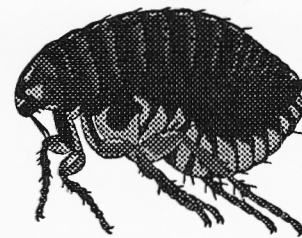


# The Flea



The Newsletter of the Cherrywood Neighborhood Association  
Vol. 3, No. 3

April 1998

Dear Neighbor,

When you open this quarter's edition of *The Flea* to page two, take a good look at how many people have become involved in Cherrywood Neighborhood Association. Just a couple of years ago only a handful of people would have appeared on such a list; now twenty-one different names appear, and the overall number of individuals participating regularly in CNA meetings and activities seems to grow by the day. This growth attests to the health of the CNA and to the passion that Cherrywood residents have for their neighborhood. These are your neighbors. They are sacrificing their time and confronting complex issues in order to promote the quality of life that we all value. Support them, or even better, join them. The pride that comes with working to improve your community is more than worth the effort.

## Mueller redevelopment plan moves forward

During the week of April 6, the San Francisco-based ROMA Planning Team, with input from the State of Texas, the Citizens Advisory Group, and several neighborhood focus groups (including one in which CNA Secretary Jim Walker plays a key role), issued a third draft of its plan for redeveloping the Robert Mueller Airport site. This draft is a work in progress; citizens still have time to offer input. Space limitations prevent *The Flea* from publishing the plan, but a recap of the recent history of the process is worthwhile.

In September 1995, the City Council appointed the Robert Mueller Airport Redevelopment Process and Goals Task Force, consisting of 16 members, two of whom reside in Cherrywood.

The task force, chaired by CNA's own Girard Kinney, met for six months and produced a report advocating an intensively developed, sustainable mixed-use community, incorporating extensive measures to support the surrounding neighborhoods.

In April 1996, both the CNA and the City Council endorsed the task force report's recommendations.

A year later, in spring 1997, the city hired ROMA to develop a plan for the site that reflected the task force's goals. The City asked Kinney to act as a liaison between ROMA and

*Continued on page 8* >

## Let's grow up!

It's been proposed that we graduate beyond our initial bylaws in order to remain effective, dynamic, inclusive, and representative.

The examination of this idea was encouraged at the last Policy Committee meeting by the formation of a Restructuring Subcommittee co-chaired by Pauline Porter and Gordon Bennett. The members are working on a proposal to model CNA after a 13-member Steering Committee approach currently used by Austin's more long-standing associations.

A presentation is planned at the next general meeting on April 29th for the consideration of all CNA members and there are plans to discuss the development of a Vision Workshop. Please come and participate!

—Joan Gruszka

## Cherrywood Neighborhood Association

President	Buzz Avery 476-1889
Vice-President	Barbara Mink 477-9094
Secretary	Jim Walker 499-0526
Treasurer	Stephen Kreger 477-4216



### The Flea

Editor	Bennett Donovan 473-2089
Layout	Mike Conner 474-7012
Distribution	Mike McClendon 482-0016
Advertising	Stephen Kreger 477-4216



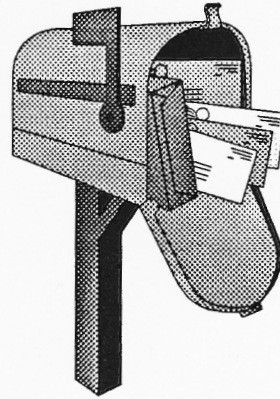
### Committees

Policy	Buzz Avery 476-1889
Spirit Action	Sharon Edmonson 473-2337
Parks	Girard Kinney 478-5042
Association Restructuring	Gordon Bennett 477-7195
	Pauline Porter 322-0717



