letter

With the stock market swinging back and forth between various shades of red and black, now is probably not a good time to ask for money — but I'm going to do it anyway!

Hyde Park Civic Association has a number of neighborhood improvement projects that require funding in large and plentiful amounts. Although no one has yet offered, YES, we do accept tax rebate checks!

It is important to know that because we are a "Civic" as opposed to a "Neighborhood" Association, we do not collect mandatory fees. All contributions are voluntary and depend on your generosity. Ongoing or future projects include the complete renovation and landscaping of the Dolphin Fountain located at the corner of Hyde Park Blvd. and Waugh.

With proceeds from the next Home Tour and Art Show in early April 2009 as well as private donations, we hope to begin work sometime before the end of 2009. Landscaping architectural plans are complete and designed to make the fountain a focal point for the area.

From our talented artists serving on the Beautification Committee, we occasionally have wild and wacky public art installations located at strategic locations throughout the 'hood. These projects depend on \$\$\$ and materials donated by YOU! The artists post their needs under the Yard of the Month heading — so always make it a point to check.

Lastly, the Neighborhood Protection Fund is used by our Deed Restrictions Committee to fight unwanted, unfriendly development in Hyde Park which can become terrifically expensive in the event of unavoidable litigation. Another very important — but lesser known — objective of this Committee includes the preservation of our ever-dwindling canopy of old-growth trees.

To my knowledge, Hyde Park is the only civic association in the Montrose area that includes tree protection in the deed restrictions. We currently have four cases in violation and in some stage of compensation for damages. The activities listed above ultimately involve the improvement of our quality of life. Precious few of the good things in life are free — please support our lovely neighborhood!

Kathy Schipper, President, Hyde Park Civic Association

Next Meeting

Monday, June 2
at 7:15 p.m. *NOTE: No general meeting in July*

Grace Lutheran Church,
2525 Waugh Dr. @ Missouri

Agenda:

Introductions

Secretary's & Treasurer's Report

Committee Updates:

- Lamar Park
- Beautification
- Membership
- Deed Restrictions
- Home Tour & Art Show 2009

New Business

Old Business

Announcements

Adjournment

Other Meetings, Events

Neartown Association Meeting

Tuesday, June 24 • 7:00 p.m.
Cherryhurst Park Community Ctr.
1700 Missouri St
<http://www.neartown.org/>

30th Houston Gay Pride Parade

Saturday, June 28 • 8:45 p.m.
Westheimer (Dunlavy to Crocker)
<http://www.pridehouston.org/>

Deadline for July newsletter: Wed., June 25

Oh no, Mr. Bill !

Pesota resigns as chairman of Hyde Park's Deed Restrictions Committee

Regretfully, William Pesota has resigned as Chair of Deed Restrictions. For the past two years, Bill has influenced the development of at least 27 properties in the Hyde Park area, possibly more. He has generously donated his time to residents on Jackson and W. Drew in meeting the legal requirements of the Minimum Lot Size designation for their streets.

Bill has spent many afternoons (and evenings!) patiently waiting his turn to speak before the Planning Commission on topics of interest near and dear to our neighborhood. He has met with politicians and City officials in an attempt to educate and influence their opinions on a variety of subjects. Few know how mind-blowing and exasperating this can be; frankly, I'm

surprised Bill has lasted this long!!

On a more positive note, Bill has been elected as a delegate to the Texas Democratic Party for the 37th precinct. Two delegates were allowed: one to Obama, one to Clinton, with Bill pledged to the latter. He supports a traditional Democratic Party Platform including universal healthcare and improving the rights of gay/lesbians with respect to marriage equality.

Hyde Park thanks you for the expert legal advice and wishes you success in exploring the political machinery. Hopefully, you'll see politicians getting smarter as they ascend the hierarchy — not just more stupidity and ignorance on a larger scale. Please continue to share your insights with us!

Hyde Park newsletter editor retiring; volunteer needed

After two years, the editor/designer of this newsletter is stepping down to give someone else the pleasure of producing it. And it really is a pleasure. Seriously.

