



A.H.N.A.

ARLINGTON HEIGHTS

MAY - JUNE 2013

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS & VIEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE ARLINGTON HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION • WWW.ARLINGTONHEIGHTSNA.COM

FIRE STATION CELEBRATES 90TH BIRTHDAY

by Christina Patoski

When Fort Worth Fire Station 18 opened for business on October 16, 1923, Arlington Heights was a sparsely populated streetcar suburb of Fort Worth that had just been annexed into the city. Today, the bungalow-style fire station at the corner of Camp Bowie Blvd. and Carleton Ave. holds the distinction of being the oldest operating fire station in Fort Worth.

This year, Fire Station 18 turns 90 and is celebrating with an open house birthday party at the station on Sunday June 9 from 5:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. Everyone in the neighborhood is invited to enjoy the fun that includes a tour of the fire station and truck, live music, downs, a bounce house, the Fire Safety House, plus food and drinks, courtesy of Central Market, Ben E. Keith, Bluebonnet Bakery, Cookies by Design and Curly's Custard. Special commemorative t-shirts will also be on sale there.

Fire Station 18 is one of the oldest buildings in Arlington Heights. When the masons from the nearby Arlington Heights Masonic Lodge No. 1184 ceremoniously laid the cornerstone for Station 18 on July 19, 1923, the population Fort Worth was 150,000, up 50% from the 1920 census figures. Camp Bowie Blvd., built as an electric trolley line in 1892, consisted of double streetcar tracks flanked on each side by a narrow asphalt-paved strip for automobiles. Originally named Arlington Heights Blvd., the thoroughfare was re-named in 1919 to commemorate the World War I Army training camp.

The fire station's nearest neighbors included the Masonic Lodge (still functioning), Arlington Heights Presbyterian Church (now Bluebonnet Bakery), Hi Mount School (now Thomas Place Community Center) and a booster station for the city's water system that is still in operation at Watonga Ave. and Camp Bowie Blvd. Further west on the boulevard at the corner of El Campo Ave. was Arlington Heights School and Arlington Heights High School (now Boulevard Heights Transition Center). Ben Eastman's Hillcrest Service Station (now Winslow's Wine Bar) and Steve's (now Lucile's) had not yet been built.



John "J.B." Pettigrew and H. A. Demelade were among the first hires at Fort Worth Fire Station 18 when it opened in 1923 at the corner of Camp Bowie Blvd. and Carleton Ave. The station is celebrating its 90th birthday on June 9, 2013 with an open house party from 5 p.m. until 8 p.m. (Photograph courtesy of Retired Battalion Chief Jim Noah)

As part of a City Beautiful initiative, Fort Worth commissioned the construction of ten bungalow-style fire stations in 1922 and 1923. They were designed to fit the neighborhood scale and aesthetics where they were located. Charles F. Allen was the architect for a number of the new fire stations, including Station 18.

The two-story tan brick building facing Carleton Ave. included cast-stone trim and a red tile roof. The truck bay door was cleverly disguised by a false wall of imitation brick with two windows. B. B. Adams was the general contractor, working with Joe Cauker as the brick contractor. Cost of the new station was \$18,000.

John "J.B." Pettigrew and H.A. DeMalde were among the first firefighters assigned to Station 18. Both were still working there when Rex Owens was assigned to the station as an engineer in 1953. In 1927, Pettigrew and DeMalde "watched Camp Bowie Blvd. get paved with Thurber brick," recalls Owens. "They remembered one brick layer who was so quick he could lay more brick than three people could bring to him."

DeMalde was fast, too. "Faster than greased lightning!" says Owens. "We'd be playing dominoes and he'd get dinner ready in fifteen minutes and it was always good!" DeMalde, of Dutch descent, goes down in

(Continued on Page 10)



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Yard of the Month

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Christina Patoski

Helping our neighbors is one of the most important things that our neighborhood association does. The recent Christ Chapel Bible Church zoning case took a long time to resolve and required hundreds of hours of teamwork from a committee of eight neighbors. The Christ Chapel Joint Steering Committee was formed at the request of our city councilman who wanted us to find a mutually agreeable solution to an unresolvable situation.

I served on this committee and can honestly say that I was both physically and emotionally exhausted by the end of it. I have no doubt that our committee gave it everything we had and that, in the end, we negotiated the very best possible agreement for the neighborhood. Please read the article on Page 5 of this newsletter for the details on the agreement.

