

WOODLAND HEIGHTS

WHCA NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2011

CALENDAR

MONDAY, JUNE 6

JUNK WASTE

East of Watson

THURSDAY, JUNE 9

RECYCLING

MONDAY, JUNE 13

JUNK WASTE

West of Watson

SATURDAY, JUNE 18

LITH MEETING

Zion Church, 9:30am

THURSDAY, JUNE 23

RECYCLING

MON., JULY 4

INDEPENDENCE

DAY



TUESDAY, JULY 5

TREE WASTE

East of Watson

THURSDAY, JULY 7

RECYCLING

MONDAY, JULY 11

TREE WASTE

East of Watson

THURSDAY, JULY 21

RECYCLING

MONDAY, AUG. 1

JUNK WASTE

East of Watson

THURSDAY, AUG. 4

RECYCLING

THURSDAY, AUG. 8

JUNK WASTE

West of Watson

THURSDAY, AUG. 18

RECYCLING

Important Lights in the Heights Updates

In the last newsletter, residents were asked to help form recommendations for how to handle the ever-popular and growing Lights in the Heights. The first general meeting to talk about growth issues and concerns by the City of Houston was on February 26. We had a great turnout. (See April newsletter at www.woodland-heights.org for a summary of the meeting.) On May 21, a small number of residents met at Zion Lutheran Church to discuss further. Here are several items of the many topics discussed that morning:

- Eliminate activities at the esplanade to minimize crowds
- Eliminate the parade to reduce number of people who come to LITH.
- Enforcement of city ordinances (underage drinking, parking violations). Change the event to another night.
- Draft general rules and guidelines for residents on the route having private parties to help with security concerns, party crashing, and entertainment/band control.
- Plan and execute a no-marketing campaign (request editors/media to not promote LITH).

The next Lights in the Heights meeting is June 18

The meeting will be at Zion Lutheran Church at 9:30 a.m. At this meeting, alternatives will be drafted to present to the board, then to all residents of Woodland Heights. Your feedback and input are needed!

The meeting on June 18th is the best venue to learn what is being discussed for LITH and share your thoughts. In the event you cannot attend the LITH meeting on June 18, you can submit your comments, suggestions and/or concerns via email. The comments received via email will be compiled and discussed at the June 18th meeting. Please email comments to lith.houston@gmail.com. For your email to be brought up for discussion, it must include your name and address.

We want to make sure everyone in Woodland Heights has the opportunity to share their point of view on this year's Lights in the Heights and get involved with it. Please let us know what you love, what you don't and what concerns you about this great neighborhood tradition. We are working hard to make Lights in the Heights the best it can be, so make sure your voice gets heard!

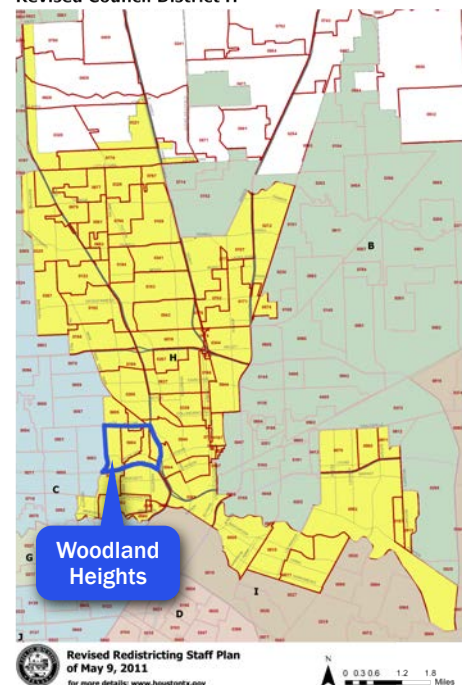
City of Houston Redistricting

The City of Houston's new redistricting proposal places Woodland Heights in District H. The western boundary of this new District would be Studewood effectively separating Woodland Heights from the Heights proper. More information can be found on the City of Houston Planning and Development Department's webpage at www.houstontx.gov/planning/2011/

Historic District Update

Woodland Heights is still a pending historic district. The City has not notified the WHCA Board of any changes to this status or of a hearing date to determine the permanent status.

