



NEWS

Newsletter of the
Zilker
Neighborhood
Association

OCTOBER 2008

Austin, Texas
Established 1981



Next ZNA
Meeting

Monday, October 27, 2008

Zilker Elementary School

1900 Bluebonnet

6:30-8:30 P.M.

☆ ☆ ☆

Meet and Greet Social

Election of Officers

School Taxes

Stop Domain Subsidies

Zoning Cases

ACL Festival Wrapup

Noise Ordinance

Newcomers, old-timers,

homeowners, renters,

parents, teachers, and

business owners

Everyone welcome

Change Is in the Air

A message from Jeff Jack, President of ZNA

When I stepped out for an early morning walk recently, the slight chill in the air caught me by surprise. Like that signal of a change in the weather, the expectation of change seems to be all around us, in the world economy and on the national political scene. Here in Zilker, we have always struggled to balance change with the preservation of what is really special about this great neighborhood, looking for opportunities to enhance what we have without sacrificing what makes Zilker so livable. This year we have had many successes and a few disappointments; here are the highlights of 2008.

- **Little Zilker Park** The city park next to Zilker Elementary, what many of us call Little Zilker Park, now has a new quarter-mile track, an irrigation system, exercise equipment, and new trees. The ZNA park committee that oversaw the creation of a park master plan last year has been reorganized as the Friends of Zilker Neighborhood Park (FZNP) and formally includes folks from the school's PTA and faculty. Special thanks go to Heather Way, who has guided the group through its formative stages; to Gardner Sumner, ZNA's Parks and Environment chair; and to city parks staff, whose generous assistance has made the original Rolling Stones contribution go much farther than we imagined. The ongoing tree planting effort is being led by Kim McKnight and Gardner. (See page 6 for details of the tree planting event in the park on Nov. 1.)

- **Shady Grove** For many, nothing will soothe the pain of the loss of the pecan orchard and trailer park on Barton Springs Road, and the extraordinary sense of place and community that its residents contributed to South Austin. For others, the Barton Place Condos, now going up behind Austin Java and Uncle *(Continued on page 2)*

Early voting for the general election begins Monday, October 20,
and ends Friday, October 31. On Election Day, November 4:

- ✓ 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 School, at 2108 Barton Hills Drive.

(See page 7 for school and city propositions on the November ballot.)

Billy's, count as a success, because ZNA was able to negotiate some reasonable limits and to secure community benefits on this controversial site.

We certainly would have preferred to keep the pecan grove and the trailer park's affordable housing, but given the speculative pressures and the previous zoning in that area, our best option was to try to establish these precedents: No up-zoning without community benefits, no increase in project intensity, and no variances to the Waterfront Overlay ordinance.

This was a hard case, and it brought out a lot of emotion on all sides, but the outcome was better than we could have gotten otherwise. I am grateful to Rick Engel, owner of Austin Java and Uncle Billy's, for giving us this opportunity to make the project better for our neighborhood.

• **Planning** One of the biggest disappointments this year has been the collapse of the neighborhood planning process for our neighborhoods along South Lamar. Many neighborhoods have come to question the benefit of participating in such plans, as their community's vision for their future is ignored by staff and city council.

From the beginning of our process, the neighborhood leaders were unable to agree with city staff regarding how decisions would be made, what role staff would play in the process, and who would actually decide what went into the plan presented to city council. After months of meetings on these basic issues, our planning process was suspended. Many other neighborhoods have had difficulty with the city's constantly changing planning process. We hope that the city will address these issues in a constructive manner in the future. I want to thank everyone who attended

any of the planning meetings; your input was important. Although we have no formal plan, your participation helps ZNA as we continue to refine and support the community's vision for our future.

With that in mind, the ZNA executive committee worked hard to develop a set of recommendations within the Vertical Mixed Use framework to manage the growth of our commercial corridors, limit commercial creep into the neighborhood, and protect the quality of life for the adjacent residents. These recommendations have been approved by the Planning Commission unanimously and have also garnered unanimous approval of City Council on first reading. By the time you get this newsletter, we hope that the Council will have passed our recommendations on final reading, and we will have set in place a very positive codification of what we see as the best way to handle commercial development along South Lamar and Barton Springs Road in the years to come. Thanks to the ZNA executive committee, who spent hundreds of hours developing our recommendations, and in particular to Lorraine Atherton for *(Continued on page 10)*



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ZNA Officer Nominations

The Zilker Neighborhood Association will elect its officers for 2009 at the October 27 meeting. Our bylaws allow the executive committee to accept nominations up to a week before the fall meeting, so you have until Monday, October 20, to volunteer to serve (or to nominate someone else). Call any of the executive committee members listed on the back of this newsletter, or e-mail ZilkerNA@austin.rr.com. At press time, we are still looking for a vice president and a social chair.

