

# HYDE • PARK

APRIL 2019

www.facebook.com/groups/HydeParkUnited/

hydeparkhouston.org

## Letter from the Vice President



Howdy Hyde Park,  
SPRING HAS ARRIVED! The short week or two of cool, sunny days in Houston is my favorite time of the year. It's a great time to enjoy a late afternoon glass of wine while relaxing on the front

porch swing. It's also a reminder of the beauty available to us in Houston and how we should work to protect it. I hope you were able to enjoy the glorious weather at our happy hour this month at The Burger Joint on March 20th. I was able to attend with my family and enjoyed seeing many of our neighbors enjoy tasty burgers, beer and milkshakes. Photos from the event are in these pages.

## MARCH GENERAL MEETING

We had a very interesting meeting with guest speaker Mayor Pro Tem Ellen Cohen! Past President Macy Bodenhamer led the meeting, so I was able to take copious notes of the discussion and they are reproduced in these pages.

What I heard from the people in attendance is that many of you are frustrated with the traffic situation in Hyde Park and are concerned about what can be done to address those frustrations. I honestly do not know if the City is capable of addressing those concerns. The lack of zoning and increasing attractiveness in our neighborhood for new and more compact development will continue to contribute to more dangerous traffic conditions. The City's dire financial situation means, in my estimation, that Montrose will not see much investment in improved road infrastructure for years to come. However, increased activism may be the only way that we push our elected officials to make hard choices to make Montrose more livable

beyond having the great food options and proximity to the arts and culture center of Houston.

I encourage you to attend the April General Meeting on April 2nd. Our guest speakers will be two representatives from the Traffic Management Branch of the Public Works Department.

In case you were not able to attend the general meeting, please send your ideas to [vicepresident@hydeparkhouston.org](mailto:vicepresident@hydeparkhouston.org).

## MEMBERSHIP

We would like to make a big thank you to those of you who have become members of the association this past few months. Your membership helps fund this newsletter, maintain Lamar Park and more. If you are unsure if you are currently a member, please contact our Membership Chair, Helen Zunka.

## WHAT'S GOING ON

I hope you have registered to participate in the trash pick-up day with Keep Houston Beautiful on April 6th. I've signed up and hope to see you at 9am at Lamar Park! As an added incentive, I'll buy you a beer at Hay Merchant afterwards to celebrate your service to the community! (Offer valid only for paid up members!)

An idea was floated at the March Happy Hour: renting a bus to take residents to a visit to St. Arnolds Brewery north of Downtown. I think this is a great idea, whether it's a weekday happy hour event or a weekend afternoon trip. If you like this idea, send a note to our Membership Chair and express your interest. Each participant would pay for their share of the cost of the bus rental and any beer or food purchased at St. Arnolds.

See ya,

Chris Delphin, Vice President

## This Month

### HPCA MEETING @ RUDZ UPSTAIRS

April 2nd @ 6:30pm

Guest speakers from Traffic Management

### KEEP HOUSTON BEAUTIFUL: HYDE PARK CLEAN UP

April 6th @ Hyde Park

9am-2pm

### HPCA HAPPY HOUR @ LA GRANGE

April 17th, 6-8pm

2517 Ralph



## Next Month

### HPCA MEETING @ RUDZ

May 7th @ 6:30pm

### INTERVIEW WITH HPCA NEWSLETTER PRINTER: KWIK KOPY

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# Minutes from February 2019 Civic Club Meeting

*Submitted by Chris Delphin*

Meeting called to order at 6:38 pm at Rudyard's Pub by **Macy Bodenhamer** (Past President). Approximately 35 members were in attendance.

Macy introduced special guest speaker, **Mayor Pro Tem Ellen Cohen**, District C Councilmember.

MPT Cohen mentioned that she has visited HPCA each of the past seven years that she has been in office. She also mentioned that there will be an election in November for Mayor and all of City Council. There are five Councilmembers that are term limited, including MPT Cohen.

MPT Cohen used the opportunity of addressing our civic association to explain a few things about how City Council works. She noted that there are 16 Councilmembers (representing 11 Districts and 5 At Large positions). With the Mayor, there are 17 voting members; however, only the Mayor can decide what goes on the agenda (this is called a strong mayor-style government).

City Council meets every Tuesday (from 9:30 am until they stop) for public sessions and will listen to any issue presented by the populace. You can sign up for 1, 2 or 3 minute slots. They do not hold executive sessions; meetings are always open to the public. MPT Cohen chairs the Quality of Life committee.

