



WOODSIDER NEWS

Important Dates

General Meeting:
February 2, 2011

Recycling:
January 27
February 10
February 24
March 10
March 24

Heavy trash pickup:
February 7 (junk waste)
March 7 (tree waste)
April 4 (junk waste)

General Meeting February 2, 2011

Our next civic club meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, February 2** from 7–8 p.m. in the cafeteria/auditorium of Longfellow Elementary School, 3617 Norris. There will be the usual reports on the civic club’s finances, security matters and topics addressed at recent civic club board meetings. The meetings always adjourn at the end of an hour.

Curbside Solid Waste Collection—Follow the Rules

It is **not OK** to put your heavy trash or yard waste out any time you find it convenient. Some Woodside residents have yard waste bags out by the street for 5 or 6 days out of every week. This is unsightly and unneighborly—it is illegal, to boot.

Yard waste (grass, leaves, etc.), in City-approved biodegradable bags, may not be put curbside by a resident or a lawn service company until the day before it is scheduled for collection. Heavy trash may not be put out until the Friday before first-Monday-of-the-month collection. If your tree trimmer or lawn service contractors can’t accommodate the curbside collection schedule and rules, you need to make other arrangements. Don’t just ignore the rules.

Too early curbside placement is a violation of city ordinance and can result in a citation and a hefty fine. Perturbed neighbors can and should report violations to the City of Houston by dialing 311 or emailing 311@CityOfHouston.net.

Most heavy trash collection days, one can see a variety of items curbside which are not heavy trash. Old suitcases, cardboard boxes, potted plants and table legs are examples. If an item is small enough to fit in a garbage barrel or recycling barrel, it is not heavy trash, and it shouldn’t be out for first Monday pickup.

Another note on heavy trash rules... We received a complaint last summer from a Woodside resident that the heavy trash trucks had driven right by a pile of rubble placed curbside for collection. It was later learned that the City’s people had concluded the rubble was from a project handled by a contractor. Heavy trash from such a project is not eligible for free curbside pickup—the contractor is responsible for disposing of it. Keep this in mind when you negotiate for a home remodeling project, a fence replacement, a new patio or driveway, etc. *Thank you for helping us keep Woodside beautiful by following these rules!*

Heavy Trash Schedule 2011	
January	Tree Waste Only
February	Junk Waste
March	Tree Waste Only
April	Junk Waste
May	Tree Waste Only
June	Junk Waste
July	Tree Waste Only
August	Junk Waste
September	Tree Waste Only
October	Junk Waste
November	Tree Waste Only
December	Junk Waste



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December 8, 2010 General Meeting

Only 20 Woodside residents showed up for the December general meeting, but it was a talkative, engaged crowd. The get-together was called to order at 7:00 p.m. lead by board member Victor Lamanuzzi; civic club president Brian Richard was out of town and unable to attend the meeting.

The first report covered civic club finances and dues collections; it was presented by Steve Schultz on behalf of Treasurer Anita Woods, who was also out of town on business. Victor then announced that the street and sidewalk reconstruction project for the northern half of Woodside had been delayed until 2012 due to City of Houston budget constraints.

Next was a discussion of recent security problems neighborhood—from the kick-burglary, pesky solicitors, and petty thefts from porches to armed robbery. Just for grins, there was also discussion of a homeless guy living in his car and parking around the Woodside and Linkwood neighborhoods. All attendees were urged to put up “No Soliciting” signs on their doors and to keep an eye out for suspicious individuals or vehicles.

There was a brief discussion of the planned meeting between four or five Woodside directors and our City Council Representative, Anne Clutterbuck. The purpose will be to present our neighborhood’s grievances—poor HPD service, the shopping center on Stella Link (which is proving to be a very bad neighbor), etc. Anyone with topics to suggest should email them to the board at Information@WoodsideCivicClub.com there will be limited time for the meeting, so only priority topics will be discussed.

Victor recited the now traditional call for volunteers to assist with some of the civic club’s administrative functions. The board is hoping to get new volunteers to help in publishing and delivering the newsletters, filing civic club tax returns and handling civic club finances. We actually got a few takers this time.

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.

At the end of the meeting, several miscellaneous topics got tossed about...

- Supplemental security patrols when needed and when cash flows permit.
- A Facebook page for the neighborhood to permit more timely information on security problems, garage sales, etc.
- Stickers for car windows to identify civic club members.
- Paid advertisements to help fund the production of bi-monthly newsletters.

All these ideas were added to the agenda for a civic club board meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m., and the last of the attendees left the building by 8:10 p.m.

Call for Civic Club Volunteers

The Woodside Civic Club’s business gets handled by volunteers, many of whom have been providing the same services for many years. The Board is very interested in finding new volunteers who will either take over or help with our administrative functions; several of our most pressing current needs are described below. None of the projects described here takes a significant amount of time.

Newsletter Publisher—this position requires a volunteer with a computer and any sort of software application (word processing or page layout) suitable for publishing our bi-monthly newsletter. The volunteer who accepts this project will help our current newsletter publisher, Anne Swanson, by preparing two or three of the six newsletters distributed each year. The volunteer is free to use existing templates and layouts or to design some new newsletter format.

