
Willow Meadows News

November 1998

December Meeting

The next meeting of the Willow Meadows Civic Club is Tuesday, December 1, 7:30 p.m. at the Willow Meadows Baptist Church. Please come and take part in what is going on in your neighborhood.

From The President

Dear Willow Meadows Residents:

The overriding concern we have worked for as a civic club for the past two years is finally coming to fruition. The deed restriction amendments have passed in all 18 sections. The work that it took was tremendous, and many people have participated in a grass-roots effort to formulate, investigate, research, draft and gain passage of the amended deed restrictions.

We will be finishing up the legal work and registration with the county records during the balance of this year. I would still welcome anyone's signature approval who has not signed. Each signature will represent additional validation of our efforts. I personally acted as shepherd for over 100 houses. I have heard the complaints and did not argue with those who did not want to sign. Every person on the board and every volunteer worker going out to collect signatures was instructed to be courteous and non-argumentative.

While we are finishing up the passage of the amendments, we are just beginning on the new responsibilities and obligations for implementation of these amendments. Whether you did or did not approve of the amendments, it must be realized that we are now a **unified subdivision**. We must continue to think and act like a unified entity. The Civic Club Officers, now more than ever, are charged with new and very important responsibilities. During the month of December, we will be busy trying to gear up to the challenges which lie ahead. Please be understanding with all of us on the board. Please be understanding with your neighbors. Some may resent the passage of the amendments. We can only hope that some day the benefits of this unified passage will be appreciated.

Thank you for your efforts, and thank you for the compliments we received. They were numerous, and very much appreciated.

Most sincerely,

Charles D. Rusciano

1998 Willow Meadows Civic Club Officers and Executive Board			
President:	Charles Rusciano (721-3136)	Security:	Mac Leichtman (723-4492)
Vice President	Chris Brouwer (723-9235)	Beautification:	Harry Boswell (728-5208)
Treasurer:	Andrew Strong (723-6923)	Deed Restrictions:	Doug Koy (723-0067)
Secretary:	John Kirtley (728-3057)	Architecture:	Rob Chase (723-4878)

TREASURER'S REPORT

This report summarizes the income statement for the Willow Meadows Civic Club through the end of October, relative to our full year budget for 1998. As you know, our primary source of revenue is your dues, so please submit your annual dues of \$150 as soon as possible to: Willow Meadows Civic Club, P.O. Box 35551, Houston, TX 77235.

Category/Description	Jan. 1-Oct 31, '98	1998 Budget
REVENUES		
Dues	\$ 82,861.00	\$81,000.00
Interest checking	0.00	0.00
Interest savings	3,312.53	4,000.00
Advertising	405.00	500.00
Other Income	0.00	0.00
Total	\$ 86,578.53	\$85,500.00
EXPENDITURES		
Bank charge	\$ 75.00	\$ 50.00
Donations	0.00	500.00
Miscellaneous	73.50	1,000.00
Mowing	3,724.94	4,400.00
Pest control	1,750.00	4,200.00
Postage	493.88	800.00
Printing	422.44	1,500.00
Security	52,340.50	62,803.44
Supplies	136.62	150.00
Legal Services	2,249.12	3,000.00
Total	\$ 61,266.00	\$78,403.44
SURPLUS	\$ 25,312.53	\$7,096.56

You will note that our revenue has already exceeded our budget, thanks to a higher percentage of residents paying their dues and sharing the costs of security and maintenance. While our surplus above looks quite large, don't forget that we continue to have large expenditures for security through the remainder of this year, so we should finish with a surplus of approximately \$8000, which makes up for a few years ago when we ran a deficit. Thank you for your participation.

MEYER PARK NEWS

Those of you who came to the last general meeting heard the recent news regarding Meyer Park. The area where the driving range was located has been cleared of fill and has been sold to the Gables Corporation, an affiliate of Trammell Crow. They are the same company that constructed the Gables apartment complex in Meyer Park and they plan to construct a similar project on that cleared site. The Meyers informed us that there were numerous proposals, but that they had the most confidence in this developer to maintain the property in quality condition. Since the dirt was removed, there has been no further activity, so we are not sure if the project is now on hold. Meanwhile, the pile of dirt that was removed across from the AMC Theaters was simply to sell the dirt. We understand that there are no projects planned for that site at this time.