She described District C (Meyerland, through Braeswood, Southampton, Montrose, Memorial Heights, The Heights, and up 290). It has a population of over 220,000 people with over 70 civic clubs (this greatly outnumbers other Districts). You can read up on her activities and what is going on in the District in the notice that is issued by her office each Friday. It's also posted to our Facebook site.

MPT Cohen explained that she was voted into the position of Mayor Pro Tem by her colleagues on City Council. What does it do? Basically, if the Mayor is not available, MPT Cohen stands in his place. She said she enjoys "seeing the sausage being made but doesn't have to eat it."

## PREPARED Q&A

MPT Cohen also answered some prepared questions:

**1. The poor street conditions in our neighborhood are an ongoing concern. We understand the "worst first" approach, but conditions are getting worse here. What will ever happen with the pink zone that has no plans for street repairs?**

What has happened? Since 2012, work on Shepherd Drive, water replacements in East Montrose (the Gillette Trunkline) and Allen Parkway. Future projects are planned for Dunlavy, the Roseland Neighborhood, West Gray and Taft reconstruction.

Worst first was used in the past, but it's not quite accurate to say it is used now. Although Montrose has some of the worst surfaces, Public Works takes into account many factors. First-priority is drainage (the cause of frequent home flooding). Since Hurricane Harvey, no new project has been added to the Capital Improvement Plan because of budget constraints. Montrose has not been added, but remains a high priority, with repairs coming in the next few years. The full list of projects will be discussed at the March 28 meeting, at 6:30, West Gray Montrose Center.

**2. Poor, sloppy, short-term pothole repair - Residents appreciate the mayor's pothole repair program, but the repair jobs are shoddy - it's just gravel thrown on top of concrete that lasts only a short time until the pothole then reappears, over and over again. It's a waste of taxpayers' and the city's money. Please look into a proper repair process.**

We can use a better substance than gravel. Some new materials are being used but they are expensive. The best option is to rebuild the street, but this requires substantial new funding. So, we need to use more temporary means. A couple reasons the repairs have not lasted long, for instance, are the weather conditions in Houston (e.g., the drought years ago caused pipes under roads to break), more traffic after the repair (increased number of drivers due to gentrification and more concentrated housing being built) and the lack of zoning limits the ability to control the growth in inner-city neighborhoods.

**3. Please provide an update on the city's homelessness problem. What is the status of cleaning up the "kush camps" in Montrose, Midtown and downtown? It appears there is still activity at the 50 Spur and Richmond.**

The fixes appear to be temporary. There are people who do not want to be confined in housing, largely due to mental health issues for those individuals. The Mayor's homeless initiative works with many organization to enhance the City's response to homelessness – the Way Home – a data driven approach to improving access to support systems to stem the growth of

## BLOCK CAPTAINS

### Bomar

Greg Jeu & Jim Hurst 281-541-6756

### California / Westheimer

Cecilia Kammer 832-788-1586

### Commonwealth

Laura Lark 713-550-6226

### 2516 Commonwealth

Mark McCreary

### Fairview

Irene Dahlgren 713-299-5190

### Hyde Park / Hyde Park Apts.

Linda Carter 713-524-2952

Pat Courtney 832-860-1814

### Hyde Park Crescent

Carlos Fernandez 713-520-7017

### Hyde Park Townhomes

Clint Harbert, 832-428-0158

### Indiana / Yupon

Alice McCarthy 713-521-5807

### Jackson

Nelson Vergel 713-539-1978

### Maryland

Finis Cowan 713-582-6066

### Michigan

Tom Whitworth 713-523-8035

### Missouri

Veronica Faubert 786-427-7422

### Montrose/Waugh

Carolina Sierra 713-446-8213

### Peden

Lori Corwin 832-582-6520

### Vermont

Peter Forbes - 832-921-3464

### Welch

Scott and Lina Rigrod 713-528-2791

Cliff Jones 713-524-3055

### West Drew

Mike McKann 713-526-6777

### West Gray / Hazel

Chris Delphin 832-691-6587

### Willard

Delia Isabel Cuellar 832 819-0813

### Yoakum/Van Buren

Macy Bodenhamer 713-201-5810

### Block captains: Notify

vicepresident@hydeparkhouston.org  
of any changes in contact information.

homelessness. Since 2012, this program has housed over 8000 families and individuals. Houston is a national leader in preventing and reducing homelessness, especially for veterans, but more people are coming to Houston due to its climate.

