



Newsletter of the
Zilker Neighborhood
Association

APRIL 2016

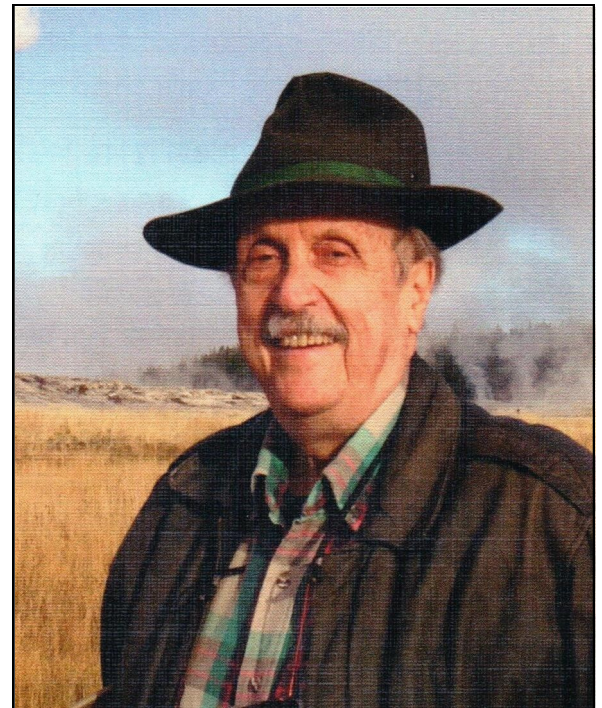
Austin, Texas
Established 1981

An Extraordinary Neighbor: Richard Gravois, 1940-2016

RICHARD WAS THERE at the beginning.

He was president of the Zilker Neighborhood Association for its first five years, from 1981 to 1985. In 1985 and 1986, he served as the South Austin Sector 12 chairman for the city's first comprehensive planning effort. He and Paulette helped keep the association going through the nineties. As the Democratic precinct chair and perpetual election judge for Precinct 332, he welcomed thousands of Zilker voters to the polls over the years—and patiently explained each new wrinkle in the voting process to us. I like to believe that he was the reason voter turnout was so high in Zilker. It just felt nice and neighborly to stop in at the school for a vote and a chat with Richard.

In the October 1998 *ZNews*, which announced a reorganization of ZNA, Richard introduced one of his “first attempts at WEB publish- (Continued on page 2)



Richard Gravois, October 2015

Bikes and Billboards on ZNA Agenda

AT THE APRIL 25 GENERAL MEETING, ZNA members will be asked to support two citywide initiatives that may be important to the future of South Lamar.

Bike Austin and Transportation Bonds

Hill Abel, vice president of Bike Austin and a member of ZNA, will provide an overview of a potential bond package to fund transportation projects. Bike Austin is calling for full funding of Austin's Bicycle Master Plan and high-priority sidewalks (see <https://bikeaustin.org/ourstreets/>).

ZNA's transportation committee has recommended that ZNA support funding for the Bicycle Master Plan, high-priority sidewalks, and corridor improvement plans, including the South Lamar plan, because they will have a citywide impact.

(Continued on page 6)

ZNA Meeting

April 25

Monday 6:30-8:30 PM

Zilker Elementary School

1900 Bluebonnet



**Bike Austin on Transportation Bonds,
Scenic Austin on Digital Billboards,
Community Policing,
CodeNext Prescriptions for
Natural and Built Environment**



Newcomers, homeowners, renters,
business neighbors

❖ ❖ **All Welcome** ❖ ❖

(Continued from page 1) ing.” Always looking for new tools to try, he set up ZNA’s first Web site (members.tripod.com/~znaweb) and also started the Zilker Yahoo Group as an easy-to-use, neighborhood-wide list serve. In his friendly South Austin spirit, Richard has provided the foundation for our electronic communications ever since. During the last ten years, he served either as president or first vice president of ZNA. At his death on March 29, Richard had been active in the association for 35 years, yet ZNA is only a small part of his legacy.

I like the way Fontaine Maverick described him: "Richard riding his bicycle all over the neighborhood and his wonderful off the wall Zilker posts . . . and the calm smiling feeling that I would get when I ran into him and we chatted." This year, let's look for ways to maintain Richard's calm smiling presence in Zilker.