By far, the most rewarding part of the experience has been getting to know the amazing neighbors on the committee, who brought to the table a wide range of valuable expertise. Paul Hooper evolved into our chief negotiator. A Canadian, Paul's level head and amiable demeanor served us very well. As a corporate Vice-President, he has had many years of experience negotiating contracts and making effective power point presentations.

Sergio Yanes, an engineer and Fulbright scholar, has worked as a project manager on a number of high profile large-scale building projects and helped us wade through complicated site plans and the wording of the final agreement. Kevin Peters, a former television news reporter, did a lot of the early footwork of organizing the nearby neighbors and interfaced with the media with aplomb. Janet Ehret's many years of working at a consumer analytics company gave her the skills we needed to gather data and to keep the neighbors informed and engaged. Allan Pickering is a GIS Project Manager who helped with gathering data research and designed dramatic graphics for our presentations. Attorney John Morris' gentle advice kept us on track and helped us to consider all the options available to us. Firefighter Kevin Stark spent many hours doing research and spoke with passion and eloquence on behalf of the neighborhood at the Zoning Commission and City Council.

Wow, what a team! I want to recognize and thank them for their generous service to our neighborhood. I am proud to know these wonderful people and am happy to count them among my friends.

Neighborhood Patrol Officer

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817-992-0187
thomas.mcnutt@fortworthtexas.gov

Fort Worth City Councilman

Dennis Shingleton
817-392-8807
district7@fortworthtexas.gov

Fort Worth Police

non-emergency
number
817-335-4222

Code Compliance Officer

Rosalind Calton
817-944-1796
rosalind.calton@fortworthtexas.gov

ADVERTISING RATES

Current circulation is 400 households bi-monthly

Business card: \$25 1/4 Page: \$50

1/2 Page: \$100 Full Page: \$200

Call 817-738-0330 or email newsletter@arlingtonheightsna.com

BAT EXPERT AT MAY AHNA MEETING

Dottie Hyatt is the Director of Bat World Lone Star and a licensed bat specialist who concentrates on helping bats through education. As the guest speaker at the AHNA membership meeting on Monday May 20, Dottie will bring live bats for us to see and will show us how to build a successful bat house and other ways to encourage bats colonies in our neighborhood.

Bats are an important part of most ecosystems, but are one of the world's most misunderstood mammals. Dottie is the Vice-President of Bat World Sanctuary, located in Mineral Wells, an all-volunteer organization that is a permanent refuge for non-releasable bats, including those that are injured or retired from zoos.

FIRE PHOTOGRAPHER AT JUNE MEETING

Glen E. Ellman, a professional photographer whose specialty is photographing fires and Fort Worth firemen fighting them, will be the guest speaker at the AHNA membership meeting on Monday June 17. If there's a significant fire in Fort Worth, you can bet that Glen will be there. He is so devoted to photographing fires that he sleeps with a fire radio and scanner next to his bed and has even been known to jump up from the dinner table when a call comes in. For many years, he published an annual Fort Worth firefighters calendar that featured his amazing action fire photographs.

Glen has been photographing fires since he was 12 years old. A graduate of Syracuse University, Glen was an Associated Press photographer in New York City and for 14 years was the Chief Photographer at the Fort Worth Star Telegram. For the last 11 years he has been the Chief Photographer for the City of Fort Worth.



AHNA Meeting Schedule

Monday May 20, 2013

Monday, June 17, 2013

Monday July 15, 2013

6:30pm-7:30pm Every 3rd Monday

Arlington Heights United Methodist Church
4200 Camp Bowie Blvd. (enter on Hillcrest)

*The boundaries of
Arlington Heights Neighborhood Association
are the triangle of
Camp Bowie Boulevard on the north
Montgomery Street on the east
and Interstate Highway 30
on the south and west.*

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What are your concerns/interests? _____

Would you like to join a committee? _____

Please mail annual dues (\$15 for household, \$25 for business) to:
AHNA, PO Box 470692, Fort Worth, TX 76147-0692

AHNA FINANCIAL REPORT

BALANCE AS OF 1/1/13 \$8,645.00

UNRESTRICTED DONATIONS

Advertising	\$ 1,625.00
Business Memberships	\$ 125.00
Individual Memberships	\$ 655.00
Interest Income	3.57
TOTAL UNRESTRICTED DONATIONS	\$ 2,409.57

