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# Willow Meadows News

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November 1996

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## December Meeting

The next meeting of the Willow Meadows Civic Club is Tuesday, December 3, 7:30 p.m. at the Willow Meadows Baptist Church. Please come and take part in what is going on in your neighborhood.

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## From The President

As this is the last newsletter of the year, let me take this opportunity to wish all of your families the best of holidays and also thank you for your support and participation in the civic club this year. We had a large percentage of dues paying members and we had the biggest crowds in recent years at our quarterly meetings. We have had numerous activities in and around our neighborhood this year, some welcomed and some perhaps not so welcome or timely. Nevertheless, I personally feel we have seen many positive developments and I wish to thank all of you and the other board members that helped us through all of these changes.

The December meeting will be important once again. We must elect officers for the coming year, and your vote is important. I regret that I will not be able to attend this meeting due to prior business commitments, but I have stated at the last meeting that I will continue to offer my services as president if the general membership wishes so. We are fortunate that our vice president has volunteered to serve one more year, and we have great candidates for treasurer and secretary. We welcome any volunteers for any position, but we especially welcome anyone interested in the remaining committee positions. These positions are all important in that you have an important role in decisions which affect your community. Please call me or any other board member if you want more details on the responsibilities of these positions.

For those of you who missed the September meeting, it was the biggest crowd in years, almost filling the meeting room with more than 100 neighbors in attendance. The hot topics were speed humps, the ever so slow street resurfacing project and the deed restrictions project. By this printing, we hope the street project is finally finished, but it sure was a lesson in delays, excuses and mixed up priorities. In the end, the results seem mostly quite good, and our streets should last longer.

The most important activity in our neighborhood is the deed restriction project. While we would have been much happier to see a 100% response to our preliminary survey, we appreciate the feedback from all of you concerned about your property values who pointed us in the right direction to start drafting the revised deed restrictions which will bring our neighborhood up into the 21st century. More about this project is within this newsletter.

Happy holidays to everyone and please come to the December civic club meeting to make your opinions known.

Sincerely

## TREASURER'S REPORT

The following report indicates the collection of dues in the amount of \$81,050 since the beginning of the year, which is \$7,427, or 10.1%, greater than we collected through the same period last year. The number of households that have paid to date is 575, or 70.0% of the total households in Willow Meadows. Those households that are paying partial payments please remember to send the balance to Willow Meadows Civic Club, P.O. Box 35551, Houston, TX 77235, and save us the postage sending you reminders.. We are more than pleased that more people voluntarily paid dues than in years past; we still wonder about the remaining 30%. We need everyone to pay their share, so please mail in those dues as soon as possible.

Category/Description	Jan. 1, 1996-Oct 30, 1996
<b>REVENUES</b>	
Dues	\$81,050.00
Interest checking	\$00.00
Interest savings	\$2,627.01
Advertising	\$80.00
Other Income	\$00.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$83,757.01</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>	
Bank charge	\$ 11.50
Miscellaneous	\$565.00
Mowing	\$3,400.00
Pest control	\$2,693.80
Postage	\$323.20
Printing	\$640.78
Security	\$48,125.70
Supplies	\$157.34
Legal Services	\$1,958.05
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$57,875.37</b>
<b>SURPLUS</b>	<b>\$25,881.64</b>

## NEIGHBORHOODS TO STANDARD

By the time you get this newsletter, the street resurfacing project should finally be finished! It was quite the project, with an original schedule to finish in August, then a revised date of mid-October, and as we went to press, Metro promised us the project should be finished before the Thanksgiving holiday. The end results may not please everyone, but, in general, the new surface is intended to prolong the life of our streets, which were beginning to crack considerably in many areas. We had approximately 30% of the base concrete replaced, and many storm drains were replaced with wider openings to allow quicker drainage.

