

WESTBURY IS A DEED RESTRICTED COMMUNITY. DEED RESTRICTIONS ARE ACTIVELY ENFORCED.



Westbury Crier

VOLUME 69, ISSUE 2

FEBRUARY 2024

WOW WORKING ON WESTBURY

**Saturday, February 17
9-10AM**

Join WCC board members at the Willow Waterhole for our monthly clean-up. This month we will host a litter pickup at the Willow Waterhole.

Meet in the parking lot on Dryad near the Gazebo on Saturday, February 17, from 9AM-10AM. The WCC will provide trash bags and grabbers for you to use. This is a great volunteer opportunity for the whole family.



Keep Westbury Beautiful

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CONGRATULATIONS TO THE NEW MAYOR PRO-TEM DISTRICT K'S MARTHA CASTEX-TATUM

Most residents of Westbury are represented on City Council by District K Councilmember Martha Castex-Tatum. In January, the new City of Houston Mayor, John Whitmire, selected Martha for the prestigious role of "Mayor Pro-Tem", which was then approved by the newly elected City Council. This honor means that she will take on the role of the mayor whenever he is not present during a city council meeting or is not available to be at an event. She previously served as the Vice Mayor Pro-Tem under our previous Mayor.



NEW Trails at the Willow Waterhole

There are miles of brand new paved trails around most of the lakes at the Willow Waterhole. Perfect for the whole family! You can bring your kids, bikes, dogs (on leash) and enjoy the Willow Waterhole today. There are also picnic tables and benches plus the brand new fishing pier. More information go to www.willowwaterhole.org



Online Owner Portal

Have you joined the new owner portal? We have over 600 owners already registered. This portal isn't just about paying dues and assessments. It is a two-way communication. You can message us, submit house plans, ask questions and it will remain in your history. We can email you the Crier newsletter, security notices, surveys, etc.

Join your neighbors today and get connected!



Westbury Pool - GREAT News!

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department contacted the Westbury Civic Club in January to say that the repairs and equipment replacements needed for the Westbury Pool are almost complete. After two summers of being closed, we are excited to announce that the Westbury Pool WILL BE OPEN this summer. This is great news! Westbury Pool is a popular city swimming pool and its aquatic exercise classes traditionally have high attendance.

Westbury Pool is FREE and is located at the corner of Willowbend and Mullins, near Parker Elementary. The summer operating schedule will be posted by the WCC after it is announced by the city.

HEAVY TRASH

February 2024
Thursday, February 8
JUNK WASTE

March 2024
Thursday, March 14
TREE WASTE ONLY

RECYCLING

February 2024
Thursday, February 8
Thursday, February 22

March 2024
Thursday, March 7
Thursday, March 21

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

WCC OFFICE

5322 W. Bellfort #100, Houston, TX 77035
Jennifer Edmondson.....WCC Office Manager

Westbury Civic Club Office
Monday—Thursday—Appointment needed
WCC Office Closed Friday—Sunday

CONTACT US

WCC Office Telephone.....713-723-5437
WCC Office Email.....westburycc@sbcglobal.net
Deed Restrictions.....westburycc@sbcglobal.net
WCC President.....wccpresident@westburycrier.com

Visit our website at
www.westburyhouston.com

“Like” us on Facebook at Westbury Houston

SECURITY

Pct. 5 Constables (WAP).....281-463-6666
Report property crimes, suspicious activity, and vacation watch
Emergency.....911
Houston Police Dept. Non-Emergency..... 713-884-3131
Southwest HPD Station832-394-0400

CITY OF HOUSTON

District K CM, Martha Castex-Tatum.....832-393-3016
District C Council Member, Abbie Kamin.....832-393-3004
Deed Restriction Enforcement (City Legal).....832-393-6333
Platou Community Center.....713-726-7107
Mayor’s Citizen Assistance Office.....832-393-0955
Houston Help & Information.....311
*For missed garbage pickup, water line breaks, potholes
sewer repairs, dead animals, traffic signals, heavy trash
violations, neighborhood nuisances, and other city services*

CENTERPOINT ENERGY

Electric outage.....713-207-2222
Suspected natural gas leak.....713-659-2111
Street light repairs.....713-207-2222
Make sure to give pole number

OTHER IMPORTANT CONTACTS

County Commissioner Rodney Ellis.....713-755-6111
County Commissioner Lesley Briones.....832-927-4444
Graffiti.....www.braysoaksmd.org
Shopping Cart Removal.....www.braysoaksmd.org
Brays Oaks Mgmt. District - Use “report a problem” link
Poison Control.....1-800-764-7661
Harris County Tax office.....713-368-2000
Harris County Appraisal District.....713-957-7800

2024 WCC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Contact the Westbury Civic Club at 713-723-5437 or westburycc@sbcglobal.net.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

President.....Cindy Chapman
wccpresident@westburycrier.com
Vice President.....Marcia Hartman
Secretary.....Lindsey Pollock
Treasurer.....Becky Edmondson

DIRECTORS AT LARGE

Deed Restrictions.....Maggie Donovan
Flood Control & Infrastructure.....Jennifer Edmondson
Greenspace Beautification.....Mat Funk
Security.....VACANT
At-Large 1.....Reagan Dunkin
At-Large 2.....Andrew Jefferson
At-Large 3.....VACANT
At-Large 4.....VACANT

SECTION DIRECTORS

Westbury 1..... Travis McClelland
Westbury 2.....VACANT
Westbury 3.....Sylvia Rosales
Westbury 3.....Jonathan Hansen
Westbury 4.....VACANT
Westbury 4.....Becky Pate
Westbury 5.....VACANT
Westbury 5.....Donna Strom
Westbury South.....Ryan Cowley
Parkwest 1..... VACANT
Parkwest 2.....Bob Droubi
Parkwest 3Alan Hirshman

POSTED WCC BOARD VACANCIES CAN BE FILLED AT ANY REGULAR MONTHLY BOARD MEETING.

NEWSLETTER INFORMATION

Published by.....Westbury Civic Club, Inc.
Editor-In-Chief..... Jennifer Edmondson
Edited by.....WCC Publication Committee
Advertising..... 713-723-5437/ westburycc@sbcglobal.net

Ad Disclaimer: *The WCC neither represents nor endorses an advertisement in the newsletter. Perform your own due diligence before contacting any advertiser.*



Westbury Civic Club , Inc.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE WESTBURY CIVIC CLUB PRESIDENT

Houston ISD has been a frequent topic in our local news and social media pages. I have mixed feelings about the decision by HISD to draft Westbury High School and Anderson Elementary School into its NES (New Education System) program to boost under-performing schools, see page 10. As with any government bureaucracy, working with HISD means being prudent, to "Trust, but Verify," At its best, schools and programs in HISD can be amazing. At its worst, dealing with HISD can be a frustrating experience where promises sometimes are made and not kept, and where advocating for change takes time and patience.

