



Woodside Civic Club

Houston, Texas

March 25, 2009

WOODSIDER NEWS

Important Dates

Next Woodside Civic Club General Meeting:

April 8, 2009

Recycling:

- April 6
- April 20
- May 4
- May 18

Heavy trash pickup:

- April 6 (junk waste)
- May 4 (tree waste)
- June 1 (junk waste)

General Meeting April 8, 2009

Our next civic club meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, April 8** from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in the cafeteria/auditorium of Longfellow Elementary School, 3617 Norris.

Copies of the draft deed restrictions update will be available again at this meeting and will be discussed, as will any written comments or questions regarding the updates. If you would like to submit comments or questions on the deed restrictions, either drop them off at 3547 Sun Valley Drive or send them vial electronic mail to Suggestions@WoodsideCivicClub.com. You should have received a printed copy of the proposed new deed restrictions document delivered to your door.

Desperate For Better Dues Collections

All Woodside Residents Urged to Contribute to Security and Other Critical Programs

In recent years, the number of Woodside households paying dues has been declining at a steady pace. In 2008, just 317 homes of the total 483 paid dues to fund our security patrols, mosquito spraying, esplanade landscaping maintenance and other programs which are organized by the civic club's volunteers. Those programs profit of *all* residents and owners. The largest single expense in 2008 was the payment of \$27,483 for streetlight upgrades which provided obvious gains in terms of security, aesthetics and enhanced property values.

Woodside Civic Club is not a social organization or a charity—it exists only to keep this neighborhood attractive and safe. No one who lives here or owns property here can claim not to have benefited from the civic club's services. If we continue to lose dues-paying membership, we will eventually come up short, and programs will have to be curtailed or ended. Since the lion's share of our annual budget goes to security, mosquito spraying and esplanade maintenance (over 90%), any cuts will quickly start to affect the quality of life in Woodside.

Dues notices went out recently to every Woodside home asking only \$125 per household. Please respond with a check. If you've lost track of the remittance portion of your notice, please drop your check, payable to "Woodside Civic Club," at 3715 Sun Valley. Make sure your address appears on the check.



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Disclaimer

Opinions expressed in this newsletter, if any, are those of individual contributing writer(s) and do not necessarily represent the views or positions of the Woodside Civic Club officers and directors. No advertisement or mention of a commercial enterprise in this newsletter should be taken as an endorsement by Woodside Civic Club.

Report from General Meeting, February 4, 2009

Twenty-eight Woodside residents showed up for the civic club's general meeting February 4. Club president Mike Ewer started the meeting with a report on the new streetlights in the southern half of the subdivision. Although only a few had been connected and turned on at that time, there was considerable enthusiasm in the group for the attractive new fixtures. The civic club has set aside money to upgrade the streetlights in the northern half of Woodside, as well, though that project will have to wait a few years for street reconstruction by the city.

Brian Richard gave what was probably the final report on the recently-completed street reconstruction project south of Latma. Anita Woods delivered a succinct Treasurer's report, which sparked a discussion on dues collections. Several ideas were exchanged on improving our record in that area—only 65.6% of Woodside residents paid dues in 2008.

A discussion of loud parties, neighborhood nuisances, and the relationship of our deed restrictions and City of Houston ordinances ensued. A "new" resident was introduced. She was, in fact, returning to this neighborhood in order to care for a parent after years away. Shirlene Campbell then provided a security report, and Steve Schultz reported on proposed new signage for our subdivision.

At the end of the meeting, civic club president Mike Ewer led a discussion of the updated deed restrictions. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:05 p.m.

At our February general meeting, refreshments were, once again, graciously provided by Woodside resident Betty Carter, a Realtor-Associate at Weichert Realty, Wayne Murray Properties.



