

January 2002

Volume 7, No. 2

# The Flea

## COUNCIL MEMBERS SEEK PETITION SIGNATURES TO RUN AGAIN

by Mark Lind

You may be as surprised as I was to find that the citizens of Austin voted to approve term limits for City Council Members. Currently three Council members are seeking signatures on petitions that would allow them to run for reelection despite these limits: Jackie Goodman, Daryl Slusher, and Beverly Griffith. To my knowledge, CNA has never taken a position in support of one candidate or another, but these three Council mem-

bers have been supportive of CNA efforts in the past, support which I believe now warrants our support for them! It is in our best interests as a community to support Council members who have actively supported our goals as much as these three have.

Jackie Goodman has offered invaluable assistance and encouragement for the Upper Boggy Creek Neighborhood Planning effort; in addition, she has been extremely supportive of our traffic calming efforts, and the recent restriping of Manor Road to include bike lanes on both sides of the street. Beverly Griffith, through one of her aides, has been working very closely with CNA on Traffic Calming issues, and has been a tireless supporter of neighborhood issues over the years. Daryl Slusher recognizes and

supports the way in which Cherrywood has been working with governmental agencies in a cooperative and positive manner.

Needless to say, the support and goodwill that we have developed with these Council members over the past several years will be difficult to replace if they are not allowed to run again. Please contact me at 708-1458 if you would like to sign petitions for these candidates. I can also provide you with blank copies if you want to canvass your neighborhood or pass them among your friends in order to get as many signatures as possible. The best chance that we have of moving forward on many of our main issues is by keeping on the Council those members who have supported us in the past! ■

## UPPER BOGGY CREEK PLAN UPDATE

by Stephen Kreger (UBCP Chair)

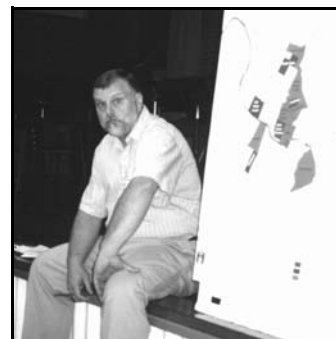
By the time this issue of the *Flea* is received, unless something unforeseen happens, the Upper Boggy Creek Plan (UBCP) will be finished or nearly so. The UBCP meetings held in December will put the finishing touches on the Plan before it is sent to the neighborhoods in the planning area for the final review and comments. The schedule, as of December 3, 2001, has the plan being mailed to the neighborhoods in the middle of January, 2002. Of course, the unforeseen sometimes does happen

and that schedule may be modified.

After the UBCP Team gets the results of the vote, it will make any changes needed and take the final plan to the Planning Commission for a public hearing. Once the Planning Commission approves the plan, it goes to the City Council, where the Team hopes approval will be forthcoming. The City Council will vote on the plan in two parts: the zoning related issues and the remainder of the plan.

The Team's goal is to have the approval of the all of the stakeholders involved, so that the presentations to the Planning Commission and the City Council will proceed without issue.

If anyone has any questions, please call me at 477-4216. ■



Stephen Kreger with a Purposed Neighborhood Planning map.

**Next CNA meeting:**

**Wednesday  
January 16**

**6:30 - 8:30 pm**

**Maplewood Elementary**

## CHERRY PICKING

by Jack Newman

"Next to a circus there ain't nothing that packs up and tears out faster than the Christmas spirit." - *Kin Hubbard (1868-1930)*



Wouldn't it be a great thing to be able to prove Mr. Hubbard's observation false? But it's January, and the bills for our end-of-year extravagances are in the mail, the results of the Thanksgiving-to-New Year's eating splurge are hard to ignore, and the kids are indoors way too much because of cold, wet weather. Some are grieving over Football-Season-Past, can't get out for golf/softball/biking/the lake, and others sincerely wish the former would get out from underfoot.

But with due respect to Hubbard's sentiment, I like this time of year. The cold and damp make the inside of a home cozy, a place to emerge from coats, hats and other wrappings, a harbor of deep and visceral comfort. Snuggling is definitely in fashion, with spouse and kids competing for big Daddy's endless supply of warmth. Meals become gatherings of young ones whose winter-whetted appetites cause them to forget to disdain the offered fare. And a fireplace becomes more than a storage grotto, presenting the eons-old pleasure of simply sitting and watching wood burn on the hearth.

This year, the closeness of family and the anchorage of a welcoming, secure home are especially dear. The introspection encouraged by the season is too easily darkened by heavy thoughts of last years' horrors; but the presence and the touch of children, of loved ones, brings the light that dissolves the shadows. This light must be shared by us with those who are alone.

I wish for all of you, all of us and every living soul everywhere a fine new year, with new and honest understanding of one another. That, and good health, I wish for all. Happy 2002!

## CHERRYWOOD *NeighborNet*

The Cherrywood e-mail list, "NeighborNet," has 230 subscribers. If you are not one, you missed discussion of:

- Progress of the UBC Neighborhood Plan
- Rezoning issues
- CNA's latest traffic calming initiative
- Burglaries and the issue of transients
- The Delwood Electric Substation
- Committee meeting times
- Patterson Park Visitor Survey
- Pets lost, found, and needing homes
- Ways to deal with mosquitos and poison ivy

To subscribe, e-mail your request to:

**NeighborNet-subscribe@yahoo.com**

## Cherrywood Neighborhood Association

<http://www.cherrywood.org>

### Steering Committee

<b>Chair</b>	Bree Buchanan	482-8468
<b>Vice-Chair</b>	Dave Westenbarger	494-9905
<b>Secretary</b>	James Spanelli	236-1482
<b>Treasurer</b>	Lyn Estabrook	458-5317
Frances DeLaune	477-1986	David Menhard 478-0996
Jeff Folmer	472-4535	Kyle Ranne 478-7506
Robbin Howard	459-9628	Jim Sander 478-3377
Rebecca Kohout	477-9560	Stefan Schuster 322-0059
		Rebecca Schwarz 478-9618

