



# The Official Newsletter of The City of Audubon Park



Dorn Crawford, Mayor  
Janette Mercer, City Clerk  
City Hall: 3340 Robin Road  
637-5066  
[www.audubonparkky.org](http://www.audubonparkky.org)  
 Friends of Audubon Park



City Council:  
Joanne Bader  
Cary Campbell  
Bill Klump  
Vince Osbourn  
Mark Stevens  
Nancy Zinner

Issue 64

December 2013

## MAYOR'S MUSINGS

*Dorn Crawford*

Greetings, neighbors. Through a series of unlikely events, I've been handed the pen for this column, and the job that goes with it. I promise to make the best use of them that I possibly can.

The bad news is, we've got a very deep hole to climb out of. The good news is, we've stopped digging.

There's a great deal to do. Here are some highlights of things either already worked on, or on the 'giddyup' agenda. Find the ones that concern you most, and look for more details elsewhere in this newsletter, on Facebook, hopefully soon on the Web site, or in email bursts. Send a message, post a comment, attend a meeting, call on the phone, or just stop by, and be a player.

- *Litigation.* A discrimination suit by former Audubon Park police officer Kile Nave, subject of recent media attention, has been settled, with no residual obligations on the City. Two other cases of much less likely impact are still pending.

- *UPS.* A novel proposal to deposit holiday packages in a prepositioned storage unit and deliver them to Audubon Park residents in golf carts fell apart, when it was discovered at the 11th hour that UPS had no plans to license the carts to operate on the streets. They instead expected the City to enact an ordinance permitting them to operate without licenses, and to issue permits, and stickers, and arrange for state inspections required by statute. Maybe next year.

- *Waste Management.* Met with our liaison guy, Tim McNally, and got no real satisfaction on current concerns like the recent involuntary switch to Friday

yard waste pickup; furnishing wheeled bins; or local access (instead of a remote call center) to report concerns (see further details in article below). Kept careful notes for next contract talks, since current contract terms don't give much leeway.

- *City officials.* Most of the positions provided in our ordinances either were vacated in the change of administrations, or had already been vacant for some time. Critical functions are being maintained, but on an acting or *ad hoc* basis. Efforts are ongoing to make prompt but careful decisions on a city attorney, police chief, engineer, treasurer, building director, and forester, and to repopulate as necessary boards administering code enforcement, ethics, forest management, and airport affairs. Any volunteers?

- *State audit.* At Council members' urging, agents of the state Auditor conducted "limited procedures" in September to examine City management problems, particularly sanitation fees, road funds, and pension plans. Their findings were so devoid of real substance, though, that they're of little use beyond publicizing problems already known. A response to their report is being drafted.

- *Roads.* Beyond getting good engineering advice, much work remains to marshal the necessary funds and insure their optimum dedicated use to get the needed work done. This means prioritizing, comparing contract rates, seeking proposals, watching the bottom line, and being ready to hit the ground running when the seasons change.

- *Airport intrusion.* Airport staff plans to resume efforts soon to acquire unlimited noise and pollution easements on the western end of Audubon Park, by inducing residents with "free" insulation and related

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home improvements to reduce interior noise. Steps are already in place to prevent this intrusion, while still preserving residents' rights to the improvements the program is supposed to provide.

· *Reforestation.* Our most precious resource has been neglected by City government way too long. A public/private partnership between the City (through the Forest Board) and the Garden Club is seeking to raise funds to fight the coming ash infestation, through a detailed plan of protective treatment and species replacement. Please look for notices, and give generously.

· *Citizen mobilization.* Clearly our most potent assets are an aware, energetic and aroused community. In the past several months, neighbors have stepped up out of nowhere to scrutinize City records; broadcast meetings; compose scenic photographs; organize public events; raise funds; and by-golly plant lotsa trees. Most of all, there's the brave crew who stood for Council elections last time, and then pressed their commitment to set the City's governance aright. The repressed energy and dedication of our citizenry are the secret weapons to fuel our resurgence.

· *Communication.* The jarring expectation is to get everybody from information *starvation* to information *overload* as quickly as possible. Between revamping the City Web site, leveraging Facebook pages, amping up this newsletter, promoting email bursts, and reinvigorating meeting participation, you should be able to follow and shape the issues of most interest to you, rather than just wondering what happened.

