

HYDE PARK

DECEMBER 2015

www.facebook.com/groups/HydeParkUnited/hydeparkhouston.org

Letter from the President

Happy Holidays, Hyde Park!



I hope you are all enjoying cooler weather and gearing up for extra time with friends and family.

In recent news, the Montrose TIRZ (Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone) formation went before Houston City Council on Nov. 18th. Several Hyde Park residents spoke at the meeting, at which no City Council action was taken. It is expected to be followed by another City Council meeting, at which a decision on the proposal may take place. See page 7 for more details on this topic and how you can get involved.

As you're finalizing your holiday giving, please remember to support your neighborhood. An annual membership is just \$30, which helps pay for this newsletter and other ways we work to keep the community connected. It also helps maintain our adopted green space, Lamar Park.

Speaking of the park, I would like to extend a special thanks to Niko Niko's for donating our Christmas tree, which you can help decorate in the park on Saturday, Dec. 5th at 10am. Just show up with your holiday cheer. For many years now, Restaurant Owner

Dimitri Fetokakis has generously provided our tree in memory of his father. We appreciate you, Dimitri!

Join your neighbors for a fantastic open Italian buffet at Riva's Restaurant on the corner of Yoakum and Missouri! Our annual holiday party is Monday, Dec. 7th at 6:30pm. Purchase tickets at www.hydeparkhouston.org no later than Dec. 5th for just \$15. All residents and their guests are welcome.

The first association meeting of 2016 will be on Monday, Jan. 4th at 6:30pm on the 2nd floor at Rudyard's. Plan to attend to learn how to make the new year your healthiest ever! Watch for guest speaker details in the next issue.

Wishing you all a warm and safe season,

Macy Bodenhamer
President

HYDE PARK CIVIC ASSOCIATION

Annual Holiday Party

Monday, Dec. 7, at 6:30 PM

Riva's Restaurant

1117 Missouri St. at Yoakum

Meal tickets cost \$15 in advance
and \$20 at the door

PURCHASE MEAL TICKETS ONLINE AT

hydeparkhouston.org

NON-EMERGENCY CONTACTS

HPD Non-Emergency (713) 884-3131

24/7 Montrose Management

District Security Patrol (832) 370-9191

Dial 311 for City Helpline

UPCOMING EVENTS

General Meetings

DECEMBER 7, Monday, Holiday Party

BOARD CONTACTS

PRESIDENT - Macy Bodenhamer
president@hydeparkhouston.org

VICE PRESIDENT - Tammi Wallace
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SECRETARY - Travis Marshall
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CITIZEN PATROL - Rex Richardson
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NEWSLETTER - Adrienne Wong
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ADVERTISING - Carlos Fernandez
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VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR
Roy Brooks
volunteer@hydeparkhouston.org

BLOCK CAPTAINS

Bomar

Greg Jeu & Jim Hurst 281-541-6756

California / Westheimer

Cecilia Kammer 832-788-1586

Commonwealth

Liz Hudson & Carol Brownstein

713-527-9852

Mark McCreary

Fairview

Irene Dahlgren 713-299-5190

Hyde Park / Hyde Park Apts.

Linda Carter 713-524-2952

Alex Aranda 713-533-9474

Hyde Park Crescent

Susan Ellis 713-528-8289

Carlos Fernandez 713-520-7017

Hyde Park Townhomes

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Indiana / Yupon

Alice McCarthy 713-521-5807

Jackson

Vacant

Maryland

Cathy Hanchett 713-542-4921

Michigan

Tom Whitworth 713-523-8035

Missouri

Tammi Wallace 713-301-2266

Montrose/Waugh

Christina Ptasinski 832-516-9811

Peden

Lori Corwin 832-582-6520

Vermont

Sharon Lord 713-522-9427

Welch

Scott and Lina Rigrod 713-528-2791

Cliff Jones 713-524-3055

West Drew

Mike McKann 713-526-6777

West Gray / Hazel

Roy Brooks 832-691-6587

Willard

Delia Isabel Cuellar 832 819-0813

Yoakum/Van Buren

Macy Bodenhamer 713-201-5810

Block captains: Notify
vicepresident@hydeparkhouston.org
of any changes in contact information.

