

## Ongoing Neighborhood Projects

—By Pat Rutledge & Louise Moss

Several community projects begun in the Centennial year are still moving forward. If you would like more information on any of the following projects, please contact [president@woodland-heights.org](mailto:president@woodland-heights.org).

**Neighborhood Family Picnic** To celebrate this fantastic spring season, gather for community fellowship and dedicate the newest community improvement, the WHCA is sponsoring a family picnic on Saturday May 31<sup>st</sup> from 4-8 PM at the Norhill Esplanade. As is customary, hot dogs with all the trimmings, plus snacks and drinks will be served free of charge. Our world famous bake sale and silent auction will be held to help raise funds for various ongoing and planned WHCA projects. This annual event is being held a little later in the season than before in an effort to coincide with the completion of the brick promenade being constructed at the south end of the esplanade (see update below).

**State Historic Marker** The application for a state historic marker for the original Woodland Heights was formally approved by the Texas Historic Commission. A dedication ceremony is planned for Fall 2008. Thanks again to Omar Holguin, Rose Gallardo and Florence Clark for their hard work in making this project a reality!

**Commemorative Brick Promenade** The design of the brick promenade for the Norhill Esplanade has been approved and the final construction bids are being refined and submitted for final approval. Construction should take about one week and be completed by late May. Once the promenade is complete, the price for engraved bricks will increase. If you are interested in paying tribute to an important event or person in your life, contact us now for the “pre-construction” prices on engraved bricks.

**Neighborhood Landscaping Projects** A butterfly garden has now been completed in Ley Plaza at White Oak and Gladys and the planned seating areas should be completed before the end of spring. Native species of heat tolerant shrubs and flowers will also be planted in the area of the Clock Tower at White Oak and Houston Avenue. Contact us if you are interested in helping with the planting effort.

**Woodland Park** “Friends of Woodland Park” has been established to organize and prioritize the ideas for the park improvements. A local architectural firm has stepped forward and offer to be involved with the project. Do you have ideas for improvements to the park? Would you like to be involved with the renaissance of this historic park? This project does not involve heavy labor, just vision and a willingness to work as part of a team to create something greater than the sum of its parts.

## April / May 2008

### **CERT Training Begins Soon!**

Community Emergency Response Team

—By Chuck Britton

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills. Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises, CERT members can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help. When deployed appropriately, CERTs can complement and enhance first-response capability in their neighborhood by ensuring the safety of themselves and their families and working outward to the neighborhood and beyond until trained first responders arrive. CERTs can then assist first-response personnel as directed. CERT members also are encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking a more active role in emergency preparedness projects in their community.

Training is FREE OF CHARGE

8 Week Program—Wednesday nights; 6—9 pm  
—May 7th—June 25th

Topics Covered:

- Introduction to CERT
- Fire Safety
- Hazardous Materials and Terrorist Incidents
- Disaster Medical Operations
- Search and Rescue
- Course Summary / Mock Exercise

Further information is available on the internet at:  
[www.citizencorps.gov/cert](http://www.citizencorps.gov/cert).

If you would like to help your community by participating in CERT, contact Jason Cisneroz in Council Member Adrian Garcia's office at (713) 247—2003 or [jason.cisneroz@cityofhouston.net](mailto:jason.cisneroz@cityofhouston.net).

### **2008-2009 WHCA Board**

Congratulations to the 2008-2009 board members elected at the March General Meeting! Chuck Britton, Tony Maluski and Vicky Bettis will continue on for another year and we welcome new members Adrian Reed, An Armstrong, Anthony Marré, Louise Moss, Matt Emal, and Randall Ellis. See pg. 5 for contact information.

## ***Protecting Our Neighborhoods***

—By Sharon Greiff, Land Use Liaison

The City of Houston Planning Committee recently made a very important decision to NOT allow a requested variance for two lots that have Minimum Lot Size Protection in Sunset Heights. This was the first variance asked requested and the Sunset Heights neighborhood is grateful for the Committee's precedence-setting decision. It was not an easy victory—this was the third planning meeting that neighborhood representatives and Planning & Development attended. The neighborhood representatives were required to document and demonstrate that the petition had been properly created, that notification was given and that there was adequate public information for the developer to make an informed decision. It is our hope that in the future builders choose to construct homes that fit the neighborhood's character.

Although Woodland Heights has a large area of the neighborhood protected, each block could "go the extra mile" and apply for additional protection via Deed Restrictions, Minimum Lot Size, Minimum Building Line, Individual Landmark protection and Historic Neighborhood Designation. Each one of these has limits as to what it can protect, the number of homes that are protected and how the protections are enforced. The following is a very brief overview of each one of these protections.

