

WLP Civic Association Board Members

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**DEAR NEIGHBORS:**

We hope you enjoyed the holidays and are looking forward to the year ahead. Like you, the WLPCA board and committee members have been celebrating remotely, living virtually, and working from home. Although we still are unable to gather, we do have some good news.

The time has come for our membership drive, and the good news is that we have reorganized our membership rolls. Director and Membership Committee Chair, **Darryl Shields**, West Lane, has worked for weeks to update and expand our membership records. Darryl has reported to the board how friendly and kind you were when he called to confirm your contact information, and all of us on the board appreciate your willingness to help. Thank you! The result of your cooperation and Darryl's diligence is a **new directory to be printed and distributed to our entire membership by May**, when we hope to host our annual meeting in person, vaccinations working and Lina Hidalgo willing!

In the past, our directories gave one line and listed one telephone number for all the members in the same household. We realize that our members often use separate phone numbers and have different names within their families. To reflect that reality, and to provide access to all our members, the board decided to expand the size and information in the directory. The new directories will include the names of all WLPCA members, their mobile and land telephone numbers, and their email and physical addresses. Members will be listed under their own names, alphabetically, so a household that has two or more members with different last names will have two or more listings in the new directory. Members with the same last names but separate phone numbers and email addresses will each have a listing. New members who join the WLPCA will have the opportunity to be listed in the directory, too (applications included!) before it is published. Of course, as always, we publish and distribute only the information our members have permitted us to include.

Besides expanded directories, we are working to add an **online payment service** to our website for your

convenience. We will send an alert once that service is in place. In addition to the directories, the WLPCA continues to bring you email alerts, citizen patrols, and organized beautification efforts; and we provide an amplified voice in civic matters. All these benefits are important components of a cohesive, strong neighborhood. As we continue to reshape our lives, adapting to global forces beyond our control, we should remember what is in our control: our relationships, our commitments, and our community.

Let's stick together!

Gilda Bayegan  
President-WLPCA

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This newsletter is published and delivered to you  
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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.

Please contact Phyllis Maddox concerning any problems you may experience receiving your newsletter.

How much does it cost to ride the bus? If you know, you're in the minority around here. Most friends, neighbors, and elected officials have no clue because they think they'll never ride the bus. But I do!

Although friends may generously volunteer to drive and pick me up when my car is in service, I find it's easier to take the bus. It's simple to use and it allows me the freedom to keep my own schedule. I hop on the bus with my tennis racquet and head to the Houstonian for a workout. Who else is on the bus? You might be surprised.



*Brian on the bus before Covid.*

Families and the workforce of our city ride on METRO every day. While onboard, I've seen men covered in sheetrock dust after a day of work; housekeepers, fast food workers, department store clerks, restaurant staff and the elderly riding to medical appointments. The general mood on the bus is pleasant and the riders I've met are very courteous. Once, my wallet fell from my backpack and a gentleman alerted me that it was on the floor. Recently, while transferring from the Westpark transit station onto the Silver Line down Post Oak, I chatted with a passenger about the beauty of the new line and how convenient it is. Once he reached the Northwest transit station, he planned to board another bus for a 45 minute ride to cut the grass of a friend who was out of town.

The new hub on Westpark is state of the art and nearly empty since the Covid pandemic. In addition to this beautiful hub, METRO service is even more convenient with a wonderful app that gives the best route options and up to date wait times when you type in a destination address on your mobile. Unless you have a METRO card, the app is the only way to avoid multiple fares on transfers because you can purchase a ticket on line for your entire trip with a one-way fare.

Some areas of our city provide functional bus shelters that shield waiting passengers from splashing water and other elements, or simply provide a place to sit until the bus arrives. Uptown Park and Upper Kirby have new, architecturally pleasing shelters, but most parts of our city do not. These other areas also lack the readily identified crossings like the ones on Post Oak, often

leading to danger when crossing a busy intersection. At Mid Lane and Richmond heading east, nothing but a sign on a post stuck in the dirt marks the bus stop, and no crosswalks are painted on Richmond. Many West Lane Place residents know the difficulty of trying to turn onto Richmond in a vehicle, so imagine the hardship of crossing on foot.



