

November 2010

# THE ESTATER

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A PUBLICATION OF THE MERRIMAN PARK ESTATES CLUB

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**NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING  
NOVEMBER 16  
MERRIMAN PARK ELEMENTARY  
7:00 PM**

The speaker for the next home owners meeting will be Steve Parker, Program Manager for Flood Plain Management for the City of Dallas.

He will have a diagram of our flood plain area and answer our questions about the present and future laws regarding our park, Merriman Parkway and the homes east of the Parkway.

**THE MERRIMAN PARK  
ESTATER**

is published periodically by and for the residents of MERRIMAN PARK ESTATES CLUB. Commercial advertising rates are \$25 for 1/8 page; \$50 for 1/4 page; \$100 for 1/2 page; \$200 for a full page. News, announcements, photos in electronic files ready for use may be sent to the editor at [estater@mpedallas.com](mailto:estater@mpedallas.com) or [wrchiles@mac.com](mailto:wrchiles@mac.com), or by calling 214 348-2052. Submission for the next issue is January 5, 2011. News or announcements for email postings can be sent to webmaster  
**Dave Franke**

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello MPE Neighbors,

I hope you are enjoying the sights and sounds of Fall in our neighborhood. The leaves are turning and our yards and the park are receiving new landscaping. Our Fall Festival was a great success due to the hard work of our chairman/MPE Vice President, **Tammy Dalton**. Thank you to some 275 residents that attended the festival. It was exciting to see so many young enthusiastic families in our neighborhood. I hope they met some of our long time residents. The blending of our different interest and age groups is a goal of our MPE Board. Together the possibilities for the future of our neighborhood are limitless. To all of you that helped with setup, working with games and activities, and cleanup—THANK YOU!!!! A special thank you to the **Lake Highlands Girls Service League** volunteers, our area police and firemen, and our special guest chili judges. After judging nine wonderful chili recipes, I know we have some great neighborhood cooks!! Check out our website (photo share) at [www.mpedallas.com](http://www.mpedallas.com) for Fall Festival pictures.

The August Estater Crime Watch report stated that an aggravated assault occurred on Kenwhite. Incorrect address information was provided by the Dallas Police Department. The wrong address was written on the police report. On behalf of the MPE Homeowners Association, I apologize for any discomfort the Estater report may have caused. In the future we will use street names and blocks but not specific addresses.

A big thank you to Chairman, **Jeff Lafayette**, **Al Bruns**, and **MP Elementary Beta Club** neighborhood residents, **Andy Green** and **Colby Altom** for picking up trash on Skillman.

Please read the minutes on our website regarding our Homeowners meeting, September 28. Our speaker was Jack White (con'td p 2)

[JackWhite@ebby.com](mailto:JackWhite@ebby.com) President of Lake Highlands Area Improvement Association. The Lake Highlands Public Improvement District [lakehighlandspid@att.net](mailto:lakehighlandspid@att.net) has police officers that can be reached at 214 850-4399 and money to promote economic growth in our area.

If you missed any of our great socials this year (Ice Cream Social, Happy Hour at Stone Elephant, Fall Festival) then don't miss our Tree Lighting December 5 at 4:30 in the Daltons side yard at 6808 Blackwood Drive. Following refreshments we will light the trees about 6:00 PM.

We will be judging our homeowner's Christmas lights at 6:00 PM on Tuesday, December 14. Be sure you have your lights on. The first place winner will receive \$75 and second place will receive \$25.

Please make your plans to attend our next MPE Homeowners meeting on November 16, at Merriman Park Elementary starting at 7:00 PM. Our speaker is Steve Parker, Program Manager for Flood Plain Management for the City of Dallas. He will supply us with the revised Flood Plain map and explain how it affects our park, Merriman Parkway and the homes East of the Parkway.

Answers to emails ---1. The burglar alarms at the Town Center site belong to Dallas County. As soon as roadwork is completed they will be removed. 2. Code violation tickets are being given to home owners for trees that are not 15 feet above the sidewalk, street, and alley. In the case of Blackwood residents alley that backs up to Skillman, the landscape across your alley is on city property. You can trim it but if someone calls the city, everything on the ground and up to 15 feet will be removed. This will remove

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the foliage between your alley and Skillman. 3. Some residents have too many vehicles on the street in front of your home. Please try to park in your garage or back driveway. This will give emergency vehicles room to respond to calls in our neighborhood. Your car is safer in your garage.