***Deed Restrictions*** – Can determine minimum lot size, building setback, side setbacks, building height, use, density and various other building characteristics. Must be approved by at least 51% of the homeowners of one or more subdivisions; however any homeowner can opt out of the deed restrictions during the first year that the restrictions are in place. Only some of the deed restriction covenants will be enforced by the City of Houston and there really isn't an adequate method for the city to police building variances; therefore the bulk of deed restriction enforcement is dependent on neighborhood groups.

***Minimum Lot Size***\* – Determines minimum lot size for a block face and the opposing block face. Must be approved by at least 51% of the homeowners and homeowners cannot opt out of the protection. Variances can be requested, but must be approved by the Planning Commission after a public hearing. The Planning Department is responsible for enforcing the protection and has adequate methods to police variances.

## ***Neighborhood Protection Continued:***

***Minimum Building Line***\* — Determines the minimum set back for the front of any building for a block face and the opposing block face. Must be approved by at least 51% of the homeowners and homeowners cannot opt out of the protection. Variances can be requested, but must be approved by the Planning Commission after a public hearing. The Planning Department is responsible for enforcing the protection and has adequate methods to police variances.

\*You can apply for both of these protections via a single petition.

***Landmark Protection*** – Regulates exterior alteration, new construction, relocation or demolition of any historic structure. The Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission (HAHC) reviews and votes on applications for Certificates of Appropriateness that are required for work affecting the exterior of a historic structure or site. If rejected the applicant can wait for 90 days and then proceed with the changes. This is strictly enforced and policed by the HAHC.

***Historic Neighborhood Designation*** – Basically the same as Landmark Protection but applies to an entire neighborhood. Must be approved by at least 51% of the homeowners and homeowners cannot opt out of the protection. As with the Landmark Protection, the city may grant a tax exemption to qualified property owners who improve designated historic properties.

If you are interested in learning more about any of these for your block you can contact the following people:

VP, Deed Restrictions I—Anthony Marre  
Email: [deed\\_restrictions@woodland-heights.org](mailto:deed_restrictions@woodland-heights.org)  
Tel: (713) 598-6430

VP, Deed Restrictions II—Tony Maluski  
Email: [deed\\_restrictions2@woodland-heights.org](mailto:deed_restrictions2@woodland-heights.org)  
Tel: (713) 528-8822

Land Use Liaison—Sharon Greiff  
Email: [landuse@woodland-heights.org](mailto:landuse@woodland-heights.org)  
Tel: (713) 868-1579

# Free Family Picnic

When: Saturday, May 31<sup>st</sup> 4:00—8:00 pm

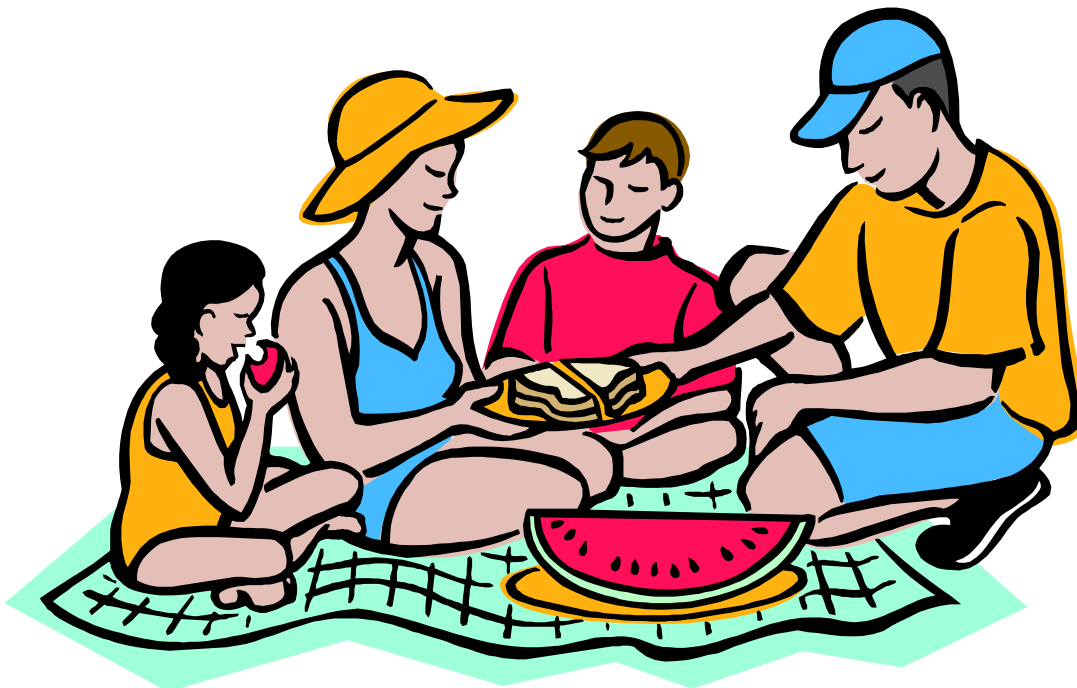
Where: Norhill Esplanade

Provided: Free Hotdogs with trimmings  
Snack  
Drinks

Bring: Blanket / Folding Chair

Events: Bakesale\*  
Silent Auction\*  
\*proceeds benefit WHCA events

Entertainment: Musical entertainment to be determined  
Kids' "Moonwalk" / Bouncy House



