



The Flea

MEETINGS SCHEDULED TO LEARN ABOUT NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

by Lex Dale Owens

An introduction to Neighborhood Watch and block captains will be presented at the Cherrywood Neighborhood Association membership meeting at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 16, at Maplewood School. This session is designed to answer questions about the requirements and duties for your street to sign up for Neighborhood Watch.

Two representatives of the Austin Police Department, Mario Renteria, community liaison, and Dane Sherry, Central East district representative are scheduled to make a 15-minute presentation. A sign up meeting is scheduled three weeks later, at 7 p.m. Wednesday, May 7, at Maplewood School.

The neighborhood association steering committee scheduled these sessions in response to the sharp increase in crime — mostly auto burglaries — reported to the police department in the neighborhood beginning in January and the recommendations adopted by the Upper Boggy Creek Neighborhood Plan. Police reports show that although crime generally decreased in the area from late 1999 through December 2002, the increase in the number of reports in both January and February almost equaled all of the crime reported during the previous 12 months.

Neighborhood Association Steering Committee Chair Dave Westenbarger suggested the Neighborhood Watch Program as the next step. Police reports show the majority of the crimes were burglaries of automobiles that occurred

along Manor Road, French Place, and Interstate 35. However all crimes are included.

Officer Sherry said, "APD is excited to be partners with community leaders to make our neighborhood safe and reduce crime." Renteria said, "We will bring new and developing programs to the Neighborhood Watch Program with the help of your input and suggestions."

The police department is especially interested in developing new ideas to include NeighborNet and new programs, which may provide officers assistance in their daily duties. This is an opportunity for our area to be in the forefront of addressing this important element of our neighborhood safety.

Lex Dale Owens, a member of the neighborhood association's Safety Committee, stated that one of the goals of our crime reduction program is to develop programs that will bring more citizen value to the police department in order to help free up officers to address more serious problems.

Owens said, "Budget cuts may affect crime reduction unless we find new ways to help reduce crime. Neighbors in Cherrywood have the perfect opportunity to do something constructive to help their families, maintain a safe community, and help keep taxes lower."

Please join us May 7 at Maplewood School for the Neighborhood Watch Program kick off event. The Safety Committee will continue to bring crime reduction programs to each neighborhood association membership meeting

throughout 2003. Other membership meetings are scheduled in July and October.

The Safety Committee meets regularly with APD, Commander's Forum, Chief's Forum, District Attorney, Capital Metro, and city staff to address the increase in crime, property used for illegal purposes, transients, railroad right of way maintenance, and traffic safety. Safety Committee members are Jules Vieau, chairman, Jim Walker and Lex Dale Owens.

**Neighborhood Watch Meeting
7-8 p.m., Wednesday, May 7
Maplewood School**

**Cherrywood Neighborhood
quarterly meeting:**

**Wednesday, April 16
6:30 - 8:30 pm
Maplewood School**

Likely topics of discussion:

- Q&A on establishing some pilot Neighborhood Watch areas. Police staff will answer your questions.
- Discussion of 501c3 non-profit requirements.
- Activities of the Transportation Committee regarding I-35.
- Announcement of Zoning 101 presentation for neighbors, including information on "super" duplexes.
- Announcement of Value Skypark/ Featherlite planning workshop and Envision Central Texas "voting."
- Cherrywood Choices

Contact Dave Westenbarger, 494-9905, if you have an item you'd like to add.

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

APRIL

- April 9** — Steering Committee 6:30 p.m., Taqueria los Altos
April 16 — Cherrywood Neighborhood Assoc. general meeting
 6:30 p.m., Maplewood Elementary School library
April 21 — Planning Committee hosts city planner Greg Guernsey,
 discussing recent and proposed changes in zoning.
 7-9 p.m., Asbury United Methodist Church
April 23 — Cherrywood Book Club, 7-9 p.m. E-mail for more infor-
 mation, thedelaunes@austin.rr.com

MAY

- May 7** — Neighborhood Watch sign up meeting 7 p.m.,
 Maplewood Elementary School
May 10 — Maplewood Spring Fling (see page 7)
May 13 — Maplewood's annual Career Day (see page 7)
May 14 — Steering Committee, 6:30 p.m., Taqueria los Altos
May 28 — Cherrywood Book Club, 7-9 p.m. (see April above)

JUNE

- June 11** — Steering Committee, 6:30 p.m., Taqueria los Altos
June 25 — Cherrywood Book Club, 7-9 p.m. (see April above)

EDITORS' NOTE

The Flea staff would like to know what you think of the news-
 letter and what type of articles you would like to see. The
 newsletter is for information about the Cherrywood Neighbor-
 hood Association and the area it serves. If you'd like to make
 a suggestion, contact any of the editors listed here.

