

Communicator

Merriman Park/University Manor Neighborhood Association

September 2007

JOIN US! NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING, OCT. 2ND, 7:00 P.M., HOTCHKISS ELEMENTARY

We're kicking off the new fiscal year with our first meeting and we hope you'll clear your schedules to attend. Grab the whole family and come meet your new Association Officers and neighbors! We will have two featured speakers: Leigh Ann Ellis, School Board Representative and Darren Orr, Realtor.

Leigh Ann Ellis, School Board Representative

As we begin the new year for MPUM and Dallas I.S.D., we have invited our "new" school board representative, Leigh Ann Ellis, to join us on October 2nd. Ms. Ellis will be on hand to answer any questions you have about:

Future plans for the Dallas Independent School District as a whole.

Concerns you might have about our neighborhood school, Hotchkiss Elementary.

1. As our school board representative, we look to Ms. Ellis to encourage the District to work with the City of Dallas to study the traffic patterns around Hotchkiss and devise a safer and more expedient traffic pattern for the school.

2. The Dallas I.S.D. police department has been very cooperative and responsive to neighborhood concerns about disruptions and misuse of the playground facilities at Hotchkiss in the evenings, and we hope Ms. Ellis will continue to inspire this cooperation in the future— encouraging DISD police to work with the Dallas Police Department.

3. We are fortunate that our school board representative happens to also have a background in landscape architecture/design and horticulture. Ms. Ellis' background puts her in a unique position to assist

those of you with concerns about the upkeep and maintenance of our neighborhood Hotchkiss school grounds.

One of the five goals set forth by the District is to, "Maintain a safe and secure environment." A critical part of every school day for Hotchkiss students as it relates to a safe and secure environment is the beginning and ending of each school day (including custodians who must work late at night) as well as the overall perception of the school and the District within the community. Don't miss this important opportunity to speak directly to your School Board Representative.

Darren Orr, Realtor

In addition to Ms. Ellis, the program on October 2nd will include Darren Orr, Realtor. We have asked Mr. Orr to briefly discuss the current real estate market in our area in light of the recent developments related to the ills of lending institutions around the country. As a current property owner and former resident of MPUM, Mr. Orr can offer a unique perspective regarding our neighborhood. If you have questions or an interest in how these situations may have affected your ability to buy or sell your properties, come and meet with us on October 2nd.

We encourage all of our neighbors to join us for this very important and informative "Kick-off" meeting.

2007-2008 Meeting Schedules: Mark your calendars!!

All meetings will be held at Hotchkiss Elementary School at 7:00 p.m. unless indicated otherwise.

Oct 2nd – Kickoff	January 15 th – Crime Watch, 7:00	March 18 th , Beautification
November 13 th – Fall Festival	at DPD NE Substation	May 20, Election of new Officers

WELCOME OUR NEW SPONSOR – Applebee's, Medallion Center

Applebee's in Medallion Center is paying for and sponsoring this issue of our neighborhood Communicator. Please look for the coupon attached to this issue of our MPUM Communicator. Take the coupon with you to the Medallion Center Applebee's and get one free entrée, with their compliments!! See attached coupon for details.

NEIGHBORHOOD E-MAIL LIST:

Are you receiving neighborhood e-mails? If not, here's what you're missing out on!

- Weekly Crime Watch News & Updates
- Lost & Found Pets
- Neighborhood Events & Functions
- General News Affecting This Neighborhood

If you want to keep up with what's going on in the neighborhood, please send your e-mail address to info@mpum.com and request to be added. While we use this e-mail for various neighborhood-related topics, we also strive to minimize the number of messages sent in an effort to respect your cyberspace and privacy.

The MPUM Communicator is distributed to all neighbor's doorsteps four to five times a year, while the e-mail list expands our ability to keep you informed by reaching you at any time, 365 days a year. The more people we have on our e-mail list, the easier it can be to keep everyone connected. For the latest news, be sure to join us online at www.mpum.org. Together, we can all help watch over our neighborhood and keep it safe.