I've enjoyed producing the Hyde Park United newsletter for the past two years. If I didn't have increasing demands on my time, I'd keep doing it.

So ... another fresh and eager volunteer is needed to tackle this monthly newsletter for the civic association. Computer and design skills are required, of course, but you don't need to be a desktop publishing genius or a Photoshop guru.

I produce the newsletter in PageMaker, but any page layout package will do: InDesign, QuarkXpress, Microsoft Publisher or Apple Pages. Heck, you could even do it in Microsoft Word if you're really adept with Word.

If interested, call George at 713-522-7050 Monday through Friday during business hours. Or e-mail me at graphicink@swbell.net. We can discuss the particulars of putting this newsletter together.

Don't be shy about it. It's fun, and you get to meet interesting people. Gimme a call. — *George Sroka*



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Brush up your Shakespeare with new book by Hyde Park author Greenwood

THE COMPLETE IDIOT'S GUIDE TO SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS brings Shakespeare's 400-year-old dramas alive in a new introduction for students, playgoers, and general readers written by Hyde Park resident Cynthia Greenwood. A performing arts journalist and critic, Greenwood has taught Shakespeare's plays to college students.



CYNTHIA GREENWOOD

This guide offers the essence and experience of the Shakespearean spoken word; it doesn't just dissect great soliloquies on the page. And it is a valuable reference tool for high school and university students, drama students, professional and amateur actors, teachers, playgoers, drama critics, and casual readers – or anyone who wants to discover, brush up on or reacquaint themselves with Shakespeare's plays.

Cultural and historical contexts are provided for 20 major plays, using

refreshing perspectives from directors and actors in lengthy, original commentary; each major play is explored in depth, explaining Shakespearean terms;

Introductory chapters also remind us that Shakespeare was at the forefront of show business. Most Americans don't think of Shakespeare as a talented entrepreneur – they think of him as the author of plays they couldn't get excited about in school. This book brings you closer to the heady, behind-the-scenes world of freelance playwriting and the London theatre scene of the 1590s. It also lends insight into decisions that theatre people make while staging Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Othello*, *Hamlet*, and *Macbeth*, to name a few.

From 1998 until 2002, Greenwood served as the opera and classical music critic for the *Houston Press*.

Need lawn maintenance? Try the guy who keeps Lamar Park looking good

I am often asked if I know of anyone in the area who does complete lawn maintenance. The answer is "YES!" His name is Frankie Chambliss and he is both reliable and inexpensive. Frankie is responsible for the maintenance of Lamar Park, and you can see for yourself the quality of work he does. He can be reached at 281-431-0882 (home) or (cell) 281-728-4742. Call for a free estimate. — *Kathy Schipper*



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Bark! Bark! Bark!
(Translation: your dog is driving us all crazy)

Dear Hyde Park neighbors, Would the owner of the incessantly barking dog please get your pet into counseling? Or, at least, keep your pooch indoors? Please show some consideration for your neighbors who are being driven crazy and may soon have to enter therapy themselves. Signed, Awake at 4 a.m. (hint: west of Commonwealth)

Doggie-doo bag dispenser comin' soon to Lamar Park

Jean Garwood, Chair of the Lamar Park Committee reports that official signage regarding dog waste in Lamar Park has been ordered from the Houston Parks Board as well as one of those poop bag dispensers on a green metal frame. These will be placed in discreet locations throughout the park. Jean asks that residents please be patient as it may take some time for the orders to go through, but she will stay on top of it.

Indiana block captain

Indiana needs a volunteer to serve as block captain. The major duty is to distribute the monthly newsletter. If interested, e-mail Kathy Schipper at kathleencanty@sbcglobal.net

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Lawyers perform June 4-7 in annual fund-raiser

The all-lawyer musical comedy *Night Court 2008: Law of the Sea* sets sail June 4-7 at the Wortham Center. Nearly 100 of Houston's finest lawyers, judges, and elected officials are volunteering hundreds of hours together to showcase their

talents and raise money for the Houston Bar Foundation, which provides legal services and related resources to the less fortunate in our community. You may even see a neighbor or two under the lights as **Martha Williams** and **Allyson Wilkinson** share the stage that is dedicated to raising the bar on lawyer jokes — these are for charity!