And we'd like your help. We are looking for those cherished
 neighbors who were original owners of their homes and have
 some tales to tell of what the area was like back in the middle
 of the last century when many of our homes were built. If you
 are one of these folks or know someone who is, please give
 one of the Flea editors a call. We will feature some of these
 neighbors in a coming issue. ■

CHERRYWOOD *NeighborNet*

Cherrywood has two means of getting out the message elec-
 tronically. One channel is our Web page, for permanent
 stuff. Just open cherrywood.org for lots on information
 about the neighborhood. The other is our "NeighborNet" e-
 mail list. Some 260 neighbors enjoy timely notices of local
 goings-on. Visit cherrywood.org to subscribe.

This past quarter you would have learned about:

- missing (and almost always found) pets
- service groups recruiting volunteers
- Austin Police Department's new maps showing crime
 in our area
- risks from CCA-treated lumber
- notices of various neighborhood meetings
- Envision Central Texas charrette on vacant land north
 and south of Manor Road
- and much more!

Cherrywood Neighborhood Association

<http://www.cherrywood.org>

Steering Committee

Chair	Dave Westenbarger ('03)*	494-9905
Vice-Chair	Stefan Schuster ('04)	322-0059
Secretary	Meg Brooks ('04)	474-6454
Treasurer	Rebecca Kohout ('03)	415-9876
Members	Bree Buchanan ('04)	482-8468
	Frances DeLaune ('03)	477-1986
	Jeff Folmar ('03)	472-4535
	Peter Ketter ('04)	473-2736
	Girard Kinney ('04)	478-5042
	Lisa McClain ('03)	789-5885
	David Menhard ('03)	478-0996
	Lex Dale Owens ('04)	477-6555
	Jennifer Smith ('04)	694-0298

* year term expires

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Hospitality: Rebecca Kohout 415-9876

Priscilla Boston 478-1867

Nominating: Michael McClendon 482-0016

Parks:

- **Cherrywood Green** Katharine Beisner 708-9407
- **Patterson Park** Isabelle Headrick 499-0621

Pets: Gale Greenleaf 474-6245

Planning & Zoning: Girard Kinney 478-5042

Security: Jules Vieau 495-9569

Transportation: Stefan Schuster 322-0059

Welcome Wagon: Rebecca Kohout 415-9876

Projects

Austin Film Society: Dolly Ensey 494-9905

Blue Ribbon Yard: Priscilla Boston 478-1867

Maplewood: Jack Newman 476-6616

Mueller Redevelopment: Jim Walker 499-0526

Tree Planting: Mike Damal 478-9622

Upper Boggy Creek Planning: Steve Kreger 477-4216

KEEP YOUR GUARD UP

As of this writing, there is a man hanging around our neighborhood who has been approaching women and asking for directions and for help with his car when he obviously doesn't need it.

His behavior is very suspicious and you should not let him engage you in conversation or open your door to him. Also, keep your doors and windows locked, even when you are at home.

He is a black male, 34 years old, black short hair, brown eyes, about 5'11", 180 pounds and he drives a silver Toyota 4Runner, license plate K49DTR with a "Shoreline" bumper sticker on the back.

If you see this man, call 911 to report a suspicious person and give a good description of his location and any other details you can.

DANE SHERRY IS NEW POLICE REPRESENTATIVE FOR OUR AREA

by Meg Brooks

We have a new District Representative Police Officer for our neighborhood. His name is Dane Sherry. He started this position in November and he works Central East Districts 5 and 6, which include the Cherrywood neighborhood. He has been a patrol officer in Central East Austin for the past nine years. This means he has spent all of his Austin police career answering 911 calls and working on crimes in this area and is very familiar with our problems, issues and the neighborhood in general.

A District Representative Officer (DR for short) works with neighborhood residents, the police department and other city agencies to improve quality of life and find long-term solutions to problems in an area instead of answering 911 calls or working on individual cases.

Officer Sherry's office is at the Central East station at 721 Wilshire Blvd., across Airport Boulevard from Patterson Park near the fire station. His phone number is 974-4456 and he has voice mail so you can leave a message any time. He has signed on to NeighborNet, the neighborhood email list, so he will be a part of our email discussions and will be able to offer quick responses to questions posted. He plans to attend our quarterly Cherrywood Neighborhood Association meetings.