New Rules for Heavy Trash Pickup

April Pick-up: Junk Waste May Pick-up: Tree Waste

Several Woodside residents ran afoul of the new City of Houston heavy trash collection schedule for our area in recent months. The first Monday in March, the heavy trash crews were collecting only tree waste—tree trunks and branches too large to be broken up and included with lawn waste (leaves and grass clippings). The first Monday in April, the crews will collect what they term "Junk Heavy Trash"—furniture, lumber, appliances, etc. Tree waste will be picked up again in May, then junk waste will be picked up in June.

Hazard waste, which in Houston includes motor oil, televisions, computer components, and paint cans or buckets, can never be put out for curbside pickup. These items must be dropped off at one of the City's designated hazardous waste facilities.

The heavy trash collection crews will leave behind items that are not of the type scheduled for the day's pickups. When that happens, the homeowner is responsible for removing the heavy trash from the curb and storing it appropriately (out of sight) until the next scheduled (appropriate) pickup date. The Woodside Civic Club newsletters include schedules for heavy trash and recycling pickup. Contact the City of Houston Solid Waste Management Department if you have questions.

Out Of The Darkness

After more than a year without streetlights, the southern half of Woodside has finally emerged from the darkness. In February, the new streetlight fixtures were connected and turned on, and they look great! Nadia Khan and Anita Woods discovered the

opportunity to upgrade our streetlights back in 2007, pitched the proposal to the Woodside Civic Club board, then organized a committee to select a style. As the street reconstruction project approached its conclusion, they also had to negotiate with Center Point to keep the original pricing structure, despite cost increases imposed after the order had been approved and submitted. Thanks to the two of you for your work on this, and thanks to the dues-paying members of the Woodside Civic Club who financed the \$27,500 project.



Numerous Street Parking Complaints In Recent Months

Has your Neighbor Turned His Parking Problem into Your Parking Problem?

It seems one unanticipated consequence of the new streets and streetlights in the southern half of Woodside has been a rise in civic pride and in the number of complaints about problematic street parking. The deed restrictions of Woodside do not address this issue directly, but City of Houston ordinances certainly do. The text of City of Houston ordinances on this topic was recently added to the civic club website (www.WoodsideCivicClub.com; check under Deed Restrictions). The most common complaints in our area have been related to the prohibitions enumerated below.

1. No vehicle may be parked on a city street longer than 24 consecutive hours. Moving a vehicle a few feet each day is not the clever strategy to circumvent this prohibition; it only shows disrespect for your neighbors and the intent of the law.
2. No trailer may be parked on a city street longer than 2 hours unless it is in the process of being loaded or unloaded.
3. No inoperable vehicle (“junk” vehicle in the ordinances) may be parked on a city street or in a place where it is visible from the street or a neighboring property. Inoperable vehicles (expired registration or inspection sticker, partially disassembled, otherwise not roadworthy) must be parked inside a garage or behind a fence.
4. The parking of large trucks and commercial vehicles in residential neighborhoods is prohibited except when those vehicles are engaged in their intended use.

Violations of these parking-related laws is not just a legal risk, it shows a deplorable lack of consideration for one’s neighbors. Accordingly, the Woodside Civic Club board will do its part to help residents correct problematic street parking. After the civic club has issued a reminder of the provisions of the City of Houston Code of Ordinances, parking contrary to those laws will be reported in writing to the Houston Police Department. HPD officers can be expected to ticket or tow vehicles if they cannot get prompt, voluntary compliance.

Important Telephone Numbers

- Smith Protective Services 713-789-5944
(Call Smith for vacation watch.)
- Ambulance, Rescue,
Fire, Police–Emergency 911
- Houston Police Dispatch 713-884-3131
- City of Houston Non-Emergency
Problems, Complaints 311
- City Public Works Department . . . 713-837-0500
- City Solid Waste Department 713-837-9158
- City Public Utilities Department . . 713-224-2500
- Report Illegal Dumping 311
- Poison Control 1-800-222-1222
- Crime Stoppers 713-222-8477

You can report violations via electronic mail to **Complaints@WoodsideCivicClub.com** or to the Houston Police Department. If you’d like to report a violation of this type to HPD on your own, you’ll find a form for that purpose on the civic club’s website. It must be printed and delivered or mailed to HPD’s southwest division station on Braeswood (no email address). Be sure to provide enough specific details such as dates and times, license numbers, expired status of inspection and registration stickers, etc. It wouldn’t hurt to cite the particular City of Houston ordinance being violated.

