

Z - NEWS

Austin, Texas

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Zilker Neighborhood Association

Join Your Neighbors For a Watermelon Social!

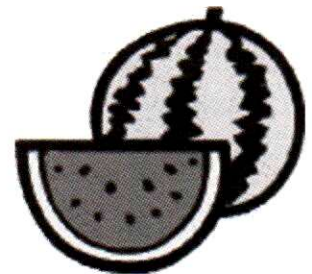
Everyone is welcome
Bring the kids! Bring a friend!
Bring your appetite!

The fun starts at 7 p.m., Monday, July 28th
behind Zilker Elementary.

Free Ice-Cold Watermelon
Tea provided by Nile Vally Herbs
Seed-Spitting Contest
Music (Bring your own instrument)
Z-News Deliverers will be honored. If you are a
deliverer - please come!

Watermelon Fun Facts

- In China watermelon is a popular gift to bring a host.
- Watermelon is 92% water.
- Early explorers used watermelons as canteens.
- The largest watermelon was 262 pounds.
- Every part of a watermelon is edible, even the seeds and rinds.
- The first watermelon harvest occurred nearly 5,000 years ago in Egypt.



From the President



More Sidewalk for Kinney Avenue Hill?

Although there has been disagreement about what we should do about it, most concur we have a serious pedestrian safety problem on Kinney between Virginia and Barton Springs Rd. Many Zilker residents who regularly walk or drive this stretch of road think it is important that something be done asap to improve the dangerous situation.

Given limited space, I'll skip a summary of the related history/politics and get right to the current situation. There is now sidewalk only from the northern edge of the Lost Canyon condos driveway down to Barton Springs Rd. The site plan for the condo development approved by the City stipulates that the developer is not required to put sidewalk in front of that property until the City puts in concrete curb. Although the City normally would not normally make that kind of work a priority, we have the opportunity to participate in a matching program that would get the curb and gutter installed this year, if we act quickly. Although I haven't yet spoken directly with the Lost Canyon developer to confirm, I've heard indirectly that he is ready to proceed with building the additional sidewalk along his property front once the curb is in place.

Raising money to get curb and gutter installed so that the Lost Canyon developer will build more sidewalk in front of his property is not a perfect solution to our safety problem. I can agree with the people who say "we shouldn't have to do this," and also we'd still be looking for another solution to fill a gap left at the top of the

hill. But, I think it's our best available option. I hear that Zilker residents have been looking for a way to get sidewalk on this block for at least 10 years. I've been worried about it for only 3 years, and I'm tired of waiting. How about you? Here's something we can do together, now.

We would need to raise \$4,875, our match portion for the construction of 325 feet of curb and gutter. That would be a lot of money coming out of any one person's pocket, but not such a great burden spread among the many people who walk down Kinney to get to the businesses in the Barton Springs Rd area, the trails and parks, and bus stops. How much can you contribute, assuming we can get assurance the sidewalk actually will be built once the curb work is done? I'm looking for firm pledges now, rather than the cash up front, to assess the feasibility of pursuing this option. Please call or e-mail me by August 15th if you are willing to contribute to this solution with cash and/or assistance in fund raising.

Ready to Participate on Executive Committee?

There are several seats open for our new year beginning October 1st. If you might be willing to serve as an officer or committee chair, please talk with me or any other officer soon about your interests. Specific needs for next year include someone with desktop publishing skills to take over the editing of our quarterly newsletter (so our current editor can move to another role).

Hope to see you on the 28th.

Your neighbor,

Deborah Bice-Broussard

Waiting for Wheatsville

By Jane Kurzawa Cravey and Wendy Papasan

Many neighbors were disappointed to see the Fiesta in Lamar Plaza close. Knowing it was of concern to the neighborhood (and to us!), the ZNA executive committee contacted several grocery store chains to let them know of the strong support for another grocery in that spot.

After contacting, HEB, Sun Harvest and several other smaller chains, only Wheatsville Food Cooperative showed an interest in talking to the neighborhood association.