RESTRICTED DONATIONS

Hillcrest Fire Fund	\$270.00
Feral Cats.	0
National Night Out	0
TOTAL RESTRICTED DONATIONS	\$ 270.00

TOTAL DONATIONS \$2,679.57

UNRESTRICTED EXPENDITURES

Newsletter	\$901.47
League of Neighborhoods	0.00
Office	49.90
Postage	198.51
Yard of the Month	200.00
Zoning	0.00
Meeting expenses	804.92
Website	278.65
TOTAL UNRESTRICTED EXPENDITURES	\$ 2,433.45

RESTRICTED EXPENDITURES

Hillcrest Fire Fund	\$270.00
Feral Cats.	0
National Night Out	0
TOTAL RESTRICTED EXPENDITURES	\$ 270.00

TOTAL EXPENDITURES \$2,703.45

RESTRICTED CASH BALANCE

Hillcrest Fire Fund	0
Feral Cats.	\$284.33
National Night Out	0
Western Avenue Project	\$4,928.92
TOTAL RESTRICTED CASH BALANCE	\$5,213.25

UNRESTRICTED CASH BALANCE AS OF 4/30/13 \$3,857.16

TOTAL CASH BALANCE AS OF 4/30/13 \$9,070.41

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CHRIST CHAPEL BIBLE CHURCH SIGNS 40-YEAR AGREEMENT WITH NEIGHBORS

On May 6, 2013, an agreement was signed by representatives from Christ Chapel Bible Church and Arlington Heights Neighborhood Association for two new overflow parking lots on Pershing Ave., adjacent to the church's current campus. The next evening, the Fort Worth City Council approved the re-zoning of the 11 residential properties on the north side of the 3600 and 3700 blocks of Pershing Ave. that the church had purchased to make way for the parking lots.

The signed agreement clearly limits for forty years the future growth boundaries of the prosperous megachurch to Owasso St. on the west and the alley between Pershing Ave. and El Campo Ave. on the north. The church also agreed to divest of any gifts of property they might receive in the future outside of these immediate boundaries. The church agreed to create a strip of open green space at the back of the new parking lots that will be made available for the community's recreational use.

It was a long, protracted negotiating process that began last June, when Christ Chapel first made public their proposed plans for the overflow parking lots. In July, prior to receiving the zoning change, Christ Chapel began tearing down and moving several of the homes. Opposition from nearby neighbors was immediate and widespread. In the months that followed, more than 100 letters of opposition against the church's encroachment into the neighborhood were filed at the city.

In August, City Councilman Dennis Shingleton and District 7 Zoning Commissioner Nick Genua charged church officials and nearby neighbors to form a Joint Steering Committee to search for a compromise that both parties could live with. Arlington Heights representatives included nearby property owners Paul Hooper, Kevin Peters, Kevin Stark, Janet Ehret, and Allan Pickering and AHNA Executive Board members Christina Patoski, John Morris and Sergio Yanes.

After a series of six meetings held from October through February, the Joint Steering Committee was at an impasse. The church refused to consider any of the alternatives proposed by the neighbors; the

neighbors refused to accept the parking lots.

At the AHNA membership meeting on February 18, the AHNA membership voted to oppose the church's re-zoning request, with 66 AHNA members voting to oppose the church's parking lots, 1 member in favor and 5 members abstaining.

On March 13, Christ Chapel's zoning case was heard by the Fort Worth Zoning Commission which recommended it for approval by a vote of 5 to 2, with Commissioner Genua voting in favor of the church's request. Zoning Commissioner Wanda Conlin voted against the zoning change, saying "I have a real hard time thinking that it's the right thing for Christ Chapel to gobble up a whole neighborhood. It's not compatible, it's not consistent and I would have preferred that we had gone in the other direction. I have a really hard time with the fact that Christ Chapel chose the spot that they chose to build their church. And they have been blessed obviously with a huge congregation. Perhaps this was not the right place for them to begin with."

Throughout the months of negotiating, Christ Chapel leaders were still unwilling to compromise on the number of parking spaces they were requesting. The case was scheduled to be heard by City Council for final action on April 2.

On March 25, Councilman Shingleton called a meeting of Christ Chapel Pastor Ted Kitchens, Christ Chapel Elder Tim Harvard, Dunaway & Associates Vice-President Tom Galbreath who represented the church, with neighbors Paul Hooper and Sergio Yanes. The councilman made the proposal of splitting the parking lot down the middle, half parking and half open green space. The neighbors accepted the councilman's compromise; the church did not.