Meanwhile, the latest news is that the area of the driving range that is along the Post Oak feeder road, which was not cleared of dirt, has a contract from Wal-Mart. The MC Development Corporation is working with Wal-Mart to get some architectural and landscaping concessions to keep that development more consistent with the existing Meyer Park shopping center.

There will be modifications to Meyer Park Boulevard that currently runs from the feeder road to Meyer Forest Drive. We are informed that this street will start from Meyer Forest, but will end in a cul-de-sac before reaching the feeder road. There will be drives at the cul-de-sac leading south into the Luby's parking area and north into the Wal-Mart parking area. This will keep our back entrance to Meyer Park open. In addition, the retention ponds will remain open for public access. You may recall earlier discussions regarding a retirement community that would have fenced in the ponds and rerouted Meyer Park Boulevard in a winding path through the cinema parking lot. Those plans are no longer in consideration.

1998 CIVIC CLUB MEETINGS

DECEMBER 1

LITTLE THINGS THAT BUG YOU

While many volunteers were circulating through the neighborhood getting signatures for the new Deed Restriction Amendments, we got to meet many of our neighbors who don't get the opportunity to go to the quarterly meetings. These are all great neighbors who generally love the neighborhood and love the area and want to keep the good quality of life we have here. But many of them expressed some points that bugged them. We are fortunate that crime is not a major problem in our area, and in general, most homes reflect the pride of ownership that is so important to maintaining our property values. Yet, little things can spoil our otherwise peaceful existence, and, sadly, good neighbors can get turned off by others' inconsiderate actions.

The most common complaint we heard while going around was regarding dog droppings in the yards. While many of us have pets and love to take them out for walks, please remember that you are responsible to pick up after your pets. Pets off a leash, as well as pet droppings, are a violation of city ordinances. Uncontrolled cat populations are also a violation.

The second biggest complaint was cars parked all over the street. Many of us park in our driveways or in our garages, but a few houses seem to have a lot of cars which remain parked all over the street, many times in front of their neighbors' houses, and stay there for days or weeks at a time. There is a city ordinance prohibiting cars parked on the street for more than a 24-hour period.

The third biggest complaint was people putting out their trash well in advance of the pick up dates. Some people seem to have a habit of starting a "heavy trash" pile the day AFTER the heavy trash pick up. Therefore, your neighbors have to look at your pile of trash for the next 30 days. Putting out trash too far in advance is also a violation of city ordinances, as covered elsewhere in this newsletter.

Please be considerate of your neighbors and follow the rules. It will make Willow Meadows that much nicer a place to live, and it will help increase our property values.

BAYOU MOWING

Some neighbors called to complain about the overgrown weeds along the Willow Waterhole Bayou. This editor also got concerned, and tracked down the what he hopes is the right department. Please note the phone number for Harris County Flood Control added to our list of useful phone numbers. Curtis Brom is the contact, and he claims that he will arrange for mowers to come when he is alerted to a problem. Well.....three calls later, and the bayou was still overgrown as we went to press. We understand that the budgets for mowing have been cut, but Curtis claimed that they should mow a minimum of two times per year, normally three, and that they will respond to problem areas. Well, we continue to wait and see if he will keep his word.

SEWER SURVEYING

Many of you have noticed a lot of surveying activity along Cliffwood between Loop 610 and West Bellfort, as well as along West Bellfort. We asked our Councilmember to investigate, but meanwhile, we managed to spot a surveying team and asked them what it was all about. They claim that there is no firm project at this time, but they are surveying for the eventual replacement of the sewer line along Cliffwood and down the length of West Bellfort towards the railroad tracks. Maybe the City of Houston is finally realizing that the last two projects they have tried along Cliffwood have failed to alleviate the problem of sewer overflow during heavy rains.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION FOR SECTION LEADERS AND VOLUNTEERS

At the next general meeting, we want to recognize the efforts of the section leaders who have given outstanding service in helping distribute the newsletters. This has been an overlooked aspect of volunteerism which has been vital to our neighborhood. In the general meeting, we are going to give special recognition and thanks to Veronica McKenzie, Gil and Elizabeth Hurwitz, Jean Wyatt Rhodes, and Paul Ofield.

DEED RESTRICTION RESULTS

Well, the results are in, and Willow Meadows owners have overwhelmingly approved the new deed restrictions. In less than two months, we are pleased to confirm that ALL sections of Willow Meadows have now approved the amendments that were distributed with the August newsletter. To give you some idea of how complex a situation this was, please see the enclosed map that indicates how our subdivision was constructed in 18 distinct sections, each which could have been taken over by a developer and changed to multi-family or businesses. The new amendments now bring us all under one common set of deed restrictions, and any future modifications will require a majority approval of the whole neighborhood.

