



# Westbury Crier

VOLUME 58, ISSUE 11

NOVEMBER 2012

## HIGHLIGHTS:

- WCC Board Meeting, November 14 @ 7PM Westbury Baptist Church
- Check out the new Westbury family feature on page 14
- Movie Night at Willow Waterhole on Nov. 30
- November's heavy trash is TREE WASTE ONLY

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WCC Publication Committee  
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## New Heavy Trash Day

Heavy Trash refers to the big trash items that are collected by the city once a month, with "Tree Waste Only" collection alternating months with "Junk Waste" collection months. Effective November 2012, **all of Westbury** will finally be on the same collection date each month. **That's right, no more North and South of West Bellfort collection days!**

### NEW Collection Date: SECOND THURSDAY each month

**November 8 will be TREE WASTE ONLY.** Tree limbs, branches or shrubs to be shredded into bark mulch or compost. NO plastic bags, NO finished wood products, NO furniture, NO lumber, NO metal. Trash may be placed at the curb no earlier than 6PM the Friday evening prior to collection day. This change will make the schedule less confusing, and it will also reduce the number of days when trash is sitting at the curb waiting to be collected (sometimes our two monthly collection dates fell into separate weeks). We started years ago with 4 different collection dates and now, finally everyone will have the SAME day each month – SECOND THURSDAY.

**\*\*\*THIS DOES NOT CHANGE THE ALTERNATING TYPE OF TRASH ALLOWED, ONLY THE DAY**

## Westbury is Planting Trees! We Need You!

The Westbury Civic Club and the Westbury GreenTeam are joining up on Saturday, November 10, from 9AM to Noon to plant trees in 2 different locations in Westbury. We intend to plant a total of 50 trees in Westbury Park and on the West Bellfort esplanade. The City of Houston Forestry Department is working with us to prepare the locations for digging, mulching, and staking. Trees for Houston, a non-profit organization devoted to increasing the tree canopy all over the Houston area, is providing trees in 15 gallon containers. Shovels and gloves will be provided.

**Registration Information:** Pre-register by contacting Hazel Potvin at [hazelnut856@yahoo.com](mailto:hazelnut856@yahoo.com) or 713-729-4568. You must fill out a waiver form required by the City of Houston.

**Date:** Saturday, November 10

**Time:** 9AM-Noon

**Where:** Meet at WCC Office @ 5322 West Bellfort to register and get location assignment.

**What to bring:** Dress for outdoor work and wear closed toe shoes (flip-flops are not recommended). Shovels are provided, but you may bring your own.

**\*Refreshments and water will be provided by the Westbury Civic Club**

## Vote on Election Day: November 6

**Daylight Savings Time Ends**  
At 2AM on Sunday, November 4, clocks fall back an hour to 1AM. We will finally get that extra hour of sleep! Daylight savings begins again on March 10, 2013.

## Willow Waterhole Movie Night Friday, November 30, 7PM-9:30

There will be another *Outdoor Movie Night* featuring "Abbott and Costello Go to Mars" and "Marx Brothers: Animal Crackers." The movies will be projected on an outdoor screen near the South Gazebo. Bring your own blankets and chairs. The gate to Willow Waterhole at Dryad will be opened for visitors to park near the S. Gazebo. Bring a picnic!

## Westbury Civic Club Board of Directors

President	Becky Edmondson	wccpresident@westburycrier.com
Vice President	Marcia Hartman	wccvp@westburycrier.com
Secretary	VACANT	wccsecretary@westburycrier.com
Treasurer	Pamela Schertz	wcctreasurer@westburycrier.com

## Directors at Large

Communications	VACANT	wcccommunications@westburycrier.com
Community Relations	Cindy Chapman	wcccommunityrelations@westburycrier.com
Deed Restrictions	VACANT	wccdeedrestrictions@westburycrier.com
Flood Control & Infrastructure	VACANT	wccflood@westburycrier.com
Greenspace Beautification	Carlos Mata	wccmaintenance@westburycrier.com
Membership	Janie Schexnayder	wccmembership@westburycrier.com
Security	Leslee Cross	wccsecurity@westburycrier.com
Volunteer Coordinator	VACANT	wccvolunteers@westburycrier.com

## Section Directors

Westbury 1	Sylvia Rendon	Westbury1@westburycrier.com
Westbury 2	Austin Chen	Westbury2@westburycrier.com
Westbury 3	VACANT	Westbury3E@westburycrier.com
Westbury 3	Ron Brown	Westbury3W@westburycrier.com
Westbury 4	VACANT	Westbury4E@westburycrier.com
Westbury 4	Vicki Eldridge	Westbury4W@westburycrier.com
Westbury 5	Virginia Livingston	Westbury5E@westburycrier.com
Westbury 5	VACANT	Westbury5W@westburycrier.com
Westbury South	Robert Capps	Westburysouth@westburycrier.com
Parkwest 1	William Grimsinger	Parkwest1@westburycrier.com
Parkwest 2	Peter Zografos	Parkwest2@westburycrier.com
Parkwest 3	Joe Niles	Parkwest3@westburycrier.com

## Westbury Civic Club Office

**Office Hours:** Monday—Thursday 9:30AM— 1:30PM\*, Closed Fridays

**Address:** 5322 W Bellfort Ste. 107 Houston, TX 77035

**Phone:** 713-723-5437      **Office Manager:** Jennifer Edmondson

**Email:** Westburycc@sbcglobal.net

\*The office is closed on all major holidays, weekends (follows HISD calendar)

**FREE NOTARY SERVICE IS AVAILABLE TO ALL WESTBURY RESIDENTS**

## USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

**Westbury Area Patrol Constable Dispatch**

**281-463-6666**

HPD Non-Emergency

713-884-3131

Power Outages (Centerpoint)

713-207-2222

Westbury HPD Storefront

713-726-7126

Platou Community Center

713-726-7107

Poison Control

1-800-764-7661

Street Light Repairs (Give pole number)

713-207-2222

District K Councilmember Larry Green

832-393-3016

District C Councilmember Ellen Cohen

832-393-3004

County Commissioner El Franco Lee

713-755-6111

## City of Houston 311 Hotline

**(for all Non-Emergency Issues)**

Forestry Department

Graffiti

Hazardous Waste Disposal

Heavy Trash

Neighborhood Protection

Parking Management

Recycling

School Crossing Light Repairs

Water and Sewer Repair

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likes on our Facebook  
page, Westbury Houston?**

**WWW.WESTBURYCRIER.COM**

# President's Message

I wasn't sure where to start on this month's message until Cindy Chapman sent me a link about strong communities. I am happy to report that Westbury has six of the seven keys which, according to Scott Doyon of "Better! Cities & Towns", are the keys to creating stronger communities. First on his list is **good governance** and this means trusting that your elected officials and community leaders are listening and engaged and getting somewhere in collaboration. We in Westbury do have a voice and we have leaders that listen to us. The other keys were: **parks and gardens, partnerships, programming, neighborhood-responsive schools, and a tree culture.** **WOW!** Those are all things that we have been doing in our Working on Westbury campaign.

**Parks and gardens?** We built the Westbury Community garden; we have the Friends of Westbury Greenspaces working on Westbury Park and Hager Park; and the Friends of Chimney Rock Park are working on the Platou Community Center. We have a Greenspace committee working on the 50 acres of esplanades.

**Partnerships?** We partner with the Westbury Area Improvement Corporation; the Westbury SuperNeighborhood, which includes our schools and churches and businesses; SWHouston 2000; the Brays Oaks Management District; the Willow Waterhole Greenspace Conservancy; the SuperNeighborhood Alliance; Keep Houston Beautiful; Trees for Houston; and almost all of the departments in the City of Houston, and many other partners. Check out the articles on our partnership activities this past month with Salem Lutheran, Starbucks, and MOCAH (Museum of Cultural Arts Houston).

**Programming?** Yes, we do. We support programs at our Platou Community Center, programs at the Willow Waterhole, Neighborhood Night Out, the White Elephant Sale, and have publicized a new Westbury Mom and Dad club in the newsletter. Look for November's programs on the Calendar page!

**Tree culture?** You bet! Westbury has its own Urban Forest Compact and a Tree Print Proposal that was adopted back in 2008. We have handed out thousands of donated trees. And on November 10th you can join us as we have our first Family Tree planting day (details on the front page).

