

It's a sure sign of summer  
if the chair gets up  
when you do.  
*Walter Winchell*



# The Stevens Park Estates Quarterly

*Don't buy the house, buy the neighborhood*

In the depth of winter,  
I finally learned  
that within me there lay  
an invincible summer.  
*Albert Camus*

S U M M E R 2 0 1 1

## Notes from the President

### Presidential And Non-Presidential Thoughts

On July 14th, there was a meeting called by City staff about water main replacement plans for a line servicing parts of Plymouth Road and Mayflower Drive. About 25 residents attended, along with about 10 engineers, construction contractors, and City staffers. I think overall residents who attended were impressed with the attempts planning to be made to be as "un-invasive" as possible. There will still be digging and occasional water cut-offs – but not nearly as bad as many had been fearing. This project will begin in the very near future. Additionally, other water main replacement in the SPENA neighborhood should begin this fall. For those areas where the main replacement will take place in streets, it appears much more digging will take place.

At the June 22nd City Council meeting, the Council was presented with the proposal for Stevens Park Estates to become a conservation district. Bottom line, the Council postponed consideration so that certain concerns and objections of some neighbors could be dealt with. Some neighbors have been working together to hammer out a revised proposal to be presented to the Council at its August 24th meeting. Among other things, the revised proposal will present Plymouth Road as a "sub-area" in the conservation district. By the way, Councilwoman Delia Jasso's office is working with us on this issue; our own Councilman Scott Griggs must recuse himself from working on the issue because he lives in Stevens Park Estates. Plans are that the Council will approve the conservation district at the August 24th meeting.

Finally, some heat-related thoughts. Eat a watermelon with neighbors. Enjoy a sno-cone. And try not to waste water as you struggle to keep you lawn alive.

*Dan Williams*  
*SPENA President*

## Editorial

### Amendments to the Texas Constitution Election November 2011

The 2011 Texas Legislature passed several proposals for amending the Texas Constitution that voters will be asked to approve in the November 2011 general election. The Texas Constitution has been amended over 450 times since its adoption in 1876 and most of the amendments are not particularly substantive, in terms of state-wide voter interest. And since no state-wide or local offices will be on the ballot in November, interest in the current set of proposed amendments and, thus turnout, will be very low.

However, as to the 2011 amendments, voters should be aware that 4 of the 10 proposals deal with the ability of counties or the state to issue bonds for certain purposes that were not specifically covered in the original Constitution and another deals with use of the permanent school fund. Generally, these proposals are technical corrections to the 1876 language but I will outline all 10 of the amendments in a subsequent newsletter.

*Scott Chase*

### Pack Of Dogs Loose In The Neighborhood

We are sending out this article to make all aware of a trend of cats being killed by a pack of dogs running loose in our neighborhoods at night.

The first incident occurred on the night of July 14 at Oak Cliff Blvd and Old Orchard. A neighbor witnessed three dogs attacking a cat, which was severely injured but survived due to the attack being interrupted. The description of the dogs was as follows:

The dogs were a brown/black pit bull mix. One dog had a wide leather collar with what appeared to be tags attached. The other dog was a Shepherd or Huskie mix, I could not make out the 3rd dog,

which was not part of the mauling but was traveling with the pack. The dogs looked to have been in healthy condition, possibly escaping from someone's yard, they were not aggressive towards me."

On Friday morning July 15, two cats were found killed on the lawns near Mayflower and Old Orchard.

On Monday the 18th, a neighbor on Old Orchard let a cat out at 4:30 am, and the cat was found dead on a neighbor's lawn a couple of houses away at 6 am.

We have also been notified that three cats were killed near Cedar Hill and Colorado on multiple dates between July 15 and July 28.

These dogs were seen and described as follows:

One looked like a boxer type, dark brown/black – (this could be the one we identified as the dark pit bull mix.) This boxer/pit has a collar. There was also a dark brown dog and a big golden dog.

A Stevens Park neighbor reported seeing a similar group of dogs resting in the shade at 810 N. Oak Cliff Blvd. and called animal control, but the dogs were gone when AC arrived. The neighbor described the trio as a boxer or pit bull mix - brown with a collar, a shepherd/husky mix, and a spaniel/hunting dog type - brown/gold. This sighting was around July 20th or so.

On Monday morning, July 25th a cat was found dead on the lawn of a residence at 7th and Montclair; a neighbor heard the dogs shaking a cat and saw three dogs outside.