We were very impressed by the initiative of some of our neighbors. Instead of complaining to yourselves, you contacted your Civic Club officers as well as the Metro officials and worked hard to get some problems fixed. A few neighbors on Wigton noticed some substandard asphalt poured during a heavy rainstorm, and they pushed Metro to get that asphalt removed and replaced. A neighbor on Sarong noticed they were planning to lay asphalt without fixing a few problem areas in the base concrete, so he managed to stop the work until we got Metro out to approve the concrete repair. One neighbor didn't get so much satisfaction from Metro at first, so she called upon a local television news reporter to expose some unacceptable work, and that sure seemed to get Metro's attention! Hopefully most of these problems were resolved to satisfaction. Thanks to all of you who worked hard for the overall benefit of our neighborhood.

## ATTENTION ALL GARDENERS AND WOULD-BE GARDENERS

Reminder: The Greenwillow Garden Club has been a part of Willow Meadows for many years, having been established in 1959. The members would like to extend an invitation to all of those interested in learning about flowers, going on interesting field trips and pursuing civic club goals. Please come join them! Meetings are held the second Thursday of the month, September through May, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon. For further information, please call Linda Miner at 721-8810. They hope to hear from you!

## **GARBAGE COLLECTION**

If you were like me, you were completely surprised by the appearance of those large black trash containers in October. I had to re-read the letter from the Solid Waste Department which informed me we would not receive this service until sometime in 1997, along with plenty of advance warning! So much for good communications! Anyways, we now have the containers and we must use them as part of the city's efforts to automate services and keep our tax increases to a minimum. Please remember that the trash pick-up day is one day per week, on Friday.

Recycle pick-up remains every second Tuesday (see the schedule below). Here are some important tips about this new method of trash pick-up:

- Trash containers should be put out after 6:00 p.m. Thursdays but before 7:00 a.m. Fridays, then returned to your house Friday evening. Putting your container out much earlier or leaving it much later are violations of city ordinances.
- Grass clippings can be placed in regular garbage bags to the side of your container for a separate pick-up. A second truck is supposed to come through our neighborhood on the same pick-up day to take these clippings for recycling as mulch.
- If you desire a smaller container, please call 551-7300.
- Place your container face-front to the curb, with the handle facing towards your house.
- Keep the container away from cars parked along the curb and away from overhead trees, especially if you don't want the large trucks to damage your tree branches.
- Don't forget the monthly Heavy Trash pick-up on the 4th Wednesday of every month for those items too large for these trash bins and which are not otherwise recyclable.

## **MOSQUITOES**

One of the topics of discussion at our September meeting was about the terrible mosquito problem. You may recall that we had very little problem with mosquitoes this summer due to the drought...until the rains finally started in late August. By Labor Day

weekend, we were overwhelmed by mosquitoes as well as by your calls. The civic club officers conferred and quickly voted to double up the spraying in the first two weeks of September. While that seemed to calm the problem, additional rains later in September brought back the mosquitoes, so we once again doubled up on the spraying. Our summer spraying contract expired at the end of October, and with any luck, so has our mosquito problem.

Some of you have questioned the difference in the spraying this year. Memories may be short, but we had received many complaints last year regarding the effectiveness of the spraying, so we investigated and selected another method. The previous method employed a weak concentration of chemicals with a very visible and odorous carrier spray of diesel fumes. The most recent method uses a very concentrated chemical sprayed in a very fine mist which has little odor. Once we started receiving complaints this year that perhaps the new method was not effective, we discovered that other neighborhoods using the old method were equally frustrated. They commented that, even with sprays so thick that their cars received a diesel coating, they still suffered excessive mosquito infestations. For next year, we will continue to study all available methods, but if you have any information that may help us, please contact a board member.

## **NEWS ARTICLES WELCOME**

We will always welcome any ideas or news you may have for the Willow Meadows newsletter. We believe this newsletter should be used for communicating anything of interest to our neighborhood. Please contact Chris Brouwer if you want to contribute a news item.

## **1997 CIVIC CLUB OFFICERS**

As we mentioned in the opening letter, the December meeting includes the election of the 1997 officers. Elections are open to all dues paying members, and we encourage all volunteers, so if you are interested in any positions, please contact a current board member to learn more about the positions and how you can help us. Chris Brouwer has indicated he is willing to volunteer to be president for one more year (we have

two year term limits) and Charles Rusciano has indicated he is willing to run for vice president again. Joanne Gore, while doing a great job as treasurer, must relinquish her position this next year as she goes back to full time employment (on top of being a busy mom); she informs us her husband, Dean Gore, is willing to volunteer for the treasurer's position for 1997. Veronica McKenzie, who has done so much for the civic club over many years, has asked if someone else might take on the secretarial duties for next year; Ruth Tynes, who has filled in for Veronica in the past, has indicated she is willing to take on the Secretary position if we do not have other volunteers.