### Communications

#### The Flea:

- **Editor** Jack Josey Newman 476-6616  
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- **Design & Layout** Bethany Andrée 473-2841
- **Advertising** Lyn Estabrook 458-5317  
Robbin Howard 459-9628
- **Distribution** Jim Walker 499-0526

**NeighborNet:** Gordon Bennett 477-7195  
Jim Sander 478-3377

**CNA Website:** Gordon Bennett 477-7195

### Committees & Projects

**Budget:** Rebecca Kohout 477-9560

**History:** Sharon Edmonson 473-2337

#### Hospitality:

- **Welcome Wagon** Lyn Estabrook 458-5317
- **Socials** Eugene Watkins 799-8819

**Nominating:** Sarah Bird 472-6542  
Jim Walker 499-0526

**Parks:** Girard Kinney 478-5042

- **Greenspaces** Gale Greenleaf 474-6245  
Rebecca Schwarz 478-9618, Jim Sander 478-3377

**Pets:** Gale Greenleaf 474-6245  
Rebecca Schwarz 478-9618

- **Cats-in-the-Hood** Sharon Edmonson 473-2337

**Planning & Zoning:** Mike Damal 478-9622

- **Development Guidelines** Mike Damal 478-9622
- **Mapping** Girard Kinney 478-5042  
Jules Vieau 495-9569, Jim Walker 499-0526

- **Zoning Cases** Mike Damal 478-9622

**Security:** Kathy Jones 472-1921

**Traffic:** Mark Lind 708-1458

- **IH-35** Girard Kinney 478-5042
- **Neighborhood Traffic Calming** Mark Lind 708-1458
- **Bikeways** Dave Westenbarger 494-9905

**38½ Street:** Girard Kinney 478-5042  
Gordon Bennett 477-7195, Dave Westenbarger 494-9905

**Austin Film Society:** Dolly Ensey 494-9905

**Manor Road:** Girard Kinney 478-5042

**Maplewood:** Jack Newman 476-6616  
Jules Vieau 495-9569

**Mueller Redevelopment:** Jim Walker 499-0526

**Tree Planting:** Mike Damal 478-9622

**Upper Boggy Creek Planning:** Steve Kreger 477-4216

## THEN, NOW, AND AHEAD

by Gordon Bennett

Will Cherrywood change as much from 2000 to 2025 as it did from 1975 to 2000?

First recall the year 1975.

We had little sense of community. We weren't called Cherrywood or anything else consistently back then. We had no effective communications. Efforts to organize were sporadic.

Our area essentially was a semi-urban backwater. Realtors and home buyers showed subdued interest. Investors bought rental properties cheap. Many homes were run down. The Brown School, now the Children's Advocacy Center, was abandoned and overgrown. The former Value Sky Park was a rat-infested field.

Before Fiesta Mart, Delwood Center contained a beauty college, chiropractor, motel, paint store, Winn's five-&-dime, plus a small off-and-on-again grocery. Today, only Sammie's Shoe Repair and Kervin's Barbershop survive. Twice as many low-rent apartments, some later razed by Fiesta and some improved like Silver Ridge, sank to their lowest when federal housing authorities filled them with welfare clients. Police always checked the complex first, and its substratum of children dragged down Maplewood School.

Across the way, Hancock Center accommodated department stores like Bealls and Dillards. Ringing a central plaza were a barbershop, cafeteria, small retail shops selling cheese, flowers and shoes, plus a smaller HEB, where Mars Music currently stands.

Manor Road, before Al Stowell, had run-down apartments and was a crime scene. Streets and homes still populated the physical plant site on the University of Texas (UT) campus. The Ex-Tex triangle was a bar with loud music outside. Hoover's was another small grocery.

Take-offs from the once Robert M. Mueller Airport drowned out the dawn roosters. 38 1/2 Street was the major route to the airport from West Austin. The Party Stop and Pinky's now occupy the site where an Exxon station once stood. The IH35 upper deck had just been added, and traffic moved normally. Taqueria Los Altos was a lousy Chinese food restaurant.

Touch tone phones were replacing rotary dial phones. Cap Metro did not yet exist. A referendum creating it, and authorizing light rail (that's right!), was a decade later.

All this was 25 years ago. How about 25 years from now?

What if the pace of change is similar, or even greater?

Contemplate the year 2025 without considering inevitable surprises.

By the 2000 census, Austin was listed the 16th most populous U.S. city, ahead of Baltimore, Boston, Denver, Seattle, and DC. In percent growth since the 1990 census, we ranked 1st!

Projections, which usually prove low, have us doubling in a few years.

If earlier growth spurts have only side-swiped our Cherrywood neighborhood? now we're more desirable, pay more taxes, and have more owner-occupiers? in future spurts we'll be right in the path. We're positioned at the edge of the central business district of a sunbelt state capital heavily invested in the hi-tech economy. Our land will become prized as conveniently located, accessible, and under-developed by highest and best use market standards. We will not remain forever a "secluded peach orchard away from the world" (poet Tao Yuan-ming).

We will remain essentially residential but distinctly less suburban. More people will live here, homes will cost more to own, and owners increasingly will favor a functioning urban community over a peach orchard.

In many ways, new preferences will be the same as present ones? capacity for

community action, good school, greenery, parks, safe streets for kids and pedestrians, and secure homes. In other ways, preferences will be much different? convenient mass transit and less need for cars; walk-to dining, recreation, services, and shopping; community-inspiring instead of isolating urban design; and less interest in private yards.