I don't claim to be an expert in HISD issues, but I have been involved in HISD issues for decades. Both of my sons attended HISD schools, and over the years, the Westbury Civic Club and the Westbury Area Improvement Corporation have advocated for Westbury area schools and have been in touch with school and parent leaders

Some of you may be concerned about what this change means for your children or your neighbor's children, or how it might affect the property value of your home. Change is hard, but all of our schools deserve support and watchful care to make sure that all our schools and our children receive the best education available. I urge all of you to keep an eye on the situation, and be ready to act if we, or our community partners, identify serious concerns during the process.

Our Westbury neighborhood is full of children. Most of our families have the ability to choose where to send their

children to school, and it is good for our community, for our families, to be able to choose local schools that are excellent and easy to get to. Why drive half-way across town when there is an excellent school nearby? That is one reason why the Westbury Civic Club and our partners worked so hard for decades to bring programs to Westbury High School like the Fine Arts magnet and the beautiful new facilities that HISD finally provided for WHS after years of broken promises.

Multiple principals told us that WHS needed a program to entice more local students to attend the school, and a Fine Arts magnet would be the best fit. It took decades of advocacy, but eventually HISD leadership and elected Trustees agreed to provide an excellent Fine Arts magnet and the facilities and extra classrooms that the school needed.

A previous principal at Anderson Elementary mentioned that children could not play in a large play area at the school because it was not fenced in. We worked with the amazing Kathleen Ownby at the SPARK program to get HISD to fence in the area. That was also a key step that needed to be done before the old SPARK playground equipment could be replaced. Kathleen Ownby then had to figure out a way to get donations for a new playground paid for, because HISD said it was

next to a city park so it wasn't needed, even though that park has no playground. Frustratingly, the City said that the park didn't qualify for funding for a playground because it was next to a School playground. It was a Catch-22 without an easy answer. Kathleen kept at it and eventually found ways to get the funding needed for a new playground at Anderson, despite it not qualifying for the traditional funding sources. This is how change happens, but it can be very slow, and it takes finding good partners to work with you.

If you are an educator or a parent at one of our local schools, please let us know about any serious problems so that we can help advocate for you. The contact info for the Westbury Civic Club is available in this newsletter and online.

Cindy Chapman



Cindy Chapman and Becky Edmondson with the amazing District K Staff and Mayor Pro-Tem Martha Castex-Tatum

January 2024 Board Notes

- ◆ Public Safety – update on criminal activity from Sgt. Derkowski (Precinct 5 Constables). Discussion about Flock cameras and Traffic Speed Indicators
- ◆ Guests included: CeCe Scott (At-Large CM4 Plummer), Justice LaComb (At-Large CM5 Alcorn), Sheryl Taylor (Texas Rep. Thierry), and Brian Pendleton (Precinct 4 Briones), and candidate Jerry Rodriguez, who is running to replace retiring Pct. 5 Constable Ted Heap.
- ◆ Treasurer Report – WCC had a loss of \$31,000 for 2023. Have shutdown the Chase Bank lockbox, which will save \$6,000 per year.
- ◆ Board Votes: Motion to approve the WCC Budget for 2024 (see page 8) as proposed - passed. Motion to authorize WCC Treasurer to move bank funds at Chase to short-term CD(s) to obtain higher interest rate – passed.
- ◆ Other Topics: Westbury Pool is being worked on and WILL re-open this year; Solid Waste issues and schedules; Revitalization Committee; Garage Sales; and Board Development Workshop will be scheduled.

NEXT
WCC Board
Meeting
Wednesday
February 21
 Westbury Baptist Church
 10425 Hillcroft, Game Room

Platou Community Center at Chimney Rock Park

11655 Chimney Rock Rd
713-726-7107
platou@houstontx.gov



Supervisor— Dajai Tennard
Email—Dajai.Tennard@houstontx.gov

Platou Center is open from 11AM—7PM,
Monday—Friday

Coming Soon to the Platou
New Genealogy Classes
Hosted by Pat Melcalfe
Contact Pat at 713-208-1083

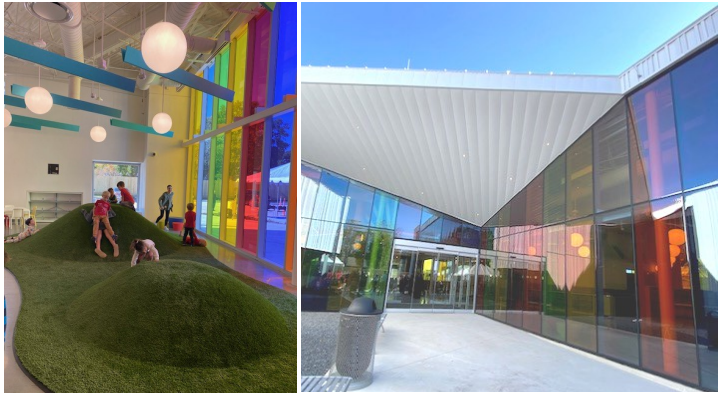
SPRING ACTIVITY CLASS SCHEDULE

- Senior Fitness — M/W/F, 9:30-10:15AM
- Table Tennis — M/F, 10:30AM-12:30PM
- Quilting — Tuesday, 9:30AM –1:30PM
- Senior Games — Wed, 10:30AM—12:30PM
- Chair Yoga — Thursday, 10-11AM
- Line Dancing—Thursday, 11AM-12PM

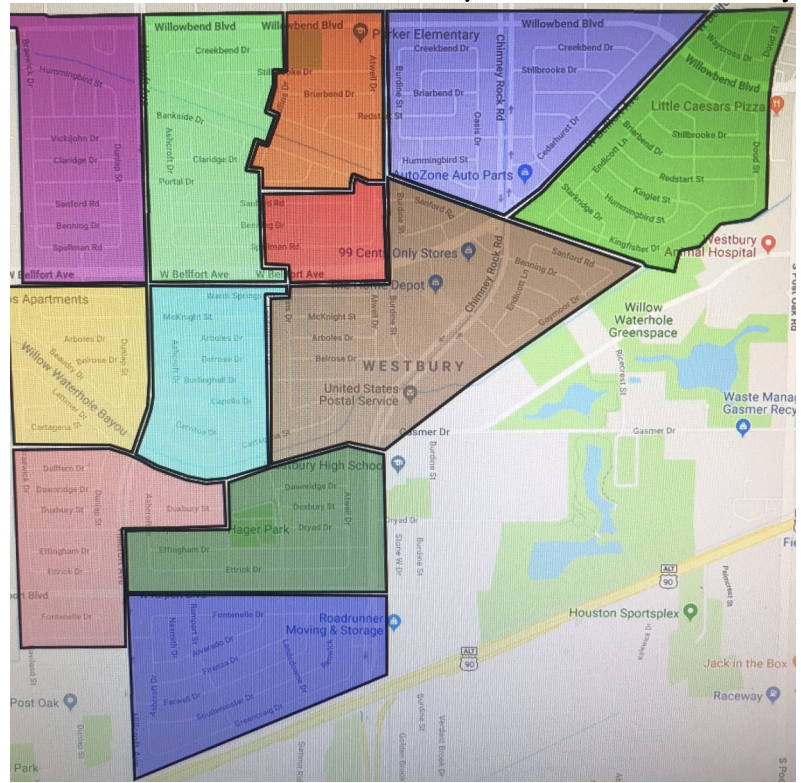
- ### 2024 Platou Center Social Events
- Mardi Gras/ Valentines -February 13
 - Spring Fling Brunch -April 17
 - Summer Daze- May 28

WESTBURY LIBRARY OPENING SPRING 2024

More information coming soon.