**Neighborhood responsive schools?** Definitely! We have good public and private schools that provide great educational opportunities for our children and that partner with the community. Westbury Christian School will perform on Nov 4 at the Willow Waterhole "Music in the Park" event.

**What does Westbury lack? Walkable, mixed-use places.** We can walk to our parks, but we need improved commercial/retail establishments for our residents. We are working on this. And now that we have six of the seven keys going for us, commercial retail developers should see the value of investing in our community.

You can read his whole article at this link: <http://bettercities.net/news-opinion/blogs/scott-doyon/18907/seven-keys-stronger-community>

One last thought...what do I think makes a great community? **You!** Great neighbors are what make Westbury such a great place to live.

Wishing all of you a wonderful Thanksgiving, Becky Edmondson.

## November Volunteer Opportunities

\*Scanning Historical Documents at the WCC office, call Jennifer at 713-723-5437

\*Deed restriction revision committee, call Jennifer at 713-723-5437 for more information

\*Willow Waterhole Movie Night Volunteers, Contact Becky Edmondson at westburygreen@gmail.com

\*Nov. 10: Tree Planting, see front page for more information

## WCC BOARD MEETING

November 14, 2012  
7PM  
Westbury Baptist Church RMC109



Becky's grandson got her on the Westbury firetruck at a NNO party!

**"Like" our Facebook page, Westbury Houston!**

## THANK YOU, Phyllis and Ken

Two long-time members of the Westbury Civic Club board of directors did not run for election this fall and we shall dearly miss their presence on the board. Farewell and best wishes on your future endeavors.

**Ken Downey** – served as Section Director for Parkwest 1 for several years and most recently served as Director of Infrastructure – developing the list of capital and SNAP (SuperNeighborhood Action Plan) requests submitted to the COH on behalf of Westbury.

**Phyllis Frye** - has been Secretary to the board and an advocate for Westbury for many years. She was a major force behind implementation of the railroad soundwall and the railroad Quiet Zone. Phyllis also has been an outstanding worker improving the quality of life in Westbury via her diligent efforts to resolve problem properties.

**There are several vacancies on the board of directors. If you are interested in learning more about serving on the board of directors, you are encouraged to contact the WCC office and also to attend monthly board meetings.**

## Board Notes

- Discussed recent car burglaries in neighboring areas
- Becky Edmondson gave an update on the HHA/Garden situation.
- Discussed many upcoming exciting events at the Willow Waterhole including Music in the Park, Movie Night, and possible educational center

# Platou Community Center

11655 Chimney Rock

Monday-Thursday 12PM—8PM; Fridays 11AM-7PM

Supervisor: Dan Reilly, Daniel.reilly@houstontx.gov or 713-726-7107

"Like" us on  
Facebook

## Stretching Exercise Class

Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays,  
9-9:45AM

Improve your flexibility by joining this  
non-strenuous exercise class.



## Aerobics\*\*\*

Tuesdays and Thursdays  
6:30-7:30PM

To register, call 713-726-7107

## Line Dancing Class

Mondays, 1-2 PM

For more information,  
call 713-726-7107

## TOPS: Take Off Pounds Sensibly Weight loss support group

Tuesdays, 5:45 to 7PM

Drop in to preview the program or  
call Dorothy 713-723-4441 or  
Naomi 713-988-2233

\*\*\*In our continued efforts to  
improve the programming and the s  
ervices we offer to the community,  
we are currently accepting  
applications for a paid aerobics or  
Zumba instructor for Tuesday and  
Thursday evenings.

## Recycle Paper at Chimney Rock Park

Please use the paper recycling bins at  
Chimney Rock Park, 11655 Chimney  
Rock. Your newspapers, catalogues,  
magazine, and cardboard help to bring  
in money to benefit programs for  
children and adults at the Platou  
Community Center in the park.

### 2011 Total Recycling Numbers

\*Cubic Yards Landfill Saved:

133.81

\*Total Tons Collected:

42.89



## Quilting Workshop

Tuesdays, 10AM - 3PM

Contact Janie at 713-721-5526

## Games

Wednesdays, 10 AM

Contact Wally at  
713-729-9310



## Portable Projects

Thursdays, 9:30- 11:30 AM

Any kind of handiwork: knitting, crochet,  
needlepoint, card-making Contact Hazel  
at 713-729-4568

## Ballroom Dance Class

Wednesdays

Advanced Class 6-7PM

Beginner Class 7-8PM

Call Marilyn 713-729-9425

## After School Enrichment

This is a **free** childcare program for  
kids ages, 6 to 13, from 3PM to 6PM.  
After homework is completed, the kids  
play games, do crafts, and play outside.

## Westbury Community Garden

Meeting at 6:15PM, Mon. Nov. 19

Public welcome! Come learn about the  
Garden and gardening.

## \*WE ARE IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD\*

We live and work in the neighborhood!



**5223 Kinglet**  
JUST LISTED



**JACKIE MURRAY**

Cell: (713) 825-9179

jackiem@waynemurray.net



Wayne Murray Properties

*Area Residents &  
Neighborhood  
Specialists*



**KENDYL MAURER**

Cell: (281) 904-8199

kendylm@waynemurray.net



**5242 Willowbend**  
JUST LISTED



**11714 Hillcroft**  
Another One Sold!!

**"We sell more, because we do more."**

Call for more information on featured listings!



**5047 Redstart**  
Another One Sold!!



**5914 Rutherglenn**  
\$429,500



**10815 Ashcroft**  
\$319,900



**5623 Rutherglenn**  
SOLD IN 7 DAYS!!!



**11114 Ashcroft**  
\$289,900



**5131 Torchlight**  
\$189,900

# What's Happening in Westbury

## November 2012 Events & Meetings Calendar

<b>Sun 4</b>	<b>Willow Waterhole Live Music Event 4-6PM</b> For more information, see page 20 Featuring Westbury Christian School music students
<b>Tues 6</b>	<b>2012 Presidential and Local Election Day</b> Get out and vote!
<b>Sat 10</b>	<b>Family Tree Planting Day 9AM-Noon</b> See Front Page for details. Call Hazel Potvin at 713-729-4568 if interested in volunteering
<b>Wed 14</b>	<b>WAIC/Super Neighborhood #37 Meeting 8:30-10AM</b> Salem Lutheran—4930 W. Bellfort Open to all Westbury residents!
<b>Wed 14</b>	<b>WCC Board Meeting 7PM– 9PM ***NEW LOCATION***</b> Westbury Baptist Church—RM C103 Open to all Westbury residents!
<b>Sat 17</b>	<b>RAIN DATE FOR WESTBURY WHITE ELEPHANT SALE</b> 8AM-NOON at Westbury United Methodist If sale happened on Oct 27 then no need for rain date.
<b>Sat 17</b>	<b>Willow Waterhole Monthly Audubon Society Bird Survey 8AM</b> Meet at The Gathering Place parking lot—5310 S. Willow
<b>Mon 19</b>	<b>Westbury Community Garden Meeting 6:15PM</b> Platou Community Center— 11655 Chimney Rock
<b>Mon 19</b>	<b>Brays Bayou Association Meeting 7:30PM</b> The Gathering Place—5310 S. Willow
<b>21- 23</b>	<b>WCC Office will be closed for the Thanksgiving holiday. The office will reopen November 26 at 9:30AM. Have a safe and Happy Thanksgiving!</b>
<b>Fri 30</b>	<b>Willow Waterhole Movie Night 7PM-9:30PM</b> For more info, see page 20
<b>X</b>	<b>NO WCC Board Meeting in December</b>

## Important Trash & Recycling Information

- ♻️ Trash cans need to be on curb by 7AM Thursday
- ♻️ Trash cans must be removed by 10PM Thursday
- ♻️ **Trash** cans must be placed at least 3 feet apart
- ♻️ Trash cans must be stored out of sight.
- ♻️ Yard waste **MUST** be in the correct biodegradable bags
- ♻️ No heavy trash out before 6PM the Friday before pick-up date
- ♻️ **YARD WASTE** is not considered tree waste & won't be collected with heavy trash. It is collected on regular Thursday trash day as long as it is in the correct recyclable bags
- ♻️ Call 311 for all trash questions and complaints
- ♻️ Nearby Trash Depositories and Recycling Centers:  
**SW Trash Depository/Recycling Ctr -10785 Southwest Frwy**  
Hours: Wed.—Sun. 9AM to 6PM; Accepts Junk Waste, Tree Waste and Recyclables. Current utility bill needed.  
**Environmental Service Center - 11500 South Post Oak**  
Hours: Tues/Wed. 9AM-3PM; 2nd Saturday 9AM-1PM  
Accepts Hazardous Household Waste & Electronic Waste
- ♻️ Refer to [www.westburycrier.com](http://www.westburycrier.com) or [www.houstontx.gov](http://www.houstontx.gov) or more trash and recycling information

