

Z-News

Austin, Texas

The Newsletter of the Zilker Neighborhood

February 2000

Message from the ZNA President

Jeff Jack

As the newly elected president of the Zilker Neighborhood Association, I would first like to thank all of our ZNA members, and especially those who attended our last general meeting on October 23. As the anthropologist Margaret Mead once noted, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, concerned citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." You may feel your commitment and service to our neighborhood often goes unnoticed, but it is through your individual efforts and time spent working with the neighborhood association that we ensure the vitality of Zilker. You represent the best of us. Thank you for your caring and your participation in the Zilker Neighborhood Association. Together, we can make a difference!

The ZNA has had a long history of service to our neighborhood, and we have been fortunate to have had many good leaders over the years. This past year was no exception. The ZNA executive committee would like to thank Robin Cravey, past president, and Harriet Gonzales, past vice president, for their year of service. They both did a great job, and we look forward to their continued support for ZNA. I would also like to thank the new executive committee for volunteering their time this year.

Last, but not least, I would like to thank those ZNA members who lassoed me into serving as president. Thanks for your confidence and support. The neighborhood faces many challenging issues and great opportunities this year. I appreciate the opportunity to serve at this important time. However, it will take all of us working together to preserve our quality of life, protect against unwanted changes and enhance the Zilker neighborhood now and for the future. Together we will make a difference!

The ZNA executive committee recently met and discussed our possible goals for this year. Some of the suggestions were:

1. Getting more involved in issues that impact us as a neighborhood.
2. Working with other neighborhood associations to increase our neighborhood political clout with elected officials.
3. Developing a neighborhood planning process.
4. Updating our ZNA web page.
5. Increasing the distribution of *Z-News* from 2,000 to 3,000 homes and businesses.
6. Expanding our ZNA membership.

Zilker Neighborhood Association General Meeting

Monday, February 28 at 6:30 p.m.
Kinney Ave. Baptist Church Fellowship Hall
1801 Kinney Ave.
Everyone is welcome!

MEET & GREET SOCIAL 6:30 - 7:00 p.m.



Come to our ZNA networking social and meet your neighbors! Light refreshments will be served.

MEETING AGENDA 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Candidates Forum for County Court-at-Law #5
(see page 9)

Gus Garcia, Jr. (Dem.)
Grant Godwin (Rep.)
Gisela Triana (Dem.)

Zoning Cases & Issue Updates

Barton Springs Road (see page 10)
Townlake Park (see page 11)
Family Residences in SF-3 Zoning Areas
May and November Elections
Lost Canyon

Neighborhood Planning (see page 5)
Old & New Business

7. Increasing our networking and communication opportunities with our residents.
8. Having more fun! Scheduling at least two social events this year: a spring or summer event and the second annual Zilker Fall Zestival in October.

While there is no order to this list, it is clear that all the members of the ZNA executive committee share the belief that this will be a very important year for the future of our neighborhood. The executive committee also wants *your* ideas. Please plan to attend the ZNA general meeting on **Monday, February 28**. Come for our first "meet and greet" social beginning at 6:30 p.m., and stay for the general meeting starting at 7:00 p.m. *Your* ideas are needed to help us expand on this list and to set the ZNA agenda for the year.

Your neighbor--

Jeff

ZNA OFFICERS ELECTED FOR 2000 BY POPULAR VOTE

The turnout of the ZNA membership was less than expected for such an important general meeting. Nonetheless, on the evening of October 23, 1999, the ballots were passed, the votes were taken and a new Zilker Neighborhood Association executive committee was elected for 2000. Robin Cravey, president, and Harriet Gonzales, vice president, were acknowledged for their work as ZNA officers during 1999.

Of the eight officers now serving, five are returning to serve second or third terms. Jeff Jack, who was the Austin Neighborhood Council representative, is our new president. Lorraine Atherton, who served as the ZNA secretary, moved to the position of vice president. Kaye Trybus, Fontaine Maverick and Barbara Cossie remain in their same positions.

At the ZNA, we like to say, "Our board only needs two Sides!" Sharing their office, Mary Ann and Steve Sides are serving together in this role as co-secretaries. Actually, we have *three* Sides. Their son, Grant, will be serving as our Zilker Neighborhood Association unofficial "mascot". The Social Chair position that sat empty most of last year is now filled by Carlene South. Laura Albrecht took Jeff Jack's position, and is now the Austin Neighborhood Council representative for the Zilker neighborhood.

These officers have accepted the challenge to lead the ZNA into the new millennium. Said Kaye Trybus, "The executive committee has a lot of work ahead of us. We are a good team."