Map of Westbury by Section



Westbury is the 2nd largest neighborhood in the City of Houston with 5,000 homes. One reason Westbury has remained such a viable and desirable neighborhood is because of the very active Westbury Civic Club. The WCC has been advocating and working hard for the neighborhood for over 60 years. We often refer to different sections when talking about current or upcoming city projects, crime, or events.

| | | |
|--|----------------|-----------|
| | Parkwest 1 | 198 homes |
| | Parkwest 2 | 445 homes |
| | Parkwest 3 | 311 homes |
| | Westbury 1 | 543 homes |
| | Westbury 2 | 530 homes |
| | Westbury 3 | 853 homes |
| | Westbury 4 | 834 homes |
| | Westbury 5 | 501 homes |
| | Westbury 5 | 150 homes |
| | Westbury South | 563 homes |

What's Happening in Westbury

February 2024 Events & Meetings

| | | |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| Thurs 8 | Heavy Trash - Junk Waste | |
| Tues 13 | Mardi Gras/Valentines Celebration Platou Center | |
| Sat 17 | Audubon Bird Survey Willow Waterhole, 5310 S. Willow See page 15 for more information | 7AM |
| Sat 17 | WOW: Working on Westbury Litter pick-up volunteer work day Willow Waterhole, Dryad parking lot near Gazebo | 9-10AM |
| Wed 21 | WAIC/Super Neighborhood #37 Meeting Anderson Elementary | 9:30AM |
| Wed 21 | Westbury Civic Club Board Meeting Westbury Baptist, 10425 Hillcroft, Game Room | 7PM |

All About Trash

Trash, yard waste, recycling, and heavy trash are picked up by the City of Houston.



Regular Household Trash

Pick-up is EVERY Thursday. Regular household trash goes into the black trash can.

Yard Waste

Pick-up is EVERY week either on Thursday or Saturday or any day the City decides to come by. Yard Waste MUST be placed in the correct City bio-degradable bags.

Recycling in Westbury



All of Westbury recycles on Schedule A. Recycling is every other week. Recycling goes into the green trash can.

March 2024
Thursday, March
Thursday, March

February 2024
Thursday, February 8
Thursday, February 22



Heavy Trash Schedule

All of Westbury is on the same schedule for Heavy Trash. Pick-up is on the 2nd Thursday of every month. Odd months are TREE WASTE ONLY and even months are JUNK WASTE months.

February 2024
JUNK WASTE
Thursday, February 8

March 2024
TREE WASTE ONLY
Thursday, March 14

Important Trash & Recycling Info

- ♻️ Regular trash pickup is every Thursday.
- ♻️ Recycling is every other Thursday.
- ♻️ Heavy Trash is once a month, 2nd Thursday.
- ♻️ Yard waste is picked up on Saturdays.
- ♻️ Westbury is on Recycle Schedule A
- ♻️ NO Plastic Bags in green recycling bins
- ♻️ Trash cans need to be on curb by 7AM each Thursday
- ♻️ Trash cans must be removed by 10PM each Thursday
- ♻️ Trash cans must be placed at least 3 feet apart
- ♻️ Trash cans must be stored out of sight.
- ♻️ Yard waste MUST be in correct biodegradable bags with City logo
- ♻️ Call 311 for all trash questions and complaints
- ♻️ Nearby Trash Depositories and Recycling Centers:
 - SW Trash Depository/Recycling Ctr** - 10785 SW Frwy
Hours: Wed.—Sun. 9AM to 6PM;
Accepts Junk Waste, Tree Waste & Recyclables.
 - Environmental Service Center** - 11500 S. Post Oak
Hours: Tues/Wed 9AM-3PM; 2nd Sat 9AM-1PM.
Accepts Hazardous Household & Electronic Waste.
- ♻️ Refer to www.houstontx.gov for more trash and recycling information

March 2024 Events & Meetings

| | | |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Sun 3 | WOW: Working on Westbury Litter pick-up volunteer work day Willow Waterhole, Dryad parking lot near Gazebo | 2-3:30PM |
| Thurs 14 | Heavy Trash—Tree Waste ONLY | |
| Sat 16 | Audubon Bird Survey Willow Waterhole, 5310 S. Willow See page 15 for more information | 7AM |
| Wed 20 | WAIC/Super Neighborhood #37 Meeting To be determined | 9:30AM |
| Wed 20 | Westbury Civic Club Board Meeting Westbury Baptist, 10425 Hillcroft, Game Room | 7PM |

Follow Westbury Houston on Facebook for announcements, reminders, and updates

Support the Westbury Civic Club Pay your 2024 Voluntary Dues TODAY!

Westbury is a unique neighborhood with the majority of the 5,000 homes having voluntary dues. Only about 450 homes in Parkwest 1 and Parkwest 2 have Mandatory Assessments. The active participation of volunteers and yearly dues contributions help the Westbury Civic Club achieve our goal and remain active in the City of Houston. The total voluntary dues requested for 2024 is \$385. This includes the WCC Dues and Westbury Area Patrol.

PLEASE NOTE: All homes are subject to the deed restrictions whether the dues are paid or not. All sections of Westbury and Parkwest have ACTIVE deed restrictions.

How To Pay Your Dues/Assessments

There are several ways to pay your dues or assessments.

1. Activate your NEW online portal and pay directly online either via credit card or bank account.
*Once your account is activated (the WCC office must approve), you can view invoices, make payments, setup payment plans, make requests, view calendar and much more. Use the this handy QR to start your online account today!
2. Hand deliver* or mail a check to the WCC Office.
5322 W. Bellfort, Suite 100, Houston, TX, 77035
Make checks payable to the Westbury Civic Club
*There is a drop slot located at the bottom of the WCC office door.
3. Pay via PayPal. You may choose a specific amount or use the custom payment option to enter any amount or additional donation. You can find the link to our paypal page on our new website, www.westburyhouston.com.



2024 WESTBURY VOLUNTARY DUES

Westbury Civic Club Dues - \$60

The WCC has been vital in keeping Westbury a desirable neighborhood over the past 60 years. The WCC helps maintain 7 miles of esplanades, issues the Westbury Crier monthly newsletter, enforces deed restrictions, provides community events and acts as a very important liaison with the City of Houston while advocating for Westbury. In a City the size of Houston, it is important to make sure you have someone representing you and your neighborhood. The WCC has done a good job of maintaining Westbury for over 60 years. Your contribution helps covers everything needed to operate and maintain the services we provide, this includes office rent, utilities, insurance, postage, printing, legal and professional fees, salary, etc. The WCC has one employee and all other work is done by Westbury board member volunteers, this allows us to keep our costs lower.

