



The Official Newsletter of The City of Audubon Park



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Janette Mercer, City Clerk
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MAYOR'S MUSINGS

Dorn Crawford

Greetings, neighbors. The 'dog days' of summer usually mean a slowing of the pace – but there's no opportunity for that right now, as so many areas continue to need ongoing attention. Here's a quick update on the most pressing:

Taxes. The collection cycle is well along now, and it's been quite a challenge mastering the complications of interacting with not just residents, but banks, mortgage companies, landlords, PVA and others involved in the process. Your City Clerk, Janette Mercer, has performed superbly, as I think any of those who've visited City Hall to deliver their checks or get advice or assistance will attest.

Restoring a normal schedule, where taxes are only assessed when the new rolls are ready, and collected just before the new fiscal year they're for, seems to have had one unintended consequence. People are already used to paying in the April-May time frame; but doing so on this restored schedule provides a 2% discount for 'early' payment. So many did so that there may be an additional squeeze on the budget (see below), since current bank interest rates we can recover on these deposits are not worth mentioning.

Budget. The budget year just ending has been an exercise in crisis management – not because of budget imbalances, but because of cash-flow problems brought on by pre-spending and related fiscal policy issues discussed in the last two Mayor's columns. The new budget, which is balanced but fragile, includes liquidation of the entire \$100K line of credit that had to be taken out to overcome this year's cash shortfall. It may require the continued

flow of revenues over the course of the next year, however, to complete the payout.

The budget message and figures for fiscal year 2015 have been posted on both the Web site and Facebook, and are available on paper from your Council members or City Hall. As you'll see, they include a number of brave assumptions on both revenue streams and spending, as we continue to struggle with retaining essential services, with decent wages, while reducing costs everywhere possible, and shedding any non-essential activities and equipment.

City officials. This is an area the budget squeeze reminds us is due for renewed appeal. Those officials supporting the City's entire executive function right now consist of the Mayor, the City Clerk, and the Chief of Police. The only *official* full-timer among these is the Chief. And the agenda remains large.

Our fine City Attorney is contracted with a budgeted retainer and hourly fee. Bookkeeping was being done by a CPA firm on a similar contract basis until April, when the City Clerk and a very skilled and generous resident, Debi Rush, took over for the balance of the fiscal year, both to overcome some operating problems and to save money. City Engineer Clint Channel is another welcome volunteer who's balanced the demands of a full-time job and family to conclude a road-work plan and contract expected to begin soon (see below). Others have stepped up in similar circumstances to help organize events, bolster communications, shape development projects, and landscape and reforest our public areas.

Excepting the police force, these are all functions originally conceived, and until recent years performed, by citizen volunteers. There's no doubt

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that spirit still lives in Audubon Park; it's only dampened now by the contemporary overcrowding of schedules, and added complications and demands of the functions involved. That's modern life. The only apparent solutions that leaves are to somehow divide these tasks among a larger group of willing participants, or hire out the work at added expense. Barring some budget windfall, an important first step would be to develop rosters of potential citizen volunteers with legal, financial, engineering and other management skills, as well as those just willing to pitch in on general projects.

In addition to these specific areas, there's still the need to flesh out the City's boards and advocates, in ethics oversight, code enforcement, forest management, airport affairs, building directorship, and a proposed parks & recreation board. Please give careful thought to how you might contribute, and contact City Hall, a Council member or yours truly to let us know. We really need your help to move the City's agenda ahead.

Legal review. Over the past several months, accumulated deficiencies in the City Code of Ordinances have grown harder and harder to overcome in day-to-day operations. These have arisen from a combination of sometimes ambiguous provisions; conflicts between ordinances adopted at different times; long-overdue legal review and rationalization; and needs to conform to a cascade of subsequent state and Federal statutes and regulations. This Code is the heart of our civil compact, so this work is only delayed at our increasing peril.

We've just received advance approval of a state grant to support much of this work, and I've asked the City Attorney to oversee the project, insuring that all the necessary legal and administrative needs are addressed, either by recodification consultants or himself. We look forward to getting this effort under way as quickly as possible.

Litigation. In brief, updating from last time: The pension case is in a "discovery" phase, with attorneys exchanging information on claims and counterclaims. The Scheuermann sanitation suit was reportedly

dismissed in lower court, and is being appealed. Two earlier cases involving former police officers remain in low key, with one in mediation.

