

UPDATE

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Monthly Meeting Reminder:

JOIN US Tuesday July 13th at 7 pm for our monthly meeting. Everett Fetzer of the Federal Reserve is going to be our speaker. He will discuss the Reserve and specifically the new building being constructed on Taft and Allen Parkway. There is also a potluck dinner in the beginning of the meeting. BRING YOUR FAVORITE DISH!

Recap of June Meeting

Speaker last month was Jack Rose from the Neartown Neighborhood Civic Association. We talked at length about the role of this particular association as an "umbrella" overseeing smaller associations and how they interact together. In the future we hope to work closely together with other associations on projects, such as the beautification of the Esplanade. Look for articles by Jack Rose in the upcoming newsletters as he will attempt to keep us all informed in what is going on in our area!

WEST GRAY SEWER PROJECT UPDATE

BY JOHN GALEENER

The response to the City's request for "Right of Entry" forms to perform sewer reconnection work on private property in conjunction with the project has reached 75%, and continues to climb. Although never explicitly stated, the City had been waiting for approximately 80% - 85% of the responses to be received before issuing the bid to contractors. Now that the response is edging into that range, the City has decided to move forward, and will be advertising for bids early next month. This means that we should actually see work in progress sometime later this year, most probably around the October - November timeframe.

As many of us are aware, the sanitary sewers in portions of the neighborhood are old and in need of extensive maintenance. The City claims it does not have the easements necessary to repair or replace the sewer in its current location. Therefore the Public Works Department has developed a plan to relocate the sewer to the street right of way.

In the past, whenever sewers have been relocated, it has been the responsibility of the property owner to pay to have service reconnected to the new relocated sewer. In the case of this project, however, the PWD has decided to include reconnection from the edge of the street to the property's sewer cleanout. In or-

der to take advantage of this, each property owner will have to grant to the PWD, and its' contractor, right of entry to the property to effect the work. These are the forms referred to in the first paragraph of this story. The City will require the Contractor to restore all damage to private property to the condition if was in before construction started. NMCA recommends that property owners protect their rights in this regard by taking pictures of the affected areas of their property just before the reconnection work is started.

Streets in the area will not be rebuilt by this project. However, West Gray will be completely resurfaced from Montrose to Waugh Drive, and the side of the neighborhood streets damaged by the trenching necessary to install the new sewers will be repaired and resurfaced. In addition, curbing and driveways on the side of the street with the new sewer will be repaired or replaced as necessary.

The City will require the contractor to keep access to every driveway along the streets open except for short periods during the time the street is dug up. Because the contractor will have an open trench down one side of the street, however, access will be limited to one-way traffic. Access to individual property driveways will be maintained by the usual method of covering the trench with a metal

plate except when the contractor's personnel are onsite and working on the section in front of the driveway.

For the property owners who have not provided the City with a "Right of Entry" form, the procedure for Right of Entry forms after contract is awarded is as follows:

The City includes the City generated sketch in the bid documents and Contractor's material lists. The successful bidder hires a plumbing contractor to reconnect the property owners sewer.

The plumbing contractor contacts the property owner several weeks before the proposed reconnection construction start date. The Owner and plumber attempt to agree to the details of the reconnection. If the plumber can accommodate the owners desired routing then the Owner and plumber will be in agreement and the plumber will make the reconnection.

If the plumber can't accommodate the owners and the owner won't compromise, then the City will be notified. The City will discuss options with the owner and mediate a solution. If no agreement is reached and the owner is not forthcoming with a "Right of Entry" then the City may be forced to delete the Owners property from the Contractors description of work, and the property owner will be responsible for hiring a plumbing contractor to construct the sewer reconnection. Cont.

Cont. from pg. 1.

Contact John Galeener, NMCA vice President at 713-524-4233 or jwgalee@swbell.net, or Scott Fair, CLR, Inc. at 713-462-0993 or sfair@clri.com for more information on the sewer project. The questions and answers below were published earlier, after the public meeting which was held in April. The questions were prepared by NMCA, and the answers were supplied by the City.

