

NEXT HH-W MEETING
6:30 pm - - January 31th,
Thursday @ GOODWILL
under the stick man

<http://www.main.org/hhwbna/>

Note: Check out our new website, and contribute appropriate material to our webmaster.

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Please send changes to Ardeth Still
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Heritage Hills - WoodBridge

Neighborhood News

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 6

DECEMBER 2007

The Association would like to thank the Travis County Health and Human Services and Veterans Service for providing the printing for the Neighborhood Association Newsletter.

PAST President's Corner

Dear Neighbors,

Since this will be my last newsletter article as president, I'd like to review some of the important issues and events that our neighborhood and neighborhood association (NA) dealt with and celebrated this past year. First, a carry-over from 2006 was the proposed development of duplexes along Furness. As most of you probably already know, we were unable to stop this development even though we did our best and went before the City Zoning and Platting Commission in mid-May after previously meeting with the developer and his team. Unfortunately, it was the Commission that we found out that there was nothing we or the Commission could do to stop or change the planned duplex development. However, the sentiments of the Commissioners were unambiguously on our side, and they extracted a promise from the developer that he would seek a zoning change to SF 6, which would allow him and his builder to more easily build condominiums rather than only duplexes. After that, the developer, Larry Wu asked to address the NA meeting a few days thereafter. I think that it was a consensus from those

who attended that meeting that they found Mr. Wu to be a sincere person in his desire to not damage the neighborhood. Of course, only time will tell if the development occurs as planned, and if so, whether or not it hurts the neighborhood. I have no information as to why nothing has happened with the development. Although, I suspect that the inaction has something to do with the overall downturn in the housing industry. However, that is my own hunch, and I don't have any facts to base it on.

The other major issue that we faced this year was the planned building of a bridge across Little Walnut Creek connecting Furness to North Plaza on the other side of the creek. As I have reported before, this project has been placed on "indefinite hold" almost entirely because of our association's opposition to it. That opposition is based on the high crime rate on the north side of the creek versus our very low crime rate, one of the (if not in fact THE) lowest crime rates in the city according to our neighborhood officer,

Jimmy Diaz. Short of an outright cancellation of the bridge project, I think we nonetheless achieved a victory by stopping further development of the bridge pro-



One of our celebrations this year was the neighborhood night out, which was spearheaded by neighbor Beth Gleason with the assistance of many neighbors.



If you'd like to join the Neighborhood e-mail list, e-mail pat-tysyvana@aol.com and she will send an invitation and directions. It is a Yahoo group, so you will need to get a yahoo ID to join, but there will be no spam.

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posal. I'm sure the NA will continue to monitor this project closely, and I encourage all of us to also do so.

One of our celebrations this year was the neighborhood night out, which was spearheaded by neighbor Beth Gleason with the assistance of many neighbors. I think those who attended that fun event in August will agree that it was a great time for all who attended and a great chance to get to meet and know each other.

As our secretary, Carol Gresser, notes in her minutes from our last meeting (November 15), our neighborhood has been increasing its engagement with our neighborhood school, Hart Elementary. One of our newest neighbors, Mary Jo Hernandez graciously agreed to act as our future liaison to the school. Although, only a small percentage of the student body comes from our neighborhood (to a large degree because we currently don't have many elementary age children in our neighborhood), we should all think of the school as a great asset for us. I have personally been involved in several CAC (Campus Advisory Council) meetings with the principal, teachers, and parents during the fall semester, and I am truly impressed and amazed at the dedication that all concerned feel for the school and the students. Mary Jo Hernandez will represent us at those meetings in the future, but I am certain that the school administrators would welcome any neighbors to attend those meetings, which usually take place from 4-5 or 5:30 on the second Tuesday of each month. Even if you don't have children attending the school, please, get involved as much as you can. The students will personally benefit, as will their families and those who live in and around our neighborhood. Ultimately, we will all benefit from these children who are eager to learn and become productive members of our society. There are many opportunities to get involved. Those who attended our last meeting heard about some of these opportunities from Claudio Cruz, Hart's outreach officer. His enthusiasm for the school and the children who attend it was infectious! One easy way

to help the school and the students is to donate children's books to the school's "Literary back packs," which Ardeth Still mentions in her article in this newsletter. The back packs allow children to take books home over holidays, weekends or extended periods away from school (e.g., summer vacation) to improve their reading skills. In many cases these are the only books in the children's homes. Please, consider such a gift to the school. What a great way to be neighborly.

At our November meeting, we held elections for our 2008 officers. I am happy to report (as does Carol in her minutes) that our president for next year will be our current Vice President, Ardeth Still. Our new Vice President is long time resident Joyce Smith. Carol Gresser and Marie Cervelli graciously stepped up again to serve as secretary and treasurer, respectively, for one more year. I am confident that they will work well together and I hope that we will all support them. A neighborhood association is about as local as you can get. So, that means that the officers act as leaders, but they cannot be expected to shoulder all or even most of the burdens of service. Most of the work of any organization occurs in committees and task forces, and these require that we all serve and share the work. I have been lucky this past year to have had so many neighbors be willing to spearhead so many different efforts (neighborhood night out, creek cleanups, traffic issues, Furness development, bridge committee, and now school liaison). I hope we can keep this momentum going in 2008 especially with the opportunity to really impact the future development of our area with the upcoming Neighborhood Planning Process. I look forward to continuing to work with many of you whom I've gotten to know in my last two years as an officer and to working with many more of you next year on various projects and issues still facing us.

