

T H E H E I G H T S

Newsletter of the Houston Heights Association

Volume 37, Number Two, February 2011



Fire On Heights

Houston Heights Loses Beloved Citizen and Beautiful Residence on Heights Boulevard

Houston Heights neighbors woke January 3 to the news of a tremendous tragedy in our tight-knit community with the loss of one of its beloved citizens, Mrs. Evelyn "Patti" Worthington, as well as that of her caretaker, Elizabeth "Lisa" Sanders.

Home Tour Chairs Marianne Sulser and Trudy Nelson and Home Selection Chair Honi Knowles remember that Mrs. Worthington didn't hesitate when the Houston Heights Association asked her to open her magnificent home for one of the Association's biggest fundraisers of the year. In no small part due to the home's intrigue, the 2008 Holiday Home Tour enjoyed record numbers of visitors that year. On the Friday evening of the tour, in snow and freezing temperatures, visitors waited in a line from the front porch to the sidewalk, down Heights Boulevard, and around the corner at 12th Street. The following year, Mrs. Worthington volunteered her home for the HHA's first-ever Holiday Home Tour Patron Party, which hosted over 100 guests and again raised important funds for the Association.



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General Meeting

Sweet Tea Talk and Tasting

Sip, savor & learn about the magical properties of tea. Angela Warren of Sweet Tea Cafe and Tea Bar will enlighten you about nature's magical elixir. Enjoy varieties of teas at the tasting bar.

Everyone is invited! Doors open at 6:30 PM. HHA General Meeting & program commences at 7:00 PM.

Not yet a member of the Houston Heights Association? Well, this is your chance to meet and mingle with your neighbors, learn about our wonder-filled neighborhood, sign up to be a member, or join one of the volunteer committees that make our neighborhood dynamic and great.

That's Monday, February 14 at the HHA Fire Station, 12th and Yale Streets.

The Houston Heights Association gratefully acknowledges the support of the following 2011 Platinum Sponsors:



Fire on Heights *from page 1*

The home – a life-long dream for Mrs. Worthington – was a replica of a historic estate in Blacksburg, Virginia, which she loved from childhood memories. The beautiful home also received the HHA’s Community Improvement Award in 2008 for best new construction.

Most people who toured the home will remember Mrs. Worthington’s beloved and priceless collection of dolls ranging from the 15th century to current times, which were beautifully displayed in their own climate controlled glass cases in the home.

Our thoughts are with Mrs. Worthington’s family and friends.

Constable Statistics

December	E	W	N
Total Arrests	0	1	2
Citizen Assists	0	0	1
Citizen Contacts	32	54	38
Vacation Watches	188	33	58
Court Citations	6	19	11
Alarm Responses	3	1	2
Suspicious Vehicles	26	24	18
Park Checks	31	43	39
Disturbances	0	2	1
Major Accidents	0	1	1
Criminal Offenses	6	0	1
Miles Patrolled	1022	835	829

We have a total of 735 subscribers for the Heights Constable Patrol Program. A special thanks to our deputies for the outstanding work that they do keeping our neighborhood safe.

Donations

Our thanks to the following for their generous support of the projects of the Houston Heights Association.

- Andrea L. Farr
- Gary Gehbauer – Heights Playground, Flower Gardens, and Fire Station Endowment
- Daniel Kornberg & Mary Scott Hagle
- Sam & Mai Lindsey
- E. Drew Mehlhaff – Fire Station Endowment
- Linda Price & Matt Grove – Boulevard Maintenance
- Joan Robins – Boulevard
- Anne Rodgers – Boulevard (Maple)

Call For Docents

Volunteers Needed for the Spring Home Tour. If you can help out with three hours of your time to work either April 2 or 3, please contact Jan Cottage at 713-880-1295 or jcottage@sbcglobal.net or Sandy Steitz at 713-392-4133 or ssteitz@comcast.net. In return, you will receive a free Home Tour ticket, value \$25.

The Houston Heights Association gratefully acknowledges the support of the following Winter 2010-2011 Sponsors:

Silver



Bronze



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**37th Annual
Houston Heights Association
Volunteer Appreciation and
Awards Dinner**

“SILVER AND GOLD”

**Sunday February 27, 2011
5:00-8:00 PM**



The Annual HHA Volunteer Appreciation and Community Improvement Awards Dinner will start things off this year with a ‘BYOB Mix-N-Mingle Hour,’ beginning at 5:00 PM on Sunday, February 27, at the HHA Fire Station, Yale and 12th Streets.

The theme and attire this year are **“Silver and Gold”** as in **“Make New Friends and Keep the Old, One is Silver and the Other Gold.”** **“Smart Casual”** attire.