1. When will the project start and how long will it take?

Approximately 8 weeks after all the Right of Entry agreements are obtained the project can be advertised for bid. Approximately 3 months after the bid advertisement the City will award the construction contract and actual construction can begin. The construction is anticipated to take approximately 9 months to complete.

2. I've heard that the City can assess property owners to pay for upgrading utilities. Will there be an assessment of property owners to pay for replacing the sanitary sewer in my street?

No assessment of property owners will be made for this project.

3. Will I have to pay to make the connection from my property to the sanitary sewer in the street?

No. If the Right of Entry agreement is signed and returned to the City, the house connection will be a part of this project and totally funded by the City of Houston.

4. How long will my street be dug up?

Sewer line, connection, and the primary street repair work in each area is anticipated to be under construction for eight to twelve weeks.

5. Will I be able to get to my driveway during this time?

Yes.

OPEN ROADS AND OPEN CONTAINERS BY CAROL GALEENER

Even the most casual observations from around town and around the state indicate that many people are unaware of, or uncommitted to, the law prohibiting open alcoholic containers in passenger sections of vehicles on Texas public roads. In 2001 legislation (House Bill 5) changed the Texas Penal Code making it a Class C misdemeanor to have an open container in a vehicle unless it is in a locked glove compartment, in the trunk, or behind the last passenger seats if there is no trunk. Passengers in vehicles driven for compensation – buses, limos, and taxis – are exempt, as are passengers in

motor homes and trailer homes.

A prohibited container is one that is open, has been opened, or the seal has been broken. For a violation to occur the container must have some alcohol in it, so don't worry about those empty beer cans or wine bottles you are transporting to the recycle center. The law specifies a "ticket offense" rather than an "arrest offense" and is applicable whether you are in a vehicle that is parked or is in operation, as long as it is on a Texas roadway. A prior DWI

within five years of the open container ticket ups the ante and the offender will be required to purchase and install a device that prevents vehicles the offender owns or operates from starting if there is detectable alcohol on the breath.

Spread the word about open container restrictions and help make Texas safe for drivers.

Source: http://www.texassafetynetwork.org/news/q_a/opencontainer.htm

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Attention Business Owners!!!

Want to include your ad in our newsletter? Membership to businesses is very affordable, at only \$36 a year. If you're interested in advertising and membership, please contact our President Allen Ueckert at 713-522-1776.

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT 2004

BY CAROL GALEENER

National Night Out 2004 - Tuesday August 3

The 21st National Night Out (NNO) is scheduled for Tuesday, August 3rd. National Night Out is a nation-wide program sponsored by the National Association of Town Watch and designed to heighten community awareness of crime and drug prevention and foster support for anti-crime programs. It is an opportunity for neighbors to meet neighbors and gain an appreciation of crime-related issues that affect quality of life in our neighborhoods. Throughout the year National

Night Out bears fruit in terms of stronger neighborhoods, community support for anti-crime programs and closer police community relations.

North Montrose has participated in NNO for a number of years. Features of NNO include turning on porch lights and visiting with your neighbors and local law enforcement officers in community get-togethers. This year will feature "block parties" at the following residences:

- Carol and John Galeener
1308 West Pierce
- Scott Howard and

Bridget Jensen
1920 West Clay

- Carole Yunker
1141 West Pierce.

North Montrose covers a large area and based on previous year's turnouts we can use more party hosts. If you would like to host a party, call Allen Ueckert at 713-522-1776 for more information. Parties start at 7:00 pm and will include light refreshments. Mark your calendar and come out and continue this fine tradition.

HISD HONORS TEACHERS OF THE YEAR

BY ALLEN UECKERT

HISD announced the district's 2004 teachers of the year on Tuesday, May 18, before a large crowd of teachers, administrators and family members. Nicole Shanahan, a pre-calculus and geometry teacher from Davis High School, won the HISD 2004 Secondary Teacher of the Year award. Nicole and her family are residents of North Montrose and have been members of the NMCA for quite a few years.