Jackson Block Captain sought

volunteer@hydeparkhouston.org

HPCA November 2015 Meeting Minutes

On Nov. 2, **President Macy Bodenhamer** called the Hyde Park Civic Association meeting to order about 6:40 PM with about 30 members and guests in attendance. The first order of business was our annual election.

Current, paid association members received ballots listing the following unopposed candidates:

Director 1 - President, Macy Bodenhamer

Director 4 - Secretary, Diana Mobley

Director 7 - Deed Restrictions Committee Member #2, Chris Brooks-Delphin

Director 9 - At Large Board Member, Roy Brooks-Delphin

At the end of the meeting, **Treasurer Rex Richardson** reported that all candidates had been elected or re-elected with 21 votes each.

Our guest speakers, **State Representatives Garnet Coleman** (District 147) and **Sarah Davis** (District 134), were introduced. They reported on the last session of the Legislature and answered questions from the audience (see related article for details).

Treasurer Rex Richardson reported a balance of \$16,585 in the HPCA general account. He said National Night Out helped to bring in new memberships and funds.

Deed Restrictions Committee Chair Diana Mobley said activity in our neighborhood has diminished significantly in the last year with the exception of the construction of large, expensive, single-family homes.

Outgoing Membership Committee Chair Sandie Zilker said that in October, residents paid for a total of 47 memberships, 27 of them new and 20 renewals. "Many had just moved to the neighborhood and joined during National Night Out, which is encouraging," she said.

President Bodenhamer reminded everyone of our upcoming Holiday Party starting at 6:30 PM Monday, Dec. 7, at Riva's Restaurant. Meal tickets cost \$15 in advance and \$20 at the door. The holiday meal now includes dessert. Tickets can be purchased online at hydeparkhouston.org using PayPal or a credit card. Bodenhamer encouraged everyone to buy their tickets in advance to save money and allow for a more accurate attendance estimate in advance.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 PM.

NEWSLETTER:

This month's deadline is earlier because of the Holidays. Please submit all material for December consideration by December 11th to newsletter@hydeparkhouston.org

Rudyard's British Pub serves good food in the 'living room of Montrose'



Bar owner Lelia Rodgers and Joe Apa, resident food wizard, share a drink at the entrance to Rudyard's British Pub, which hosts the civic association's general meetings.

A venture capitalist and a science major walk into a bar. Where are they? Rudyard's, of course.

Bar owner and former venture capitalist **Lelia Rodgers** and **Joe Apa**, resident food wizard with a degree in biology and chemistry, make **Rudyard's British Pub** at 2010 Waugh Drive a most pleasant place to drink good beer and eat good food, amongst other things. "We're known as the living room of Montrose," Rodgers said, an appellation she acknowledges proudly.

Rudz—as the bar is often called—is familiar to Hyde Park residents, especially those who attend the monthly meetings of the civic association in the upstairs meeting room and performance space. Rudz hosts those meetings for free and—every October—provides a half keg of beer for our National Night Out celebration in Lamar Park.

Starting in 1978...

Rudyard's started in 1978 on Kipling, moving in early 1981 to its current location on Waugh Drive. Originally, the bar occupied a much smaller part of the building with the rest occupied by shops such as Glen Rumsey Frame Shop and Thunderbird Motorcycles. In 1993, "we were a punk rock bar—sort of—serving only beer and wine," Rodgers said.

In 1997, Rodgers bought the building, adding a kitchen, a full bar and a performance space upstairs. Those changes to an already-established neighborhood watering hole were not universally welcomed. "People thought I was killing Rudz, that I was over reaching," Rodger said. In 2000, Rudyard's expanded to fill the entire building with the opening of The Next Door.

