

Belmont-Hillsboro News

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2003 BHN Home Tour perfect (again)

by Keith Durbin, President, BHN Association

On Saturday, October 4, over 650 lucky tour goers were treated to tours of 9 of Belmont-Hillsboro's finest homes. We had yet another beautiful fall day, which certainly brings out the many tour goers!

The day kicked off with a breakfast cooked by Mad Platter chef, Michael Fenswick and his wife, Carla, and hosted at their home on Beechwood Avenue. All volunteers were invited along with committee members and homeowners. Michael once again wowed the crowd with his gourmet breakfast buffet.

Following the tour, David McMahan hosted a poolside thank you bash at his Belmont home for all those involved with the tour with entertainment

provided by neighbor David Zald on the Chapman stick. The wine was donated by neighbors and tour sponsors, Hoyt and Elizabeth Hill of Village Wines.

Thanks again to committee chairperson Gary Bynum, the members of the home tour committee who dedicated many hours to making the tour a success, the volunteers on the day of the tour, and of course, our homeowners, who made all of this possible. A very special thank you goes out to the many advertisers and sponsors who helped make this years tour the most successful to date. They are very supportive of our wonderful neighborhood and deserve our sincere thanks and support. ☺

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PLEASE NOTE:

This newsletter is not to be put *in or on* mail boxes, according to the U.S. Postal Service.

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Annual BHN meeting hears about preservation zoning, trees, parking

BHN's well attended annual meeting on October 13 heard a discussion of several important issues.

- Tim Walker, Metro Historical Commission, showed examples of conservation zoning, a topic many residents have asked about. (There are already seven conservation districts in Metro.) Less restrictive than historical zoning, conservation zoning requires a conservation permit when dwelling space is demolished, added to, or moved; designs are reviewed by a Metro commission, and owners usually feel that this is a helpful process.
- Mark King, certified arborist with the Nashville Electric Service, explained NES's procedures for tree-trimming, often a focus of controversy. To prevent storm damage to power lines, NES trims or removes trees to avoid overhang or problems with "sway." NES teams try to contact owners in person or with door hangers when marking trees for trimming or removal; there is a delay of two weeks

to two months between marking trees and cutting.

One problem pointed out by residents is the language barrier. While each crew is supposed to have at least one English-speaker, this doesn't always seem to happen. (If you need to contact NES, their customer service number is 736-6900.)

- Council representative Ginger Hausser reported that Metro now has new procedures for "permit parking" near universities such as Belmont and Vanderbilt, to ensure that residents can park in front of their homes.
- The following members were elected (or re-elected) to the Steering Committee:
 - Bill Davis, 1707 Primrose Avenue
 - Jenkins Hardin, 1409 Ashwood Avenue
 - Larissa Lentile, 1508 Ferguson Avenue
 - Brandon Murphy, 2006 18th Avenue South
 - Eric Swanson, 1915 Beechwood Avenue
 - Maria Salas, 1401 Elmwood Avenue. ☺



BHN ARCHIVE

1973: Neighbors testify at Council against rezoning two acres on Hazelwood for 40 apartments (Hazelwood had not yet been brought through to Sweetbriar).

1988: Sovran Bank (a merger of Nashville's Commerce Union Bank with Atlanta's C&S, soon to merge into NationsBank and then BankAmerica) commits itself to community lending as a result of negotiations here in Nashville.

1978: Aerial photographs of Nashville homes are displayed at Green Hills library so residents can see where they are losing heat.

1993: The Halloween Festival jointly planned with Hillsboro Village is the victim of an early chill, complete with sleet and rain. This second festival turns out to be the last.

1983: Devinder Sandhu organizes Neighborhood Watch groups on eight blocks.

1983: Councilwoman Betty Nixon is defeated as chair of Council's powerful Planning and Zoning Committee by surprise secret ballot, because she is considered "too close to neighborhood groups."

1993: After publishing a scruffy-looking newsletter for twenty-some years and getting it distributed every two months, we change our look, with a computer-generated format designed by neighbor Cy Fenton of TechHead Solutions.