We asked our new officers: "What do you like best about living in the Zilker neighborhood?"



JEFF JACK
President

An architect by vocation, Jeff's *avocation* is neighborhood preservation. Over his years in Austin, he has served on several boards and committees that work to maintain the integrity of Austin's neighborhoods. Recently, he has been working on the Townlake Park project. Living in Zilker since 1984, and a single parent to son, Jamie, Jeff says he "loves being on the hike and bike trail."



MARY ANN SIDES
Co-Secretary

Mary Ann has lived in the Zilker neighborhood for two years. She says, "A balanced life of family, work and laughter keeps me happy. Add God, friends and *Twinkies*, and then I become whole." A grade school teacher for the Austin Independent School District, she enjoys visiting the Umlauf Sculpture Garden for the peace and quiet she probably longs for in the classroom!



KAYE TRYBUS
Vice President

Kaye, a Zilker resident since 1979, is in her third term as ZNA vice president, and also serves on the Townlake Park project. She sees the Zilker neighborhood as her front yard. But her favorite place to be is in her *own* front yard where she leash-walks Molly, one of her three felines. Kaye says, "We love walk around and see the birds. Although, *she* has a different agenda for watching than I do!"



STEVE SIDES
Co-Secretary

Steve has lived in the Zilker neighborhood for two years. He is a builder by profession, and says he likes "to stay busy." Of course, since he is a builder in Austin, he probably *is* busy! Like Mary Ann, he likes walking through the Umlauf Sculpture Gardens for inspiration and reflection. Steve also enjoys bicycling around the neighborhood for fun and exercise with Mary Ann and Grant.



LORRAINE ATHERTON
Vice President

Lorraine has lived in the Zilker neighborhood since 1981. She likes being one block away from four bus stops and within walking distance of so many local businesses, especially the ones that serve food! You can catch her at Kerbey Lane Cafe, Matt's El Rancho, Taco Express, La French Bakery, Phoenicia, Suzi's Kitchen and ArtZ Rib House which are *her* favorite places to be in Zilker.



FONTAINE MAVERICK
Treasurer

Fontaine has lived in the Zilker community for 24 years, and this is her second term as treasurer for the ZNA. She has her own bookkeeping business, called *Taking Care of Business*, and is a jeweler. She successfully organized our Zilker Fall Festival in October. Barton Springs Pool is one of her favorite places in Zilker, but her *most* favorite place to be is beside her grandson, Manny!



LAURA ALBRECHT ANC Representative

Laura, a Zilker resident for eight years, enjoys the diversity of the neighborhood. She also likes caring for her front yard "Italian garden" where she grows tomatoes, peppers and basil. Laura says, "Where else can you live where it's okay to plant a garden in your front yard, and your neighbors don't believe it's out of the ordinary. They *just* want to know when the crop will be ready!"



CARLENE SOUTH Social Chairperson

Carlene is feisty, lively, funny *and* organized. In other words, she is the perfect social chairperson! Having lived in the Zilker neighborhood for 11 years, she says, "What I love about being in Zilker is the trees, trees, trees!" And, as the vice president of Treefolks, Carlene *knows* her trees! Carlene will be hosting our new "Meet & Greet" Social before our general meeting. Drop by and meet her!



BARBARA COSSIE Z-News Editor

This is Barbara's second term as editor of *Z-News*. She is determined to get "this editing thing" right *this* time! She thanks her mentor, Robin Cravey, who got her through her first term. The Salvation Army, Goodwill and yard sales are her favorite spots in Zilker. Barbara says, "I collect teapots, and it's always a good day when I find another one for my collection. Not that I *need* another one!"



GRANT SIDES (with Mom) Mascot

Okay, we don't really have an "official" position of mascot for the ZNA, but we realized early on that when we got the *two* big Sides, we got the little one, too! Grant, age 5, our mascot of the neighborhood, represents the youth of Zilker today *and* the future. Because of him and the other youngsters living in our neighborhood, we are reminded every day why we do the work we do.

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THE TRAFFIC CALMING REPORT: Making Our Streets Safer

By Lorraine Atherton, ZNA Vice President

Do you ever feel like things are moving *too* fast? That's because we are.

During October and November city staff collected traffic counts and speed measurements in the Zilker neighborhood as part of the city's traffic calming program. The numbers were presented to the working group of 21 Zilker neighbors and 17 alternates in January to help us identify problem streets and intersections. Over the next few months, the working group will be developing a traffic calming plan to present to the entire neighborhood for a vote.