Our first opportunity to honor his contribution will begin April 25, the first day of early voting. Walk or bike to your favorite polling place and cast your vote, for Richard.

Lorraine Atherton, ZNews Editor



Early voting April 25-May 3
Election Day Saturday, May 7
 vote at Zilker Elem. School (1900 Bluebonnet), Barton Hills School (2108 Barton Hills), or any other Travis County polling place.

Check election info at

traviscountyelections.org or
 call 512-238-VOTE.

Uber's Prop. 1: Who's Misleading Us?

THE TRAVIS COUNTY DEMOCRATS have passed a persuasive resolution opposing Prop. 1 (the ordinance placed on the May 7 ballot by Uber). There is only the one proposition on the ballot, but as the Democrat’s resolution explains, it covers a multitude of profound issues. Before you vote, please read it.

Supporters of Prop. 1 have argued that the ballot language (at the top of the next page) is misleading. The City Council ordinance and the Uber ordinance will be posted on the ZNA Web site (zilkerneighborhood.org) along with a side-by-side comparison, so you can see for yourself. The obvious questions are:

1. Does the Uber ordinance repeal and prohibit required fingerprinting? Yes. The Uber ordinance reads: "Nothing in this section shall require or be construed to require fingerprinting as part of any criminal history search or audit required under this section." It even prohibits the Airport from requiring fingerprinting: "The regulation and operation of TNCs at ABIA may not contradict or amend the requirements set forth in Section 13-2-513 (Driver Eligibility) of this Article."

2. Does it repeal the requirement to identify the vehicle with a distinctive emblem? Yes. In the Council ordinance, the section is called "Trade Dress." There is no similar provision in the Uber ordinance.



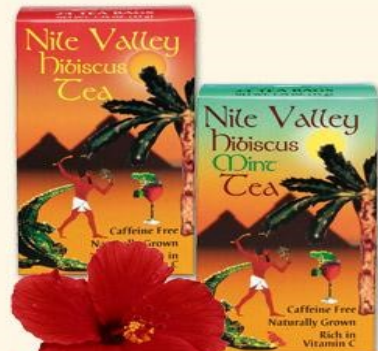
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May 7 Ballot language

CITY OF AUSTIN PROPOSITION 1

Shall the City Code be amended to repeal City Ordinance No. 20151217-075 relating to Transportation Network Companies; and replace with an ordinance that would repeal and prohibit required fingerprinting, repeal the requirement to identify the vehicle with a distinctive emblem, repeal the prohibition against loading and unloading passengers in a travel lane, and require other regulations for Transportation Network Companies?

3. Does it repeal the prohibition against loading and unloading passengers in a travel lane? Yes. The Council ordinance has two relevant passages: "Geofencing. During large special events TNCs shall cooperate with event sponsors and the City to identify and use geofence pick-up and drop-off locations, as determined by the director to promote a safe and transportation efficient event" and "Travel Lanes. A driver operating as a TNC driver may not stop, stand, park, load or unload passengers in a travel lane or in an officially designated bus stop." The Uber ordinance has no similar restrictions.

Another difference is that the Council ordinance includes a public safety provision requiring a vehicle safety inspection specific to TNC vehicles and in line with current safety inspections for all ground transportation service vehicles; the Uber ordinance limits inspections to typical Texas vehicle inspections.

As this newsletter goes to the printer, the evidence is mounting that Uber's third-party background checks are not better than the FBI fingerprint checks. *L. Atherton*

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Spring Fling at the Highball

ZILKER ELEMENTARY PTA will be hosting its Ninth Annual Spring Fling Fundraiser on April 29 at 6 PM, at The Highball at Alamo Drafthouse South Lamar (in Lamar Union, 1120 S. Lamar). The party and silent auction let us celebrate spring with all our Zilker friends while supporting the elementary school, which is the heart of our neighborhood. The money we raise pays for campus-wide technology needs, arts and cultural enrichment programs, tutoring, and classroom supplies.

