



# Vickery Place Neighborhood NEWS

GREENVILLE-BELMONT-HENDERSON-CENTRAL-GOODWIN

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## MARCH GENERAL MEETING

Date: Thursday, March 10<sup>TH</sup>  
Time: 7:00 PM  
Place: Vickery Towers at Belmont & Greenville Avenue

Paint it and plant it is the theme of our March general meeting. Come hear from the experts and bring a neighbor.

## SPRUCE UP FOR SPRING

You will have the opportunity to **Ask Sherwin Williams** as John Martinez, Area Sales Representative and store managers; Brad Moore, Charlie Wyda and Breck Bass will be on hand to give house painting tips and explain the new products and supplies discount that is being set up for VPNA. Everyone who attends the meeting will receive an organizer that will include interior and exterior color trends, schemes and historical palettes along with product information to make your home a showcase.

Rusty Allen, owner of **Salvia Garden Design**, will share tips on organic gardening and spring planting. A native Texan, Rusty focuses on plants indigenous and adaptable to Texas soil and climate. He also encourages an organic environment that promotes butterflies, birds and other wildlife. Rusty has 13 years experience consulting and

designing. Come and get answers on how your garden grows from Rusty Allen.

Don't miss this informative home and garden show. Door prizes, free tickets to the St. Patrick's Day street party and refreshments will add a festive touch. **Vinny's New York Pizza** will treat everyone to pizza so don't fuss with dinner before you come. Keith Allen, our Interactive Community Policeman, will update us on neighborhood crime watch and be available for one on one questions and concerns.



*May the road rise to meet you,  
May the wind be always at your back,  
May the sun shine warm upon your face,  
The rains fall soft upon your fields and,  
Until we meet again,  
May God hold you in the palm of His hand.*



## ST. PATRICK'S DAY STREET PARTY

Saturday, March 12  
Between Vanderbilt and Vickery on Greenville  
10:00 A.M. till 6:00 P.M.  
\$3.00 per person admission  
No one under 21 admitted



See St. Patrick's Day insert for traffic plan and party details and page 4 for neighborhood "no parking" sign assembly.

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**Bulky Trash/Basura Abultado**  
Don't Set Out Trash Before:  
Thursday, March 10

**Pick Up Week:**  
MAR. 14th - 19th

## **VPNA AMONG FIRST TO HOST A PUBLIC STRONG MAYOR DEBATE**

A large crowd of area residents gathered at Vickery Towers for the February meeting of VPNA to hear the pros and cons of the Strong Mayor Proposal.

Beth Ann Blackwood, credited for initiating the referendum appeared on behalf of the Citizens for a Strong Mayor, and Michael Jung represented the committee formed in opposition, the Coalition for Strong Government. VPNA Vice President, Bruce Thomas, moderated the debate.

It was an exciting evening of lights, cameras and action as this was the first of the public debates to be held on the issue. Tom Fox and Emily Ramshaw from The Dallas Morning News; Jay Gormley, CBS; Lance Liquez, WBAP and Juan Renteria, WFAA covered the event. We were somewhat surprised that the media reported the debate as a Vickery Towers program rather than a VPNA sponsored meeting. We were nonetheless delighted with the news coverage.



**BethAnn Blackwood, Bruce Thomas and Michael Jung**

Ms. Blackwood and Mr. Jung, both lawyers, skillfully batted the pros and cons back and forth for nearly an hour; then the floor was opened up for audience comments. This was Ms. Blackwood's first public defense of the referendum initiative that bears her name.

Ms. Blackwood touted the strong mayor proposal as bringing accountability to a broken system of City government where no one is held accountable. Mr. Jung painted the proposal as extreme, and warned that accountability would decrease as members of City Council were stripped of their power to intercede with City staff to bring services to their districts. Ms. Blackwood countered that such "micromanagement" by Council members is prohibited by the current City Charter and is part of the problem, with Council members working at cross purposes rather than for the City as a whole. Mr. Jung urged voters to hold their individual members of Council responsible when city services fail, such as the recent scandal of Code Enforcement inspectors trashing complaints. Both agreed, however, that the issue was not about Laura Miller, but about the future of Dallas.