When the data sheets were passed out, the first thing we noticed is that speeding is a problem all over the neighborhood. About 75% of the sites recorded speeds above 30 miles per hour (mph) for the eighty-fifth percentile. That means 85% of the vehicles were going that speed or slower, and 15% were going faster. When we realize that most of our streets are designed for 20 mph, it becomes clear why so many of us feel unsafe on or near our streets. For instance, at the counter on La Casa, 85% of the vehicles were going 31 mph or less. This means about 15% (or 109 vehicles on that particular day) were going faster than 30 mph on a dangerous hill that is posted for 20 mph. The highest 85% speeds were recorded on Rabb Road (including Rae Dell and Robert E. Lee Road), Bluebonnet Lane and Melridge, and Kinney Avenue.



The counts and speeds were taken at 40 spots around the neighborhood (between South Lamar and Rabb Road, from Barton Springs Road to Barton Skyway), and turning movements during peak hours were counted at five intersections on South Lamar Boulevard and two on Barton Springs Road. The counts were presented as 24-hour totals and as one-hour AM and PM peaks. If you would like to learn more about the counts on your street, come to the ZNA general meeting on **Monday, February 28 at 7:00 p.m.**, look at the data, and find out who on your street is in the working group.

The traffic calming project has about \$150,000 to spend in the Zilker neighborhood. We can choose from a range of devices, from stop signs to complete street closure, depending on what we as a neighborhood think will help the most.

At this point, it is important to understand what the traffic calming project will *not* do:

1. The traffic calming project won't lower posted speed limits or improve enforcement of existing traffic laws. The police department will not stop speeders unless they are going more than 10 mph over the posted limit, and Public Works insists that it cannot post speed limits below 30 mph.

What you can do: Volunteer to lobby our City Council for a more rational approach to speeding.

2. The traffic calming project won't build sidewalks (except for short stretches that are an integral part of a traffic calming device)

What you can do: Volunteer to organize a sidewalk inventory or a sidewalk planning group.

3. It won't calm traffic on or improve pedestrian crossings across South Lamar Boulevard. City staff tells us that addressing just one intersection on South Lamar Boulevard would consume the entire traffic calming budget for Zilker. Still, getting across South Lamar, especially to and from bus stops, is perhaps the most dangerous traffic problem for our neighborhood. According to data compiled by the Trans Texas Alliance, in the last three years, four children have been injured trying to cross the Zilker neighborhood section of South Lamar.

What you can do: Volunteer to work on a plan to improve pedestrian safety on South Lamar.

In the meantime, if you are driving around our the neighborhood, please *slow down*, and enjoy the beauty of Zilker!

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Zilker Neighborhood Planning: Why Is It So Important?

Every day, no matter where we are, we see evidence of Austin's growth. It may be the traffic congestion on our streets and highways, the increase of our taxes, or the new buildings going up.

Austin's population is currently just over 600,000. It is estimated that this region will *double* in population within the next twenty-five years! How will this explosive growth change Austin? Will it be for the better or the worse? Will we--or *can* we--protect the quality of life in our existing neighborhoods?

To address this issue, the city leaders initiated an effort to focus on neighborhood planning several years ago. In the process of creating neighborhood planning, it was envisioned that neighborhoods would define for *themselves* the appropriate growth for their neighborhood, the needs and desires of the neighborhood, and what would be unacceptable in the area. This process of planning has been used by several neighborhoods, including Dawson just east of Zilker. Twelve neighborhoods have been, or are presently in, the process of developing neighborhood plans. Recently, this process was expanded with the expectation of completing plans for 60 neighborhoods within the next five years. These neighborhoods represent most of the entire Austin urban core.

Asked about neighborhood planning, ZNA President Jeff Jack said, "This process offers neighborhoods a great opportunity to determine their *own* futures. However, it will require a significant effort by the people who care about the Zilker neighborhood to ensure a great plan. The first step will be to create an effective leadership team, and it is important that this team be inclusive of all the folks who live, work and own property in Zilker. The primary responsibility of the ZNA is to represent our residents, and ensure that our interests are a priority in the planning."



In order to establish this leadership team, the ZNA will need *your* help. Zilker is a large neighborhood with almost 5,000 people. To ensure that everyone has an opportunity to participate in this process, the ZNA executive committee has suggested that Zilker be divided into sectors, and a communication network be established to supplement the neighborhood newsletter, *Z-News*. Two ways we can do this are via "telephone trees" and a neighborhood e-mail serve. But there is more work to be done.

Why is neighborhood planning so important? Because Zilker is *your* neighborhood, and the future of Zilker is in your hands! ZNA Vice President Kaye Trybus stated, "Austin is growing every day. We can't afford to waste another minute! If we don't protect our neighborhoods now, who will in the future?"