## Planning Calendar

**Holiday Lights/Decorations Judging in early December. Exact dates will be published in the December Crier.**

**Dec. 15- Deck The Halls Parade**

## November 2012 Heavy Trash & Recycling Calendar

<b>Thurs 1</b>	Curbside Recycling All of Westbury
<b>Thurs 8</b>	Heavy Trash— TREE WASTE ONLY <b>ALL OF WESTBURY</b>
<b>Thurs 15</b>	Curbside Recycling All of Westbury
<b>Thurs 29</b>	Curbside Recycling All of Westbury

## December 2012 Heavy Trash Calendar

<b>THURS 13</b>	Heavy Trash— JUNK WASTE <b>ALL OF WESTBURY</b>
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**ATTENTION ALL RESIDENTS:**  
EFFECTIVE **NOVEMBER 2012**,  
THE HEAVY TRASH SCHEDULE WILL BE  
CHANGED. **ALL OF WESTBURY**  
WILL NOW BE PICKED UP ON THE  
**2ND THURSDAY** OF THE MONTH.  
This change is only for the pick up day,  
not for the type of trash picked up.

For monthly breakdown of trash type, please see chart below.

## City of Houston Heavy Trash Schedule

<b>January</b>	<b>Tree Waste ONLY</b>	<b>July</b>	<b>Tree Waste ONLY</b>
<b>February</b>	Junk Waste	<b>August</b>	Junk Waste
<b>March</b>	<b>Tree Waste ONLY</b>	<b>September</b>	<b>Tree Waste ONLY</b>
<b>April</b>	Junk Waste	<b>October</b>	Junk Waste
<b>May</b>	<b>Tree Waste ONLY</b>	<b>November</b>	<b>Tree Waste ONLY</b>
<b>June</b>	Junk Waste	<b>December</b>	Junk Waste

# Westbury Park

## Help Westbury Park Get a New Shade Structure

A new Westbury Park Playground is coming soon! See the design for one of the playground structures pictured below. There is an additional Toddler Playground included but it is not pictured. Westbury Park is the park located near Parker Elementary. The existing playground equipment will be demolished by the city in a few months and construction of the new playground area will begin in late 2012. City taxpayer funds will purchase and install the play equipment; however, the city does not provide shade covers similar to what has been built at the nearby Godwin Park playground. A "Friends of Westbury Greenspaces" committee has been created to raise additional funds to purchase a shade cover similar to what has been built at Godwin Park (see picture on the right). The neighborhood around Godwin raised money to build their shade structure, and **we can do it, too!**

Playgrounds are attractive assets to our community and play structures with shade will encourage our kids or grandkids to exercise outside even in hot weather. Please consider making a tax deductible contribution. Many employers offer matching gifts for community projects such as this. All amounts are appreciated and donors contributing \$250 or more will have their names engraved on a plaque placed at the playground as a permanent thank you.

Please use the form below. The WAIC is a 501(c)(3) organization which frequently partners with the Westbury Civic Club for improvement projects. Donations will be tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. If you would like more information about fundraising or would like to help with the effort, then please contact Westbury residents Bill Burhans ([burhans56@yahoo.com](mailto:burhans56@yahoo.com)) or Melanie Rosen ([rosenworks3@gmail.com](mailto:rosenworks3@gmail.com)).



Main Playground  
(Ages 6-12)



**Donations as of  
10/21/12**

**\$10,148 from Westbury  
residents and \$1,250 in  
matching grants from  
employers.**

**Total= \$11,398**

### Friends of Westbury Greenspaces Donation Form

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Donation Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_ \* (if amount is \$250 or more please fill out below)

\*Names on plaque: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail donations to: WAIC/Friends of Westbury Greenspaces, 5322 W. Bellfort, Suite 107, Houston, TX 77035.

Checks should be made payable to the Westbury Area Improvement Corporation (WAIC)/Friends of Westbury Greenspaces.

\$\$\$\$ Free Copy of Tax Return on CD \$\$\$\$  
 \$\$\$\$ Free Review of Prior Year Return \$\$\$\$

**Pam Schertz, CPA**

Small Business Accounting & Tax Services  
 5322 West Bellfort, Suite 211  
 Houston TX 77035

**281-974-2096**

**Westbury  
Executive Office  
Business Center**

We support growing businesses

11415 Chimney Rock  
Houston, TX 77035

Phone (713)729-1122  
Fax (713)729-5431  
E-mail: [Rieger@riegercpa.com](mailto:Rieger@riegercpa.com)

# Westbury Community Garden

## Salem Lutheran Volunteers Work at the WCG

Volunteers from Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church worked in the Westbury Community Garden as part of their church annual day of service on Sunday, 9/30/2012. The motto for the day of service was "God's Work. Our Hands." The six volunteers mulched all of the trees in the "North 40" orchard and pulled weeds in the fruit orchard area. They also cleared weeds from the gravel walkway to the Education Pavilion. These hard-working volunteers enjoyed being in the garden so much that they worked longer than they had originally planned to. Thank you, Salem Lutheran Volunteers!



**Top Photo:**  
Volunteers (L to R):  
Louise Chalupa,  
Jared Martin,  
Nathaniel Martin,  
Derek Mauzy, Alex  
Huff, and Jan Huff

**Right Photo:** Alex  
Huff showing off  
the back of his  
t-shirt

## Gift of Art for the WCG

Nearly 10,000 managers and higher-ups with the Starbucks coffee-store chain assembled in Houston to kick off the company's massive Global Leadership Conference in early October. Working with the City of Houston's Department of Neighborhoods, the WCG was chosen as a work site for Starbucks volunteers. Due to the turmoil caused by the Houston Housing Authority, the project was pulled in mid August after our first meeting with the HHA. This meant not only would we not have the 4,000 hours of volunteer time but that the expansion of the garden would be put on hold. We have to commend Starbucks for not abandoning us and we are currently working on a modified expansion plan directly with them. We love you Starbucks!

But their volunteer commitment did not end completely, as the indoor portion of the volunteer initiative still took place and our project stayed intact. Hosted in the George R. Brown Convention center, over 500 Starbucks execs and the phenomenal MOCAH team came together to create a most artful day. MOCAH's (Museum of Cultural Arts Houston) mission is to use art and creativity as tools for social awareness and community development. Reginald Adams and the Queens of Creativity, led by Rhonda Adams, created hundreds of beautiful and useful signs for the garden. These range from small plant identification signs to large informational signs and even some of MOCAH's famous mosaic tile pieces.

Jayashree Soman and Becky Edmondson, both gardeners and Westbury residents, attended the morning session. The energy, creativity and enthusiasm of the Starbucks partners was incredible and infectious. The talented artists of MOCAH helped everyone find their inner creative voice. Watch for a notice about when the signs will be installed in the garden.



Above: WCG Members hold up signs made at event

Left: From L to R: Becky Edmondson, Reginald Adams (MOCHA) & Sam Turner

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*Serving The Westbury Area for 5 Years*

Texas Registered Builder #44786

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## The Westbury Community Garden is Still in Danger

In August, surveyors from the Houston Housing Authority (HHA) were discovered on the Westbury Community Garden (WCG) site, which is leased from the HHA. After queries were made by our City Councilmember Larry Green, it was discovered that the HHA is considering building about 250 low-income housing units on the site leased by the WCG and that the HHA had also earmarked funds in its proposed 2013 capital budget to purchase Hillcroft frontage to make the proposed apartment site larger.

The award-winning Westbury Community Garden provides a valuable service to the Westbury area and preserves valuable greenspace. It recently won yet another award (see page 11). Furthermore, there is negligible need for low-income housing in our area since the surrounding area has more than 23,000 apartment units, most of which are low-income units. Due to high vacancy rates, **thousands** of these low-income units are available for rent at any given time, including more than 300 vacant units at the adjacent huge low-income apartment complex (The Plaza).