Five days before the April 2 City Council hearing, church leaders offered their first significant concession to the neighbors by agreeing to reduce the requested number of parking spaces by 20% and creating a 15-foot

(Continued on Page 11)

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APRIL YARD OF THE MONTH

It's hard to drive past the riot of color and textures at the corner of El Campo Ave. and Carleton Ave. without taking notice.

When Patty and Troy Stimson bought their home in March 2012, there was no grass in the front yard, just two foot-tall weeds and some boxwoods, nandinas, sage and a pecan tree. After the boxwoods were moved to the backyard, Patty, who knows a lot about plants, started designing. "I didn't want it to look like a commercial landscape with patterns," she says. "I want it to look happy."

Together, Patty and Troy planted ten pallets of grass by themselves, but needed help in planting the trees and shrubs. The couple buy most of their flowers and shrubs from Calloway's, but also shop at Archie's Gardenland and Lowe's. Patty used professional gardeners to help her pick out plants for a variety of color and heights throughout the year. "I love the new variety of lamb's ears that don't get so big and leggy," Patty says. "I also like the new pansies with no eye in the middle that are supposed to last until June or July."

Oddly enough, Patty admits she loves pulling weeds, "I can't walk by one without pulling it up." Troy is a retired American Airlines pilot and Marine, so the Stimsons installed a flagpole and proudly fly the U.S. flag and the Marine flag. "It's important to him," Patty explains. Underneath the flagpole, the plantings are mostly native perennials, including red yucca, mounds of Blackfoot daisies, lavender, with a few periwinkles thrown in for seasonable color.



Using a mix of natives and exotics, Patty Stimson transformed her once barren front yard at 4410 El Campo Ave. into an award winner.

The beds bordering the house are a mix of exotics and natives, including hosta, columbine, ajuga, yellow and purple coleus, rosemary, gerber daisies, purple oxalis, rose of Sharon, pinks, azaleas and purple sage.

"For some reason, we have the best rich, black soil in our yard," Patty points out, knowing that most of her nearby neighbors struggle to garden on limestone bedrock. "We've wondered if our property is built on what used to be the stables for the old Camp Bowie or something."

Patty wants to garden as organically as possible, so when it was time to fertilize she used organic chicken manure which "smelled for days, but it was worth it." Patty uses Osmocote when she plants flowers.

The Stimsons, who moved to Arlington Heights from Grapevine, wanted to create a natural look for their landscape, so they were thrilled to discover Whiz Q Stone at Loop 820 and I-20. "It was the best deal--we bought all the rocks for \$300 and that included them delivering them and setting them up for us," says Patty who works in Dallas for a family-owned oil and gas company.

When Patty turned 60 this March, she returned home to a big surprise in the front yard. Her two daughter-in-laws and stepdaughters "forked" her by planting 60 forks in her yard, along with a mass of large brightly-colored spinning pinwheels, making the yard look even more like a botanical fantasyland than it already does. Only a few of the pinwheels remain, because "I like to give a pinwheel to kids who come by in strollers," Patty says.

Troy is in charge of the backyard vegetable garden where this winter they grew lettuce, spinach and cilantro. Beneath the two well-established pecan trees in the back, they've planted roses and peach trees.

The Stimsons are the first AHNA Yard of the Month for 2013. They received a \$25 gift certificate from Archie's Gardenland and a complimentary year's membership in AHNA.

If you would like to nominate a yard for this award, please contact Carol Berry, Chair of the AHNA Yard of the Month Committee, at carol_berry@sbglobal.net or 817-731-9523.



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MAY YARD OF THE MONTH

There is not a single blade of grass to be found in Jennifer and Steven Lucio's front yard at 4124 Pershing Ave. The xeriscape theme had already been established by the previous owner when Jennifer bought the house, her first, in 2006. She was still single at the time and "excited to learn about plants and to plan out what to do," she says.

It was handy that her father who lives just a few blocks away on Hillcrest is a knowledgeable gardener. "My dad helped me a lot," admits Jennifer. "Plus, it gives us something to do together."

The yard is divided into two distinct elevations, separated by the front sidewalk. The top portion is flush with the house; the bottom portion is three feet lower and level with the street. The landscaping on the top elevation was already underway when Jennifer moved in. An arbor was there, but it was falling down, so she replaced it with a metal one and planted a Blaze climbing rose to cover it. There are also antique roses, as well as yellow and floribunda roses. Bushes of Texas sage and a bed of irises are near the front porch. Low-growing juniper fills in as a ground cover and gently cascades over the native rock walls.