### Projects

Community Gardens	Neil Jodeit 469-9325
	Lisa Tipps 322-9620
Hike and Bike Trail	Cynthia Majors 479-0774
	Michael McClendon 482-0016
Neighborhood Beautification	Mike Damal 478-9622
	Sharon Edmonson 473-2337
Recycling and Disposals	Jim Walker 499-0526
Maplewood School	Jack Newman 476-6616
Scrapbook & History	Sharon Edmonson 473-2337
Speeding & Traffic	Helen & Ben Davis 474-9751
	Cathy Jones 480-8041
Tree planting	Steve Barney 478-3653
	Mike Damal 478-9622
Airport Redevelopment	Gordon Bennett 477-7195
	Priscilla Boston 478-1867
	Jim Walker 499-0526
Cat-In-Hood (feral cat control)	Sharon Edmonson 473-2337
Schieffer Area	Priscilla Boston 478-1867
Email listserv	Jim Walker 499-0526 jwalk@greenbuilder.com
Web page	Gordon Bennett 477-7195 gordonb@uts.cc.utexas.edu



## Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Just wanted to let you know that I really enjoy *The Flea*. Hope you will keep it coming.

Because of my age, I am unable to help you with the delivery of *The Flea*, but I would like to contribute \$10.00 for the expense of having it printed.

I live on 32nd Street and have lived there for over 50 years. There are some yards on 32nd Street that never seem to be mowed. I just wondered if the neighborhood association could do anything to alleviate this problem.

Thank you,  
Lisa Engeling

Dear Lisa,

*Thanks so much for the generous contribution. The issue of unkempt yards came up at the CNA meeting of 10/29/97. You can call Mark Parsons of Travis County Health and Human Services at 469-2015 to report the problem of weeds taller than 18". Sharon Edmonson has also volunteered to help residents on this issue. You can call her at 473-2337.*

*Send letters to the Editor to 3706 Clarkson Avenue, Austin, TX 78722, faxes to 474-2895, or e-mail to conner@texas.net.*

## January 28, 1998 meeting highlights

*The following items were excerpted from Secretary Jim Walker's minutes of the last CNA meeting. For the full text of the minutes, call Jim Walker at 499-0526.*

### Annual Officer Elections

Buzz Avery, Stephen Kreger, and Jim Walker were nominated for President, Treasurer, and Secretary, respectively. Each was elected without opposition and will serve a third consecutive term.

Mike Damal and Barbara Mink were nominated for vice-president. Mike accepted in absentia and Sharon Edmonson read his statement. Barbara read her own statement. Barbara won 19-18 with one illegible ballot. A motion to revote lost 30-6. This will be Barbara's first term as Vice-President.

### Schieffer Neighborhood

The last several issues of *The Flea* have been distributed in the area represented by the Schieffer Neighborhood Association and have solicited response on the subject of union with the CNA. Several Schieffer residents expressed hesitancy over joining without full neighborhood consensus. After considerable discussion, a motion to unite the two associations passed 33-1. The CNA by-laws will be amended to reflect this union.

### Policy Committee Update

The Policy Committee was formed to recommend policy on important issues brought before CNA meetings. The committee is open to everyone. Many feel that the CNA needs a basic vision before any representative policies can develop. To this end, the Policy Committee has renamed itself the Policy and Vision Committee. It typically meets on the third Saturday of every month. Contact Buzz Avery at 476-1889 for more information.

### Financial Report

Treasurer Stephen Kreger reported an increase in printing costs for *The Flea*. It currently costs \$294 to print 1500 copies; ads now bring in \$200 per issue. The newsletter

thus runs a deficit, although a \$97 one-page advertising insert allowed the last issue to break even. In the future, the price of ads might have to be raised, or more ads might have to be included.

### Suspicious Activities

Neighbors along Vineland and Giles Street suspect drug-dealing from a house in the area. The Austin Police Department has been slow to respond due to a lack of material witnesses. It was suggested that residents keep an eye on the area to discourage illegal activities or form a formal Neighborhood Watch on the streets in question.

### Meeting Space

Increased attendance at CNA meetings is putting pressure on the current space at Maplewood Elementary. The new pastor at Asbury United Methodist has invited the CNA to move its meetings back to the church, but several people expressed a desire to keep Maplewood School as a focal point for the neighborhood. It was agreed to try to find a bigger available room at Maplewood.


### Coalition of Airport Neighborhoods

Jim Walker outlined intentions to create a coalition of neighborhoods adjacent to Mueller Airport. Such a coalition could strengthen the community's voice in airport redevelopment. Contact Jim at 499-0526 for more info.


