



Newsletter of the
Zilker
Neighborhood
Association

Austin, Texas
Established 1981

Let's Stop Planning for Crime

by Lorraine Atherton, ZNews Editor

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH goes beyond crime reporting. Over the decades, it has provided guidelines for how a traditional neighborhood like Zilker is supposed to work—a kit for creating a healthy neighborhood one block at a time. As Richard Gravois, president of ZNA, put it in a recent post to the Zilker Yahoo group, "The benefits of a Neighborhood Watch program are many, and crime prevention is one but not the biggest. The biggest benefit is getting to know your neighbors. . . . It is a shame that TV crime shows have big, blaring sound effects when the cops get the bad guy. Toot, Toot. There is no way that we will use tax money to get 76 trombones to play when you nod to your neighbor, but that's what we need."

The current crime wave in Austin has renewed interest in these programs, and in response, some Zilker neighbors are volunteering to help you organize a Neighborhood Watch group on your block. Read about it on page 4.

In response to crime reports on the Zilker Yahoo group, Jeff Jack (a former ZNA president) also touched on the need to spend tax money on healthy neighborhoods. Back when the City of Austin was negotiating its police contract, says Jeff, "it was apparent that the only real indicator of crime levels was the economy. Good economy, less crime; bad economy, more crime [but we] were pressed into increasing the number of officers per 1,000 population" with the hope of reducing crime. Jeff goes on to explain that essentially all our tax revenue is dedicated to the public safety budget: "So we now have the best staffed and the very highest paid police department in the state yet no measurable decrease in crime. . . . We did nothing to address these potential real causes of crime, but instead relied on just more funding for public safety. . . . We did not diversify our economy, increase job training, or improve education for the most vulnerable of our population, so when the economy went bad, the crime rate escalated."

Indeed, at the beginning of last year's budget cycle, one of the first suggested cuts to the police department's own budget was the Community Liaison office, which helps us with Neighborhood Watch and other crime prevention efforts. Through the Austin Neighborhoods Council, ZNA supported efforts to maintain effective community programs within APD, *(Continued on page 10)*

Next ZNA Meeting February 22 Monday 6:30-8:45 PM

Zilker Elementary School
1900 Bluebonnet



Meet and Greet Social
Oxford Parking Permits
Name Our Park
Neighborhood Watch
Update



Newcomers, old-timers,
homeowners, renters,
business neighbors

All Welcome



Primary Elections

TEXANS WILL VOTE in Democratic or Republican party primaries on March 2.

✓ Precinct **332** votes at Zilker Elementary School, on Bluebonnet at Hether.

✓ Precinct **462** votes at the MHMR office at 1700 South Lamar, Suite 101, off Collier.

✓ Precinct **342** votes at Barton Hills Elementary, at 2108 Barton Hills Drive.

Our Park Workday: March 6

ONCE AGAIN, the Zilker community will take part in “It’s My Park Day,” scheduled this year for 9 AM till noon on Saturday, March 6. Enjoy a lovely spring day with friends and neighbors as we give our neighborhood park a little TLC. We’ll be pruning, planting, and mulching, so be sure to bring hats, gloves, shovels, clippers, pruning shears, and rakes. We’ll provide refreshments for the hard-working volunteers. “It’s My Park Day” is a citywide event sponsored by the Austin Parks Foundation. If you are interested in attending, please email littlezilker@gmail.com and we’ll keep you posted.



Kim McKnight



Zilker Park Kite Festival

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at
Zilker Park
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March 7, 2010

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See zilkerkitefestival.com

Park Names Headed for City Board

by Kim McKnight, for Friends of Zilker Neighborhood Park

TWO FINALIST NAMES for our neighborhood park have been selected to be forwarded to the City of Austin Parks and Recreation Board. “Bluebonnet Park” and “Little Zilker Park” received many submissions from the school and neighborhood community.

Zilker Neighborhood Park, which is smaller than five acres, is directly adjacent to Zilker Elementary, and it is very close to the larger Zilker Park that most Austinites know. The Friends of Zilker Neighborhood Park sought a more distinctive name that would give the park an identity that is separate from both the school and the big Zilker Park.

Last spring, a committee of Friends of Zilker Neighborhood Park undertook a park renaming process, which started with requesting name submissions. We received more than 50 entries. The committee sifted through the submissions and has put forward the most popular names. Further, the committee will be submitting a list of names of neighborhood people who merit special recognition due to their commitment to the community.