Jennifer added begonias and pansies along the walkway for annual color. "Even though pansies and begonias aren't technically native plants, the landscape needed color," she says.

For the bottom section of the yard, between the sidewalk and the street, Jennifer started with a blank slate, except for two junipers. "I thought I could make a good statement by unifying the bottom garden with the top garden," Jennifer explains. So, she combined red yuccas with Blackfoot daisies and purple lantana and added more juniper. "Sadly, the purple lantana didn't come back," she says. And early on, she lost all of her newly-planted red yuccas to a thief who pulled them out one night. But, Jennifer bought new ones "and now they're too big to steal."

After admiring the thriving ice plants in her nearby neighbor's yard, Jennifer tried planting them for color, but they didn't survive. So, now she relies on beds of moss roses for summer color and pansies for winter color. The final touch was the large landscaping rocks which accent the rock wall behind them. "I bought them at Archie's," Jennifer says. "They've got a good selection in an area behind the store."

When Jennifer isn't working in her yard, she's likely inside practicing her oboe. She began playing piano at age five, and oboe when she was ten. A honor graduate of the Cleveland Institute of Music with a master's degree from The Julliard School, she has had an impressive classical musical career. Since 2001, she has been the Fort Worth Symphony's principal oboist and also performs as concerto soloist with the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra and in collaboration with the Chamber Music Society of Fort Worth. She has been the guest principal oboist with the Baltimore, Milwaukee, and Seattle symphonies, as well as on television on the PBS Live from Lincoln Center program.

Jennifer shops for the best values at Archie's Gardenland and Calloway's, and sometimes shops at Lowe's. Because most of the plants in the yard are drought tolerant, the Lucios do not have an irrigation system and stay on top of things with mobile lawn sprinklers on timers. Jennifer fertilizes only when she plants and prefers extended release granules.

Husband Steven, a pharmacist who works for a health care corporation,



When Jennifer Lucio isn't practicing on her oboe for her next performance with the Fort Worth Symphony, she's often outside working in her inviting xeriscaped front yard at 4124 Pershing Ave.

is learning about gardening. But, "it's not his hobby, like it is for me," says Jennifer.

As the AHNA May Yard of the Month, Jennifer and Steven received a \$25 gift certificate from Archie's Gardenland and a year's membership in AHNA.

If you see a yard in the neighborhood that you think is award-worthy, please contact AHNA Yard of the Month Committee Chair Carol Berry at carol_berry@sbcglobal.net or 817-731-9523.



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COMPOSTING: SCIENCE OR ART?

by Kakkie Cunningham

Regardless of how compost gets to its final decomposed state, it is possible for it to be both a science and an art. There are lots of opinions regarding this subject.

Decomposition occurs naturally and will continue to do so, regardless of how we as humans try to control it. You can tackle composting like a science experiment by measuring, weighing, and testing. Or, you can choose to take the approach of watching, observing, using your nose, and applying common sense. Combine both of the above methods at different stages of the process and you will have the best of both worlds.

There are five basic principles of rotting that must occur to create compost. The first is you need to create a mass of compostable materials. Most experts recommend starting with at least one cubic yard of material, or approximately a 3 foot x 3 foot x 3 foot pile, depending on what composting method (bin, tumbler, pile) you have chosen.

The second component on the list is material for fuel. Remember that carbon materials are brown and nitrogen materials are green.

Moisture is third on the list and comprises about 50% of the total mass.

Air (or oxygen for you scientific-types) is next on the list. Two types of decomposition can occur. Aerobic decomposition occurs with ample oxygen supply. Anaerobic decomposition takes place without oxygen. Aerobic is, by far, the fastest and most efficient.

Last on the list is time. Compost can happen in as little as thirty days, but it can sometimes take up to two years. The process can be accelerated by manipulating the compost pile, which consists of poking, tossing, or even moving the pile.

Next, let's define brown and green materials. Carbon, or brown materials, are dry, brown, yellow, coarse, bulky materials, such as dry leaves, dried (not green) grass clippings and small dead twigs. An easy way to remember this is to think about stuff that once was alive, but now is dead, most of which turns brown in color. Nitrogen, or green, is succulent, gooey, and dense materials. If you guessed kitchen waste, you are correct.