The audience participation portion began with an articulate and forceful support of the Blackwood proposal, urging the need for Dallas to "grow up" and adopt a mayoral system similar to other large cities throughout the country. The majority of comments, however, opposed the proposal, fearing an interruption of special relationships formed with Council members under the current 14-1 system. Others agreed with Ms. Blackwood that the current system is broken, but like former VPNA President Morris Smart, questioned whether the Blackwood proposal was "the right patch for the tire."



**Delia Montelbo wins door prize from Urban Flowers & Gifts**

Mr. Jung urged everyone present to work together toward preparing a better proposal. Ms. Blackwood disagreed, arguing that the current proposal is the only one that has been brought to the ballot, and expressing skepticism that City Council would voluntarily place a proposal on the ballot that would strengthen the mayor at their expense.

A big thank you to Ken Lampton, M-Street-Dallas for sponsoring door to door tag advertisement to promote the debate, Urban Flowers and Gifts for providing a lovely door prize and as always, Vickery Towers for offering us a great venue for our meetings. Thank you, Bruce, for inviting the speakers and the excellent job of moderating.

## IS THERE A BUILDER'S SIGN IN THE YARD NEXT DOOR?

When you wake up one morning and see amidst the tulips and daffodils a builder's sign in your neighbor's yard, by early summer new construction will most likely be in full bloom. This may be a good thing depending on the current condition of your neighbor's property. A new house? A new sidewalk? Just the ticket to raise your property value and get rid of that eyesore next door. Well, maybe! Keep in mind that many infringements can occur along with the new construction that will impinge on your home and property.



We are planning a series of articles to help prepare you on what to expect during the building process and your rights as the homeowner next door. We hope that this makes the construction a little more bearable and in some instances helps protect your home and property.

### LOT-TO-LOT DRAINAGE

As more and more established Dallas neighborhoods, including Vickery Place, look towards becoming a Conservation District, there is more to take into consideration than just building materials and architectural styles. While these may be important aspects in preserving the look and feel of a neighborhood, there are bigger issues at play.

One concern brought up by several neighborhoods at the "teardown" meeting (sponsored by the City of Dallas, January 10, 2005), and something we are experiencing first hand in Vickery Place, is lot-to-lot drainage between the newer homes and their older neighbors. Most new homes are built on a poured slab vs. pier and beam. It is easier for builders to raise the grade of a lot, than to pour extra concrete to get the needed height. Many times, this leaves a 1'-2' higher grade than the neighboring lot. The builder is supposed to address this drainage problem in order to pass inspection. One common solution is for the builder to construct a retaining wall out of wood or masonry material on the new home lot. If over time, the wall breaks down, it will be the responsibility of the new home owner to repair or replace it.

Another aspect that may compound the drainage issue is the fact that some of the newer homes remove the side driveway and build a rear entry garage accessed from the alley. The old driveway served as a natural divider between homes and allowed for drainage to the street. With this gone, the proximity between homes is much closer—rather than 10'-15' space between homes, they can now be as close as 6'-7' apart (still within City Codes), again making it difficult for excess rain to drain properly.

If you have concerns about improper drainage resulting from new construction, contact the City of Dallas Building Inspector's Department, 214 948-4229 and/or go down to the Oak Cliff Municipal Center, 320 E. Jefferson Blvd., Room 118, (214) 948-4480, and see any building permits and plans for the lot in question.