CRIME WATCH

SCAMS: MAGAZINE & OTHER SALES: You would be well advised to refrain from purchasing anything from ANY stranger for ANY reason— especially magazines. These are often scams. We have reports of magazine and other salesmen in our neighborhood, all with different stories to play on our sympathies. Magazines don't show up until long after the scammer is gone. If you do not PERSONALLY know the person, **even if they say they live in the neighborhood**, don't fall for their stories and make a purchase or give them money. If they need help offer to call 911 to come assist them. To keep these people at bay, display a NO SOLICITING sign on your front door and then enforce it. We have free No Soliciting stickers available if you need one. Just send a request to info@mpum.com. It is against the law for people to solicit at your home if you have one of these signs posted.



POLICE DEPARTMENT NEIGHBORHOOD FOCUS

Our Police Department recognizes the value of private citizens, and they continue to look for creative ways for us to use our eyes and ears to help them do their job. Chief Kunkle has plans to institute a "beat management policing" policy, through which he'd direct officers to stay on their own beat when not answering emergency calls, become more visible in the neighborhoods, even returning to foot patrols in some areas. Officers will concentrate more of their efforts on high-profile problems such as violent neighborhoods and drug houses and also on smaller issues such as open garage doors that breed property theft. Police would also become more diligent in reporting city code violations—such as trash, tall weeds and street light outages—to City Hall's Code Compliance Dept. All great news for our neighborhood!

POLICE WEBSITE

The Dallas Police Dept. Northeast Substation has launched a Website that's loaded with crime statistics. We are **BEAT NUMBER 215** and **REPORTING AREA 1085**, so look for stats in those specific areas to see what's happening in our neighborhood. www.northeastcrimewatch.org

HOTCHKISS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PLAYGROUND

We have learned from DISD Police that the school grounds are not to be occupied after dark. The police are especially concerned about any large groups of people who have been observed late at night. DISD Deputy Chief Gary Hodges asks residents to call the DISD Dispatcher at 214-932-5656 to report any type of activity on the playground after dark. So, please keep this number handy and don't hesitate to call. We must remember that the Hotchkiss Elementary School playground is not a park, as it does not fall under the Parks Department. Therefore, it does not have the kind of facilities or security necessary to be utilized as a public park for people or pets. More importantly, we need to keep in mind that young children play on these grounds, so help us keep it safe and clean. In fact, if you take your kiddos there or even just walk around the grounds for exercise, you might think about taking a plastic bag along and pick up any litter you might find.

MAIL FRAUD – HELPFUL TIPS

We recently had an incident in our neighborhood that required Postal Inspectors to become involved. They continue to remind us all to be careful with any papers that could fall into the wrong hands. If you've been a victim of mail fraud or of any other crime, please notify the Crime Watch Chairman or any Neighborhood Association Officer so we can alert the neighborhood. Some tips to consider:

- Don't leave outgoing mail in your unprotected box for collection
- Take mail to the post office or give it to a letter carrier
- Get a locking mailbox or install a mail slot
- Shred It! Shred financial statements/documents w/ personal info
- Retrieve your mail quickly, never allow it to sit overnight
- Have a neighbor collect your mail when you are out of town or ask your post office to hold your mail
- Have new checks delivered to your bank, not your home
- Keep your Social Security card in a secure place and give your SSN only when absolutely necessary
- Don't throw your ATM receipts in the trash; Shred them
- Keep a minimum number of credit/debit cards and checks in your wallet or purse
- Do not keep cards and statements in open view at your office, home or car
- Have Social Security or Payroll checks directly deposited into your bank account
- Check your credit report regularly

CALL 911

Many of you are hesitant to call 911 when you see something suspicious in the neighborhood. The Dallas Police Department is begging everyone to please call when there is any doubt at all. Calls are completely secure and "bad guys" won't know who called. Remember, **calls be made anonymously**. When the dispatcher asks if you want to be contacted, simply say no. When asked for your name, simply decline. The operators are only asking the questions they have been trained to ask on every call, but the police say that it's completely up to you if you identify yourself or not. So, if you're afraid someone will know who called 911—don't worry. Make the call, and don't release any of your personal information. The police want the information much more than to know who you are. Don't worry about whether you are right or not—let the police determine if someone is okay. They tell us that their success rate of catching thieves is highly dependent on private citizens making the calls—they love our calls.