Food: A Key Part of Success

Food is one the key elements in the success of Rudz, a success Rodgers attributes to "Joe's level of professionalism. The kitchen turns out food that kept people from getting up and leaving," she said.

Apa, who double-majored in biology and chemistry, worked in various restaurants to pay his way through college, starting with casual dining and pizza joints and eventually working up to fine dining establishments. He worked for well-known Houston chef Monica Pope at T'afia, now known as Sparrow. He also had a catering business and spent three-and-a-half years as a private chef, flying around the country to various jobs. Long before he set foot in a professional kitchen, Apa learned about good food and cooking from his mother and paternal grandfather. "I'm blessed to have had so many good cooks to learn from," he said.

When Apa came to Rudz, he inherited a "legacy menu" of Rudyard's favorites such as fish and chips and hamburgers. "That's part of the customers' experience of Rudyard's," he said, so the legacy menu stayed, but with upgrades in quality and consistency. He vetted suppliers to locate the best ingredients and instituted composting, which cut kitchen waste in half.

"Our food is fresh-made and affordable," Apa said. "Our kitchen is hitting on all cylinders. We offer cheap, good food—but not fast food," he added.

Monthly Beer Tasting Dinners

In December 2007, Apa launched Rudyard's monthly Beer Tasting Dinners featuring five different beers and five food courses. When planning the dinner, Apa takes several factors into consideration, starting first with the brewery that's being featured. He researches the beers to be offered, noting alcohol content, prevalence of hops, whether they're pale or bitter and more, then crafts a menu to compliment or contrast with each beer.

The Beer Tasting Dinners are usually held the last Thursday of the month except when they conflict with holidays. "It has a really good following," Apa said. Reservations can be made online at rudyardspub.com.

Another aspect of the Rudz experience is live music and comedy performances. "We're committed to live original music," Rodgers said. "We're successful at being both a gathering spot and a live music venue with stage quality performances."

What's Next

Rodger said Rudz is refining inventory and adding a "20 tower tap" to expand their already significant selection of beers. "We were offering imported and craft beers before it was the thing to do," she adds.

Submitted by George Sroka, past president

New Year's Resolution for a Safer Community? You Can Help!

Wishing we all felt safer in our own neighborhood? You can contribute to that goal by joining our Citizens on Patrol group sponsored by the Houston Police Department. This group acts as a neighborhood watch program, with volunteers who "patrol" during their regular community activity. Patrollers keep an eye out for suspicious activities and then report those to HPD's nonemergency line at 713-884-3131, or emergencies to 911. Those reports have identified vandalism, potential auto vehicle and home burglaries, and even intercepted thefts.

If you're interested in joining, contact Rex Richardson at treasurer@hydeparkhouston.org. A one-hour training class at the HPD storefront on Westheimer is all that's required.

Please consider becoming a citizen patroller. There is no minimum time commitment, and many patrollers simply keep an eye out when driving on their regular commute through Hyde Park. When residents look out for each other, we all have greater peace of mind. And who doesn't want that?!

Submitted by Macy Bodenhamer, president

Citizens on Patrol Report for OCTOBER 2015

Submitted by Rex Richardson

Hours patrolled by car = 40.40
Hours patrolled on foot = 119.65
Suspicious incidents reported = none for October

Thanks to all the patrollers who kept an eye out last month for the safety of our neighbors and community.

Jackson Block Captain sought

volunteer@hydeparkhouston.org

HYDE PARK CIVIC ASSOCIATION

Annual Holiday Party

Monday, Dec. 7, at 6:30 PM

Riva's Restaurant

1117 MISSOURI ST. AT YOAKUM

*Join Your Neighbors and Friends for a
Buffet Dinner, now including Dessert*

Meal tickets cost \$15 in advance and \$20 at the door

TICKETS CAN BE PURCHASED ONLINE AT

hydeparkhouston.org

using PayPal or a credit card

Volunteer Appeal for our Hyde Park Community

As the holidays draw nearer, I find myself more grateful than ever for the community we have here in Hyde Park. To that end, we are growing the organization and services HPCA offers to its members, one step at a time. **Neighbor Terri Arellano** is working to begin a Hyde Park Families group for the many families who live in Hyde Park. This group envisions meeting the needs of families as a social network where parents may get pointers, play dates, and positive interaction with others who live in the neighborhood! Please keep an eye out on our Facebook page for the date of the first meeting!