The ZNA executive committee has nominated these neighbors to serve as officers in 2009:

Co-Presidents: Richard Gravois and
Lorraine Atherton

First Vice President: Open

Second Vice President: Bobby Rigney

Secretary: Ryan Stryker

Treasurer: Andy Elder

ANC Delegate: Kurt Koegler

Z-News Editor: Lorraine Atherton

Social Chair: Open

The following neighbors have agreed to serve on the executive committee in unelected positions:

Holiday Family Program: Barbara Cossie

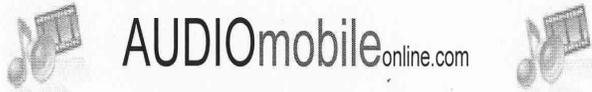
Membership: Kim McKnight

Neighborhood Planning: Dave Piper

Parks and Environment: Gardner Sumner

Zoning: Peggy Pfaff

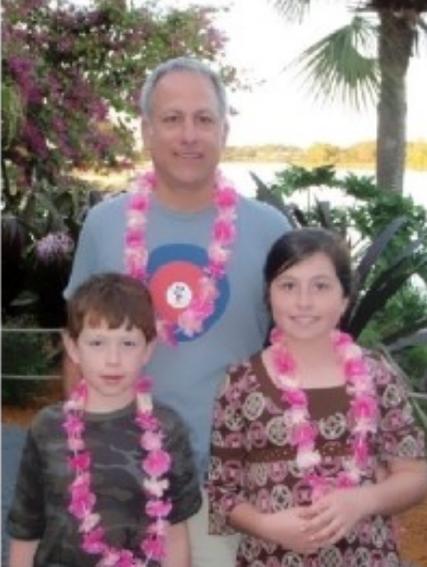
Dave Piper will also be replacing our long-time Z-News advertising coordinator, Fontaine Maverick.



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What's Good in the 'Hood Moonlight Bakery Has Sunny Days Ahead

by Barbara Cossie

After twelve years of working at Whole Foods and eight years of teaching culinary arts at Johnston High, Derek Stilson opened his own bakery in July. "I thought it would be a second job, a hobby, of sorts," he says with a smile in his voice. "It's really two jobs." The name "Moonlight" refers to the hours he works as head baker. "I am here at two in the morning; sometimes I start baking at midnight." Ah, but by sunrise, Derek's cozy bakery on South Lamar at Goodrich (next door to the battery shop) is filled with delicious treats.

On a recent Sunday morning, my lovely assistant and I worked up an appetite by strolling through the neighborhood to Moonlight. The bakery greeted us with a feast for the eyes—row upon row of tempting pastries: butterhorns filled with whipped cream, flaky croissants, giant cinnamon rolls with soft icing, mooncakes in



Look for bat cookies at Moonlight Bakery this Halloween.
(Photo moonlightbakery.com)

chocolate and vanilla, and lovely long eclairs, along with cookies, breads, danishes, and several flavors of kolaches (fruit-filled and nonsweet). We had to stand at the counter and drool for quite a while before we could decide what to try first. (There is no seating at Moonlight Bakery; Derek



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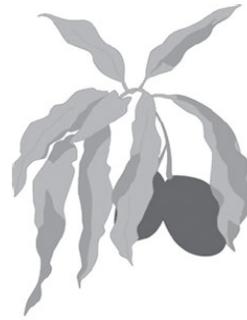
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says it keeps the cost down). Since we limited ourselves to one pastry and a cuppa joe to go, we will have to return soon to try those mooncakes!

Celebrating a special event? Derek says he can create desserts and cakes to order—just for you! All you have to do is ask.

Moonlight Bakery, 2300 South Lamar Blvd. #102. Open Mon-Sat 6:30 am-2 pm, Sun 8 am-2 pm. Web site at www.moonlightbakery.com.



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**Buying or selling in Zilker?
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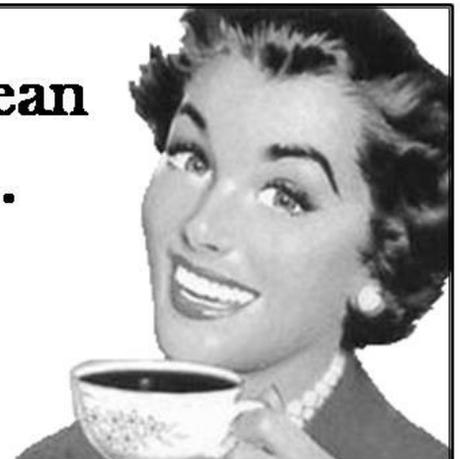
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It's Planting Time at Little Zilker Park