Sherry encourages everyone who lives in our neighborhood to attend the Commander's Forum on the first Monday of every month at 6:30 p.m. at the police department Recruiting Office on East 7th Street at Pleasant Valley.

Part of what a District Representative can do is help us keep track of crime trends and give us tips for making our neighborhood safer (like those listed to the right). While no amount of crime is acceptable, Sherry reports that our neighborhood has a relatively low rate of crime. Our biggest current crime problem is car burglaries. This is a crime that can be decreased through our own vigilance in following crime prevention tips. Sherry asks us to always report crimes and suspicious persons to 911 so the police can have an accurate view of what is happening in our neighborhood.

Ask Officer Sherry

In every newsletter, we would like to answer your crime, police or criminal justice system questions. Send your questions to Meg Brooks at fishgirls@aol.com or call her at 474-6454. Try to keep the questions relevant to the neighborhood and on issues of interest to all of us in Cherrywood. ■

Meg Brooks is secretary of the CNA Steering Committee.

CRIME PREVENTION ADVICE

We have a relatively low rate of crime in our neighborhood but there are things you can do to help protect yourself.

- Keep your property well lit.
- Don't keep belongings in your car.
- Lock your car.
- Remove portable stereos.
- Score the back of your registration and inspection stickers with a razor.
- Keep the doors to your house locked even when you are home.
- Keep bushes cut low so that your doors and windows are visible.
- Report all suspicious behavior to 911 with good description, especially direction of travel, license plate and/or clothing description.

What to do if your car is burglarized

Call 911 and make a report. The police department may send a police officer or may take the report on the phone. Be sure to ask that someone come and take fingerprints if you want that done. Fingerprints are collected by civilian crime scene technicians. They dust for fingerprints and collect any other evidence that might be present. But you have to ask that they come out.

Dane Sherry,
District Representative
Police Officer



Photo: Liz Hargrove

DEVELOPER MOVING FORWARD ON MUELLER PLANS

by Jim Walker, Mueller Neighborhoods Coalition and Greg Weaver, Catellus

Just because you can't see it, doesn't mean things aren't happening at Mueller. In fact, the neighborhoods, the city and master developer, Catellus, are all working together and moving forward.

In October 2002, the City of Austin and Catellus signed an exclusive negotiating agreement for the redevelopment of Mueller, the former airport just north of our neighborhood. The negotiating agreement has allowed the city and Catellus to enter into discussions regarding the project's specifications, including funding, plan design and land use. This process is expected to take between 18 and 24 months and will culminate in a Master Development Agreement, which will be submitted for City Council approval.

In August, Greg Weaver, vice-president of Catellus, moved his family to Austin from Denver and took the lead for the company on the next phase of the Mueller redevelopment. Greg has attended several community meetings, including

the Mueller Neighborhoods Coalition and the Robert Mueller Municipal Airport Implementation Commission. Topics of discussion so far have included Catellus' support of the Masterplan (they love it), if and how a new Seton Children's Hospital could fit into the Masterplan, and the current problems and needed solutions for the 51st St./Interstate-35 intersection (which also involves addressing the Wilshire Blvd./Airport Blvd. intersection).

On March 1, Catellus sponsored a kick-off party at the Austin Film Society hangar. The cold weather didn't detract from the great tunes of the Damnations and the delicious food, but did sidetrack the model airplane demonstration. However, the pilots were gracious enough to hang around to answer questions and show off their planes. Organizers were pleased to see many new faces interested in Mueller redevelopment.

The Tower, a quarterly newsletter for the redevelopment project and sponsored by Catellus and the city, made its debut at the kick-off party – just another way

to get information on the project. A Web site exclusively dedicated to the Mueller project will be online in the next 60 days, the address will be posted on NeighborNet and the Cherrywood Neighborhood Association Web site (cherrywood.org).

Until then, Greg and his team want your feedback and questions. The best way to contact Catellus is by calling 391-4938 or e-mailing Lori_Flores@catellus.com. Another great way is to participate in the Implementation Commission meetings the second Tuesday of the month from 6 to 8 p.m. at Waller Creek Center.

And of course, we can't forget about the Texas Legislature. Rep. Ron Wilson did file another bill (HB 483) that proposes to reopen Mueller to general aviation use, but advocates for Mueller redevelopment, primarily the city, our neighborhoods, and Catellus, are coordinating to change the bill to allow Mueller to be fully redeveloped. Any action needed to help in this effort will be posted on NeighborNet and the Mueller-Neighborhoods listservs. ■

Jim Walker is a spokesperson for the Mueller Neighborhoods Coalition and a resident of Cherrywood.