There is always an opportunity to make a difference in our neighborhood, and the following are the greatest needs right now: (1) **Citizens on Patrol Coordinator** and (2) a **Membership Chair**. Send me an e-mail to volunteer@hydeparkhouston.org if you are interested in learning more about any of the listed positions.

"Citizens on Patrol" was established in an effort to bring the citizens and the police department together for a common goal, and that is to

improve the quality of life by eliminating crime." Its goal is to reduce crime while also making our community a friendlier place while also encouraging crime awareness.

"The broadest, and maybe the most meaningful definition of volunteering: Doing more than you have to because you want to, in a cause you consider good."

Ivan Scheier

Membership Chair

The effectiveness of HPCA is only as strong as its efforts in reaching out into the community and creating a presence in our wider community. This is done primarily through the membership committee. The Membership Chair maintains records of membership, makes regular

reports of the Associations numbers, and seeks creative ways to increase membership enrollment.

Lamar Park Co-Chairs/Committee Members

We are in need of three committee members and one more co-chair to fill the Lamar Park Maintenance Committee. **Neighbor Sharon Beausoleil** has graciously stepped forward, and we are hoping for more members in the coming weeks!

Lamar Park Fundraising Committee

Do you have experience in fundraising? We need your help with carrying on our efforts at restoring Houston's oldest fountain in Hyde Park; The Eight Dolphins.

Newsletter Writers

Have you had a long-time interest in exploring something different or relevant to you about our neighborhood? We would love to feature your own research and writing in the newsletter! Other possibilities include writing about your restaurant experiences here in Houston, or even about something daily that you live/experience that when viewed from a slightly different angle, is extraordinary.

Co-Chairs, Home Tour

These two positions would be responsible for organizing and overseeing the annual display of historic and noteworthy homes in Hyde Park. An interest in architecture and the history of Hyde Park is not necessary but a big help!

*Submitted by Roy Brooks,
Volunteer Co-ordinator*

2015 MEETING, TRASH PICKUP AND RECYCLING SCHEDULE

All residents are welcomed to monthly meetings (@ **6:30-7:45 p.m., 2nd floor Ruyard's Pub on Waugh**). Featured guest speakers will be announced in advance. Come early to order dinner or a beverage and enjoy during the meeting. Meetings are always held on the 1st Monday of each month, with exceptions noted as follows:

December - No meeting, Holiday Party, Riva's

**TRASH/RECYCLING:
TRASH PICK-UP: MONDAYS
SINGLE STREAM: Dec. 7, 21.
HEAVY/JUNK: Dec. 2.**

Theater or Theatre

I have never counted the number of theater(re) groups in the greater Houston area but it is probably over 40. You may be familiar with and may have attended performances at the Alley, Stages, Main Street, Ensemble, U of H, Rice and U of St. Thomas. Perhaps you are not aware of Mildred's Umbrella, Stark Naked, Hune, Catastrophic, Theater LaB, Horsehead, and so many more talented groups. Houston is exploding with great theater. There are no good reasons (okay there are probably some good reasons) for sitting at home.

Let's start with one reason, "I can't afford to go to the theater". Every performance of Catastrophic Theatre is "pay what you can". Many of the theaters offer at least one performance (usually on Monday night) that is "pay what you can". Wordsmyth Theater has rehearsed readings of new plays about 6 times a year and there is no charge to attend. Senior play subscriptions (not offered at every theater) and preview nights are usually \$10 to \$15 per play and you have an assigned seat.