WCC President Becky Edmondson met with HHA President & CEO Tory Gunsolley on October 16 and according to Becky it was a good meeting. The HHA is upset that they have received so much negative publicity and feedback on the topic. Mr. Gunsolley sent an email that stated the following: "First, we don't have plans yet. We are conducting due diligence into the possibility of building on the seven acres we own. We may decide not to build there, we may decide to build there, we may decide to sell the land, we don't know yet and that is why we undertake due diligence. Many of the objections and comments raised by the community to date have been considered and are being considered as a part of this due diligence process. We have appreciated this input and it is helping us consider many issues like the number of vacant apartments in the neighborhood, the school performance and potential overcrowding and the lack of retail, especially the lack of a grocery store. We have heard you. We are not rushing to take action but are doing our research."

The HHA claims that it is undecided whether it will build on the garden site and that there is no time table; however, the HHA kept funding to acquire the adjoining Hillcroft frontage property in its capital plan – despite **hundreds** of complaints from the community. Mr. Gunsolley said that the HHA would sell the 7 acre garden site if the HHA did not build on it, but he was unsure if the site had been appraised. He stated that the HHA would be willing to consider selling the land to our coalition to preserve the Westbury Community Garden, if the HHA decided not to build on it.

The fact that the Hillcroft property acquisition was left in the plan for 2013 is worrisome. If there is no time table and no decision has been made then why was it important that the acquisition be left in the plan for 2013? You can read our letter and the HHA response on the following pages.

**BEFORE** the Community Garden....



**AFTER** the Community Garden....



Stay updated through our website, [www.westburycrier.com](http://www.westburycrier.com) or our Facebook page, **Westbury Houston.** Come to the next WCC Board Meeting on Nov. 14 at 7PM at Westbury Baptist RMC109

**Welcomes New Clients! 10% off boarding with Ad**

**FoNDReN**  
**5 STaR KeNNeLS**  
**281-835-4445**

Boarding  
Grooming  
Training  
Doggie Day Care  
Dog Park  
Supplies

**14420 Fondren, One block South of Beltway 8**  
[www.fondren5starkennels.com](http://www.fondren5starkennels.com)

## Meadows Preschool

Fun-tastic learning experiences  
Babies—Pre K.  
Professional teaching balanced  
w/ nurture  
**713.255.7025**  
[cwehmeyer@wmbc.org](mailto:cwehmeyer@wmbc.org)

**Meadows Preschool**  
*The Little School with a Big Heart*  
4300 W. Bellfort  
Houston, TX 77035



# What can YOU do to Help the Westbury Community Garden?

## What can you do to help save the Westbury Community Garden?

- 1. SIGN the online petition. Thanks to the 1746 who have signed and left so many uplifting comments!** If you have not already done so, please sign the online petition to Save the Westbury Community Garden (go to Change.org and search for Westbury Garden). Encourage all your friends and relatives to sign the online petition. You do not have to live in Westbury to sign the petition. SIGN if you love community gardens, or SIGN if you want to preserve precious urban greenspace, or SIGN if you hate wasteful federal spending on unnecessary housing. If you don't have online access, then a paper version of the petition is available for signing in the WCC office.
- 2. Think about ways to make this permanent greenspace.** We will need to raise upwards of half a million dollars to purchase the property.
- 3. CONTACT US Representative Al Green** (the garden is in his congressional district) to state your concerns. The Houston phone number is 713-383-9234.
- 4. PLEDGE your financial support to the acquisition of this seven acres.** It may be too early to actually start collecting money, but it is not too early to verbally pledge your support. In fact one resident sent an email pledging a \$10,000 personal donation to help acquire the property. Whether you want to contribute \$5 or \$5,000, send an email to westburygreen@gmail.com.

### Here is what the WCC and our allies are doing to save the Westbury Community Garden:

1. We continue our political advocacy on behalf of the garden. Several city councilmembers have already visited the garden and endorse preserving it: CMs Larry Green, Steven Costello, Andrew Burks, and Jack Christie. CM Bradford will be visiting soon. State Representative Borris Miles supports our garden and urban gardening. We hope to soon discuss the topic in person with Congressman Al Green.
2. We continue to publicize the topic, as illustrated by several front page articles in the local weekly "Southwest News"
3. The garden leadership team operates the garden with an optimistic view of the future and continues to develop a master plan for the property.
4. The board of the Brays Oaks Management District has been formally requested to keep this 7-acre property in the BOMD Parks Master Plan and to seek funds to purchase the property in the near future.

The Houston Housing Authority's corporate promise is "to effect positive change in lives and communities citywide ... while changing ... communities for the better."

**Neither the proposed acquisition of the Hillcroft property nor the building of a housing project is in the best interest of Westbury. The WCC passed a motion to oppose the building of the proposed affordable housing project on the site of the Westbury Community Garden. The reasons for our opposition are:**

- The building site is adjacent to an existing low income apartment complex of 940 units at a reported occupancy rate of 60%. The need for more inventory is non-existent as there are over 100 complexes with over 23,000 units with thousands of vacancies in the area. We reaffirm our position of no new apartments and instead encourage the rehabilitation of existing stock.
- Due to its proximity to the large low income apartment complex this would only serve to further concentrate poverty in an area with little in the way of services.
- For the thirty years that the HHA has owned this property it has been park space and is now the site of perhaps the largest, most successful community garden in Houston that has won both local and national awards. It is important to preserve green space.
- The Hillcroft property listed for acquisition is main thoroughfare frontage on Hillcroft and is prime for real retail development. We need stores, not more housing units. This area is a food desert.



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# Letter to the HHA CEO & President by Cindy Chapman

***I think it is very possible that some persons at the HHA and at the city have underestimated the true affection and pride that the Westbury Community Garden engenders in Westbury as a whole.*** Even people who despise gardening have very positive feelings for the Westbury Community Garden. Some years ago, the Westbury area underwent a decline. Our commercial properties are shabby and many are boarded up. One of the most prominent properties in Westbury, the Westbury Square commercial property, was once a source of pride and is widely considered by experts to have been "50 years before its time" as a pioneer as a mixed-use living and commercial center. Unfortunately, the owner of Westbury Square has been in litigation with the city for years regarding the conditions at that location. Westbury High School only recently has rebounded from the stigma of being a LowPerforming school for many years, although much work remains to be done at WHS. Meanwhile, those of us who love the area, have been working overtime to build community spirit and to resolve the issues within our power to work on.

We have given away thousands of trees. We have organized clean up days. We have organized as a SuperNeighborhood and have begun working together on behalf of the larger community. We fought to keep our local city community center from being closed last year. We are currently advocating to get transportation provided from local schools to that community center, so that children whose parents can not afford the after-school programs can have access to the free programs and free suppers available at the city community center. Last year we successfully fought to save the METRO bus route which is the ONLY bus route which services the apartments and the nursing home and the mental health day program (The Gathering Place) located on Gasmer and South Willow to the east of Westbury High School. We have been strong advocates to improve the programs at Westbury High School and to get much-needed campus improvements included in the current HISD bond proposal.

And then we get to the garden.... Westbury has a large number of Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists. We have a Westbury Garden Club which maintains several sites in Westbury. Our "green" activities such as tree give-aways and tree plantings have always enjoyed strong community support. We also have several residents who are active in the Urban Harvest program. **Although the Westbury Community Garden is now sponsored by the Westbury SuperNeighborhood and the Westbury Civic Club and the 501c3 Westbury Area Improvement Corporation, outsiders may not realize or understand that a group of dedicated gardeners themselves conceived the concept of the Westbury Community Garden.** They searched far and wide to find a location in the area to build a community garden. They held numerous meetings to figure out how such a garden might be organized and financed. They came to the Westbury Civic Club and said "We have a dream." I was President of the Westbury Civic Club at the time, and I knew nothing about community gardens. However, the WCC board and I knew these gardeners and dreamers because many were long-time community activists and volunteers. We were excited by the vision and the dream and we had faith that if anyone could be successful in building a great community garden, then the team which proposed it to us could do it. The Westbury Civic Club and the Westbury Area Improvement Corporation and the SuperNeighborhood agreed to be sponsors and to aid these gardeners with our financial support and with our access to publicity and our connections. The dream grew, and then the dream became reality, and the reality was an even bigger and better community garden than we had dared even to hope could be built. Many of the community leaders and many residents in Westbury have helped build the Westbury Community Garden with their own hands - stacking concrete blocks, shoveling dirt and mulch, sweating, getting bit by fire ants, and getting sunburned. Our residents take great pride in the local and national awards received by the garden and the numerous favorable media articles written about our garden. The garden is a visible symbol of what Westbury can do as a community when we work together. Neutral parties such as City Councilmembers Larry Green, Steven Costello, Jack Christie and Andrew Burks support saving the Westbury Community Garden because they have visited the garden and have seen for

themselves that the Westbury Community Garden is exactly the type project that the city of Houston has been trying to encourage in our communities.