1983: Vanderbilt proposes "life-flight" helicopters to Medical Center and holds public hearings.

1998: Our Neighborhood Improvement Committee, chaired by Keith Merrill, plants 71 trees on Belmont Boulevard and has 35 more on order.

1988: The Hillsboro-West End organization, spearheaded by Tom Grooms, starts a successful recycling project at Harris-Hillman School; it catches on quickly, despite winter weather, and by the summer of 1990 many political candidates want to be filmed dropping off their recyclables.

1998: Neighbors on Beechwood Avenue between Altura and Hawthorne block off the street for a block party (first done in 1977).



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BHN association makes grand entry

by Keith Durbin, President, BHN Association


If you have driven into Belmont-Hillsboro from Music Row recently, you probably have noticed a new addition to the neighborhood at the corner of Magnolia and 18th Avenue. The new Historic Belmont-Hillsboro neighborhood entry sign was completed in November.

It's a monument to the neighborhood and is both sign and symbol. The design uses a material present in many of the homes in our neighborhood: limestone. With its central and side square pillars, the sign imitates the Belmont Terrace entry markers found on Belmont Boulevard where Cedar Lane starts up the hill. Finally, we can rightfully call ourselves *historic* Belmont-Hillsboro because a large portion of our neighborhood was placed on the National Register

of Historic Places in the mid-1980s.

The sign was designed by neighbor and architect Michael Ward and has been in the planning stages by the BHN beautification committee for over a year. The work, which is unrelated to the new Belmont University sign at Magnolia and Wedgewood, was built by Jones Stone Company.

The BHN Steering committee voted approval of the funds to build the sign early in 2003. The sign has been fully paid for from the treasury of Belmont-Hillsboro Neighbors Inc, which raises funds primarily through our annual home tour.

BHN will maintain the sign, which is located on Metro Nashville property. Our next step is to plan and carry out landscaping. 

What we did in a year

Zoning, safety, fundraising, parties highlight BHN activities in '02-03

- Increased memberships to 250 households
- Delivered more than 50 new neighbor packets to new homeowners
- Held Tour of Homes on October 4, featuring nine homes, drawing 650 visitors, and raising \$12,500 for BHN
- Developed plans for a Historic Belmont-Hillsboro sign at the entrance to the neighborhood on 18th Avenue South and Magnolia, to be erected in November
- Welcomed runners in the Country Music Marathon on April 26, preceded by a potluck breakfast on Belmont Boulevard
- Co-sponsored, with the Nashville Bar Association and other organizations, the annual block party on Sweetbriar Avenue, remembering Otha Turner; proceeds go to the Second Harvest Food Bank
- Organized, funded, and participated in the Spring Cleanup on April 19, filling three large roll-offs with trash from alleys and streets
- Co-sponsored two block parties in cooperation with the 15th Avenue Neighborhood Watch
- Sponsored Fall Movie Night on Beechwood Avenue
- Sponsored a book group that continues to meet monthly
- Donated \$250 to Nashville Crime Stoppers for placement of 20 Cash for Tips signs at the neighborhood perimeter
- Funded street signs for the 15th Avenue Neighborhood Watch program
- Contributed \$1500 to the Bill Barnes scholarship program for residents of the Edgehill Urban Renewal District
- Responded to zoning and codes enforcement issues, including
 - The ongoing uncertainty about redevelopment of the Forrest Hills Apartments
 - Changes in the commercial area on Belmont at Dallas
 - Zoning appeal cases, including two recent ones
- Responded to the Traffic and Parking Commission's studies regarding
 - bike lanes on Belmont
 - sidewalks on streets most used by pedestrians
 - an updated transit plan for collegiate areas
- Participated in the Nashville Neighborhood Alliance, which monitors Council bills, protects the rights of neighborhoods and works to define what neighborhood livability means throughout Metro
- Maintained contact with Hillsboro Village's committee to administer design guidelines for new construction in the Village
- Distributed 2,000 copies of the *Belmont-Hillsboro News* door to door, through about 50 block representatives, every other month
- Maintained communication with neighbors through list-serv e-mails, web site, telephone hotline, and bimonthly newsletter