<b>1996 Willow Meadows Civic Club Board Members</b>		
<b>President</b>	Chris Brouwer	723-9235
<b>Vice President</b>	Charles Rusciano	721-3136
<b>Treasurer</b>	Joanne Gore	
<b>Secretary</b>	Veronica McKenzie	729-3696
<b>Security</b>	Jane Leslie	729-4918
<b>Maintenance</b>	Harry Boswell	728-5208
<b>Deed Restrictions</b>	Doug Koy	723-0067
<b>Architecture</b>	Rob Chase	721-4878
<b>Beautification</b>	Randall Doe	297-5648

## **SPEED HUMPS: AN UPDATE**

If you missed the September meeting, here is an update on the speed hump situation. Many individuals submitted applications to the City for speed humps. The City of Houston advised us that the following streets were applied for: Greenwillow north of Loop 610, Greenwillow south of Loop 610 to West Bellfort, O'Meara from Greenwillow to Cliffwood, Nenana from West Bellfort to Willowgrove, Willowgrove from West Bellfort to Willowbend, Cliffwood from Loop 610 to West Bellfort and Cliffwood from West Bellfort to McDermed. In July and August, the City conducted a traffic survey of all of these streets which included a traffic count and a speed check. For a variety of reasons, not all streets indicated above qualified on this first round. The streets that did qualify were then asked to provide a Petition of Support from residents on that street. The City provided a form and a map indicating where the speed humps might be located on these streets. The streets that qualified to this level are: Greenwillow from Braeswood to Loop 610, Greenwillow from Loop 610

to West Bellfort, Cliffwood from Loop 610 to West Bellfort and Cliffwood from West Bellfort to McDermed. Those petitions were returned to the City, and the level of support on these petitions will be used as a factor in determining if these streets will get speed humps as early as December or January. There are so many neighborhoods applying for the speed hump program that the City can only complete approximately one third of those which qualify. Therefore, even for the streets in Willow Meadows that qualified, speed humps are not guaranteed. Existing applications will be reconsidered through four 6-month cycles for the program, after which they will be dropped. Realizing that there are a wide variety of opinions on speed humps, the Civic Club officially remains neutral on this topic.

## **OTHER NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS**

While Nenana may not get speed humps, many neighbors reminded us of the dangerous intersection at Nenana and Willowgrove, where a lot of through traffic from commuters and from the shopping center tended to swing through that intersection without looking. We applied to the City of Houston for a stop sign and they quickly responded to that request. Now all you have to do is stop at it!

A neighbor applied for a signal light at the intersection of Nenana and West Bellfort, where cross traffic from the shopping center makes this intersection rather tricky. The City studied the intersection and traffic patterns and determined that this intersection did not qualify for a signal light.

Following up on a neighbor's request to fix the badly misaligned sidewalks on Cliffwood along the Willow Park, we have pushed the Department of Public Works, who have finally agreed to replace a 150 ft section of sidewalk along the park which has been damaged by tree roots and cars. This project is scheduled for 1997 as part of the Safe School Sidewalk Program.

Our neighbors in Westwood put in a request to the City of Houston for improved street lighting along West Bellfort and Willowbend from Stella Link to South Post Oak. Thanks to their efforts, we should see HL&P installing 4 new lights along West Bellfort near

the Willowgrove and Meyer Forest intersections. This will make for safer walking and jogging along the Meyer Park center. An additional 79 light locations with new poles along West Bellfort and Willowbend were identified by the City and now await funding.