Plan to attend the ZNA general meeting on **Monday, February 28 at 7:00 p.m.** to voice *your* ideas about this important issue.

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The Official Printer of *Z-News*,
the Newsletter of the Zilker Neighborhood Association

Our Neighborhood Profile: Who Are We?

The City's Neighborhood Planning Initiative is a great opportunity to empower neighborhoods to shape their own futures. While we may have ideas for protecting and enhancing Zilker, first we need to understand some basic information about our neighborhood. The neighborhood boundary map on page 7 indicates the extent of our neighborhood planning area and the demographics below give us "the big picture" of the composition of Zilker.

In our next issue of *Z-News*, we will give you more information on the services now available in the neighborhood. This information will include how utilities run, the carrying capacity of our roads, transit stop locations and other basic data that will help the neighborhood make sound planning decisions.

Zilker Neighborhood Data

Land Area: Acreage

1. Land Area

Zilker Park	379 acres
Neighborhood	<u>759 acres</u>
Total Area	1,138 acres

2. Area by Land Use

Single Family	320 acres	42%
Mobile Homes	15 acres	1%
Multi-Family	<u>55 acres</u>	<u>7%</u>
Subtotal Residential	390 acres	50%

Commercial	81 acres	10%
Office	14 acres	1%
Industrial	<u>8 acres</u>	<u>>1%</u>
Subtotal Business	103 acres	12%

Civic	24 acres	3%
Park/Open	379 acres	---
Transportation	200 acres	26%
Utilities	1 acre	>1%
Water	<u>7 acres</u>	<u>>1%</u>
Subtotal Area	232 acres	30%
(without Zilker Park)		

Undeveloped	32 acres	4%
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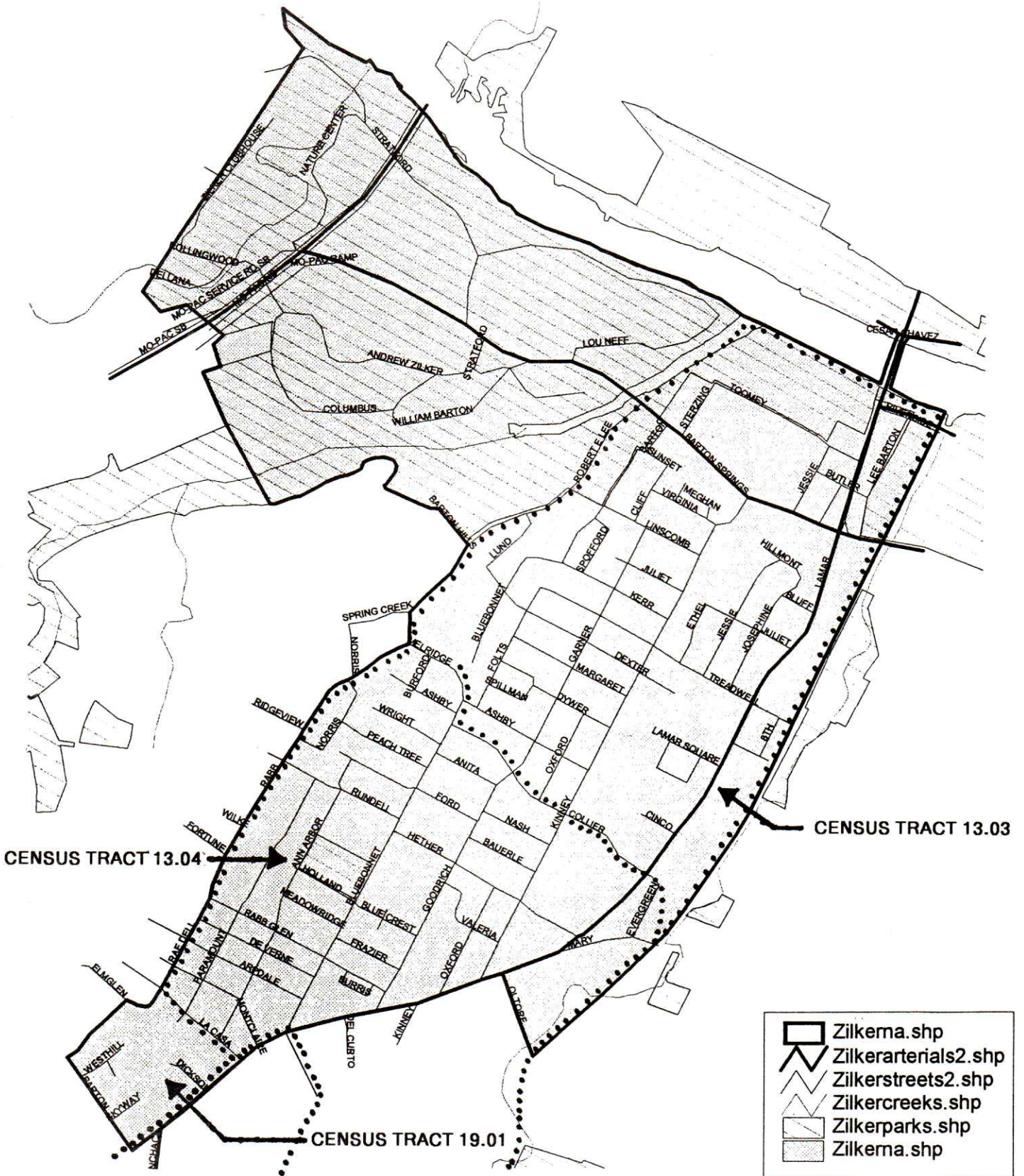
Density: Current density based on neighborhood area and 1990 data