## Ley Plaza Butterfly Garden

Be sure to stop by Ley Plaza (at White Oak and Gladys) to see the wonderful new butterfly garden! 17 volunteers came out on Saturday, April 5<sup>th</sup> to help plants more than 200 plants and install soaker hoses to ensure that the new plants get off to a great start. Dee Howell and TJ Marks from the City Parks and Recreation Department provided consultations, landscaping direction and plants. Additional plants were provided by Pat German and James Muhl. Many thanks to the following dedicated volunteers who helped make this project a reality: Amelie (our youngest gardener), Cal, David, Dee, Harry, James, Janet, Jayne, Jeff, Jill, Jim, John, Karen, Louise, Pat G., Pat R., Rob, Stefan, and Hallie (our Canine mascot). Special thanks to Pat German, a Master Naturalist, who was instrumental in forging a relationship with the city's parks department.



Volunteers Janet Tallichet, Dee Howell, Louise Moss, Cal and Stefan Sercu hard at work on the butterfly garden.



Many thanks to the hard working gardeners Janet Tallichet, Rob Proctor, Jill Whitten, Jayne Porter, James Muhl, Pat German, Louise Moss, Karen and David Danberg.

## Yards of the Month

—By Jill Whitten

Sponsored by Buchanan's Native Plants

The March YOM winner was  
**509 Woodland**

The sign has been taken down, but Marci DeBock's garden still sings with glorious color and life. You know the place—a big shark hangs over the driveway. Most of the garden action takes place between the curb and the street. It has vegetables including beans, peas, onions, squash, tomatoes, chard, rosemary, thyme and oregano. Oh, and it has flowers—salvia, big yellow daisy-like things, oleander, crepe myrtle, angel trumpet, penta, bulbine, coral and other vines. Did I mention that it has art? Marci's son Dylan, inspired by a local bottle tree, has filled the few open spots with bottle tree sculptures made of rebar, wood and glass. It's an old fashioned, Woodland Heights place made with love and creativity. Did you know that some butterfly larva flourish on fennel and parsley—who knew?



The April YOM winner was  
**934 Euclid**

For April, 934 Euclid, takes the honors with a densely packed smorgasbord of fruit trees, vegetables, flowers, and herbs. The place is bursting with floribunda that matches the exuberance of owner/gardener, Jeff Shell. Jeff is the creator and perpetrator of the Green Valentine tree-planting, which is in its sixth year. His garden expression says "NO" to grass and "YES" to edible plants, chickens and eggs. You have to see it to believe it. He doesn't even know what all the plants are, but they smell good.



The May YOM winner is  
**Ley Plaza**

Ley Plaza is a team effort between neighbors and the city parks and recreation department that produced a beautiful butterfly garden and refuge. Dedicated neighbors adopted the park in 2006, planted trees, removed invasive species, and brought in not only mulch, but energy and hope. Now, they have planted a garden that will bloom and sustain butterflies, birds, bees and all of us. Three benches will be installed soon.

**Worth Seeing:** The giant agave at 402 Byrne has not been scientifically identified, but it is huge! The plant lives 9-12 years, sends up a 20' tall bloom and then dies. Over the years it has produced pups that will take over when the "mother" agave dies. The bloom, happening now, resembles a giant asparagus. Go check it out!

**Woodland Heights Newsletter**

The Woodland Heights Newsletter is a publication of the Woodland Heights Civic Association (WHCA), and seeks to keep the community informed of board activities and developments of interest to area residents.

**WHCA General Meetings** are held the **second Tuesday** of every month (except June, July, August and December). Unless otherwise noted, meetings are located in the meeting room at Zion Lutheran Church, 3606 Beauchamp.

