

WLP Civic Association Board Members

President: Jane Root

Secretary: Pat Bohn

Past President: Mohammad Bayegan

Website: www.wlpca.org

Directors: Chris Elhardt, Karisa Gallucci, Larry Gray, Ann Iverson, Ted Richardson, and Sue Shivers

Vice President: James Brodnax

Treasurer: Cynthia Trigg

Newsletter: Gilda Bayegan

Webmistress: Kirsten Doherty

A LETTER from the PRESIDENT

Dear Neighbors:

The Annual Meeting on May 7 was a huge success, extremely well planned and very well attended by residents of West Lane Place. Thank you, **Mohammad**, for lining up all of the informative speakers, who certainly gave us food for thought regarding construction in our area, crime control, and property taxes. We are most appreciative of Amazing Place, which allowed us to use their facilities for our meeting.

I am honored to serve as your President for the upcoming year. I look forward to working with the other elected officers:

James Brodnax, Pat Bohn, and Cynthia Trigg as well as the elected Board Members, **Chris Elhardt, Karisa Gallucci, Larry Gray, Ann Iverson, Ted Richardson** and **Sue Shivers**. In addition to these dedicated people, the appointed committee chairmen will play very important roles in making our Civic Association work.

The Newsletter team consists of **Gilda Bayegan**, Editor, **Molly and Gary Whitney**, Co-Editors, and **Mary McDaniel** and **Phyllis Maddox** who will serve as block captain coordinators. Our goal is to publish four newsletters this year. Please be on the lookout for them.

Our Crime Alert system is so important to our residents and we have **Ann Iverson** to thank for her expertise in keeping this system going. **Mohammad Bayegan** is Security Chairman. **Ted Richardson** will serve as our City of Houston Liaison and Archivist. He is in possession of all of the West Lane Place records since the Civic Association was formed in 1992, so if there is anything you want to know, be sure to contact Ted. **Mike Weingart** will continue in his role as HPD liaison. **Philip Barnard** is the "go to" person regarding traffic in our area. As you all have observed, this is a constant challenge with all of the construction underway in the neighborhood.

Karisa Gallucci is our Membership Chairman. It is our goal to have each and every resident of West Lane Place become a member. All dues paying members (except for those who have opted not to be listed) will be listed in our 2014 Directory, which will be published and distributed in the near future. Of utmost importance, is to welcome new residents of West Lane Place and invite them to join our Civic Association. **Sue Shivers** will be in charge of reaching out to these new residents. Please be sure to let Sue know if you know of someone who has recently moved to West Lane Place. **Cynthia Trigg, Karisa Gallucci, and James Brodnax** will be working on coordinating Neighbors Night Out, which will be

held this year on Tuesday, October 7. This is a wonderful event, and a terrific way to gather with old friends and meet new neighbors.

We are most grateful to **Sherryl Gorman**, our Recycling Chairman for the reminders to put out our recycling bins. **John Abraham**, as Landscape Chair, makes sure that the entrances to West Lane Place are well maintained. Should the need arise for legal consultation, **Marion McDaniel** has assured me that he will steer us in the right direction.

Our Website, which provides a great deal of information about West Lane Place, was originally set up by **Margaret Ann Bromberger**, is now being maintained by **Kirsten Doherty**. In addition to being responsible for the information on the website, **Kirsten** maintains all of the membership records. We are so grateful to her for taking on this difficult job and doing it so well. Please be sure to visit WLPca.org, and if you have any suggestions for additions to the website, be sure to let **Kirsten** know.

As you can see, this is a truly cooperative effort. I am so appreciative of all of these people who are willing to give their time and effort to making West Lane Place such a fabulous place to live.

Jane Root,
President

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The views and opinions expressed herein are those of the author(s) of each article, and not necessarily those of the WLPCA.

