

WLP Civic Association Board Members

President: Paula Djabbarah
Secretary: Lynne James
Past President: Marj Elhardt
Directors: Gilda Bayegan, Margaret Ann Bromberger, Clifton Iverson, Marion McDaniel, Stan Smith & Jane Van Santen

Vice President: Ted Richardson
Treasurer: Jane Root

Newsletter: Gilda Bayegan (gildabb@msn.com) & Mary McDaniel

LETTER from the PRESIDENT

Dear Neighbors,

If you haven't been to a WLPCA Annual Meeting, May 11 would be a great time to join your neighbors and get acquainted with this WLP tradition. You will have the opportunity to greet and ask questions of our new City Councilman, **Oliver Pennington**, and learn about the latest happenings at Highland Village from General **Manager Lynne Keener**. **Sherryl Gorman** and her team, **Phyllis Maddox**, **Lynne James** and **Jane Vansanten**, have put together an evening filled with friends, food and fun.

On May 11 you will also be electing the board for 2010-11. Nominating Committee Chair, **Marj Elhardt**, was assisted by **Jane Root**, **Fisher Trigg**, **Pat Bohn** and me. Together, we made a special effort to bring new talent to the board. The slate is presented in this newsletter for your approval.

This will be my last President's Letter so I want to thank the Board, Committee Chairmen, the REC volunteers and all of you who work so hard to make WLP a special place to live. What other neighborhood hand delivers newsletters and hospitality packets to your front door, publishes a directory, sends out crime and pet alerts, shares vendor referrals and local news on its web site and promotes a kind of old fashioned sense of community seldom found in an urban setting?

None of this happens by chance. It takes the combined talents of many. We can all be proud of the results. Come help us celebrate our neighborhood on May 11th.

I'll see you there.

Paula Djabbarah
President, WLPCA

Landscaping the Entrances to WLP

You may have noticed that the new entrance monuments at each end of Mid Lane now have new landscaping, and are looking pretty wonderful. For that, we can thank our 2010 Director-Nominee, **John Abraham**, who has hit the ground running, so to speak, even before he is an official member of the board. Along with our current vice president and 2010 Presidential Nominee, **Ted Richardson**, and **Chris and Marj Elhardt**, John has had the dirt flying at both ends of Mid Lane, and when the dust settles, our new landscaping will be in place, growing strong and looking beautiful.

Our thanks to John, Chris, Marj and Ted, for beautifying our entrance ways and making our trips in and out of West Lane Place all the more pleasant. We also thank **Buchanan's Native Plants** for contributing to our project.

(Please visit Buchanan's at 611 East 11th Street in the Heights. ph: 713-861-5702)

We look forward to welcoming John and all our nominees to the WLPCA Board.

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This newsletter is published and delivered to you
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Changes in Leaf and Yard Debris Collection. *If you stay abreast of all the exciting news in waste disposal, you already may know that the City of Houston has changed the rules regarding collection of leaves and lawn debris. Our lovely Recycling Chairperson, Sherryl Gorman, has investigated the new rules, and reports her findings for us, below.*

The New Compostable Bag Program

by Sherryl Gorman.

In an effort to save taxpayers substantial money and keep “compost-able” yard waste from needlessly filling up costly landfills, the City of Houston will soon begin requiring the use of biodegradable bags for such waste. **Starting April 5**, City of Houston Solid Waste Management Department crews will only pick up bagged yard trimmings placed at the curb in **City-approved compostable bags**. Yard trimmings placed in the garbage cart, or in any other type of container or bag will not be collected. And, if you continue to place yard trimmings in non-compostable bags **you can be fined at a minimum of \$50 and no more than \$2,000!**

Approved compostable bags are available at numerous retailers throughout the city. These bags can be identified by a **logo on the box** specifying “**City Approved**”, and “**City of Houston Biodegradable / Compostable Bag.**” Currently, the following retailers sell these bags:

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Walmart | Lowe’s |
| Home Depot | Berings |
| Randalls | Kroger |
| Ace | |

You may check this website for other retailers:
www.houstontx.gov/solidwaste/compostableretail.html

By diverting this organic material from area landfills, the City anticipates saving at least **\$1.5 million** annually while preserving the environment and valuable landfill space. The Solid Waste Management Department will use avoided landfill costs to add more Houstonians to the Automated Recycling Program

The City of Houston reminds residents that they can “**let it lay or take it away.**” In other words, Houstonians can choose the free alternative to bagging their leaves and lawn clippings by using a mulching mower for “**grasscycling**” or by creating their own personal compost pile. ♣

If you haven’t done so yet, please join now or renew your membership in WLPCA by paying your dues!