Please feel free to email me with neighborhood concerns [mpepresident@mpedallas.com](mailto:mpepresident@mpedallas.com) or send information to [mpeneighbor@hotmail.com](mailto:mpeneighbor@hotmail.com) for immediate release.

Hope to see you at our MPE Homeowner's meeting November 16.

**Sandra Bruns**

### **AUGUST 24 BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

#### **1--Permanent Supportive Housing**

**a - Sandra Bruns** reported on the Federal Government's placement of Permanent Supportive Housing in the apartments near Forrest/Audelia area.

This is going to happen and will be funded for 5 years.

**b - Lake Highlands** ranks approximately in the middle of placements of other communities in which these programs have been implemented.

#### **2 - MPE Fall Festival**

**a - Tammy Dalton** reported on the status of this year's fall festival.

Theme "Old Time Family Fun", to be held on 10/24 from 3-6 pm.

**b - Plans** include a Chili Cook-off, 3 legged races, sack races, pie eating contest, pumpkin painting, etc.

**c - A vendor** will supply hotdogs, fries, fritos, and cobbler to compliment the chili.

**d - There** will be a charge for food only: \$8 early registration; \$10 at door

**e - Risa Thompson** will put together a flyer to be placed on all

Email: [mpeinfo@yahoo.com](mailto:mpeinfo@yahoo.com)

doors reminding MPE of date, time, & activities.

### **3 - Treasurer's Report**

**a - Keith Jones** reported approximately 180 households have paid dues to date. Collection of \$5,800, which is around \$600 more than budgeted for.

**b - There** will be a blurb put into the next Estater regarding matters from Treasury.

**c - The Tom Thumb** income is not as good as expected. Instructions and a form to add our neighborhood number to your rewards card will be in next Estater.

### **4 - Parks Department**

**a - Milo Maness** reported on the budget for next year's parks department.

**b - Final** budget numbers will not be known until September or October. It is a certainty that there will be a cutback on what the Parks Department will be able to do for MPE in 2011.

**c - The Parks Department** indicated they would like us to mow the first 12 feet of grass along Merriman Pkwy from Topsfield to Skillman. A written contract will be required for this. The board considered many suggestions from mowing ourselves to contracting it out. **Milo Maness** received a bid for mowing and trimming, weeding of beds and trimming hedges. Prices ranged from \$1,800 to \$3,060 year. If we add mowing and trimming around the creek bank the cost goes to \$7,610 a year.

**d - The board** tabled final discussion until we get a fixed budget from the Parks Department in October.

### **5 - Estater**

**a - Bill Chiles** will be putting together an October Estater. All information and materials need to be to Bill by October 8.

### **6 - V.I.P. & Crime Watch**

MPE Voicemail: 214 967-5075

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**a** – Discussion revolved around the reporting in the Estater of a crime in which an incorrect address was cited. This offense occurred in the alley and the police department assigned an address to the offense with was not correct. **Sandra Bruns** apologized for the error and will also make an apology at the next neighborhood meeting and in the next Estater.

**b** – Crime has been steady and **Chris Cockrell** encouraged everyone to keep a watch and make sure garage doors are down.

**c** – **Chris Cockrell** also reported a continuous need for more VIP drivers.

#### **7 – Miscellaneous.**

**a** – **Tammy Dalton** reported that **Mike Mata** is interested in taking over the armed patrol as long as he does not have to do marketing. It was suggested that this be under **John Beall** and the funding be brought under the Treasurer. Further discussion will need to take place and a change to the MP by-laws will need to be voted on before next year.

**b** – Code compliance have been issuing parking tickets to residents for parking on the wrong way in front of their own homes. **Sandra Bruns** reported that she feels the next code department area will be our alleys. Code requires overhanging trees to have 15 feet clearance, no trash cans or trash holders within 1 foot of alley.

**c** – Welcome committee, to date, have used half their budget. Please make an effort to welcome our new neighbors.

**d** – **Risa Thompson** was recognized for the success of the MPE Happy Hour at the Stone Elephant. It was agreed that a second event will be held there as well.as date to be determined.

**e** – Block parties are moving forward and hope to be held once we get a break in the weather.

**f** – Storage unit is slowly being filled with tables. There will be an advertisement in the Estater for rental of these items. A proposed \$5 per table was suggested and agreed to.