Part One: Officers by Molly Boren Whitney

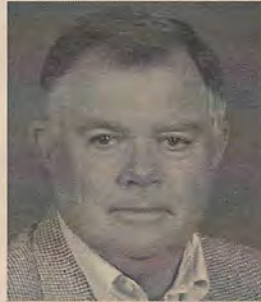
West Lane Place Civic Association is fortunate to have another fine group of officers on the job for the upcoming year. So that you can be familiar with who is at the helm, we asked the new officers to provide us with a little insight into their backgrounds and daily life.



Our new **President, Jane Root**, of Mid Lane, has lived in West Lane Place since 2002, and has **served on the WLPCA Board of Directors twice in the past, as Treasurer for four years and as Membership Chairwoman for another year.** Jane grew up in New York City and graduated from **Connecticut College** in New London, CT. She spent a number of years as Personal Trust Officer for several local banks. The mother of four grown children, Jane now enjoys traveling, reading, and cooking. She volunteers at **Methodist Hospital** and at **Amazing Place**, and she also does volunteer income tax preparation for the underserved. Even if you don't yet know Jane, you probably do know her rescued **Golden Retriever, Hudson**, everyone's friend and arguably the unofficial Mayor of Mid Lane.



Vice President, James Brodnax, of Hackberry Lane, moved to West Lane Place in 2006, but hails from West Texas, including San Angelo, Big Lake, Odessa, Sonora and Pampa! He graduated from **Texas A&M University-Kingsville**, where he majored in Accounting. Except for two years in Saudi Arabia, James has lived in Houston for the last forty years, mostly in the Galleria and Inner Loop areas. He worked as a CPA, with UHY and PriceWaterhouseCoopers, and is now in real estate, associated with Keller Williams Metropolitan. He is currently **Chairman of the Board of Harris County Child Advocates**, past President of **Crisis Intervention**, and past Board Member of **Special Olympics Texas**. He loves to travel, dine out, attend plays and movies, and read. His children are Amy, Adam, and Matthew.



Secretary, Pat Bohn, of West Lane, also was born in New York, but he graduated from the **University of St. Thomas** right here in Houston. **This is Pat's second term as Secretary of WLPCA.** Before his service in WLPCA, Pat made his career in the financial services industry and was in management at Merrill Lynch. He and his wife, **Joan**, an accomplished and respected abstract artist, lived in Meyerland for over 20 years before they moved to West Lane Place in 2000. Pat and Joan, who are the parents of two sons, are the proud grandparents of a darling granddaughter.



Treasurer, Cynthia Trigg, of Bash Place, was born in Yuma, Arizona, but apparently got to Texas as soon as she could! She grew up in Austin and graduated from Austin High School. She attended **Randolph Macon College** in Virginia and returned to Austin to complete her degree at the **University of Texas**. She lived for a time in Greenwich, Connecticut, and then moved to Houston in 1984. Here, she headed a Kumon Math and Reading Center in Memorial for 14 years, and tutored middle school math. Since retiring from those careers, **Cynthia has served as Treasurer on the WLPCA for two terms**, and has helped organize the last two Neighbors Night Out. She enjoys golf, gardening, and playing Mah Jongg, and is very active with the **Alzheimer's Association**. Cynthia is the wife of **Fisher Trigg**. A blended family, they are parents of five children and have three grandchildren

West Lane Place borders an area that is in the midst of extensive and exciting development. Many changes in surrounding streets and businesses lie ahead. These new officers will be leading us through these times that will be both interesting and challenging. Let's give them our support, cooperation and thanks. ♠

Next issue, Molly will introduce the members of our Board.

Most of us are tired of the seemingly endless construction projects all around us, and I know many of us dread their completion and the added traffic that will pour onto our streets. But, being passionate about design and architecture, I marvel at the magnitude of the construction just north of us. I am a big believer in development. It is a reflection of Houston's viability. It has made Houston what it is, a great place to be!

As impressive as the frenzy of new construction near us is, it represents just a small fraction of what is taking place all around Houston. **Houston is quickly overcoming Chicago as the Nation's third largest city, behind New York City and Los Angeles.** Unfortunately, with growth comes growing pains as we endure the noise, dust, and traffic disruptions that are inevitable with construction. But, all-in-all, it's a nice problem to have.