### Spirit-Action Committee Update

Sharon Edmonson, Chair of the Spirit-Action Committee, gave a report on SAC activities. Refer to page 6 for her updated report.

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# Neighborhood Buzz

by Buzz Avery

## Spring has sprung

Spring is upon us with all its glory. Days are cool and everywhere green foliage bursts forth. It's the best time to walk the neighborhood and appreciate our wonderful neck of the woods.

Spring is also the best time to assess the conditions of our own homes and yards.

Priorities might include:

- Landscaping and improving yards with ample watering, trimming, tree-planting, decorative stonework, and possible xeriscaping
- Painting homes, porches, and fences; reshingling roofs; repairing sidewalks, porch lights, mailboxes, and gutters
- Disposing of rubbish or branches that have accumulated around your house

Well-kept homes with aesthetically pleasing exteriors provide many benefits. "Curb appeal" accounts for about 10% of a home's value. Psychologically, coming home to a beautiful domicile improves your disposition with the pride of accomplishment. In terms of safety, criminals tend to look for neglected areas and pass up neighborhoods where the residents obviously care.

I think I've finally got myself psyched up enough to turn off the TV and just do it.

## Return of the zapper

I've covered this issue in the past, but people need to be reminded that bug zappers do not kill mosquitos. Mosquitos are blind; they are attracted to the odor of warm-blooded animals, not to light.

Bug zappers actually attract and kill the predators of mosquitos, principally dragonflies. The end result is an *increase* in mosquito population.

Mosquitos are controlled only by eliminating standing water that collects in empty trash cans, discarded tires, rain gutters, buckets, etc. Mosquitos don't respect property lines. If your neighbors aren't helping to control the problem, ask them to do so or do it for them. Just don't buy bug zappers.

## Proposed bylaws changes

Some CNA activists are earnestly advocating change in how we now operate [see related articles on pages 1 and 5].

Three years ago the CNA came back to life by adopting new bylaws and electing officers. Today, however, these bylaws may be insufficient to address the wide variety of situations we face. The City of Austin seeks neighborhood input on issues on an almost weekly basis. We need to be able to respond.

The existing bylaws allow the president to speak for the association on issues on which the general membership has adopted a position at a regular quarterly meeting. There's often a gap between the surfacing of an issue and the association's response.



Suggested changes to the bylaws are forthcoming—but a word to the wise. When it comes to major changes to the

status quo, disagreements inevitably emerge. It is absolutely inappropriate to hash out such differences at general meetings. This divides the association, drives people away, and ultimately fails to accomplish anything.

At our April meeting, the membership will decide whether to continue this reform initiative. If approved, then the Association Restructuring Subcommittee will present new bylaws for adoption at the July meeting.

If you have a heartfelt interest in bylaws revision, get involved now. Contact Pauline Porter at 322-0717 or Gordon Bennett at 477-7195. Don't wait until the last minute to try to undo what others have spent months creating.

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## CNA in your e-mailbox

The CNA Web site offers information on the association and the neighborhood, but for keeping up with issues on an ongoing basis, try subscribing to CNA's e-mail list.

By doing so you can post a message asking for information or passing along news your neighbors should know about. This message will be e-mailed to all subscribers.

If you want to reply to a given message that arrives in your e-mailbox, you may either send your response directly to the originator or broadcast it by posting it as if it were an independent message.

To join, please direct a request to Jim Walker (jwalk@mail.utexas.edu) or Gordon Bennett (gordonb@uts.cc.utexas.edu). This procedure protects members' privacy: anyone can view messages but *only* subscribers can access names and addresses. You may remove your name independently.

To send your message to everyone on the list, direct e-mail to: cherrywood@mcfeeley.cc.utexas.edu.

To contact the list processor, direct e-mail to listproc@mcfeeley.cc.utexas.edu. Leave the subject line blank (if your e-mail software permits), and put your request in the form of a key phrase into the message space.

For example, to get a list of subscribers with their e-mail addresses, send the message "review cherrywood." You can get the information in this article by sending "info cherrywood." For a comprehensive list of these command phrases, send the message "help." To remove yourself from the list send "unsubscribe cherrywood."