The park renaming process will be an agenda item at the upcoming Zilker Neighborhood Association general meeting on February 22. After the meeting, the names will be forwarded to the Parks Board. The board will receive public comment and then forward a recommendation to the City Council, which makes the final decision. Any citizen in any part of the city may come forward to support any name of his or her choosing.

Special thanks to the scores of Zilker neighbors and Zilker Elementary students, teachers, and parents who participated in the park naming process by submitting suggestions. Further appreciation is given to the committee that has spent almost a year working on this project.

To volunteer for upcoming workdays or other park projects, contact littlezilker@gmail.com.

Donate toward Little Zilker park improvements by sending your contribution made out to the Austin Parks Foundation (write "Zilker Neighborhood Park" in the memo line) at 816 Congress Ave, Ste. 1680, Austin TX 78701.

Who Puts the "Ho Ho Ho!" in the Holidays? Our Zilker Neighbors Do!

by *Barbara Cossie, ZNA Holiday
Families Program Coordinator*

A BIG THANK YOU goes out to all our neighbors who gave to the ZNA Holiday Families Program. In December 2009, ZNA served eight families from Zilker Elementary School by providing toys, clothes, books, household items, food, and HEB and Target gift cards.

As the boxes of wrapped gifts arrived at the door delivered by our Zilker elves, the children's eyes got bigger and brighter. They knew that Santa had not forgotten them. "Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!" was many times accompanied by clapping hands and smiling faces. This is why ZNA has continued to do this annual project for the past 11 years.

Without donations from our neighbors, this program would not be the success it is. So it is with much gratitude that the ZNA executive committee wishes to thank and acknowledge all the folks that gave so many people so much joy with their donations of their time, talent, money, and gifts. Special thanks go to our Zilker elves for wrapping and delivering the presents for our holiday families: Hill Abel, Lorraine Atherton, Janet Dunkelberg, Mike Meier, Bobby Rigney, and Jean Warren. Please visit the ZNA Web site at www.zilkerneighborhood.com for a complete list of our holiday donors.

Again, thank you, neighbors. Your compassion and service to this cause is the reason why Zilker is the best place to live, all year 'round!

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Join In with Neighborhood Watch

by Laura "Ole" Olesen

WE ZILKERITES have grown increasingly concerned about the upsurge of home and vehicle break-ins, as well as other crimes, in our neighborhood.

The Austin Police Department has been responsive to the concerns we raise, but simply cannot be everywhere at all times. There is a historic precedent for neighborhoods helping law enforcement. Neighborhood Watch was designed in the 1960s when the U.S. Sheriff's Department partnered with citizens and citizen groups to slow an upsurge in crime.

Much of Neighborhood Watch's success is

Please let Laura know if you can join your Zilker neighbors at this lunch meeting:

Time: Thursday, February 18, at noon

Place: Artz Rib House back room

Contact Laura at 663-5776 or

ole@oleaustin.com

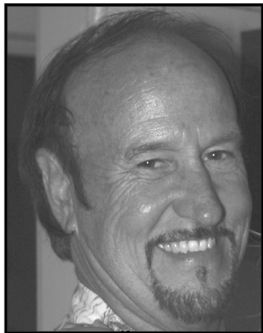
if you'd like to be involved.

about knowing and staying in touch with our neighbors so that we more easily know when unusual activity is afoot and what to do. The added benefit of Neighborhood Watch is getting to know one another better.

I have agreed to be a point of contact for Zilkerites wanting to participate so we can be more efficient with our efforts. Please contact me if you're interested in more information.

To start, one of our Zilker neighbors will share lessons learned from organizing her block so we can avoid some of the stumbling blocks she experienced. Please let me know if you can join us for this lunch meeting, on February 18. If not, look for a sign-up sheet at the ZNA meeting on February 22.

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Also, watch the Zilker Yahoo group for further updates. If you aren't a member yet, go to www.Yahogroups.com and search for "Zilker," then click on "Join this group."

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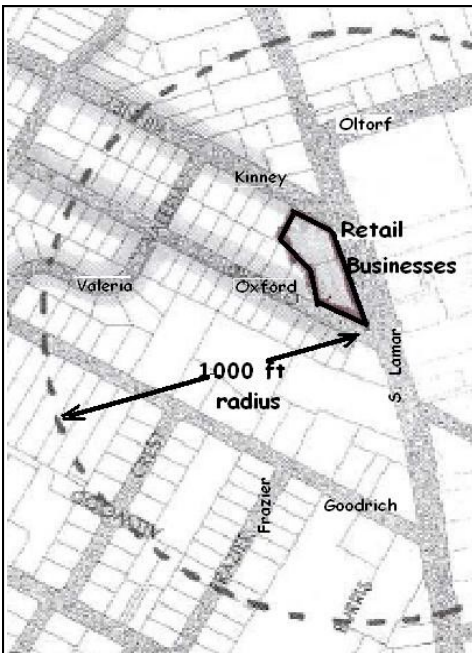
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Oxford Parking Permits Turn the Corner