· *Media.* In connection with the above, I expect shortly to transfer moderation of the *Audubon Park Residents* Facebook page (which now has over 500 'friends!') to a private citizen, so it remains an independent medium for community discussion. I'll hold onto the companion *Friends of Audubon Park* page for the time being, and see if it can function as a mayor's forum for information and dialogue.

· *Budget.* Despite the Council's superhuman efforts to achieve a balanced budget last fall, past casual spending habits still need to be brought to heel to avoid overspending. Several budget lines, including accounting support, fuel and maintenance, and legal counsel, may have to be curtailed to stay within

available limits. We have to start by being the same kind of tightwads at City Hall that we are at home.

· *City administration.* Basic documents like meeting minutes are almost caught up - but the overall shape of official records and historical data is abominable. Property inventories, security procedures, manpower management, personnel accounting and administrative systems all need overhaul.

The biggest problem, obviously, is finding things to do with all the spare time (*not*). But this challenge can be met, along with the rest, as people of energy and good will have already shown by their willingness to step up and fill the breaches. I look forward to working with you in the year ahead. Merry Christmas, and all the best wishes for the holidays.

## **AUDUBON PARK GARDEN CLUB NEWS**

*Joanne Bader*

### *Community Christmas Celebration – December 15<sup>th</sup>*

This year's Community Christmas Celebration will be held on Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup> at City Hall from 6-8 pm. Come join your neighbors and friends at this annual event, sponsored by the Garden Club, that ushers in the holiday season and focuses on fellowship and community spirit! There will be refreshments including hot cider, coffee and delicious holiday cookies! There will also be door prizes – residents must register for them but need not be present at the time of the drawing (8 pm) to win the two monetary prizes (\$100 and \$50). Other smaller door prizes will be awarded between 6 and 8 pm on the half-hours, including a beautiful holiday centerpiece.

Residents are also asked to decorate your doorways and homes by Saturday evening December 14<sup>th</sup> to ensure that Audubon Park looks its best for the many visitors who enjoy driving through our city during the holiday season to see the beautifully decorated homes in our historic neighborhood.

The Garden Club would like to thank the many residents who help decorate the lampposts along Audubon's streets and to encourage those streets that don't currently decorate to join in! The beautifully decorated lampposts add to the festive atmosphere and definitely help everyone get in the

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holiday spirit. The Community Christmas Celebration (and city newsletter) would like to acknowledge those decorating volunteers; if you know who decorates the lampposts on your street, please call Anita Garrison at 637-8837 so we can add their names to our lists.

#### *Brightside Cleanup in October Beautifies Entrance to Audubon Park*

The Garden Club helped to sponsor a neighborhood cleanup along Preston Highway in conjunction with Brightside on Saturday, October 26th. Coordinated by Garden Club member Cathy Lally, approximately 6 volunteers turned out to pick up trash along the Preston entrance to Audubon Park. The weather was less than glorious – chilly, windy, and gray, in fact! Despite the weather, nearly 10 bags of garbage were collected by the intrepid volunteers between the railroad overpass and Hess Lane on both sides of Preston. The City owes a great big “thank you” to these helpers! Another Brightside cleanup will likely be held in late April 2014.

#### *Festival of the Dogwood*

Although it is still several months away, please mark your calendars for the upcoming Festival of the Dogwood which will be held over TWO weekends in April next year. The festival itself will take place during April 18-20, 2014 but the annual Sunday concert will be held the following weekend on April 27<sup>th</sup> at Audubon Baptist Church so as not to conflict with Easter celebrations the previous Sunday.

The Garden Club hopes that we can encourage more residents to light up their trees, homes or other flowering plants or shrubs next year – and remember, don’t wait till the last minute to purchase spotlights as these are often sold out just prior to the festival, held traditionally during the third week of April! More information will be provided about the festival in the spring newsletter which is delivered to resident homes in March.

#### *Upcoming Garden Club Programs*

The Garden Club hosts a monthly program series from September to May. These monthly programs are open to all residents and their guests and are held at Audubon Park City Hall, 3340 Robin Road, beginning at 1 pm (unless otherwise noted). Upcoming programs include:

Monday, January 13, 2014: “*Ornamental Grasses*” with guest speaker Suzette Whyte, owner of Nature by Design and a Kentucky Certified Nurseryman.