## **ESPLANADE NEWS**

Ken Meyer of MC Development, which owns and manages the Meyer Park center, stated that the West Bellfort esplanade will soon be under construction, perhaps as soon as mid-November. The first step is the landscaping of the esplanades, and the project will start with the installation of an irrigation system down the West Bellfort esplanade from Meyer Forest Drive to South Post Oak, followed by many new trees and landscaping. Once this project is complete, the Willow Meadows Civic Club will be reviewing the esplanade from Cliffwood to the railroad tracks to see how we can further beautify this section.

Mr. Meyer is aware of some complaints regarding unsanitary waste disposal from the restaurants in the South Colonial center on South Post oak, which his company manages. He encourages residents along Willowisp that notice foul odors and trash, as well as anyone else with complaints, to call the City of Houston Health Department to pursue these infractions. As property manager, he will encourage his tenants to comply with city regulations for maintaining a CLEAN and HEALTHY neighborhood.

Here are some phone numbers to remember if you have a problem:

- Harris County Health Department: 439-6270
- City of Houston - Consumer Health: 794-9400
- Mayor's Citizen Assistance: 247-1888
- Martha Wong, Councilmember District C: 247-2004
- Orlando Sanchez, Councilmember: 247-2005
- Mayor Bob Lanier: 247-2200

Together, let's keep our neighborhood LIVEABLE!

## **OTHER NEWS AROUND YOU**

You may be aware that a new company, Center America, recently purchased more than 70 older shopping centers in the Houston area. Some of these

shopping centers are near to Willow Meadows and we should see some renovations taking place soon. The current project is the renovation of the shopping center at Stella Link and Holcombe (home of I.W. Marks, Weiners, Bally's, etc.). Center America will move their corporate offices to the second floor of that building. Closer to home, the shopping center at Stella Link and Loop 610, current home of Cloth World and past home of McDuff's and Panchos, is about to get a total facelift. Food City will take over the McDuff/Panchos location and promises a clean supermarket to give you one more choice in groceries. Construction should start in December. The developers showed us their plans, which looked very nice, and will include a new parking lot and improved lighting. They welcome any suggestions from us regarding potential new tenants to meet your needs. Call 665-2511 with your input.

Speaking of Stella Link, it is finally getting closer to being replaced. We all know what terrible condition this street is in, especially from Braeswood to south of Loop 610. A contractor should be selected in January 1997, and we should see construction start shortly thereafter, with total replacement of the concrete from Holcombe all the way to South Main. There has been some talk of widening parts of Stella Link to 6 lanes, which would have eliminated some esplanade areas, especially south of Loop 610, but local civic clubs are currently fighting that proposal.

## **DEED RESTRICTIONS**

Since our last meeting, there has been only one formal complaint filed in writing. This concerns a three-story tree house in a backyard on Osby. The City Legal Department is reviewing this complaint.

The Deed Restriction Modernization Project is well under way! Our first meeting started with a great group of 15 volunteers on October 7. Copies of a recent model deed restriction revision were reviewed, and our volunteers were divided into three groups to work on the drafting of the various parts of the proposed new deed restrictions. Our plan is to put together the three groups' comments into a complete deed restriction draft, which we will review amongst the volunteers, at which point we will have the attorneys review the draft. What should you expect

over the next few months? When the attorneys have finished review of this draft, EVERY HOUSEHOLD will receive a copy of this draft, and we need EVERYONE to review it. At this stage, you will still have an opportunity to indicate your opinion on a paragraph by paragraph basis. These comments will then be incorporated into the final deed restrictions. The next time you see these deed restrictions, they should be in their final binding form, and at that point YOU will either sign in approval or not for the complete document. If you have any other questions regarding the deed restriction project, or if you have some time to help us in the final steps of this project, please feel free to call any of the Civic Club board members.

You may recall that we enclosed a Deed Restriction Survey in the last newsletter. Your feedback was very important for us in pointing our volunteers in the right direction for drafting these new deed restrictions. For your information, here are the results from that survey:

1. **2-STORY HOUSES:**

- In Favor: 87%
- Opposed: 13%

2. **RESTRICT MAXIMUM SIZE:**

- In Favor: 88%
- Opposed: 12%

(We also appreciated your comments reminding us of set back limits as a means of control.)