Revised Council District H



Nearighborhood Security Update

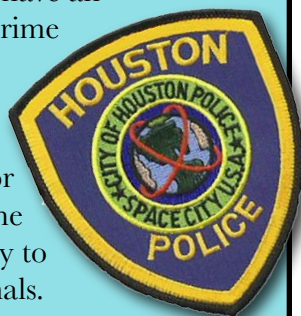
As most of you know, Harris County pulled the plug on the Constable Program, which was slated to be implemented in our Woodland Heights last month. Since then, we have been working hard on alternative neighborhood patrol services. Once we identify the option(s) that make the most sense to the neighborhood, we will circulate that information to the community. A number do exist, including using private, unarmed security companies, or off-duty HPD officers. We are also talking with other neighborhoods and business districts about their patrol services. This is a high priority issue for the WHCA and the community, and we are dedicated to putting an alternative program in place soon. If you have any suggestions, do not hesitate to contact David Jordan at security@woodland-heights.org.

We are also seeking support for Citizen Patrol, a HPD-sponsored neighborhood watch program. The "CP" program requires initial training for volunteers, and a minimum of 30 hours of patrol per month by the entire neighborhood patrol group. If we have fifteen volunteers, that is only a few hours a month. HPD also provides CP neighborhoods with neighborhood watch signage and magnetic signs for patrolling vehicles. If you have any interest in participating in Citizen Patrol, please contact David Jordan at security@woodland-heights.org.

Here are the April monthly crime statistics for the Woodland Heights (and the change from the same month in 2010):

Type of Incident	Num.	Change from April 2010
Aggravated Assault	1	Down 50%
Auto Theft	4	Up 100%
Burglary	3	Up 200%
Robbery	1	Unchanged
Theft	18	Down 5.5%

This is just a reminder to report all crime, including property crime, to the Houston Police Department. As the City continues to reduce HPD resources and redirect assets to problem crime areas, it is critical that HPD have an accurate assessment of the crime patterns in the Woodland Heights. In addition, a reported property crime can help to link people caught for other crimes, and improve the ability of the district attorney to prosecute and punish criminals.



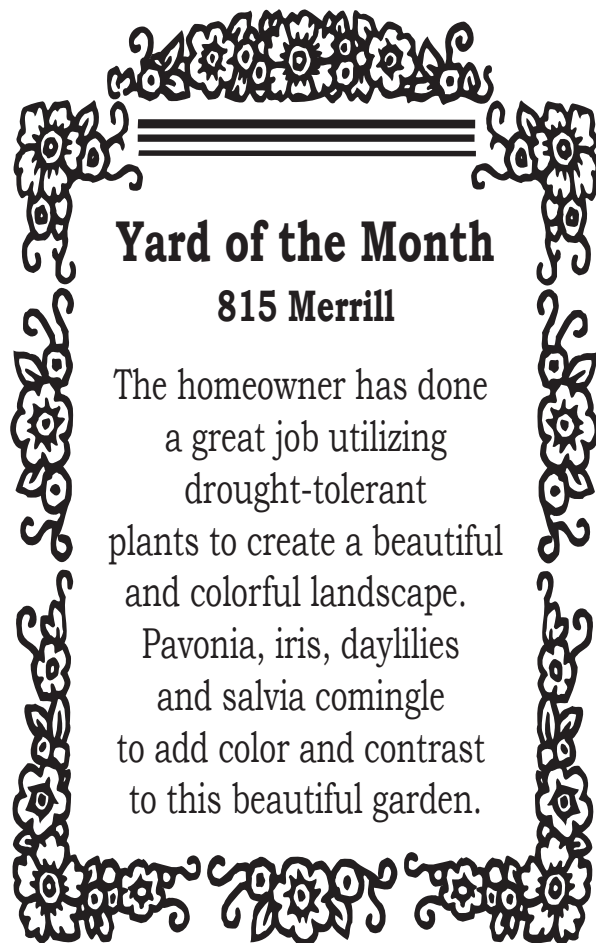
Newsletter Update

You may have noticed that the last issue of the newsletter was mailed directly to you. That was an experiment by the Board to determine whether directly mailing the newsletters was more efficient than the hand distribution we have used for years.



What the Board found was that direct mailing is very expensive and not any faster than the volunteer distribution network. Volunteer deliverers often get newsletters on doorsteps the day after they are printed, while mailing can take over a week from printing to delivery. And the volunteers, of course, cost the neighborhood nothing.

Unfortunately, we are left with one of the problems that direct mailing was intended to address – some neighbors never get their newsletter at all. Occasionally, well-intentioned distribution volunteers find themselves too busy to deliver them. If you know of a block that never seems to get newsletters, or you would like to volunteer to spend 10 minutes a month walking newsletters around your block, please contact newsletter@woodland-heights.org to let us know.