Reason #2, "I can't eat or drink during the performance". Sometimes that is true but most theaters allow you to purchase food and drinks at the concession counter and take them into the theater. You obviously need to consume quietly. Some theaters such as Catastrophic provide wine, beer and soft drinks after each performance to give you time to meet the actors and discuss the play. I am seeing more theaters offering this amenity after a performance.

Reason #3, "I don't like dreary, depressing plays". Then pick a play that is light and happy. I can't offer much help here as I love dreary, depressing plays. I can't list everything that is playing, so I will pick only two options on plays being performed in December. For the light, entertaining Christmas play go see **Ho, Ho Humbug 2.0** at Stark Naked Theatre Company. Purchase tickets at www.starknakedtheatre.com. For more drama see **Everything will be Different: A Brief History of Helen of Troy** at Catastrophic Theatre. Purchase tickets at www.catastrophictheatre.com. You will find



Above: Ho, Ho Humbug 2.0 (Source: Stark Naked Theatre website). Below: The Danube (Source: Catastrophic Theatre website).



me sitting in the front row enjoying a drink and my cell phone will be set to silent.

Submitted by Mary Ellen Whitworth

Mary Ellen and husband Tom have lived in Hyde Park for almost 40 years. They can be seen walking the neighborhood with mostly unruly dogs. Mary Ellen is an environmental engineer and a playwright.

Hyde Park Civic Association Annual Membership		
Individual - \$30	Couple - \$60	New or Renewal (circle one)
Date Paid:		
Amount Paid: \$		Check No.:
Name(s):		
Address:		
Telephone:		
E-mail:		

Only about 10% of residents are civic association members. If you're not one of them, please consider joining for just \$30/year. And if you haven't renewed your membership for 2015, please do so. Use the form above or just go to our website to pay through PayPal. Memberships fund the cost of printing this newsletter, help maintain Lamar Park and more. We need your support and welcome your involvement!

Mail form and check to:
Hyde Park Civic Association
PO Box 66422
Houston, TX 77266-6422
Or just pay online at hydeparkhouston.org.

Local legislators review last session, answer questions

Submitted by George Sroka, past president

The two state legislators who represent Hyde Park discussed bills passed in the last session of the Texas Legislature and answered questions during a lively Q&A at our general meeting November 2 at Rudyard's.

State Representatives Garnet Coleman (District 147) and Sarah Davis (District 134) outlined their accomplishments and frustrations from the last session, then tackled questions from the audience.

The boundaries of their districts intersect in Hyde Park with Davis representing the area west of Commonwealth and Coleman the area east of it.

Coleman, who has served 24 years in the legislature, said the biggest downside of the last session was the "Grover Norquist kind of budgeting" in which no taxes or tax increases are considered. "That's the environment we're in," he said, and it limits the state's ability to expand Medicaid and address other crucial needs.

WOMEN'S HEALTH FUNDING

On the plus side, Coleman said the legislature restored funding for education, addressed women's health issues, and instituted a better approach to mental health. Women's health and mental health are two of his key priorities, he said, adding he is "very proud" of the improvements made there.

Davis said "healthy babies, healthy mommies legislation is my focus. I'm a breast cancer survivor, so I'm especially pleased the legislature added \$260 million for women's health."

Higher education also did well in the last session with a 7% increase in funding—the first one in 10 years, Davis said. Also, the new Tuition Revenue Bond will provide \$3.1 billion for universities to build dorms and other facilities to improve higher education infrastructure.

Most of the \$209.4 billion two-year budget comes from the state sales tax and federal funding. The taxes on oil and gas production fund the state's Rainy Day Fund, Davis explained.

DIVERTING SPECIAL PURPOSE FUNDS

Davis said one of the most important, but little noted, changes made in the last session eliminated diversion of funds supposedly collected for specific purposes. For example, funds collected to improve state parks and to defray the cost of electricity for the poor were not being spent for those purposes. Instead, the money in previous sessions had been diverted to cover shortfalls elsewhere, she explained.