The City has been working with TxDOT on the issues at the Spur at Richmond because it is their property that is being used by the homeless.

**4. The ongoing commercial development in Montrose raises concerns about the stability of our infrastructure to support increased traffic and even more densely populated neighborhoods. The new construction on West Gray and on Montrose Blvd will undoubtedly result in this, but problems like sinkholes and poor drainage/street flooding persist. How will the city address this?**

Another key factor to improving the stability of the neighborhood is the creation of the Montrose TIRZ. However, it takes time to grow the funds.

**5. Two years ago, residents James Hurst and Delia Cuellar filed a request to the Traffic Dept (project 6535-15 NTMP) to have a study performed in Hyde Park to address speeding traffic. What is the status?**

Public Works has a large backlog for speed bumps. Currently, the only funds available are from each District Councilmember's \$750k discretionary fund for project works. This allows each Councilmember to address emergency or urgent issues with more speed than through the standard process. MPT Cohen's office has spent \$900k for speed bumps in District C since 2012. Hyde Park is currently 13th on the list of areas, out of 32 areas in District C, waiting for speed bumps to be added. Unfortunately, there are no funds for 2019. In fact, each District may lose the discretionary fund because of the budget shortfall.

## PROP B

Following the presentation of her responses to the prepared questions, MPT Cohen described her views of the situation with Proposition B. She stated that Prop B will require another \$100m (over a \$120m deficit) to be spent to fulfil Prop B's requirements! She will vote for cuts to the City's public safety apparatus, likely eliminating the jobs of more firefighters than police officers (for which the City already has a deficit), plus laying off municipal employees and reducing hours for libraries and public pools during the Summer. The City cannot raise property taxes (as property taxes are capped by law) nor sales tax (capped by State law) to address the deficit. New fees (like a garbage collection fee) would not come close to covering the deficit. She closed by saying that, if the City cut funds to every department, it would still not have enough money to pay for Prop B.

## IN PERSON Q&A

A resident asked whether the City can use a lottery to raise money. MPT Cohen responded that the State pre-empts the ability for Cities to raise funds through a lottery.

A resident asked about the theft of UPS (and other) packages; has the City spoken to UPS or USPS to see how they can address the risks of package theft? It was suggested that residents use a delivery service to specific places (e.g., UPS store, Amazon delivery to Whole Foods, etc.).

A resident asked if there are any regulations for cable companies in how they install cables. For instance, they often leave wires hanging around. Is there any way to prevent these companies from being sloppy or self-police their activities? We were informed that there are ordinances that prescribe safety but not aesthetics. The utilities usually

own the poles, which may be regulated by the State. MPT Cohen's chief of staff will check on this.

A resident asked about the abysmal water pressure in the area, as it seems to be caused by increased construction of new homes. Is there a policy to improve water pressure? MPT Cohen responded that potable water lines are worked on at the same time as sewage lines and street conditions, each being a factor for Public Works to determine priority for their schedule. It is unlikely that Public Works will return to Hyde Park. However, there is a minimum water pressure that has to be provided and you may qualify for repair if the pressure is below the threshold.

Lastly, multiple residents asked about the rampant drug dealing in the neighborhood – What can you do about this? The response: call 911 and then call MPT Cohen's office to put pressure on the police. The police must catch the possible criminals in the process of committing a crime or have probable cause to enter the premises to find a crime being committed.

Ending Note

MPT Cohen ended her presentation by giving a plug to the 2019 election and asked us to stay informed about candidates for District C. This area has the highest voter turnout in the City!

## GENERAL BUSINESS

Following MPT Cohen's presentation, Macy noted that there are currently just under 80 paid members and implored residents to join (please do!). She also announced the happy hour that took place at The Burger Joint on Wednesday, March 20th. Macy noted that financial information was not available at the meeting, but offered to send the information to anyone who requests.

Deed Restrictions Committee Chair **Mike McKann** mentioned the construction on the 1100 block on Jackson Blvd. There are no deed restrictions for this property, but it is subject to Chapter 42 (minimum lot size). The City must enforce this limitation.

Macy then reminded the audience about the clean up in Hyde Park on April 6th, starting at 9 am and ending at 2 pm. We hope you signed up, but even if you did not, please come and help out!