KEEP OUR NEIGHBORHOOD BEAUTIFUL - CALL 311 FOR CODE VIOLATIONS

Did you know you can report certain neighborhood problems from your computer? Just visit www.dallascityhall.com and look for the 311 link on the left side of the page. Click the link, and you'll be able report all kinds of problems. If you don't have a computer or just prefer, pick up the phone and dial 3-1-1. And once again, you can remain anonymous via the computer or over the phone—simply decline giving out any personal information.

ALLEY ADDRESS SIGN INITIATIVE

Sign Up No Later Than Nov 15th!

The Alley Sign Initiative offers a low-cost, high-impact solution to easily identify your home's **STREET NUMBER** for emergency vehicles and VIP patrols driving our alleys. They are made of aluminum, installation is easy and the cost is negligible vs. the Benefit! If we can submit an order for a minimum of 100, the cost is only \$9.00 per sign. To indicate your interest in buying a sign, please send an e-mail to info@mpum.com. Include your name, address, phone number and the e-mail address you would like us to use. If you do not have e-mail, fill out the form provided with this newsletter and place it in the VIP box on the porch of or mail to 7272 Walling Lane, Dallas, Tx 75231. You may also bring your forms to our Oct. 2nd meeting or Nov. 13 to our Fall Festival. **When we've reached our goal of 100 or more orders, we'll e-mail or call you with instructions for payment.** (See enclosed insert for sign color, design & order form)



VOLUNTEERS IN PATROL

MPUM VIP members recently attended a meeting at the Dallas Police Dept. Northeast Substation along with VIPs from other neighborhoods, and officials were amazed when over 150 people showed up! The meeting was called to consider some creative ways the police department might utilize VIP groups more effectively.



VIP activities are safe and NON-CONFRONTATIONAL. You are trained how to observe and report without directly being involved. ALL ages are encouraged to make time to attend the 6-hour training and become a VIP member. In other neighborhoods, VIPs are heavily staffed by senior citizens who have retired. So if you are retired, please consider joining VIPs!

Our Neighborhood Association provides the magnetic signs placed on each member's vehicles during patrol activities. Other

recommended equipment, i.e. notepads, "Kojak" lights, flashlights, scanners, etc. are voluntary and at the expense of the patroller. We will soon order embroidered shirts for VIP patrollers who wish to purchase one for identification purposes while patrolling.

This is a fantastic program and we sure need your help! Please contact Dottie Giesler at 214-349-7028, jazzydott@sbcglobal.net or Donna Mason at 214-348-7721, info@mpum.com if you need further information about the program. Application and waiver forms can be downloaded from our Website as well as the Northeast Substation's Website. Or, give us a call we'll make sure you get the forms. The police department also needs volunteers to work at the substation to help with clerical duties.

VIP TIPS

You can help keep crime to a minimum in our neighborhood by not inviting trouble. Here are some helpful tips:

KEEP YOUR GARAGE DOOR CLOSED at all times when you cannot watch over it—don't advertise what you have by keeping your garage door wide open.

LOCK-TAKE-HIDE: Don't invite motor vehicle break-ins. Keep your car locked at all times, do not leave anything of value in your car or hide it so someone can't look in the window and be tempted.

LEAVE YOUR LIGHTS ON. Consider acquiring floodlights with a motion sensor. Light helps deter crime. In addition, light provides more safety for our neighborhood walkers and runners.

KEEP YOUR ADDRESS POSTED IN THE ALLEY. Please see the "Alley Address Sign Initiative" in this paper to acquire an alley address sign. If you need help installing, contact a member of the MPUM Board or send a request to info@mpum.com.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

Welcome your new slate of officers and Board Members for the 2007-2008 fiscal year, ending May 2008.