APRIL

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11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

MAY

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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	*Annual Meeting May 11*				

JUNE

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JULY

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 = Tree waste; **J** = Junk waste pick up

Weekly household trash pick up on Mondays. NOTE: Recycling is now **every other Monday**, on highlighted days in boxes. Please have your bins out on the curb by 7 am and in by 10 pm.

“Tree Waste” is defined as “clean wood waste such as tree limbs, branches, and stumps (lumber, furniture, and treated wood will NOT be accepted.)”

“Junk Waste” is defined as “items such as furniture, appliances, and other bulky material.”

In light of recent security compromises in our area, here are some suggestions I have researched for helping us all to stay safe.

Our **mail carrier** has these strong recommendations:

1. **Never place a vacation hold online.** Always use the yellow cards that are available at the post office.
2. **Never leave outgoing mail (especially when mailing checks) – or the hold card – where it can be seen.** If you have a locking box, place it inside and a note for the carrier that there is outgoing mail. If you don't have a locking box, talk to your carrier about the best way to notify him/her of a vacation hold; the best thing for outgoing checks is to take them to the post office and drop them in the box there – preferably inside.
3. **Get to know your mail carrier.** Make sure he/she is familiar with your habits. Then if something 'different' happens, it raises a red flag for the carrier who can then ask you about it.

If you are targeted for **credit card fraud** (as happened recently in our neighborhood), **contact the credit card company immediately.** The company should be told that they have issued a fraudulent credit card. In addition, **contact the 3 credit reporting companies – Experian, Transunion and Equifax.*** Everyone with a credit report is legally entitled to a free report every year. By having it, you can find out if there is some credit misinformation that you might not know about. At the same time, you can let these companies know about anything that has happened recently (like the false credit card) that they might not know about.

Here are a couple of suggestions for when you are out and about.

1. **When locking your car in public, do not use the remote device** to lock it. Use the inside button. Someone has come up with a scanning device that reads the remote signals when you use it to lock your car. You lock your car, walk away and return to find it has been burglarized with no sign of break-in. Lock with the button, close the door and when you return, use the remote to enter the car.
2. Another scanner being used in public is a small, **hand-held device that can actually scan the credit cards in your purse or pocket remotely** – for instance, while walking behind you in the airport or grocery store. It also will scan the information in your passport (the new passports contain a computer chip that the old ones did not). One way to fight this is to **use a reflective metal sleeve** to carry these items. They are available for sale, but **aluminum foil** works well too if you prefer to create your own.

It's too bad these precautions have become necessary, but if we are careful, maybe we can put a crimp in a thief's 'best laid plans.'

* For links to these credit reporting companies, please go to the WLP website and click on this issue of our newsletter. www.wlpca.org

WLP Annual Meeting May 11

Where: Morton Kuehnert's (formerly Parvizian's)
4901 Richmond Avenue (at Loop 610)

When: Tuesday, May 11
6:30 Cocktails
7:00 Meeting Begins

Agenda: WLPCA Annual report
Election of the new WLPCA board
Meet City Councilman,
Oliver Pennington
Highland Village update by
HV Manager, Lynne Keener
Another Great Opportunity to Pay Your
WLPCA Dues **** (If you haven't yet!)**

Light Refreshments generously donated by:
Ambassador Chinese Restaurant
Bayou City Seafood & Pasta
Bombay Brasserie

Our thanks to Morton Kuehnert's for allowing us to gather in their new location, to Ambassador's Chinese Restaurant, Bayou City Seafood, and Bombay Brasserie for their generous donations to WLPCA, and to our own crew, Sherryl Gorman, Lynne James, Phyllis Maddox, and Jane VanSanten, who have worked tirelessly to make this year's Annual Meeting the fun and informative event that it will be.

See you there!

**To join WLPCA or renew membership, bring your checkbook with you. You can sign up at the meeting.

Proposed Slate of Officers and Directors of WLPCA for the 2010-12 Term

These are the nominees for directors and officers of the West Lane Place Civic Association board for the next two years. The election will take place at the Annual Meeting on May 11.