The final step is to file the signature pages for all sections, and the deed restriction amendments will become effective on that date. Meanwhile, if you were not contacted to sign the deed restrictions, please forgive us, as our volunteers were not able to find everyone at home over the last few months. If you wish to sign the approval for our records, we ask you to phone Charles Rusciano at 721-3136.

As many of you know, each and every section had to reach the approval of a majority of the registered home owners in order to adopt the new deed restrictions. In most of the sections, the approvals were in the 60-80% range. In a few sections, we were higher than that, even reaching 100% approval in one section! The feedback indicates that there were some neighbors opposed to the new amendments, but these did not exceed 10% in any one section. The remainder that did not sign either were never home or were absentee owners (rental properties, etc.). As indicated above, if you were not contacted and still wish to sign, please call Charles Rusciano at 721-3136.

There was a misconception from a few people that the new deed restrictions apply only to those who signed them. That is not true. The new deed restrictions apply to **each and every property in Willow Meadows**. If you suspect something may be in violation of our deed restrictions, or if there are other issues that you wish to bring to our attention, please use the Deed Restriction Complaint Form included in this newsletter.

SECURITY REPORT

We regret that we misplaced some September reports in our listing below as we went to print. Fortunately, once again, crime has been relatively minor in our neighborhood, much below previous years. We wish to once again express thanks to Precinct 7, and Sgt. Cerda, for continued cooperation and responsive assistance with information. Here are the significant incidents during this reporting period:

Aug. 7: 4400 Sarong. Early morning. Truck window broken. No witnesses or suspects.

Aug. 7: 4300 Sarong. Early Morning. Burglary of motor vehicle, car wheels stolen. No witnesses or suspects.

Aug. 8: Snake reported in kitchen. Unable to locate.

Aug. 29: 4300 O'Meara. Burglary of motor vehicle. Reported through Houston Police Department.

Oct. 3: 4300 Meyerwood. Burglary of motor vehicle. Car stereo stolen. No witnesses or suspects.

Oct. 20: 4400 Sarong. Two men in a pickup truck walked into open garage and stole lawnmower. No arrest made as of yet.

Oct. 28: 4800 Knickerbocker. Power tools stolen from open garage. No witnesses or suspects.

As you can see from the reports above, the majority involve burglary of a motor vehicle, which is a good reminder that you should not leave anything valuable in your vehicle if it is parked in the street or driveway, and of course, if you can put the vehicles in the garage, they are that much safer. The burglaries from garages occurred when they were left open. It only takes a few seconds for a burglar to spot an opportunity and take something from an inviting garage.

With cooler weather, many of us like to open our windows. Please remember to lock them when you leave the house, or you leave a wide-open invitation to a burglar. Also, with the holidays upon us, think if your presents stacked up near the windows might attract unwanted attention. If you go out of town, don't forget that our Constables can provide a home watch. They will also provide a complimentary "Crime Prevention Inspection" of your home that may

help with insurance discounts. Please keep your eyes and ears open. When in doubt, call the Constables at 643-6602. It never hurts to have the Constables come out check out suspicious persons.

“THANK YOU” TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

The Deed Restriction project was a collaborative effort of so many of your neighbors. Many of us had differing opinions, but we believe we arrived at the best overall set of deed restriction amendments for our neighborhood. We wish to take this opportunity to acknowledge some of those people who donated countless hours working on the deed restrictions:

Joanne and Steve Bassett, Dena Brody, Chris Brouwer, Rob Chase, Rosemary Cruthirds, Randall Doe, Norma Hageney, Mary Jackson, Doug Koy, Jack MacDonough, Veronica McKenzie, Susan Marsh, Marlene Matalon, Doug and Mitti Meyers, Charles Rusciano, Andrew Strong, Charles van Ravenswaay, Michael Wadler, and Dick Wright.

You may recognize some of your neighbors above. We had representation from all quadrants of the subdivision, both long-time residents and newcomers, with backgrounds as varied as architects, chemists, realtors, designers, salesmen, lawyers, teachers, accountants, engineers and retirees.