The City, owners, prospective developers will respond in predictable ways to demand for more intense and more commercial land use. Some will mount overt political pressure for amended building codes. Some will mount covert pressure for variances and lax enforcement. Some will simply build illegally. A wide gap between market and preferences will be unstable.

Some residents, therefore, reason that a rational perspective is to anticipate inevitable pressures for change, to assert as much control over them as as possible, and to try to guide development in preferable directions. Such strategic thinking was the original promise of the Upper Boggy Creek Neighborhood Plan, and its absence will be this Plan's major disappointment. But good strategic planning can still go on long after this Plan is finished, and maybe with some help from this Plan.

In 20 years, the former airport site will become an innovative new-urban community housing 30,000 residents or more. UT, which wants to be a walking campus instead of a commuter campus, will expand student housing between IH35 and Blackland, and maybe along Manor Road. 38 1/2 Street will widen and become part of a cross-town route, but also will acquire some safety and aesthetic amenities. Light rail will go west of us, through UT, and maybe east of us, through the former airport. IH35 will widen to 6 lanes in each direction, plus elevated High Occupancy Vehicle lanes, wiping out most businesses along the east-side frontage road.

We can't stop all this. We can influence how some of it plays out. ■

## REED PARK AT 34TH AND CHERRYWOOD December 4 Park Meeting Summary

by Katharine Beisner

### Attendees:

Katharine Beisner, Joe Ahlquist, Brent Hays, Pat Eakin, Lisa Schemanske

### Timeline:

- December 15 - Park Workday: review the site plan, mow the grass, breakdown and remove the brush pile, and clean up the creek
- **January 10, 6:30pm Pato's - Park Meeting**
- **Unscheduled January Workday**

We discussed the need for more neighbor participation in order to achieve our plans. Networking our neighborhood relationships and using the phone more to encourage neighbors to attend meetings and work-

days are some of the ideas we considered.

We reviewed the site plan and decided we needed more neighborhood input before finalizing it.

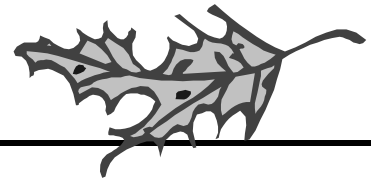
We planned a December 15th workday to review the site plan, mow the grass, breakdown and remove the brush pile, and clean up the creek. We'd like to take on implementation of the site plan - planting trees, building native plant beds, etc., but we felt we need to focus on building a core of interested neighborhood volunteers first before tackling these larger tasks.

We planned a January 10th meeting at Pato's to be followed shortly by a January workday. Hopefully we'll be planting some tree and natives by then.

For information contact Katharine at [kbeisner@austin.rr.com](mailto:kbeisner@austin.rr.com). ■

## PEPPING UP PATTERSON PARK

Friends of Patterson Park, a group of community members interested in supporting the improvement of Patterson Park, will hold its first meeting in mid-January (date and place to be announced). We will discuss raising community involvement in the park, setting goals for the park's improvement and forming a non-profit to further those ends. The meeting time and place will be posted on the CNA website and on flyers in the park. Please call Isabelle at 499-0621 or e-mail [pattpark@texas.net](mailto:pattpark@texas.net) for more information. ■



## UPPER BOGGY CREEK BIKEWAY UPDATE

by Dave Westenbarger

On November 29, 2001, Commissioners of the Texas Department of Transportation held a hearing for TEA-21 Statewide Transportation Enhancements Program projects that were not selected during the first round (first round selections were announced November 14). A final decision by TxDOT is expected January 31, 2002.

The bad news is the UBC Bikeway was not among those recommended in the first round. The good news is that of the \$130 million to be awarded, initial selections totaled only \$75 million for 60 projects (of 315 eligible). That leaves an additional \$55 million to be awarded at the discretion of the TxDOT Commissioners. In the previous round of TEA-21 funding in 1999, the Lance Armstrong Crosstown Bikeway was also denied funding in the initial awards. However, Mayor Kirk Watson made a convincing argument at the hearing and won funding.

Although the Walnut Creek Trail was awarded funding, Austin's other nomination, the Congress Avenue pedestrian improvements and bat observation platforms were not selected. Only three out of 20 projects in the Austin District were selected. The other two winners were nominated by Hutto and Buda.

Of the 255 projects that were scheduled for presentation on November 29, representatives of only 123 of made the effort

to do so. At 5:30 p.m., after waiting all day, Austan Librach, Director of the City's Transportation, Planning and Sustainability Department, made the presentation for the UBC Bikeway. Commissioners were given a fact sheet and color maps of the trail, with destinations noted.

Mr. Librach highlighted:

- Interconnectivity provided with bus and bike routes, including the City's trail network
- Compatibility with an active rail line, as shown by other trails throughout the country
- The opportunity to increase pedestrian and bike trips by providing a safe route, with gentle grades, away from motor vehicles

He also stressed the 40 percent funding match provided by the City, more than most other projects, and the contributions of a broad spectrum of neighborhood groups including schools, churches, civic organizations, Capital Metro (the owner of the railroad right-of-way) and 'Friends of the Upper Boggy Creek Bikeway', a coalition of community groups in favor of the project.

While other projects pleaded, held up signs and wore matching tee shirts, the UBC Bikeway relied on a well-planned recitation of the many strengths of the project. Commissioner questions focused on safety and the number of schools served. As Mr. Librach noted in his presentation, the UBC Bikeway "is precisely the type of transportation project the Enhancement Program was created for." We'll have to wait until January 31, 2002 to see if the TxDOT Commissioners agree. ■

## LATEST NEWS ON TRAFFIC CALMING – THE LONG AND WINDING ROAD...

by Mark Lind (Traffic Committee Chair)

In the last issue of the *Flea* it was reported that, at the next General Membership Meeting, the Traffic Committee would ask for a vote requesting the installation of speed cushions on Cherrywood near Edgewood to curtail speeding on that street. Shortly before that meeting, the Committee learned that there were limited funds available for a single Traffic Calming program this year, despite the fact that the program has not been fully funded. At the meeting a vote on general support for traffic calming in the Cherrywood area was unanimous.