## Draft bylaws proposals posted on CNA Web site

Considerable energy is going into a revision of CNA's bylaws, spurred on by Pauline Porter's discovery of a very different and arguably better structure used successfully by the Old West Austin Neighborhood Association (OWANA).

Two new CNA Web pages give the latest information on these proposals:

1. "CNA and OWANA" is a one-page summary of differences between our current bylaws and the OWANA bylaws.

2. "Revised Draft" presents the latest draft for possible new CNA bylaws, modeled on OWANA's.

The CNA's Web site can now be found at <http://asnic.utexas.edu/~bennett/nhome.htm>. The old location points to it.

Printed copies of the latest draft are also available by calling me at 477-7195 or Girard Kinney at 478-5042.

—Gordon Bennett

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## Spirit Action Committee Update

by Sharon Edmonson, SAC Chair

### Cat-in-the-Hood Club

Nineteen—count 'em—nineteen of Cherrywood's feral cats (11 males, 8 females) have now been trapped, spayed, vaccinated, and released. This costs \$35 per cat. Sponsors are urgently needed. To sponsor a cat, or even half a cat, call me (473-2337) or CAT-PAC trapper Cassie Helton (474-7461).

### Cherrywood scrapbook

We have purchased a cloth-covered neighborhood scrapbook, measuring 20"x 25" and containing 50 loose-leaf pages. We will bring a box to CNA meetings to collect historical and "history-in-the-making" photos and memorabilia. Mike Doyle has volunteered his scanner for reproducing images. Anyone with photos can contact me at 473-2337. Look for a CNA History committee to form soon.

### Neighborhood parks

SAC's investigation of trashed-out vacant properties in the neighborhood has not only found the existence of Reed Park, but also located another acre-sized parcel of undeveloped city property adjacent to the railroad tracks and a tributary of Boggy Creek between Vineland and Clarkson (North-South) and Merrie Lynn and Larry Lane past Randolph (East-West).

After six months of trying to get city departments to clean the parcel, SAC/Clean-Up Committee activists did it themselves. They devoted a weekend to dragging trash such as paint cans, tires, auto parts, furniture, and beer bottles from the underbrush. At that point, the city finally got involved. Capital Metro/Longhorn Railway hauled away the collected trash, the city's Solid Waste Services picked up the rotting railroad ties, the Electric Utility-Urban Forestry department chipped up the woody debris, and Environmental Health Services posted "no dumping" signs.

Thanks to this broad-based community and city effort, perhaps the numerous birds in the area sing a little louder. [See related article on page 8.]

### Monthly neighborhood cleanups

Cleanups of Manor Road and 38½ Street continue on the first Saturday of every month. I lead the 38½ Street cleanup from Pato's parking lot at 9:00 am; Mike Damal leads the Manor Road cleanup from 2002 Manor Road (old Discovery Incubator) at 10:00 am. The more people who participate, the more we can clean in one hour. It really makes a difference.

### On the SAC burner

Other issues discussed at recent SAC meetings include a Welcome Wagon to greet new residents, an "elder-care" network to support senior citizens, a neighborhood party, a neighborhood mural project, and the planting of trees and wildflowers.

If you are interested in any of these items, or have any ideas of your own, please attend the May 27 or June 24 SAC meetings to be held in the Maplewood Elementary School art room from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend.

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# Paranoid Railroad,

or how nothing scares big business like neighborhood interest in their activities

by Bennett Donovan

Early in January, someone dumped an old mattress along the tracks near Cherrywood Road and Clarkson Ave. Since mattresses don't fit in my 30-gallon garbage can, I called the city and learned that Longhorn Railway maintains its right-of-way. So I called the railroad, and Jennifer, the receptionist, told me that Mr. R.V. Meuth, the roadmaster, was responsible for maintaining the tracks. First, however, my request would have to go through the general manager, Mr. Donald Cheatham. He would call me back.

I suddenly had the bright idea to write a general piece on the railroad for *The Flea*. After all, trains and their sonic blasts are a part of the daily lives of almost all Cherrywood residents. I had no idea that I had instigated a crisis of epic proportions in the offices of Longhorn Railway.