CITIZEN INPUT SOUGHT ON I-35 PLANS

by Stefan Schuster

The Environmental Assessment of the I-35 reconstruction from the Texas Department of Transportation should arrive any day now, and we are preparing for a public hearing. It probably won't happen until after the Legislative session. This hearing and the meeting of CAMPO – the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization – concerning the plan are two critical events where you can help

by turning out in force to share your view on the impacts of the design for the future of our neighborhood.

Until then it is important to let our City Council members know how we feel. Slusher, Wynn and Thomas all serve on CAMPO, which decides how federal transportation dollars are spent in the Austin area.

CAMPO members recently voted to include Hays and Williamson counties. This is welcome news since we are all affected by large regional highway proposals, and we will need all the citizen participation we can muster. On the downside CAMPO has moved up the next update, and we are concerned that the reason for this is that air-quality is-

issues are being linked to financing.

In other news, Capital Metro and the City of Austin presented their new future transportation plan to the Austin Neighborhoods Council Mobility Workgroup. A new preliminary Engineering/Environmental Impact Statement will begin by looking at some sort of mass-transit solution for the central corridor. Numerous neighborhoods to the west of us are participating in this spring kickoff. If you're interested in knowing more or getting involved, let me know: Stefan Schuster at hydroplan@hotmail.com or 322-0059.

Stefan Schuster represents our neighborhood association on the North Central Interstate 35 Neighborhoods Coalition.

"ZONING 101"

RESUMES

Several important changes have occurred over the last couple of years that affect what legally can be built in our neighborhood. Many folks have raised questions about what they or their neighbors can now build on lots zoned SF3. The questions involve the number of dwelling units, size, impervious cover, off-street parking, etc. as well as other related issues, and what changes loom on the horizon.

On Monday, April 21, the Cherrywood Neighborhood Association Planning Committee will host Greg Guernsey, planner with the City of Austin, to address recent and proposed develop-

ments in the City Code that affect, or will affect, land use in our area.

Guernsey will bring us all up to date on the status of such issues as the change that now allows detached dwelling units where formerly only duplexes were allowed, the overlay zoning and resulting controls that resulted from the Upper Boggy Creek Neighborhood Plan, and the issues of super duplexes and other housing types that we may see in our neighborhood.

Here are the particulars for the meeting: **Monday, April 21, 2003, 7–9 p.m.**
Asbury United Methodist Church,
Wesley Chapel, 38½ at Cherrywood Rd.

Please RSVP to Girard Kinney (gkinney@texas.net or 478-5042) if you plan to attend so that we can have an idea of how many folks will show up. ■

WELCOME!

Rebecca Kohout has been delivering welcome baskets to the neighborhood's new residents. A warm welcome to new homeowners who have moved here from December through March 1.

- Lisa Wood, 3708 Robinson Ave.
- Julie Hart, 3107 Lafayette Ave.
- Cindy & Don Hubbard, 3214 Lafayette
- Charlie & Julia Roadman, 3 Kern Ramble

If you have bought a home in Cherrywood in the past several months and have not heard from the neighborhood association's Welcome Wagon, it is because you weren't home when Rebecca came by to deliver your basket. Please call her at 415-9876 to set up a time for delivery. Your basket is waiting for you.

ENVISION CENTRAL TEXAS: WORKSHOPS FOCUS ON CHERRYWOOD AREA

by Gordon Bennett

A series of "Envision Central Texas" workshops hosted by well-known regional planners John Fregonese and Peter Calthorpe involve Cherrywood. A workshop in April trained its attention on a 61-acre swath of Cherrywood, Chestnut and Rosewood between Manor Road and 12th Street, following the railroad tracks and the Upper Boggy Creek Greenbelt. To see a map of the ECT East Austin Community Test Site go to http://asnic.utexas.edu/~bennett/_map/ManorRd.pdf (2 underlines, "_map," not "_map").

Ninety percent of this tract is vacant. The other 10 percent is a parking lot. Hopefully it will be put to better use for the community. Three separate neighborhood plans have zoned it for mixed commercial and residential development. Once a pocket of poverty with a concentration of African-American families, it slowly is diversifying and "gentrifying." Demand for affordable housing is keen. It is close to Mueller redevelopment, UT, downtown, and maybe one day even rapid transit.

Two big problems hinder development of the tract. More building and impervious cover may threaten adjacent homes in the flood plain. And considerable cleanup will be required. The north end was the Value Sky Park and is now leased to Seton to accommodate overflow parking from Brackenridge Hospital. The middle area was the Featherlite concrete fabricating plant, which has remained derelict for two decades. Running the length, north-south, was the former Austin and Northwest Railroad. Capital Metro bought its 162-mile right-

of-way in 1999 to preserve for rapid transit. In the meanwhile the Austin Area Terminal Railroad leases the tracks to freight operations.