Since then, we have been making an effort to verify the status of these funds and request that Cherrywood be included in the more limited Traffic Calming program this year. Letters expressing CNA's position were hand-delivered to all City Council members and/or their aides the last week of November. Similar letters have been mailed to Alan Hughes, director of the Traffic Calming program; and Austan Librach, director of the City's Department of Transportation, Planning, and Sustainability.

As we go to press, the status of these funds has yet to be determined. The City is facing mounting budgetary pressures as a result of the economic downturn and the money may ultimately be reallocated, but as in the past, it is the active and vocal communities who receive the greatest attention from our elected officials. So we encourage everyone who is concerned about traffic issues and pedestrian/bike safety to contact the people below and let them know that we want to work with the City to achieve our long-held, yet elusive goal of "safe, walkable streets" for our neighborhood! ■

Alan Hughes, Director  
Traffic Calming Program  
alan.hughes@ci.austin.tx.us  
499-7129

Austan Librach  
Transportation, Planning,  
& Sustainability  
austan.librach@ci.austin.tx.us  
974-2357

Mayor Gus Garcia  
gus.garcia@ci.austin.tx.us  
499-2250

Daryl Slusher, Place 1  
Council Member  
daryl.slusher@ci.austin.tx.us  
499-2260

Raul Alvarez, Place 2  
Council Member  
raul.alvarez@ci.austin.tx.us  
499-2264

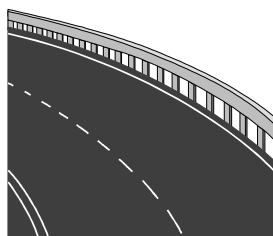
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jackie.goodman@ci.austin.tx.us  
499-2255

Beverly Griffith, Place 4  
Council Member  
beverly.griffith@ci.austin.tx.us  
499-2258

Will Wynn, Place 5  
Council Member  
will.wynn@ci.austin.tx.us  
499-2256

Danny Thomas, Place 6  
Council Member  
danny.thomas@ci.austin.tx.us  
499-2266

Jesus Garza, City Manager  
jesus.garza@ci.austin.tx.us  
974-2200



## CNA'S GROWING REPUTATION FOR WORKING WITH GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES

by Mark Lind

Over the past several years, members of the Cherrywood Neighborhood Association have been actively working with representatives of several state and city agencies, on a range of issues including the widening of IH-35, the location and design of the new Austin Energy electrical substation, and bus stop improvements. One recent conversation revealed the benefit of CNA's non-confrontational, cooperative approach.

Recently I attended a fundraiser and petition-signing event at Threadgill's Restaurant for both Jackie Goodman and Daryl Slusher, two of the three City Council Members who are trying to gain enough signatures to be allowed to run for Council despite term limits. I was fortunate enough to be able to speak personally with Councilmember Slusher. He remarked that all too often, Council Members and City Staff are faced with neighborhood associations who take a confrontational approach, one that results in unnecessary hostility and ill will. In contrast, he acknowledged that our neighborhood association has a history of dealing effectively with city agencies, and that our cooperative approach improves the chances of achieving our goals. Surely, this recognition will ultimately benefit CNA as we continue to address issues and concerns in partnership not only with our citizens, but with the city and state agencies involved. ■

## CHERRYWOOD TREE PLANTING UPDATE

by Mike Damal

To date over 100 trees have been planted in our annual neighborhood fall

tree plantings. Despite bad weather on December 8, six volunteers planted 15 trees and delivered ten more to Cherrywood residents who are going to plant them on their own. Larry Lane is the top street this year, with the most new trees planted on it. Originally we thought we were going to get only red and live oaks,

however we ended up with a mix of red oak, live oak, Chinese pistache, and burr oak – all excellent trees for our neighborhood. If you did not take part in this year's tree planting, it's not too late to buy a tree on your own and help beautify Cherrywood! ■

## GRANDE COMMUNICATION'S REPORT CARD

by Rebecca Schwarz

In November I asked for comments about Grande's service over the NeighborNet. I'm pleased to say that many Cherrywood residents were willing to let me know how the new phone, cable and Internet service provider stacked up against the services already available to this neighborhood. Below are a sampling of the comments and impressions from our neighbors who are the first to try Grande's services.

### About the Little Green Boxes

"Grande Communications crossed the line when they first plowed through my neighborhood with their unsightly green boxes dotting front yards everywhere and that huge utility box on the corner of 34<sup>th</sup> Street and Cherrywood. Concerns were communicated to Grande which they addressed with untruths regarding "approval" from the neighborhood association that never occurred.... Is this a company that I would want to do business with? No!"

"Any article about them should include something about the unfortunate start CNA got with this company, including the fact that many of their boxes occur where we will eventually want sidewalks. Also, the huge structure they have put up over on 34<sup>th</sup> is an example of monumental litter as far as I am concerned. I will never forgive their having come into our neighborhood without meeting with association reps to help plan where their hardware would be placed."

"... They strung all new fiber optic cable throughout our neighborhood. No one else has done that to provide improved services to us."

### Installation and Set-Up

"The installers had a small problem with their equipment which stretched the install time out, but they worked late to get it done. They were all friendly and polite."

"They did not arrive on time the first time and we had to cancel and reschedule for another Saturday. [When they did arrive] they were polite and pretty knowledgeable."

"They arrived on time and were very polite but it took them over six hours total to install cable and DSL. The salesperson told me it takes two to three hours."