Westbury Area Constable Patrol - \$325

The WCC has a contract with Harris County, Precinct 5, Contract Deputy Program to patrol Westbury and provide 24-hour response. This program is referred to as the Westbury Area Patrol (WAP). The WAP currently consists of three Constables (2 Deputies and 1 Sergeant) that are assigned patrol Westbury daily. The Contract Deputy Program is designed so that even when a Westbury deputy is unavailable, the next closest Pct. 5 Constable will be dispatched. Several of our bordering neighborhoods (Meyerland, Maplewood, and Marilyn Estates) also participate in the Pct. 5 Contract Deputy Program, so deputies are typically nearby at all times.

The Harris County Pct. 5 Constables are certified peace officers, licensed by the State of Texas to enforce the laws of the State of Texas. The deputies are uniformed, armed and drive distinctively marked, emergency equipped, law enforcement vehicles. The Constables provide high visibility, rapid response to emergency and non-emergency calls, vacation watches, alarm monitoring, and home security checks. The WCC gets regular crime reports from our Sergeant to ensure that the WCC is kept up to date with crimes in our area.

2024 MANDATORY ASSESSMENTS

2024 Mandatory Assessments - \$290

Owners in Parkwest 1 and Parkwest 2 revised their deed restrictions in 1993 & 1994 to include Mandatory Assessments.

➔ Properties in Parkwest 1 that have a new owner of record after the January 1, 1993, are subject to the Mandatory Assessment clause.

➔ Properties in Parkwest 2 that have a new owner of record after the January 1, 1994, are subject to the Mandatory Assessment clause.

The Mandatory Assessments are due annually on February 1. The 2024 Mandatory Assessments are \$290. The WCC has launched our NEW online owner portal. This now makes it easy to view, track, and make payments online. The 2024 invoices for Mandatory homes will be mailed in January to the address on record. If you do not receive your invoice, please sign up for your new online owner portal (use the handy QR code to the left) to view a copy or email westburycc@sbcglobal.net. If you have past due assessments and would like to set up a payment plan, please email the WCC office at westburycc@sbcglobal.net.

Westbury Civic Club Voluntary Dues Form

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Included payment is for the following:

- WCC Voluntary Dues - \$60
- WAP Westbury Area Constable Patrol - \$325
- Mandatory Assessments - \$290 (2024)
- Extra Donation (please specify WCC or WAP)
- _____

**WESTBURY IS A DEED RESTRICTED COMMUNITY.
DEED RESTRICTIONS ARE ACTIVELY ENFORCED.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WCC Monthly Board Meeting

3rd Wednesday of each month at 7PM
Westbury Baptist Church Game Room
Next Meeting—Wednesday, February 21

CONTACT THE WESTBURY CIVIC CLUB

WCC Office— westburycc@sbcglobal.net
713-723-5437

WCC President—
wccpresident@westburycrier.com

Owner Portal— Send general request
through your account

Social Media—
Facebook—Message Westbury Houston

WCC Office FAQ

House Plan Review - Form is online at
www.westburyhouston.com. Submit
plans and completed form to the WCC
office at westburycc@sbcglobal.net

Statement of Account - Email the WCC
office at westburycc@sbcglobal.net

Resale Certificates - Info and form is
online at www.westburyhouston.com

Deed Restrictions, Policies, By-laws
www.westburyhouston.com

Account Balance - Set up your PayHOA
account today.

Join the WCC Board?

Come to the next meeting and join this
great group of volunteers maintaining
and making our neighborhood a great
place! We welcome any Westbury
homeowner to join! We need YOU!

Open Board positions*

At Large directors (two positions)
Security director

Westbury 2 Section Director
Westbury 4 Section Director
Westbury 5 Section Director
Parkwest 1 Section Director

*Must be the listed owner of record for
your Westbury property in order to be
on the WCC board. Section directors
must live in the section representing.

Join the WCC Green Team today!

Work on keeping Westbury Green!
Help maintain our esplanades and sign
gardens, and much more! Sign up today,
www.westburyhouston.com

Postal Package Delays in Houston



Have you noticed delivery problems by the US Postal Service? Have you been tracking the progress of a package and noted that it has been sitting for days at the new Missouri City Postal Center that handles packages for our area of Houston? Have you gone days without receiving mail? Customers are also frustrated because the South Houston postal center does not have a way for customers to contact them directly, by phone or in person.

News reports indicate that some packages are taking weeks to deliver, which the US Postal Service says is a result of efforts to modernize the postal system. "This process, as with any such transition, takes time," USPS said in a statement. "As with any transition, some unintended and temporary disruptions may occur. We are taking steps to ensure packages are processed as quickly and efficiently as possible and apologize to any customers who may be experiencing issues with delivery of their items."

What is happening? The North Houston postal facility is in the process of becoming a regional processing and distribution center for mail and packages. The new Missouri City facility, which is located just a few miles away from us in Westbury, was built as a local processing center, which is intended to process destination mail and transfer mail and packages to delivery. The news media indicates that delivery issues are being experienced at both the North Houston Postal Center and the South Houston Local Processing Center.

US Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia has said, "Together with Rep. Al Green, we are jointly addressing the reported inefficiencies causing delivery delays at the USPS North Houston Processing Center in my district and Missouri City Processing Center in his," Garcia said. "Both distribution centers have been a concern and source of constituent complaints. We are committed to ensuring the seamless operation of essential services for our constituents."

Congressman Al Green, who represents most Westbury residents, held a press conference on January 22 about the delivery problems customers have been having with the US Postal Service. Congressman Green emphasized the urgent need for solutions. He has requested that a customer service representative be stationed at the South Houston center. Congressman Green stated, "You have to assume that every package is important. Every package may have something that can actually have circumstances associated with a person's life." Regarding the upcoming election cycle, he noted, "I am concerned, as I believe the public is concerned, about the inundation of mail ballots that [USPS] will receive and or mail related to the election that they will receive. And I want to make sure that this flows as it should – timely and appropriately."

The next day, Congressman Green said that the US Postal Service told him they would be adding 23 more staff persons at the Missouri City location to help handle the backlog of packages, although he did not have a timeline as to when the new workers would be starting.

Braes Interfaith Ministries ReSale Shop is Moving

Braes Interfaith Ministries is a coalition of local faith organizations which provide services to specific zip codes, including the Westbury zip codes of 77096 and 77035. The member congregations provide financial support (not rental assistance), food, clothing, items for the resale shop, and support for special activities such as the School Supplies Program and the Holiday Food Baskets.

Their resale shop is in the process of moving from South Post Oak to the shopping center where the Chase Bank and 99Cent Store are located. This new location is in the heart of Westbury, near the corner of Chimney Rock and West Bellfort. The phone number will stay the same. The predicted move date has changed from January to February.

