

WLP Civic Association Board Members

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Vice President: Ted Richardson
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LETTER from the PRESIDENT

Happy New Year! January is membership month. We would love for everyone to make a collective resolution to join or renew their membership in WLPCA, and get their dues in by January 31 so our new membership team, **Jane Van Santen** and **Jane Root**, and their consultants **Marj** and **Chris Elhardt**, can rest easy.

Some columnists have tagged the past decade as the **“oughties”** for their lack of progress, but for WLPCA this has been a productive ten years. We’ve seen the **establishment of the Quiet Zone**, the **diversion of the University Line** away from our back door, the **initiation of the Crime Alert System**, the **replacement of the entrance monuments** and the **revamping of our web site**. Our **streets have been repaved**, **sewer lines replaced**, **curbs and sinkholes repaired**, **trees planted in the esplanade**, a **Newcomers’ program initiated** and WLPCA won **designation as a Prohibitive Yard Parking Community**.

We ended 2009 with the **beginning of the long-awaited interim repairs on the Drainage Ditch**. This temporary fix should assure improved drainage for our area while the design drawings for the permanent underground system are being prepared. We are hopeful that bids for the permanent underground system will be received later this year - which when completed will be the culmination of a hard fought campaign with Harris County Flood Control District that began with our past president, the late **Peter Popkin**, and was continued by our vice president, **Ted Richardson**.

In addition to these accomplishments, WLPCA has nurtured strong working relationships with Harris County and the many departments within the City of Houston that directly affect our neighborhood’s well being. WLPCA produces the superb **West Lane Place News** and publishes the annual **Membership Directory** to keep you informed

about neighborhood issues and in touch with your neighbors. WLPCA also sponsors fun **social events** during the year that promote community building.

All of these accomplishments have been possible because of a viable and proactive Civic Association. *Please* keep us strong with your support. *Please* **write a check today and send it in with the form** in the envelope provided in this newsletter. This is one New Year’s resolution that’s easy to keep and will improve our little spot in the world.

All of us on the Board wish you a New Year filled with beauty, grace, health and happiness,

Paula Djabbarah
President, WLPCA

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Recycling, Heavy Trash, and Tree & Limb Pick-up Schedule for WLP

JANUARY

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7		9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

FEBRUARY

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	J	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

MARCH

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11		13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

APRIL

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	J	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

 = 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.)”

Calling All Non Members

You know who you are!

Today you have an easy opportunity to join your West Lane Place Civic Association. **Inside this issue, you will find a membership application** delivered right to your door. As incredible as it may seem, we have not yet received applications from a few of you out there, so we are extending yet another invitation to you to join.

No kidding, we really do need you. And, guess what, you need us, too! Many of the conveniences you enjoy every day in this neighborhood* are here because of the efforts of members of the WLPCA Board, backed by the strength of the membership of the Association.

If you haven't already done so, please get your application in today. **Jane VanSanten** and **Jane Root** are working on the new edition of the WLPCA Directory with the help of **Marj** and **Chris Elhardt**, and we want to include *you* as an important member of this community. You really *are* an important member. **We need each and every one of you to join. This is your neighborhood, and this is how you protect it!** ♣

*Streetlights, curbs and gutters, entrance monuments, increased police patrols, crime alerts, drainage ditch improvements, street drainage improvements, Quiet trains all day and night, no dirty book store on Richmond, speed bumps on Mid Lane, trees planted in the Richmond esplanade, this newsletter, and friendly neighbors, to name a few.

New Book Club for Newcomers

As a result of the September Newcomers' Party, WLPCA has started a new book club -- with eight members so far! **Debbie Villeneuve** and **Stevelyn Beunger** are co-chairs; group members take turns hosting and/or leading the book discussions. The club meets monthly on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 to 8.

Upcoming books are:

February 10: Wolf Hall, by Hilary Mantel (historical fiction about Henry VIII)

March 24: The Shadow of the Wind, by Carlos Ruiz Zafon

April 14: When Everything Changed (The Amazing Journey of American Women from 1960 to the Present), by Gail Collins

For information, call Stevelyn at **713-961-0125**.