"[the installer] left without doing any checking and when I checked the TV a few minutes after he left, only a few channels worked. It took me four phone calls to Tech Support to resolve the issue. He also didn't leave any information whatsoever about how to program the remote, how to operate their menu, or a list of channels. Grande did send another person out the following day with the packet and also mailed us one."



"The installer for us was on time, polite and very thorough. He was there longer than the Time Warner guys were, but I guess they had a little more setup to pull the coax from their box to the house. They also replaced coax outside and inside the house to make sure the signal would be clean."

"He arrived an hour early....[and] even ran over to buy a phone jack with two jacks since Grande doesn't carry them. He, of course, didn't have to do this, but offered to so he would have to make two holes in my wall."

### Internet Service

"The Internet speed is comparable to Road Runner and maybe even a little faster during peak times."

"Their Internet speed is unbelievable – much faster than our DSL line at the office."

"They don't have a lot of documentation

that they give you when they install on their channel lineup or Internet settings, like how to access the server space you get or accessing usenet groups."

### Television Service

"There are plenty of TV channels, mostly the same ones as Time-Warner...The only thing I really miss is having the listing in the newspaper. Other than local stations, Grande's stations have different numbers than Time-Warner and the *Austin American Statesman* doesn't list those."

"Cable seems pretty good, some things lots better than Time-Warner, some not as good. We have to use the new remotes we got from them in combination with our old remotes.... There isn't a printed program guide, and sometimes their on-screen guide isn't up."

"The only thing I kind of miss about Time-Warner is News 8 Austin. That channel is owned by TW so you don't get it on Grande. Not nearly enough to make me regret choosing Grande, just something people should be aware of if that happens to be the only channel they watch."

"I particularly like the music channels that are available. It's an opportunity to hear music without commercials or DJs."

### Telephone Service

"The phone sound quality on both lines is good."

"The telephone service is noticeably better with clear connections and no static."

"As for quality, all the static I've had for years with Southwestern Bell (now SBC) is gone."

### Billing and Cost Comparisons

"On billing, I'm not sure it's much cheaper than Southwestern Bell. I have the same configuration of lines and services on Grande and it seems about the same, though I haven't done a penny-for-penny comparison. The 'fees and taxes' definitely raise the cost noticeably over what is advertised by Grande though."

"For the services we have, Grande is about 8 percent cheaper than having the equal options with the other providers.... My only concern is that the person who was walking the streets signing up customers was rather misleading in his price quotes. He was quoting prices about 30 percent less than they actually are. You really have to ask him specific questions about fees, otherwise your bill will be higher than you expected."

"I just had regular cable through Time-Warner so I can't really compare the prices. However the billing is definitely much simpler. Grande's bill is very straightforward."

"They also worked with me to provide the least expensive package deal available. If they had not spent that time, I probably would have spent \$25 - \$30 extra a month that was not necessary."

"The billing is extremely simple and obviously combines three payments into one. From what I've seen the prices are comparable with competitors but when you [consider that] it's all in one bill, there is no real comparison."

#### Customer Service

"I have had to call them about a dozen

times and every time they answered the phone before the third ring. The people on the other end were polite and knowledgeable. A couple of times they had to call me back - and they really called me back. In fact, both times they called back with the hour."

"Their customer service is very responsive. Human beings answer the phone and answer your questions."

#### Overall Comments

"Thus far, I am glad we switched. Customer Service is good, the quality of the phone lines appear better, cable TV and Internet speed is about the same plus overall it is slightly cheaper. Of course, I don't know how I would feel if I had one of those boxes stuck in my front yard."

"For the combined services that I wanted Grande had a much better deal."

"I am having a very positive experience with Grande services. I chose them due to my long-standing disdain for Southwestern Bell and the opportunity to bundle services. The bonus has been the wide choices of digital cable channels and Internet service."

[AUTHOR'S NOTE: We also had a Grande 'bundle' installed, going from SBC's abysmal service and reliability on two lines (plus Time-Warner cable, a dial-up ISP and a long distance provider) to 4 lines from Grande, with their TV cable, fast cable broadband ISP and including scores of long-distance minutes and many extra features we had not had before, all for about the same cost. The Grande consultant, **Lew Katz** (220-4880 or [lew.katz@grandecom.com](mailto:lew.katz@grandecom.com)) was knowledgeable and patient in his explanations. The service personnel were numerous, capable and friendly, and performed necessary wiring, including interior lines, for free (a jack was extra). They were prompt and finished an impressive amount of work in a very reasonable amount of time. They kept me informed about their activities, and asked us frequently about our preferences for outlets and computer, phone and fax placements. The real test that convinced us was the following day, when (horrors!), our new lines went dead. **Within a very few hours**, Grande had found a cable in their system cut by some contractor, and simply replaced it. Service, and our faith in a phone company, was restored. Compared to our long and miserable SBC experience, culminating in the very recent loss of our business line for OVER 30 DAYS, we feel liberated from a third-world phone system!]

## LEARN YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS

for FREE at the

## 8<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL PEOPLE'S LAW SCHOOL

Saturday, February 23

The People's Law School is an opportunity to learn more about common legal issues. This FREE community service event will be held on Saturday, February 23, 2002, from 8:30 am to 1:15 pm at the University of Texas School of Law. If you would like a volunteer to speak to your church, synagogue, civic group, neighborhood association or any other organization about the 2002 People's Law School, please contact Elizabeth Colvin at 479-5017 or [ecolvin@wdo-law.com](mailto:ecolvin@wdo-law.com). We would like everyone in the community to know about and attend this free day of legal education. At the People's Law School, attorneys and local experts will volunteer their time to teach classes on the following topics:

- **Family Law Series:** Divorce, Child Support & Custody, Modification
- **Small Business Law Series:** Creation, Operation, Patents & Trademarks
- **Employment Law**
- **Workers' Compensation & Disability**
- **Consumer Protection**
- **Criminal Law**
- **Nature of the Courts**
- **Public Information Access**
- **Special Education Law**
- **Bankruptcy and Alternatives**
- **Landlord & Tenant Rights**
- **Real Estate Law**
- **Copyright Law**
- **Wills and Estate Planning**
- **Guardianship and Alternatives**
- **Mediation**
- **Immigration**
- **Doing Research in the UT Law Library**

For a schedule of class times and more information, visit [www.travisbar.com](http://www.travisbar.com) or contact the Travis County Bar Association at 472-0279 or [tcba@travisbar.com](mailto:tcba@travisbar.com). Advance registration (available on the web site) is encouraged so we will know how many people to expect. At the event, class size is limited and classes are available on a first-come basis. The People's Law School is sponsored by the Travis County Bar Association and the University of Texas School of Law.