Parking problems plague residents

by Gene TeSelle, BHN

Residents on Beechwood and Sweetbriar Avenues have been plagued with on-street parking by employees in the large office buildings at 2416 and 2424 21st Avenue South. The place is so busy that a policeman has been hired to direct traffic and help pedestrians cross the street. More to the point, office workers park on both sides of Beechwood and Sweetbriar for the length of a city block. The office buildings do not have enough space even for their own employees; there is a sign saying "All parking is reserved by suite number."

The source of the problem is the parking requirement in the Metropolitan Zoning Ordinance, which

reduced the number of spaces required for offices. Even fewer spaces are required in the Urban Zoning Overlay adopted in 2000, on the theory that cars will be replaced by walking and public transportation. But that's not what this and many other buildings are designed for.

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More changes for St. Martin Square

by Gene TeSelle, BHN

Back in 1972-73 controversy arose over the construction of St. Martin Square, a 54-unit development of "town houses" sold on a condominium basis. It's on Gale Lane east of 12th Avenue South.

For one thing, the complex was surrounded by single-family homes of Tudor and neo-colonial design. And then the area was in what some regarded as "racial transition." Several African American residents opposed the development, saying it would lead to the "ghettoization" of the neighborhood. The builder was Edwin B. Raskin, who worked with Hope, Inc., and other organizations to provide quality housing on an equal-opportunity basis. It was named for St. Martin de Porres, the son of a freed slave in Lima, Peru, who carried out many ministries to the poor people of the city; he had been canonized by Pope John XXIII in 1962. The promise was that St.

Martin would attract an equal mix of black and white residents; but it never turned out that way.

And then there was another problem. As Councilman Mansfield Douglas III pointed out at the time, when condominiums are sold to moderate-income people there can be foreclosures; then the units end up in the hands of absentee investors, and the renters can be highly transient. Despite the efforts of a number of residents to revitalize the complex during the last thirty years, none of them seemed successful.

Now another approach is being taken. Chan McCullough has bought all but two of the units and is completely rehabbing them, inside and outside (no more faux Mansard roofs, for example). Prices will be between \$95,000 and \$150,000, depending on size and decor. The name is being changed to 12 South Towers to link the complex with the revitalized business district along 12th Avenue South. ■

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Neighborhoods can learn first responder skills for readiness

From a variety of natural and terrorist disasters, ranging from Nashville's 1998 tornado to 9/11/01 in New York, those who deal with emergencies have found that neighborhoods can play a crucial role—in communications, in identifying people who need help, and in mobilizing support for victims. With this in mind, the American Red Cross has developed a Red Cross Ready program for

training volunteers. In partnership with the Nashville Neighborhood Alliance, it has a 90-minute session designed to cover the basics of being ready for the unexpected: learning CPR and the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED); becoming a disaster volunteer; writing a disaster plan; building a disaster kit; and giving blood. The Board of the Neighborhood Alliance took this course on October 23, so that neighborhood representatives can host training sessions in their own neighborhoods. If you are interested in attending a neighborhood training session, contact BHN (386-3711) or e-mail the ■

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Belmont-Hillsboro Neighbors Membership

Belmont-Hillsboro Neighbors, a tax exempt, nonprofit corporation, is composed of renters and owners working to make our neighborhood a good place for everyone, encourage good relations, preserve its residential quality, and maintain neighborhood diversity.

How to Join BHN

If you agree with the aims of Belmont-Hillsboro Neighbors and would like to join (or renew your membership), please send your

name, address, telephone number, email address, and \$15 dues for a family membership (\$10 for individual) to

Belmont-Hillsboro Neighbors, Inc.
P.O. Box 120712
Nashville, TN 37212

To find out more about Belmont-Hillsboro Neighbors, e-mail questions to info@belmont-hillsboro.org or call the hotline at 386-3711.