Tickets are available at <http://www.hba.org/> and can be acquired with a few quick clicks.



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Monday—Friday
Lunch Specials: 11 a.m.— 2:30 p.m.
Dinner 5:00 p.m. — 9:30 p.m.

Saturday
12:00 Noon — 10:00 p.m.

Sunday
12:00 Noon — 9:30 p.m.

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Our Garbage Collection and Recycling Schedule

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Recycle: Every other Tuesday (except as noted*).

Please note – Your automated container & recycling bin should be at your curb by 7 a.m. and removed by 10 p.m., **on your collection day**. If it appears it may rain, do not put out your newspapers for recycling, as the city cannot recycle wet newspapers. **Glass is NOT accepted curbside**. The recycling schedule:

June 2008		July 2008		August 2008	
Tuesday	June 3	Tuesday	July 1	Tuesday	Aug 12
Tuesday	June 17	Tuesday	July 15	Tuesday	Aug 26
		Tuesday	July 29		

Check the city's trash pickup and recycling schedule online at: <http://www.houstontx.gov/solidwaste/77006.html>

Heavy Trash: Second Tuesdays. June 10, July 8 and August 12

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Hyde Park United Civic Association Meeting Minutes: May 5, 2008

INTRODUCTION AND OFFICER REPORTS

The May 2008 meeting of the Hyde Park United (HPU) Civic Association was held at **Grace Lutheran Church** on Monday, May 5.

Kathy Schipper began the meeting by asking all of those present to introduce themselves.

Kathy suggested that the group entertain a motion to approve the minutes from the April 2008 meeting. **Allyson Wilkinson** pointed out one correction to the April minutes as published in the newsletter: "Only artists whose houses are on the home tour will be allowed to have their studios on the **Home Tour**. Any artist is welcome to have his/her studio on the **Art Crawl**."

The April 2008 minutes were then approved as revised.

Carlos Fernandez read the Treasurer's Report, after which he discussed the placement of ads in the HPU newsletter, for which he is responsible. People often ask him if they can run a one-time ad. The answer is "No" because it creates excessive and unnecessary effort for Carlos and **George Sroka**, the HPU newsletter editor. Also, if Carlos does it for one person, he has to do it for everyone, and too many people would demand the service.

Then **Kathy** asked for a motion to approve the treasurer's report as presented.

NEW BUSINESS

Kathy stated that she was trying to recruit a speaker from the **Montrose Blvd. Conservancy** to speak at the October general meeting about their future plans. **Tom Greer** shared an article about the Conservancy from the newspaper. **Kathy** reported of the Conservancy's effort to transform two sides of a section between Westheimer and Welch into green space, to show what the rest of the street would look like. (They have architectural plans for the whole street.) This would also be a fundraising effort on their part. One member expressed skepticism about this goal. **Kathy** said the Conservancy also plans to divert more Medical Center traffic away from Montrose Blvd. "I think the green space

will be beautiful, once they do it," **Kathy** said. "They want to put something special that marks that intersection of Montrose and Westheimer," she added.

Kathy also explained that the Conservancy would raise funds from foundations, business owners, and other donors. Another source of funding will come in the form of newly created management districts. Currently, there's the **Kirby Management District**, the **Downtown Management District**, the **Midtown District**, and the **East Montrose District** being voted before the **Texas Legislature**, which will create a management district for this entire area. The district will have taxing authority, at a very low tax rate. (**Kathy** clarified that HPU is hemmed in by various surrounding management district. It is inevitable that we will eventually join the East Montrose Management District and the name will reflect all of **Montrose**.)