Cherrywood Watch T-Shirts are still available! Designed by Cherrywood's own Mike Conner to show we are a community of people who care about those who live around us.

This neighborhood T-shirt initiative is NOT meant to be a "patrol". It IS meant to be a part of what people do everyday in the neighborhood: exercising, walking our dogs, mowing our lawns. By wearing this T-shirt, we advertise and reinforce our efforts to know our neighbors and to look out for each other.

Crime prevention groups tell us that criminals look for easy targets. Here is an opportunity for us to show that we are not the typical urban neighborhood that rolls up its sidewalk after dark.

These high quality black-on-white T-shirts are professionally silk-screened by Spirit Wind Graphics. Prices are \$6.50 for S-XL, \$8.25 for XXL, and \$9.75 for XXXL. Order your shirt today by contacting Frances DeLaune at [fpdela@austin.rr.com](mailto:fpdela@austin.rr.com) or 477-1986.



## FLAG ETIQUETTE

by Leslie Vieau

It is heartening to see all of the American flags displayed throughout our neighborhood. However, because of the number of wet, bedraggled flags that I have seen when walking after dark, it seems that a refresher in "Flag Etiquette" is in order. I include some of the points that are relevant to our outside displays, but there is a lot more information on the internet if you search on Flag Etiquette.

Here are the basics:

Ideally, an American flag on your house should hang from a staff that angles out from the front wall, a windowsill, or balcony. It's a good idea to screw a bracket made for holding a flagstaff to the trim. Fasten it securely so it won't become soiled or damaged. Do not allow the flag to touch the ground, floor, water, or anything else beneath it. It's also appropriate to hang the flag from a horizontal staff.

Whether the flag hangs from an angled or horizontal staff, be sure the union or canton (the rectangle with the stars) is at the peak. (Hanging the flag with the union down signals extreme distress.) When our President declares the flag to be flown at half-staff, it is acceptable to hang the flag from a horizontal staff with the union down, though your neighbors may not understand why you're doing this.

When the flag is displayed either horizontally or vertically against a wall, the union should be at the top and to your left. When displayed in a window, the flag should be hung so that the union is on the left when you see it from the street.

Though it is customary to fly the flag from sunrise to sunset, the U.S. Code says that "when a patriotic effect is desired," you can display it around the clock. If you do, you should illuminate it with a light.

The flag should not be displayed on days when the weather is inclement, except when an all-weather flag is displayed.

When displayed from a car, the flagstaff should be fixed or clamped firmly to the vehicle, ideally on the right side. The flag should not be draped over the hood, top, sides, or back. The same holds true for a flag displayed on a float in a parade. Don't carry the flag flat or horizontally. And, because it is not meant to be apparel, do not wear a United States flag. If you wear a lapel flag, pin it on the left side, near your heart. ■



## WHERE CHILDREN EXPERIENCE HISTORY AS COWBOYS, PILGRIMS, AND DINOSAURS



by Eugene Watkins

St. George's Episcopal School, located at 4301 N. IH-35, was recently awarded a five-year accreditation by the Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools (SAES) and the Episcopal Diocese Commission for Schools. The journey to receiving accreditation was a year long project involving an examination of St. George's records, observation of all staff and an investigation into all areas of the school by the SAES team. Such accreditation ensures that both academic and early childhood development guidelines are faithfully adhered to by the school.

"If there were one word to describe St. George's emotion right now, it would be pride", said the school's program director, Sue Nikodem, "pride in who we are and pride in what we do." She

commended the staff, Board of Directors, and parents for their contributions towards accreditation.

Founded in 1966 and originally conceived as an outreach program of the church, the school has grown over the years to become a full-fledged preschool, serving a culturally and socio-economically diverse population of children 18 months to 5 years. Their education philosophy follows Christian beliefs and offers children a rich playful environment in which to develop social and academic skills necessary to excel as they enter grade school.

"The children's imagination and creativity are inspired through special instruction in art, music, and foreign languages," Nikodem said, "They experience history as cowboys, pilgrims, and dinosaurs. They investigate science through hands-on exploration and experimentation. They discover a variety of cultures through a multitude of activities centered on holiday and other special events."

Visitors are welcome at this state-licensed extended care provider. Contact Sue Nikodem by telephone at 452-6063 or by e:mail at [snick@hotmail.com](mailto:snick@hotmail.com). ■

## NEXT DOOR

by Jack Newman

"Men are born to succeed, not to fail."  
- Henry David Thoreau

This time last year, the campus at Kealing Junior High was in an uproar, and not because of any athletic event. It was an epic struggle between those who wanted the nationally renown Magnet Program for gifted and advanced students pulled from our neighboring Eastside campus and moved to a separate, totally Magnet campus (purportedly to be at the Reagan H.S. location) and those who wanted it to stay at Kealing, where the good teachers, equipment, programs and eager students might be a positive influence on the non-Magnet, primarily neighborhood kids.

The tone and content of the exchange was often less than genteel, with accusations and emotionally charged meetings, and at one time even the very respected Magnet teaching staff were close to mass transfers out of the fray.