Monday, February 10, 2014: “*Camellias*” with guest speaker Jacquelyn McGrail, a Master Gardener, Landscape Design Consultant, and Past President of The Rambler Garden Club. This program is held during the annual winter pot-luck luncheon to be held at Audubon Baptist Church, 1046 Hess Lane at 11:00 am. There is no charge to attend the luncheon but reservations should be made by calling Cheryl Westbay at 634-1239.

Monday, March 10, 2014: “*Tips on the Care of Hydrangeas and Crepe Myrtles*” with guest speaker Jeff Wallitsch of Wallitsch Nursery and Garden Center.

Tuesday, April 15, 2014: “*Experience Riverside, The Farnsley-Moreman Landing*”. This will be a field trip, with carpooling from Audubon Park City Hall, 3340 Robin Road, at 12 p.m. There is an admission of \$4 to enter this site.

Tuesday, May 13, 2014: “*Healthy Soil Makes Great Gardens and Trees*” with guest speaker Gary Murphy, Certified Arborist with Limbwalkers Tree Service. This program, held at City Hall, begins at 11:45 am.

Remember – membership is no longer restricted to Audubon Park residents only....If you know of someone interested in joining the Garden Club, please have them contact Club President, Gene Stotz, at 634-4921 for more information.

### **HELLO - WHO'S THERE?**

Hi, I'm Dorn Crawford, of 932 Audubon Parkway. When I'm not doing this, I work on arms control treaties and agreements for the US Department of State - these days mostly by telecommuting on secure lines at the Air National Guard base. For ideas, concerns or just a friendly chat, you can reach me at home at 636-3687; through City Hall at 637-5066; by email, [Dorn@AudubonParkKY.org](mailto:Dorn@AudubonParkKY.org); or just stop in. I'm trying to be at City Hall late afternoons, 4 - 6, for closing the day's business and visiting; otherwise, feel free to come by the house. See you soon!

Hi, I'm Vince Osbourn. I live at 3114 Chickadee Road. During the day, I work at Humana Inc. as an I.T. Program Manager. Always feel free to contact me at [VPO2963@gmail.com](mailto:VPO2963@gmail.com) for issues or questions on council or city business. I also invite you to voice your opinions or feedback at the council meetings (3rd Monday of each month). Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve you. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

My name is Mark Stevens, for those of you who don't know me, I am one of your City Council members. Our new mayor has suggested we all put an article in the Newsletter. I would like to use my opportunity to reach out to the residents that may choose not to decorate their houses for the holidays. I personally love decorating for Christmas and regardless of your religion, this time of year is a great time to showcase the beautiful homes in the park. The lights, the colors, the greenery and ribbons all give the park a holiday feel for the many people that drive through and live here. So I encourage everyone to do a little something to spice up your home for the holidays. I realize that it may be a little late for this year but for most of us, we'll be here for many more seasons. Let's all show our neighborhood pride every year. So that being said, Merry Christmas to all.

*More to come – stay tuned!*

### **FOREST NEEDS HELP!**

The decline of our urban forest is dramatic, in the Metro area in general, and Audubon Park in particular. Age, pollution, pests and storms have taken a terrible toll, and any other neighborhood might be almost beyond recovery.

But this is Audubon Park. As reported in the last newsletter, our intrepid joint committee of the Forest Board and Garden Club has launched a partnership fund-raising effort to combat the coming ash infestation, and help restore our magnificent tree canopy. Now we need to deliver.

Audubon Park residents Darrell and Nancy Shelton have made a *very* generous offer: they are willing to donate *up to \$5,000 to the Audubon Park Tree Restoration Fund to match donations from other residents!* Their gift is being made in appreciation and recognition of the efforts of the Forest Board and Garden Club to maintain the beauty and health of the urban forest in Audubon Park. They specifically recognized the untold hours of work and planning in this endeavor provided by *Anne Bobigian and Betty Weise*, both members of the Forest Board and the Audubon Park Garden Club.

Nancy and Darrell have long been supporters of Audubon Park's trees and public parks – donating endless time and effort themselves. Now they've given Audubon Park a tremendous gift by offering

this "challenge grant" to jump-start much needed reforestation work.

The Garden Club already has a 501C(3) fund that can accept tax-deductible donations to fuel this effort. Now, they just need your check, made out to the *Audubon Park Garden Club*, naming the *Tree Restoration Fund* in the memo line; mail or carry it to the treasurer, Janet Shumate, at 1218 Falcon Drive. She'll supply you the tax write-off papers. Please give as generously as you can, and ask your employers if they match charitable contributions. If they do, Janet can help make that happen too. Between the Sheltons and your employer, your donation could be *tripled* – as they say on TV, it's like printing money! Don't miss this opportunity – be a player!