See www.envisioncentraltexas.org on the Web for more about Envision Central Texas, a multi-year, million-dollar effort to get voters to endorse regional planning by participating meaningfully. Envision Central Texas predicts a million new in-migrants to greater Austin. Presumably this rising tide will not all live in expensive single-family homes built in expanding rings of suburbs and suffer lengthy commutes by car. ■

Gordon Bennett operates NeighborNet and the Cherrywood.org Web site.

Vote in June

Envision Central Texas is soliciting your opinions on how the Austin region should grow. More than a million new people are expected over the next several decades, presenting enormous challenges for all of us. You can help plan for this future, while protecting the quality of life we enjoy.

Information collected at public work-

shops last fall has been distilled to several scenarios for housing, land use, transportation, air and water quality, and other factors.

During June, ballots will be available for you to express your preferences for these future scenarios. Look for ballots in newspapers, at libraries and other public places.

For more information, contact Liveable City, 481-8400.

PATTERSON PARK PLAYGROUND CONSTRUCTION TO START IN JULY

by Isabelle Headrick

Things continue to move along at an exciting pace at Patterson Park. Construction on the new playground is slated to begin in early July and is expected to take two and a half months. Friends of Patterson Park is working in concert with the city to pull together funds for Phase One of the trail system—the leg from Wilshire Boulevard to the playground. This is an expensive proposition, as it entails erosion control on that slope; however, we do have some funds that we can donate to the process.

Other areas of the trail system are also on the front burner. FoPP sought and has received official recognition from the city's Parks and Recreation Department of the community's desire for a trail in Patterson. In addition, PARD has initiated preliminary designs for a trail. We are exploring ways to cut the estimated cost of trail installation by getting volunteers to work on trail building.

FoPP is exploring the idea of building a skate park in Patterson. Interest has centered on the area close to Airport Boulevard between the volleyball and basketball courts. We spoke with Seth Johnson of Austin Public Skate Park Committee, which is raising funds to build a large, citywide skate park. Whether or not Patterson is the appropriate place for such a park is still up for discussion; however there is significant interest in a small, neighborhood-scale skate park. The two organizations have agreed to work together to achieve both goals. For more information about the skate park committee, visit www.austinpublicskatepark.org.

Donations to Friends of Patterson Park are tax-deductible and greatly appreciated. You may send a check payable to Austin Parks Foundation with "Patterson Park" on the memo line (mail it to APF at 815 Brazos St., Suite 1001, Austin, Texas 78701). We welcome anyone with an interest in Patterson Park to come to our meetings, which are usually held monthly at Genesis Presbyterian Church. For more information about Friends of Patterson Park or if you are interested in trail building, call Isabelle at 499-0621 or e-mail pattpark@texas.net. ■

STEERING COMMITTEE COMPLETE

by Michael McClendon

Two Steering Committee members were elected at the January meeting to fill vacant positions.

Lisa McClain was elected to fill the slot vacated by James Spanelli. Lisa is a private-practice attorney specializing in water and environmental law. She has lived in Cherrywood more than two years, and is a renter exploring the possibility of purchasing a home. Lisa is

interested in parks, green spaces and neighborhood cleanup. Lisa's term expires October 2003.

Jennifer Smith was elected to fill the slot vacated by Anderson Simmons. Jennifer works at Dell and has both rented and owned homes in Cherrywood for more than four years. Jennifer is interested in density, smart-growth and neighborhood preservation issues. Her term expires October 2004

The Nominating Committee continually recruits people interested in serving as Steering Committee members. If you are interested in serving or nominating someone for service, please contact me at 482-0016 or contact another Nominating Committee member. ■

PATTERSON PARK SWIM TEAM PRACTICE BEGINS IN JUNE

by Rebecca Schwarz

The Austin Parks Department's Neighborhood Swim Team program offers a chance for kids to swim and compete for fun every summer. The program runs in 18 locations, including a team based at Patterson Pool and called the Patterson Piranhas.

The program begins the first week of June and runs through July. Last year the City Wide Championship Meet was at Walnut Creek Pool. Those who qualify may compete in the State T.A.A.F. Games of Texas Meet at the end of July.

According to the Parks Department Web site, children between the ages of 5 and 17 with no fear of water, and who can already swim at least 25 meters are eligible to participate. Since this is a recreational neighborhood summer swim team program, swimmers who have participated in a year-round organized program are not eligible to participate in this program.