One consolation is that the Cardinal Rule of Real Estate is especially true for us "Innerloopers" living in close proximity to the Galleria, Highland Village, and the upscale retail and residential developments underway north of us. With millions of dollars being invested so close by, the investment we made in our homes is appreciating greatly. **Our enclave called West Lane Place soon will be surrounded on three sides by some of the priciest developments in Houston.** Yes, indeed, West Lane Place is a great place to be, and I think it will be even better!

The fortunate reality of our situation is that all these developments are positioned at the "top of the market" ...luxury ...upscaled...expensive...no matter how you call it, all are meant to attract the affluent urban professionals that will soon be our new neighbors. When finished, this new construction will bring a wonderful mix of residential, retail, entertainment, and restaurants. **To succeed, these developers must address the same concerns we have by providing ample parking, predominately in garages, mainly underground and concealed or appropriately hidden from view. They will enhance their huge investments by spending lavishly on landscaping, fountains, and lighting, amenities that are largely public and will beautify our entire area.** The best part is all of this will be only a short walk away.

If you're still unconvinced, I ask you, what would be the alternative option? No development? Having existing projects slowly decline? That is exactly how urban areas decay! But, here we get to be in the "cat bird seat." Not a bad situation! Not a bad location!

Yes, the inevitable consequence of these improvements will be more traffic added to our overwhelmed streets. Traffic, in case you haven't

noticed, is already increasing on San Felipe and Westheimer. But let's face it, we Houstonians have been spoiled in this regard. Compared to our urban peers in NYC, LA, and Chicago, traffic in Houston has been a breeze. We hop in our cars and expect to get where we're going relatively unstressed. I'm thinking it will not be quite so easy in the future, and the City of Houston will have to address this problem, not just in our area, but in terms of a master plan for the entire city. In the meantime, we must be patient...plan ahead...listen to music...stay calm...take a chill pill ...accept that it's going to take us a little longer to get "there."

Now here is a brief summary of the major projects that are currently, or soon will be, under construction in the area north of us between the 610 West feeder road and the rail road tracks, from Westheimer to San Felipe. These are the projects that will have the greatest impact on West Lane Place.

The Millennium High Street. This is the already completed apartment project on Westheimer, west of Mid Lane, that sat partially constructed for such a long time. It has 340 units that are one, two, and three bedroom luxury leased apartments, and is currently 45.8% leased. It is **LEED certified**, and the first project in Houston to offer **charging stations for electric and hybrid cars** in a six story parking structure. It is pet friendly (with restrictions) and has its own dog park. **Fidelity Bank** and **Seasons 52** are the only retail tenants on the ground floor. Please see www.themillennium.com for information.

Azalea Court...Phase One. Currently under construction with completion anticipated next summer, this project sits on 2.71 acres located on the east side of Mid Lane, starting at the bend and extending north to the existing apartment development, Twenty One Twenty One, across Mid Lane from Whitney Bank. Designed by architects **Looney Ricks Kiss** from Memphis, this will be an eight story apartment for lease complex when finished, with 344 units that are one, two, and three bedroom luxury suites. This upscale complex will offer multiple amenities including swimming pool, fitness center and club room for tenant use. A seven-floor parking garage for 524 cars will be hidden to the backside, and the main entry to the parking will be from Mid Lane. We will appreciate the extensive landscaping, water features and street lighting that are planned.

Phase Two, still "on-the-boards," is scheduled to start construction this coming fall. Designed by the same architect as Phase One, it is being proposed as an eighteen to twenty story luxury apartment building that will span from Mid Lane to the railroad tracks. It will go by a name that has not yet been decided, and will sit basically on the land currently occupied by the 4150 Westheimer address behind the now vacant Westmark Bank site. The existing fitness center is moving into the Wallis State Bank site for the next 18 months, until Phase Three begins. *Please see Location, cont'd, page 4.*