We then discussed using the upstairs space at Rudyard's. We recently learned there is an operating elevator to allow people to get upstairs. This is welcome news because we do not need to pay for this space, there is no time limit, and we get privacy for our meetings.

Macy announced that we will have a candidate roundtable in September. We will invite candidates for District C and the At Large Positions.

Before closing the meeting, resident **Alice McCarthy** asked if we could get someone from Vermont Commons to discuss getting our neighborhood on the Constable's beat. Macy reminded the group about past research on the private constable program: it costs \$75k a year. She did talk to East Montrose Civic Association, which did a campaign to raise funds, but the funds ran out 6 months later. Plus, the makeup of Hyde Park is different than those neighborhoods that have managed to raise funds and use the program; Hyde Park has more renters in multi-family homes. However, Macy noted that the Board will discuss what we could do to raise funds.

Lastly, we heard from candidate for District C, **Greg Meyers**, who informed us that he called HISD to have police issue tickets near Wilson Elementary and HISD noticed that there is a lack of warning lights and that this will be fixed. Greg also gave a plug for himself as a candidate.

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## CITIZENS PATROL REPORT FOR FEBRUARY 2019

Hours patrolled by car = **31.3**

Hours patrolled on foot = **74.3**

Thanks to all the patrollers who kept an eye out for the safety of our neighbors and community.

*Submitted by Bill Galbraith*

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VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR - Avery Hodge

[volunteer@hydeparkhouston.org](mailto:volunteer@hydeparkhouston.org)