Teams practice five times a week. Last year the Piranhas practiced from 6 to 7:30 p.m. All swim meets, five including the City Wide Championship Meet, are between 8 and 1 o'clock on Sundays. A parent manual, detailing rules and guidelines will be available the first week of practice. Talk to the coach at each pool for more information.

The program costs \$50, which includes the \$5 T.A.A.F. registration fee. Another \$10 gets you a T-shirt. For more information visit the Web site at www.ci.austin.tx.us/parks/aquatics.htm or call the Aquatic Administration weekdays between 8 and 5 at 476-4521. ■

Rebecca Schwarz works for SilverStar, a nonprofit theater, and writes screenplays.

PERENNIAL GARDEN PLANTED AT CHERRYWOOD GREEN

by Brent Hay

Flowers are blooming, trees are budding, and Cherrywood Green is bursting with activity. This spring marks the second season of development and beautification for the pocket park at the corner of Cherrywood Road and East 34th Street.

In late February the Friends of Cherrywood Green took off running by putting in a large perennial garden featuring drought-tolerant native and naturalized plants. In addition to adding visual interest, the bed provides a safety zone between the Green and Cherrywood Road for kids and pets. Care was taken in designing the bed and selecting plants not to impair visual or physical access to the Green.

A path is on the agenda for this year and if you look closely you can see where it has been marked out. It winds casually from one end of the Green to the other. The Friends of Cherrywood Green will add a bulletin board for posting notices about community activities, lost pets and such.

You may notice a couple other things as the year rolls on. In the woods along the creek we will add under-story plants, such as Turk's caps and beauty berries, to diversify the native growth and attract birds. If you are interested in the plantings, look for labels listing the plants' common and botanical names around the Green.

If you would like to know more about the Cherrywood Green scene, activities are posted on the Cherrywood Neighborhood Association's listserv, or you can contact Brent Hay at 236-8721 or Katharine Beisner at 708-9407. ■



Katharine Beisner (top) and Friends of Cherrywood Green work hard to beautify the park.
Photos: Liz Hargrove

MAPLEWOOD NOTES

**Your Neighborhood School
3808 Maplewood Ave., 414-4402**

► Join us in beautifying the grounds around Maplewood. As recipients of a portion of the Upper Boggy Creek grant, Maplewood parents and teachers are moving to improve the aesthetics of our building and yards. We invite community members to join us at their convenience to dig, plant or paint. Stop by the office or call to find out how you can help.

► May 10 is Maplewood Spring Fling with the goal of emphasizing our school as a hub for community involvement. Activities include a plant and bake sale, kid friendly fun, and artistic showcases reflecting the diversity of Cherrywood neighbors. To pull this off, we need community participation. All neighbors are encouraged to join the celebration of our kids, school and community. If you are an interested musician, artist, gardener with seeds to plant or donate, or someone who wants to help, please call Lisa Schemanske at 477-5876.

► Maplewood's annual Career Day is on May 13. Parents and neighbors are invited to participate. It seems that truly

happy individuals have found a way to make a living that also feeds their soul. If you would like to pass on your passion—whatever it may be—to the next generation, plan to be a presenter at our event. You are an invaluable resource to help expand the career choices and dreams of our students. Call Kelli Kirk at 414-1086 to sign up.

► Dog-owning neighbors, if you use the Maplewood fields as an exercise area for your pets, please clean up after them. You can imagine the mess caused by 40 dog-dung covered little feet coming into a classroom after recess. We would like to see our fields remain open and inviting for neighborhood recreation, instead of fenced and locked.

► Did you know that AISD is planning big, big budget cuts that will affect the education of all of our children? There are plans to eliminate Reading Recovery, increase regular and special-ed class size, and reduce the number of art, music, and PE teachers. Say "No to classroom cuts" by calling the board members at 414-2413 and voicing your strong opinion. For more information and email addresses check out the AISD Web site at www.austin.isd.tenet.edu. ■

This Maplewood news column is written by Kelli Kirk, a counselor at Maplewood who lives in our neighborhood.

Cherrywood Choices

NEIGHBORHOOD HAS MANY VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

by Dolly Ensey

April is Volunteer Month, and there are many opportunities right here in the neighborhood to volunteer all year long for nonprofit and service organizations or groups whose services are available to Cherrywood residents.

Cherrywood Choices encourages neighbors to reach out. Among the skills needed are accounting, carpentry, law, technology, medicine or simply holding hands.