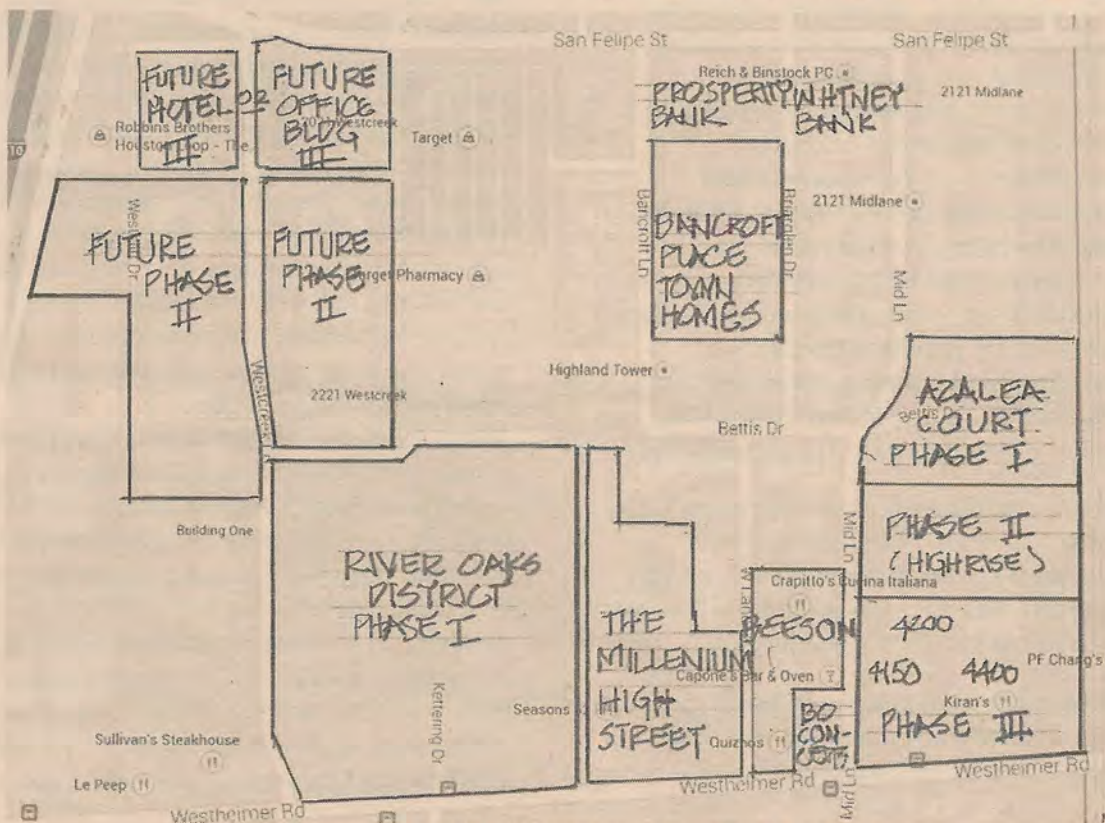
Location, cont'd. **Phase Three** is planned for the parcel of land at 4100 Westheimer, where Kiran's Restaurant & Bar, Salon E, and the Wallis State Bank are currently located, and 4200 Westheimer, the site of the Cabinets & Design showroom and the Trustmark Bank. The ultimate use planned for this phase has not yet been determined. Please see www.azaleiacourthouston.com for more info.

River Oaks District. This massive mixed use development currently under construction will ultimately reach from Westheimer to San Felipe, replacing the now largely demolished West Creek Apartment complex. **Since it will be so enormous, we are fortunate that its developer, Oliver McMillian, from San Diego, is well known in the industry for "making special spaces happen."** The design team includes Gensler, Papageorge Haymes & Hoerr Schaudt and features luxury retail, restaurant, entertainment, and residential venues. **This massive development promises to redefine the luxury shopping experience. Its design calls for an urban grid of tree lined streets, curbside parking: a strolling environment.** The current phase includes 252,000 sq.ft. of retail space, 92,000 sq.ft. of office space, 279 residential units, and an eight-screen, 560-seat I-pic Theater. Subsequent phases will link this site to the West Loop feeder road, with the northernmost end at San Felipe being reserved for a future office building or hotel. The City obviously believes in this project, as we have put a \$19 million financial incentive into the pot. Please see www.riveroaksdistrict/houston.com or www.olivermcmillan.com for more information on the project or the developer