Yard of the Month

815 Merrill

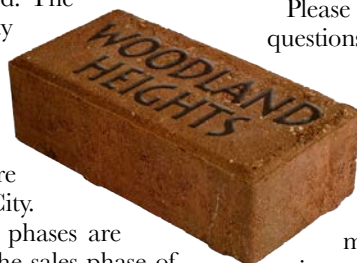
The homeowner has done a great job utilizing drought-tolerant plants to create a beautiful and colorful landscape. Pavonia, iris, daylilies and salvia comeingle to add color and contrast to this beautiful garden.

The Norhill Esplanade: Our Gathering Place

Because of its relative size and location within the WHCA, the Norhill Esplanade for many years has become our informal gathering place. Many of us use and enjoy it, and the WHCA board will continue to apprise the neighborhood of current, planned, and possibly proposed improvements.

Commemorative Brick Terrace

We are pleased to report that a project started during our Woodland Heights Centennial Celebration and supported by many of you, has now been constructed. The long-awaited and redesigned Community Brick Terrace is finally a reality. A great deal of thanks goes to our neighbors, Scott Slaney, who professionally designed the terrace, and Thad Kudela, who guided the construction plans through the entire approval and permitting process with the City.



Now that the design and construction phases are complete we want to move forward with the sales phase of the project. An order form with associated information appears in this newsletter and on our website. Brick sales proceeds will be used in future neighborhood beautification efforts including the tree pruning, and sprinkler system repair/replacement efforts in the Norhill Esplanade, and for other general WHCA improvement efforts.

We hope to schedule a dedication ceremony for the Commemorative Brick Terrace in the near future, so keep an eye out for that important bit of news.

Vision for the Future

Now that we have completed the general construction of the brick terrace and will soon be taking care of the deferred

maintenance items at the Norhill Esplanade (tree care and sprinkler system), would you like us to consider other improvements? If so what would you have in mind? What would you like to see in this great community gathering place? (What if the utility boxes on the south end were less noticeable? etc). Obviously any improvements to the esplanade that we decide to make will need to be cared for and properly maintained either by neighborhood volunteers or paid contractors. But we will factor these added costs in during the review process.

Please provide your suggestions, recommendations, and questions to beautification@woodland-heights.org.

WHCA Beautification Subcommittees

Would you like to be involved in the beautification efforts of our neighborhood? But is your time limited and you don't want it taken up with community meetings? How about volunteering for a role in any number of "subcommittees" that never need to "meet"? We could use someone to scout and recommend winners for Yard of the Month throughout the year. And now that the brick terrace is a reality, we will need help managing the brick orders, the transportation of the engraved bricks, and their installation in the terrace. We could also use some creative ideas for the marketing and distribution of our Porch Book. Perhaps you have a good idea for a neighborhood beautification project, like other residents have had in the recent past--such as the removal of the tacky "bandit" signs or the repair and colorful painting of our bus stop benches. With your talents and just a limited amount of time (you decide how much), you could make a significant difference in the neighborhood. Contact us at the email above.

NEW COMMEMORATIVE BRICK ORDERS

In order to manage costs associated with engraving, shipping, and the installation of commemorative bricks in the Norhill Esplanade Brick Terrace, it may be necessary to hold orders 2 or more weeks upon receipt before creating a work order. So please understand that this is a new endeavor for us and that we will be creating procedures as we go along to efficiently manage the ordering and installation process.

Please use the following order form for all your brick orders.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact me at (phone): _____

(e-mail): _____

I want 1.____ 2.____ 3.____ 4.____ 5.____ Bricks (More? _____)

Each brick can have a maximum of four lines of type with up to 15 characters or spaces per line.

Please print here what it is that you would like to see engraved on your commemorative brick(s).

.....

Prices for new brick orders established May 2011 are as follows:

Bricks Ordered	Price Per Brick
1 or 2	\$125
3 or 4	\$115
5 or more	\$100

Engravings are subject to review and approval by WHCA. Please return your order along with your check for payment to the WHCA P.O. Box address on the back page of the newsletter.

Membership Report

Woodland Heights Civic Association voluntary dues help supports many projects in the neighborhood! Here's where your dollars go:

- Event Promotion
- Watson & Norhill Esplanade Maintenance
- Deed Restriction Enforcement
- Woodland Heights Website
- Newsletter

A membership renewal notice is included in this newsletter. If you aren't sure if you've submitted your dues, please contact membership board member Cindy Pena Sarrat at membership@woodland-heights.org.

Here are the streets that have reached the 20% renewal mark: Northwood, Bayland, Highland, Woodland, Omar, Wendel, E. 6 1/2 St., E. Woodland, Gladys, Greenleaf.