## Did You Know?

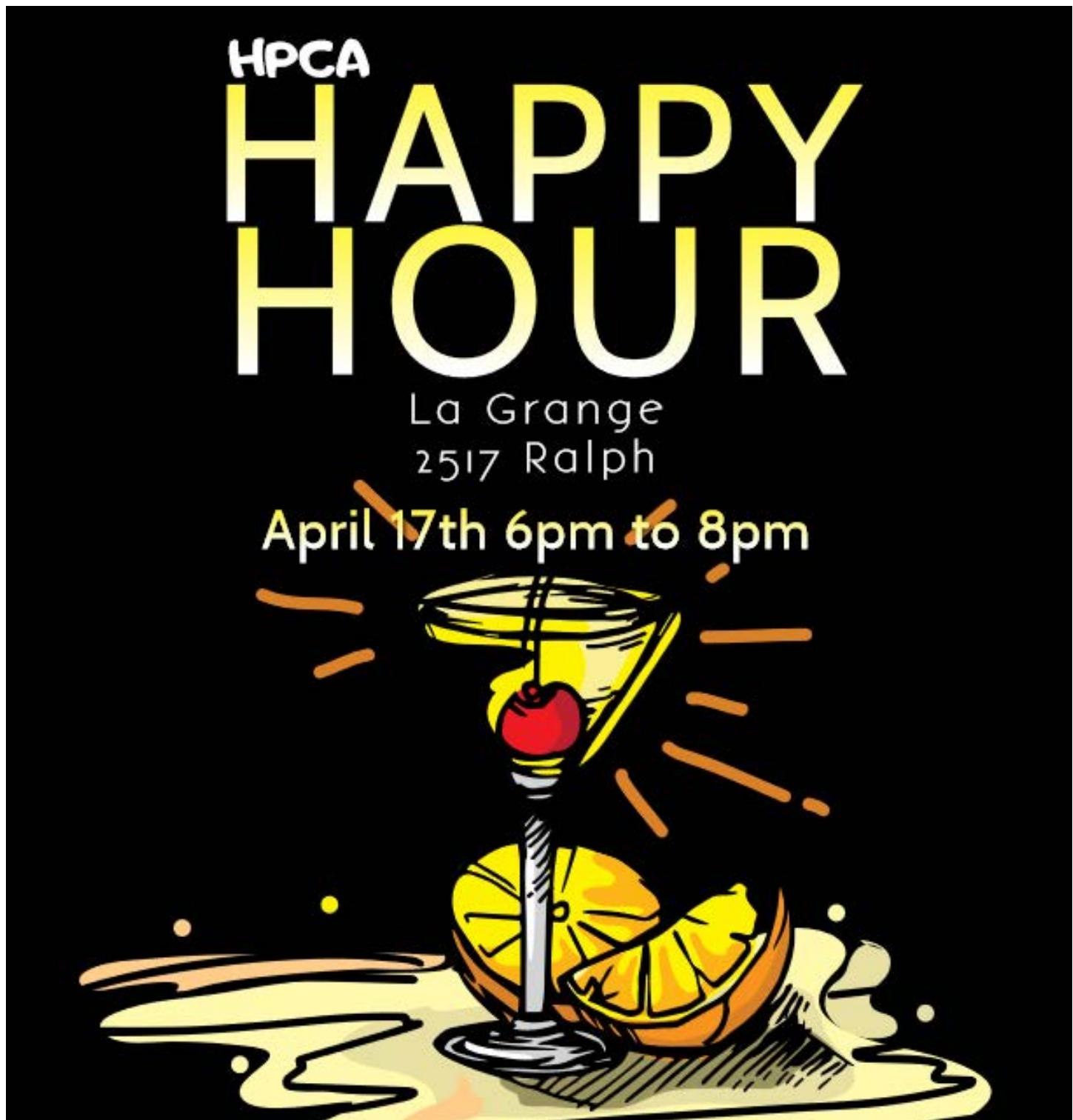
Submitted by Chris Delphin

Did you know? ... Earth Day is also Macy Bodenhamer's birthday! This year, it takes place on Monday, April 22nd. The theme for Earth Day 2019 is to protect threatened and endangered species. As noted on the EarthDay.org website: The unprecedented global destruction and rapid reduction of plant and wildlife populations are directly linked to causes driven by human activity: climate change, deforestation, habitat loss, trafficking and poaching, unsustainable agriculture, pollution and pesticides to name a few. What can you do to reduce or eliminate the impact of your activities every day?

## Call for Volunteer: Citizen Patrol Coordinator

Our beloved **Bill Galbraith** is soon on to his next adventure in Oregon, with his wife Emily. A huge thank you to him and his efforts over the years. We are hoping another kind soul will volunteer for this position.

If you are interested in getting involved in this project, or any other volunteering opportunities with HPCA, please reach out to [Volunteer@HydeParkHouston.org](mailto:Volunteer@HydeParkHouston.org).



# Hyde Park Civic Association – 2019 Monthly Meeting Schedule

Submitted by Past President Macy Bodenhamer

Monthly meetings are open to the public and held on the first Tuesday of each month at 6:30pm, with the exceptions of holidays and others noted below. Rudyard's British Pub generously donates their upstairs space to host our meetings. Come early or stay late to enjoy their delicious food and beverages!

Volunteers work to secure guest speakers of general interest to the community each month. If you have a topic that you'd like to learn more about or want to suggest a guest speaker, contact president@hydeparkhouston.org.

- April 2
- May 7
- June 4
- July – summer break, no meeting
- August 6
- September - TBD
- October – National Night Out TBD
- November 5
- December – HPCA Holiday Party TBD

## HPD Crime Reports for Feb 2019

Submitted by Jim Pollard

Crime	Date	Location
Aggravated Assault	2/16/2019 17:43	1300 Block WESTHEIMER RD
Aggravated Robbery	2/5/2019 0:09	2500 Block MONTROSE BLVD
Burg of Resid to Commit Assault	2/28/2019 12:41	1200 Block WELCH ST
Burglary Building	2/3/2019 3:23	1100 Block W GRAY ST
Burglary Habitation	2/3/2019 2:16	1100 Block W DREW ST
Burglary Habitation	2/25/2019 11:58	1200 Block JACKSON BLVD
Burglary Motor Vehicle	2/7/2019 12:15	900 Block WESTHEIMER RD
Burglary Motor Vehicle	2/12/2019 7:23	2300 Block COMMONWEALTH ST
Burglary Motor Vehicle	2/13/2019 16:25	1500 Block CALIFORNIA ST
Burglary Motor Vehicle	2/13/2019 22:10	1100 Block WESTHEIMER RD
Burglary Motor Vehicle	2/15/2019 22:39	1200 Block MISSOURI ST
Burglary Motor Vehicle	2/20/2019 3:51	2000 Block WAUGH DR
Burglary Motor Vehicle	2/21/2019 23:41	1500 Block MISSOURI ST
Burglary Motor Vehicle	2/28/2019 9:54	1100 Block WESTHEIMER RD
Theft - All Other Items	2/14/2019 13:06	1300 Block WELCH
Theft - From Building	2/18/2019 22:41	900 Block WESTHEIMER RD
Theft - U.S. Mail	2/13/2019 12:20	1300 Block WELCH ST

Want to advertise in the Hyde Park monthly newsletter? Contact Carlos Fernandez at [advertising@hydeparkhouston.org](mailto:advertising@hydeparkhouston.org).

