

MESA PARK MESSENGER

A Mesa Park Neighborhood Association monthly newsletter for the residents of Mesa Park

OCTOBER 2006, VOLUME 12, ISSUE 13

WE'RE BACK!

Due to unforeseen circumstances, we have not published a July, August or September newsletter. We apologize for the delay, but are happy to be back on track. If you have layout and design skills and can volunteer about 10-15 hours a month, please e-mail claudia.mpna@gmail.com as soon as possible. The MPNA needs your help.

BEING SAFE FROM DOGS RUNNING LOOSE

By Shawn McAdams

Mesa Park residents have been victims of unprovoked dog attacks in recent months. This problem came to the attention of the MPNA Board. Here are facts on the problem and advice on how to prevent it recurring. The victims were in their own yards or walking down the street when they were attacked by aggressive dogs that escaped from their Mesa Park residences and went on rampages. Some of the victims drove off their canine attackers without injury. But one victim was bitten and needed Emergency Room treatment. The dog responsible for that injury was taken by the authorities and "put down" (also called "being euthanized"), meaning the dog was killed. What if the victim had not been an adult, but a child? Or a family pet? And maybe not just bitten, but horribly bitten? Mauled? Mutilated? Crippled and traumatized for life? Killed? It could happen. At least 3 human deaths related to dog bites were reported in Texas in 2005, and at least 4 in 2004. Many serious injuries were reported, and countless minor injuries that nevertheless were painful and expensive. We must act prudently and swiftly to prevent such tragedies and troubles in OUR neighborhood. The first action is for DOG OWNERS. We are responsible for confining and controlling our dogs to prevent harm to persons and damage to property. The Law specifies criminal and civil penalties against the owner of a dog that runs loose and is a nuisance, or damages property, or injures a person or another animal, or even attacks without injuring. Penalties are even greater if the dog is not registered or vaccinated. And the dog itself may pay the ultimate penalty: its life. We love our dogs, but we MUST keep them safely confined, and walk them only on the leash, not off the leash. It's the Law. We should control them with firm, professionally-taught obedience training and kindness, not with harsh words and beatings. We MUST have them

registered and vaccinated as the Law requires. We owe it to our dogs, to ourselves, and to all the neighborhood. The second action is for EVERYBODY AND ANYBODY. How many times have we seen dogs running loose on the streets, and we did nothing? Not called Animal Control or the Police, but instead said or thought "It's wearing a collar. It must be somebody's pet. I don't want to make trouble for a neighbor. It's OK if it runs loose." We do that too often. But it is NOT OK. Maybe the collar carried an expired registration tag (dog license) or an expired vaccination tag and the dog is unregistered or diseased. Maybe the tag was not an official registration but was just a cute medallion from the Pet Store. Maybe the collar carried a special "Dangerous Dog" warning tag, for a dog that already had been "busted" by the Law for unprovoked attacks against persons. Such dogs are unpredictable and very dangerous. And what about dogs without collars? Are they ownerless strays? Or the beloved pets of irresponsible owners who do not register or vaccinate them? Diseased? Dangerous? Vicious? ANY dog running loose can be dangerous, especially if it is in a pack of two or more loose dogs. ANY dog bite can be painful and dangerous, even from a tiny Chihuahua biting a small child. Although four of the unprovoked attacks researched for this article were done by Pit Bulls running loose, victims also reported unprovoked attacks against themselves or against their own dogs by German Shepherds, Labradors, Dobermans, Chows, Boxers, Poodles, Dachshunds, Chihuahuas, and just plain mutts. And all the victims who escaped uninjured from attacking dogs that went on to attack another person said this: "IF ONLY I'D CALLED 911 IN THE FIRST PLACE, THEN THE NEXT PERSON WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN HURT." Don't gamble when SAFETY IS AT STAKE FOR YOUR PETS, YOUR CHILDREN, AND YOURSELVES. REPORT LOOSE DOGS IMMEDIATELY. Call 311, the City of Austin's public safety Help Line for non-emergencies. Or call 911 if the situation is an emergency. The trained operators can send help to the scene within minutes, or even within seconds if a unit is nearby. Animal Control Officers and/or Police Officers can save you and yours from a dog attack. They can lock up dangerous or diseased or nuisance animals and give citations to irresponsible owners. They also can advise you about problems, and refer you to the proper channels for solving them. Do the right thing: IMMEDIATELY CALL 311 OR 911 AND REPORT ANY DOGS RUNNING LOOSE. You may save a person or pet you love from injury or death.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: The Playscape is now OPEN in Schroeter Park! Also our website has been redesigned and looks great, plus easier to navigate and read! We will be updating events soon. Please check it out: <http://www.main.org/mpna/>