1. People per acre: $(4,708/759) = 6.2$
2. Housing units per acre: $(2,294/759) = 3.02$

Population: The Zilker neighborhood includes all of census tract 13.04, approximately 60% of census tract 13.03 and a small portion of tract 19.01. The data below is a "snap shot" of the neighborhood in 1990 when the population of Austin was about 472,000. Today, Austin's population is over 608,000. There will not be 2000 census results until next year. In the meantime, we will be working with the city to make 2000 projections for Zilker that can be used as we develop our neighborhood plan.

1990 Data

1. Total residential population	4,708
2. Population by demographic type	
Anglo	3,026
Hispanic	907
African American	104
American Indian	2
Asia American	92
Other	537
3. Total number of households	2,294
Average number of people/household	2.05
4. Housing units by type	
Owner occupied	914
Rental	1,373
Total number of housing units	2,287
Average number of people/housing units	2.05
5. Economic Demographics	
Median household income	\$23,358
Per capita income	\$14,075
% below poverty level	19.4
6. Employment Data: Civil Labor Force	
Employed (Women)	1,301
Employed (Men)	<u>1,604</u>
Subtotal	2,905
Unemployed (Women)	75
Unemployed (Men)	<u>85</u>
Subtotal	160
Not in labor force (Women)	532
Not in labor force (Men)	<u>326</u>
Subtotal	858
7. Educational Demographics	
Without high school degree	644
High school degree	705
Some college or associate degree	1,089
Bachelor or graduate degree	<u>1,409</u>



ZILKER NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOC.

A Note from Zilker School

Guess who's about to celebrate her big 5-0?

If you said, "The editor of *Z-News*," we're flattered. If you said Zilker Elementary School, you're right! Students, parents, teachers and ex-students are hosting the birthday fete of the half century for their favorite school on **Friday, April 28**. But *your* help is needed to make Zilker's birthday celebration the best one ever! How? It's easy!

1. Fill out and mail the Interview of Previous Students and Parents form enclosed.
2. Call the school office at 414-2327 to volunteer your time and talent to the event.
3. Got pictures? The party planners are looking for photos or memorabilia from Zilker's past to scan or copy.
4. Come to the party! The day-long event will include a concert and dedication ceremony of the **Texana Faulk Conn Outdoor Learning Center**. Zilker students will present their special program, "The History of Zilker". (Can't wait to see that!)

And speaking of the new outdoor learning center, we don't know whose idea it was to install this outdoor amphitheater, but that person should get a prize! What a wonderful addition to Zilker School and our neighborhood. Ms. Trevino, school principal, says, "The purpose of the outdoor education center is to provide an outdoor amphitheater for this school and community to embrace its commitment to the arts." But Zilker needs your financial help to move this project along. That natural stone staircased seating for 500 ain't cheap, folks! And we all know rocks don't grow on trees, don't we? So put your money where you can sit on it--again and again! Your contribution is tax deductible. Get out that checkbook and send your donation to :

The Texana Faulk Conn Outdoor Learning Center
Zilker Elementary School
1900 Bluebonnet Lane
Austin, Texas 78704

"Wow! I didn't know he could do that!"