### Follow-up Teardown Strategy Meeting Sponsored by the City of Dallas

Teardown Strategy Meeting  
April 04, 2005  
6:30 - 9:30 pm  
Student Center, Lake Highlands High School  
9449 Church Road  
For more information on this important meeting go to [www.forwarddallas.org](http://www.forwarddallas.org)



**WANTED: VOLUNTEERS TO ASSEMBLE “NO PARKING” SIGNS FOR ST. PATRICK’S DAY STREET CELEBRATION**

Over the past few years combined efforts of local merchants and area neighborhood associations have resulted in much needed control of the annual Greenville Avenue St. Patrick’s Day celebration. Thanks to a parking plan developed by the city traffic planning department, the bottleneck created by thousands of parked cars is reduced and managed by making Vickery Place streets one side only parking. Signs must be assembled, placed on designated curbs the night before the event and retrieved the following morning.

Please bring your hammer and join your neighbors for pizza, beer and sign assembly Wednesday, March 9 at 5605 Vickery Boulevard.

- **Sign Making Party**

Date: Wednesday 3/9/05  
 Time: Starts at 5pm (come when you can)  
 Where: The LeBlanc home, 5605 Vickery Blvd.

- **Put “No-Parking” Signs Out**

Date: Friday 3/11/05  
 Time: 6:00pm sharp  
 Where: The LeBlanc home, 5605 Vickery Blvd.  
 We’ll divide the streets and blocks and give everyone instructions.

- **Pick up “No-Parking” Signs**

Date: Sunday 3/13/05  
 Time: 10:30am  
 What: Drive around and pick up as many signs as you can  
 Where: Drop signs off at the LeBlanc home, 5605 Vickery Blvd.

Your participation will help make this a safe and successful celebration.



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Serve these delicious eggs on your Easter Buffet.

### Crabmeat – White Truffle Deviled Eggs from the chefs of Abacus Restaurant

- 1 dozen eggs (boiled, peeled and cut in half, yolks removed)
- 12 ozs. of claw crabmeat-cleaned (divided use)
- yolks from cooked eggs
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup sour cream
- 1 stick butter
- 1 tablespoon dijon mustard
- 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  tablespoon Creole seasoning (Tony Chachere's or similar)
- 2 lemons (juiced and zested)
- 1 tablespoon of white truffle oil (specialty market or gourmet shop)
- 2 tablespoon of snipped chives



In a food processor, combine 8 ozs. of the crabmeat, egg yolks, sour cream, butter, Dijon mustard, Creole seasoning, lemon juice, zest and truffle oil. Process until just smooth. Fill each egg half with mixture using a spoon or pastry bag with star tip. Garnish with chives and remaining crabmeat.

#### ROBERT E. LEE KINDERGARTEN ROUND-UP

Robert E. Lee Elementary will hold its annual Kindergarten and PreKindergarten Roundup on Wednesday March 23 at 2:00 p.m. Come learn about kindergarten and prekindergarten programs. Meet the principal and teachers. Enjoy a performance by kindergarten and pre K students. The school is located at 2911 Delmar between Vanderbilt and Goodwin.

For more information, call 972 749-7400



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## THE GIFT OF LIFE

The Vickery Place Neighborhood Blood Drive, on Saturday, February 12<sup>th</sup>, benefiting friend and neighbor Leslie Farrell, was a great success! For many folks, Saturday mornings are a time to catch up on lost sleep, do those neglected chores around the house, run errands, or spend time with their family. But on this particular morning, 28 scheduled donors (neighbors, family and friends), 4 walk-ins and 1 Whole Food employee, decided to do something different; to give the gift of life by donating blood. Not only will this benefit their friend and neighbor Leslie by giving her credit for blood products, but it will also help many others in the community. Because of their time and effort, lives will be saved.

Carter Blood Care mobile unit arrived early on site and technicians/staff were ready by the 8am start time. Modern technology is great until something breaks down, and that is what happened part way through the drive. Due to a printer and later a computer malfunction, the donor process was impaired and eventually the mobile unit had to close up shop, leaving the site an hour early. Carter sincerely regrets this inconvenience and encourages those who did not have the opportunity to donate to go to one of the nearby Carter Centers. When you go to donate, give the staff this number, 040882—that is our account number (Vickery Place Neighborhood Association, benefiting Leslie Farrell).