Into this maelstrom strode CNA's own Dan Gohl, the very respected Director of the widely honored and successful Magnet Science Academy at LBJ High. In response to a personal request by the AISD Superintendent, Pat Forgione, Dan accepted the additional duties as Magnet Director of Kealing Junior High as well as maintaining his LBJ position. His importance to the Kealing Magnet program was established during a special meeting of parents, students and teachers during which a staff spokesperson stood, and speaking for the entire Magnet staff, stated that directly because of Dan Gohl's commitment to the program, the teachers would be staying, and willingly at that.

Well, Kealing has been doing just fine

since, thanks, although the drumbeat for a move hasn't entirely gone. But as successful an act as Mr. Gohl's hasn't gone unnoticed by others interested that kind of innovation and motivation in learning. Dan has been given leadership of a program in another state, which will allow him to create his vision of educational excellence from the ground up, including millions of dollars committed to building and equipping a school to his own design. It was the near carte blanche opportunity, he says, that was impossible to turn down. His love for Austin and this neighborhood is strong, and he is leaving with permanent connections to his River City home and friends. We salute neighbor Dan and wish him well! ■



## NEIGHBORHOOD GONDOLIER PLIES AUSTIN LAKES, LOCAL STREETS

by Dave Westenbarger

When my wife told me she witnessed a gondola cruising down East 38 1/2 Street, I thought that either she was seeing things or our interest in the issue of traffic calming had affected her vision. The only gondolas we'd ever seen in real life were in Venice, Italy. But when I, too, saw a large, shiny black craft heading down our street, I imagined it had something to do with the nearby film studio at the former airport site. Wrong again. After seeing a gondola navigating Town Lake later, it became clear.

The answer was revealed at [Venetian-Passage.com](http://Venetian-Passage.com), where I learned neighbor Paul Parma was responsible for the mysterious gondola sightings. Recently,

Paul began offering gondola excursions on Lake Travis and soon, he hopes, Town Lake. If you've ever been to Venice, or just wished so, now you can enjoy an authentic gondola ride here in Central Texas, in a genuine Venetian-crafted vessel.

Paul became an Austinite in 1984 when he began work on his engineering degree. Now, he lives on Brookview Road in Cherrywood with his wife, Alison, two daughters, Ariel, 11 and Bianca, 9, and son Ezra, 3. The idea to offer gondola excursions on picturesque Austin lakes occurred to him during two extended stays in Venice, where he learned the crafts of building and piloting a gondola. "My love for, interest in, and knowledge of Italy made the pursuit of the concept a natural choice," said Paul. To that end, two authentic gondolas were constructed, one even formally blessed, in Venice: the Sophia Marie and La Serenissima, which means "The Serene One".

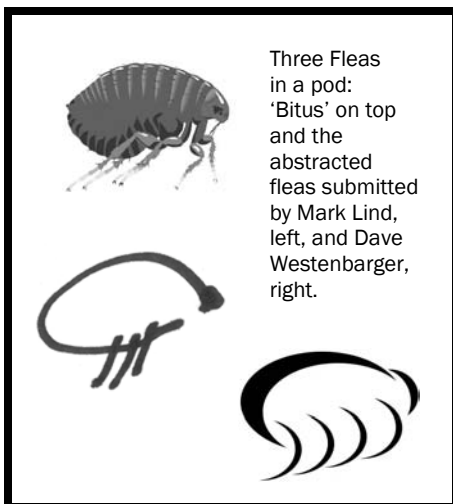
Having worked with the City of Austin to develop specifications for a gondola concession on Town Lake, Paul presented his concept to the Austin Parks and Recreation Board in August. The Board voted unanimously to recommend the City establish the concession. Now, the concessionaire needs approval by City Council, which Paul hopes will happen in time for Valentine's Day.



Paul in full livery on a very cold Town Lake in November.

"Imagine . . . strolling down the shaded path along Town Lake . . . You spy a dock below with a handful of people transfixed by a strange, dark, 36-foot craft moored at the adjoining quay. You . . . are drawn to the water's edge, in awe of the vessel's grandeur, its organic curves, lines and shape, simultaneously Oriental and not. You couldn't have described a gondola a moment before, but you know that this is a gondola."

Give our neighbor a call at 320-8622 or e-mail [info@venetianpassage.com](mailto:info@venetianpassage.com) to book your voyage. For more information or to view an array of photographs attesting to a truly unique experience in Texas or the world, go to [www.VenetianPassage.com](http://www.VenetianPassage.com). We wish Paul and his family the best in their new venture! Tanti Auguri! ■



Three Fleas in a pod: 'Bitus' on top and the abstracted fleas submitted by Mark Lind, left, and Dave Westenbarger, right.

## TO RE-LOGO OR NOT TO RE-LOGO THE FLEA?

The issue of a new logo for the CNA quarterly newsletter was raised two issues ago in response to a perceived unfavorable sentiment toward our entomologically correct bug. To this end, we initiated a contest to determine both the wishes of the neighborhood regarding this matter, and suggestions for a new logo should one be necessary. The lack of response has been deafening. Of the very few who did weigh in on this almost half say just leave it alone.

There were a couple of new-logo contributors, however, and to honor their efforts we are showing them to our readers in this issue. However, it has become obvious to the staff that there is very little impetus to change what we have. Therefore, barring any subsequent general hue and/or cry for banishing 'Bitus' to the dustbin of journalistic detritus, we hereby declare our current logo to be our present and future logo as well.

## VIEW FROM THE BACKLOT: A Parent's Perspective of the Austin Studios' Neighborhood Internship Program

by Ann Stafford

Last January, our daughter, Franny Stafford, was selected for an internship with the Austin Studios – a program we learned about through our neighborhood association.