Okay--really--I'm not kidding; this should be a hoot! Check out the annual **Zilker School Coffee House & Talent Show** on **Friday, March 31** beginning at **6:30 p.m.** Honestly, you need to see what your neighbor is willing to do in public...in front of an audience...without embarrassment. You might be surprised to learn that he or she can *really* sing, play an instrument, dance or juggle. You might be amazed to find out that your neighbor is a poet, magician or acrobat. Or, you could even decide that you have a talent that *you* want to share! Whether you choose to sit in the audience and enjoy the show, or be *part* of the show, this will be an evening to remember. And how much will this fun cost ya? What if we told you that it's *free*? Okay, you tell me; where can you go in this town to see local entertainment for nothin'? The Zilker Coffee House and Talent Show, of course! We'll see you there on March 31--on stage or off!



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HAVE YOU HEARD Z-NEWS?

As the old Beatles' song goes, "You say good-bye, and I say hello....hello...hello..."

(Please, those under 25, don't ask us who the Beatles are. We feel old enough already just mentioning them!)

A fond farewell goes out to **Lee** and **Leslie** who lived on Kerr Avenue. They recently moved to Maine so Lee could attend woodworking school. After he completes his studies, we hope they will come back to the Zilker neighborhood. Lee would certainly have his plate full working on some of our older Zilker homes. Good luck, kids! We'll miss you. You've been good neighbors!

Z-welcome goes out to **Milton**, who recently moved to Kerr Avenue. In fact, he moved into Lee and Leslie's house after they left. Hello, neighbor!

Let's welcome **Paul**, **LaDonna** and **Luke** who moved to Ann Arbor. They came to the neighborhood because they wanted Luke to attend Zilker Elementary School. High praise, I'd say!

Welcome back, **Cody**! Son of **Curtis** and **Sharon**, and sister of **Brandy**, Cody recently moved back from Phoenix to take a job he couldn't refuse. It's good to have him back in the 'hood!

Put another candle on the cake, Maudie!

Great big happy birthday wishes go out to four of our ZNA officers: **Kaye**, **Fontaine** and **Barbara** had birthdays in December, and **Jeff** celebrated his special day in January.



A happy birthday wish goes out to **Kelvey** who lives on Garner Avenue. She celebrates her 14th year this month, and the countdown toward that 16th birthday has surely started. "Oh, man! Another two years until I can get my driver's license?"

If you have some good news, tell us!
We would love to hear from you.

Z-News
P. O. Box 33546
Austin, Texas 78764-0546

The Candidates' Forum

It's election time again, neighbors! Elections will be held in March, May and November. In May, most of the attention will be given to the city council race, but there is another important race coming up as well.

The Travis County Court-at-Law #5 will have its primary in March. The role of this judiciary is critical to crime prevention, and this court handles criminal cases in our area.

Because crime prevention is an important issue to our neighborhood, the ZNA executive committee has invited the candidates, Gus Garcia, Jr., Grant Godwin and Gisela Triana to speak at our general meeting on **Monday, February 28 at 7:00 p.m.** Each person will have an opportunity to talk about his or her experience and agenda for this important judgeship.

Plan to attend this upcoming meeting to learn more about these candidates, and how your vote can affect your neighborhood.

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NEW SHOPPING CENTER TO OPEN ON SOUTH LAMAR

Soon another piece of undeveloped green space in our city that was home to wildflowers and other living things will be no more. That vacant lot sitting between the Genie Car Wash and the Mini-Warehouse on the east side of South Lamar Boulevard is being developed for another life form that can easily be spotted in this prosperous Austin economy: the *Shoppersapien*.



The recently opened RaceTrac service station was the first business that took some of the empty site, and a shopping center is planned for the rest. Called Ainbinder Retail Center, the shopping center will be located at 1509 South Lamar.

As this development is directly impacting two neighborhoods, the executive committees of the Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Association and the ZNA met with the developer of the Center to request several changes in the building design. It was stressed to the developer that it was important that the shopping center be pedestrian-friendly and *not* have the typical "strip mall" look. However, since the project already had the required zoning, the committee members had little leverage to demand any changes. The developer listened to the suggestions presented, and agreed to make several revisions in the original plan.

The changes include better handicapped access from the sidewalks along South Lamar to the building, lowered parking light poles, a redesign of the building front, and added shade on the west side of the building. Said Jeff Jack, ZNA president, "We appreciate that these changes were accepted by this developer. However, in the future, we hope our neighborhood plan will include commercial building design guidelines to ensure more compatible development in the Zilker neighborhood."

CONSTRUCTION AHEAD: BARTON SPRINGS ROAD UNDER REPAIR

Ah, Barton Springs Road. That mile of bumpy pavement that leads Austin residents and visitors in and out of Zilker Park has been the pivotal point of discussion, debates and disagreements for the last few years among neighbors, business owners and city staff.