The executive committee arranged for Wheatsville General Manager Dan Gillote to make a presentation at the general meeting in April. In a nutshell, Gillote reported the co-op is interested in expanding to South Austin, but the timing, location, and finances are not quite right.

Because of the tremendous amount of excitement generated at the meeting, despite less than positive news, we circulated a sign-up sheet for folks interested in helping Wheatsville expand.

Jane Kurzawa Cravey held a meeting to discuss the situation further. 11 people attended and about 55 expressed an interest by email. Neil Jodeit, a

Wheatsville board member, attended the meeting.

Jodeit confirmed what Gillote had alluded to. Wheatsville is not ready to expand. Most likely it will be one to two years, because they are still recovering from the opening of Central Market, which hit their sales hard.

In the meantime, what can South Austin do to help?

Shop at Wheatsville. The more people who spend their dollars at Wheatsville, the quicker they'll get to the magic profit number that will allow expansion.

Become a lifetime member. Extra dollars from membership contributions go straight to capital, which gets the co-op closer to achieving its goals.

Spearhead task forces that:

Engage in a capital drive to get on-paper commitments from investors in anticipation of the expansion south.

Conduct a membership drive for the co-op in the neighborhood.

Campaign for a South Austinite for the Wheatsville Board of Directors.

If you are interested in heading any of these task forces, please contact Jane Cravey. She has the list of folks who attended the meeting. All these ideas will bring the Wheatsville Food Co-op one step closer to South Austin.



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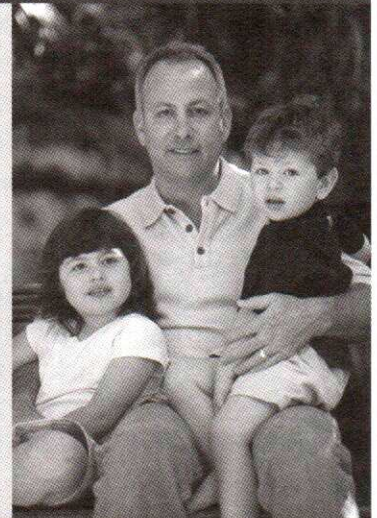
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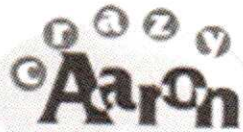
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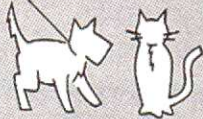
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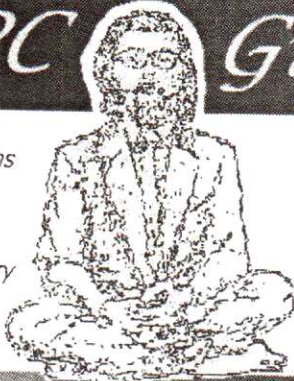
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Mad about MAD6

By Lorraine Atherton and Jeff Jack

The Zilker Neighborhood Association supports local businesses along South Lamar Boulevard and believes they are an essential part of our vibrant neighborhood. The preservation of these businesses is just as important as safeguarding residential areas of the neighborhood.

The Problem: South Lamar designated as a major highway

The Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO), the regional agency that determines where tax dollars are spent on roads, has developed a roadway plan for the next 25 years. Referred to as Campo 2025, it designates South Lamar as a Major Arterial Divided 6 or MAD6 (six lanes with a center median). Adding two extra lanes means increasing the right-of-way to 130 feet. This would result in tearing down more than 35 buildings and removing the front parking from another 97 business. The effect on nearby homes and businesses would be devastating.

The Solution: Tell CAMPO to leave South Lamar a MAD4

CAMPO will consider amendments to the 2025 plan this fall. Among the amendments is one from the Austin City Council that recommends South Lamar remain a four-lane arterial with a center turn lane. By keeping the MAD4 designation, improvements can be made without widening the road. This is the only way to protect local businesses and the neighborhood.

"Adding two extra lanes...would result in tearing down more than 35 buildings..."