Beeson. There is yet a fourth development taking place on the west side of Mid Lane. The developer is **Beeson Properties.** This property includes the sites currently occupied by Capone's, Crappitto's and Quiznos. Capone's is in the process of opening a new location on Kirby Drive near Richmond, but will remain open in their current location through December. Their current building (adjacent to Bo Concepts) is scheduled for demolition starting in January, 2015. Crapitto's, as most of you know, is now vacant. Quiznos will be re-locating early next year, clearing that site for more retail development. We believe the Plan calls for a three-story mixed-use building (retail on-grade with 2 floors of offices above) with on-grade parking fronting Mid Lane. There will be a parking garage on the north end of the site (the Crapitto's end) and an additional retail component on the Westheimer end of the site (the Capone's & Quiznos end.) We are told that Bo Concepts is not part of the new development, and will remain in its current location.

We all owe thanks to the efforts of those dedicated individuals who represented the West Lane Place Civic Association and attended the hearings with the Planning Commission that ultimately denied the Developer his requested variance to build much closer to the beautiful old oak trees that overhang Mid Lane. The building was gratefully moved west to protect the oaks. For more information on this project, please see www.swamplot.com/changing-buildings-on-mid-lane/2012-01-12/

For the next Newsletter, I will attempt to find out what is being contemplated to our South, specifically focusing on Richmond Avenue. I apologize in advance for any misinformation that may be portrayed. I am not, I emphasize, an investigative reporter!



New Projects North of Westheimer Across from West Lane Place

Anyone who has lived in Houston for ten years or so is unlikely to have forgotten the arguments that raged for and against the “**University Line**” light rail **METRO** proposed for Richmond Avenue some years ago after Houston voters approved the project for Westpark. And, everyone who remembers probably assumes the debate is over since the residents and businesses along the Richmond corridor objected *en masse* so clearly and for such a long time. But **this issue popped up again in Congress recently**, just as Brittany Seabury warned us in May, and we might have been facing this threat again today. But a show of resistance was coordinated between **U.S. Congressional Representative John Culberson**, the **WLPCA**, residents of West Lane Place and Afton Oaks, and business neighbors on Richmond Avenue, and this **METRO** project has been thwarted for another year.

If you attended our annual meeting on May 7, you must remember **Brittany Seabury**, the bright young woman from Rep. Culberson’s office, who graciously appeared to speak to us about the relocation of our post office. During her presentation, she also warned us that although **Rep. Culberson has upheld his promise** to use every resource to save us from **METRO**, **his protections endure only from one budget to the next**, and federal funding can be renewed any time the budget goes before the House of Representatives for a vote. Just as Ms. Seabury had warned, that scenario suddenly materialized a few weeks ago when **Rep. Ted Poe** made a last minute attempt to strip language (previously inserted by Culberson for our protection) from legislation before Congress. If Mr. Poe’s amendment were to be adopted, it would expose us once again to the potential threat of the Rail. But, after the quick response of the **2013-2014 WLPCA Board of Directors**, who approved a letter of support to Rep. Culberson, the emails and telephone calls from West Lane Place neighbors, some of our neighbors in Afton Oaks, and local businesses on Richmond Avenue, Mr. Poe’s amendment failed and we’ve been spared for another fiscal year.

These events were a dramatic lesson in how important it is to stay informed and participate in our own governance. When we first learned that Ted Poe was seeking to amend the language of the bill, the outcome seemed bleak because Poe had the backing of some powerful groups, and his fellow Republicans were expected to support him. We don’t know why at the last minute Mr. Poe withdrew his request for a recorded vote, but we hope our letters, emails and phone calls helped to influence him.