Newcomers' (and others!) Party in March

What is a Newcomers' Party? It's a social event -- no politics, no agendas or membership fees, just social!

Last September, **Stevelyn Buenger, Joyce Lehrfeld, Debbie Villeneuve, and Susan Jenkins** hosted a party for *new-ish* WLPCA neighbors. The turnout was good, it was fun, and as a result, Voila! a dozen or so new friends found each other, eight of whom formed a Newcomers' Book Club (see page 2.)

Since the first Newcomers' Party was a success, there are plans for a second "neighbor-op" in March. You don't have to be new to the neighborhood to come - just have an interest in meeting people new to WLP.

Invitations will be sent via **Evite** through your email. If you aren't yet in the WLPCA Membership Directory, please call Debbie so she can include you.

If you would like to receive an invitation or help organize the effort, or for general information, please call:

Debbie Villeneuve,
Chair, Newcomers' Committee
281-948-2736
villeneuve.debbie@gmail.com

Lost Little WLP Kitty Found its Way Home with Help from Lassie

You may recall last year when we reported the story of a cat that suffered a terrible injury just before Hurricane Ike blew in, and no one could find her owner. ([The West Lane Place News](#), October, 2008.) That cat's sad outcome inspired the WLPCA to undertake a means of notifying neighbors of lost or found pets through an email system we named the "**Lassie Alerts.**"

Recently, because of the Lassie Alert system and the efforts of caring neighbors, one fortunate kitty found its way home. When a little cat that had been visiting **Pat Bajensky**, of Hackberry Lane, suddenly disappeared last summer, Pat issued a Lassie Alert. Her appeal reached a good neighbor, and together they were able to locate the kitty and find its happy home.

If you lose your pet, or if you find a lost pet, we hope you, too, will issue a Lassie Alert so the rest of us will be on the look out for your lost pet, or the lost owner of the pet you found.

To request a Lassie Alert, please contact **Ann Iverson** at: annci@sbcglobal.net

Our Post Office NOT Closing (Yeaaa!)

We've all heard there's a silver lining in the clouds... WLP may benefit from the lack of silver in the economic clouds we've been experiencing. Perhaps because nobody stepped up to buy the land from USPS, the **Julius Melcher** station on Timmons Lane is no longer on the verge of closing.

Post office personnel reported recently there's no activity to indicate the station is scheduled to close, and the whole idea seems to have been scrubbed.

Hooray for small blessings in hard times!

But...

Car Break-ins at Julius Melcher (Boo!)

When visiting the Julius Melcher Station, please be extra careful to leave nothing in your car that would tempt a thief. Our neighbors report seeing evidence of frequent break-ins of cars parked in the post office parking lot. These break-ins occurred in cars parked right by the main door to the post office, in the middle of the day. So, take care when you mail your letters!

Alley Actress and WLP Neighbor, Bettye Fitzpatrick, Exits the Stage



Bettye Fitzpatrick

On December 27, 2009, after more than 52 years at **Alley Theater**, our neighbor, Ms. **Bettye Fitzpatrick**, of Lana Lane, retired. Her last performance was playing the **Ghost of Christmas Past** in the Charles Dickens classic, *A Christmas Carol*. She tells us that she began her career at Alley and moved into West Lane Place in **1957** when **Eisenhower was President!** For her many performances in so many roles over so many years, we express our appreciation with a salute and a standing ovation. **Well done, Ms. Fitzpatrick!** ♥

The New York Metropolitan Opera's spring opera series

is being **simulcast** at noon every Saturday through May 8 at the **Edward's Cinema on I-10**. The operas include *Simon Boccanegra* with Placido Domingo, *Aida*, *The Magic Flute*, *Tosca* and others. This is a fabulous way to experience opera up close, with behind-the-scenes interviews of the singers, directors, and stage hands during the intermissions. For more about this exciting series, go to operainfo.org

Parvizian's ... Going, Going, Gone ... for Good?

Most of us remember the WLPCA annual meetings generously hosted two years in a row by **Parvizian's Rugs** at their location on Richmond Avenue at Loop 610. And, we have all seen the "Going Out of Business" signs hanging for months in Parvizian's windows. But how many of us believed Mr. Parvizian *really would* go out of business? Well, he did!