Remind your elected representatives of the public support for keeping South Lamar a MAD4. Write or telephone Sen. Gonzales Barrientos (CAMPO chair), the mayor and city council, Travis County commissioners, your state senator, and the state representatives elected from Austin.

To get on the CAMPO mailing list to receive notices of public hearings, phone (512) 974-2275 or e-mail campo@campotexas.org.

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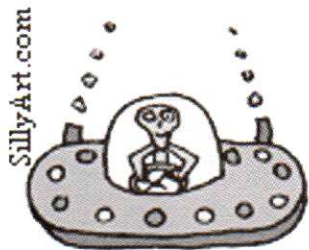
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Alien Scooters are Out of This World

By Wendy Papasan

Although the departure of the Fiesta gave neighbors one less reason to visit Lamar Plaza, a new electric scooter shop is attracting customers from all over Austin.

Alien Scooters, which sells environmentally friendly, electric transportation, is decidedly South Austin. The neon spaceship over the door and the matching tie-dyed t-shirts on the owners confirmed my suspicion that this place was 78704-worthy.



Ann McSpadden, a co-owner with Daniel White, was helping an elderly gentleman when I walked in, but a friendly greyhound mascot escorted me while I perused the collection.

The scooters run from about \$100 for a kid's toy to a \$3,700 beauty that goes up to 30 mph and runs 50 miles on one charge.

When McSpadden finished with her customer, I asked to test ride a middle-of-the-line model. She outfitted me with a shiny maroon helmet and we stepped outside.

"Some of our scooters are for serious transportation, others are just for play," said McSpadden. "But they're all real quiet, clean, easy to take care of and affordable."

I had fun zipping around the parking lot, following Ann as we went up and down hills and past cars. Later I found out my scooter reaches a maximum of 17 mph, will run for 20 miles on a nickel's worth of electricity and costs about \$800.

The other thing that piqued my interest was their line of electric bikes. These e-cycles are fully pedal-powered or can cruise by battery, depending on how the biker is feeling. This feature gives riders a kick whenever they need it, and is especially practical for our hilly city's 100-degree summers.

Visit www.alienscooters.com for more information or beam down to 1122B S. Lamar for your own test flight.

ZNA Membership - It Does a Body Good!

By Elizabeth Yevich

One of the nice surprises about being on the ZNA Executive Committee is having people approach me by saying they've seen my name associated with the neighborhood association. The first thing I ask them (since I'm in charge of membership) is whether or not they're a current member of ZNA. More often than not, their membership has expired. So instead of pushing membership sales at parties, I thought I'd write an article to review the basic rules.

Dues for ZNA are \$7 each year, per person. Just this year, the Executive Committee instituted a sustaining membership of \$25 per person, per year. This is a way for those who can contribute more to do so.

The association's fiscal year begins October 1. This means if you pay your 2003

dues in September, your 2004 dues are still due October 1st. Receiving a newsletter doesn't mean your dues are paid. Most homes and apartments in our boundaries receive a copy, whether they are ZNA members or not. To be eligible to vote at meetings, you must be a member for at least 30 days and have paid your dues.

I hope you drop by to renew or become a new member at the Watermelon Social July 28th! For membership questions contact Elizabeth Yevich at eyevich@austin.rr.com or (512) 462-2859.

**THANK YOU to
our newest sustain-
ing members!**

Robert Corbin
Carol and Robert
McDaniel
Dave Piper
Dillon Powers
Mary Sahs
Robin Sherwin

Zilker Neighborhood Association

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About the Zilker Neighborhood Association...

ZNA holds general meetings the 4th Monday of February, April, July and October. The executive committee meets at 7 p.m. the first Monday of each month at Artz Rib House.

Our Purpose: To improve the quality of life in the neighborhood in matters of land use, environmental protection, public services, consumer protection, preservation of the historic and unique character of the community; to provide support in other matters of neighborhood concern and to promote and participate in the civic life of the city.

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