Waste Management (Inc). Chronic expressions of concern by some residents have prompted close scrutiny of the waste collection program. In year-end reconciliation of the budget, it was discovered that invoices for the current contract had not been updated from unit prices or numbers serviced from the previous contract. The discrepancy is being deducted from the year's final bill, in order not to exceed the appropriation for these services.

Audit. The City's annual audit report was completed, approved by the Council, and posted to the City Web site. While remaining imperfect, it provides a clearer layout and explanation of the central concerns addressed, relative to previous reports, and should be a useful road map for future efforts. Please have a look when you can.

It remains now to find a new auditor, to fulfill the Council's mandate to apply new eyes to the City's financial function for the fiscal year just ending. Candidates are being sought; your ideas and nominations are welcome and encouraged.

Roads. As noted above, City Engineer Clint Channell has persevered voluntarily to compose a plan of priority work, conduct a public hearing, absorb feedback, solicit bids, develop a contract, and survey the area with the contractor. The plan presented at the hearing is posted on the Web site. We hope to get this priority work under way, within the available resources, as soon as possible.

Airport affairs. As before, beyond the day-to-day disruption of overflights, the main present issue with the airport is insuring they complete interior noise-reduction work Federal funds have provided for qualified homes in the Preston corridor, without adding such unauthorized conditions as the surrender of residents' property rights. A code enforcement hearing was just held on June 25th, affirming the citation of airport management for seeking such easements from property owners without the required City permit.

Reforestation. The joint Tree Committee of the Forest Board and Garden Club has done stellar work in maintaining and beautifying our common areas. Be sure to wave when you see them at work – and feel free to pitch in when you can!

The Committee has also carefully husbanded private funds raised for its tree replacement program, addressing both parks and City easement areas, especially those threatened by the ongoing emerald ash borer infestation. They need your cooperation and commitment in re-greening your own easement, and can provide advice and assistance in making removal arrangements, and with viable species replacement. Please see the dedicated article below, call on them, and be a player.

City administration. Priority efforts at present include repairing or replacing failing infrastructure (primarily HVAC, paint, and windows); upgrading equipment to safe and secure standards (computers, security containers, file facilities, armory); composing or updating SOPs and policy manuals; implementing formal filing, archiving and retrieval systems for City records; updating formal property inventories and accountability; and shedding excess supplies and equipment. These are key areas that, for the most part, can only progress with broad support, either contracted or volunteer. We're counting on your support as these efforts move ahead; hope you'll keep in touch!

AUDUBON PARK GARDEN CLUB NEWS

Joanne Bader

Festival of the Dogwood Showcases Spring Beauty

After a dismal, cold and snowy winter, Mother Nature rewarded us with a spectacular show of beauty during the annual Festival of the Dogwood! This year, the dogwood blossoms were at or near peak bloom during the festival, held during the weekend of April 18-20th. Based on the number of cars cruising up and down Audubon Park's streets, and the large groups of adults and kids seen strolling through, it was evident that the Festival was a success! Attendance at the Sunday April 27th concert, held at Audubon Baptist Church, was also higher than usual

and all who came to listen to the River Cities Concert Band had a wonderful afternoon of music and fellowship. The community owes a great debt of gratitude to residents Carol and Louis Korb for sponsoring this free annual concert which caps off the Festival of the Dogwood!

The Garden Club would like to thank all of the residents who lit up their trees and flowering shrubs and spruced up their yards during the Festival and to those who donated cookies and other refreshments for the Sunday concert. We also appreciated the presence of District 10 Councilman Jim King and State Representative Jim Wayne, who were part of the ceremonies on Sunday in honor of Arbor Day. Audubon Park received wonderful publicity for the event from the Courier Journal and, if you haven't seen it already, there is a beautiful YouTube video produced by a visitor posted on the City's Web site at audubonparkky.org, showcasing the beauty of the dogwood blooms.

Many residents were dismayed that the trees in Henderson Park were not lit up this year; this was due to a variety of factors – problems with some of the electrical boxes and trees that had been damaged or removed due to storms where boxes were situated. Hopefully these issues will be resolved before next year – though the Garden Club would welcome anyone with electrical expertise to help remedy this issue. If you would like to volunteer in this area, contact Gene Stotz at 634-4921.

Audubon Park Garden Tour – Saturday June 28th

Audubon Park's annual Garden Tour is scheduled for Saturday, June 28th, from 10 am to 4 pm. There will be nine gardens featured on the tour – none of which have been showcased before – in the Audubon area. Tickets for the tour will be available at City Hall on the day of the event and cost \$15. The Garden Club will also sponsor a plant sale at City Hall starting at 10 am. Additional information about the Garden Tour can be obtained from Gene Stotz at 634-4921 or Mary Miller at 635-7322. The proceeds of the tour will be used by the Garden Club for projects that benefit Audubon Park. We hope you will invite family and friends to join you in touring the local gardens!