HOME TOUR

Allyson mentioned that the next newsletter would contain information that breaks down the various **Home Tour** committees in order to recruit volunteers. She is calling for more homes to be part of the tour. She's looking for a task force volunteer for the **Art Crawl**. A planning meeting at **Nikos Nikos** restaurant recently was fruitful. HPU is trying to include diverse architectural styles on the tour. **Kathy** mentioned that there are no lovely town homes represented yet on the tour. The date for the tour is the first Saturday in April, in 2009. There was further discussion of possible conflicts on that date.

TREE UPDATE

Kathy called **Victor Cordova** from the City of Houston Urban Forestry Department, and he seemed to think we could get as many trees as HPU believes it needs in October. "These will be 15-gallon hardwood trees that have to be planted in the City right of way. **Kathy** asked all those present to be looking for places to plant these trees. **Hyde Park** residents will get first dibs on the trees, and then **Kathy** will open the give-away to all of **Montrose** or anyone interested. The City will drop the trees off in **Kathy's** driveway, and those who want them can pick them up from **Kathy's**

house. "People need to pick them up quickly," **Kathy** said, adding that the last time she managed this effort, she had about two hundred trees. She said we were lucky to get the 15-gallon trees. "These are hardwoods that are on the City's protected tree list," **Kathy** said. "If the tree dies, they will replace it."

TRAFFIC STUDY

Kathy reported that the traffic study has been sent off, but there is no news yet from the City. We assume they are studying HPU's application. It will take a while to review all 70 complaints of traffic problems and issues.

LAMAR PARK

Jean Garwood reported the unencumbered balance of \$6,365 in the Houston Parks Board account.

DEED RESTRICTIONS & TREE PROTECTION

Dan Schnorr announced that **Cherry House Moving** is moving an old duplex at **1400 Vermont** off the premises. There was further discussion about when and how trees are protected in **Hyde Park**. **Kathy** clarified that only trees on deed-restricted properties are protected. **Dan** volunteered to walk around and measure trees on certain properties, citing the loss of many trees over the last few months. Those present discussed the problem of specific tree losses. **Allyson** asked for volunteers for the **HPU Tree Task Force Committee**. "We've lost a lot of trees this spring."

"**Montrose** is one area of the city where you can actually call 911 if a tree is endangered or if it is being cut down," **Kathy** said. "They will respond. The police even encourage it."

HPU residents will get a list of meetings changes for the summer months. **Allyson** announced details about the annual **Houston Bar Association's** musical comedy benefit production, written by lawyers, about lawyers, from June 4-7 at the **Wortham Center** in downtown Houston.

There was a motion to adjourn the May meeting, followed by a second. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned.

Submitted by Cynthia Greenwood, Secretary

PIP
Positive
Interaction
Program
Report

Operation Greensweep targets homeless who camp on bayous, steal to support drug habit

The April meeting featured a presentation of HPD's new Operation Greensweep initiative and was presented by one of the architects of the program, Lt. Wendy Zeller. This program is directed at a particular group of homeless people who camp and hide out on our bayous, robbing and stealing from people, residences and businesses to support their drug habit.

The program utilizes Neighborhood Protection and Parks Dept to remove hiding places, clear underbrush and debris, and TXDOT to haul trash. This program also utilizes foot patrol, horse patrol and bicycle patrol officers. In a recent bust, 25 people were arrested at encampments. Among them they had a total of 215 life-time arrests, consisting mainly of drug and property crimes. They even found a pedophile camping within sight of a children's play area, but didn't send him to jail because he was found dead.

As part of our regular meeting, we also heard from Sgt. Richard Wilson of the 802 Westheimer Storefront. He reported that his officers had made significant arrests on copper thefts, which thieves try and sell in order to buy drugs. He also reported that the apartment complex at 1414 Hyde Park had been taken over by squatters who were dealing drugs from there – they got seven trespass arrests in one raid and the next day got one more trespass arrest and a dope arrest. In regard to the "grow house" at 1200 W. Drew, it lead to 15 more such houses in Houston. The lead behind this was former 802 Storefront officer, Brenda McCord, who was given Female Officer of the Year for her work on this project.

Officer Wayne Pate reported that National Night Out has been switched this year from August to Oct. 7 to avoid the August heat.