One third of the groups listed by Cherrywood Choices are United Way Partner Agencies. Two are schools: Open Door Preschool and Maplewood Elementary. Another, **planetcancer.org**, was founded by neighbor Heidi Schultz Adams, in response to her personal challenge. Literacy Austin, which has moved, has preserved its connection to Cherrywood through neighbors who continue to tutor its clients.

Detailed information can be found at www.cherrywood.org, at quarterly Cherrywood Neighborhood Association meetings or can be requested from cherrywood78722@yahoo.com or 494-9905. Details include volunteer opportunities, a description of work, time involved, events, and how to donate money or materials. Updates will be provided via email and handouts.

There is something each of us can do. Write prescription labels in Spanish for People's Community Clinic. Share your voice as a telephone friend for Northeast Caregivers or during story time at the schools. Cook on Monday nights for Traurig Faith Home. Help Urban League in training and career development. Buy supplies for families in crisis being helped by Children's Advocacy Center. Share your Webmastering expertise with Wright House Wellness Center. Help Big Brothers Big Sisters' program on one-time outings such as baseball games or field trips. Lend a hand to Hospice Austin-Christopher House by leveling bricks on its pathway called "Walk of

NEIGHBORHOOD GROUPS

Asbury United Methodist Church, 477-8122
 *Austin Area Urban League, 478-7176
 Austin Film Society/Austin Studios, 322-0145
 *Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Central Texas, 472-5437
 Blackland Community Development Corp., 972-5796
 *Children's Advocacy Center, 472-1164
 Faith Home/Traurig Faith Home, 302-4101
 Friends of Cherrywood Green, 708-9407
 Friends of Patterson Park, 499-0621
 Heritage Park Nursing & Rehabilitation Center, 474-1411
 *Hospice Austin's Christopher House, 322-0747
 *Lifeworks, 735-2206
 *Literacy Austin, 478-READ
 Maplewood Elementary School, 414-4402
 *Meals on Wheels and More, 476-MEAL
 Northeast Caregivers of Austin, 459-1122
 *Open Door Preschool, 481-0775
 *People's Community Clinic, 708-3156
 Planet Cancer, 481-9010
 Reading Is Fundamental/RIF, 472-1791
 Vortex Repertory Theatre, 478-LAVA
 Wildlife Rescue of Austin, 472-WILD
 *Wright House Wellness Center, 467-0088
 * Partner Agencies of United Way Capital Area-2003

Friends." Usher at the Vortex Theatre. Yard care and landscaping is on everyone's list. Opportunities are often close enough to walk, ride your bike or take the bus.

You can volunteer one-time, part-time, weekly, monthly or once a year. Participation can be solo, with a friend or a group. Monetary donations, general or specific, often can be made online. Wish lists include clothes, pens, pencils, hangers, magazines, compact discs or videos. Even extra tickets or similar items can be used for volunteer rewards.

Cherrywood Choices includes groups, such as Wildlife Rescue Inc., coming soon to a location nearby, and groups with Cherrywood clients and headquarters outside the neighborhood, such as Meals on Wheels and More. Cherrywood is full of talented, thoughtful people with much to share. ■



AFS SEEKS NEIGHBORHOOD INTERNS

The Austin Film Society, our neighbor at the former Mueller airport site, has set its deadline for applications for summer internships. The internships last four months. Deadline to apply is May 15. For applications and more information, click on the resources icon at www.austinfilm.org.

Look on the same Web site for information about this summer's media camps for youth ages 13-17 who live in Mueller Neighborhoods Coalition neighborhoods. Those camps are June 16-20 and July 7-11 at the Comacho Center and cost \$65. ■



Michael Montague's Blue Ribbon Yard.
Photo: Liz Hargrove

BLUE RIBBON YARD

by Priscilla Boston

Congratulations to Michael Montague, winner of Cherrywood's Blue Ribbon Yard award for the months of February-March. Even in the dead of winter, Michael's design talents are evident in the charming yard at 3314 Cherrywood.

Michael, director of textiles and apparel in the Department of Human Ecology at the University of Texas, says the primary influence on his gardening style is the time he spent living in the south of France.

Walk by and see his vision — and the new spring growth emerge.

JERM POLLET: LAUGHING WITH A SINUS CONDITION

by Kelli Kirk

Cherrywood is full of neighbors who tap into their creative potential and actually make a living at it. Jerm Pollet is one of those, and he has twice chosen to dwell and to craft in our midst.

You might already know him. Ever heard or seen Mr. Sinus Theater? Jerm is one-third of this trio of funny fellows wowing audiences with their wit and pop culture wisdom at the downtown Alamo Drafthouse.