### **OCTOBER 24 BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

#### **1-MPE Fall Festival**

**a** – **Sandra Bruns** thanked **Tammy Dalton** for making the Fall Festival a big success.

**b** – The board was very pleased with the turnout, as well as all of the young families which attended. The pictures were very encouraging and bode well for the future of MPE.

**c** – The table centerpieces were to go to the judges of the chili cook-off.

**d** – Thank you cards are to be written and delivered to the home owners on Hyde Park for allowing MPE to use their property for the festival.

#### **2 – Budget Update**

**a** – **Keith Jones** reported that we had one new member join since our last board meeting.

**b** – Tom Thumb money received during the last quarter totaled \$275. This is slightly less that what was budgeted for.

**c** – New Tom Thumb rewards forms are to be included in the welcome baskets.

#### **3 – Parks Department**

**a** – **Milo Maness** reported on the new budget for the city's parks department.

**b** – Our area manager has changed, but the budget will remain approximately the same.

**c** – The board agreed to make our annual payment of \$2,000 to the parks department in order to continue our excellent relationship forged over the years.

#### **4 – Christmas Lighting Party**

**a** – The annual Christmas lighting party is to be held on Sunday December 5 at the home of **Tammy Dalton**.

**b** – Party time is 4:30 – 6:30pm.

**c** – Judges for the neighborhood lighting contest December 14 are **Louise, Milo, Keith, and Jeff**. The winner will receive a \$75 gift and 2<sup>nd</sup> will receive \$25.

#### **5 – MPASP**

**a** – **Tammy** reported that **Mike Mata** will take over the armed patrol program with fund raising.

**b** – **John Beall** will continue to write checks and audit the books this year.

**c** – **Milo Maness** agreed to set the schedule for the new patrol.

**d** – The board agreed to move the funding for MPASP under the new Treasure's authority. This will take an update to the by-laws which will need to be approved by MPE residents at the end of this fiscal year.

#### **6 – V.I.P. & Crime Watch**

**a** – **Marilyn** reported the most common crime to MPE has been BMV.

**b** – V.I.P. is still looking for more volunteers, but report no major problems over the last month.

#### **7 – Miscellaneous.**

Next HOA meeting is November 16 at MPE Elementary School. Next MPE Board meeting is December 14.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Thanks to the 199 households who joined this year. We exceeded our membership goal by 30 households and there are 25 new households that joined this year.

Our membership year runs through the end of February. It is not too late to join the Homeowners Club for this year  
Keith Jones, Treasurer

## REPORT OF THE SEPTEMBER 28 MEETING

### 1. Welcome

**Sandra Bruns** extended welcome to all residents and thanked them for their community support.

### 2. Guest Speaker

**Risa Thompson** introduced our guest speaker: Jack White, President Lake Highlands Area Improvement Association. Jack provided loads of information in regards to the Lake Highlands area. First was the discussion on the Public Housing initiative. He informed of how the government had broken their own rules in regarding public bids for the program. This allowed the second set of housing vouchers to be denied and pulled, thus stopping the expanded housing. Jack also updated the Town Center. The Dart Station is scheduled for completion this December. A mixed use development will be going into the Walnut Hill/Audelia area. A TIF bond has been established for maintenance of the area. This amounts to \$300k a year. Also, this extends to the Skillman corridor. Jack asked us for help in identifying projects to spend the money. This also includes a special P.I.D. police unit.

The following info was provided for further information:

[lakehighlandspid@att.net](mailto:lakehighlandspid@att.net)

[jackwhite@ebby.com](mailto:jackwhite@ebby.com)

P.I.D. police: 214-850-4399

Many thanks to Risa and Jack for an excellent informative session.

### 3. Reports: Fall Festival

**Sandra Bruns** reported on the Fall Festival scheduled for October 24, 2-6 pm. Location is Hyde Park. Theme is Old time family fun. There are to be sack races, pumpkin drawings, etc. Also, a Chili Cookoff is to be held and supplemented with other food for

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the event. Admission is \$8 in advance and \$10 at the gate.

**Budget:** **Keith Jones** reported that 196 households have paid annual dues. This is 16% above projection.

**Garden Club:** **Sandra** reported the next meeting to be on October 14. They will be discussing **Nancy Davenport's** book.

**Womens Social Club:** **Louise Boll** invited all women to attend the club and gave highlights of upcoming events including a Christmas Party.