Lifeguards Needed

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department is hiring lifeguards for the summer 2024 season. There is a \$500 incentive bonus to work throughout the summer. Candidates must be 16 years old by May 31, pass a swim evaluation, have a government issued picture ID, and submit an online application. More information is available at 832.395.7129 or www.houstontx.gov/parks/swimming.html

2024 WESTBURY CIVIC CLUB BUDGET

General Income

| | Approved Budget |
|---------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Mandatory Assessments | \$98,020 |
| Voluntary WCC Dues | \$48,600 |
| Westbury Area Patrol Voluntary (Restricted) | \$255,150 |
| Total Dues & Assessments | \$401,770 |
| Crier Advertising Fees | \$12,000 |
| Refinancing Fees | \$1,000 |
| Transfer Fees | \$16,750 |
| Resale Certificates | \$2,500 |
| Total General Income | \$434,020 |

Program Expenses

| | |
|------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Crier Printing & Expenses | \$47,000 |
| Programs and Hospitality | \$1,160 |
| Harris County Constable Fee (3 Deputies) | \$279,360 |
| Total Program Expenses | \$327,520 |

General Expenses

| | |
|------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Postage, Mailing Service | \$10,000 |
| Bank and PayPal Fees | \$2,500 |
| Computer and Software | \$10,500 |
| Insurance | \$3,000 |
| Payroll Expenses | \$55,000 |
| Contract Services—Accounting/Legal | \$5,000 |
| Facilities and Equipment (Rent) | \$17,500 |
| Utilities (Electric, Phone) | \$3,000 |
| Total General Expenses | \$106,500 |
| TOTAL: Program + General Expenses | \$434,020 |

Budget Discussion

The Westbury Civic Club board approved the 2024 budget at the January 2024 board meeting. According to the WCC bylaws, the annual budget must be a balanced budget (where estimated income and estimated expenses are the same).

Last year our proposed total budget was \$421,000. The cost of the WAP Constable Patrol, our most expensive program, has increased to \$279,360. For 2024, we are estimating the income and expense at \$434,020, which is an increase of about \$13,000 compared to 2023.

Looking at our income categories for 2024, Crier advertising is down from past estimates and has not really rebounded since COVID. We will be working on attracting new advertisers. We've reduced our refinance and transfer fee estimates due to rising interest rates. We've increased our estimates for dues and assessment income, as it will be easier to both send out bills and for residents to pay with our new system. Our estimates are very conservative and we hope that our dues and assessment payments get back to the pre-COVID levels. It is still our hope to get collections up to the point that we can add an additional deputy to our Constable Patrol Program, which means we would like to be able to increase from our current 3 officers to 4 officers. The dues for the WAP patrol are increasing by \$10 for 2024 to \$325 to cover the increase in the contract cost this year. Commissioner's Court is considering another increase in 2024 when our contract renews October 1, 2024.

Our expenses generally do not change much from year to year. We expect our banking charges to go down in 2024 as our new bank does not charge as much as our previous bank lockbox. Our new database and payment system costs \$875 a month, but we will no longer have to pay \$400 for a lockbox to receive check payments. We've allocated a bit more for postage expenses as the new system makes it easy to generate letters and invoices at a charge of just \$1.00 each, which includes the postage. Our proposed budget amounts for wages, rent, electricity, and utilities remains the same as 2023.

Many thanks to the budget committee of Becky Edmondson (Committee Chair), Lindsey Pollock, Jonathan Hansen, Marcia Hartman, and Cindy Chapman.



ACTION ELECTRIC CO.

Specializing in

- Electrical Repairs
- Power Outages
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- Overhead/Underground Power Lines/Meter Jaw
- Install Car Charger & Generator

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Master Electrician
Lic #6260

City of Houston Inauguration Day

Becky Edmondson and Cindy Chapman represented the Westbury Civic Club, our non-profit partner the Westbury Area Improvement Corporation, and the Westbury Super Neighborhood at the January Inauguration Day for the incoming city elected leaders. We thank Mayor John Whitmire for inviting us to the event, which was open to the public.

Cindy and Becky briefly spoke with the Mayor, and later during the Open House festivities, we made a point to visit each of the five At-Large Councilmembers, plus the two Councilmembers who represent Westbury residents. Houston is fortunate to have elected officials representing us with a broad range of experiences and talents.

Remember that Westbury has SEVEN members on City Council who represent us -- 5 At-Large plus our 2 District Councilmembers in District C and District K. We look forward to 2024 and beyond.

District C – Abbie Kamin, DistrictC@houstontx.gov

District K – Martha Castex-Tatum, DistrictK@houstontx.gov
*Mayor Pro Tem for 2024

At-Large1 – Julian Ramirez, AtLarge1@houstontx.gov (new)

At-Large2 – Willie Davis, AtLarge2@houstontx.gov (new)

At-Large3 – Twila Carter, AtLarge3@houstontx.gov (new)

At-Large4 – Letitia Plummer, AtLarge4@houstontx.gov

At-Large5 – Sallie Alcorn, AtLarge5@houstontx.gov



MARCH PRIMARIES AND MAY SPECIAL ELECTION


Political flyers for the March primary election season are already showing up in Westbury mailboxes. Yes, this seems too early, but the primary elections in March are the important elections to determine which candidates will be on the Republican and Democratic ballots in November. Races may include: US President, US Senator for Texas, US Representative(s), Texas Representative(s), various Judges, Justices of the Peace, and several county positions (Constable, Sheriff, County Commissioner)

For example, US Senator Ted Cruz is seeking a third term in office in November. Currently there are nine Democrats and 3 Republicans who will be on the March ballot to determine who will be running against each other in November.

For those Westbury residents who live in Texas Senate District 15 (formerly represented by newly elected Houston Mayor John Whitmire), there will be two elections – one in March and one in May. The March election will determine who will be on the ballot in November to replace him. Confusingly, the Special Election in May will determine who will temporarily fill his position for the remainder of his term.

CAUTION: The Houston area has been experiencing mail and package delivery problems since December due to modifications in progress at the Houston postal processing centers. If you qualify to vote by mail, consider whether the mail situation has improved to judge whether to vote in person or vote by mail. See article on page 7 about mail issues.

The closest early voting location for Westbury is Bayland Park Community Center at 6400 Bissonnet. On election day, March 5, you can vote at any Harris county voting locations. Parker Elementary (10626 Atwell) and the Platou Center (11655 Chimney Rock) are the two closest here in Westbury. Both parties will be voting in the same locations. The Harrisvotes.org website has a lot of good useful and easy to follow information.



2024 ELECTION DATES

Visit the **Harris County Clerk's Office Elections Department** at HarrisVotes.com or call 713.755.6965 for more information.

| Primary Elections <i>Tues., March 5</i> | Uniform Election <i>Sat., May 4</i> | Primary Runoff Election <i>Tues., May 28</i> | General Election <i>Tues., November 5</i> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Last Day to Register to Vote Feb. 5 | Last Day to Register to Vote April 4 | Last Day to Register to Vote April 29 | Last Day to Register to Vote Oct. 7 |
| Early Voting by Personal Appearance Feb. 20 - Mar. 1 | Early Voting by Personal Appearance April 22 - April 30 | Early Voting by Personal Appearance May 20 - 24 | Early Voting by Personal Appearance Oct. 21 - Nov 1 |
| Last Day to Apply for Ballot by Mail Feb. 23 | Last Day to Apply for Ballot by Mail April 23 | Last Day to Apply for Ballot by Mail May 17 | Last Day to Apply for Ballot by Mail Oct. 25 |
| Election Day March 5 | Election Day May 4 | Election Day May 28 | Election Day Nov. 5 |

TWO WESTBURY SCHOOLS DRAFTED INTO THE HISD “NES” PROGRAM



We are still learning more about the situation, but on January 23, it was announced that both Westbury High School and Anderson Elementary School will be assimilated into the Houston Independent School District (HISD) “NES” program for next year. NES is an acronym for “New Education System”, which is intended to boost education performance at under performing HISD campuses and which was rolled out to more than 80 HISD schools last year. This year, more schools are being drafted into the program, including Anderson Elementary and Westbury High School.