Depending on when we get this newsletter out, I hope that everyone will have (or had) a great holiday season.

Sincerely,

Ramon Trevino

The next Neighborhood Association meeting will be:

Thursday, January 31th, 2008

6:30 pm to 7:30 pm

GOODWILL under the stick man.

Signs will be posted in the neighborhood to remind you of the meeting.

The Inaugural Edition

Dear Neighbors,

I'm looking forward to working with you all in the upcoming year. Who knows what it will bring?!

I spoke with Minal Bhakta, and our Neighborhood Planning Process will be postponed until mid-spring or summer, as the Oak Hill group is not yet finished.

On another note, I want to welcome Joyce Smith as Vice President! Thanks for stepping up! She will be in charge of distributing the newsletters to our block captains.



Lastly, I'd like to share highlights from a presentation by Claudio Cruz, the parent support specialist at Hart Elementary. As Claudio spoke to us at the last meeting, I had to admire his enthusiasm for the students, parents, and teachers at Hart. Their goals are high; the school faces many challenges, and Claudio responds with positive energy. Many of the parents of these students are first generation immigrants who did not have the privilege of attending school in Mexico, so Claudio has offered classes for these parents to learn everyday spoken English. Approximately 73% of the students have limited English proficiency and about 89% are considered at risk. Tutors and mentors are greatly needed and valued. Most students are on the free or reduced price lunch program. Many students do not have books at home to read, and textbooks cannot be sent home, so the



school developed the Literary Backpack program. There are a few special, highly prized backpacks, each of which goes home with a student overnight, and then rotates to the next student on the list. Right now, there are three of the special backpacks in use.



As neighbors, Claudio welcomes our help, especially in these ways:

- Donations of children's coats
- Donate books for the Literary Back Packs
- Reading a book to a class of children on reading appreciation days
- Volunteer for in-class or after school tutoring

As a neighborhood association, we contributed a check of \$50 to Hart Elementary, which funded the Literary Backpacks. We are especially appreciative that the school allows us to use its library for meetings. We may want to consider contributing a bit more.



One of our new homeowners, Mary Jo Hernandez, has agreed to be our liaison with the school and to serve on Hart's Campus Advisory Council. Please contact her through the list serve with any questions or suggestions. Feel free to contact the school directly if you want to volunteer to read or tutor, or with donations of coats and especially books.

If you would like to subscribe to the Yahoo e-mail address, please do so at heritage-hillswoodbridge-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

<http://www.main.org/hhwbna/>

Webmaster: Dung Lam

The APD News "Home for the Holidays"

This month's insert is a document from our neighborhood officer, Jimmy Diaz. I'm sure the information is helpful with the holiday season upon us.

**Heritage Hills / Woodbridge Neighborhood Association Agenda
November 15, 2007, Meeting**

Meeting called to order by President Ramon Trevino at 6:41 p.m.

Two items on agenda:

1. **Claudio Cruz, speaker:** Mr. Cruz represents our neighborhood school, Hart Elem. He went through a handout that he gave us telling about the school, its mission statement, and an overview of the school. Mr. Cruz told us ways the neighborhood community could help the school and those ways are: tutoring, donating books, and donating coats for the students. He expressed appreciation for the \$50 donation made by our association and a thank you letter was read at the meeting.

2. **Election of Officers:**

A vote was taken for election of officers for the new term. The only contested race was the one for vice-president. The nominations were: Duggan Flanakin, Debbie Fountain, Bill James, and Joyce Smith. Joyce won with the majority of votes.

Our officers are: President: Ardeth Still; Vice President: Joyce Smith; Secretary: Carol Gresser; Treasurer: Marie Cervelli

THANK YOU, RAMON, FOR ALL YOU HAVE DONE!!!!

Ramon asked for a volunteer to serve on the Hart School CAC as a rep from our neighborhood. A new neighbor, Mary Jo Hernandez, volunteered. Thank you, Mary Jo, for stepping up to the plate!

Diane Key reported that she went to a neighborhood assn. meeting in the neighborhood across I-35 from us. They want to have an organized protest March on Dec. 1 to show disapproval of the unacceptable activity going on at the Chevron station and the motels over there.

Patty Sylvana said there is a speeding task force for the neighborhood and if you want to participate call/e-mail her.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

To support the Heritage Hills-Woodridge Neighborhood Association and become a member, please complete the form below and mail it to: HH-W NA, 903 Pepperell Ct., Austin, TX, 78753, or bring it to the next HH-W NA meeting. Make checks payable to Heritage Hills-Woodridge Neighborhood Association; dues are \$5.00/yearly for each family or owner.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Telephone (Home) _____ (Work) _____

E-mail Address _____

Would you like to find out about volunteer opportunities with HH W NA?
YES___ NO ___