

Annual 4th of July Parade & Picnic

The Fourth of July is upon us, so start planning your float, decorate your bikes, wagons and motor scooters, bring a musical instrument, and join SRCC as we celebrate our annual parade and potluck picnic. If you wish to participate in the parade, please make your way to the corner of St. Edwards and Eastside Drive by 10:45, so we can start lining groups up for the procession down Eastside Drive to



Little Stacy Park. Plan to get there early to get a good seat on the curb as we always have a great crowd. This year we will be selling SRCC T-shirts to help offset the expense of hosting the parade. The shirts are \$15. If you'd like to order one in advance please contact Teri Hubbeling at terivh@sbcglobal.net. See the flyer inside for more details on the parade and picnic.

And from everyone in SRCC, many thanks to our annual parade and picnic organizers, who selflessly undertake managing this great event: Betty Weed, Teri Hubbeling and Russell Fraser.

So join us and celebrate the 4th in a wonderful, family-friendly environment and bring your favorite potluck dish. ☺

We Did It! SAO Raises \$44K to Fight Oak Wilt

By Susan Williamson

Save Austin Oaks (SAO), with the support of the SRCC, South Congress merchants, and our neighbors (see our Sponsor Thank You) raised \$44,000 to stop the spread of the most recent outbreak of oak wilt in the neighborhood, which threatened the shade canopy throughout the neighborhood, including Stacy Park.

On April 19th, the group kicked off the campaign with a reception at the newly opened and beautifully designed Hotel St. Cecilia on Academy Drive. "Liz Lambert, owner of the Hotel San Jose and a neighborhood resident, was wonderful. She offered to host a reception at her new hotel on Academy," said Robin Sanders, chair of SAO. "That really got things started."

Donations came from the neighborhood and beyond, including Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Association. "When we announced that we needed to put in a new trench this summer, people responded immediately. Neighbors, many of whom gave in 2005 to stop the disease, gave generously," Robin noted. Even neighbors many blocks from the outbreak supported the project. "If we don't stop the disease now, it will kill the oaks in Stacy Park within a couple of years, and then those in my yard a few years later," said Betty Weed, a resident on Alta Vista in the south end of the neighborhood. "I can't imagine the park without those wonderful trees."

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Inserts 4th of July Flyer

SAO Sponsors

Stores and restaurants on South Congress responded as well. On May 7th – First Thursday – many merchants pledged to give a percent of their profits to the effort. Then on May 19th, Rob Lippincott sponsored a benefit concert in Guëro's Oak Garden. That topped off the effort.

The 2005 trenching project created a boundary around the original outbreak zone; the trench enclosed an area bounded by Academy Drive, Hillside Avenue, Park Lane, and Newning Avenue. That project has been successful, Sanders says, containing the spread of the disease to the north, west, and east. The breach along a small portion of the southern edge may have predated the 2005 trench or may have been caused because the oaks affected are so large and their root systems so extensive (oak wilt is most often caused by connections between root systems).

Neighbors traveling around Newning Ave, Park Lane, and Drake Ave will encounter some traffic disruption during June as a trench is dug to sever all root connections between the new infected area and surrounding healthy trees. SAO is working with the Texas Forest Service, the City of Austin and H & T Utilities to implement the trenching plan. For more information on Oak Wilt and efforts to control it, as well as a map of the trench go to www.saveaustinoaks.org. ❧

Travis Height-Fairview Park Historic District Update

By Michele Webre

The City of Austin passed a Local Historic District ordinance in 2004. Since then, despite the efforts of a dozen neighborhoods only one district in Austin comprising ten houses has become a Local Historic District. National preservation experts as well as faculty and students in UT's Historic Preservation program have called Austin's LHD ordinance one of the most stringent and onerous in the country. Because of these concerns, the Heritage Society of Austin asked the City to make changes to the ordinance to bring Austin more in line with peer cities such as Fort Worth and San Antonio. The Landmark Commission has approved the changes and the revisions are going before the Planning Commission, then on to the City Council. In the meantime, Travis Heights-Fairview Park needs volunteers and funds to finish the work on its narrative and database. We postponed a homes' tour fundraiser in the spring because we needed more volunteers. Without additional help and donations, demolitions of our houses continue, our LHD application remains in jeopardy, and we lose more of the historic fabric of our neighborhood. If you want to help or learn more, go to www.HistoricTravisHeights.org. All support is appreciated. ❧

Norwood Posse Submits Grant to Austin Parks Foundation

By Wolf Sittler

On June 1st the Norwood Posse submitted a grant application to the Austin Parks Foundation. This first step is a small one, but every journey needs that first step! The focus is hiring a state-licensed asbestos abatement contractor to remove the shingles and roofing felt. Then the entire roof will be covered, temporarily with thick, recycled, vinyl from billboard advertising to prevent further water penetration to the interior of the house. Our application also calls for a total clean-up of the site. The next grant cycle is September, and we plan to prepare a grant focused on removing the wood covering of the roof, replacing rafters as needed, putting on new decking and a new roofing material. Ideally we would like to use the barrel tiles originally installed. The company that makes them is still in business, though they have not yet indicated what kind of deal we can get. The main issue is the cost of a tile roof versus composition shingles.