The Highball party will have music by DJ Manny and appetizers. **Please note that this is an adults only event.** With each ticket purchase, you will receive a \$10 gift certificate to Whole Earth Provision Co., when you pick up your wristbands.

The silent auction is almost entirely online now. Bidding began April 11 and will end Thursday, April 28, at 11 PM. Go to the Spring Fling page on the Web site zilkerelem.org to bid on great summer camps, gift cards to delicious local restaurants, and much more. If your bid is successful, you will be notified by e-mail.

Please visit zilkerelem.org to purchase tickets to the Highball event, to bid in our online auction, and for other school info.

Thanks to Kalynn Tupa, Rachel Elder, and Jill Rhoden for news from the PTA



For It's My Park Day in March, the Zilker PTA Sustainability Committee organized work in the Edible Garden. They had enough volunteers to spruce up and mulch existing beds and improve the bed by the Jackie Kraal Library (above) with a new drainage area and some heavy duty weeding. Thanks to everyone who helped.

Join the Friends of Little Zilker Neighborhood Park

through FLZP@yahoo.com.

Contact FLZP at littlezilker@gmail.com to find out how to participate in volunteer projects. Subscribe to the FLZP Yahoo group to keep up with planning, meetings, and events.

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Our Favorite Librarian

A DEDICATION CEREMONY was held April 12, at 2:15 PM, to name the library at Zilker Elementary School in honor of Jackie Kraal, the school's recently retired librarian.

Besides serving the schoolchildren of Zilker for 32 years, Jackie preserved and added to a collection of photos and documents recording the school's first 50 years, and she made the archives accessible to the school community, endearing her to neighborhood history buffs and ZNA newsletter editors.

(See the April 2010 edition of ZNews, on Zilker Elementary's sixtieth birthday.)

District 5 City Council

Call or e-mail Ann Kitchen's City Council office if you would like to be notified of future District 5 Town Hall meetings or other opportunities to participate in City government.

ANN KITCHEN

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--------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------

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(Continued from page 1)

Scenic Austin and Digital Billboards

Girard Kinney, president of Scenic Austin, presented the following request to the Austin Neighborhoods Council in March:

In January the Austin City Council initiated a 120 day period for a "community conversation" regarding a proposal to amend the Signage Ordinance which would, among other things, allow digital billboards in Austin.

Our request to ANC pertains to the proposal to convert some of our existing billboards to digital—to utilize digital, changeable technology to allow advertisements to change every 8 seconds. That's 450 advertising messages every hour and over 10,000 message changes on a single billboard face every day.

Some facts about digital billboards

Negative impacts on adjacent properties and neighborhood character: Billboards in general, and digital billboards in particular, have negative impact on the character and value of adjacent properties

- **Safety:** Billboards are distracting to drivers and make driving in our city less safe. There is a mountain of evidence that Digital billboards increase the distraction and make driving even less safe.

- **Austin compared to other markets:** Austin stands with San Antonio, Houston, Fort Worth and approximately 85% of all other Texas cities that currently prohibit new digital billboards. Four States, known for beauty and tourism—Alaska, Hawaii, Maine, and Vermont—prohibit all billboards, digital and non-digital.

- **Energy use:** Digital billboards are energy hogs, by some estimates using 30 times per sign face as the average residence.

- **Scenic beauty:** In addition to Austin being touted as "weird", residents understand why they and others are drawn to the region—the scenic beauty of the city and the Hill Country. Billboards, and especially digital ones, block the views of our beautiful natural & built environment. Even Houston has been much more successful in controlling the visual pollution that billboards, especially digital billboards, represent.

Our request is that ANC join Scenic Austin in our opposition to Digital Billboards in Austin.

The ZNA Executive Committee recommends that the general membership join Scenic Austin in opposing amendments to Austin's sign ordinance that would allow digital billboards.

Also on the April 25 agenda

A presentation from the Austin Police Department on the latest community policing initiative.

News on parks and garden projects at Little Zilker Neighborhood Park, Zilker Elementary School, RE Lee Tributary, and the Collier fire station.

An update on the March CodeNext neighborhood meeting and the draft Code prescription for the Natural and Built Environment. The first report in the Code Prescription series details strategies to preserve, protect, and enhance the City's natural and built environment. There are more than 40 Prescriptions for: Water and Watersheds, Landscape and Trees, Compatibility and Transitions, Design for Mobility, Redevelopment, Greenfield Development, Parks and Open Space.