A resident at Davis and Montclair reported a cat killed by three dogs outside her home in the early morning of Sunday July 24th. She heard the commotion and exited her house and saw three dogs leaving the scene but was unable to provide a description. She reported that two kittens had been killed on the block that week as well.

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We want to notify all of the north Oak Cliff neighborhood associations of these incidents and urge residents to keep watch for these or any other stray or loose dogs. Please call the city to complain about any loose dogs that are sighted and ask for animal control sweeps at night. The dogs are reported to be in good physical condition; it is not clear if they are strays or dogs that are let loose at night.

Several Stevens Park neighbors have purchased a dog trap and will be putting it out starting the week end of July 30th. Any stray cats or raccoons will be released; any dogs with tags that have identification will have their owners notified. Otherwise we will take them to Dallas Animal Services. If any other neighbors are interested in a trap we'll be happy to send you the link to the business that we ordered it from. The city normally provides traps but they are not doing so during the hot weather. It is necessary to monitor traps closely, and not leave any trapped animals out in the daytime heat.

In summary, we've had multiple cats killed in three areas – Stevens Park Estates, Winnetka Heights, and East Kessler. We are also receiving reports from neighborhoods to the south, of similar cat killings. We cannot confirm that the same group of dogs is responsible, but the descriptions are similar. Dog #1: a pit bull/boxer dark brown/black with wide collar. Dog #2: a husky/shepherd mix Dog #3: brown or gold mixed breed; possible spaniel/setter/hunting dog type.

A Stevens Park neighbor has contacted Scott Griggs, and he was able to get a response from Animal Control. Tina Mayfield from Animal Control Rapid Response Dispatch reported that they are trying to find the dogs but they need our help in doing so. She had some advice for us in trying to catch the dogs. If we see the dogs sleeping do not try to catch them. They will run. Call this phone number 214-670-3278 immediately. She will dispatch an animal control officer or team. The office is open M-F from 6 A.M. to 6 P.M. If it is after hours call 311. You can reference case #388470 made on 7-21-11. If the case has been closed they will open another case. Animal Control does have what they call a "sweep team"

and they will be back in the office on Tues. (8-2-11).

Unfortunately Animal Services has a two week backlog of reports, but, if neighbors are diligent about reporting loose dogs, and do it consistently, over time we can have animal control officers rolling through our neighborhoods on a regular basis.

*Wilson Meador*  
twodogtrading@gmail.com

## Letters from SPENA Residents

I agree that it is important for pet owners to be responsible. What about the folks who are feeding the raccoons? I wish that they would realize the problems they are causing for their neighbors. These are wild animals and should remain so. If people would not feed them they would go back to their natural habitat and live as they were meant to. The city of Dallas does not want us to feed them.

One year I trapped 27 over the summer and sent them off to the city. They are causing havoc and destruction and possible spread of disease. How many of us have had problems with them getting in the attic and causing untold problems with electricity, ductwork destruction, insulation and sheet work damage?

Even more obvious, using the pool for a swim or using the backyards, porches etc. for their toilet. I am getting a little tired of having to do poop patrol every morning. To date this summer, I have only trapped 5 and that is only because I have stopped because of the heat. People who are leaving food outside for their animals or for the raccoons are inviting them to stay in the area.

I hope that some awareness of this problem will help to curtail the problem.

*Sharon Roeser*

### Notice of Dog Trap in the Neighborhood!

Sunday night around 10pm, I was walking my dogs. when I saw a gentleman walking his dog. His large black dog was loose and passed by the trap that was in Monica's yard. I think all neighbors need to be notified not to walk their dogs without a leash as the dog may get caught in the trap and there will be lots of problems arising

from this. I told the gentleman that there is a dog trap in the neighborhood but did not say where it was. All he said was that he will keep a "closer" watch on his dog. His dog was half a block behind him...

*Farhad Niroomand*

## Town Hall Budget Meeting

The City of Dallas wants your feedback on the City Manager's proposed Fiscal year 2011-2012 Budget. Please plan to attend the Budget Town Hall Meeting to share your input.

Wednesday, August 17th 6:30 pm

Councilmember Scott Griggs

3710 N. Hampton Road

Nash Davis Recreation Center

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We encourage neighbors to join  
SPENA on Facebook, under  
Stevens Park Estates  
Neighborhood Association

**SPENA CRIME LINE**  
**214.967.5173**

to report any crime  
or to listen to any recent  
neighborhood crime

# Save The Dates!

## September Art Events!

The Oak Cliff Society of Fine Arts will host their annual Wine & Art Fundraiser on Saturday, September 24th. The theme of this year's event is "Women Artists of the Texas Centennial". Patrons will get a chance to enjoy rarely seen images of artwork from this underexposed group of Texas artists such as Coreen Mary Spellman, Florence McClung, May Schow, and Martha Simkins. Attendees will enjoy live music, hefty hors d'oeuvres, and a variety of fine wines. Tickets will be \$50 to attend the event (7PM), and \$75 for the event plus the gallery talk (6PM) by Dr. Jack Davis, Professor of Art, University of North Texas.