## Your local civic association needs YOU!

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at [www.hydeparkhouston.org](http://www.hydeparkhouston.org).

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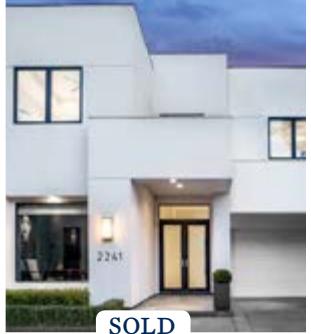
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## HYDE PARK

*A Sense of Community*

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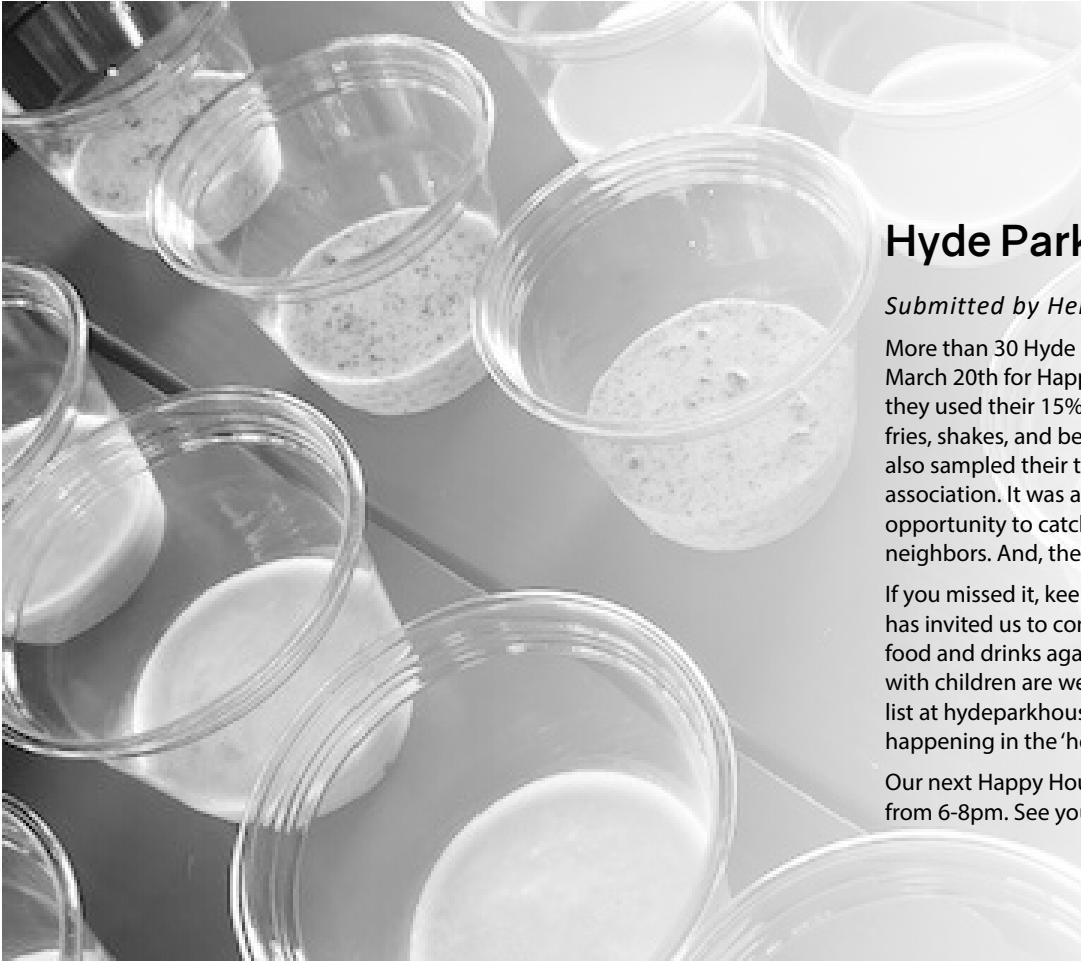
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## Hyde Park Happy Hour

*Submitted by Helen Zunka*

More than 30 Hyde Parkers came out on Wednesday March 20th for Happy Hour at The Burger Joint where they used their 15% off coupon to enjoy burgers, fries, shakes, and beer. Thank you Burger Joint! We also sampled their tasty shakes courtesy of our civic association. It was a perfect spring evening and a great opportunity to catch up with old friends and meet new neighbors. And, the patio is pet friendly!