This episode also dramatically demonstrates the importance of your civic association. Because the network was already in place to respond to this crisis, then-president, **Mohammad Bayegan**, and the **2013-2014 Board of Directors** were able to draw upon the power of West Lane Place in time to nip this threat before it had the chance to become a dangerous bud.



Oh-Chihuahua, Rocky Epley Has Reflective Safety Gear!

by Phyllis Maddox



Rocky Epley in his new reflective vest

In our last newsletter, **Chris Elhardt** urged us to be more careful about our own safety by wearing clothing that can be seen at night, and he told us about our unfortunate little neighbor, the Chihuahua that had been struck by a bicycle in the street. The little accident victim was **Rocky Epley** of Lana Lane, and it turns out Rocky’s mommie, **Melissa**, has followed Chris’ good advice. Now Rocky is outfitted with a very bright vest so even though he is tiny, he’ll make a big flash when car lights shine on him in the dark.

Melissa, who you may have met when she runs in West Lane Place, has promised to take precautions herself, by wearing something reflective at night, too.

Thanks, Melissa and Rocky, for setting a good example for the rest of us.



Rocky and his mommie, Melissa Epley ♥


JULY

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22		24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

AUGUST


Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	J	28	29	30
31						

SEPTEMBER

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23		25	26	27
28	29	30				

OCTOBER

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	J	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

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

Weekly household trash pick up each Monday. NOTE: Recycling is **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.” *

* Junk and tree waste may be left on the curb a day or two prior to collection day.

When **Mary McDaniel**, of Hackberry Lane, and I, **Gilda Bayegan**, Mid Lane, became the editors of the *West Lane Place News* in July 2008, we agreed that I’d create the newsletter and Mary would distribute it. We decided on four issues a year, and since then, we’ve produced and distributed about two dozen newsletters that we hope you enjoyed reading. This issue inaugurates a big change in how the *News* will be produced in the future, because we are delighted to announce that we’ve added **three new members** to our team.

Gary and Molly Boren Whitney, of Mid Lane, have joined us as editors, and hit the ground running. You read Molly’s contribution on page 2 and you couldn’t miss Gary’s extensive article on pages 3 and 4 about the development springing up all around us. Gary is particularly qualified to write about these projects since he has practiced commercial interior design for nearly fifty years after obtaining his degree in architecture from Pratt Institute.

You also find an article by **Phyllis Maddox**, of Mid Lane on page 5. Phyllis said she’d share distribution responsibilities with Mary McDaniel, but already she is taking on more than she signed up to do. In addition to Mary and Phyllis, an entire **corps of your neighbors volunteer to deliver the newsletter** to your door. **These dedicated letter carriers brave rain, heat, ants, and mosquitos to make sure you get your newsletters.** If you see them out on their routes, please thank them!

What changes can you expect to see? Perhaps the most obvious will be the **by-line**. In the past, I never included my name because I wrote almost everything in the newsletter. But now there’ll be **several of us writing on a regular basis, so you can expect to see all our names on our articles.**

There’ll be some changes in distribution, too. We’re excited about the new talent at the *News*, and have rededicated ourselves to our original schedule of four issues each year. Which means our letter carriers will be busier than ever. Let us know if you’d like to volunteer for the fun of ant bites and sunburn, and you can join their ranks, too!

As always, we produce this newsletter so all of us will have the opportunity to know each other better, and learn about issues that are important to us all. This is *your* news. **We hope you will be inspired to share your news with us by writing an article yourself on any topic that concerns our neighborhood.** You can submit your article, or your idea for an article, to any of us directly or through our email addresses listed on the website, www.WLPCA.org.

Announcements

Poo. Thank you to everyone who removes their dogs’ droppings from the street, but we ask those who do not to take disposable bags with you on your walks, please.

Julius Melcher Chopped. USPS has made its final decision to “relocate” five of the six post offices that were under consideration, including ours. Of the six being considered, the Southmore Station, in Sheila Jackson Lee’s district, is the only one that escaped closure. We will provide more information about the new location and timing of the move when we learn more from USPS.