At 6:00 PM, dinner will be served by Massoud’s catering, and the evening will continue with the recognition of past and present volunteers, including prestigious awards for the 2010 Citizen of the Year, Corporate Citizen of the Year, and Marcella Perry Award, among a few other surprises. Results will also be announced for the 2010 Community Improvement Awards, consisting of Residential Renovation, Commercial Renovation, Residential New Construction, and Commercial New Construction.

Due to TABC rules, the HHA will be unable to provide alcoholic beverages for this event at this location (plenty of non-alcoholic beverages will be available), but we encourage everyone to “BYOB” for you and your guests.

**SAVE-THE-DATE:
TICKETS WILL GO ON SALE
FOR THIS FUN EVENT ON FEBRUARY 1, 2011.**

Tickets are \$20 per person or \$175 for a reserved table of 8 and will be available through our website (www.houstonheights.org). Seating is limited and will be available on a first-come, first-served basis.

We look forward to seeing you on Sunday, February 27!

If you have further questions,
you may e-mail info@houstonheights.org.

Restoration

The next Houston Heights Association Restoration/Historical Committee meeting will be held at 448 Harvard Street on Thursday, February 10, from 7:30 to 9:30 PM.

Most everyone has an opinion about the new Preservation Ordinance. But when you are in the process of buying a home with contributing historic potential, but the seller asks that it be torn down after it is purchased, what do you do?

The answer, of course, is one preserves it. And that is essentially what a young couple with vast experience restoring a National Register home with amazing history at 1605 Heights Boulevard does. This month, we visit a home that is defined by a statement from the new owners that “houses deemed so often ‘too far gone’ may need a lot of work, but there is plenty that can be used without just tossing the house in a landfill and starting over. And there are so many resources right here in Houston to help with that process.” The trend to renovate a local building with historic potential follows a national trend to use older historic buildings to save the environment as well as incorporate historical preservation.

As experienced restoration aficionados, this couple bought this house, believed to be built in 1908, from seeing the handwritten cardboard “for sale” sign they passed daily. And they saw the interior two weeks after completing the purchase. Downsizing from their earlier home on “The Boulevard,” as it was known in the early 1900’s, they bought it. The price basically was just over the lot value, so they felt comfortable buying without seeing the interior as the seller required. Well, you can guess it was a shock for them to see it from the inside!

The house was in an awful state of disrepair. They could literally push on the wall of the master bedroom, and it would move and show the ground underneath from termite damage everywhere. It was 1600 square feet, not including the attic space that was built out with stairs and a plywood floor. So their restoration began.

Their philosophy from the beginning was to save every bit of the house that could be utilized and to use the existing square footage and attic space more efficiently to meet the family’s needs. Most of the original floor plan downstairs remained intact. It started as a two-bedroom; they kept one bedroom as the master and converted the space from the second bedroom into master bath, closet, laundry room, and powder room. The attic space was converted into two bedrooms and one bath. They also added on a new screened porch.

All the electrical, plumbing, HVAC, and roof were saved, as were all the original wood molding, wood floors, exterior wood siding, and windows. They even used a marvelous old sink found buried in the yard for a kitchen sink. Locally great resources in Houston were found to match the old house materials. Historic Houston had windows, siding, and flooring for patching and a claw-foot tub. The front door and antique glass doorknobs were bought at Atkins Antiques, and miscellaneous salvage pieces came from August Antiques on Heights Blvd. And, in turn, they found good homes for unused materials. Pine paneling went to Tim Womble for one of his projects; Historic Houston took the plumbing fixtures, gas fireplace, heaters, and other items.

They found the perfect architect, Spencer Howard, who works full time at Rice and does houses, too. He understood, and was enthusiastic about, the owners’ obsessive desire to save whatever could be saved of the house and their insistence on not adding more but making good efficient use of the existing space. He focused on improving energy efficiency and searched for unique pieces for the house like a find in Louisiana of three stained glass windows salvaged out of a house destroyed by Katrina for the den. The laundry room sink came from his parents’ backyard. Their contractor, Gabriel Home Builders here in Houston Heights, was good natured and patient as well with all the owners’ wishes, even though

...continues on page 5

Restoration from page 4

many of them required extra work. Overall, with careful planning and excellent resources, everything went extremely well for this must-see home.

This meeting will highlight what was thought to be another Houston Heights “tear down” house that has been transitioned into a charming family home using efficient recycling. Overall, the original exterior character of this property was kept intact. For those interested in how to do proper restoration and recycling, this meeting will be a must. Also, for those wanting to meet great neighbors and have an enjoyable evening, do attend.