YARD OF THE MONTH

By Susan Serna

Thank you so much for the Yard of the Month nominations that have been sent in! It's great to receive feedback from our neighbors! There are plenty of beautiful yards to consider for this recognition. If you know of a particular yard that you'd like to nominate to receive Yard of the Month, please feel free to email the address to Susan at sserna@austin.rr.com. Congratulations to the winners!

August: Nancy Richards, 11619 Natrona ■ September: Leonard Montgomery, 11702 Santa Cruz Dr.

FOOD DRIVE

By Patricia Barrueta

Keller Williams Food Drive's theme is "Paint the Town Red!"! 30,000 white grocery bags imprinted with our RED Keller Williams company logo will be distributed by our agents all over Austin to be filled with food. Last year, Keller Williams collected over 20,000 lbs. of food and \$400.00 for the Austin Area Food Bank. My partner, Jonathan Stilley, and I will personally hand out 600 bags in the Mesa Park and Balcones Woods neighborhoods. Most, if not all, of the residences in Mesa Park will get bags. Of course, anyone who does not receive a bag for whatever reason, is welcome to participate by just leaving their own grocery bag filled with non-perishable goods on the front curb the **morning of October 21st** and we will double check every house in the neighborhood just in case. Thank you!


FALL IS THE BEST TIME TO PLANT A TREE

By Susan McVicker

Many of the trees in Mesa Park, planted 30 years ago, were fast growing trees and they are nearing the end of their life span. The best time to plant trees is between October and March so that they have time to establish roots before long hot summer months.

Trees in our yards add beauty and so much more. Properly placed shade trees can reduce heating and cooling costs up to 30%, by providing shade for roofs and walls. Trees help to stabilize your neighborhood and add considerable value to our homes. Trees help clean the air, add beauty and color and are home to many different types of wildlife. With proper selection and placement, trees provide us with years of enjoyment as well as added value to property.

For additional information there is a great guide book available at any nursery and Home Depot and Lowe's, just ask for "Native and Adapted Landscape Plants". This is a free publication provide by Texas Cooperative Extension and the City of Austin. The Texas Cooperative Extension can answer many questions. Contact them at 854-9600. "The Growing Guide for Austin" is an excellent resource published by TreeFolks. You can call 443-5323 or www.treefolks.org. Another excellent web site is www.growgreen.org.



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SAVE THE DATE!

HousingWorks Austin 3rd AUSTIN HOUSING SUMMIT
Balancing Affordability and Healthy Neighborhoods

October 7, 2006, 8:30 am to Noon

St. Edward's University Ragsdale Center

Light breakfast and coffee 8:00 – 8:30 am

Free Admission

For information or to RSVP email Christine at cgauss@austin.rr.com

Mesa Park NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING

Tuesday, October 24th

7 - 8 pm

Covenant United Fellowship Hall

4410 Duval Road

Please join us!

In our city of neighborhoods, an increasing number of neighbors, friends and often our own family members struggle to afford a home in the city they love. Join neighborhood, education, faith and other Austin community leaders on the morning of October 7 to discuss the role of housing affordability in preserving healthy neighborhoods:

- See examples of successful efforts in Austin and around the country to preserve affordability in neighborhoods
- Discuss the importance of stable homes on families, schools, and neighborhood security
- Learn about the Yes for Homes! Housing Bonds on the November ballot
- Discuss concerns and opportunities for your neighborhood

The decisions we make today will shape Austin's next 50 years. It's time to act to preserve a community that everyone can afford. Bring your voice and ideas to help set the course for an affordable Austin.