ALONG WITH THE INCREASE in walkable services available to Zilker residents has come a burden on parking along the streets near those businesses. Oxford, Kinney, and Valeria streets near South Lamar have had an undue burden of employee and patron parking. Walking, driving, and accessing driveways on these streets has become hazardous much of the time. Residents, led by Robert Guillory on Oxford, have completed an application for the city's Residential Parking Permit program. The program will limit parking on these streets to residents and their guests during specified hours. The last step before submitting the application to the city will be to review and endorse it at the ZNA meeting on February 22. Business owners near the permit areas (shown in the map below) are particularly invited to attend this meeting and to comment on the application.



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Restaurant Row Introduces Outdoor Music Permits

by Lorraine Atherton

THE CITY OF AUSTIN has issued six Outdoor Music Venue (OMV) permits within the Zilker neighborhood under the new city sound ordinance approved about a year ago. These permits allow the venues (usually a restaurant or bar) to provide amplified music outdoors within certain decibel and time limits, on designated days of the week. A permit is issued for one year. If the venue violates the terms of the permit, the permit may not be renewed.

The Zilker venues are all north of Barton Springs Road, on or near Restaurant Row. All but one (see *ZNews* July 2009) operate as restaurants and are therefore limited to 70 decibels, measured at the property line.

These restaurants have OMV permits to use sound equipment outdoors. Besides the times noted here, they may also play till 2 AM during SXSW. Four can play till 8:30 PM Sun-Thu and till 10 PM Fri-Sat:

Austin Java, 1608 Barton Springs (expires Aug 12)

Baby Acapulco, 1628 Barton Springs (Nov 6)

Lift Cafe, 215 S. Lamar (Sept 24)

Uncle Billy's, 1530 Barton Springs (Aug 12).

One is limited to 8:30 PM all week:

Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf, 221 S. Lamar (Jun 25).

One can play up to 85 db, till 10 PM every night:

Shady Grove, 1624 Barton Springs (Oct 10).

No commercial venues within the boundaries of ZNA are permitted to play outdoors past 10 PM. This is the same time limit that the city code applies to residential uses: "A person may not use sound equipment that produces sound audible beyond the property line of a residence in a residential area between 10 PM and 10 AM." The ZNA executive committee hopes that this will make it easier for affected neighbors to report violations and for the police to enforce the permits. If you are disturbed by amplified sound after 10 PM, you can be certain that the event is not permitted and the police should be called to shut it down.

No OMV permits have been issued in our neighborhood south of Barton Springs Road, and that includes the length of South Lamar within ZNA, from Barton Springs Road to Barton Skyway. Most of the restaurants and bars along South Lamar are so close to residences that they are not eligible for sound permits (under one interpretation of city code). ZNA is working with a citywide coalition of neighborhoods to resolve some of the inconsistencies in the implementation of the new sound ordinance, especially the general restriction that says the city "may not issue a permit to operate sound equipment within 100 feet of property zoned residential."

Thanks to all the neighbors and business owners who made the effort to work together on the terms of these permits.



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from ZEN, the Zilker Elementary News
 Cathy Sak, Zilker PTA Email Communications, zilkerpta@gmail.com, 689-4471

Donation Deadline Extended to Tuesday, February 16
 The PTA Arts In Education Committee needs your donations to make the Z a success!

What is the Z?

The Z is none other than the infamous **Zilker Elementary Art Auction** - one of the best Art Auctions just west of SoCo. We've got it all... paintings, illustrations, jewelry, sculpture, photography, literature, music and more.

When is the Z?

Thursday, **February 25**, 2010 • 5PM - 7:30PM (in the Zilker Cafeteria)

Who benefits from the Z?

All Zilker Students. 100% of the money raised by your donation goes directly to the PTA Arts in Education Fund, which allows us to provide the Circle of Light Holiday Concert, performances by One World Theater, African Drumming and Dance lessons, Yoga, Martial Arts and much more.

How do I donate to the Z?

You may deliver your donation to Zilker Elementary - Attention Jamie Pettit, Zilker Art Department. Or, if you prefer to have your donation picked up, please contact one of the following committee members and we will be happy to accommodate your needs:

- Michele Hoelscher (michelehoelscher@austin.rr.com)
- Sage Baker (sage@sagebakerconsulting.com)
- Andrea Ewen (andreasartclass@fusebox23.com)

Please include a Z Art Entry Form included in the Z Art Brochure.