To volunteer, email us at Information@WoodsideCivicClub.com or come to the next general meeting.

Recycling Bins—Rules & Pickup Schedule

All Woodside residents should now be accustomed to using the 96-gallon green barrels for automated recycling pickup. Complete recycling information is available on the City of Houston website, but here are the highlights:

Recycling will be picked up **every other Thursday**, just as before, but you won't have to lug your bin(s) to the curb—the new barrels have wheels, just like our garbage barrels.

You will still be able to recycle aluminum and tin cans (rinsed out), newspapers, catalogs and magazines, phone books, plastic containers marked with codes 1-5 and 7 (rinsed and drained), corrugated cardboard (break down those boxes), cereal boxes and similar cardboard packaging material.

You can now **recycle glass bottles, jugs and jars** which have been rinsed out and drained. That should be a welcome change.

Don't put things in the recycling barrels that are not listed here or on the lid: **no plastic bags, no batteries, no pizza boxes, no paper plates or cups, no yard clippings or tree branches, no motor oil, no Styrofoam, no plate glass or ceramic.** Certainly, **no hazardous materials** (paint, computer or other electronic components, insecticides, etc.) are permitted. Those can get you a citation and a stiff fine.

The green bins have an embedded microchip and are assigned to a particular street address. Apparently

the trucks that will pick up our recycling will weigh each bin and credit the home for its recycling efforts – eventually, after you activate your recycling account with the City, coupons will be awarded for sufficient contributions to the program – those coupons will get you discounts at stores and restaurants. Get more information on the program at this web address: <http://www.houstontx.gov/solidwaste/recyclebank-participantletter.pdf>

The City of Houston asks that we keep our barrels rinsed out and mostly dry inside (so as not to contaminate the paper). If a barrel is lost or stolen, a police report will have to be filed to get a replacement. You might want to consider putting your street address on your barrel so you'll be able to tell if yours has been switched. Remember that you can earn rewards with the materials you recycle only if it is credited to your account via the embedded microchip in **your** barrel.



Remember that your recycling barrel should be rolled to the curb for collection **every other Thursday** at the same time you put out your household garbage barrel(s). The recycling barrels should go out **January 27, February 10 and 24, March 10 and 24, and April 7 and 21.**

Do you have an unresolved or persistently recurring problem that has not been remedied with your phone call to 311?

311

While most problems can be resolved with a phone call to 311, and we encourage you to utilize that system as your primary means of

reporting problems to the City, if you have a problem that has not been resolved you can contact the office of a City Council Member to ask for assistance with your issue. When calling a Council Member's office, be sure you have a current problem tracking number that you should receive from the 311 operator when you originally report the problem.

Woodside is located in District C and the Council Member for constituents in our district is:

Anne Clutterbuck
Phone: 832.393.3004
E-Mail: districtc@houstontx.gov

You can also contact one of the five At-Large Council Members as their constituency includes all of us that live in the City of Houston. Their names and contact information can be found at <http://www.houstontx.gov/council/>



Lost and Found Pets

Cats and dogs seldom run loose in Woodside; when you see one, there is usually some frantic owner looking for the beloved escapee. Unfortunately, that owner may be looking for Spot or Sparky several blocks away. In this neighborhood, there is now a quick way to expand the search for lost pets and pet owners. A new email address link on the Woodside website has been established to report pets lost and pets found. It is a little long, but it's easy enough to remember – LostAndFound@WoodsideCivicClub.com. In your subject line, please indicate whether you've lost or found the critter and what sort he or she is (e.g. "Lost gray kitten" or "Found smelly but friendly small dog"). In the body of the message, provide a more complete description and contact information. For now, all messages will be forwarded to volunteer Marty Webb so she can match up the reports and reply to the email messages to arrange for pets and owners to be reunited.

2011 Civic Club Dues and Woodside Car Stickers

Woodside homeowners should be receiving their request for voluntary annual dues of \$125 around the end of January. Those dues pay for services which benefit all Woodside residents and property owners—security patrols, upgraded streetlights, mosquito spraying and esplanade landscaping have been our significant expenditures in recent years. We hope to receive payments from more than the 62.5% of households which paid in 2010. Two notes on dues payments for 2011...

- Please provide your current email address on the remittance advice. We will not share it with anyone, but we would like to build a contact list of Woodside homeowners for the purpose of timely alerts and reminders.
- For the first time, dues-paying civic club members will receive two stickers for their car windows or bumpers so that neighbors and security patrol personnel can recognize residents' vehicles. It won't be foolproof, but it will help identify vehicles from outside the subdivision.

Recycling Points

Many Woodside residents who were initially enthusiastic about recycling their household waste have discovered that the value of points accruing based on weight is quite low. If you fill your barrel to the top every two weeks and it is always over 100 pounds, you might have enough points to get a Big Mac with fries or an iPod Shuffle...by 2020! We are researching ways to donate recycling reward points to charitable or civic organizations. Look for details in a future newsletter. If you know how to do this already, please let us know at Information@WoodsideCivicClub.com.