In addition, the process of collecting signatures was quite a chore. The biggest problem identified by our volunteers was just finding people at home, whether on weekdays or weekends, day and night. Many thanks to all of you, including:

Michael Abramowitz, Sherry Bernardy, William Bremer, Dena Brody, Chris Brouwer, Beverly Feldman, Bob Fleischer, Chris Griffin, Russell Heinen, Liz Hurwitz, Lisa and John Kirtley, Doug Koy, Mac Leichtman, Hugh Rafferty, Charles Rusciano, Andrew Strong, Ed Stubbs, Charles van Ravenswaay, Michael and Freda Wadler, Linda Waldman, Andrea Walters, Linda Wilson, Israel and Beverly Wuntch.

We apologize if we forgot to mention any of our volunteers. We really do appreciate your help.

ARE YOU BREAKING THE LAW?

GARBAGE REMINDERS

IMPORTANT REMINDER! This may seem like a trivial point to our considerate neighbors, but many neighbors continue to bring to our attention that a few inconsiderate neighbors regularly break the law by putting out their trash well before the City of Houston ordinances permit. While we all appreciate that we generate lots of trash, and many of us are remodeling or cleaning up the landscaping, we still don't appreciate the neighborhood looking like a trash dumpster 365 days a year. Here are the City laws regarding the trash:

1. Do not place garbage cans and bagged clippings and leaves on the curb until 6:00 p.m. the day before pick-up day, which is now Monday for the whole neighborhood.
2. Heavy trash is picked up on the fourth (4th) Wednesday of each month. On weeks where there is a Monday holiday, the pick-up day will be moved to the Thursday after the scheduled Wednesday pick-up. Heavy trash is not permitted at curbside until the Sunday prior to the pickup day. NOTE: Concrete, bricks, sheetrock, or plaster are not to be including in "heavy trash" pick-up.

Complaints about violations may be phoned in to the SW Division Office or the Community Outreach Inspector at 865-4177. Violators will be issued a first warning, then fines can be imposed from \$50 - \$2,000. It is not worth the risk. PLEASE ADHERE TO THE RULES.

RECYCLING:

The recycling "hotline" is 865-4201. Call if you have any questions. Since there are certain restrictions, ask plenty of questions to make sure you comply with any restrictions. Please note that we are close to two of the four city recycling centers. The Westpark Recycling and Educational Center, located at 5815 Southwest Freeway (accessible from Westpark), is the closest. This center will accept deposits of "hazardous waste" from our residents. Bring a Texas drivers license or other ID with your address on it, or a utility bill.

RECYCLING SCHEDULE

PLEASE NOTE! The recycling schedule has been changed for all of Willow Meadows. Beginning from November 2, recycling pickup will be every second

Monday, the same day as our automated trash pickup. Please remember the following schedule for recycling:

November 16 & 30, December 14 & 28, January 11 & 25, February 8 & 22.

Acceptable materials for curbside recycling include aluminum and tin cans, #1 and #2 plastics, glass bottles and jars, telephone books, newspapers, magazines and used motor oil.

Don't forget: Heavy trash pick-up is the **fourth** Wednesday of every month, which is not necessarily the last Wednesday, as some of you learned in July. 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 25, December 23 and January 27.

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Coldwell Banker, United Realtors
(713) 598-2241 Voice Mail
(713) 623-8899 x3048 Office
www.har.com/gregphilpott**

OFFICER ELECTIONS

The next general meeting in December is the time we elect new civic club officers. As you know, anyone who has paid dues for 1998 and is willing to volunteer to run for office may do so. All interested

candidates should contact our current President, Charles Rusciano @ 721-3136 and express an interest. Or, you may show up for the general meeting and express your interest and submit yourself as a candidate. Each year we elect officers in December to serve for a one-year term for the following year. Under our corporate by-laws, the President appoints all non-elected board members. The Board has voted to create a new "Editor" position, and all persons interested should contact Charles Rusciano to express an interest. This position will require computer skills on Microsoft Word and knowledge of the internet. We currently have some new candidates for the Editor, Security, and Beautification committees, but we welcome all interested volunteers. If you would like to be a member of the Civic Club Board, or just wish to know what the responsibilities are for any of these positions, please call any board member. For the upcoming elections, Charles Rusciano has expressed his interest to continue as President; John Kirtley is willing to continue as Secretary, and Andrew Strong has expressed his interest in moving from Treasurer to Vice President. Rich Bernardy has offered his services for the Treasurer's position. Of course, all elected officers' positions require majority vote from those in attendance at the December General Meeting.

On the lighter side . . .