BECOME A ZNA MEMBER TODAY

Membership is open to Zilker residents (renters or homeowners) 18 years old or older. (Map on page 7.)
Nonresident property owners are not eligible for membership.

Annual dues are \$7 per person. Please list each member's name and e-mail address below.

Name: _____

E-mail: _____

Name: _____

E-mail: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

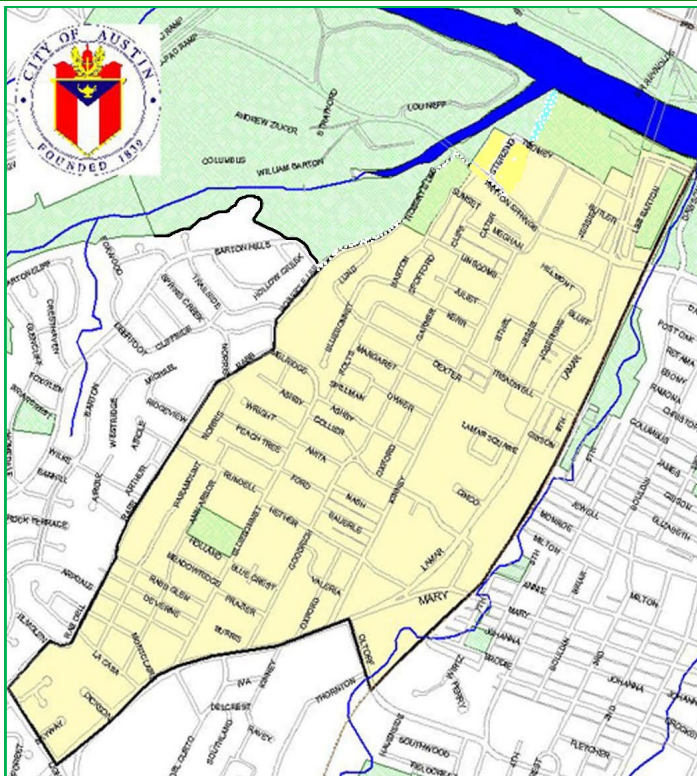
Dues amount: _____ Additional contribution: _____ Total Enclosed: _____

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

ZNA Memberships, 2009 Arpdale St, Austin, TX 78704

or bring this form with you to the next ZNA meeting

Or visit zilkerneighborhood.org to join online



The boundaries of the Zilker Neighborhood Association include Zilker Park and Rabb Road on the west and extend to the railroad tracks on the east, Barton Skyway on the south, and Lady Bird Lake on the north. Residents on both sides of boundary streets are eligible for membership in ZNA.

ZNA is within City Council District 5. It contains voting precincts 332 (west of Kinney), 340 (east of Kinney), and a portion of 342.

For ZNA bylaws and other information, visit zilkerneighborhood.org.

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Distribution: Open

Web site: Dave Piper

Advertisers: ZNA reserves this newsletter's limited advertising space for businesses based within the boundaries of the association.

**2016 Executive Committee of
the Zilker Neighborhood
Association**

Officers:

President: David King, 512-415-6016

1st Vice President:

Richard Gravois

2nd Vice President: Dave Piper

Secretary: Bobby Rigney

Treasurer: Elizabeth Yevich

Social Chair: Dave Floyd

Austin Neighborhoods Council

Delegate: Jeff Jack

Newsletter Editor:

Lorraine Atherton

Other executive members:

Parks and Environment Chair:

Gardner Sumner, 512-468-6200

Zoning and Code Chair:

Bill Neale, bneale15@yahoo.com

The Executive Committee may be contacted by e-mail through www.zilkerneighborhood.org

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About the Zilker Neighborhood Association

ZNA holds quarterly meetings on the last Monday of January, April, July, and October, at Zilker Elementary School, 1900 Bluebonnet Lane. The Executive Committee meets at the Umlauf Museum, 605 Robert E. Lee Road, 7 PM the first Monday of most months. Watch the Web site for updates.

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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