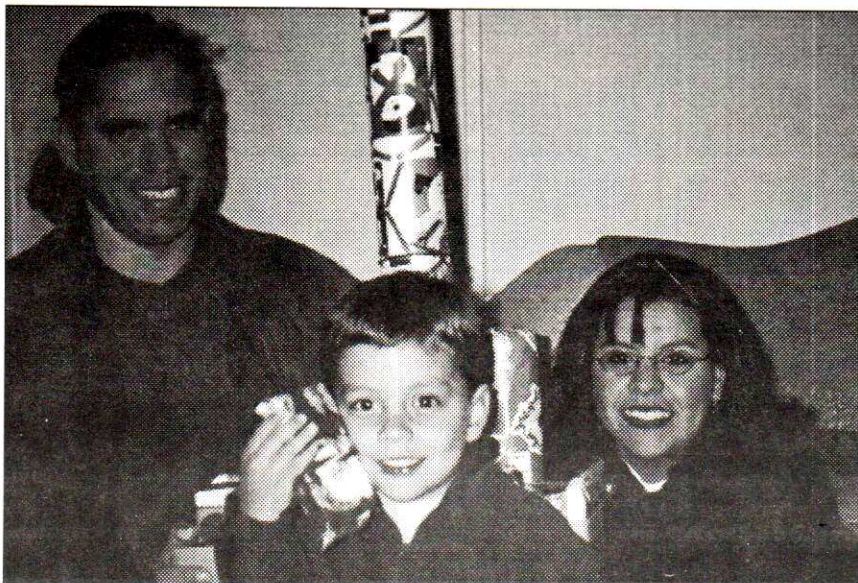
But soon all that will be over, as the Barton Springs Road reconstruction moves forward with the final design. Last month, city staff reviewed the project with members of the Zilker Neighborhood Association executive committee and Eleanor McKinney. As a landscape architect, Ms. McKinney has a personal interest in the Barton Springs Road design other than just a professional one. She lives in Zilker neighborhood as well. Asked to review the landscaping along Barton Springs Road, she suggested several plants and trees that would maintain seasonal color and lower upkeep. Jeff Jack, ZNA president, said, "We can't thank Eleanor enough for her expertise and the time she spent in working with the ZNA executive committee on this project."

Of course, it will be a long time before the trees and plants are put in the ground. In the meantime, there will be the construction. The construction phase of the project will be disruptive to residents and local business owners alike. The ZNA executive committee has asked the city to meet with business owners to coordinate schedules and minimize the impact on their businesses along Barton Springs Road.



As the construction schedule goes now, all right of ways will be acquired by the city by March, utilities will be moved by May, and general construction will begin in June. The projected construction will take at least one year. While this will be an inconvenience to our neighborhood, the resulting improvement will be a beautiful entry into Zilker Park and will increase carrying capacity for Barton Springs Road while providing a more pedestrian and bike-friendly road.

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ZNA Officers Sponsor a Zilker School Family for the Holidays

At the December 3rd board meeting, the executive committee voted to sponsor a family from Zilker School for the holidays. There was not enough time to involve the general membership, so the committee moved quickly and decisively. It was agreed to use ZNA funds for a \$50 HEB gift card with committee members donating food and presents from their personal funds.

Right before Christmas, the Sides made a visit to the single mother and her 9-year-old daughter, the recipients of these holiday tidings. As the photo at the left shows, a festive time was had by our ZNA officers and mascot as they prepared to play Santa to our sponsored family.

THE GOTHAM AND BEYOND

The Gotham Condominium project proposed for South Congress just at the southeast corner of the Congress Avenue bridge came to a screeching halt last month due in large measure to the opposition of park and neighborhood advocates. The Houston developer had proposed a 120-foot high building in an area where the Townlake corridor is protected by the Waterfront Overlay District Ordinance (WOD), which should have limited the height to only 60 feet. The proposed building also violated the Capitol view dominance zoning that would have required building setbacks from Congress Avenue. While this project has been promoted as "Smart Growth," it was rejected by the Parks Board and the Downtown Design Commission for many reasons, including its inappropriate scale, lack of mixed uses, and its limiting of pedestrian access to Townlake.

City Council member Beverly Griffith led the effort to stop the project outright. However, Council member Jackie Goodman was successful in getting the council to just put the project on hold until June 2000. Ms. Goodman wants to have a citizens committee review the intent of the Townlake Corridor Study and the protective ordinances and then re-evaluate the Gotham project. While there was some confusion about the way some portions of the waterfront overlay ordinance was re-codified in the city's recent "plain English" rewrite of the Land Development Code, neighborhood advocates felt that the intent was very clear to limit big buildings along the south shore waterfront, and that the project as proposed should have been rejected as suggested by Ms. Griffith.