On Tuesday, May 13, the City-Wide PIP group was given a tour of HPD's new Crime Center located at HPD headquarters, 1200 Travis. The Crime Center is not the same as the Crime Lab. This is a 24/7 operation that utilizes a web-based system to accelerate investigations and control violent crimes. It utilizes the internet and uses real-time maps and statistics. Eventually, it will allow public access to crime information and statistics.

As a reminder, please report or fax to the Storefront, non-emergency complaints or problems utilizing the Central District One PIP "Citizen Complaint Form", a copy of which is available on our website. Fax the form to HPD Storefront: (713) 284-8616
The purpose of PIP (Positive Interaction Program) is to facili-

tate an exchange of information between HPD and neighborhood residents, using monthly community meetings as a forum. Hyde Park United falls within the Central Patrol/District One PIP Group and meets the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Police Officers Union Bldg, 1602 State St. The next regularly scheduled PIP meeting will be held June 25, 2008.

CRIME STATISTICS: FEBRUARY 2009

Activity	Street/Block	Premises	Date/Time
Murder	None Reported		
Rape	None Reported		
Robbery	1100 Westheimer	Road/Street/Sidewalk	02/17 - 09:00 pm
	1200 Westheimer	Restaurant	02/25 - 03:45 pm
	1200 Westheimer	Other Parking Lot	02/27 - 11:35 pm
	2600 Commonwealth	Road/Street/Sidewalk	02/23 - 12:25 am
Assaults	1300 Westheimer	Night Club Parking Lot	02/24 - 11:30 pm
	1400 Westheimer	Bar/Night Club	02/17 - 01:30 am
Burglary	1200 West Gray	Residence/House	02/07 - 01:00 pm
	1500 Vermont	Residence/House	02/22 - 05:00 pm
Burglary of Mr. Vehicle	1100 Fairview	Road/Street/Sidewalk	01/30 - 11:00 pm
	1200 California	Road/Street/Sidewalk	02/17 - 04:00 am
	2300 Montrose	Other Parking Lot	02/03 - 02:02 am
	2500 Montrose	Road/Street/Sidewalk	02/26 - 11:00 pm
	1400 Hyde Park	Road/Street/Sidewalk	02/09 - 02:00 am
	1400 Hyde Park	Road/Street/Sidewalk	02/09 - 02:00 am
	1500 California	Apartment Parking Lot	02/21 - 05:30 pm
Auto theft	1200 Westheimer	Unknown	02/01 - 11:00 pm
	1400 Westheimer	Road/Street/Sidewalk	02/10 - 03:30 am
Narcotics	None Reported		
DWI	2700 Montrose	Road/Street/Sidewalk	02/16 - 02:15 am

CRIME STATISTICS: MARCH 2009

Activity	Street/Block	Premises	Date/Time
Murder	None Reported		
Rape	1300 Westheimer	Road/Street/Sidewalk	03/13 - 01:30 am
Robbery	2500 Commonwealth	Night Club Parking Lot	03/30 - 11:00 pm
	2700 Commonwealth	Road/Street/Sidewalk	03/15 - 04:40 pm
Assaults	2400 Montrose	Restaurant Parking Lot	03/27 - 01:10 am
	1300 Westheimer	Bar/Night Club	03/19 - Midnight
Burglary	1300 Fairview	Auto Repair Shop	03/19 - 08:00 pm
	2000 Waugh	Convenience Store	03/12 - Midnight
	2600 Waugh	Clothing Store	03/07 - 06:30 pm
	1500 California	Apartment	03/27 - 08:00 am
	1500 Vermont	Multi-plex Home	03/30 - 09:05 pm
Burglary of Mr. Vehicle	1400 W. Gray	Road/Street/Sidewalk	03/18 - 01:00 am
	1900 Waugh	Road/Street/Sidewalk	02/23 - Midnight
	1200 Westheimer	Bar/Nightclub	03/28 - 10:30 pm
	1400 California	Road/Street/Sidewalk	03/15 - 05:00 pm
Auto theft	1300 Bomar	Apartment Parking Lot	03/20 - 05:00 pm
	2500 Montrose	Road/Street/Sidewalk	03/09 - 01:00 am
	2500 Yoakum	Road/Street/Sidewalk	03/12 - 01:00 am
	1400 Maryland	Road/Street/Sidewalk	03/30 - 08:00 pm
Narcotics	1000 Westheimer	Restaurant Parking Lot	03/14 - 10:00 pm
	1300 Bomar	Road/Street/Sidewalk	03/29 - 12 Noon
	2000 Waugh	Unknown	03/16 - 06:00 pm
	1400 Hyde Park	Unknown	03/29 - 11:25 pm
	1500 Hyde Park	Apartment Parking Lot	03/03 - 01:38 am
DWI	1000 Westheimer	Road/Street/Sidewalk	03/28 - 01:04 am
	1200 W. Gray	Unknown	03/14 - 03:04 am
	1700 Montrose	Unknown	03/14 - 12:33 am
	1300 Westheimer	Road/Street/Sidewalk	03/23 - 02:56 am
	1600 Commonwealth	Road/Street/Sidewalk	03/20 - 01:39 am