Music is Jerm's primary artistic outlet. Originally from New York City, he began writing lyrics at the age of 8. In the early '90s, he headed to Austin, where he settled in the house on the southeast quadrant of Cherrywood Road at 38½ Street with hip-hop bandmates of Brothers Cup. Their place, now a day care center, was dubbed "The Burger Palace" due to frequent trips to the Short Stop in Delwood Center.

Brothers Cup opened gigs for Ice Cube and Cypress Hill. From 1992 to 1996, Jerm played in a "bouncy punk" group known as Gals Panic that enjoyed regional success and sold more than 10,000 CDs on its own label.

Afterwards, Jerm formed the short-lived pop punk band Missile Command. When that project ended, he was left searching, even substitute teaching while he discovered his own voice. In 1998, he began performing solo as Tall, Dark and Lonesome. Interweaving monologues with storytelling lyrics, he enjoyed residencies at two great Austin rooms of yesteryear, Liberty Lunch and Electric Lounge. Releasing more indie CDs, he built a following in the "punk rock campfire" scene.

Pollet, who now lives in the Duplex Nation area of the neighborhood, describes some Tall, Dark and Lonesome fans as "modern day, punk rock, train-hopping hobos." The band playing on his most recent record, "Every Song is a Mating Call," was formed at a performance when fans showed up with instruments ready to play. As with his artistic influences, Billy Bragg and Bob Dylan, Jerm's songwriting is heartfelt, witty, and relatable. He feels punk doesn't have to be loud and distorted. It's more about expression, attitude and consciousness.

Often traveling to New York, Jerm performs with friend Timothy Speed Levitch, subject of the documentary "The Cruise." A performance with Levitch caught the attention of Alamo Drafthouse owners who called Jerm and said, "Hey, you're funny. Come and perform at our place."

That call led to the successful current

run of Mr. Sinus Theater, which is a version of the '90s TV show, "Mystery Science Theater 3000." Pollet, along with Owen Egerton and John Erler, sit in the front of the theater joking and wisecracking as the film flickers on the screen, commenting on just about everything from the director's motive to voice inflection. Audiences take cues from their hosts' humor and spontaneity by responding with laughter, applause and their own comments. Check out the performance schedule at www.mrsinus.com. ■

Kelli Kirk works at Maplewood Elementary School as a counselor and is parent to 18-month-old Gabriela with her husband, Mickey Williams, a musician.



Jerm Pollet, Tall, Dark and Lonesome.

SXEASTAUSTIN IS A SMASH

by Rebecca Kohout

Chad Hamilton and the Cherrywood Neighborhood Association Hospitality Committee hosted the third annual SXEastAustin Party in conjunction with the SXSW music festival. From noon to 6 p.m. on March 13, free music, beer and barbecue spilled out onto the Willowbrook greenbelt with friends, neighbors and musicians enjoying the beautiful spring weather.

Though it was the third year for Chad to host the event, it was the first year for the neighborhood association to help sponsor it. The Hospitality Committee helped with a financial contribution and organized volunteers who helped set up, cook briskets, clean up and solicit sponsorships from Fiesta (thanks to Steve) and Monarch (thanks to Shaun), which donated beer and drinks.

Nine bands played. Three women from Melbourne, Australia, in the band Git, were dressed in their cowboy boots and slippers with red roses in their hair and could have won fans with their accents

even if they hadn't sounded so great. Other rock bands included the Baptist Generals (Denton), Head Leather (Austin), the Meat Purveyors (Austin), lil'Cap'n Travis (Austin), the Sparrows (Dallas), Gingersol (Brooklyn, N.Y.), the Silos (New York City), and Kevin McKinney (Austin).

Cherrywood volunteers included Amanda Williams, Peter Ketter, Sallie and David Juvenal, Debbie Hagar, Cynthia Ballesteros, Kelly Miles and Mary Coleman.

The party was mentioned in the Statesman's XLent section, topping a list of SXSW freebies. Channel 8 news spent several hours at the party, and Cherrywood residents saw the results on TV.

Chad has invited all Cherrywood neighbors to this event in the past and now that the Hospitality Committee assisted, we hope to help him continue a fun Spring tradition. Rumor has it that our police liaison was present in plain clothes enjoying the music and weather. Mark your calendars for the Thursday of Spring Break next year and bring your lawn chairs. ■

Rebecca Kohout is chair of the CNA Hospitality Committee.



SXEa party pictures: backstage, front view, and host Chad Hamilton with Rebecca Kohout.
Photos: Rebecca Kohout