3. **PERMIT RESTRICTED HOME OFFICES:**

- In Favor: 94%
- Opposed: 6%

4. **RESTRICT VEHICLE STORAGE:**

- In Favor: 90%
- Opposed: 10%

5. **PERMIT SMALL OUTBUILDING:**

- In Favor: 93%
- Opposed: 7%

6. **HOUSE MAINTENANCE:**

- In Favor: 97%
- Opposed: 3%

7. **YARD MAINTENANCE:**

- In Favor: 93%
- Opposed: 7%

8. **MANDATORY DUES:**

- In Favor: 85%
- Opposed: 15%

9. **GRANDFATHER CLAUSES:**

- In Favor: 87%
- Opposed: 13%

While the above comments are by no means final and binding, they indicated to our committees that a majority of the people are in favor of tighter controls of the general appearance of the neighborhood, while taking into consideration changes over the past 40 years.

## **BRAYS BAYOU TRAIL**

Recently, a plan was approved to add or improve almost 350 miles of bicycle trails around Houston as part of a federal Transportation Enhancement project. A major portion of this project will be adjacent to our neighborhood. More than \$12 million of your federal tax dollars and Metro funds will be used to completely rebuild and extend the trail along Braeswood. The trail will be extended as far west as Beltway 8 and as far east as Mason's Park, near to the ship channel. The trail will be widened to 12 feet to allow plenty of room for bicycles, inline skaters, walkers and joggers. Almost all parts of the trail will be changed so that there are no street crossings to hinder your progress. Some dedicated bridges will be built to cross over the bayou so that your journey brings you to both sides of the bayou. All underpasses are to be lighted 24 hours a day, so as not to provide any shadowed areas to hide in. This project is in the design stage, and construction is expected to start in the second half of 1997. For all of you who like to exercise along the trail, you know what an asset this much improved trail will be to our neighborhood.



## **TELL A FRIEND!**

Now that Willow Meadows has just gone through a facelift, with resurfaced streets, additional street lights and updated street signs, we should not hesitate to tell everyone how great our neighborhood is. One neighbor reminded us of the many great reasons to live in Willow Meadows:

1. LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION!!! 15 minutes to downtown, 5 minutes to the med center, 10 minutes to the Galleria and Greenway Plaza.
2. GREAT NEIGHBORS! As indicated throughout this newsletter, it is with everyone's participation that we get things done to improve our lives. We have a friendly, caring, great mix of people here.
3. PARKS AND TRAILS! The Willow Park has tennis and basketball courts as well as a playground and great playing field, while we have a great duck pond and driving range within walking distance. The Brays Bayou trail will be top class very soon.
4. SECURITY PATROL! Security is important to all, and our constables take pride in protecting the neighbors and our neighborhood.
5. SCHOOLS! Convenient to some great public and private schools.
6. LARGE HOMES ON LARGE LOTS! Solidly built brick homes are the typical size most in demand. Notice the numerous remodeling and landscaping projects going on around you.
7. NEIGHBORHOOD SWIMMING POOL! The Willow Pool is available to its members and guests, with swimming lessons and a great swim team.
8. CLOSE TO SHOPPING, MOVIES AND RESTAURANTS! We are fortunate to have two highly competitive supermarkets within walking distance, as well as numerous restaurants and two major movie theaters.
9. NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS! An active Civic Club, numerous church and synagogue groups, as well as school groups, a garden club, baby sitting co-op and more.
10. PROPERTY VALUE! We still have some of the best home values in the city, with much more home for the money than neighboring Meyerland, but our property values are creeping up, so keep up the good work.

## RECYCLING REPORT

The schedule for recycling in the coming months is as follows:

November 26, December 10 & 24, January 7 & 21, February 4 & 18.

Don't forget: Heavy trash pick-up is the fourth Wednesday of every month. It is a violation of City ordinance to put heavy trash out for pick-up earlier than the weekend preceding scheduled collection. The schedule for the coming months is:

November 27, December 26 (Thursday), January 22, February 26.

## SECURITY REPORT

The "crime wave" we were experiencing this summer seems to have slowed. The smash and grab type thefts to vehicles parked in the street or in driveways continued through mid September and stopped. The persons committing these crimes were never caught in spite of the fact that we made some temporary scheduling changes in order to have a Constable officer on duty during targeted early morning hours.