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Hyde Park June 2008 Yard of the Month

1218 WILLARD

Congratulations to:
Jeff and Joy Marino

Their yard is well cared for and hedged with lovely trees. Jeff and Joy said “we are very excited about being yard of the month.”

Help us honor the efforts of those working to keep Hyde Park beautiful.



If you have possums living under your house, consider yourself lucky

The following was received in response to a plea in the previous newsletter for advice on how to deal with possums under a house.

I am a wildlife rehabilitator licensed by the State of Texas and I live in your neighborhood. I specialize in opossums because: 1) they do not carry rabies or distemper (due to a very low body temp), 2) they are very clean and—if healthy—flea free, and 3) very beneficial to the environment.

If you have one temporarily living under your house (she will move on) consider yourself lucky. She is clearing out all the roaches, snails, spiders, mice, and snakes (yes, even poisonous ones) living under your house. Opossums are nocturnal and they go where the food is. They use our fences as “highways.” If your dog is barking at one in the middle

of the night, bring the dog in for an hour and let the opossum move on. It most likely will. They like catfood, so bring that in too.

I repeat, your dogs and cats and children will NOT catch diseases from opossums. Opossums do not carry rabies. As an opossum rehabilitator, I handle them all the time and I am not required to take the rabies preventative shots as are rehabilitators who handle coons and squirrels. You will catch more diseases from your dog than you will from an opossum.

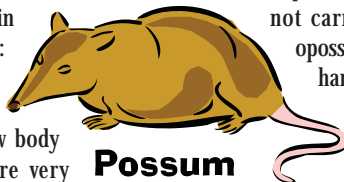
If you corner one of these guys on your porch, just go inside for awhile and it will leave. They are not “vicious” or “dangerous” or “nasty” — they are clean and quite gentle; but if cornered they will hiss and show their pointy teeth to try to scare you away — if you go, they will go

to. If you put your finger in their mouth they probably will bite you, but they will not lunge at or chase you.

Opossums are marsupials, like kangaroos, and are North America’s only marsupials. They are very special little “varmints,” and are protected by the State of Texas. There are humane traps you can set for them, but at this time of year the mothers have their babies with them, so there is a good chance you will catch mother and only some of the babies. If you can wait awhile, they will move on to someone else’s yard to eat bugs and snails, etc.

We are lucky to have them in our neighborhood. Did I mention, they eat rats? And for the record, they are not the ones chewing your flowers or digging up your bulbs.

If I can help further, please call me at 281-435-4155. Thanks for opening up this opossum dialogue in our neighborhood. — submitted by Mary Scheps



Possum

WE PRAISE THE YARD(S) ECLECTIC

Nominate someone in Hyde Park for their beautiful yard — and tell us why you think they deserve it.

E-mail nominees for Yard of the Month to: beautification@hydeparkunited.org

Acknowledge beauty, effort, and community pride: nominate a yard of the month


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