If you missed it, keep an eye out, The Burger Joint has invited us to come back and enjoy their delicious food and drinks again in the near future. Families with children are welcome. Sign up for our email list at [hydeparkhouston.org](http://hydeparkhouston.org) to keep up with what's happening in the 'hood.

Our next Happy Hour will be on April 17th at La Grange from 6-8pm. See you there!

*Thanks to all the Hyde Park residents that joined us at The Burger Joint!*



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# THE PHOENIX or The Operatic Adventures of Lorenzo Da Ponte on Two Continents in Two Acts

Submitted by Mary Ellen Whitworth

The Houston Grand Opera (HGO) has commissioned a new opera. Our local Hyde Park Opera expert, **Cynthia Greenwood**, provides the details:

The life of Mozart's legendary librettist is featured in a new HGO commission.

Amid the contemporary scandal of corrupt cardinals and pedophile priests, the infamy of Lorenzo Da Ponte, who wrote the libretti for Mozart's most popular Italian operas, is sure to intrigue Houston operagoers. Houston Grand Opera (HGO) will present The Phoenix starting April 26, a newly commissioned work that explores the life of the Roman Catholic priest and poet who hid a secret family that included two children. Exiled from Venice, he met Mozart in Austria and wrote the stories for the composer's beloved works, *Don Giovanni*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, and *Così fan tutte*. Through his association with Mozart, Da Ponte found fame and renewed acceptance in society. Eventually, though, he went bankrupt and escaped to the United States, where he eventually established the first opera company in New York City.

HGO's original commission of The Phoenix, by composer Tarik O'Regan and librettist John Caird, features the eminent baritone, Thomas Hampson (as the elder Da Ponte) and bass-baritone Luca Pisaroni (playing a young Da Ponte). HGO presents five performances of this world premiere from April 26 – May 10. Visit [www.houstongrandopera.org](http://www.houstongrandopera.org).

The performance is 2 hours and 25 minutes with one intermission and is sung in English and Italian. Ticket prices range from \$25 to \$270.

Houston Grand Opera offers Opera Insights lectures before every performance. These events are free to ticket-holders, so come early and join the group on the Orchestra level of the Brown Auditorium for the inside scoop on the day's opera! Event begins 45 minutes before curtain. You can even rent a pair of binoculars if you are sitting on the 5th floor.





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## Indoor Air Quality

Submitted by Heather Almquist

Thousands of Americans suffer with allergies, hay fever and respiratory complaints such as a cold or flu. In Houston, we are often pummeled by an onslaught of allergens thanks to our short winters.

If you suffer from hay fever, sneezing, and allergies, it may be time to evaluate your home by performing an inspection and thoroughly instituting regular preventative maintenance. Look and smell for stale air and lingering odors. Are there any visible signs of growth in drip pans? Too much dust? Dirty filters?

Many times these allergy complaints can be traced to poor indoor air quality caused by inadequate ventilation or lack of maintenance to the heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems.

What can you do to reduce or eliminate poor indoor air quality? The following are a few helpful tips:

1. Remove all standing water in drip pans under your refrigerator and air conditioning units.
2. Use cleaning chemicals and insecticides sparingly. You may want to use alternate methods.
3. Remove garbage and trash on a daily basis.
4. Vacuum your rugs and carpeting at least once per week. Make sure your vacuum is properly working with a clean out bag. Does your vacuum just pick up dirt and then blow it back out?
5. Change air filters in your heating and air conditioning units.
6. Clean your duct work every 3 to 5 years. Professional services are available.
7. Clean fireplace flue (if applicable) yearly if you use it on a regular basis.
8. Do not store spray insecticides or any items at the air intake to your HVAC system.
9. Call your local gas and electric company to inspect your furnace prior to the winter season.
10. Keep pets outside or regularly bathe them. (Don't forget the flea prevention!)



# BUDGET POWER

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### Got a big idea?

Newsletter content and story ideas are welcome from Hyde Park residents. In 2019 the deadline will always be the 15th of the month for publication the following month. Reach out to [newsletter@hydeparkhouston.org](mailto:newsletter@hydeparkhouston.org).



## Business Solutions

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April 2019

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