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT RECAP

Hosted by Bob and Jessie Grissom, Shoshone Drive had a great turnout for the annual Nat'l Night Out block party on August 1st. Posters were made by Becky Grissom and Claire Dubiel to welcome our neighbors and guests. A water balloon game was organized by Dave Chilik, with Jesse and Maggie McLean winning the prize. Everyone in attendance was entered to win prizes that pleased and delighted all present. Refreshments included delicious hamburgers and hotdogs, chips, soft drinks of all kinds, topped off with a spectacular array of cookies, pecan tassies, and cakes.

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Guests in attendance included our letter carrier David Phinney and family; David, Scott, Stacey and Arturo from Fire Station # 25 on Duval Rd; Lisa and Jason from the EMS unit. Others of note included Jerry Reynolds with City of Austin Code Enforcement, Amy Everhart from Representative Mark Strama's office, Barbara Pokornay with the Post Office, and Scott Mount from Austin Energy. The Northwest Command Division of the Police Department was represented by Lolita Slagle, Sgt Gena Curtis, District Rep Joe Maciel, and Commander Leo Enriquez.

John Bowyer was recognized for his help in nabbing a thief who had burglarized numerous vehicles in and around our neighborhood.

A big thank you goes to Cindy Lindsay and Becky Mills for helping at the sign-up table, also to Gilbert Grissom and Kevin O'Brian for cooking the burgers and dogs.

Ninety two people attended, and declared this to be the best Nat'l Night Out get together yet. We are all looking forward to next year, and hope to see you there.

Note: National Night Out was designed to meet your neighbors and reintroduce that sense of community and friendliness once widely enjoyed in this great country.

CLASSIFIEDS

Peace of Mind Pet Care since 2004 in Mesa Park! Experienced vet techs care for your pets. Call 794-1031 free estimates.

Do you need a little pampering? Please call Kim Neilson @ 663-1227 for a complimentary Mary Kay facial & make-over.

Affordable bookkeeping for small businesses including payroll. Senior Citizen bill paying and account reconciliation. Notary Public. Kim Neilson- 663-1227 or knbooks@gmail.com

Animal lover will walk your pets for you, can also check food & water if you are away. Whitney 418-1225.

Piano Lessons for young children in my home. Call Elizabeth - 345-5584 for more information.

NEIGHBORHOOD CONTACTS

President:

Terry Tevis, mpnapres@yahoo.com, 736-8469

Treasurer:

Susan McVicker, susanmev@att.net

Board Members:

Claudia Ullrich, claudia.mpna@gmail.com

Gwen Thompson, 343-6522

Cindy Lindsay, TreeTopProp@prodigy.net, 346-2232

Hon. Board Member:

Val Schroeter, 345-3314

Quarries Representative:

Pamela Villars, pvillars@earthlink.net, 418-8219

Volunteer Coordinator:

Ruth Kidwell, rkidwell@austin.rr.com, 343-1638

Yard of the Month Chairperson:

Susan Serna, sserna@austin.rr.com

Lost & Found Pets:

Jennifer, POMpetcare@yahoo.com, 794-1031

Marie Wilson, organize4u@prodigy.net, 343-2662

Neighborhood Watch Coordinator / Park Chairman:

Kendall Kelsoe, ninpo_ikkan@juno.com

Webmaster:

Julie Kennedy, julie@digitalcitydesigns.com

Newletter Editor:

Looking for Volunteer

Emergency: 911

Police Non-Emergency: 311

NW Austin Police District Rep: SPO Joe Maciel,

joe.maciel@ci.austin.tx.us, 974-4289

Reminder: The MPNA is not a HOA (Homeowner's Association). If you have a complaint or need to report a violation, please contact the appropriate city official for assistance. Thank you!



In home pet sitting. Let us take care of your pets while you are away—furry, feathered, or finned tails welcome

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