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Brightside Cleanup in April Beautifies Preston Entrance

The Garden Club hosted a Brightside Community-Wide Spring Cleanup on Saturday, April 12th, 2014. Approximately 10 volunteers, including some from the City Council, showed up at 9 am to clean up around the Preston Highway entrance to Audubon Park. The timing was perfect as Audubon Park's Festival of the Dogwood was held the following weekend, and this is a major gateway to our community! The intrepid volunteers collected 17 bags of trash and weeds. Many thanks to Garden Club member (and resident) Cathy Lally for coordinating this event. There should be another Brightside cleanup scheduled in the fall. Information will be circulated once a specific date has been chosen.

Monarch Butterfly Waystations Created in Three Area Parks

Members of the Garden Club and Forest Board have created three certified Monarch Waystations in Curlew Park, Oriole Park and Henderson Park. This is a program sponsored by The Garden Club of Kentucky and the National Garden Club to encourage local garden clubs and individuals to construct areas containing plants that provide food and shelter for migrating Monarch butterflies.

Welcome New Members and Summer Program Hiatus

The Audubon Park Garden Club would like to welcome several new members: Beth Donnelly, Debra and Kerry Habenstein, Ann Hurst, Collis Marshall, Cynthia Ohlman, and Grace Worful. While many of these new members are Audubon Park residents, membership in the Garden Club is no longer limited to Park residents. If you or someone you know would like more information about joining the Garden Club, please call Club President Gene Stotz at 634-4921.

The Garden Club programs go on hiatus during the summer months, and will begin again in September. A listing of the upcoming programs will be added to the City's Web site by the beginning of August, and also in the next edition of the City newsletter.

HELLO - WHO'S THERE?

Stephen C. Emery serves as our City Attorney. He represents several cities in Jefferson County and the City of La Grange in Oldham County. He is a graduate of the Louis D. Brandeis School of Law at the University of Louisville. Stephen has been in private practice, and working for Kentucky municipalities, since 2001, after he completed his service as a Staff Attorney in Bowling Green, Kentucky, for Court of Appeals Judge, Joseph R. Huddleston. Stephen's law partner is T. Andrew Howell.

Hi, I'm Doug Sweeney, your Chief of Police since February. I'm a lifelong Louisville resident, married with 3 children and 6 grandchildren. I'm a UofL graduate, and near attaining a Master's in Criminal Justice there. I've also completed the Administrative Officer's Course and Executive Police Leadership Graduate program at the prestigious Southern Police Institute.

I joined the Louisville Division of Police in 1991, working first in patrol, investigating everything from serious assaults, robberies, thefts, and narcotics, to white collar crimes. Advancing through the ranks to Lieutenant, I ran the department's largest unit, Traffic, for 6 years, where my responsibilities included

- overseeing investigations of all fatal and near-fatal collisions in Jefferson County.
- developing and executing traffic plans for many of the Metro area's largest events, to include Thunder Over Louisville and most Kentucky Derby related events.
- planning and executing traffic routes and escorts for many VIPs, to include Presidents, Vice-Presidents, and cabinet-level officials.

I retired from Louisville Metro Police Dept in July of 2013, and began working part-time for APPD last October. Since being appointed Chief, I've been focusing on law enforcement, first and foremost – but also on making our force solid for the long term, developing and refining organizational policies and procedures, property management, physical security, community outreach, fiscal affairs, and recruitment. I'm a firm believer in the community policing concept. My door at City Hall is always open, so I hope you'll stop by when you have a chance.

I've compiled the introductions below on a couple of our outstanding group of officers, and will add more in future issues. Please get to know them!

More introductions to follow – please stay tuned!

Brian Frederick is a graduate of Jeffersonville High School and Indiana University. He started his law enforcement career with state Corrections Department's Probation and Parole office in 1990. In 1994 he became a police officer with the former Louisville Division of Police. Brian retired from the Louisville Metro Police Department in 2008, and focused on building his private security business (Frederick Asset Protection, est. 2004).



He also holds the rank of Major in the US Army Reserve.

Brian has a daughter, and was married within the past month to Jennifer, a current LMPD officer.

Brian loves the job of policing, and takes the patrol duties he has performed in Audubon Park since October 2013 very seriously, as do all our officers. He is extremely vigilant!