I think another aspect of the garden which is not fully appreciated by outsiders is that from the very onset of planning the garden, those dreamers wanted the garden to be inclusive and welcoming. One reason they specifically wanted the site was because of its proximity to the impoverished children who attend Foerster Elementary and the opportunities to help educate children about gardening. Membership in the garden is open to anyone who will follow the garden rules and pays a modest fee to help cover the water bill. You don't have to live in Westbury and you certainly don't have to live in a Westbury single-family home to participate at the garden. A Spanish translator is provided at the monthly meetings because some of the gardeners have limited English proficiency. We have heard whispers and innuendos that some at the city and the HHA think that opposition to HHA low-income housing on the site of the Westbury Community Garden is racially motivated. Goodness gracious, what a bunch of baloney. Westbury is one of the most diverse places in Houston, which is one of the most diverse places in the nation. Westbury and Houston have significantly changed over the past 20 years.

An additional frustration this week is all the coverage in the local media about the Starbucks volunteers while Houston hosts a Starbucks convention. The Westbury Community Garden was originally scheduled to host about 1,000 volunteers this week from Starbucks. We were going to add 50% more garden beds to handle the needs of our waiting list. We were also going to plant an acre of fruit trees to serve the local food pantry at Bethel's Heavenly Hands (a program run by the huge Bethel's Family Church which is located about two blocks from the Westbury Community Garden), and we had planned to build a Children's Garden area. At least one very small part of the Starbucks volunteer effort is happening for the garden this week - new signs painted by Starbucks volunteers with guidance by MOCAM (Museum of Cultural Arts - Houston)

If folks in Westbury act as if they are mother bears protecting their cubs from danger, then it is because many folks in Westbury see the garden as a creation that they have birthed and nurtured and is worth protecting. If the danger to the garden comes in the form of affordable housing potentially being built in an area which has a paucity of highly-desired greenspace, plus an excess of low-income housing and a glut of vacancies and a serious need for more commercial and retail businesses, then the protectiveness changes to frustration that the garden is endangered by something that is unneeded and unwanted.

If the folks at the HHA believe that we in Westbury have over-reacted, I acknowledge that we have expended much effort to keep our residents and our allies aware of the situation. That is not an easy task to do, but we have an obligation to our residents to keep them informed about issues which are important to them and to our area of town. We would be negligent to do otherwise. However, we have striven to be as factual as possible with the knowledge that has been available to us. I hope you can acknowledge that many other communities would have reacted with far more emotion and far more frenzy than we have. As a matter of fact, the only complaint I received about the WCC September Annual Meeting was that some residents wished more time on the agenda had been spent talking about how to fight the HHA and to save the community garden. I have heard feedback that the most frequently discussed topic during the national Neighborhood Night Out (NNO) block parties here in Westbury on Tuesday night was about the HHA and the community garden situation. I think the HHA should be profusely thanking the leadership of Becky Edmondson for her efforts to keep the situation calm and under control.

Best regards,

Cindy Chapman

Westbury Civic Club - Director of Community Relations

# Community Garden Wins Award!

## Westbury Community Garden Wins 2012 Community Stars Award

We are pleased to announce that the Mayor's office has selected the Westbury Community Garden as a recipient of one of the 2012 Community Stars awards, to be honored at a special ceremony on November 8<sup>th</sup> at the Houston Office of the Drug Enforcement Administration. They applauded our efforts to maintain a high quality of life for our neighborhood as we strive to make Westbury a safe, healthy and drug-free community. Annually, Houston Crackdown, the anti-drug division of the Mayor's Office of Public Safety and Homeland Security, along with the Houston Office of the Drug Enforcement Administration and Clear Channel Communications, highlight local agencies, organizations, and individuals for their outstanding efforts to prevent substance use among youth and adults throughout the greater Houston-Harris County region. Donald Perkins, District K Chief of Staff, nominated the Westbury Civic Club/WAIC based on our ongoing effort with the Westbury Community Garden. Marcia Hartman, Vice President of the WCC, completed the application. The Westbury Community Garden, with its slogan of "Growing Community Through Gardening", brings so much to our neighborhood and we are grateful to have been recognized by the 2012 Community Star award. We thank the many gardeners who have contributed their time working with area youth. The gardeners do much more than growing tomatoes; they work in the garden, not to earn prizes and awards, but also to better the Westbury community.

### Below is a portion of the award-winning application submitted.

The Westbury Community Garden serves to educate adults and children about good nutrition and ecology, strengthen community spirit, provide organic food, and serve as a gathering place for the community. Located virtually between the single-family houses of the community and a 940-unit low-income apartment complex, the Garden has brought together diverse groups in our community, and provided a safe, peaceful gathering place in an area that sadly needed it. **It is our belief that teaching children about nature and giving them a sense of pride in what they can accomplish with their hands, helps keep them focused on the essential values in life—and away from drugs.** Activities in the Westbury Community Garden have kept the nearby children away from a drug-ridden city park on the other side of the complex, and provided supervision for them in a place where adults are constantly coming and going.

All of the children, who have worked on creating and maintaining the Westbury Community Garden and have watched it grow and expand, have learned valuable life lessons. It has taught them what they can accomplish through their own hard work and effort. This is a lesson that can carry over into their school work and their dreams. They are learning first hand that they have the power and ability within themselves to do anything they want if they are willing to work for it. The Westbury Community Garden uses fruit, vegetables and habitat gardens to bring the entire community together and to improve the health, nutrition and quality of life for Westbury residents. It has resulted in a heightened sense of community, a safer environment for our children, and an increased sense of responsibility towards each other. We are "The Village" when it comes to raising our children, and Westbury Community Garden is an important link in that process.

## Fall Gardening

Fall is the perfect time to start a wide variety of herbs and vegetables in a cool season garden. Fall and winter are a great time to grow many herbs, including: cilantro, parsley, oregano, dill, and fennel. This time of year is also Houston's "salad season". Lettuce, spinach, arugula, cress, and kale all sprout easily, mature quickly, and thrive in our mild fall and winter temperatures. Peas, carrots, onions, garlic, beets, broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, and a variety of other vegetables like the cooler temperatures, too.

If you are interested in starting a cool season garden, Urban Harvest, Houston's non-profit garden teaching and advocacy organization, offers hands-on classes for new and seasoned gardeners; some classes are taught onsite at the Westbury Community Garden. Urban Harvest's website ([www.urbanharvest.org](http://www.urbanharvest.org)) is a great resource for Houston-specific gardening information. Urban Harvest's phone number is 713-880-5540. The Westbury Community Garden's website, ([www.westburycommunitygarden.org](http://www.westburycommunitygarden.org)), compiles the experiences of our neighborhood gardeners and also offers garden information.

[WWW.WESTBURYCOMMUNITYGARDEN.ORG](http://WWW.WESTBURYCOMMUNITYGARDEN.ORG)

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# Crime/Security

## Crime Statistics for Westbury Super Neighborhood 37\* 30 days preceding October 22, 2012

	Single-Family Home	Apt/Condo	Commercial Property	Public Areas	Totals
Burglary	8	6	0	0	14
Theft	2	3	6	1	12
Auto Theft	1	5	0	1	7
Robbery	0	0	0	1	1
Assault	0	1	1	0	2
Rape	0	0	0	0	0
Murder	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>36</b>

\*Area bounded by: S. Post Oak, US 90/S. Main, utility easement north of Willowbend and drainage bayou, west of Braewick

### Single Family Residential Crime Locations (30 days preceding 10/22/12)

10900	Atwell	Burglary
5200	Benning	Burglary
5700	Benning	Burglary
11100	Braewick	Burglary
5500	Briarbend	Theft
11500	Chimney Rock	Burglary
5700	Farwell	Auto Theft
6000	Fontenelle	Burglary
10800	Moonlight	Burglary
10600	Mullins	Theft
5900	W. Bellfort	Burglary

## \*\*\* Westbury Residents Security Alert \*\*\*

Deputy Addison of the Westbury Area Patrol came to the WCC office on October 16 to report the following information. The Office Manager from the Meyerland Community Improvement Association also called the WCC office on October 17 to make sure we had the information as the crimes are happening in our general vicinity.