Print out a copy from the Zilker Website (zilkerelem.org) or pick up a copy from the front office.

ZNA Wishes Zilker Elementary a Happy Sixtieth Birthday



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ZNA Officers 2010

THE ZILKER NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION elected these officers for 2010 at the general meeting on October 26, 2009:

- President:* Richard Gravois
- First Vice President:* Bobby Rigney
- Second Vice President:* Steven Jennings
- Secretary:* Ryan Stryker
- Treasurer:* Andy Elder
- ANC Delegate:* Kurt Koegler
- Z-News Editor:* Lorraine Atherton
- Social Chair:* Greg Shotwell

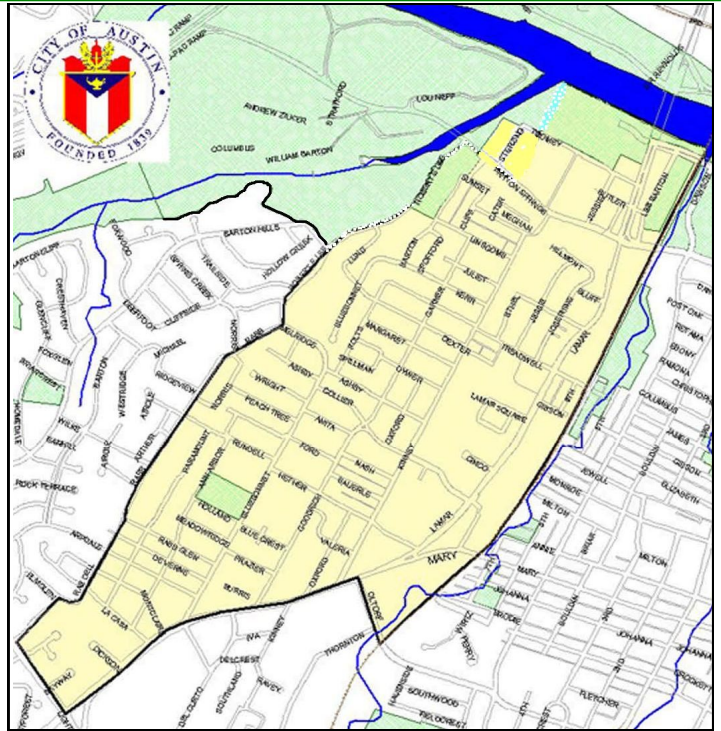
The following neighbors have agreed to serve in unelected positions:

- Holiday Family Program coordinator:*
Barbara Cossie
- Z-News advertising coordinator:* Dave Piper
- Z-News Distribution:* Fontaine Maverick
- ACL Fest:* Steve McGuire
- Parks and Environment:* Gardner Sumner
- Membership:* Elizabeth Yevich

Frequently asked question:

How does the ZNA Executive Committee arrive at a position on an issue?

The committee considers several factors, beginning with the association's bylaws. Depending on the issue, the committee may consider the ZNA neighborhood planning survey conducted in 2004, the City of Austin neighborhood planning survey conducted in 2005, specific ZNews surveys, input gathered from discussions and



The boundaries of ZNA include Zilker Park on the west and extend to the railroad tracks on the east. The southern boundary is Barton Skyway. The northern boundary is the lake.

resolutions adopted at our quarterly meetings, discussion on the list serve and e-mail input from neighbors, and political consultation with board and commission and City Council members.

For more information, including the association's bylaws, please visit the new ZNA Web site at zilkerneighborhood.org.

BECOME A ZNA MEMBER TODAY

Membership is open to Zilker residents (renters or homeowners) 18 years old or older. Annual dues are \$7 per person. Additional contributions are welcome. (Many couples pay \$25.)

Name: _____ **E-mail:** _____

Name: _____ **E-mail:** _____

Address: _____ **Phone:** _____

Dues: _____ **Contribution for ZNA general fund:** _____

Please make checks payable to Zilker Neighborhood Association and mail with this form to:

ZNA Memberships, 1818 Treadwell St., Austin, TX 78704

More Music to Save the Lake

THE AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL's action to exclude planned unit developments (PUDs) from the recently readopted Waterfront Overlay ordinance has opened the gates for developers to seek increased entitlements, rendering the Waterfront Overlay moot. So SaveTown Lake.org will be having a fundraiser to support a "Stop the PUD Flood" campaign.

The event will be March 7, at El Sol y La Luna, at Sixth and Red River, 6-10 PM. Tickets will be \$25 in advance; \$30 at the door.