Jason Hairgrove is a graduate of St. Xavier High School (1989). He began his career in public service as a firefighter at Camp Taylor Fire Department in 1991. Jason was hired by Louisville International Airport Public Safety (LIAPS) as a firefighter in 2001. In 2004 he changed his focus to its K-9 unit (Explosives Detection).



The Airport changed its public safety model to dual Law Enforcement and Fire Fighting, and in 2011 Jason switched from K-9 to general firefighter/police officer.

In 2009 he was hired on a part-time basis with the City of Audubon Park's Police Department. He continues to perform regular patrol duty, despite his full slate of Airport duties. He is always willing to help out if available, at a moment's notice!

Jason is a highly qualified professional. In addition to his firefighter and police certifications, he has advanced training in explosive and hazardous material handling, terrorist incident response, arson investigation, emergency medical services, crisis intervention, radar and laser devices, and several other specialized skills.

FOREST BOARD

A Perspective on the Parks of Audubon Park, Chapter 1

Anne Bobigian

Unlike other beautiful small cities within the Metro Louisville Area, Audubon Park has five "Pocket Parks", which add a unique character to our City. When I first moved to Audubon Park in 2005, I was blessed to meet Ethelyn Maxwell, who introduced me to the trees (she knew each one personally) and also the history of each of the parks. She, along with Sara Pope and other long-term residents, had planted and nurtured many of the trees in the parks for over 40 years.

Ethelyn explained that each park had its own unique purpose.

- Curlew Park was the natural areas park, being adjacent to a stream and a forested strip.
- Oriole Park was the site for the annual Fall Arts & Crafts Festival, which was held by the Garden Club to raise money for tree maintenance and planting.
- Henderson Park was dedicated to the Dogwood Festival, with a small outdoor stage area for the lighting of the dogwoods and lighting installed throughout the park. It had the most extensive dogwood collection.
- Robin and Triangle Parks were for recreation – the centers were to be kept open so that people could throw balls, and Frisbees, and kids could play tag. They were informal play areas.

All the parks together were part of the natural area's Bird Sanctuary. Ethelyn loved the hawks in Oriole Park the most.

The Forest Board, throughout all the changes in each Park due to damage and tree losses, has striven to preserve these core purposes. It is because of Ethelyn's careful records that we know something about the original trees in each park, and when others were added.

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First, a Review of Curlew Park, the largest of the Parks

In 2005, the first time I walked through Curlew, the entire park was densely shaded from Crossbill to the point where Curlew and Nightingale meet. In the flattest portion, nearer the point, there was the largest American elm that I had seen. The canopy was at least 40-50 foot in diameter, covering the entire end of the park. A different species of elm had been added adjacent, and too near, the big tree, and struggled under the canopy of the American elm.

The Nightingale side of the Park still included a number of large ashes in poor condition; the center part of the park included another huge tree – a 3 foot diameter black cherry – and two double mature sweet gums with disease damage originating in damaged roots.

All these trees are now gone! My first forest board assignment was to get bids on removal of one of the double sweet gums with extensive trunk rot, and several of the ashes. Unfortunately, the black cherry also had major rot and came down on its own, doing extensive damage -- taking out several dogwoods, one of the ashes, and a healthy "new" 20-year-old Tupelo. Next, the huge American elm developed Dutch elm disease in 2007-2008 under the stress of severe drought. Before it could be removed, it fell apart disastrously in 2009 during the ice storm. It took the lesser elm, more dogwoods in the park, and nearly destroyed the fully mature Dawn Redwood. By 2009, the entire character of the park had changed, and dogwoods now exposed to full sun began to fail.

There are several important lessons the Forest Board has learned in the past 10 years:

1. The mature park trees are under significant stress, and many are at the end of their lifespan. The stress makes it more likely they will contract ailments like Dutch elm disease. To maintain them requires special care and concern, such as cabling and disease treatment.
2. When a failing mature tree isn't removed, it often does severe and extensive damage when it comes

down on its own. Prompt removal can save years of work and irreplaceable mature trees, like the numerous dogwoods destroyed as collateral damage in Curlew.

3. Environmental stresses, like drought and prolonged heat, pests and new diseases, require careful consideration of species that can be used for replacement planting. We cannot simply replant with the same trees that were in the site before. In addition, a huge tree like the American elm has a root plate that is enormous – usually triple the diameter of the trunk. Even when stumps are ground out, the actual site of the previous tree remains unplantable for as long as ten to fifteen years.