Here comes the science part: formulas for creating compost can be exact scientific ratios, ranging from 25 to 30 parts of carbon (brown) to 1 part nitrogen (green). This can be accomplished by either weighing or measuring the components. The moisture level should resemble that of a wrung out sponge. For those of you who are on the perfectionist side, the optimum temperature should peak in the 150-degree range which kills harmful pathogens and undesirable weed seeds. By the way, there is such a thing as a compost thermometer, available at most good garden stores.

Here is my own common sense approach. My composting bin is a rolling barrel on a base that holds 55 gallons. I fill it half-full with brown material, making sure to pack it down somewhat. Then, I add a completely full 4-gallon pail of green material. I finish filling the barrel



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with brown material and roll it several times to mix the ingredients. Then, I add 1-2 gallons of liquid which can consist of any combination of the following: aquarium or captured rainwater, sugared soft drinks that have gone flat, out of date fruit juice, out of date cans of fruit or veggies complete with liquid, old syrup or jelly. The list of possibilities is endless.

Once the liquid is added, I close the barrel and roll it several times. I test the moisture level and if necessary, I add more liquid. I roll the barrel and observe it daily for the next 3-4 days. Upon opening, I check the temperature. If the temperature is not climbing within three days and the compost fails the moisture test, I add more water.

After this, I use my nose. If it smells like it's rotting, like ammonia, I add more brown material. If all appears okay, but I can't squeeze moisture out of a handful of the stuff and it is not hot enough, I add ½ gallon of liquid at a time and roll the barrel until the moisture level is good.

After that, it is simply a matter of opening, checking the contents, making minor adjustments, and then rolling the barrel daily. Most of the time, this method will yield compost in about 45 days.

Compost may be stored for a short period of time in containers that are moisture proof, but the longer it is stored, the less effective it becomes, so using a batch immediately gives the best benefits.

This is the method I've developed that works best for me. Do some research and get started on your own compost system. Your garbage will be lighter and your garden and lawn will love you for it!



Compost can be created in as short as thirty days, but it can sometimes take up to two years. The process can be accelerated by manipulating the compost pile, by poking, tossing, or even moving it. (Photo by Kakkie Cunningham)

Here is a brief summary of how much compost to use:

Potted Plants - 1 part compost to 3-4 parts of soil.

Lawns - 1/4 inch used as top dressing 2-3 times a year.

Garden beds - 1/4 - 1/2 inch on top or mixed in top soil once a year.

Trees - remove 1 inch of top soil; add 1 inch of compost and then mulch to bring up to original level of soil. Apply once a year.



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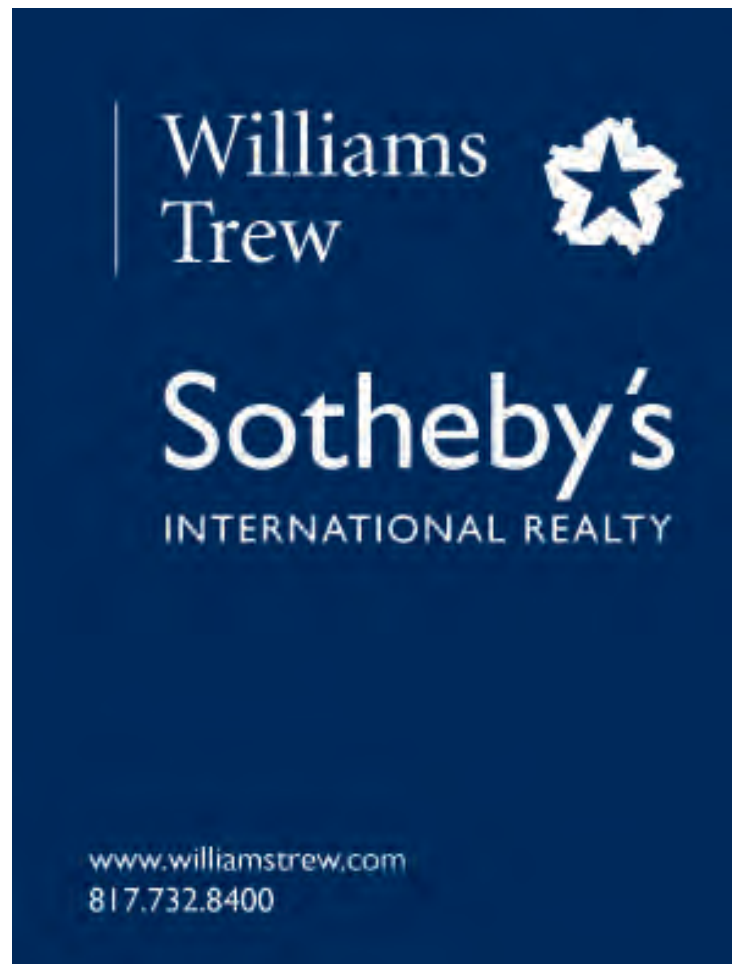
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(FIRE STATION - Continued from Page 1)