Save Town Lake has a great line-up of local talent who support the preservation of the Lady Bird Lake corridor: Ponty Bone and the Squeezetones, Sarah Hickman, Bob Livingston and Bill Oliver, and a special appearance by Esther's Follies.

ZNA is a sponsor for this event, in recognition of the importance of STL's work in protecting Zilker's South Bank area and the neighborhood's longstanding support of the Waterfront Overlay ordinance.

Jeff Jack

The **South Austin Food Co-op** is a member-owned and operated co-operative dedicated to promoting healthy, organic, and local food (when available) at fair prices to our members. Our semi-annual **Members Meeting** will be **Friday, February 19, 6 PM**, at Opal Divine's Penn Field. It is our desire that all members take this opportunity to come together and hear about our progress to date. Visit southaustinfoodcoop.org for more information.

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(Continued from page 1) including the District Representative offices (we love our DRs). Neighborhoods across the city have learned that throwing money at the police department will not keep us safe. Prevention takes a higher level of planning.

So this is a call for Zilker neighbors to connect the dots between crime prevention, the city budget, and the comprehensive plan, and to send a message to City Hall that Austin's planning must start with sound economic policies aimed at supporting healthy neighborhoods.

Break Out of the Planning Box

ZNA has held two "Meeting in a Box" events to gather neighbor input for Austin's new comprehensive plan. The second drew two dozen neigh-

Imagine Austin is seeking input from Austinites on a Vision for the future of the city, as a first step in creating a new Comprehensive Plan.

Residents can participate in two ways.

First, anyone can take the Issues and Aspirations survey, at any Austin library or online at www.imagineaustin.net/survey.htm.

Second, Austinites can host their own planning party--ask for a "Meeting in a box," and invite a few people over to participate. The Imagine Austin Meeting-in-a-Box has everything you need to host your own meeting. Find it online at www.imagineaustin.net/getmeeting.htm or call Kathleen Fox at 974-7877.

Other surveys and input opportunities will continue through 2011 and invite the public to weigh in on substantive issues and priorities facing Austin.

(from the City of Austin Web site)

bors from Zilker, Barton Hills, South Lamar, and other parts of 78704. (Thanks to Artz Rib House for hosting this gathering.)

By the end of the meeting, these South Austinites had all come up with very similar priorities: Protect the environment, improve mobility for everyone, make Austin affordable again for the average person, and keep what is special about Austin. It was not surprising that they tended to agree with each other. What was surprising was how closely they agreed with Austinites of 30 years ago, and how little has changed.

Jeff Jack happens to possess one of the few copies in existence of Austin's 1979 comprehensive plan, and he had it at Artz. The planning exercises documented there came up with the same priorities and vision for Austin as the folks

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at Artz, and they are not the priorities that have received the most time and attention, and tax dollars, at City Hall, week after week, for the last 30 years.

This is not meant to discourage anyone from participating in these planning exercises. The ZNA executive committee hopes that all Zilker neighbors will at least fill out an online survey and try to think outside the conventional box of land use and development. At the end of your survey or planning party, try to answer one more question: How can we change city government to ensure that our new plan will not be ignored for another 30 years?

Some think that geographic representation is the key, so that council members can understand and be responsive to the various areas of town. Others think public funding of elections will address the undue influence of special interests at City Hall (the recent Supreme Court ruling on corporate campaign spending has added urgency to that argument). Whatever answer you favor, it's important that you ask the question, and incorporate it into your vision for Austin's future.

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Z Newsletter of the Zilker Neighborhood **NEWS** Association

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Distribution: Fontaine Maverick, 443-3290

2010 Executive Committee of ZNA

Elected Officers:

President: Richard Gravois, 441-3430
1st VP: Bobby Rigney, 471-3758
2nd VP: Steven Jennings, 382-5805
Secretary: Ryan Stryker, 431-4245
Treasurer: Andy Elder, 428-9180
Social Chair: Greg Shotwell, 797-4376
ANC Delegate: Kurt Koegler, 288-0676
ZNews Editor: Lorraine Atherton, 447-7681

About the Zilker Neighborhood Association

ZNA holds general meetings the fourth or fifth Monday of February, April, July, and October, at Zilker Elementary School. The Executive Committee meets at 7 PM the first Monday of each month, usually 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.

Committee Chairs:

Holiday Family Program: Barbara Cossie, 447-4437
ZNews Advertising: Dave Piper, 916-9636
Parks and Environment: Gardner Sumner, 468-6200
Zoning: Bobby Rigney

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