Parvizian's has closed its doors forever, according to **Mr. Gus Parvizian**, after almost forty years in the business, and we have been told that Kuehnert's Auctions is taking over the space. On the **Morton Kuehnert** website, is the announcement of a "Galleria Area Location Opening 2010" that we assume refers to the Parvizian space.

Our friend at Parvizian's, **Mr. Luis Arce**, the force behind organizing the Parvizian's side of our annual meetings, will continue to operate a rug business out of a small area in the building. We hear that he will become something of a Personal Shopper, scouring the world for new and antique rugs for his clients. If you need to reach Mr. Arce, you can find him at **832-309-4904**.

We welcome Kuehnert's to the neighborhood and wish them and Mr. Arce success with their new ventures.

New Deed Restrictions Enforcement Committee

WLPCA also welcomes the newly elected Deed Restrictions Enforcement Committee for **West Lane Place**. The following new members were elected at the Committee's annual meeting on January 12:

Bill Donkervoet	Kay McKeough
John Bissell	Terry Hart
Richard Hemingway	Elaine Callaway

We thank these neighbors for volunteering their time and talent to preserve the integrity of the north section of WLP.

Wayward Hummingbird Spotted on Midlane During the Freeze

On the very cold, blustery day that the freeze blew in last week, a tiny hummingbird was seen fighting the frigid wind, bumping its beak against a tubular birdfeeder hanging from a tree on Midlane. **Why would a bird that sips nectar and winters in the Tropics be in Houston in January, out in the bitter cold?** Why would it be interested in a seed-filled birdfeeder?

According to **Jim Stevenson**, of the **Galveston Ornithological Society**, lingering hummingbirds are a recent phenomenon. He tells us the bird we saw was tapping at the seed feeder because it was habituated to

a hummingbird feeder that a misguided bird enthusiast probably left out too long. The "nectar" in the feeder tricked the hummingbird into staying after flowers had bloomed, and it perished in the freeze as a consequence. With the environmental pressures they already face, what a shame that it was human intervention that caused the loss of this tiny bejeweled creature.

To learn the correct way to feed hummingbirds, contact the GOS at galornsoc@earthlink.net.

What to Do in the Garden After the Big Chill

Driving around West Lane Place and beyond, you do not have to go far to see the brown and shriveled remains of what *had been* beautiful Bougainvillea hedges, fragrant tall gingers, and previously green fig ivy-covered walls. There are freezer-burned patches all over Houston.

Organic gardener, **Matt Raney**, at **All in One Discount Nursery**, offers this advice to revive your garden:

1. Cut away dead material and feed * your damaged plants now.

Matt explains that if the dead portions remain, the plant will continue to send nutrients to those parts that it should instead be storing for re-growth. Matt assures us not to worry, feeding and pruning will not stimulate the plants to grow too soon. He says the soil temperatures are too low and there is not enough daylight yet, so plants will remain dormant, building reserves for spring.

Matt also warns us that dead material left on a plant will not only drain the plant of nutrients, but also will expose it to fungus, mold, and parasites attracted to the moisture trapped in the debris.

2. Trim and feed roses on Valentine's Day.

Matt says this Old Wives' Tale is accurate; that mid-February is the perfect time to prune.

3. Leave your citrus alone.

Matt says the leaves of most citrus trees will have sustained damage from this freeze, but as long as they are still green, they can photosynthesize and nourish the tree, so do not remove them. Later, these damaged leaves probably will fall off, in which case your citrus trees will spend their energy producing new leaves instead of blooms and fruit. So, do not be alarmed if your orange, lemon, lime, and grapefruit trees fail to bloom this year.

* No advice can apply to every example. For specific questions, Matt says you can call or visit him:

Matt Raney, All in One Discount Nursery
4305 Northfield Lane
Houston, Texas ; **713-895-9171**
www.allinonediscountnursery.com

If you put out a hummingbird feeder, you must be responsible and follow some basic rules. Otherwise, you, too, may harm the hummingbirds.

The best way to feed them is to include plants they like in your garden such as Trumpet Vine and Lantana.

For a list of plants that attract and support Hummingbirds, call the Bexar Co. Master Gardener Hotline: 210-467-6575