Nicole's passion for teaching was fostered by her own experience in school. She was reared in a low-income, single-parent family in which "education was not the focus." She says she can't remember that her mother ever read to her. She says her first educational experience was at HISD's Mitchell Elementary School, where she lived in fear of being called on to read aloud while she worked

through a reading disability with the help of a teacher. "With her support and encouragement, I was able to regain some self-confidence," Shanahan says.

Shanahan developed another meaningful relationship with Ms. Broughton, a teacher in high school. "I am proud to say that this teacher helped me to become who I am today. I can honestly say I love teaching and try to incorporate the qualities of those



teachers who inspired me."

Shanahan's inspiration helps her teach students she says remind her of her own situation at their age. "I see myself in the students I teach at Davis High School. Many of them are raised by single parents and are economically disadvantaged. Although it can be emotionally exhausting, I try to be as open and expressive as possible about my genuine concern for my students," she said. "I try to recreate the dream for success and for college, as Ms. Broughton did for me."

We all congratulate Nicole on a job well done!

6. Will there be street parking restrictions?

During construction, on-street parking restrictions will probably be necessary to expedite construction and allow traffic flow and access.

7. What will happen to traffic flow during the project?

Traffic disruption will be minimized to that absolutely necessary to facilitate the construction of this project.

8. Can I help determine how the connecting line from my house to the street is routed to the new sewer line?

Yes. Routing of the new service lines will be coordinated with the property owners.

9. Can a neighbor and I agree on a single trench to handle both connecting lines?

For single family service, each service must be a separate line and not cross another property.

10. Who will contact me to arrange a meeting about the connection?

The City and/or the City's representative and the City's Construction Contractor.

11. Will I be able to pick my own plumber to do the hookup and have the City pay?

No.

12. What will happen if I don't sign the waiver to let the plumber on my property?

Your property will not be connected to the new sewer line. Any future connection to the sewer line will be entirely at the property owner's cost including permit and connection fees.

13. Will the City put back my landscaping?

The contractor is required to restore landscaping to pre-construction conditions or better.

14. What will happen to the existing sewer lines once we cut over to the new system - will they be plugged or just abandoned?

They will be abandoned.

North Montrose Civic Association

P.O. Box 130184
Houston, TX 77219

We're on the Web!
www.northmontrose.org

NMCA Officers & Board

Officers:

President:

Allen Ueckert 713-522-1776

Vice President:

John Galeener 832-453-2656

Treasurer:

Gus Elizondo 713-522-2468

Secretary:

Susanna Evens 713-528-8601

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Scott Howard 713-524-1290

Betty Anderson 713-527-8961

Bridget Jensen 713-524-1290

Lance Jones 713-522-1776

Russ Lebovitz 713-524-1121

Julie Wilsford 713-520-6433

Margaret Young 713-521-5982

The North Montrose Civic Association was formed over 25 years ago to promote civic affairs in the neighborhood. NMCA is a non-profit organization that depends on voluntary membership and participation. Included in this UP-DATE Newsletter is a form for residents to use to join or renew their membership. NMCA meets every month at the Museum of Printing History at 1324 W. Clay to present programs of interest to the local residents. The membership dues are very reasonable and will help defray the organization's costs to produce and distribute the Newsletter, to sponsor social events such as National Night Out and the Holiday Dinner and to organize and complete various neighborhood projects. Please join NMCA and just as important, become an active resident. See you at the next meeting!

**North Montrose Civic Association
Membership Form**

Mail to P.O. Box 130184, Houston, TX 77219

_____New Member _____Renewal

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ DATE: _____

E-Mail: _____

CHECK ONE:

Owner Resident _____ Tenant Resident, _____
Business _____ Non-resident Property Owner _____

Annual Membership Dues:

Individual Member -- \$15	Household -- \$20
Senior Citizen Individual -- \$6,	Senior Citizen Household -- \$9
Business -- \$36	Non-Rest Property Owner -- \$24