We also provided more concentrated coverage on the street that was experiencing most of these crimes.

Sgt. Rosser believes that these burglaries were being committed by two or more teenagers in a car. They worked very quickly, smashing out a vehicle window, grabbing items and fleeing the scene without ever attracting any attention or arousing the suspicion of residents. It is very possible that they live in the area. The Constable officers will continue to look out for these persons should they start operating in our neighborhood again. Remember not to leave briefcases, cell phones, CD's or any other valuables where they can be seen in the car. Off street parking in a well lit area is preferable to parking on the street if you are unable to park your vehicle in a locked garage.

Below is a list of the more serious incidents reported to the Constable or taken from HPD stats since our last newsletter was printed in August:

August 15: 4800 blk. McDermed, burglary of a motor vehicle - Another smash and grab during nighttime hours. Car was parked in driveway and several items taken.

August 23: 4300 blk. McDermed, burglary of a motor vehicle - Smash and grab during nighttime hours. Car was parked in street and items taken.

August 27: 4300 blk. Woodvalley, burglary of a motor vehicle - Smash and grab occurred in evening between 9:45 and 9:50 p.m. (Sgt. Rosser had just patrolled this street and observed nothing minutes before incident)

Sept. 8: 4400 blk. Lympar: burglary of a motor vehicle.

Sept. 12: 4500 blk. McDermed: burglary of a motor vehicle - Window smashed but nothing reported missing.

Sept. 15: 9100 blk. Greenwillow: attempted auto theft or attempted burg. of motor vehicle - Broke right side window approx. 9:15 p.m.

Sept. 13: 4400 blk. Cheena: burglary of a residence - Someone entered an unlocked garage at residence and took misc. tools and power saws.

Sept. 23: 4400 blk. Cheena: On an unusual note, a headstone was found in the street at the intersection of Greenwillow and Cheena.

Sept. 23: 4500 blk. McDermed - motor home stored at residence broken into. This same thing has happened in the past. Sgt. Rosser made suggestions to the owner regarding location and lighting to help prevent future problem.

October 11: 4600 blk. O'Meara - burglary of a residence. An observant neighbor called the Constable to report 3 suspicious black youths at front door of home across street at approx. 11:20 a.m. When Deputy Lozano arrived at the scene, the neighbor had observed the youths go to the back of the house. Deputy Lozano saw that a rear sliding door had been opened and was waiting for some backup when one youth ran out and was able to escape by jumping a fence. He arrested the second youth as he ran out and with the help of the HPD helicopter, Deputy Lozano was able to arrest the third youth who had also escaped and was hiding in a backyard on Lemac. The identification of the youth that escaped is known to the Constable and they expected to pick him up later, possibly if he showed up at school. The boys were 15, 16 and 17 years of age.

October 12: 4300 blk. Wigton - Several yards were trenched at approx. 1:30 a.m. A neighbor was able to provide a description of the vehicle and Deputy Lozano was able to track down the youth responsible. Criminal mischief charges will be filed if restitution is not made to residents.

November 6: 4400 blk. Wigton - burglary of a motor vehicle. Speakers were stolen from an unlocked van parked in driveway. This information came in as this report was being prepared and it is not known whether it is related to previous crimes of this type.

Remember that even though we have a Constable on duty 60 hours a week, supplemented through mutual cooperation by Willowbend's 40 hours of contact coverage, the Constable cannot be in every part of the area at once and there are some periods in every 24 hour day that we have no one in the area. Everyone can contribute to the security of our neighborhood by being observant and reporting anything suspicious to the Constable for investigation. As you can see, one observant resident was able to stop a crime in process and save her neighbor any further loss.

We have three new Reserve Deputies volunteering their time to patrol our area. This really helps with area coverage and visibility of the Constable patrol. It should also help with the speeding problems. Speeders are receiving either warnings or tickets depending on the severity of the infraction. Sgt. Rosser says that there seems to be some confusion among people he has stopped regarding the speed limit on neighborhood streets. The speed limit is 30 mph even though there are no signs posted in the neighborhood. Please observe this speed limit for the safety and courtesy of your neighbors.