The recent newsletter for "The Trail Way" (Official News Bulletin for the Houston Bikeway Program) printed that Jack Rains, a bicyclist who chairs the Harris County-Houston Sports Authority, has announced that there will be bicycle parking facilities at the new ballpark. Personally, I don't know which is funnier: the thought of seeing Jack Rains ride his bike to the ballpark, or seeing just how long a bicycle would last at the ballpark parking lot.

CIVIC CLUB DUES

This is a reminder that Civic Club Dues are payable at the first of each year. This summer, we sent out reminder notices to those on record as not having paid. If you received this notice in error, please contact our

Treasurer to clear up our records. Meanwhile, we appreciate those of you who did pay, as we surpassed our goals, with 71% of all households paying their dues, a record for recent years. Results by street are indicated below, and a big thank you goes to Lymbar, Silverwood and Willowgrove for the highest percentage participation. But what about those folks on Willowisp and Breakwood?

Breakwood: 53%	O'Meara: 76%
Cheena: 77%	Osby: 68%
Cliffwood: 69%	Piermain: 73%
Firestone: 76%	Sarong: 73%
Greenwillow: 69%	Silverwood: 88%
Knickerbocker: 73%	Waynesboro: 57%
Lemac: 75%	Wigton: 63%
Lymbar: 90%	Willowgrove: 85%
McDermed: 63%	Willowisp: 53%
Meyerwood: 71%	Woodvalley: 61%
Nenana: 77%	



<p>October – 4843 McDermed November – 4414 Cheena</p>
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We are pleased to announce that Teas Nursery has stepped up to the plate and is providing us gift certificates so that we can continue the Yard of the Month program. Located at the site of the old Wolfe's Nursery at 4545 Beechnut, Teas will offer our neighborhood specials from time to time to help keep our yards and gardens looking beautiful. They are a welcome new neighbor.

ADVERTISING

We would like to remind you that the Willow Meadows newsletter will accept advertising to help defray the costs of printing and other civic club expenses. If you have a local business or provide a service useful to our neighbors, you may want to let us

know about it. To encourage participation, we have reduced our prices, as indicated below. We generally go to print the first week of February, May, August and November.

- Half page: \$50 each edition
- Quarter page: \$25 each edition
- Eighth page: \$15 each edition

Please contact Chris Brouwer at 723-9235 if you are interested to place an advertisement.

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 at 723-9235 if you want to contribute a news item.

USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

PRECINCT 7 CONSTABLES:	643-6602
EMERGENCY:	911
POISON CONTROL:	654-1701
MAYOR'S OFFICE:	247-1888
MARTHA WONG, DIST. C:	247-2004
ODOR HOTLINE:	783-4348
WATER/SEWER REPAIRS:	754-0600
NEIGHBORHOOD PROTECTION:	525-2525
HARRIS CTY FLOOD CONTROL:	684-4197

INTERNET NEWS

In the last newsletter, we discussed the possibility of obtaining a Web page on the internet. Since that time, Scott Hochberg has graciously offered to host us on his website. Andrew Strong has communicated with Rep. Hochberg about setting up our site and address.

It is in the initial stages of development. We will be working on this project over the next few months to establish our website. A few people expressed their concern that this might cost too much money. We wish to clarify that we intend to keep our costs to a minimum, with the eventual hope that, as more people start working with computers, we might save on printing costs (currently our newsletter is printed free of charge, but that cannot last forever), as well as gain some advertising revenue from local realtors and businesses.

This is very exciting and goes along with the plans to expand communications in our neighborhood. With the creation of a new "Editor" position, we feel we can speed up communications, network between users, and offer current information to all residents

formation of the Web page, please contact Andrew at (713) 723-6923 or astrong@cg-law.com.

SYNAGOGUE ADDITIONS

You may have noticed the activity at the United Orthodox Synagogue at the north end of our neighborhood. At the end of October, the contractors arrived and began removing the porte-cache to begin the remodeling of the synagogue. This project is slated to take the better part of a year, involving extensive remodeling of both the interior and exterior.

In addition, they will be expanding the social and sanctuary areas. When the project is complete, the synagogue should make for a very attractive entrance to our neighborhood from South Braeswood.

who have the capability to hook up to the internet. We can showcase the neighborhood, display newsletters, directories and other vital information. To view an example of what we would like to do, visit the website for Woodland Heights Subdivision in Houston at "www.woodland-heights.org". If anyone has an interest in participating in the



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WILLOW MEADOWS DEED RESTRICTION COMPLAINT FORM

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 mail in 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? _____