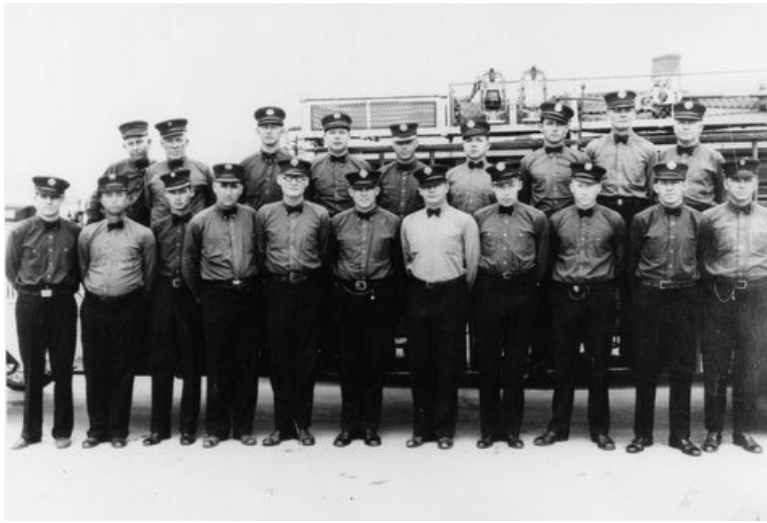
Station 18 history for making the best Dutch apple pies. "There were out of this world," enthuses Owens who could be counted on to peel the apples.

The only crew fatality in the 90-year history of Station 18 occurred in 1927 at a one-story frame hay barn fire on the corner of Montgomery St. and Bryce Ave. The crew fought the fire for 2 ½ hours, laying down 1,200 feet of hose. It was raining that morning when firefighter Frank Massengale, a member of Station 18's original crew, tried to cut through a 1,200-volt power line. His gloves were wet; he was blown off the ladder and died on the spot.

"We had some pretty good-sized fires," according to Joe Wier who came to Station 18 in the mid-60s, working the C shift with Harlan Estes, Caesar Snyder and "Jabber Jaws" Jimison ("he was always talking", says Wier). Even though most of the calls they made were emergency medical calls, they battled some historic Westside fires, including the one in 1968 that wiped out the Colonial Hotel and Apartments on the corner of Camp Bowie Blvd. and Montgomery St. Same for the 1968 Western Hills Hotel

fire which demolished the nationally-famous swanky resort that had its own private heliport on Camp Bowie Blvd. and Edgehill Rd. Arlington Heights United Methodist Church at the corner of Camp Bowie Blvd. and Thomas Pl. survived two big fires, one in 1982 and another in 1987.

When the fire alarm went off at 1:39 a.m. on January 16, 1981, Rivercrest Country Club was already fully involved. "It was gone by the time we got there," recalls Rex Owens who was the first one in. "My pumper was pumping water from four or five lines." Despite the heroic efforts of the Station 18 crew and the backup units from other stations, the main clubhouse burned to the ground. Owens has a keepsake brick etched by the fire, the most memorable in his career.



One of the most famous Station 18 alumni is Roy Lee Brown, who at the age of 92 is still an internationally-revered Western swing musician and the brother of the celebrated musician and

bandleader Milton Brown (of the Musical Brownies), co-founder of the Western swing genre in the 1930s.

Then, there is "Claude," the notorious ghost who many firefighters believe has been haunting the station for years. Even though most of the Station 18 firefighters don't believe in ghosts, a number of them have had mysterious experiences at the station, like hearing heavy footsteps, toilets flushing, toilet seats dropping, doors blowing open and closing on their own. One firefighter claims he saw a man sitting at the downstairs computer one night. Another says he saw a fireman dressed in an old style uniform standing in the kitchen.