The city is in the process of assembling the Citizens Committee that will review the Townlake corridor. The Zilker Neighborhood Association and other south shore neighborhood groups have requested that there be significant neighborhood representation on this committee and hope that the city council will honor this request.

Jim Smith, assistant city manager in charge of this effort, has proposed a two step process. First, a smaller citizen group will be charged with looking at the area directly around the proposed Gotham site, which is

from the river to Barton Springs Road, and from South 1st Street to South Congress Avenue. This group would make its recommendations by March with the city council making a final decision on the Gotham in June. The second step would include a study by a larger community group over the next 12 to 18 months that would encompass the whole Townlake corridor from Tom Miller Dam to Montopolis.

The key issue is that Townlake is for all of Austin. The waterfront protection the community has worked hard to establish should not be set aside for the economic gain of a few developers. Yes, Austin does need more downtown housing, and we should keep development off the aquifer, but there are better places for this project than on the edge of Townlake. If "Smart Growth" is to be truly smart, it has to also protect Austin's most precious resources, our neighborhoods and the Townlake corridor. The question is whether Council member Goodman's initiative can result in stronger protections for Townlake next June. If not, the Gotham issue will certainly have the neighborhood and parks advocates at City Council Chambers next June opposing the project.

Wait a minute! What if the Hokey Pokey is really what it's all about?

It's Townlake Park...Not Townlake Parking!

Did you know that within five years, Austin will have a beautiful park with fountains, running trails and playgrounds, *and* just a short walk from the Zilker neighborhood? Did you know that creating this park has taken a community-wide effort to ensure that Austin's citizens and visitors will be getting the best park possible?



The area around Palmer and Auditorium Shores is currently called Townlake Park. A master plan for the area was developed with the city inviting the South Central Coalition (SCC) to be a "stakeholder" in the planning process. The SCC includes the Avenue (Congress) Merchants Association and six south shore neighborhoods: Bouldin, Dawson, Galindo, Barton Hills, South River City Citizens (Travis Heights) and Zilker. The final consensus master plan was adopted by the City Council last year. Since that time, architects, engineers and landscape architects have been working together to develop the design with stakeholder input.

The size and location of the parking garage was a major issue during the master planning process, with neighborhoods clearly concerned about the height and appearance of the structure. In the final plan, the garage will be located on the northwest corner of Barton Springs Road and South 1st Street, the scale of the building is limited to four floors, and the visual impact of the building will be reduced by curving the exterior walls. After the master plan was adopted, it was proposed that the parking garage be increased from a four story parking garage to at least six stories. This change was deemed unacceptable by the neighborhood and parks stakeholders, and they successfully lobbied the City Council to maintain the integrity of the original plan.

With this one issue settled, now instead of increasing parking in Townlake Park, the city can be looking at better mass transit solutions and alternative sites for additional parking, if the need does arise. We invite you to attend our general meeting on **Monday, February 28** to hear more about Townlake Park.

Start the New Millennium Off Right! Join Your ZNA Today!

Annual ZNA dues are only \$5.00 per person.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Send this completed form and your check
(payable to the Zilker Neighborhood Association) to:

Fontaine Maverick, Treasurer
Zilker Neighborhood Association
P. O. Box 33546
Austin, Texas 78764-0546

Which of *These* Costly Homeseller Mistakes Will You Make When You Sell Your Home?

Austin, Texas--A new report has just been released which reveals the seven costly mistakes that most homeowners make when selling their homes and the 9 Step System that can help you sell your home fast--*and* for the most amount of money.

This industry report clearly shows how the traditional ways of selling homes have become increasingly less and less effective in today's real estate market. The fact of the matter is that fully three quarters of today's homesellers don't get what they want for their homes and become disillusioned and financially disadvantaged when they put their homes on the market.

As this report uncovers, these seven deadly mistakes that home sellers make will cost them literally thousands of dollars when they go to sell their homes. The good news is each and every one of these mistakes is entirely preventable.

In answer to this issue, industry insiders have prepared a free special report entitled, "*The 9 Step System to Get Your Home Sold Fast and For Top Dollar*".

To hear a brief recorded message about how to order your free copy of this report, call 1-800-278-5449 and enter ID #1086. You can call anytime 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Call NOW to find out how you can get the most money for your home.

This report is courtesy of Thom Lemon, Broker.
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Zilker Neighborhood Association (ZNA) general meetings are held four times a year in February, April, July and October. Meetings are scheduled on the last Monday of these months as announced. These general membership meetings are open to all Zilker residents and others interested in the preservation of the Zilker neighborhood.