There have been a string of burglaries to motor vehicles in the neighborhoods around us. **The burglaries are occurring to cars; most of which are in the garage at the time of the incident.** The criminals are entering the garages through open or unlocked pedestrian doors or garage doors and searching through the vehicles for any items of value. In 2 days there were 10 of these crimes reported. They were mostly reported in Marilyn Estates around the 5400 and 5500 blocks of the streets north of Willowbend, the upper boundary of Westbury. The criminals have been moving southward.

**Please** do not leave valuables in your vehicles, even if your car is parked in the garage. It is also a good idea to keep the pedestrian doors to your garage locked. If we make it difficult for criminals to commit crimes, they will move on.

If you see any suspicious activity related to this (or in general), please call the Precinct 5 Constables dispatch immediately at 281-463-6666 and report what you saw in as much detail as possible.

### Security tip of the month:

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# Dues Form

## 2012 Westbury Civic Club Dues

**\*Please send  
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 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_  
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## Thank You Westbury!

We greatly appreciate the residents who used the past *CRIER* issues to submit their 2012 dues.

We have reached our 2012 WAP goal!  
 Can you continue to help raise money to get an extra deputy?

**Make checks payable to:  
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 Mail to:  
 P.O. Box 975182  
 Dallas, TX 75397-5182  
 Online payment:  
 paypal.com—Send Money to  
 westburycc@sbcglobal.net  
 Make sure to include your  
 address or account number**

Westbury Civic Club Membership	\$40	\$
Greenspace Beautification	\$25	\$
Westbury Area Patrol	\$230	\$
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$295</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>Additional Contributions:</b>		
Westbury Civic Club		\$
Greenspace Beautification		\$
Westbury Area Patrol		\$
Westbury HPD Storefront		\$
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$</b>

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# Attention Westbury Families: This Page is for YOU!

## Westbury Mom and Dad Club

Hello, Moms and Dads of Westbury!

Have you noticed the oodles of young parents strolling their tots around our tree-lined streets? Have you seen young families that you would love to introduce to your own young family, but are just not sure how to go about it? Well, now there is an easy way to meet dozens of families all at once: The Westbury Mom & Dad Club!

The WMDC is a dynamic group designed to help the young Moms and Dads of Westbury connect with each other. As a network, it will be versatile enough to meet every need. If you want a weekly mom meet-up, we're for you. If you just want company on that occasional trip to the zoo, we're for you. If you want a dads-only event, we're the group. A toy co-op? Look no further. If you want it to happen, this is the club that will help make it happen.

So, please, if you have at least one child that is 4 years of age or under, come join us at our next event. You won't regret it!

Email [westburymoms@yahoo.com](mailto:westburymoms@yahoo.com) for more information. We look forward to meeting you and your wee ones!

## Fun Family Events Around Houston

**63rd Annual Holiday Parade— November 22, 9AM, Downtown Houston.** This is a long-time Houston tradition! Presented by H-E-B. The parade is free to the general public. Make sure to get there early for prime spots along the route!

## Fun Family Events In & Around Westbury

**November 4—Willow Waterhole Live Music Event 4PM**  
For more info, see page 20.

**November 10—Family Tree Planting Day, 9AM-Noon.**  
Plant a tree for the future with the future generation! All the information is on the front page! Come let the kids experience nature and give back to the earth!

**Nov. 30—Movie Night @ Willow Waterhole, 7-9:30PM**  
Kids and adults will enjoy classic movies projected on an outdoor screen near the "South Gazebo". **FREE.** GREAT FAMILY EVENT! More info, see page 20.

The first movie night held in October was a huge success! There were kids and families of all ages. If you want, come early and bring a picnic dinner and chairs. The WWGC provided snacks and popcorn at the last event and should again. Come out and enjoy a nice evening under the stars watching some old classics!



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# METRO Referendum on the 2012 Ballot

## METRO'S BALLOT ITEM: GENERAL MOBILITY FUND

Years ago, METRO began funding the General Mobility Program (GMP) which gives 25% of its 1 cent sales tax back to the city, county and 14 small cities to pay for street improvements and related projects. The other 75 percent of METRO's sales tax revenue goes toward METRO programs, including Park & Ride, bus service, light rail, vanpool, HOV-lane operations and METROLift. The current GMP agreement expires on September 30, 2014, so a new referendum will be held this year to determine the fate of the GMP program.

You will be voting FOR or AGAINST the following item at the bottom of the 2012 ballot.

**THE CONTINUED DEDICATION OF UP TO 25% OF METRO'S SALES AND USE TAX REVENUES FOR STREET IMPROVEMENTS AND RELATED PROJECTS FOR THE PERIOD OCTOBER 1, 2014 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2025 AS AUTHORIZED BY LAW AND WITH NO INCREASE IN THE CURRENT RATE OF METRO'S SALES AND USE TAX.**

**What "FOR" means:** Harris County, Houston, and the other municipalities within the METRO service area have reached a compromise about the General Mobility Program (GMP) between now and 2025. If the referendum is approved by voters, then the compromise will be implemented. The GMP will continue and the incremental increases after 2014 will be shared by both the municipalities and METRO, with METRO spending their 50% of the incremental increase on buses, bus shelters, and to pay down debt but not for rail. Work would continue on the three light rail lines already in the works: the North, East, and Southeast Lines. Construction of the University and 90A light rail lines could end up being delayed until at least 2025, when another referendum would be called.

**Who endorses the "FOR" position?** Harris County, the City of Houston, METRO Chairman Gilbert Garcia, and the Houston Chronicle.

**What "AGAINST" means:** If the ballot item fails, then the METRO board will decide whether to keep all the income currently going to the GMP, or how to split up the money between the various entities which currently receive GMP funding. The funding issue may end up being settled via litigation or in the Texas Legislature.

**Who endorses the "AGAINST" position?** Houston Tomorrow, Citizen's Transportation Coalition and rail supporters.

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# HCC Bond on the 2012 Ballot

The Houston Community College (HCC) system has proposed a bond referendum for Houston voters to consider in November. WCC President Becky Edmondson attended one meeting on the topic, and three other directors (Cindy Chapman, Virginia Livingston and Vice-President Marcia Hartman) attended the September "SWHouston 2000 Bi-Monthly Breakfast" to hear HCC Trustee Richard Schechter speak on the topic. The following information is taken from that presentation and from data on the HCC website.

## Q - How is Houston affected by HCC and the proposed bond referendum?

A - HCC is #1 in Texas for 2-year degrees and technical certificates (*Community College Week*, July 9, 2012). HCC now serves 40% more students than it did 5 years ago and it is difficult for students to schedule their classes since HCC is at 92% capacity. HCC proposes to renovate facilities and to build new facilities.

## Q - How would Westbury and SW Houston be affected if proposal is approved?

A - The **Coleman College Health Science Center** in the Texas Medical Center was built for 1500 students and currently has more than 3500 students earning associate degrees and certificates in 20 health science fields, but potential students are being turned away due to lack of space. The biggest single cost allocation in the bond proposal (\$120 million) is to build a new HealthCare Education and Early College Building at the Coleman campus. The popular **West Loop HCC campus** will get campus improvements. Additionally, "Workforce Programs" prepare students with knowledge and skills for immediate entry into the workforce. There is a serious need for these programs in our area and HCC proposes to construct a **new Workforce Building and Campus within the Brays Oaks Management District (BOMD)**, which includes Westbury and our neighbors to the west. This new campus would serve up to 5,000 students.

## Q - How much money are we talking about?

A - The last HCC bond election was in 2003. HCC is seeking approval for \$425 million in bonds for new facilities, improvements, and acquisitions. Homeowners with a 65+ Homestead Exemption will not see any change in property tax. A home with the standard HCC homestead exemption and valued at \$150,000 will see an estimated maximum annual tax **increase** of about \$31; meanwhile, a home valued at \$200,000 will see an estimated increase of \$42.37.

## COH Public Works Spoke at SuperNeighborhood Meeting

ReBuild Houston and City of Houston Public Works came and made presentations about COH Departments in Streets and Drainage and Re-Build Houston. They had several helpful tips and suggestions. The Public Works Department uses 311 data to help determine where problems are in the city and the severity of problems.

Use 311 for ALL your road concerns.

"Potholes" are bowl-shaped holes and are NOT the same as a "skin patch" needed. They have different crews that respond, so make sure to refer to the problem by the right term.