The Houston Heights Restoration/Historical Committee meetings are open to the public quarterly to learn about history and restoration in keeping with the appreciation of the historic nature of Houston Heights. Please let Committee Chairman Dean Swanson know if you have a restoration project, historical structure under restoration, or historical information or photos pertaining to the Heights past to share at future meetings. Contact Dean at swansonad@sbcglobal.net or 713-880-2832.

Historic District Reconsideration Update

Houston City Council passed amendments to the Historic Preservation Ordinance on October 13 by a 12-3 vote. At the same meeting, City Council also passed a separate ordinance providing for a transition process from the old ordinance to the new ordinance. The transition ordinance established a 30-day period during which property owners in an existing or pending historic district could request reconsideration of their district. That period ran from October 18 through November 17.

In seven historic districts, including Houston Heights East, West, and South, the owners of 10% or more of the tracts asked for their districts to be reconsidered. The City mailed to all property owners in those districts an announcement of a public meeting (held December 8 for the three Houston Heights districts) and forms to be mailed back by any owners wanting to repeal their districts.

Planning Director Marlene Gafrick reported to City Council on January 6 that the number of returned forms was insufficient to trigger a recommendation to abolish the Heights East, Heights West, Heights South, Boulevard Oaks, and Avondale West districts.

The meeting for Norhill was held January 8; forms were due back by January 24. The meeting for First Montrose Commons was held January 18; forms are due back by February 2. Results from those surveys were not available at press time.

Ultimately, City Council will use the information from the returned forms and recommendations from staff to decide whether to affirm, modify, or abolish each district.

Please see the City of Houston Planning and Development Department site at www.houston.tx.gov/planning/HistoricPres/hist_pres_amend.html for final versions of the amended Historic Preservation Ordinance and the transition ordinance. We expect that further information on the reconsideration process will be posted there as it becomes available.

Candlelight Auction

This year’s Spring Home Tour Candlelight Dinner Auction promises to be as spectacular as ever, in fact almost “Oz-like.” We have a lot of incredible art donations from notable artists. This also includes a collection of side tables (to be bid on individually) designed and artistically embellished by local artisans and artists. The auction will include hundreds of items, including gift certificates from local merchants and amazing dinners in equally as amazing Heights homes. Besides all of this, there will be a few fantastic getaway vacation packages and a few big surprises.

HHA Education Committee Helps to Spread Holiday Cheer: Stories & Grants

The winners of the 2010 holiday writing contest read their stories to a large and enthusiastic audience at Waldo's Coffee House on Saturday, December 18. Many thanks to Waldo's for hosting this festive event! Shown in the picture at right are Andrea Arroyo, third-place winner for "Her Wish," Mandy O'Leary representing Ismael Garza, first-place winner for "The Choir Tour," and Jodi Bash, second-place winner for "Annie's Christmas."



Classroom Grants

Ushering in the New Year are many exciting projects in our Heights-area schools! The HHA Education Committee is pleased to announce that it has selected the following teachers as recipients for its 2010-2011 educational grant program:

Field Elementary School:

3rd Grade Team Ysobel Hayden & Rene Ibarra, \$675.00 for "Science & Math"

Hamilton Middle School:

Librarian & Art Teacher Team Robert Bunch & Bridgette Phillips, \$1,000.00 for "The Collage Project"

Helms Community Learning Center:

5th Grade Science Teacher Ida McCoy, \$730.00 for "Science Literacy"

Physical Education Teacher Calvin Easterday, \$1,000.00 for "Fun Movement with Music & Learning with Geo-phone Mats"

Technologist Julia Hernandez and Pre-K & Kindergarten teachers, \$800.00 for "Visual Vocabulary"

Kindergarten Teacher Ana Lerma, \$750.00 for "Discover and explore with engaging science/math workstations"

Love Elementary School:

Librarian Stephanie Eda, \$750.00 for "Leaping Into Literature"

Kindergarten Teacher Pamela Esquivel, \$750.00 for "iPad for Kindergarten"

Pre-kindergarten Teacher Carmen Vazquez and Kindergarten Teacher Brenda Munoz, \$750.00 for "Amaryllis Flowers"

Reagan High School:

Band Director Stephen Becker, \$750.00 for "Music/Band Instruments"

New Members

Please welcome the following new members to the Houston Heights Association.