The Regional Foundation Library, a branch of UT, has provided the names of eight Texas foundations that can be approached for grants. Many foundation boards are comprised of more senior folks who have an increased interest in preserving our cultural heritage, so this may well be a good time for grants that focus on historic preservation. The Parks and Recreation Department has also notified us that a Park Improvement Agreement between us and the Austin Parks Foundation is imminent. This document must be finalized before any work can be done; it is also a cornerstone of our fund-raising strategy.

A UTSA student in the Master of Science in Historic Preservation program has offered her help in whatever areas are deemed appropriate. New city council member, Chris Riley, is a board member of the Austin Parks Foundation, and has agreed to help us move this project forward. Our new mayor, Lee Leffingwell, is aware of our project and should be of some assistance. Efforts are ongoing to build a supportive coalition of council members.

The Norwood Posse now has a signed an Adopt-a-Park agreement with PARD that is the foundation for cooperation and mutual assistance. We will be encouraging PARD to focus on the development of a master plan for the Norwood tract. This is a goal that they have, but it has not received any priority, so it's time to squeak the wheels!

We appear to have some very positive momentum after years of delay; brick by brick we will restore this house! ❧

Solar Power in Travis Heights; Is It Right for You?

By John Foote

Solar panels are appearing on more of the rooftops in the neighborhood these days. Have you wondered if the combination of technology, energy prices, and environmental concerns finally created a scenario where a solar array on your own house makes cents?

A basic problem with solar panels is produced electricity can't be saved. The City of Austin has solved that problem for you. If you have a solar system installed you become a micro-power plant, delivering electricity to the grid. When the system produces more power than your house uses, the meter literally runs backwards. In effect Austin Energy is your battery. This is important because photovoltaic doesn't work at night and you want credit for everything you've produced and didn't consume during the day to lower your electric bill. For most people reduced electric bills are what "pays" for solar photovoltaic installation.

How much does a system cost, and does the cost justify the expense? In Austin we have access to two programs that help offset the total cost to the homeowner. The City of Austin will rebate up to \$50,000 for an approved installation, up from \$13,500 in previous years. Tim Harvey at Austin Energy states there are plenty of funds available for 2009. Additionally there is a Federal Tax Credit for 30 percent of the homeowner's installation cost. The final cost to the homeowner is affected by multiple factors including the size of the system. Casey Marshall, COO at Meridian, an Austin solar company, states the typical owner is currently running out of pocket \$5,000. Velocity Credit Union is also a supporting partner in the Austin Energy program, offering competitive rates on loans.

So is a solar system right for you? Maybe, but each property owner should do some research to learn if solar panels on their roof is a good idea or not. The cost of the home owner varies per install. In Austin there is an existing infrastructure that will gladly do the research for you. Just call Austin Energy at (512) 482-5326 to get started. The Austin Energy website, www.austinenergy.com has extensive information and good links as well. Approved solar installation companies will provide bids and production estimates. Armed with this information you can make your own, informed decision. ❧

Committee Reports & Neighborhood Announcements

Sherwood Oaks Crime Report

By Elloa Mathews

In a single week in early April, one block on Friar Tuck Lane had three vehicles burglarized, one vehicle theft and a home burglary. Luckily an observant neighbor saw the home burglary and called APD. The burglars threw the stolen DVD players, TVs and PCs into yards along Long Bow Lane as they made their escape into the Blunn Creek Preserve, where another observant neighbor alerted APD the following day to the burglars return and they were apprehended.

Since this recent crime spree, several more cars have been burglarized on Little John Lane but neighbors have taken action. A list serve to alert Sherwood Oaks neighbors to criminal activity has been created. If you would like to join you must be a resident of Sherwood Oaks. To request membership in the group, send your name and address to <http://www.oursherwoodoaks.com>.