Initially, Franny worked at clerical jobs, such as cleaning up the storage closet, inventorying the tape library. The staff was flexible with her time, by allowing her to work around her many other commitments, including like editing the McCallum newspaper literary journal, preparing an exhibit of her still photography and attending classes at One World Theater. Somewhere in all of these activities, Franny was supposed to go to school, apply for college and take care of the senior year stuff like prom and graduation.

The internship turned into more of a mentorship brimming with honest, constructive feedback, encouragement and support. Franny received jobs that challenged her creativity and stretched her limits. She was entrusted with taking responsibility for a task and checked to make sure she had the tools she needed to do the job right. They allowed her to take as much or as little leadership as she could handle and treated her like a valued member of the team. Sure, she waited tables and scraped dishes at the Texas Film Hall of Fame awards dinner, but she felt like she had a part in the success of the evening. She was treated with respect and

included at every level that was appropriate and her self-esteem and confidence have grown as a result. Meeting and working with people in the film industry like Richard Linklater, Robert Rodriguez and Elizabeth Avellan, has shown her that successful filmmakers are the ones who rise to the challenge and luck has very little to do with it.

All of Franny's internship experiences have value, even if they have not been wonderful. This summer she worked with a production company that had more interns than chairs. But, eventually she was moved to a producer who taught her to use digital editing equipment on "real" work. She is presently working 12-14 hour days on Rodriguez' Spy Kids sequel. She is assigned to the props crew and is the youngest and least experienced member of the crew. It is not without challenges - 6 a. m. call times and hauling equipment up the hill at Pedernales Falls to name a few. But despite the hard labor, early hours and earning the nickname "Crash", Franny loves it. More importantly, she is getting a realistic view of the film industry.

Soon Franny is scheduled to start in the film department at the University of North Texas. Along with the clothes, stereo, linens and computer she packed for school, she takes with her a new self confidence and a pocketful of memories, skills and experience. We are grateful to the folks at Austin Film Society, especially Rebecca, Elizabeth and Sal, for providing her with a wonderful learning experience and filling her toolbox so well. Whether or not Franny con-

tinues to pursue a future in film, she has gained such invaluable experience that will serve her well in whatever path she takes.

[NOTE: The next semester internship deadline is January 18. For more information visit [www.austinfilm.org](http://www.austinfilm.org)] ■



## THANKS FOR FRIGHTENING US

by Paul Andrews

Maplewood Elementary School's Fright Fest 2001 successfully raised PTA money and brought together families from many surrounding neighborhoods, including Cherrywood, Wilshire Wood/Delwood I and Delwood II. During this community celebration, crowd-pleasing popcorn and cotton candy were con-

sumed in great quantities by participants in between playing free games and winning prizes. Organizers Vanessa Ronsonette, Karin McCullough, and Paul Andrews send out sincere thanks for the unending support donated by local individual and business sponsors, as well as the dozens of volunteers. A special acknowledgement to the Maplewood room parents for their abilities to recruit volunteers, especially the coaxing of family members; set up and manage booths, plus staying late to magically clean up the premises – the real fright! ■

Many thanks to Marshall Bruni and Ana Salda, Cheryl Cavanaugh, Jessica Andrew, Ray Jordan and Jeanne Arbuckle, Joanne and Mark Smolen, Maryann Overath and Tim Grisham, Charlene and Rusty Helton, Erika Allbright, Rachel and Duane Robinson, Neomi Rocha, Alice and Paul Andrews, June Burnum, Melody Harris, Angelica Cruz, Craig and Brenda High, Fiesta Mart, Haas Policy Consulting, Inc. (Debra Haas), Grande Communications (Libby Malone), Newman Associates (Jack Newman), Monarch Food Mart Academy, and the numerous anonymous individuals who donated cash, toys and prizes!!

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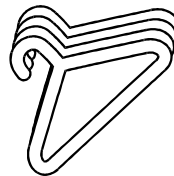
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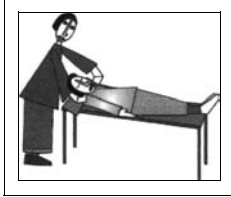
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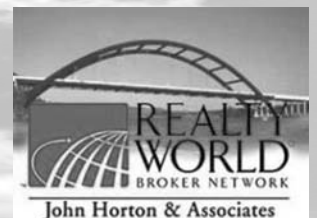
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Vol. 4 #4

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Winter 2001/2002

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For information on other homes for  
sale in the neighborhood, call  
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## Weathering Winter

Suggestions for keeping your home ,  
inside & out, safe through seasonal  
elements.....

- ◆ Gutters and downspouts should be cleaned in mid-fall and double-checked before winter. The next time it rains heavily, put on your coat and boots and step out into the yard to observe how well the gutters are working. If they aren't flowing properly, they may need cleaning, realignment or replacement
- ◆ The coziness of a warm, glowing fire in your woodstove or fireplace can continue to be a source of enjoyment if you follow a simple maintenance schedule. Have chimneys and woodstoves cleaned early in the season and inspected by a trained chimney sweep. This will help avoid hazards such as carbon monoxide poisoning and fires.
- ◆ Water and ice collecting on steps and walkways may create hazards. To avoid this, consider installing an overhang above the entrance to your home. If your walkway has poor drainage, consider replacing it with a properly graded walkway.

*When the rock is hard, we get harder than the rock. When the job is tough, we get tougher than the job. ~ George Cullum, Sr*

**This new year, take a moment to remember and thank those that have in the past, and now, in the present, continue to fight for our freedom and justice for our country.**



## A Touch of Feng Shui ....

Trim your plants at least every three weeks. Overgrown plants that look straggly and uncontrolled are not good feng shui. More importantly, you should trim your trees at least once a year. Always make sure your trees do not overwhelm your home.

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