by Heather Way, President, FZNP

The Friends of Zilker Neighborhood Park (FZNP) steering committee is a group of volunteers appointed by the Zilker Elementary School PTA and Zilker Neighborhood Association Executive Committee to implement the master plan for our neighborhood park. FZNP has lots of great projects planned for our neighborhood and school park this fall and winter. One project will be to come up with a name for the park (we have been calling it Little Zilker). While you are thinking about names, come help us plant 54 trees on November 1 (see the volunteer info to the right). We will also need help to purchase and install picnic tables and benches, purchase and install playground equipment, and create a tile mosaic. To get involved, e-mail hway@austin.rr.com, or call 632-1695. We meet the third Wednesday of each month at Zilker Elementary School from 6:30-8:00 pm.

Zilker Neighborhood Park

Tree Planting

Saturday, Nov. 1

9 a.m.

The city will provide the trees & dig the holes.

To volunteer contact:

katykappel@yahoo.com

442-6184

B.Y.O.T. (Bring Your Own Tools)

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ZILKER AREA REAL ESTATE PROS

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2111 Oxford	1821 Spillman

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Don't Forget the Bottom of the Ballot

Propositions to raise school tax, audit city government, and stop subsidies

by Lorraine Atherton

After you make your choices at the top of the national election ballot and work your way through the state and county races, don't overlook the three local propositions at the end of the ballot. All will affect how we spend our local tax dollars.

In **AISD Proposition 1**, the school district is asking for a tax increase to raise an additional \$17.7 million for maintenance and operations. According to AISD, the increase will allow the district to raise salaries for teachers and other employees by 3% and to continue full individual health insurance coverage for all employees. If approved, the tax on the average home, valued at \$233,324, would increase by \$91 a year, or about \$7.58 per month. The increase would not affect the taxes on homes of persons who are 65 years of age or older, or those with disabilities.

For more about AISD Prop. 1, call 414-9518 or visit the district Web site www.austinisd.org; or visit supportaustinteachers.com.

City of Austin Proposition 1 sets a five-year term for the city auditor. The Austin Neighborhoods Council has long recommended that the city auditor needs some measure of job security to be able to conduct effective investigations, and this charter amendment would help to achieve that.

This reporter was unable to find the actual charter amendment on the city Web site.

Proposition 2, the **Stop Domain Subsidies** charter amendment, would stop the flow of taxpayer subsidies, in the guise of financial incentives, to retail developments. According to the SDS Web site:

"During 7 days in May 2003, a well-connected Austin real estate developer, Endeavor Real Estate, cut a rush deal with the City of Austin for \$65 million in tax incentives to build a high-end shopping mall in north Austin called the Domain. . . . With scant public scrutiny and through a series of false assumptions and misrepresentations, the developer cloaked the true taxpayer cost and convinced City of Austin officials to rebate public sales tax and property tax money back to the developer until the year 2028. Shortly thereafter Endeavor flipped the deal to Simon Properties, a \$49 billion company and the largest mall developer in the US. In addition to bilking the taxpayers, the deal has forced local merchants to compete with a shopping mall subsidized by public tax money, an unfair disadvantage for the unique local businesses that give Austin its character."

The full language of the amendment includes exceptions for truly beneficial practices, such as reimbursements for street and utility improvements and incentives for energy or water conservation; it represents a clear statement of Austin's desire for a fair and equitable economic development policy. ANC and the ZNA executive committee have endorsed this proposition.

Read the full text of the amendment at stopdomainsubsidies.com.



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Helping Our Neighbors During the Holidays *by Barbara Cossie*

This year has been rough on all of us, hasn't it? We could all use some holiday cheer about now. But imagine being a single mom raising her kids alone on just one income, or a parent with a disabled child struggling to meet daily medical costs, or an underemployed parent trying to keep up with rising rent and utility bills. The holidays can look grim from their perspective.

Throughout this decade, the Zilker Neighborhood Association executive committee has promoted a lovely holiday tradition in the spirit of giving and caring, and over the years the program has continued to bring joy to the lives of many families who need help during the season. This year the ZNA Holiday Families Program will help eight families selected by the counselor at Zilker Elementary School. The counselor will help the families put together their wish lists, and with donations from our kind Zilker neighbors, gifts will be collected and delivered to these families.

Please consider sharing your blessings with those families in need. You can give a financial donation in any amount, or purchase items from a family's wish list. All money collected will be used to purchase items not already donated. Gift cards (Target, Walgreens, HEB) and food donations are also welcome. ZNA elves will wrap and deliver the presents by Christmas Eve.