What benefit will the schools receive? HISD states that schools in the NES program will receive additional resources and support intended to dramatically improve academic performance, including higher salaries for teachers and staff and rigorous instructional programs.

Will the outstanding Fine Arts program at Westbury High School (WHS) be affected? It is unclear, although HISD has stated that existing magnet programs will continue. As a reminder, the Westbury community advocated for decades for a Fine Arts magnet program to be created at WHS, since Parker Elementary and Meyerland MS for the Performing and Visual Arts are nearby and are attended by local students. After many years of advocacy by the Westbury Civic Club, the Westbury Super Neighborhood, the Friends of WHS, and others, finally HISD agreed to create a Fine Arts magnet at WHS. WHS now has an amazing Fine Arts facility with specialized classrooms, practice rooms, and performing spaces and HISD has provided funds to hire excellent fine arts instructors at WHS. The Fine Arts magnet at WHS has steadily been growing and building its reputation. The Westbury Civic Club and other community advocates have seen the WHS Fine Arts magnet as a key point to attract more neighborhood students and to improve the scholastic achievements at WHS. It has been working. Scores at WHS have been improving, and were high enough that WHS was not drafted into the NES program last year when most other HISD high schools were. However, it is advised that the Westbury neighborhood and supporters of WHS keep a close eye on the situation. Magnet programs are expensive to operate and Fine Arts magnet programs are even

more expensive since specialized talents are needed in a variety of skills. Will HISD be willing to provide the funds to maintain the WHS Fine Arts at its current level of excellence? It is unclear. There have been past attempts at HISD to reduce funding of established Music or Fine Arts magnet programs, including the excellent programs at Parker Elementary and at Meyerland Middle School, so it is too early to know what HISD will actually do. The situation is even more uncertain, since HISD has been taken over by the state of Texas and the elected School Board Trustees have no power. HISD is being run by a Superintendent and a Board of Managers appointed by the state of Texas. Our concerns are not helped by the fact that HISD chose to shut down the wonderful school libraries at WHS and Anderson Elementary this year, both of which were brimming with bookshelves full of new books, along with closing other school libraries in HISD.

Why did the test scores drop so much for these two schools? This is an arcane and not fully transparent process, and we are still learning about the topic. We have seen comments that the test scores from last year were artificially high due to the way that they were calculated. We have also seen comments that the newest test scores are unusually low because the state of Texas made significant changes to the testing and scoring system, and that scores cannot readily be compared between the two years. It is a fact that 57 school districts are suing and another 59 school districts in Texas have signed on as intervenors to complain at how the Texas Education Agency proposed to apply new school standards this year. These districts are complaining that their schools will receive lower state grades, even in cases when student performance has improved. Even though the case is still in court and the state has not yet implemented its controversial school scoring system, the HISD Superintendent opted to use that controversial scoring standard to decide which schools to draft into the NES system for next year. Last year, both WHS and Anderson Elementary had state scores high enough that they did not qualify to be drafted into NES. This year their scores are low enough that they qualified to be drafted into NES.

Raising Kids in Today’s Culture: From MTV to TikTok

A series of Parent Seminars hosted by Westbury Baptist

February 21, March 20, and April 17 at 6PM

Most parents raising children today are children of the 80’s and 90’s. We are Generation X, the latch-key kids. We drank from the water hose, stayed out until the street lights came on, and sat by the radio and waited for the DJ to play our favorite song so we could hit record on the cassette player. And now we’re raising kids who carry access to the entire history of the world in their pockets, hang out with their friends without ever leaving the house, aren’t really interested in getting their driver’s licenses, and can listen to any song they want in a split second. But there’s a big difference between the culture that was MTV and the culture that is TikTok.

Raising children is not for the faint of heart. There’s a lot of truth to the old saying, “It takes a village.” Out of our desire to

be an integral part of our community, we want to be a part of that village with you. We want to walk alongside you as you venture down this parenting journey, not assuming we have all the answers, but simply to remind you you’re not alone.

Beginning Wednesday, February 21, at 6PM we will host a three-part parenting seminar on Raising Kids in Today’s Culture. Again, this is not about us trying to give you all the answers, because we’re on this journey with you trying to figure it out as well. However, this is an opportunity to talk about the foundational elements we can provide for our children in order that we effectively raise up the next generation. It’s also a time to establish a deep community of parents who are helping each other along the way.



Shred and Recycle Event in Westbury

District K hosted a Free Paper Shredding event plus Small Electronics E-Waste Recycle collection right here in Westbury in January. The work crew at the Westbury location was manned by District K staff, the Solid Waste Department, and a host of volunteers from the University of Houston. It was a very successful morning as many residents took advantage of this service.



The WCC had a chance to take the January Crier with its special trash section to show Solid Waste director, Mark Wilfalk, as well the Deputy Director, who is in charge of recycling. They were both impressed by the excellent work by Jennifer Edmondson. If you did not keep your January Crier, you can find a copy on our website, www.westburyhouston.com.



Trash Can Placement

Household garbage and recycling must be put inside city-issued containers and then placed on the curb by homeowners on the correct day.

- ➔ Regular trash collection is Thursday
- ➔ Recycling is collected every other Thursday

- 🗑 Do NOT place trash cans in the street.
- 🗑 Trash and recycling containers should be placed at the curb between 6PM Wednesday evening and 7AM Thursday morning.
- 🗑 The container must be accessible to the automated collection truck and not blocked by obstacles, including parked cars.
- 🗑 Homeowners with multiple trashcans **MUST** place trashcans three feet apart.
- 🗑 Do not place cans next to light poles or trees.
- 🗑 Trash cans must be removed from the curb by 10PM Thursday.

TRASH CAN PLACEMENT EXAMPLES



"NEIGHBORHOOD SPECIALISTS"

JACKIE AND KENDYL TEAM



JACKIE MURRAY
(713) 825-9179



KENDYL MAURER
(281) 904-8199



10602 Cedarhurst - 4/3/2•\$570's 5730 Hummingbird - 4/2/2•\$460's



5510 Briarbend - 3/2/2•\$340's



10926 Endicott - 3/2/2•\$360's



5819 Portal- 5/3/2•\$550's



11022 Braewick - 3/2/2•\$320's



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New Flood Relief Along the Willow Waterhole Bayou

The City of Houston, in its continued effort to reduce flooding in Westbury, have dug overflow drainage channels from the streets along the Willow Waterhole Bayou. These streets include Beaudry, Lattimer, Braewick, Cartagena, and Ludington. Harris County Flood Control purchased 8 lots along these streets after Hurricane Harvey. All the homes purchased back up directly to the Willow Waterhole Bayou. The lots were cleared and HCFCD had been maintaining them for the past several years. The lots are now owned by the City of Houston. The new city drainage channels are intended to supplement the existing street drainage system in heavy rains. Since the new recent drainage work completed by the City, residents along Beaudry reported that the water flowed nicely through the new drains during the heavy rains in January.