I phoned the railroad three more times over the course of January, identifying myself as the editor of a neighborhood newsletter, but never could reach Mr. Cheatham. Jennifer seemed genuinely surprised that he had not returned my calls and asked if I had an answering machine. I do.

Finally, in early February, I called Longhorn Railway yet again, this time with a list of five questions for Mr. Cheatham to read at his leisure and discuss with me later: (1) What is the nature of the contract between the city and Longhorn Railway? (2) How big is the railroad's right-of-way alongside the tracks through Cherrywood? (3) What is the maintenance schedule for this right-of-way? (4) Who should people call to have large debris removed from the right-of-way? (5) Does Longhorn Railway instruct its maintenance crews to clean up trash before mowing?

After two more weeks of being stonewalled, I called again on the morning of February 17. Within 30 seconds I was astonished to be talking to Mr. Cheatham himself. He told me first that he did not appreciate my attempts to intimidate him. Confused, I went ahead and asked him my pre-submitted questions. Over the course of a

very brief interview," I learned among other things that (1) I already knew the contractual relationship between the city and railroad and was just trying to harrass him; (2) he had consulted two lawyers who confirmed that Cherrywood neighborhood was not "a third-party beneficiary" to this contract; (3) I could research the original Southern Pacific deed if I really wanted to know about the right-of-way; (4) Longhorn Railway's track maintenance meets federal specifications and needs to do no more than that; and (5) the tracks were there before I bought my house and would be there long after I was gone. I told him I understood this last point: I actually like trains.

Beyond the content of Mr. Cheatham's responses, what really shocked me was the hostility engendered by a set of pertinent questions from a neighborhood newsletter. Contrary to his accusations, I was neither trying to intimidate him nor propose that the neighborhood had a right to run his railroad. Should the neighborhood not have information about the tracks that run through it? Is it an act of intimidation for residents to take an interest in a major local business?

My experience with Longhorn Railway and, at an earlier date, Fiesta, have led me to the following unscientific conclusions. Big businesses which do not rely on neighborhood patronage for their profits are apt to view neighborhood scrutiny as a direct assault on their right to make money. Activist residents are merely pests who are trying to "intimidate" or "interfere." In some cases, as in that of Fiesta's placement of garbage cans throughout its parking lot, the business does eventually cooperate, but the initial feelings of "us against them" are hard to dislodge.

As neighbors intent on preserving our quality of life, we must not alienate local businesses with unreasonable demands; moreover we should show our appreciation when businesses listen to neighborhood concerns. At the same time, we must be vigilant and vocal when necessary. My recent experience has shown me that Longhorn Railway does not care for our neighborhood. That's a shame, because now I am compelled to keep a close eye on the tracks.

About the mattress, somebody removed it in February. I don't know who.

## Agenda for April 29, 1998 General Meeting Maplewood Elementary School

- 6:30\* Greetings and refreshments
- 6:40 Begin meeting with introductions
- 6:45 Acknowledgments, announcements, and amendments or additions to agenda
- 7:00-7:30 Committee reports
  - 7:00 Spirit-Action Committee
  - 7:10 Policy Committee
  - 7:20 Parks Committee
- 7:30-8:55 Discussion and action items
  - 7:30 Consider appointment of Jim Walker as Mueller Conversion CNA liaison
  - 7:40 Development permit applications
  - 7:50 Neighborhood communications: *The Flea*, Web site, and e-mail
  - 8:00 Restructuring Committee presentation
- 8:55 Set date and place of next meeting
- 9:00 Adjourn

\*Times are approximate. Please keep comments brief so all wishing to speak can be heard.

## Cherrywood Parks Task Force appointed

The CNA Policy Committee has appointed a Parks Task Force to study Reed Park (aka "Sunsong Park" and "Cherrywood Park"), bounded by Cherrywood Road, 34th Street, Kern Ramble, and Concordia Avenue.

The task force, consisting of 13 Cherrywood residents, has met, assigned preliminary areas of responsibility, toured the site, and scheduled one more meeting before the April 29th General Meeting.

The Task Force will inventory resources at the park, research the history of the site, identify key issues to be addressed, propose a name for the park, produce a physical plan and implementation strategy, and bring a recommendation to the CNA. The process we develop to deal with this park could potentially become a prototype for developing a greenspace plan for the entire neighborhood.