If after NORMAL rainfall, you have stormwater coming over the curb, then call 311 and report it. They will do a study of the area drainage and will investigate. It could be very helpful to take photographs for when you are contacted by Public Works.

Uneven lanes or separation of lanes is a safety issue and will be responded to more quickly. Report to 311.

When reporting a problem to 311, please get a service number, provide your contact information, and request a "callback" from the city about the status of your complaint. You must provide your contact information and request a callback to get a status report.



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## HISD Bond Election Overview

The Houston Independent School District (HISD) has proposed a bond package for Houston voters to consider in November involving 1.9 billion dollars. To learn more, please attend the non-partisan Voter's Forum on October 18 sponsored by Southwest Houston 2000 and the Brays Oaks Management District in the auditorium of Westbury High School from 7 – 8:30 PM. Or go to the HISD website.

### Q – How is Houston affected?

A - Thirty-eight (38) schools would be rebuilt or modified, with a focus on high schools. Money is also proposed for technology, restroom, and security improvements across the district.

### Q – How will Westbury and Southwest Houston be affected?

A – Leaders in the Westbury community have been advocating for improvements at Parker and WHS for many years. The building for **Parker Elementary** here in Westbury will be entirely replaced and **Westbury High School** will see a replacement of the oldest part of the building, and a new wing will be built to house the 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Academy, which is currently entirely housed in trailers. Also, the Westbury High School campus will be enlarged through the acquisition of land next door where two apartment complexes are located. The additional land will be used for a regional athletic facility. Some local high school students attend other HISD schools which will also be improved by the proposed bond package: the nationally renowned **High School for the Performing and Visual Arts** will get a new campus, the nationally renowned **DeBakey School for Health Professions** will get a new campus, and **Bellaire High School** will get a new campus. There are too many changes proposed to list them all here.

### Q – How much money are we talking about?

A - Those who have a Senior Homestead Exemption on their homes will not see any change in their property tax. HISD has the lowest tax rate in Harris County. HISD anticipates gradually phasing in a tax rate increase. Under this estimate, the property tax rate would increase by 1 penny in 2014, another penny in 2016, and 2.85 cents in 2017. By 2017 the tax rate would reach a maximum of 4.85 cents (1 + 1 + 2.85) per \$100 of taxable value. For average home with a market value of \$198,936, this would mean an increase of about \$70 per year, by 2017.

## Parker Elementary Chosen to Perform at National Conference, ACDA

The Parker Elementary Advanced Chorus (4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades) has accepted an invitation to perform at the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) 2013 Conference in Dallas during Spring Break. This event is the most prestigious choral event in the United States with 18,000 choral conductors, composers, music educators and publishers in attendance. The mission of the ACDA is to inspire excellence in choral music through education, performance, composition, and advocacy. Invitations to perform are few and earned solely by audition. The Parker Elementary Advanced Chorus was selected out of 250 chorus groups.

This is the third invitation that the Parker Chorus has received, the first being an invitation to perform at the conference in New York City (2003), the second being an invitation to perform at the conference in Miami (2007). There was no funding for the first invitation, but thanks to a massive fundraising effort, the Advanced Chorus performed at the Miami ACDA Conference and received a seven-minute standing ovation. (The ovation was recorded and posted on You Tube by a non-Parker person.)

The Parker chorus is the only elementary school in 50+ years of the ADCA'S existence to be invited to perform at this conference. The Advanced Chorus will perform at two world famous venues, the Dallas' Winspear Opera House and Meyerson Symphony Center, home of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra. Its performances in Dallas will require an overnight stay and travel by motor coach. As fundraising opportunities arise to support the Chorus' performance in Dallas for the ACDA, please be generous.

Parker Elementary is an HISD Music Magnet. The director of the Parker Chorus is Marianna Simpson. For more information, please call the Parker Magnet Office at 713-726-2122.

### **Cappy Selig, the retired, longtime principal for Parker Elementary and Westbury resident, is a strong supporter of the HISD School Bond proposal.**

*"This Bond proposal will benefit Westbury High School and Parker Elementary School and other schools in the Houston Independent School District. Improvements to our schools strengthen our property values and maintain our community. The Westbury subdivision stands to gain with the passing of the Bond referendum. We have strong schools in our area, but when you drive up to them, you see fifty-year old buildings in dire need of repair. Our children need up-to-date facilities, so that they can be educated in a twenty-first century classroom."*

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## Quiet Zone, METRO and Union Pacific

Those of you who travel Chimney Rock or Hillcroft down to South Main/US 90A may have noticed the recent clearing of underbrush between the Westbury South soundwall and the existing railroad tracks. For many years, the Union Pacific railroad has had plans to extend the second railroad track that currently ends at South Post Oak. The recent clearing activities are related to this planned second railroad track. This second track which is a \$46 million project will travel four miles from S Post Oak to Sugarland.

It may also explain the train horns we have been hearing during the day as they warn workers near the tracks. We have asked for an explanation for the night time horns but have not yet had a response.

This work has nothing to do with preliminary plans by METRO to build a light rail line parallel to South Main connecting the Texas Medical Center, Westbury, Missouri City and several points in between. The option for the 90A METRO rail line that has the track running parallel to South Main will have the track built **INSIDE THE EXISTING SOUND WALL**. There is an alignment option that would take the track down the Hillcroft and West Airport esplanades thus avoiding taking right of way easements from the homes along Greenraig. The November METRO referendum will determine whether light rail expansion will occur in Houston or if it will be postponed until at least 2025 and beyond.





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## City Bonds on the 2012 Ballot

### The City Bonds on the Ballot

Every 5 to 7 years, the City of Houston has a bond measure as part of a routine cycle of going to voters for, what Mayor Parker calls, the equivalent of pre-approval for a mortgage so the city can borrow money. The last bond package of \$625 million received voter approval in 2006. The current proposed bond package of \$410 million will fund Capital Improvements to rebuild and improve parks, police stations, firehouses, health clinics and libraries. According to the City's website, together with the City's Hire Houston First program, the projects funded by city bonds will create up to 12,000 good, local jobs. They say in these tough economic times, Houston is leading the way---creating more jobs, borrowing less and improving the quality of life for all Houstonians for years to come.

The good news? Because of Houston's commitment to fiscal responsibility, this is the smallest bond proposal in 30 years **and does not require a tax increase**.

**Proposition A:** \$144 million in Public Safety Improvement Bonds to improve police stations and fire stations.

**Proposition B:** \$166 million in Park Improvement Bonds. Plus, these city bonds for parks and trails will be supplemented by a similar amount of money, to be raised privately.

**Proposition C:** \$57 million in Public Improvement Bonds for health, sanitation/recycling and essential improvements at city facilities

**Proposition D:** \$28 million in Library Improvement Bonds—including replacing the Meyer Library, which is the closest library to Westbury. This library is aging and inadequate due to its size and condition.

**Proposition E:** \$15 million in Bonds for affordable housing

### Where Do You Vote?

- Precinct 14:** Parker Elementary, 10626 Atwell
- Precinct 453:** Spanish United Pentecostal Church, 5365 W. Airport
- Precinct 22:** Foerster Elementary, 14200 Fonmeadow Dr
- Precinct 293:** Andy Anderson Elementary, 5727 Ludington
- Precinct 554:** Braeswood Assembly of God, 10611 Fondren
- Precinct 291:** Houston Christian Fellowship, 111222 Hillcroft
- Precinct 281:** Kolter Elementary, 9710 Runnymede Dr
- Precinct 146:** Platou Community Center, 11655 Chimney Rock

**Polling locations may change up until Election Day. Visit [www.harris.votes.org](http://www.harris.votes.org) for up to minute news.**

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# Willow Waterhole Upcoming Events

## Upcoming Events at Willow Waterhole Conservation Reserve

Activities are presented by the Willow Waterhole Greenspace Conservancy and sponsored by the Brays Oaks Management District. For more information about location or parking, refer to the website [www.wwgc.org](http://www.wwgc.org) or the WWGC Facebook page as the event date approaches.

### Sunday Music at the Park – Sunday, November 4 at 4 PM

The first music event this fall at Willow Waterhole will feature students from Westbury Christian School plus musical theater students performing numbers from the musical "Into the Woods." Performance will be at the South Gazebo. Parking will be available off Dryad.

