



Hollywood banking on more faith-based movies. **PAGE F4** Cruising without crowding on a very big boat. **SUNDAY IN TRAVEL**

Life & Arts

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Section **F**



The house at 2407 Harris Blvd. was built in 1929, but in the 1990s the Pemberton Heights estate's 4½ acres were redesigned and include a frog pond, above, and belvedere, below, patterned after one on the grounds of Versailles' Petit Trianon.

Garden Conservancy's Open Days tour gives the public a rare glimpse of six local gardens, including an estate from a vanishing era



Joe Pinnelli photos

Open the grounds and say 'Ahhhhh'

By Julie Bonnin
SPECIAL TO THE AMERICAN-STATESMAN

In the fantasy garden, moss cloaks age-old surfaces and uncommon flowers glow along a wooded path to somewhere enchanted. This imagined garden exists in Europe, or maybe the Northeast, but probably not in Central Texas, known more for its scrappy, drought-resistant plants than for lush garden tableaux.

So it's a bit of a revelation when you enter the iron gates at 2407 Harris Blvd. and find enchantment that begs for lyrical descriptions, a landscape with classical European lines that doesn't lose sight of its natural topography.

The Pemberton Heights neighborhood garden, which belongs to Steve Hicks and Donna Stockton-Hicks, will be open to public view only as one of six outstanding Austin gardens on the Garden Conservancy Open Days tour, which

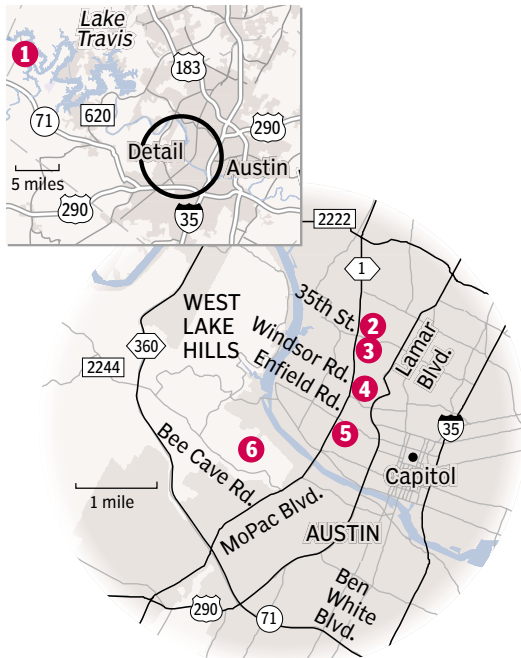
takes place Oct. 21.

Of all the gardens on the tour, this is perhaps the most wildly impractical, resembling the sort of grand estate that used to exist for the wealthy few, re-envisioned in Austin, of all places, by famed British landscape designer Penelope Hobhouse in the 1990s.

"We are the lucky stewards of this property," says Stockton-Hicks. "When we travel, we go to museums, to beautiful gardens. We wanted to open this to the public, and especially to people who love gardens, so that everyone can know there's this jewel in Austin."

The elegant Mediterranean-style home at the center of the property was built for a cotton merchant by noted Dallas architect Hal Thomson in 1929. Sixty-one years later, former owner Gabrielle Sheshunoff brought in Hobhouse to create a master plan for the 4½-acre site.

See **TOUR**, back page



Linda Scott AMERICAN-STATESMAN

Open Days tour information

Discounted Open Days tickets (book of six for \$25) can be purchased in advance at Gardens, The Natural Gardener, Big Red Sun and P&K Grocery. Tickets for individual gardens (\$5) may also be purchased the day of the tour, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Oct. 21, at each location on the tour.

Proceeds from Open Days benefit national garden preservation efforts, as well as local nonprofit groups designated by garden hosts.

More garden information and directions available at www.gardenconservancy.org/opendays and in the Open Days directory that comes with the purchase of a book of tickets.

The tour includes:

1. **Stone House Vineyard**, 24350 Haynie Flat Road (park at this address, near location in Open Days tour's printed information), Spicewood;
2. **Poth-Gill Garden**, 1811 W. 36th St.;
3. **Deborah Hornickel garden**, 3206 Oakmont Blvd.;
4. **Harris Boulevard Garden**, 2407 Harris Blvd.;
5. **James L. Arth Garden**, 1707-1709 Waterston Ave.;
6. **David-Peese Garden**, 8 Sugar Creek Drive.

Experience Mailer as filmmaker at Alamo

Rare screening of author's movies part of Ransom exhibit

By John DeFore
SPECIAL TO THE AMERICAN-STATESMAN

New Journalist. Drunken brawler. Nobel Prize nominee. Alleged misogynist. Braggart. Filmmaker?

Movies weren't Norman Mailer's primary means of expression, nor did they bring him much acclaim. But like some other literary stars of the '60s and '70s (Susan Sontag, for instance,

'Mailer vs. Hollywood'

When: 7 p.m. Wednesdays
Where: Alamo Downtown, 409 Colorado St.
Information: 476-1320, www.drafthouse.com

whose few movies are famously difficult to sit through), the author tried his hand at the medium that was threatening to overtake books as the day's most "relevant" art.

See **EXHIBIT**, F5



'Tough Guys Don't Dance,' based on Norman Mailer's novel, stars Isabella Rossellini and Ryan O'Neal. It screens Nov. 15.

Police, gun shop can safely dispose of unwanted ammo

Q: On cleaning out a house, I found some loose ammunition and some still in boxes — .38-caliber, etc. Is this classified as hazardous waste? Or is there a better way to dispose of it?
— A. Edson

A: No, the Household Hazardous Waste Facility for Austin and Travis County residents does not accept ammunition. And yes, there is a better way.

Call 311 (press 1 for nonemergency police matters) and the operator will alert the Austin Police Department. An officer



Jane Greig

will come to your home and collect the ammunition.

In addition, McBride's Guns, 2915 San Gabriel St., accepts ammunition for proper dispos-

See **GREIG**, F5