In 2005, when the crew went to get into the fire truck late one night, they found more than 100 feet of the engine's hose spread across the truck bay floor. "We missed a run because of it," says Firefighter Kody Martin. "I don't think any of us would pull that kind of prank."

Legend has it that it's Frank Massengale, the firefighter who died in the line of duty in 1927. Another theory is that the ghost is a civilian who used to hang out at the station and died upstairs.

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It's hard to dismiss the possibility of paranormal activity when there have been so many inexplicable events witnessed by so many different people. Be that as it may, many Station 18 firefighters have never experienced anything out of the ordinary there.

By the mid-1970s, Station 18 had become out-of-date as a fire station. The bay doors were too narrow and too low to accommodate the new fire fighting equipment. \$250,000 in bond money was approved in 1978 to build a new fire station. But, it turned out the property on Carleton Ave. was too small to build a new fire station. Plus, the nearby neighbors didn't want to see the 1923 bungalow station torn down.



The Rivercrest Country Club fire broke out in the early morning hours of January 16, 1981, just a few blocks from the Station 18 fire house. The two-story clubhouse was a total loss. It was one of the biggest blazes in Westside history.

In 1982, the Arlington Heights Sector Council, a neighborhood group that was recognized by the city, fought hard to save the historic building "because it is one of the earliest public buildings in the sector and one of the most significant architectural designs." By 1984, the fight to save Station 18 was won when the bond money was used to modernize the bungalow building with a wider bay door and taller ceiling for the modern fire trucks, achieved by excavating out a deeper truck bay.

In the late 1990s, Station 18 got Quicksilver, the first new fire engine in the history of the station--all the previous trucks had been hand-me-downs. In 2006, the station upgraded to a new Compressed Air Foam System (CAFS) pumper truck that they named the U.S.S. Fort Worth in 2011, in honor of the new Naval combat ship. A few of the crew drove the truck down to Galveston for the ship's formal commissioning ceremonies in September 2012.

Life at Station 18 goes on today pretty close to how it's always gone. There are still three shifts, A shift, B shift, and C shift, each with four crew members who work 24-hour shifts every third day. Daily chores include keeping the truck and station spit polish clean, taking turns cooking, working out to stay fit, studying territory maps, and inspecting fire hydrants and fire extinguishers in commercial businesses. In the old days, down time included ping pong, dominoes, washers and pool; today, there's cards, television and surfing the internet.

Station 18's territory runs from Merrick St. to Montgomery St. and include the Davidson Railroad yard, north to the Trinity River and south to Oak Park. The railroad does not have its own firefighting team, but does not have many fire emergencies, according to Lt. Stephen Boynton of Station 18's B shift.

Up until 1980, firemen only fought fires and occasionally were called in for bad car wrecks and a few heart attacks. Now, anytime you call an ambulance, the fire department is required to show up, too. Medical-related calls make up 87% of the fire department's runs.

The city is not accepting any new fire trainee applications. Most firemen

stay with the job until retirement. There's only a 2% turnover rate.

By modern standards, Station 18 is a small station, described by some as "cramped quarters", but it is beloved by all who have worked there, as well as by the nearby neighbors.

"It was a joy to go there," says Joe Wier who retired in 1988 and attended the station's 50th birthday party. "I looked forward to going to work there every day. We had a good crew; everyone was congenial. It was a happy place to work."

Happy 90th birthday, Station 18, from your friends in Arlington Heights! See you at the party on June 9.

(CHRIST CHAPEL - Continued from Page 5)

wide area of open green space. The neighbors needed more than five days over the Easter holiday weekend to get buy-in from their neighbors and AHNA.

The parking lot case was continued at the April 2 City Council meeting to allow consensus to be reached among the neighbors. Three separate presentations were made to the AHNA Executive Board, the AHNA general membership and to the nearby neighbors who would be most affected by the parking lots. All groups voted to accept the compromise, as long as final growth boundaries were clearly defined in a document that would be filed with the deed records.

Attorney Ike Shupe provided legal counsel to the neighbors. Once the agreement went through some last minute back-and-forth tweaking, it was determined to be the best possible compromise that could be negotiated for the neighbors. The growth boundary agreement is strictly between Christ Chapel and the neighborhood; the city is not involved in the agreement whatsoever. It is being filed in the Tarrant County deed records. To see the agreement, please go to the AHNA website at www.arlingtonheightсна.com.

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