Homes along the Willow Waterhole Bayou in Parkwest 3 and Westbury 3 are in the 100 year flood plain and have suffered repetitive flooding. Some homes have flooded as many as 8 times since the 1970s. Addressing the drainage issues in this part of Westbury has been a long topic of discussion and advocacy in the Westbury Civic Club. The first flood action committee was started after the 1973 floods and much work was done in the late 1970s and early 1980s. After repeatedly flooding in 2013, 2015, 2016, and 2017, Westbury residents demanded action from flood control and the City. The home buyouts along the Willow Waterhole Bayou are the first ever in Westbury and those lots will all be used for flood control efforts going forward. It is nice to see the City and the County are working together to help reduce flooding in Westbury.



New drainage outlet on Beaudry

Westbury has a very large, multi-phase storm drain reconstruction project that is due to start this year. The plans for Phase 1 have been drawn and contractors being chosen. The reconstruction project will increase the size of our storm drains (they are undersized for current standards and well past their intended lifespan) and try to address some of our repetitive flood areas. The WCC suspects that it will take over a decade for the City to finish all the phases of the reconstruction project. Due to this extended timeline, we are very glad the City addressed the immediate issue of street and structural flooding along the streets that abut the Willow Waterhole bayou.

WESTBURY AREA IMPROVEMENT CORPORATION SUPERNEIGHBORHOOD #37

The WAIC and Westbury Super Neighborhood meeting was held at the Southwest HPD station community room on January 17. The following motions passed:

- ◆ Accept the November 2023 meeting minutes.
- ◆ Contribute \$100 to Anderson Elementary School for a bearded dragon.
- ◆ Approve the proposed 2024 WAIC Budget – but amend to increase the amount budgeted for Anderson Elementary from \$1,000 to \$1,500.
- ◆ Revert back to the usual 9:30 AM meeting time for February meeting, place to be determined.

A proposed budget for 2024 was discussed for the WAIC and approved. The city has a new program pending that the Westbury Super Neighborhood could apply for this spring. Some funds will be moved to a CD for higher interest rate. Find out if the WAIC can get QuickBooks at a lower cost since it is a non-profit.

There was a lot of discussion about meeting place and time. The current date (3rd Wed) and time (9:30 am) conflicts with weekly city council meetings and if we move future meetings to the new city library, it does not open until noon on Wednesdays. Discuss again next month.

Public Safety: Discussion about problems at certain commercial addresses. The Constables are monitoring two sites on West Bellfort with ongoing problems that back up to residential properties. Discussion that the Constables are not authorized to

use the city Trespass Certificate process that HPD can use. Constables continue to do traffic stops for speeding and DWI. Constable Heap is retiring at end of 2024, and his replacement will be elected. Chapman and Edmondson wrote letters to Harris County Commissioners in December to protest proposed large price increases to the constable program, and the large increases have been taken off the agenda for now. An after-hours bar is operating on SPO.

Public Safety technology and programs: Discussion about Flock Cameras and Traffic Speed Indicators. Flock cameras have a contract with the City and its license plate readers notify law enforcement (both HPD and Precinct 5 Constables) whenever there is a “hit” on a vehicle that is linked to crime. Discussion that a traffic signal at West Bellfort at Burdine would reduce speeding and improve pedestrian safety. Discussion that speed limits are lower in some neighborhoods than in Westbury and what is the process to set those speed limits.

Other Topics: Westbury Community Garden pending projects and fundraising. 311 reports submitted in the Westbury area. TIRZ 20. Pending events in Westbury and at allied community partners. Trails – update that ground has been broken on the trail to connect the intersection of Chimney Rock/West Bellfort to Willow Waterhole. Status of building site on Gasmer (former Shell research center). Precinct 4 is taking public comments for proposed renovation of Bayland Park and Community Center. A technical assistance grant has been awarded by federal government to develop a grant proposal for the former Ruffino landfill site as regional detention for Keegan’s Bayou. Westbury Pool is re-opening this summer.

Crime Statistics for Westbury Super Neighborhood

Crime in Westbury Single Family Homes—January 1—31, 2024

KEY

| Block | Street | Crime | Date | Time | Section of W |
|-------|--------------|-------------------------------|------|------|----------------|
| 12600 | Ashcroft | Simple Assault | 1/3 | 6pm | Westbury South |
| 11900 | Atwell | Burglary, Breaking & Entering | 1/14 | 11am | Westbury 3 |
| 12400 | Atwell | Auto Theft | 1/2 | 9am | Westbury South |
| 6000 | Beaudry | Theft from Motor Vehicle | 1/13 | 11am | Parkwest 3 |
| 11100 | Braewick | Simple Assault | 1/24 | 7am | Westbury 5 |
| 11100 | Braewick | Burglary, Breaking & Entering | 1/8 | 10am | Westbury 5 |
| 6000 | Dryad | Robbery | 1/12 | 2am | Westbury 4 |
| 12100 | Dunlap | Theft from Motor Vehicle | 1/11 | 2am | Westbury 4 |
| 5600 | Ettrick | Theft from Motor Vehicle | 1/8 | 11am | Westbury 4 |
| 11500 | Hillcroft | Theft—Other | 1/23 | 8am | Parkwest 3 |
| 5700 | Hummingbird | Auto Theft | 1/16 | 11pm | Parkwest 2 |
| 11400 | Mullins | Auto Theft | 1/10 | 10pm | Westbury 3 |
| 10800 | Rampart | Theft from Motor Vehicle | 1/2 | 1am | Parkwest 2 |
| 10900 | Rampart | Theft from Motor Vehicle | 1/2 | 12am | Parkwest 2 |
| 5700 | Warm Springs | Simple Assault | 1/1 | 1am | Westbury 3 |
| 5900 | W. Belfort | Simple Assault | 1/13 | 9pm | Westbury 5 |
| 5900 | W. Belfort | Auto Theft | 1/23 | 3pm | Westbury 5 |

- Theft from Motor Vehicle
- Auto Theft
- Vandalism
- Robbery
- Burglary
- Simple Assault
- Theft—other

The crimes listed took place between January 1 and 31. They are in alphabetical order by street. The crimes are highlighted by type. Please see key above.

Crime by the Numbers

| Crime Type | Homes | Apts./TH | Comm./Business | Park/Public |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------------|-------------|
| Aggravated Assault | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Theft from Motor Vehicle | 5 | 0 | 2 | 3 |
| Burglary | 2 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Robbery | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Simple Assault | 4 | 15 | 8 | 3 |
| Shoplifting | 0 | 0 | 6 | 0 |
| Drugs, Narcotics | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Vandalism, Damage | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Auto Theft | 4 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Theft of Vehicle Parts | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Theft—Other | 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 |
| Theft from Building | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Purse Snatching—Theft | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| DUI | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Disorderly Conduct | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Sexual Assault | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Arson | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 17 | 26 | 30 | 12 |

VACATION WATCH



Are you going on vacation over Spring Break? If you pay your Westbury Area Patrol dues, make sure you request a vacation watch by the Constables. Vacation Watch is a great service that is included in our contract. A deputy will check out your property at least once a day to make sure it is secured and no suspicious activity. You can register for a vacation watch online at <https://constablepct5.com> or call 281-463-6666

Security & Crime Update

At the January civic club meeting, our Precinct 5 Sergeant Nick Derkowski spoke about the uptick in crime for January. Remodeled homes are being targeted. Car break-ins are up. A vehicle was stolen when the thieves found the keys inside the truck in the cup holder. Deputies recovered a small purse stolen from another vehicle. Deputies asked us to remember not to leave things of value in our vehicles. If your car is broken into, please report it to Pct 5 so that the deputies will know where the hot spots are.