**WHCA Contact Information**

P.O. Box 7754  
Houston, TX 77270-7754  
**Tel: 713-683-5188**  
Website: woodland-heights.org

**WHCA Board Members**

**Adrian Reed, President**

Email: president@woodland-heights.org  
Tel: (713) 863-8592

**Louise Moss, Secretary**

Email: recorder@woodland-heights.org  
Tel: (713) 880-0060

**Randall Ellis, Treasurer**

Email: treasurer@woodland-heights.org  
Tel: (832) 797-6416

**An Armstrong, VP, Newsletter Sponsorship**

Email: newsletter@woodland-heights.org  
Tel: (832) 202-5372

**Vicky Bettis, VP, Membership**

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**Tony Maluski, VP, Deed Restrictions II  
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Tel: (713) 337-0068

**Chuck Britton, VP, Security**

Email: security@woodland-heights.org  
Tel: (713) 869-8176

**Newsletter Layout Editor (non-board position)**

Colleen Tautfest jcct05@yahoo.com  
Tel: 713-802-1643



**American Cancer Society Relay for Life**

The American Cancer Society Relay For Life is a fun-filled, overnight event that mobilizes communities throughout the country to celebrate survivors, remember loved ones and raise money for the fight against cancer. Teams of 8—15 members gather with tents and sleeping bags to participate in the largest fundraising walk in the nation. Teams seek sponsorship prior to the Relay, all with the goal of supporting a cure for cancer. This year, the Relay For Life is coming to the Heights and will take place at White Oak Park on **May 16, 2008**. The Relay starts at 6:00 pm with a cancer survivors' lap. At 9:00 pm there is a Luminaria Ceremony to honor cancer survivors and remember those who lost their battle to cancer. If you are interested in participating, please contact Barbara Dickens at **281-630-5120**.

Neighbor Peggy Lindow reports that she recently learned of the official pledge to the Texas flag. Written in 1933, the pledge is as follows:

*Honor the Texas flag; I pledge allegiance to thee, Texas, one state under God, one and indivisible.*



**CALENDAR**

- May 5 Heavy Trash, East of Watson
- May 7 **CERT Training #1; 6—9 pm**
- May 12 Recycling
- May 12 Heavy Trash, West of Watson
- May 13 **General Board Meeting**  
7:30 pm; Zion Lutheran Church  
3606 Beauchamp
- May 14 **CERT Training #2; 6—9 pm**
- May 16 **ACS—Relay for Life**
- May 21 **CERT Training #3; 6—9 pm**
- May 26 Memorial Day (no trash pick-up)
- May 27 Recycling
- May 28 **CERT Training #4; 6—9 pm**
- May 28 **PIP Meeting; 7:00 pm**  
1602 State St.; Police Union Bldg.
- May 31 **FREE Family Picnic**  
4—8 pm; Norhill Esplanade
- June 2 Heavy Trash, East of Watson
- June 4 **CERT Training #5; 6—9 pm**
- June 9 Heavy Trash, West of Watson
- June 9 Recycling
- June 10 **General Board Meeting**
- June 11 **CERT Training #6; 6—9 pm**
- June 15 Happy Father's Day
- June 18 **CERT Training #7; 6—9 pm**
- June 23 Recycling
- June 25 **CERT Training #8; 6—9 pm**
- June 25 **PIP Meeting; 7:00 pm**

**Strong Support for Constable Program**

After only 6 months of gathering support for the proposed constable program, Woodland Heights has caught up in numbers with some of the Houston Heights quadrants that have been working on launching the program for over a year. Organizer Karen Derr sites better communication channels in Woodland Heights as the reason for our quick start, but more work is needed to implement the program. We still need 100 pledges of support at \$255/year to begin patrols in Woodland Heights. While the extra patrol benefits everyone, there are special perks for paying participants.

THE PROGRAM WILL PROVIDE: 8 hours of patrol, 5 nights a week (will expand with increased participation).

FOR PAYING RESIDENTS ONLY: Vacation Property Checks and a direct number to the patrol dispatcher.

COST: \$255/year per participating property.

START: Takes 45 days to implement after we get our target number of participants (250 participants per 1200 properties) signed up and money collected by third party management company (used by other neighborhoods including Shephard Plaza).

SIGN UP: E-mail Karen Derr ([Karen@KarenDerr.com](mailto:Karen@KarenDerr.com)) with your name, phone number and address. You will be billed when we have an exact start date for your area and the third party management company has received all of your information.

**WHCA Newsletter Accepts Sponsors**  
—By An Armstrong, VP—Newsletter Sponsorship

Monthly sponsorship fees are \$50/month for a 2 x 3.5 inch (business card size) sponsorships/promotions block. The WHCA Board will review all applications for sponsorship. Individuals interested in becoming WH Newsletter sponsors, should contact the WH Newsletter Sponsorship VP, An Armstrong at [newsletter@woodland-heights.org](mailto:newsletter@woodland-heights.org) for further details.

**Thank you to our sponsors:**

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713-868-7585

**WHCA Membership Form**

Membership Year April 1, 2008 to March 31, 2009

Mail to: **Woodland Heights Civic Association, P.O. Box 7754, Houston, TX 77270-7754**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

New Member? (Circle One) YES NO

Please check the appropriate space:       Homeowner - \$35  
 Senior (60+) Homeowner - \$10  
 Renter - \$10  
 Friend of Woodland Heights — Non-resident — Any amount

**I want to make an additional contribution to the Civic Association of \$ \_\_\_\_\_**