Position	Name	Phone	E-mail Address
President	Bill Haughton	214-801-2425	president@mpum.com
VP - Admin.	Jonathan Bernstein	214-343-4494	vp@mpum.com
Treasurer	Charlie Ramirez	214-341-1861	treasurer@mpum.com
Secretary	Barbara Hansen	214-340-3339	secretary@mpum.com
Crime Watch	Brenna Rivas	214-553-5161	crimewatch@mpum.com
Beautification	Dottie Giesler	214-349-7028	beautification@mpum.com
Zoning/Code	Ed "Rick" Webber	214-348-3526	zoning@mpum.com
Newsletter Editor	Kathy Gifford	469-877-4462	newsletter@mpum.com
Neighborhood Pets	Carrie Clark	214-356-3859	pets@mpum.com
Website	Donna Mason	214-348-7721	info@mpum.com
Volunteers In Patrol	Dottie Giesler	214-349-7028	vip@mpum.com
Volunteers In Patrol	Donna Mason	214-348-7721	info@mpum.com
Immediate Past President & Membership	Robert L. Giesler	214-349-7028	membership@mpum.com

VACANCY:

CRIME WATCH CHAIRMAN

We regret to inform you that we are losing our current Crime Watch Chair, Brenna Rivas. Brenna is moving to another Dallas neighborhood. We were sorry to hear about her move, because she stepped right into the position of Crime Watch Chair with such ease. In such a short time, she's done an outstanding job for our neighborhood. Brenna was instrumental in working with two other neighborhoods to put together a very successful National Night Out on August 7. We'll certainly miss her and wish Brenna and her family well in their new neighborhood.

If you have interest in becoming our next Crime Watch Chairman, please call Bill Haughton at 214-801-2425 or send an e-mail to info@mpum.com.



ANNUAL DUES

Annual dues continue to be \$15 per year, per household. We have provided a self-addressed envelope for your association dues for the 2007-2008 fiscal year that began on June 1, 2007. If you're not sure if you've paid, check the paid list on our Website at www.mpum.com. If you do not have web access, contact Charley Ramirez, 214-341-1861. If you have not paid, you may use the self-addressed envelope provided. Checks can be made payable to Merriman Park/University Manor Neighborhood Association.

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS

If you do not have extra time to give to the neighborhood but would like to contribute in a special way, you may send a donation along with your dues and indicate how you wish your contribution to be spent. We do have the ability to apply special funds for special areas of interest.

At times we have unexpected expenses, like repairing the brick wall recently at Fenton and Northwest. As our VIP program grows, you could help fund the magnetic patrol car signs. Or

perhaps you want to add new plants somewhere in the neighborhood.

We don't expect you contribute anything apart from annual dues however, if you'd like to make a contribution, use the self-addressed envelope provided and indicate clearly your wishes.



SUGGESTIONS

Another way you can contribute to the neighborhood is to make suggestions. How can we do things better in this neighborhood? You may send your suggestions to info@mpum.com or use the self-addressed envelope provided with this newsletter. Anonymous suggestions are fine. If you would like to be contacted, be sure to include how we may contact you.

BEAUTIFICATION

The "Wall" has returned. The west wall at Fenton and Northwest Highway was partially destroyed on May 12, 2007, when a driver under the influence careened out of control, jumped the curb and hit the end of the wall close to NW Highway. Because it was an injury accident, a report was filed by the officer on the scene.

The Fenton wall was repaired (looks great!) at a cost of \$1,300, but the driver of the car had no driver's license or auto insurance. Thankfully, your neighborhood association was able to fund the expense because our residents are diligent in paying their dues (\$15) each year. However, an expense like the wall repair takes a large "chunk" out of the association budget. Donations (for any area or project in our neighborhood) are always welcome, appreciated and encouraged.

NEIGHBORHOOD TREES

You've likely noticed we have lost some very large trees lately. As our neighborhood ages, so do our trees. If you lose a tree, REPLANT! Trees add value to our properties and we need to be diligent in replacing them. If you need help finding a resource for reasonably-priced trees, please visit www.texastreesfoundation.org.

One of our residents points out to be cautious of people giving really good deals on tree work, especially if the truck has no sign on the side giving a company name. A bad tree-trim job apparently killed one of his trees. He also points out that "real" tree companies carry liability insurance,

which comes in handy if they accidentally drop a limb on a neighbor's house.

SANITATION

Council members revisited the years-old debate over whether to move to once-weekly trash pickup service. To voice your views about this issue, contact:

Council member Sheffie Kadane
Dallas City Hall
1500 Marilla Street, Room 5FS
Dallas, TX 75201-6390
Main Phone
(214) 670-4069

MOM'S GROUP

The MPUM Moms' Group is still very active with a membership of about 30 moms in the neighborhood. The kids range from newborn to school-age. This group typically has one Moms' Night Out at a local restaurant each month, a Moms' Book Club meeting once a month and playgroups with the kiddos several times a month. A calendar of events will be posted on our neighborhood Website. If anyone has questions or wants to join, please e-mail Stephanie Ochel at ochel@sbcglobal.net.