"We appropriated those funds out and ended that practice," Davis said.

The legislature also repealed all occupational license taxes, which in some cases cost \$200 per year for professional licenses, she said.

"We represent about 175,000 people each," Davis said of herself and Coleman. "We work together. He's a senior member of the Democrat Caucus and I'm a Republican. We still have a tradition of working together. The newspaper will make it seem like we're



State Representatives Sarah Davis (District 134) and Garnet Coleman (District 147) outlined their accomplishments and frustrations from the last session, then tackled questions from the audience, November 2 at our general meeting.

always at odds, but that's not true," she said.

Coleman said the biggest conflicts in the State Legislature are not Republican versus Democrat. "Rural vs. urban is where you see the big fights occurring," he said.

The Texas Legislature—which consists of 31 Senators and 150 Representatives—meets once every other year for 140 days. The Constitution prohibits voting on anything in the first 60 days, so the Legislature had

The biggest conflicts in the State Legislature are not Republican versus Democrat. "Rural vs. urban is where you see the big fights occurring." – Garnet Coleman, State Representative

"We still have a tradition of working together. The newspaper will make it seem like we're always at odds, but that's not true."

– Sarah Davis, State Representative

to deal this session with 6000 bills in the last 80 days, eventually passing 1,300 bills and joint resolutions.

QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION

In the Q&A session that followed their remarks, Coleman and Davis were asked what decreased in the budget. Coleman said not much went down, which he considered a success.

They were asked what effect the drop in the price of oil would have on the state budget. Coleman said he thinks the state should compensate by drawing money out of the "Rainy Day" Fund (officially the Economic Stabilization Fund). Davis said the political will to do so doesn't exist. "It would take 100 votes to do it. Those votes aren't there," she added.

Davis said "we think the controller is wrong about his revenue estimates," which she believes are unrealistically high. "Because we don't believe it, we allocated less spending." Coleman said "nobody likes raising taxes," but a shortfall requires either cutting spending or raising taxes. "There are differences in

philosophy, but we have to balance the budget. My goal is to spend what we have on the right things," he said.

In perhaps the liveliest exchange of the evening, Coleman and Davis elaborated on the elimination of supposedly dedicated funds not being spent for the purposes for which they were collected. Coleman said the money to subsidize electricity for the poor simply wasn't getting to the poor. "Better not to have a rousse going on, because that money just wasn't being used for the designated purpose," he said.

Those funds were diverted to other purposes when a Constitutional amendment created a spending cap, forcing the Legislature to either raise taxes or cut spending, Coleman explained.

BUDGET GIMMICKS

Davis described the diversion of funds from specific-purpose accounts to cover shortfalls as a "complete budget gimmick," adding "I get the frustration. I'm with you. We're working to stop that from happening ever again."

In a particularly lively exchange, Coleman took exception to being characterized as a "politician" in his responses to the questions. "I wish you wouldn't use that word," he said.

When asked about his "wish list" for the next session, Coleman said "I'd increase spending

on early childhood education...at least get it back to the level before the big cuts...and more funding for higher education. I think those two areas might give the biggest bang for the buck."

In the final question of the evening, Coleman and Davis were asked how state legislation hamstrings local government, specifically regarding pension funds for Houston police and firefighters. Coleman explained that state legislation on pensions covers *only* Houston firefighters, not police. "Pensions should be funded of course, but the question is—should the benefits be that rich?" Coleman said he told the mayor to come up with a deal on a piece of legislation and the Legislature would deal with it. That hasn't happened, he said.

Davis said pensions for Houston firefighter is such a local issue that it's unlikely to inspire action by the Legislature. "There's just not the political will to fix it," she said. And Coleman added that opening that issue in the Legislature runs the risk of allowing what happened in Wisconsin. "We might wipe out all public unions in Texas," he said, if the state tackled the issue of adjusting one city's pension plan.

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