## **USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS**

PRECINCT 7 CONSTABLES:	<b>748-8900</b>
EMERGENCY:	<b>911</b>
POISON CONTROL:	<b>654-1701</b>
MAYOR'S OFFICE:	<b>247-1888</b>

MARTHA WONG, DIST. C: **247-2004**

CITY SWITCHBOARD: **247-1000**

WATER/SEWER REPAIRS: **754-0600**

NEIGHBORHOOD PROTECTION: **525-2525**

TRAFFIC LIGHT/SIGN REPAIRS: **865-4000**



Recently, we were advised that the County Commissioners have voted to increase the cost of Contract Security such as Precinct 7 provides to us by 6% when our new contract is effective on Jan. 1, 1997. We are told that this is to cover increased operating costs to the county but that they expect to be able to hold the new rate for up to 3 years.

As we approach the next year and notices for annual dues are mailed, it will be important to try and increase participation among residents in the Willow Meadows Civic Club. Contract Security accounts for the largest portion of funds taken in by the Civic Club which currently has approx. 70% participation among residents. The other 30% of residents, whether they own or rent benefit from this service as well. We do not want to discourage a non-member from reporting something that may affect the safety and security of themselves or a neighbor simply because they do not pay dues. At the same time, it has not gone unnoticed that there are residents that do not support this program monetarily yet have no problem having their burglar alarm company calling the Constable dispatcher for service or who call the Constable to handle their own personal complaints which have nothing to do with the general security of Willow Meadows. This is very unfair to the 70% of residents who participate. For those interested in joining next year, the dues are \$150. If you rent your home, please try to negotiate an arrangement with your landlord so that you can participate or contact the Civic Club directly.

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**DEED RESTRICTIONS**

All deed restriction complaints are reviewed and appropriate steps taken for enforcement. Complainants are advised in writing of the Board's actions on their complaints. Please use the form below to report suspected violations.

**WILLOW MEADOWS CIVIC CLUB  
P.O. BOX 35551  
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77235  
DEED RESTRICTIONS COMPLAINT FORM**

NAME OF  
COMPLAINANT \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ TELEPHONE  
# \_\_\_\_\_

NATURE OF COMPLAINT: (Please be specific - Give Names, Addresses, Dates, Details)

If legal action would be required, are you willing to be a complainant and appear in court as a witness if absolutely necessary? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you know of any other residents in your section of Willow Meadows who will also appear in court if necessary? \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail your completed form to the address above. Your name will not be divulged unless you are a complainant in a lawsuit.  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **What Do Home Buyers Want?**

A recent survey of potential homebuyers gives some insight as to what would entice a home buyer to move into a new community. The answers may surprise you; the majority responded that they want access to jogging trails and more park space. Fortunately for us, Willow Meadows provides parks and trails, with major improvements slated for the Brays Bayou trail. The majority of homebuyers intend to spend between \$100,000 to \$199,000, looking for a 1500 to 2500 square foot home, so Willow Meadows fits right into those categories. In regards to usage of that footage, most buyers would trade off a large master bath in favor of larger bedroom space and larger living spaces. In the kitchen, counter space is a high priority, as well as seating space, double sinks and built-in microwave ovens and light wood cabinets.

One of the most sensitive topics for a homebuyer is the cleanliness of the home. If a house for sale has a reputation amongst the realtors of being “unclean”, they will avoid showing it to prospective buyers. If a buyer sees an unkempt home, he will start to doubt other aspects of the home, such as “are the furnace/AC and appliances in good working condition?”, “are there other hidden defects?”. Unkempt homes generally command lower offers than homes where the owner has put in some efforts to spruce up the yard and keep the interior in clean condition.

(Excerpted from Houston Chronicle, Real Estate Section)

## **YARD OF THE MONTH**

Our special thanks to all of you who devote a lot of time and energy to make your yards so attractive. It is appealing to the eye and also adds to the value of your property. The Yard of the Month awards for the recent months are:

October: 12003 Cliffwood

November: 10115 Willowgrove