Pres: Ted Richardson
Vice Pres: Marion McDaniel
Treasurer: Jane Root
Sec: Lynne James

Directors for 2010-12:

John Abraham
Mohammad Bayegan
Betty Moore

The 2010 Census; What to Tell and to Whom

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The time is approaching when you may find someone at your door claiming to be a US Government Census worker. How do you know if they are legitimate, and how much should you tell them?

The BBB advises us to be cooperative but cautious to avoid becoming victims of identity theft. Here are some guidelines to follow:

If a real **U.S. Census worker** knocks on your door, they will have a **badge**, a **handheld device**, a **Census Bureau canvas bag**, and a **confidentiality notice**. Ask to see their identification and their badge before answering their questions. However, you should never invite anyone you don't know into your home.

Census workers are currently only knocking on doors to verify address information. **Do not give your Social Security number, credit card or banking information** to anyone, even if they claim they need it for the census.

The Census Bureau will not ask for Social Security, bank account, or credit card numbers, nor will employees solicit donations. Any one asking for that information is NOT with the Census Bureau. And, the Census Bureau has decided not to work with ACORN on gathering this information, so **NO ACORN worker should approach you saying he is with the Census Bureau.**

Census workers may contact you by telephone, mail, or in person at home. However, the **Census Bureau will not contact you by Email**, so be on the lookout for Email scams impersonating the Census. Never click on a link or open any attachments in an Email that pretends to come from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Remember, no matter what they ask, you really **only need to tell them how many people live at your address**. While the Census Bureau might ask for basic financial information, such as a salary range, **YOU DON'T HAVE TO ANSWER ANYTHING AT ALL ABOUT YOUR FINANCIAL SITUATION.**

NOTE: If you mailed back the questionnaire sent in March, no Census worker should visit you at all!

More Thoughts on Your Security

Unfortunately, it seems WLP is a target for thieves, with several break-ins since our last newsletter. So far, our residents have suffered no personal injury, thankfully, and we hope no one will. We urge you to take every precaution to protect yourself and your home from crime.

If you see something fishy, **Jo Cook** suggests using **your cell phone to snap a photo**, **if** you can stay safely in your locked car to do so. If you witness suspicious activity, or if you suffer a crime in WLP, please notify our crime alert system immediately at:

annci@sbcglobal.net

Please take a moment to **add this email address to your list now** so that if you ever need it, you will not have to spend time searching for it. The faster we can issue an alert, the more good it might do.

Thank you, Paula!



After the election of the new board in May, we will lose our current superstar **WLPCA President, Paula Djabbarah**. Paula has served WLPCA as president for two consecutive terms. Before she was president, Paula served as a director, and in between, she continued to donate much of her time and effort to West Lane Place as a "civilian" with no official board position.

As president, Paula has done a remarkable job of keeping our neighborhood on the radar screen at City Hall, she has overseen the operations of our deed restrictions enforcement committees, she initiated special events to welcome newcomers to our neighborhood, she implemented our crime alert system, and she has kept our board ticking along on schedule with punctual and painless meetings.

A former **Red Cross** executive, Paula's good works extend far beyond the boundaries of West Lane Place. One of the many causes to which she devotes herself is **RESULTS**, (www.results.org) the nation-wide grassroots organization that provides micro loans to worthwhile applicants world-wide. Currently, she is busy organizing an event for **Nobel Prize** winner, **Mohammad Yunus**, when he visits Houston later this year. (She will be happy to tell you more about that, if you care to become involved!)

As those of us who served with her are aware, Paula never fails to recognize the contributions and achievements of others. Now we would like to take a moment to recognize hers:

Thank you, Paula, for a job very well done!

Flight of the Hummingbird Article – Last time, we promised an article in this issue on Hummingbirds. Pressing neighborhood news preempted that piece, but to watch in real time **a live view of a hummingbird** on her nest in a rose bush in California, visit www.phoebeallens.com. Sometimes you'll see just an empty nest, sometimes you'll witness tragedy. (A lizard, then a crow raided the nest already this spring.) But sometimes you can see a Hummingbird tend her eggs and tidy her little nest, and oh what a thrill that is! ♥

"I hope you love birds too. It is economical. It saves going to heaven." Emily Dickinson