### 4. Business:

**MPASP:** **David Martin** is leaving and will no longer be responsible for the armed patrol. **Mike Mata** has agreed to take over this program. The Money to fund this is over \$20k a year. The board recommends this funding be taken over by the next years Treasurer. New by-laws will be needed for this. Residents were asked to consider this request and give their input.

**Park:** **Milo Maness** reported on the cutback happening within the city's parks department, which leaves maintenance up in the air. The board has met to look at alternatives. It has been decided to table further discussion until we get clarification from the city.

**Crime Report Correction:** **Sandra Bruns** apologized again for the misreporting of a crime in our neighborhood. She also explained the new procedure to report streets only and not specific addresses.

**Flood Plain:** There could be a change in the flood plane which would affect some MPE residents requiring them to obtain flood insurance. This would most likely affect the first three houses up from Merriman Pkwy. Residents are encouraged to get grandfa-

thered flood insurance policies before rates skyrocket.

### 5 – Other Business

**Tom Thumb #4757:** **Sandra Bruns** reminded everyone to add the MPE number to their reward cards. Donations are smaller year over year.

**Table Rentals:** MPE has purchased tables for rent at \$5 per table with a \$15 refundable deposit. All MPE residents are encouraged to use this new resource.

**VIP:** More volunteers were asked for. Also, reports were given as to most recent crime in MPE. Theft is the main problem and neighbors are asked to make sure garage doors are to be kept closed.

**Estater:** Deadline for the next Estater is October 27.

Next HOA meeting is set for Tuesday, November 16.

Next MPE Board meeting is October 26.

Meeting adjourned.

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# Fall Festival 2010 – Lots of Old Fashion Family Fun!

Thanks to all the help from the neighborhood we had another great Fall Festival on Sunday, October 24th. The weather was perfect, the chili was delicious, the company was delightful, and I think fun was had by all.



To the Homeowners on Hyde Park, thank you so much for the use of your yards, and your electricity and your patience. – **Jim and Pat Biesenberger, Carol Ann and David Ramsour, Mary and**

**Collin Peters, Val and Marsha Holley, Tom and Shelly Downey, and Lisa Hartman** who cleared limbs and branches in the rain for us!



To the set up and cleanup crews, thank you so much for your time and efforts – **Mike Mata, Jason Dalton, Carl Baggett, Jason Keeler, Jeff Lafayette, Keith Jones, Sandra and Al Bruns, Chris Cockrell, Guillaume Coffinier, the Ramsours, the Peters, and the Downeys** and everyone else that pitched in.

To our chili cook-off contestants, thank you for making the cook-off so much fun and for helping feed us all: **Mavis Sterward and Laura Atherton, Dee Ann Baggett, Pierce Goetz, Bob Runyon, Jennifer Keeler, Justin Boll, Mike and Ellen Mata, Lana Marker, and Risa Tompson.** All the varieties were yummy and there was a lot of talk about making the cook-off a new tradition.



To the **Women's Social Club**, thank you for sponsoring our kids pumpkin painting activity. The kids loved it!

To **Carol Ann Ramsour** and the **Garden Club**, thank you for our beautiful center pieces and welcome table decorations.

To **Jeanene Tips**, thank you for donating the margarita machine – it was very popular!

To **Jeff Marker**, thank you for the music and sound equipment. You kept us all in just the right mood.

To **Mike Mata**, thank you for coordinating the presence of the **Dallas Police and Fire Departments**, the extra tables and cones and letting us use your truck to haul everything all over the neighborhood.

To **Amberly Bradley** and the **Lake Highlands High School Girls Service Club**, Thank you for all of your help. You made it possible for us to have a moment to actually enjoy the festivities!



To all the **volunteers** that coordinated the games and activities and manned the welcome table and the dinner line, thank you for making my job just a bit easier and making sure everyone had a good time.



To our community guests, thanks for joining us and being a part of such a fun filled day – **Laurie Taylor**, principal MPE; **Leah Santa Maria**, counsellor MPE; **Jack White**, president LHAIA and the **Dallas Police Department** and **Fire and Rescue Teams.**

To all my neighbors, thank you for coming out with your family to support your neighborhood and be a part of the fun. The teamwork that helped make this festival a success was just one more example of why my family loves Merriman Park Estates. I sincerely appreciate you all!



**Tammy Dalton**, VP Merriman Park Estates Homeowners Club