There should be a small, round, black sensor (RFID) on the curb side of your green barrel which is tied to your address and your recycling reward points account. The truck has to read that sensor's signal when it picks your barrel up in order to credit your home's account. We recently learned that you stop accruing points when that sensor gets knocked off by rough handling, usually by the collection truck. Many barrels in Woodside have such damage. You can request that your barrel be repaired or replaced by calling 311 and providing your home address. You'll have to leave your barrel outside and accessible to have it repaired or replaced. If your account shows you lost recycling reward points while the sensor was off, ask that they be credited based on your recycling history.

Curbside Lawn Waste—Biodegradable Bags

In an effort to save a few million in annual landfill charges, the City of Houston changed the rules for putting yard waste (leaves, grass clippings, small branches) out for curbside pickup. Those materials have to be in City-approved, biodegradable/compostable bags made of starch, rather than plastic. Since many homeowners and lawn service companies have been using plastic bags for years and years, adjusting to this change may be a problem for some. There are still a few folks putting non-conforming bags out for curbside pickup.

It appears one can now buy City-approved biodegradable/compostable bags at a variety of retail locations, including, Randalls, Lowe’s, Bering’s and area Walmart stores. The packaging for the bags must include the “seal of approval” depicted here. There are several companies marketing these bags—look for EcoGuard, EcoSafe, Bag-to Nature, BioBag, or Al-Pack. Others will be marketed eventually. At some retailers, compostable bags are more expensive than the (petroleum product) plastic variety.

If you plan to put grass clippings and leaves out for curbside pickup—get some approved, compostable bags before the next trash collection day. If you use a lawn service, and the company has always provided bags, make sure those folks are aware of the change—if they bag your grass incorrectly for pickup, the City’s big blue

truck will pass you by, and you’ll be stuck fooling with the non-conforming bags and their contents.

While you’re discussing this with your lawn men, remind them that bagged lawn waste cannot be put curbside until the day before Thursday morning pickup. Your neighbors shouldn’t have to look at curbside trash bags for days; don’t turn your problem into their problem.

Do not try to avoid this problem by dumping your yard waste in your City-provided trash barrel or recycling barrel, even if there is lots of room for it—it is illegal to mix lawn waste and household waste this way, and the fine for doing so ranges from \$50 to \$2,000 (ouch!).

More importantly, do not try to avoid this problem by having your lawn clippings disappear down a storm drain or sewer. That is also against the law and will get you and/or your lawn men slapped with a citation and a stiff fine. Smart neighbors know to call 311 and report this practice to the City because blocking the storm sewers will result in flood waters in our streets and, eventually, in our homes. That’s not very neighborly!

The better way to avoid this issue altogether, of course, is to mulch your yard waste or compost it in your own back yard. For more information, visit <http://www.houstontx.gov/solidwaste/index.html> or www.HoustonSolidWaste.org.

April Showers Bring May Flowers—Save the Date! March 26, 2011

Planning to do some yard work this spring? Plant some flowers, mulch your beds, maybe even plant a tree? Merry hands make for merry work! Woodside is planning a **Neighborhood Yard Day** to create a stronger community and help beautify our neighborhood. Come out, meet your neighbors, have some lemonade and maybe even plant a flower or two in your yard. Stay tuned to our next newsletter for more details.

If you would like to volunteer to help us plan this event, please contact Information@WoodsideCivicClub.com.

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, 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

Yard of the Month Winners

January



And a happy new year to all! Woodside gets to start off the new year with a charming vista directly across the street from our December 2010 winner. Talk about trying to keep up with the Joneses. The Raskins on 9139 Timberside have done a superb job at mixing numerous heights, textures, and shapes into their landscape palette. Large sago palms accented by small foxtail ferns and cold hardy- colored accent plants backdropped by low-to-mid-heights shrubbery make for a wonderful melange of interest. The house and landscape are just so appealing. A great way to start off our new year.

A menu of Possibilities!

An array of things you can do to curb dangerous driving in Texas - select the choices & portions that suit your tastes & appetite.

TEXTING WHILE DRIVING and DISTRACTED DRIVING are the problems -



your voice and every form of expression you can muster are the SOLUTIONS.



Exploring Political and Public Awareness Strategies to Curb Texting While Driving & Distracted Driving

Not sure you want to get involved in this no-texting-while driving stuff?

It shouldn't be much of a problem for you because all levels of activity are tiered, ranging from *just listening* and up to and through several items and levels on the 'activity menu.'

Your choices can be made from 'armchair activity-lite' right up to being 'mad as heck and not going to take it anymore' activities.

Join us and just listen -- or take on the role of your choice.

A meeting on curbing TEXTING WHILE DRIVING & DISTRACTED DRIVING will held at St. Luke's Presbyterian Church, Tuesday, January 25th, from 7pm to 8:30pm. 8915 Timberside Drive, Houston 77025

contact Clyde Peterson at themdangpictures2010@gmail.com