For more information see [www.turnerhouse.org](http://www.turnerhouse.org).

Dr. Jack Davis is internationally recognized for his contributions to art education. He is a professor and Director for the North Texas Institute for Educators



on the Visual Arts at UNT. He was a board member for the Center for Advancement of the Study of Early Texas Art from 2003-2009. We are fortunate to have Dr. Davis contribute his expertise and enthusiasm for early Texas art at the event.

The annual Fall Gallery Walk of the Dallas Art Dealers Association will also be on Saturday, Sept. 24th. All 35 of DADA's member galleries will be open. DADA will offer panel discussions for artists and art lovers; this fall the panels will focus on Art of Oak Cliff: Then and Now. Panel 1 will be from 10:30 to noon and is entitled Oak Cliff Art Then. Panel 2 will be from 1 to 2:30 pm and is on Oak Cliff Art Now.

The panels will be held at the Oak Cliff Cultural Center, 223 W. Jefferson Blvd. Ticket prices will support DADA's Edith Baker Art Scholarship. For more information see [www.dallasartdealers.org](http://www.dallasartdealers.org).

*Kenda North*

*If you would like to host a SPENA First Friday this year, please contact Nicole Vandermolen or [spenasocial@sbcglobal.net](mailto:spenasocial@sbcglobal.net)*

**Save the Date**

**second**  
**FIRST FRIDAY** **happy hour**

**SEPTEMBER 9**  
**6 to 8 pm**

**More to Come...**



## Right in your Backyard

Twelve Hills Nature Center is an urban preserve located in the heart of Oak Cliff neighborhoods in Dallas. We are bound by Kessler Woods on the west, Timbergrove Circle on the north, Rosemont Elementary on the south, and Kings Highway on the East.

The Twelve Hills Nature Center serves as an outdoor classroom and passive recreational area. It seeks to educate both adults and children about environmental stewardship and community-building through the grassroots creation and maintenance of a native Texas black-land prairie, and small wetland. We currently work with all grade levels at Rosemont Elementary School through our Nature Leaders Program, where children learn about native plants, habitat and replanting of the black-land prairie.

The Texas black-land prairie soils are a black, alkaline, calcium-saturated clay, sometimes referred to as "gumbo," which developed from the Austin chalk formation and the volcanic ash that adulterated those carbonates as they were deposited in the shallow Creta-

ceous-age seas.

The Texas black-land prairie is a tornado-shaped area that sweeps down through the heart of Texas, beginning as a broad band just south of the Red River and tapering to a point at the city of San Antonio.

Many early settlers who first encountered the black-land prairie described it as a vast endless sea of grasses and wildflowers with sparsely scattered trees or mottes of oaks on uplands. Forested, or wooded areas were restricted to bottom lands along major rivers and streams, ravines, protected areas, or on certain soil types. The Blackland and associated prairies and woodlands in Texas contain four out of the ten most threatened or endangered plant community series in the United States, as recognized by the Natural Heritage Commission.

We hope that you will stop by The Twelve Hills Nature Center and visit our incredible project. Stop and read the quotes carved into our stone walls, view our list of major donors, also carved into our walls, and walk the almost 6 acres of a black-land prairie restoration going on right in your own

backyard.

We are very pleased to announce that we are a destination stop on this year's **Old Oak Cliff Conservation League Home Tour, October 8-9, from 11AM to 6PM.** We hope that you will mark your calendars for this incredible event. As well, **The Twelve Hills Nature Center will be hosting a Farm Dinner for 100 guest on October 23, 2011.** This event will be our first Farm Table Dinner and will include incredible eats from local chefs and will be held at sunset on crest of the highest hill at Twelve Hills. More details to follow regarding this event.

We do hope that you will take the time to visit The Twelve Hills Nature Center in the near future. Our physical address is 817 MaryCliff Drive, and the center is open from dusk to dawn 7 days a week. The parking lot is shaded and the trails are cooler than your local streets. So come walk Twelve Hills today.

Scott Jenke  
President  
The Twelve Hills Nature Center  
president@twelvehills.org



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