News from our Neighborhood School, Longfellow Elementary

by Clyde Peterson

Spelling Bee Buzzes at Longfellow

The 2009 spring wave of academic and performance awards is forming at Longfellow Elementary.

Leading off is Jessie DeArman of Ms. Roy's fifth grade class. Jessie won the Longfellow Elementary spelling bee and represented the school at the City West Region Bee on February 10. She competed against champion spellers from 50 HISD schools (including 13 middle schools).

Jessie did a great job and was not eliminated until the third round. Can you spell "susceptible"? Or better yet, can you spell "Way to go, Jessie!"?

Many thanks to Ms. Roy for acting as the Longfellow spelling bee sponsor.

Longfellow Musicians Hit the High Notes

Longfellow Elementary School's musicians have been cutting a successful path around and about the city and our community this school year.

On March 7, 34 3rd-, 4th-, and 5th-grade student members of the Advanced Longfellow Chamber Orchestra performed in the State UIL Solo/Ensemble Festival at Parker Elementary School with the all 34 students earning honors

Twenty-five students earned "I" ratings and 1st place medals, the highest rating possible in the competition. The remaining nine students received Ribbons of Commendation for their performances.

Students performed works by Paganini, Bach, Weber, Schumann, and Beethoven—not arranged for children— but as originally written by the composers.

The Longfellow Chamber Orchestra was recently invited to play at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, performed at Brady's Landing for an event with HISD General Superintendent Abelardo Saavedra, and will soon be performing in Jones Hall as a part of the Houston Family Day with the Houston Symphony.

This follows performances in December when the Longfellow Chamber Orchestra played with the Advanced Orchestra from HSPVA on selections from *The Nutcracker* by Tchaikovsky, and also "caroled" at a local hospital in the Medical Center.

The up-and-coming musicians are scheduled to perform in concerts and festivals in April and May. Keep an eye out for your chance to take in one of their performances.

Shazam! Street Problem in Longfellow Area Fixed!

Each day more than 700 Longfellow Elementary kids, faculty and staff find their way through our area streets to get to their school. Many come on buses and many, many are transported by family cars.

That's a lot of wear and tear on streets, and until recently some of the approaches to Longfellow were so bad that the condition of the streets was a threat to do damage to both HISD buses and all those family cars—not to mention other neighborhood drivers' vehicles.

Given those conditions, the Longfellow PTA decided recently that it was time to seek a remedy to those street problems. The response from the office and staff of City Council Member Anne Clutterbuck's office was head spinning.

Call it the luck of good timing or, more likely, call it one super heads-up group of city workers, but the request for attention to severe street problems on both Norris and on Ilona streets was responded to within minutes of the request's arrival at Ms. Clutterbuck's office. That's right: minutes.

The day after the PTA request, city crews were on the scene and had marked up the areas in need of immediate attention. A few work days later all the work—some of it very significant pieces of work—was done!

Hats off to Ms. Clutterbuck's people for such a great response to a request from the community, and a couple of solid cheers for the Longfellow PTA for taking up and helping solve a problem that was affecting us all.



News from our Neighborhood School, Longfellow Elementary

Longfellow Teacher of the Year

Lynn Gerbode has a long association with Longfellow that began as a parent volunteer 1988.

A graduate of Rice University with a degree in architecture, this Woodside resident originally took the job as science lab instructor during a hiatus from her architectural career as a favor to the school's principal at the time, "just for a year or so," running one of the very few elementary science labs in HISD at the time.

That was thirteen years ago, and she hasn't looked back. Ms. Gerbode has seen the facility grow from a bunch of old glassware donated from offices in the Medical Center to one of the best equipped elementary facilities in the District.