Whole Foods Market generously provided parking lot space for the mobile unit that morning—not only was this an excellent visible location to have the drive, the store was a convenient place to warm-up, use the rest room, or grab a snack, cup of coffee, or hot chocolate! Thank you Sandi Parton and Whole Foods staff!

Thank you one and all who participated—even if you found you were not eligible to donate that morning or could not donate due to Carter's early leave, your good intentions were deeply felt and appreciated by Leslie and her family.

## UPDATE ON LESLIE

Leslie has just completed round 3 of her chemotherapy treatment successfully. Due to the potent chemo cocktails and aggressive treatment, not to mention being poked, prodded, tested and injected, Leslie's energy level is somewhat low. But her spirits are very high, due to the many emails, phone calls, goodies and greeting cards from all of you! She has been receiving excellent care from her partner Angi, along with the skilled medical personnel at Parkland, and support from family, friends and neighbors. Keep those positive thoughts and up-lifting cards coming! Just mail them to Leslie in care of VPNA, P. O. Box 720192, Dallas, TX 75372.



**Leslie's sisters, Jennifer McGranaghan & Allison Farrell, friend Nellie Bertran and Leslie's mother, Janice Hilz visit with Morris Smart during Saturday morning blood drive.**



**Leslie's family and VPNA blood drive organizer, Beth Bentley, wait outside the unit with Jett and India Simons while Mom and Dad are giving blood.**



*Thanks for hosting VPNA.org*



## GOING THE EXTRA MILE(S)

On June 5, 2005, nineteen year Vickery Place resident and neighbor Robin Terrell, will participate in her first century (yes, 100 miles!) cycling event in Lake Tahoe, as a member of The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's 'Team In Training'. Funds raised by this ride, will go towards research to eliminate Leukemia, Lymphoma, Hodgkin Lymphoma and Myeloma and to treat current patient needs. Her training for this event began on Feb. 5, 2005 and will end with the experience of the 100-mile ride. Robin has been training hard and says her ultimate goal is to cross the finish line, upright, on her bike!

Robin has chosen to cycle in honor of some incredible people. One of her honored heroes is her Aunt Dickey who has been battling Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma for the last 8 years. So far her remission has never lasted more than 8 months at a time, but Robin and her family are hoping and trying all avenues to make remission a permanent solution. Robin is also riding in honor of one of her neighbors, Leslie Farrell. Leslie was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia shortly after Christmas. She has been spending a lot of time at Parkland hospital undergoing chemo treatments and blood and platelet transfusions. She is hoping for a bone marrow transplant in June. And the DFW Team is riding for Danielle Taylor, a 14 year old girl whose Chronic Myelogenous Leukemia is finally in remission due to the help of money raised by the Team in Training riders, runners, and walkers.

As Robin started her training, she put on medical bracelets with the names of those above that she is honoring in this challenge. She won't take the bracelets off until she crosses the finish line in Lake Tahoe on June 5th. These bracelets are not only a reminder to herself of why she has undertaken this challenge, but also a reminder to all who see the bracelets that we need to help fight this battle of all blood related cancers.

Robin is asking us to join her in this challenge. Her goal for this ride is to raise \$4,200 by April 1, 2005 to donate to the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. To learn more about Robin's fundraising efforts for this worthwhile cause, or to follow along with her progress, log onto her web page, [http://www.active.com/donations/fundraise\\_public.cfm?key=RobinTerrell](http://www.active.com/donations/fundraise_public.cfm?key=RobinTerrell). Or you can contact her directly for a donation form, 214-826-0052. Only 100 miles to go Robin—you go girl!



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*The Vickery Place Neighborhood News is published by the Vickery Place Neighborhood Association. For advertising rates and information, email Vickery Place at [info@vpna.org](mailto:info@vpna.org).*

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