# Paid	% Neighborhood	Dues Collected	Donations	Total Received
350	15.60%	\$9,900	\$4,056	\$13,956

Super Neighbor Report

A super neighbor has given above and beyond their regular dues. Thanks to each and every one of you! Here are 35 of our neighbors we wish to recognize:

- Andy & Kim Taurins
- Alexandra Vaikhman
- Anne Finch & Lloyd Schwing
- Arthur & Victoria Mournian
- Brigette & Chris Larson
- Cathering & Jonathan Day
- Charles Krenzler
- Charles Kuffner
- Cheryl Villalobos
- David & Sherry Gibbons
- Eric & Eileen Olson
- Erin & Michael Copeland
- Evan & Laura Michaelides
- Frederick & Marianne Smith
- Glenn Hieshima & Suzanne Kairo
- J.B. Cirincione
- James & Cynthia Winton
- James & Juanita Finch
- James & Paige Clarke
- John & Jan Greer
- John & Ann Stephenson
- John Faraguna
- Joseph Richard
- Kenny Kelley
- Kevin Smith
- Sean & Laura Haley
- Nathaniel Smith
- Paul & Marilyn McLaughlin
- Robert & Elizabeth Hickman
- Ruth Hughes Fletcher
- Sandra Warren
- Sarah & John Norton
- Sarah Puente
- Stephen & Mary McCready
- William Howze

Whoooo is it making that noise?

By Arnold van Ek and Riverhorse

As busy as we all are with the hustle and bustle of daily life, most Woodland Heights residents would perhaps be quite surprised to know that there are Screech owls living among us! Our neighbors Tom and Connie Elliot share both a passion and fascination with these beautiful creatures, and sat down with us to share their story.



Connie, a native Minnesotan, and Tom, a Texan, met in Austin in the late 70's, when they were both getting graduate degrees in geology. Later, Tom's job took them to California for fifteen years where they acquired a 100-year-old house and an appreciation of the special charms of old neighborhoods. When they moved back to Houston in 1995, they looked hard for the same kind of special neighborhood and were happy to find the Woodland Heights.

'One night about 5 years ago, we drove into our driveway and were surprised to see a little owl perched above the garage. A bird book provided a quick ID: the Eastern screech owl. With more reading, interest blossomed. We decided to build a nest box, following plans from Audubon Magazine's website. When the sawdust finally settled, we had built six boxes! These were hung in the yards of enthusiastic family and friends including, of course, our own back yard on Euclid Street. About this time, we found a fascinating web site put up by Chris Johnson in Austin, who had a tiny video camera in his owl box and posted pictures from this "nestcam". Chris' advice helped us build simple cams of our own (we are not "techies" by any means). We put these into three of the Houston nest boxes, along with tiny microphones. To our delight, owls subsequently nested in all three of these boxes. With the cams, we've had great fun watching action inside the nest box from March to May. The fun factor increased even more when our friend, Katherine Hohl, built a website where we can upload live images to share. (Go to www.owlcam.rosebudssupport.org to see pictures, FAQ's and videos from past years.)

On Euclid St, the owls successfully raised four owlets in 2008, four more in 2009, and three in 2010. Eggs are laid in March and take about 30 days to hatch. For us, perhaps the greatest enjoyment comes from the simple act of setting aside a little "owl time" each day, near dusk and dawn, to do nothing but just sit quietly and watch tree limbs against our neighborhood sky. But the real benefit is that the owls help to drag too-busy urban folks like us into a closer awareness of our surroundings. Connie and Tom are happy to field questions related to their owl experience. Contact them via e-mail: elliott3@pdq.net

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Welcome to the Neighborhood!



Meet **Elliott Johnstone**, the Woodland Heights “Welcome to the Neighborhood” volunteer! Elliott has been busy delivering welcome totes to new neighbors since July of last year. In just 9 months, Elliott has delivered 50 welcome totes and has

made an additional 54 attempts to reach newcomers. If you find a business card on your door, please give her a call! She has a bag of goodies to share with you!

If you are new to Woodland Heights and have not been contacted, please give Elliott a call at 713-880-5960.

Don't Abandon Your Pets!

Cats are left behind on occasion when residents move. Please be considerate of your animals and neighbors. If necessary, place your pet with a new owner or in a receiving shelter; do not just leave the animal to fend for itself.



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: 713-200-3610

Website: woodland-heights.org

Advertising Information

Monthly advertisement fees are \$50/month for a 1.75 x 3 inch (approximately business card size) advertisement/promotions block. The WHCA Board will review all applications for advertisement. Individuals interested in becoming WH Newsletter advertisers should contact the Newsletter Vice President, Maryellen Quarles, at newsletter@woodland-heights.org for further details and pricing for larger blocks. Checks are payable to the Woodland Heights Civic Association at the above address.

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