Deciding that a high quality facility deserved a high quality teacher, not just a 'curator,' she went back to school, earning over 60 credit hours of

university education courses in a teaching degree and state certification program, while working full time at Longfellow. Now known throughout the West Region for her favorite, highly interactive family science nights, she is often consulted and always willing to share her knowledge and expertise with anyone who asks.

Some of her recognitions in the field of education include significant grant awards for classroom related activities and materials from organizations such as BP Corporation, Baylor College of Medicine, Fund for Teachers and Toshiba America Foundation.

During the summer, she can be found teaching classes at the Houston Museum of Natural Science, as well as giving cooking or "fiber arts" lessons to friends and family.

Art Pollet, 1917–2009

by Clyde Peterson

Art Pollet, the other half of a Woodside fount of love, kindness and civic virtue has passed away. He joins his equal half, Barbara, who passed away in 2003, in Eternity—and Eternity is all the better for it.

All who have lived in Woodside have benefited from the good works and good ways of the Pollets. For decades, Barbara and Art looked after things great and small in our neighborhood, and, as frequently, looked after many of our neighbors as well.

As Woodside Civic Club director Phil Stern commented on Art's passing, "Art's contributions can't be overstated." And Barbara was his partner and supporter in it all.

Art served for many years as the Woodside Civic Club treasurer, and even more he served as the perennial wise man on the club's board and throughout our neighborhood. Art's fingerprints are on our beautification efforts, tree planting, security and a list of things around Woodside and beyond that's endless. The only thing that exceeded Art's service over the years was Art's modesty, though he had very, very little to be modest about.

Art, as was Barbara, was as thorough in all his undertakings as he was brilliant. Even more they were of

excellent humor and were warm and welcoming to all.

Among Art Pollet's specialties was dealing with things found loose in Woodside. This ranged from scooping up abandoned small animals, to chatting with small children as

they wandered by, to reeling in any and all in Woodside who were game for a good social encounter or who needed some eager and/or sympathetic listener to whom tales of triumph or sorrow could be told.

What a legacy it would be for us who remain to emulate even a portion of the Pollets' goodness to others, and to replicate as much as we might of their service and devotion to their neighborhood.

Art has joined Barbara now, and the picture many of us will hold of them forever in our minds is of their walking, walking and walking the streets of Woodside, hand-in-hand with the cheer and enthusiasm of new lovers for all their years among us.

And should Eternity be a fair and just place, we can be sure those walks, hand-in-hand, have resumed.



Barbara and Art Pollet

Yard of the Month Winners

March



Spring has sprung, and what a great way to present the new beginning with azaleas and wonderfully-colored flowers. Bonnie and Dan at 9115 Kapri have done a tremendous job at coaxing their flowers to pop at the right time. Wonderfully colorful plantings, accented tree surrounds, and azaleas in bloom really set this yard apart. You can tell there is a lot of work, love, and a dash of mojo put into their presentation. It all comes together for a wonderful springtime treat. The picture just doesn't do this yard justice, Fantastic job.

April



Finally, we have pleasant weather, and it appears that our April YOTM winner has used her time wisely. Joan at 9223 Timberside presents a fantastic landscape using islands of colors and plantings. The yard has a hint of “Kenrokuen” Japanese influence, based on the lines, and repeating accents. The surrounding rockwork emphasizes the thematic plantings—colored flowers in the front, a tree to the right, and a dash of color mixed with xeriscape on the left. The landscape was designed to emphasize the house's features. Time to hire that feng shui instructor. Great Job!

Internet Websites of Interest to Woodside Residents

Woodside Civic Club
Harris County Appraisal District
Harris County Tax Assessor
City of Houston Problem Reporting

www.WoodsideCivicClub.com
<http://www.hcad.org/> (property value information)
<http://www.tax.co.harris.tx.us/>
<http://www.houstontx.gov/311/index.html>