We also extend many thanks to outgoing Officer Courtney Daniel, who served the Sherwood Oaks and Woodward neighborhoods as our Austin Police Department District Representative (DR), for two years. Officer Daniel was promoted to Sergeant in the Downtown Area Command in April, and we wish her all the best. Our new DR for Sherwood Oaks and Woodward is Officer Ray Lopez, and we look forward to working with him over the next couple of years. He can be reached at 974-5551 or at raymond.lopez@ci.austin.tx.us. ❧

Travis Heights Art Trail Calling for Submissions and Sponsors

By Margaret Adie

The Travis Heights Art Trail is coming up December 5 & 6, 2009. We welcome artists in all mediums, musicians, authors, food artists and dancers. The application can be found online at our website, www.travisheightsart.com, and is due no later than August 1, 2009. Come join our wonderful community of amazing talent.

For Business Sponsors, The Art Trail is an excellent way to reach a targeted audience. We welcome all businesses in Austin and especially those in the Travis Heights area, including SOCO, to advertise with us. Your business and logo will be prominently displayed on our website and on over 5,000 flyers that are distributed throughout Austin. Applications are due August 1, 2009. You can find also find the sponsorship application at www.travisheightsart.com. ❧



2009 – 2010 SRCC Officers and Executive Committee

In March we elected a new slate of officers to represent our community. Congratulations to the following individuals for their willingness to donate their time and energies towards making our neighborhoods and City better places to live.

Serving as President is Sarah Campbell. Marc Drew is our new Vice-President. Nick Garrett and Dawn Cizmar return as Co-Secretaries. Welcome aboard!

We also want to thank our outgoing 2007 – 2008 officers for their tireless dedication to SRCC: Jean Mather, President for many years of service, and Cile Montgomery and Sarah Campbell who served as Vice-Presidents.

SRCC Officers	
President:	
Sarah Campbell	512/462-2261
Vice President:	
Marc Davis	512/656-2841
Treasurer:	
Bob Drew	512/913-7485
Co-Secretaries:	
Garret Nick	512/326-7676
Dawn Cizmar	512/443-4231

Area Coordinators

Area 1	Claudette Lowe	447-1514
Area 1	Helen Dey Valdez	634-3740
Area 2	Alicia Reinmund Martinez	447-0266
Area 3a	Teri Hubbeling	447-8852
Area 3a	Bruce Barrick	444-0220
Area 3b	Brooks Kasson	444-8100
Area 3b	Kenny Hilbig	326-9120
Area 4a	Sam Martin	441-5222
Area 4b	Kris Asthalter	443-4963
Area 4b	Tim Mahoney	326-9944
Area 5	Neal Nuwash	462-9093
Area 5	Ellen Ward	851-0095
Area 6	Barbara Aybar	447-1135
Area 6	Dawn Cizmar	443-4231
Area 7	Fred Krebs	447-6442
Area 7	Helen Fleming	917-1935
Area 8	Maria Martinez	443-9784

Committee & Liaison Chairs

Austin Police	District Rep	974-4711
Blunn Creek	David Todd	416-0400
Membership	Carol Martin	441-5222
St. Edward's	Elloa Mathews	442-6986
Transportation & Public Safety	Toni House	447-8090
Zoning	Jean Mather	444-4153
Austin Neighborhood Council	Jean Warneke	443-5488
South Central Coalition	Danette Chimenti	565-0217
Cap Metro Rep	OPEN	
Newsletter	Helen Dey Valdez	326-4320
Partners in Education	Paige Fillipp	637-0988
Save Town Lake	Kenny Hilbig	326-9120
TH-FP Historic Dist	Michele Webre	422-1262
Austin Parks & Town		
Lake Trail Foundations	Wendy Todd	442-3130
TH Arts Trail	Margaret Adie	440-8579
Travis Park Apt & Austin Interfaith	Terry Franz	447-8768

SRCC Meetings - We normally meet the 1st Monday of every month at 7 PM at the Grace United Methodist Church, 205 E.

Monroe. Check the website for details. If you want to be part of the SRCC listserv send an email to: SouthRiverAustin-subscribe@yahoo.com.

Membership Renewals - You can renew your membership or join SRCC by sending your dues to P O Box 40632, Austin TX 78704. Treasurer Bob Drew will deposit all checks and will forward all membership information on to Carol Martin, who will update the membership database.

South River City Citizens Membership Form

Revised October 2008

Membership Categories:

_____ Single \$5 _____ Sustaining \$10
 _____ Family \$7 _____ Big Bubba \$20

Please mark areas of interest or amount of additional contribution:

_____ Parks _____ Schools _____ Oak Wilt
 _____ July 4 _____ Historic District _____ Newsletter
 _____ Arts Trail _____ South Congress _____ St. Eds/Woodward

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Make checks payable to SRCC (for membership) and mail to: SRCC, P O Box 40632, Austin TX 78704.