► **Mueller** Continued from page 1  
the various groups affected by the redevelopment.

In summer 1997, special interests argued for keeping Mueller open to aviation. In

response, the CNA again voted to support termination of all aviation. Soon after, the State finally agreed to move all aviation operations to Austin Bergstrom International Airport (ABIA) in return for the right to develop 282 acres of the Mueller site as a state office park.

A city-wide forum on the latest redevelopment proposal will take place on April 29 at 6:30 p.m. at the City's Electric Utility Building at 721 Barton Springs Road. The Citizens Advisory Group will meet on May 20 at 6:30 p.m. in the City Hall Annex at 2<sup>nd</sup> and Lavaca.

—Information supplied by Girard Kinney.

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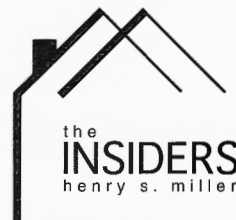
*I am so excited to finally be a part of the Cherrywood neighborhoods.*

Since I bought the Hostetter's house at 1712 Giles Street, I've been delighted by the warm reception I've had from many of my new neighbors.

I look forward to meeting the rest of you soon.

*Linda Taylor*

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# Home Owner's Update

*What's Hot & What's Not in the Austin Area*

### Not -

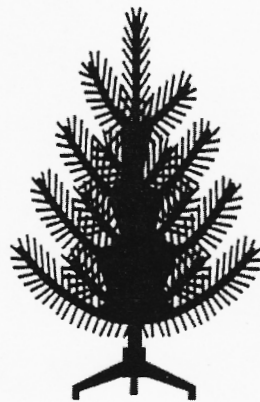
#### Don't Go With The Slow

- For an inexpensive, environmentally safe way to keep your drains clean and the system working longer, mix together 1 cup of baking soda, 1 cup of salt and 1/4 cup of cream of tartar. Once a week, pour 1/2 cup of this mixture down the drain, followed by 1 quart of boiling water.
- If you didn't take preventive steps in time and your drain is already clogged, pour in 1/4 cup of baking soda, followed by 1/2 cup of vinegar. Cover the drain until the fizzing stops, then flush with 1 quart of boiling water.
- If you don't have baking soda handy, try this alternative cure for a clogged drain. Boil 3 cups of vinegar, pour it down the drain and wait ten minutes for it to take effect. The drain should be ready to use.

### Hot -

#### Put that Christmas Tree to use before you put it away!

*An inexpensive way to clean a chimney is to lower a rope from the top and tie the end hanging down the chimney to the trunk of a small, cut fir tree, from the roof, haul the tree up through the flue. Then drop the free end of the rope down the flue and pull the tree back down. ( Like most techniques for cleaning chimneys, this is a messy operation. Be sure to cover the hearth and all adjacent areas before beginning it.)*



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## Spring Notes!!!

### January

- 10 Austin Lyric Opera Strauss *Salome* Bass Concert Hall
- 17 White Tailed Deer Season Ends - South Texas
- 19 Confederate Hero's Day (State Holiday)  
Classes begin: SWTSU, UT
- 22 UT Performing Arts Center-Quartet with Manuel Barrueco
- 23 Concordia University Austin Ethnic Fair
- 31 A Mozart Fest Annual Birthday Concert
- 20-24 Chicago UT Performing Arts Center

### February

- 12 Holiday - AISD, Eanes (Half Day), Hyde Park, Kirby Hall, Leander, Manor, Pflugerville, Tx School for the Deaf
- 15 President's Day (Federal, State, County, City Holiday)
- 16 UT Performing Arts Center - Tito Puente
- 20-21 Austin Cat Fanciers Charity Cat Show

### March

- 2 Texas Independence Day (State Holiday)
- 11 Austin Newcomers Club Luncheon
- 12-20 South by Southwest Film Festival
- 12-21 Austin- Travis County Live-stock Show, Rodeo & Fair
- 15 Spring Break Begins: AISD
- 21 Austin American Statesman Capitol 10,000
- 22 Holiday: AISD Classes Resume

History Center of Austin Public Library