The good news was that there has been an increase in the number of calls to dispatch about suspicious persons. In one case, a deputy was dispatched to a suspicious vehicle. The suspect was DWI. He also had a pistol, marijuana, and Xanax in the vehicle. D.A.'s office took charges for the DWI and Unlawful Carry of Weapon, but declined the drug charges. The drugs were tagged for destruction and suspect booked in jail.

A vehicle lost control and crashed into a house in Westbury South. Deputies arrived and located the suspect driving away. He was arrested for DWI and failure to render aid to the person injured inside the home with non-life threatening injuries.

Precinct 5 handles hundreds of calls a month from Westbury residents. As you can see from the above reports, just being in the neighborhood means that they are able to respond quickly and control the situation. They have been doing traffic speeding control on W. Belfort, Hillcroft and Willowbend. Westbury would be a very different neighborhood without these dedicated law enforcement professionals watching out for us.

**Pct. 5 Constable Dispatch
Westbury Area Patrol**

281-463-6666

SW HPD Station

832-394-0400

HPD Non-Emergency

713-884-3131



WHERE IS THE GARDEN?

12581 Dunlap (77035) is off Hillcroft between W. Airport and South Main. Heading south on Hillcroft, turn right onto Greencraig, follow it around the bend where it turns into Dunlap. The large blue roof on the WCG Pavilion is readily visible.
Street parking.

The Gardening Within Reach Project

In 2014, one of WCG's gardening gardeners asked if there was a possibility of converting a raised bed that was one concrete block high to a garden where one could sit or stand to tend the plants. It seemed reasonable and necessary, so a team of members pulled together a plan and went to work. "The new raised garden is perfect," says Bert Gonzalez, now 89 years old and still gardening every season.

More Bi-Level Garden Plots

Fast forward six years. It was becoming apparent that other community gardeners who had trouble with knees, hips, or shoulders would benefit from the bi-level beds. An Eagle Scout candidate and his troop and family built two more bi-level gardens. WCG members and volunteers continued the work in 2023 and this year we will complete a whole row of twelve bi-level sit-stand gardens. The garden leadership team is very pleased to accommodate our senior members in this way. We know that growing and eating healthy, organic food, getting outdoors for moderate exercise, and the social aspects of meeting and working with like minded friends are important factors in keeping seniors healthy so they may "age in place" - that is live longer at home.

Easy Access and Parking

The next phase of Gardening Within Reach meant providing close access and parking to the members who grow veggies in the new row of elevated gardens. The garden's Master Plan called for a new entrance just south of the pavilion with a parking area and stretch of driveway that will run right next to the bi-level gardens. The driveway will eventually encircle all the active areas of the community garden and provide several parking areas.



A Driveway That Doubles As A Water Conservation Tool

The new driveway and parking will be constructed with pervious paving materials to further support the garden's mission of conservation and sustainability. The design is intended to create a rock filled channel beneath the driving surface that not only supports heavy vehicles like dump trucks, but make a place for stormwater to accumulate and slowly percolate back into the ground, rather than run off into the street.

2024 Will Be the Year of Expansion at WCG

The Gardening Within Reach fundraising was expanded to include the needed driveway and parking. For three years WCG's year-end crowdsourcing fundraiser, The SeedMoney Challenge, has been earmarked for the new raised beds, driveway, and parking. In 2023 and 2024, our accumulated fundraisers, several small grants and gifts will coalesce to finally make the first section of the new driveway a reality. We are almost at the financial goal line. If you'd like to contribute to the Gardening Within Reach Project, checks may be sent to WCG, 5322 W. Bellfort, Suite 100, Houston, TX 77035.

We hope you'll have a chance to visit for one of the garden's community events this year and see the progress that this group gardeners and our many supporters working together as a community has built.





Photo—Mark Mulligan, Houston Chronicle

Willow Waterhole

More than Just Flood Control

TRAILS * BIRDS * WILDFLOWERS

Visit the Willow Waterhole TODAY! The main Westbury Lake trails and gazebo are easily accessible via the new parking lot at the end of Dryad near Westbury High School.

www.willowwaterhole.org



Thank you to the volunteers who showed up on a blustery, chilly day for the first Working on Westbury beautification event of 2024. We had two dads, each with a young son, show up to pick up trash at our Willow Waterhole clean up event. (Young kids enjoy finding trash and picking it up with those long trash grabbers! It is a bit like an Easter Egg hunt.) We had a high school student seeking volunteer activity hours for his high school. Plus three members of the Westbury Civic Club board at the event. Considering the weather, we were very pleased with the turnout, since we had considered canceling the event due to the weather forecast.

Westbury is blessed to have many city parks and esplanades, as well as the Willow Waterhole facility. The goal of the WOW: Working on Westbury program is to do trash cleanup and beautification projects to make these public places better. If you have a school group or other group interested in a project, let us know and we will work with you. We also are looking for Westbury residents who would like to join the "Green Team" as volunteers or as project leaders. Contact us by sending an email to westburygreen@gmail.com.

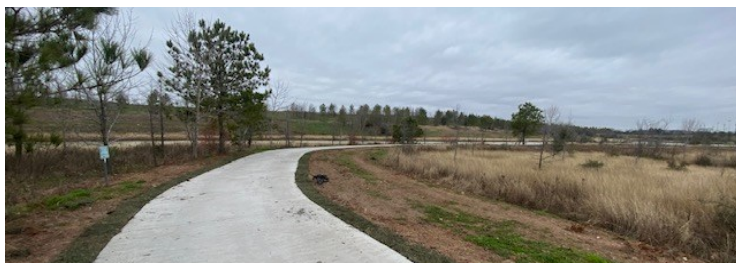
The next WOW: Working on Westbury event will be on Saturday, February 17, from 9-10AM at the Willow Waterhole for another litter pickup.



Streets Around Willow Waterhole Repaved

Have you recently driven down Gasmer between Chimney Rock and South Post Oak? Did you notice how smooth it was? Thank you to District K CM Martha Castex-Tatum and the City of Houston for repaving Gasmer, Clematis, and Ricecrest.

After decades of heavy truck traffic had created large street potholes, some the size of the Grand Canyon, alternating with humps of asphalt from previous road repairs, the road was finally repaved. Visitors to the Willow Waterhole and to Westbury who travel via Gasmer have a much better experience than before.



Audubon Society Monthly Bird Survey @ the Willow Waterhole

Saturday, February 17, 7AM
Meet at the Gathering Place, 5310 S. Willow
For more info., visit houstonaudubon.org/



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