Steve & Judy Beck

Curry Buckalew &

Isabel Sigala

Tyann & Ian Casady, gift

from Mireille Patman

James Chapman &

Tony Pryor

Shirley & Daniel Dobrowski

Stephen Donato

Tyler Doyle

Linda Enger

Chris & Robyn Fellows

Tyler & Aimee Flood

Jim & Sara M. Garcia

Joan Kerr

Kevin & Susan King

Lyndsey & Daniel Knight

Yvonne & Gary Koehler

Leslie May

Patrick McConn

Seth & Katie McNew

Dennis & Ashley McQueen

Mike & Amy Moore

Wesley Moore

Suzy Morton & Dell Toelkes

Don & Judith Neptune

Milton & Suzanne Palmer

Ted & Jere Pfister

Joyce & Dave Savelle

Dan & Jan Schmieder

Alaina & Gregory Smith

Beverlee Steinberg &

Chad Alexander

Sherri & Larry Stuart

Greg Utterback

Jack & Deanna Vernon

Mike White

Joyce Wildenthal

Shelli Williams

Woodland Cottage Etiquette,

Shea Sandefer Hill

Emily Yang

Calendar (continued from back cover)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
March 6	7 HHA Land Use 6:30 PM Fire Station	8	9	10 - <i>garbage</i>	11	12
13 <i>Daylight Savings Time starts</i>	14 HHA General Topic TBA 7:00 PM Fire Station	15 Greater Heights SNC (SN15) 6:30 PM Fire Station	16	17 - <i>garbage and recycling</i> <i>St. Patrick's Day</i>	18	19
20	21 HHA Board 6:30 PM Fire Station	22	23 PIP Meeting 7:00 PM 1602 State Street	24 - <i>garbage</i>	25	26
27	28 HHA Education 6:30 PM Fire Station	29	30	31 - <i>garbage and recycling</i>	April 1 Candlelight Dinner	2 Spring Home & Garden Tour 12:00-6:00 PM

Community Calendar

Events planned by other community organizations.

Every Wednesday to Saturday, 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Historic Houston's salvage warehouse is open. See www.historichouston.org.

Every Monday, 7:30 to 10:00 PM, Houston International Folk Dancers introductory lessons at Oddfellows Hall, 115 E. 14th.

February 3-5, Opera in the Heights presents Verdi's *Don Carlo* at Lambert Hall, 1703 Heights Blvd. For more information, visit <http://www.operaintheheights.org>.

March 5, 9:00 AM to 12:00 noon, The Lymphoma Research Foundation will host its second Houston Lymphomathon at Stude Park, 1031 Stude Street. For more information on volunteering, forming a team, signing up to walk, or becoming a sponsor, visit <http://www.lymphomathon.org/Houston2011>.

March 24-26 and March 31 through April 2, Opera in the Heights presents Bizet's *Pearl Fishers* at Lambert Hall, 1703 Heights Blvd. For more information, visit <http://www.operaintheheights.org>.

Future History

April 1-3, Spring Home Tour

June 4, Heights Fun Run

October 2, Bicycle Rally

December 2-3, Holiday Home Tour

December 5-7, Holiday Basket Preparation and Delivery

February 26, 2012, Awards Dinner

At The Fire Station

Events at the Houston Heights City Hall and Fire Station, 12th and Yale

The second Monday, 5:00 to 7:00 PM, and the last Monday of the month, 8:00 AM to noon, the City Council District H Satellite Office is open at the east (office) door.

Heavy Trash Notes

February is a "Junk Waste" month; March is a "Tree Waste Only" month. See <http://www.houstontx.gov/solidwaste/treewaste.html> for dates in your area and more information.

HOUSTON HEIGHTS ASSOCIATION
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 HOUSTON, TX 77270-0735

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Return Service Requested

Calendar of Events for February 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 <i>Groundhog Day</i>	3 - <i>garbage and recycling</i>	4	5 <i>Deadline for next newsletter</i>
6	7 HHA Land Use 6:30 PM Fire Station	8	9	10 - <i>garbage Restoration / Historical</i> 448 Harvard 7:30 - 9:30 PM	11	12
13	14 <i>Valentine's Day</i> HHA General "Sweet Tea" 7:00 PM Fire Station	15 Greater Heights SNC (SN15) 6:30 PM Fire Station	16	17 - <i>garbage and recycling</i>	18	19
20	21 <i>President's Day</i> HHA Board 6:30 PM Fire Station	22	23 PIP meeting 7:00 PM 1602 State Street	24 - <i>garbage</i>	25	26
27 - Volunteer Appreciation & Awards Dinner 5:00-8:00 PM Fire Station	28 HHA Education 7:00 PM Fire Station	March 1	2	3 - <i>garbage and recycling</i>	4	5 <i>Deadline for next newsletter continued within</i>

HHA headquarters: The Fire Station is on the corner of Yale and 12th Streets.

HHA web site: <<http://www.houstonheights.org>>