Please write a check today (payable to ZNA) and mail it to 1818 Treadwell St., Austin, TX 78704. Write "Holiday Family Program" on the memo line. If you would like to purchase gifts to donate, call Barbara at 326-1222 (daytime only).

ZNA Holiday Families Program Volunteer Sign Up 2008

Yes, I want to help make the holidays happier for eight Zilker families.

Name: _____

E-mail: _____ Address: _____

Phone: _____

- I would like to purchase a gift from a family's gift list. Please contact me when the lists arrive.
- I would like to donate money to the ZNA Holiday Families Program.
- I have enclosed a check for \$ _____

Please make checks payable to Zilker Neighborhood Association and mail with this form to:
ZNA Holiday Families Program, 1818 Treadwell, Austin, TX 78704

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: _____

Contribution for special project (specify): _____

Please make checks payable to Zilker Neighborhood Association and mail with this form to:
ZNA Memberships, 1818 Treadwell St., Austin, TX 78704

Thank You, Neighbors!

When Hurricane Ike pounded the Texas coast in September, the Capital Area Food Bank took a pounding too, as evacuees poured in from Houston and Galveston. Being dependent on the donations of Austin residents, the Food Bank put out a call, and Zilker neighbors answered.

It was a small e-mail that went out to the Zilker Yahoo group:

"Can you help our Texas neighbors? Please donate bottled water, granola bars, diapers, personal care items."

The items were delivered by the bagful. A big thank you to all those folks who donated to the Food Bank. You will never know who drank the water or ate the food you donated. Just know that all you gave went to a person who really needed your donation. You, Zilker neighbors, are the best!

Barbara Cossie

To volunteer for the Capital Area Food Bank, call 684-2140. For more information, visit the Web site at www.austinfoodbank.org.

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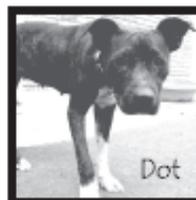


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(Continued from page 2) tracking the properties and Bobby Rigney for his detailed research. Great job!

• **Holiday Families Program** The ZNA Holiday Families Program was formally established in my first term as president of the association, back in 2000, and last year served ten families. Of all the work ZNA has done over the years, this effort shows the real heart of our neighborhood. Speaking of heart, Barbara Cossie and Kaye Trybus have been the driving force behind ZNA's spirit of giving. Thank you, Ba and Kaye, for all you have done for Zilker's children and hurricane evacuees. Thanks also to everyone who has contributed food and holiday drives in the past. (See page 8 to sign up for this year's holiday family fund.)

• **What's Next?** A wide range of topics promises to keep the executive committee busy on into 2009, including new zoning cases, the ACL festival, the Austin Clean Water projects, traffic safety, the Enchanted Forest sound issue, and the expansion of Zachary Scott Theater. I am very proud of our accomplishments this year and of the important role the association plays in keeping Zilker so special, but our continued success will

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depend on the dedicated folks who volunteer to serve on the executive committee and to work on individual projects. The quarterly meeting on October 27, when the association will elect its officers for 2009, is the best possible time to get acquainted with your neighbors and become more involved in ZNA.

The October meeting will also mark the end of my term as ZNA president. I have served on two different occasions as president of ZNA, for a total of six years. I am optimistic that the work of the last few years, particularly the precedents we have set for variance and zoning cases and the City Council approval of our VMU application, will serve us well in the future. So it is the right time for me to step aside and for new leadership to navigate the coming season of change. I appreciate the opportunity to have served as president. It has been great to work with the members of the executive committee and to get to know more of my neighbors. We have a wonderful neighborhood, a responsible and caring neighborhood association, and I look forward to being your neighbor for years to come.

Jeff Jack

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Holiday Menu

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

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2009 Arpdale St., Austin, TX 78704

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Editor: Lorraine Atherton, 447-7681

Ad Sales: Dave Piper, 916-9636

Distribution: Kim McKnight, 663-6422

2008 Executive Committee of ZNA

Elected Officers:

President: Jeff Jack, 447-5877

jjack2@austin.rr.com

1st VP: Richard Gravois, 441-3430

2nd VP: Bobby Rigney, 471-3758

Secretary: Ryan Stryker, 431-4245

Treasurer: Andy Elder, 428-9180

Social Chair: Bill Bunch

ANC Delegate: Kurt Koegler, 288-0676

ZNews Editor: Lorraine Atherton

Committee Chairs:

Holiday Family Program: Barbara Cossie, 447-4437

Membership: Kim McKnight, 663-6422

Neighborhood Plan: Dave Piper, 916-9636

Parks and Environment: Gardner Sumner, 462-0210

Town Lake Park Rep.: Kaye Trybus, 447-4437

Zoning: Peggy Pfaff, 383-1595

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.

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