UNIVERSITY MANOR GARDEN CLUB

The University Manor Garden Club kicked off their 2007-2008 season (51st) on Thursday, September 13, 2007. Meetings are held at the Town North Bible Church at 10:00 a.m. Other dates you should note for the Garden Club meetings include: Sept.

13, Oct. 11, Nov. 8, Dec. 13, Jan. 10, Feb. 14, March 13, April 10 & May 5.

If you have not joined the Garden Club yet or paid your annual \$10.00 dues, please send a check payable to the University Manor Garden Club to: Alice Stultz, 7035 Arboreal, Dallas, TX 75231. Also call Alice at 214-341-4399 if you have any questions.

This year's Garden Club Officers are: Elizabeth Edwards, President; Ginny Howdeshell, Secretary; Cindy Stone Johnson, Treasurer; Rose Blatch & Alice Stultz, VP Programs; Alice Stultz, Membership; Ginger Hartman, Social Chairman and Joy Goyen, Parliamentarian.



PET TIPS

Residents are urged to keep pets safe in summer heat. Dallas Animal Services reminds residents that animals left in a hot car can quickly suffer brain damage or die. Temperatures inside a vehicle can quickly reach 120 degrees, so officials caution you to never leave a pet unattended in a parked car for any period of time.



YARDS OF THE MONTH

September – 6947 Kingsbury
August – 7011 Town North
July – 7130 Walling
June – 7023 Freemont

ANNOUNCEMENTS

HELLOS

We'd like to do a better job welcoming new people to our great neighborhood. If you know of a new resident that has moved in, please send an e-mail to info@mpum.com. We want to have an opportunity to meet, greet and welcome our new residents.

GOODBYES

Gene Friesen: The neighborhood (and MP/UM) lost a long-time resident who served for many years as President of our Merriman Park/University Manor Neighborhood Association. Gene Friesen passed away July 8, 2007. Gene and his wife, Glenna, spent tireless hours making sure this neighborhood was the best it could be, in every way. Our neighborhood is what it is today because of Gene's kindness, dedication, leadership and his ability to follow as he fully supported those who followed him in the Presidency. We will

miss Gene and are grateful for the time he devoted on behalf of his fellow MP/UM residents. We extend our sympathy and best wishes to his wife, Glenna.

Murel Peake: After a long battle with a rare neurological disease (Progressive Super Nuclear Palsy), Murel passed away on August 16, 2007. Murel used her wit, personality and great humor to support her family, friends and various organizations. With husband, Terry, Murel began a support group for persons with PSP and that group will continue because of her courage. After some family time, you may see Terry around the community. Please give him your support.

Bill Sevadjan: Bill passed away on August 23, after a heroic battle with cancer. Bill spent his life preparing young people for their future through physical and spiritual "coaching." One of his passions was his rose garden that utilized his entire front yard and

brought the brightness of his flowers to our lives. Best wishes to Bill's wife, Jan, and their family.

CONGRATS

Robert L. Giesler: After 39 years with DISD, Robert retired this year. Robert taught and served as Principal of many Dallas schools, the most recent of which was Magnet Center for Government, Law and Criminal Justice (the Law Magnet) at Townview Center. Many of you know Robert because he was our Association President for several years or you may know him because he taught you or your kids! Congratulations to Robert on a long and extremely successful career in education!

(If you know of others in our neighborhood who need to be remembered or recognized, please e-mail info to info@mpum.com.)

The Communicator is a publication of the Merriman Park/University Manor Neighborhood Association, P.O. Box 820803, Dallas, TX 75382-0803. Articles, letters and suggestions are invited and appreciated and can be mailed to the P.O. Box or sent via e-mail to info@mpum.com. *This issue of the MPUM Communicator was Paid for and Sponsored by Applebee's, Medallion Center, 6464 E. Northwest Hwy, Dallas, TX 75231, 214-361-7625.