Amy Shelton is working on an online component to this effort that can automate much of the process - so if you get snowed in, help is on the way. But otherwise, you needn't wait. Janet is near, and ready to take your check right now! Let's roll!

### **SANITATION PROGRAM**

A recent liaison visit from our Waste Management contractor provided an update on current policies and practices. Some highlights:

The recent switch of the yard waste pickup from Tuesday to Friday was part of a system-wide effort to optimize their service network. They think they've achieved the best possible balance of mileage, equipment mix and workload for each pickup day area-wide. Any further changes now would upset the balance. Sorry about any inconvenience.

Varied experiences getting the cart-style bins from WM have come from the varied practices they've used over time. Present policy is, any bin you request will cost \$2/month, period. Those who've gotten free ones in the past are lucky, but that ship has sailed.

You may have noticed pickups coming a little later in the morning recently. The collectors like to come early, to get their work behind them, but complaints about predawn noise can result. Some streets had been experiencing pickups as early as 5 AM, but those have been dialed back, and seldom occur before 7 now. The bad news is, it's not always

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possible for residents to pull empty bins back from the curb before starting their workday.

The recycling flyer circulated with the last newsletter gives a local customer service number, 966-0117, and this can be used to report problems or concerns. But the number still connects to their call center in Nashville, which is economical but not always attuned to local issues.

On the other hand, with future contracts to evaluate, it makes sense for City Hall to have some idea of what the problems are -- and the clerk has a private number and email for the local representative to pass reports along and monitor corrections. This route might be both more effective in the short term, and more useful in the longer term. Call City Hall if you can. Better still, if you can send an email to [Clerk@AudubonParkKY.org](mailto:Clerk@AudubonParkKY.org), the action can be archived and response given in writing, and used to keep the rest of the community informed, through future newsletters and other available media.

And don't forget - with this coming Christmas and New Year's both on Wednesdays, the Friday pickups those weeks should be expected on Saturday instead. Happy holidays!

### **FRIENDLY REMINDERS**

- There is no parking permitted on the street or on parking pads between 2 A.M. and 6 A.M. There is also no parking permitted on the grass. Please inform guests to your home of this important information. Please be on the lookout for walkers and joggers and watch your speed.
- Building, tree, and property sale permits are issued through City Hall. If you have a project in mind, a tree you would like to trim or remove on the easement, or if you would just like to have a yard sale, please call or come by City Hall for more information on obtaining a permit.
- Please report any street lights that are out or malfunctioning to City Hall at 637-5066. The information provided will then be forwarded on to LG&E for repair.
- *With regard to pets, please keep in mind that your neighbors do NOT want your pets wandering in*

*their yard or on the roadway in front of their houses leaving unpleasant surprises or attacking the pets they may have. Please pick up after your pets and make sure they are under control at all times and are not running around loose. We have received complaints at City Hall of barking dogs and of cats on the prowl. Please try to keep your pets from disturbing your neighbors or the bird population in the area.*

- Please discourage children and others from climbing in trees in the various City parks due to safety issues and damage possibilities.
- Please keep in mind that information regarding Ash Trees and the Emerald Ash Borer are available at City Hall.
- The Forest Board meets at City Hall the second Wednesday of each month at 7 P.M. Various work days in each of the parks takes place monthly. If you are interested in helping out, please attend one of the meetings to find out further information.
- City Council Meetings are held the third Monday of each month at City Hall at 7:30 P.M. Everyone is encouraged and invited to attend.
- In relation to garbage collection, the collection days in the City are Tuesdays and Fridays. Yard waste is collected on Fridays, and recycling is on Tuesdays only. Yard waste and recycling items are to be placed at the curb. *Please keep in mind yard waste must be bundled and not to exceed 48 inches in length (logs will not be accepted). These requirements also remain the same when there is debris from storms, etc.; the City does not have a drop site for storm debris.* Household garbage is collected at the rear of the house. Yard waste and recycling should *NOT* be placed at the street earlier than the evening before collection. We have had several complaints of residents leaving garbage containers out at the street. Please make sure containers are stored in their proper place near your home. If you have had problems with containers not being placed back where they came from, please let City Hall know.

*Holiday reminders:* For the weeks of Christmas and New Year's, Friday collections will slip to Saturday.