Site analysis in Curlew has enabled us to establish a wide variety of long-lived native shade species to enhance the bird habitat in Curlew Park. These will be "*legacy trees*". Nut trees like shellbark hickories and American chestnuts have been added, as well as flowering nectar trees like American basswoods and sourwoods. Shade-tolerant native canopy magnolias are being planted among the remaining declining sweetgums and ashes. We've carefully selected the most valuable ashes to treat for prevention of Emerald ash borer infestation.

The large stumped areas of former giants (which first are raised mounds and then become sunken areas as deep wood rots) have been planted as butterfly gardens or woodland gardens. The flooded areas on Crossbill with chronic sink holes has been converted to a wetland "Rain Garden," with tree species and shrubs and ferns that tolerate seasonal flooding. The elm full sun site, along with the rain garden, will be an official Monarch Station, part of an initiative of the State Garden Club and the Audubon Park Garden Club.

All these are part of a plan to improve the habitat for all the creatures in the Park- birds, butterflies, and squirrels, rabbits, possums and deer - and enhance the peace and beauty of the community, for ourselves.

If only the deer and rabbits could be less voracious and let our plantings get established!

COMMUNICATIONS

City Hall has been striving to take advantage of current technology to 'get the word out,' while still making sure everybody has access to the information available. This has meant an evolving mix of meetings, newsletters, Web site development, social media, text/email/voicemail bursts, newspaper notices, letter mail, hand delivery, supplies placed for pickup – and, of course, direct access to City Hall and Council members. Some current trends:

Official notices. State law requires ordinances and some other official notices to be published, either in full or in certified summary, either by newspaper, or first-class direct mail. At present rates, mailings are the much cheaper alternative. We've been experimenting with ordinary envelope stuffing, flyer-style foldups, and even postcards in an effort to economize. With the approaching end of the tax cycle, every effort will be made to upgrade our address list with the most current information available.

Social media. Facebook pages have been an invaluable resource for short-term postings, immediate feedback and dialogue. There have, however, been some recent disruptions to work around. These include updates and edits to notices that don't take; calendar items that don't appear on the main feed; and the recent complete disappearance of the *Friends of Audubon Park* page, which is still being sought out. Please bear with these glitches, as this is probably still the broadest platform available as a public forum, with over 650 current participants.

Web site. The site has been entirely retooled as a repository and archive of City information, and seems to be growing in popularity as progress reports come in. This is a great alternative to trekking over to City Hall for basic reference material and advice.

Newsletters. The City adopted a cost-cutting measure a couple of years ago that alternates hand delivery of newsletters with Web posting. The present issue is on the Web-only cycle, but we're aiming for a broader base. As an experiment, limited paper copies of this issue will be available at City Hall and the Little Library info bin for those who prefer.

Police patrols will also carry copies that can be obtained simply by flagging down the officer. Other pre-positioning possibilities are being studied.

We need the help of Web readers to get word around of these other sources to those who don't have ready access. You might even print a copy at home for a neighbor who needs it! That's the Audubon Park way.

The Elves. A huge shout-out to neighbors who've devoted superhuman efforts to packaging and delivering our 'presents' – the required paper communications – by stuffing, stamping, addressing, and direct hand delivery. Mega-thanks (alphabetically) to Joanne Bader, Georgine Burmeister, Jennifer Clements, Jack Conlin, Clare and Steve Cullen, Suzanne Eberenz, Laura Kelty, Rose and John Mangino, Drew Perkins, Gene Stotz, Margaret Tanguay, Betty Weise, and Nancy Zinner!

FRIENDLY REMINDERS

- In addition to community calendars, event notices, meeting schedules, and official information, the entire City Code is available on the Web site, *AudubonParkKY.org*, with provisions on parking, permit requirements, nuisance abatement, and all the rest. Please visit often!
- Report any streetlights that are out of order or malfunctioning to City Hall, at 637-5066. This input will be relayed to LG&E for repairs.
- Please discourage children and others from climbing trees in the various City parks, out of concern for both safety and potential damage.
- Information regarding ash trees and the emerald ash borer is available at City Hall, and on the Tree Committee's Web site, *TreeCommittee-APKY.org*.
- Trash collection days in the City are Tuesdays and Fridays. Recycling is collected on Tuesday, and yard waste on Friday. Garbage is collected from behind your house both days, while yard waste and recycling items are to be placed at the curb.

Holiday reminders: For 4th of July, Friday pickup will slip to Saturday. We ask your help in retrieving yard waste containers from the curb before the Independence Day parade! For Labor Day, both Tuesday and Friday pickups will be a day later.