The Knights of the Ku Klux Klan is watching you.

An arrow bearing that note was shot into the offices of Space City!, an underground paper published from 1969 to 1972. The incident was one among many violent acts against countercultural groups. The KPFT transmitter was bombed off the air twice. Bullets were shot at and yellow paint thrown on the walls of Margaret Webb Dreyer’s gallery, which she ran out of her home from 1961 to 1965. The gallery had served as a counterculture hub according to Thorne Dreyer, her son and an editor of Space City!. Six shots were fired into Houston News late Friday, April 9, 1971, during a night of attacks on several Space City! advertisers. All received calls saying, “If you don’t stop advertising in Space City!, you’ll lose more than just a window.”

“The main thing about Houston was that it was all spread out,” Dreyer said in a talk at the 2009 Zinc Fest Houston. “There was no Houston there, only community in bits and pieces everywhere. Houston was much more of a city than it was then. What Space City! did was to help to identify all these pockets of progressive politics and kindred spirits, and pull them together into a cohesive spirit—a network of countercultural stuff.”

Underground in H-Town, an exhibition at the Museum of Printing History organized in partnership with the Houston Metropolitan Research Center, presents Space City! and other alternative press, Voice of Hope, El Papel Chicoano, Breakthrough, and others are on view until July 24, 2010.

by Raj Mankad

SPACE CITY!
UNDERGROUND

Pictured is a gathering of the paper’s staff outside the Space City! office at 1207 Welch Street. Front row, from left: Victoria Smith, Sherwood Bishop, Tanya Phillips (on Sherwood’s shoulders), Susie Le Blanc, Molly Bing, Tina Phillips, Thorne Dreyer, Mark Wilson. Top row, from left: Russ Roland, Bobby Estin (with lampshade), Sue McHun Duncan, Tom Hyden, Bryan Baker, Bill Nacum, Lynne Balamek, Kevin Fitzgerald, Vicki Gladstone, Ernie Shaver, unidentified, Judy Gillin Fitzgerald, Jim Shannon. Above, lampshade: Connie Mendez, Space City! photo by Jerry Sebesta.