### Movie Night: Friday, November 30 at 7-9:30PM

The 2nd *Outdoor Movie Night* will feature "Abbott and Costello Go To Mars" and "Marx Brothers: Animal Crackers." The movies will be projected on an outdoor screen near the South Gazebo. Bring your own blankets and chairs. The gate to Willow Waterhole at Dryad will be opened for visitors to park near the S. Gazebo. Bring a picnic!

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## Audubon Society Bird Survey

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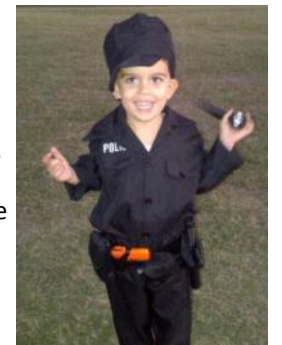
## Halloween Movie Night Recap

What a night at the Willow Waterhole as the inaugural "Movie Night in the Park" took place! Over a hundred residents enjoyed a crisp night watching family Halloween movies under the stars, as they lounged in chairs and on blankets. It was great kickoff to the Halloween season.

Prizes were awarded to those in costume. Among the winners were a fireman, policeman, a clown, a mouse, a dead vampire girl, a mouse, Alice in Wonderland, a couple of monsters, a flapper, a pirate, a couple of 50's gals and a big monkey. People brought their kids, their dogs, their friends and their families. Freshly popped popcorn set a festive air and everyone enjoyed the free snacks. The movie screen was huge and reminiscent (for those of us old enough to remember) of going to a drive-in movie. In fact, as the night got cooler, several groups moved to their cars to watch the rest of the movie. Everyone seemed to enjoy the humor of Abbot and Costello, and Boris Karloff's *Frankenstein* was still scary 80 years later.



Kids in Costume at WWGC Movie Night



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# Neighborhood and Area News



NEW Halloween Category Yard of the Month – Westbury 2

## Yard of the Month October Winners

- Parkwest 2:** 5703 Portal—Al & Pat Magee  
**Westbury 1:** 5167 Kingfisher—Miguel Posada, Rosanna Salvat, & Jason Leger  
**Westbury 2:** 10706 Burdine— Jason & Valerie Martin  
**Westbury 4:** 11906 Atwell—Hugp Suarez  
**Westbury South:** 5810 Farwell—Dung Pham

## Need a Stop Sign on Your Street?

Is there intersection in your section that needs a traffic sign? Anyone can make a request for a new sign to the city by following these few easy steps.

- Note the cross streets at the intersection & the reason why you think that intersection needs a traffic sign (or to change a sign from a Yield Sign to a Stop Sign).
- Dial 311 and follow the voice prompts, provide the cross streets to the phone operator.
- Request a call back or follow up email once the situation has been accessed by an inspector.

Thanks to the new and improved 311 system, our neighborhood has been the recipient of several new stop signs.

## 63rd Annual Holiday Parade

**November 22 at 9AM, downtown Houston**

This is a long-time Houston tradition! Presented by H-E-B. The parade is free to the general public. Make sure to arrive early for prime spots!

## Parker Elem. School Magnet Tours

Parker Elem (HISD Music Magnet) will be hosting tours of the school during Magnet Awareness Week, Nov 5-9. The magnet has instruction in Suzuki Strings, piano, band, chorus, guitar, and music enrichment. Tour dates and times are: Nov. 5 @ 9AM & 1PM; Nov. 6 @ 1PM; Nov. 7 @ 9AM, 1PM & 6:30PM; Nov. 8 & 9 @ 1PM. **Note:** Just because a child is zoned to Parker Elem does NOT mean auto enrollment in the magnet program. A magnet application must be completed and processed. Magnet apps are due by Jan. 11, 2013.

## Westbury Resident, Hazel Potvin, Receives “Proud Partner Award” from the Mayor

Congratulations to Hazel Potvin. Hazel received a major “Proud Partner Award” as an individual volunteer. She received the award at the Keep Houston Beautiful 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Mayor’s Proud Partner Luncheon on October 29. The award is primarily for her years of volunteer service at the Platou Community Center and Chimney Rock Park, although Hazel has been involved in many different volunteer activities here in Westbury. Hazel was nominated by our non-profit partner, the Westbury Area Improvement Corporation (WAIC).

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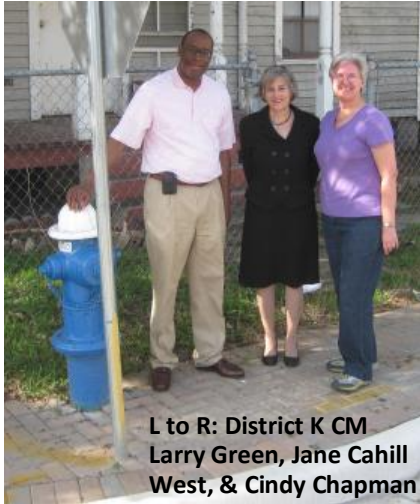
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# What is Wrong with this Photo?

## What is Wrong with this Photo? City Development Codes



L to R: District K CM  
Larry Green, Jane Cahill  
West, & Cindy Chapman

City ordinances make for very dry reading, but in the near future the city proposes to update the city's land use and development ordinance, often called "Chapter 42". The city proposes to change the designation of areas between the Loop and the Beltway (such as Westbury) from "Suburban" to "Urban" for development purposes. The Washington Avenue area has seen much recent development and is already classified as Urban. Jane Cahill West, President of the Washington Avenue SuperNeighborhood, has been leading tours with city councilmembers and their constituents to show problems which are not addressed in the current Chapter 42 draft and enforcement problems with the existing ordinances.

So, what are some of the problems shown in the photo? The newly constructed sidewalk

does not have handicap access and it is impassable to pedestrians due to a fire hydrant and stop sign. Even worse, the developer violated stormwater requirements and paved over the open stormwater collection ditches and put in curbing - without installing any stormwater drains or piping! During rain events, water does not have anywhere to drain at this intersection.

Other issues of concern observed during the tour included: more impassable sidewalks, public property being used for private benefit (developers enclosing city property inside private fenced areas or creating private parking spaces on city street easement property), and private signs restricting public street parking installed without city approval.

The Westbury Civic Club is actively involved with the Houston SuperNeighborhood Alliance (SNA) – which seeks to bring better balance to the proposed Chapter 42 ordinances and to improve enforcement of existing development ordinances.

## Deck the Halls Holiday Parade December 15

The 13th Annual Deck the Halls Parade\* on Saturday, Dec. 15th, at 5 PM! This year's theme is "Disney Princesses". The traditional favorites Santa, Pancho Claus, Hanukkah Harry, Kwanzaa King, and all of the characters from the Nativity story will march along as well. Other participants include the Houston Art Car Klub, Home Depot, Houston Roller Derby Girls, Star Wars Storm Troopers, HPD, HFD, area churches, small businesses, charity organizations, and many more!

Please contact them if you would like to be in the parade. They are asking all residents on the route to light up their yards. If you are a musician, artist, someone with a talent to contribute to the parade, or just think it would be fun to be in a parade, let us know.

For more information and a map of the route, please visit their website at [www.deckthehallsparade.org](http://www.deckthehallsparade.org) or like the Deck the Halls Parade page on Facebook. The parade is sponsored by The Mandell family. Email [ember\\_mandell@yahoo.com](mailto:ember_mandell@yahoo.com) or [noelle\\_mandell@yahoo.com](mailto:noelle_mandell@yahoo.com), or call them at 713-367-3787.

\*This is not a WCC sponsored event

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# 2012 National Night Out Party Fun

National Night Out 2012 was held on October 2, 2012. We had 14 parties register with the WCC Office. Thank you to all the Westbury Residents who registered their National Night Out Party! WCC President Becky Edmondson, WCC VP Marcia Hartman, Security Director Leslee Cross, and Office Manager Jennifer Edmondson went to every registered party, met Westbury residents and handed out new WCC goodies! WAP Deputies, David Addison and M. Nurrudin, both made the rounds as well. The parties this year were great! One on Ashcroft had a taco truck with delicious food. The Arboles party had the Westbury Fire Truck and ambulance come out for the kids. The Sanford party won the WCC Pizza party and received 10 free pizzas! It was nice to meet so many Westbury neighbors and see the interactions! Can't wait to see you in 2013! If you didn't have a National Night Out party this year but you really wanted to, call the WCC Office. We can help you!



**Thank you to all the  
NNO party hosts!**



Photos: Various parties around Westbury, 2012 National Night Out



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