*Brian on the bus after Covid.*

Why is it important to me to have safe crosswalks? In addition to my own safety, I'm concerned about the safety of other pedestrians who navigate our city. My close friend, Lesha Adams, was killed last year when she stopped to help a gentleman in a wheelchair get over the curb to a bus stop on North Shepherd with no accessible ramp. A woman approaching the stop was texting while speeding. She came around the corner too fast and struck Lesha and the man she was helping, killing them both. Within two weeks of that tragedy, a new crosswalk with overhead flashing lights and proper ramps was installed, and Lesha's picture is now painted on the electrical control box at that METRO stop.

I hope the City will improve the conditions of the stop at Mid Lane and Richmond before we experience a similar tragedy. (*\*please see editor's note at the end of this article.*) I contacted councilman Greg Travis to request a crosswalk across Richmond and wheelchair ramp to be installed at our Mid Lane bus stops. Within 24 hours, I received a call from a METRO inspector who said he would investigate the site. Unfortunately, the only result of that investigation is a record of my inquiry because the inspector soon called back to say there was to be no further movement on my request.

I want to believe Houstonians and our city leaders do our best to protect fellow citizens, and that we are able to recognize and help others who need support. Whenever I'm driving, and a bus is stopped in my lane, my impatience is reduced remembering the many riders I have met who are in as big a hurry to get to their destination as I am. I also remind myself how fortunate I am to have the choice to drive my car or Uber rather than rely on the bus as my primary form of transportation. The next time you see water puddles at a bus stop, consider slowing down to avoid splashing the people waiting there.



Left: Bus stop at Mid Lane and westbound Richmond, with curbs and a car where crosswalks would be painted. Right: Bus stop on eastbound side of Richmond, marked by a sign sticking out of the dirt.

Remember that many of the people waiting for the bus are working to make our lives more convenient. Or they might be your neighbors who, like me, have discovered how timely a bus ride can be!

By the way, a one way fare is \$1.25.

*\*Shortly after Brian submitted this article, we learned the terrible news that an Afton Oaks neighbor crossing the SE feeder of Loop 610 and Westheimer was killed by a hit-and-run driver around 1 p.m. on Thursday, December 17. Police are asking anyone with information to call HPD Vehicular Crimes: 713-247-4072.*

## **Walking**

by the West Lane Place News staff

We might sound like a stuck record, we might be accused of preaching to you, and you might tell us to stop acting like your mother, but we assume those risks. As we have harped many times in this newsletter, **we want you to be very cautious when you are walking in the streets.**

Since the Covid isolation began, more and more people seek the fresh air and companionship they find when they take a walk, and in Houston that usually means walking in the street because we don't have consistent sidewalks. While walking and socializing are healthy activities, please do not forget that cars use the streets, too, and the dangers they pose to you.

Even the most responsible driver may have trouble seeing you at certain times of day, like dusk. **When the sun starts to set, you have no trouble seeing ahead of you as you walk, so you may not realize that you tend to disappear to passing cars.** If you wear reflective gear, the reflection will bounce off oncoming headlights at night, making you more visible in the dark. But in the gloaming hours, reflective gear doesn't work as well.

**Another issue is children, and dogs on leashes, especially small dogs.** They are even less visible than you are. Please keep them close to you, and if possible, stay between them and traffic. In other words, please do not let them veer into the street where careful drivers may not see them in time to stop, or see them at all!

Responsible drivers make every effort not to harm you, but there are too many drivers who are not so



Richmond Ave stop on Post Oak's Silver Line, with curbs, covered shelter, landscaping, and lighting. A highly visible crosswalk with traffic lights is just out of view of this image, to the right of the shelter.

You can download the METRO app through this link:  
[www.ridemetro.org/Pages/rideMETRO-App.aspx](http://www.ridemetro.org/Pages/rideMETRO-App.aspx)

careful. WLP residents regularly witness airborne cars, all four wheels off the pavement, flying over speed bumps on Mid Lane and West Lane. **In addition to speeders, hit-and-run drivers are out there, too, and they are perilously close to us.**

**On Saturday, December 5,** neighbors on **Bash** were awakened at about 4 a.m. by an "explosion" when three cars crashed into each other on Richmond Ave. between the railroad tracks and Mid Lane. By the time police arrived, the car that caused the accident was sitting in the road, empty, reeking of suspicious smoke. Its driver had fled the scene. Later that morning, he was discovered passed out, slumped in a chair in the walled garden behind a home on Bash where he had scaled multiple fences and walls to gain access. Police were called and he was arrested. That driver and his victims seem to have escaped serious injury, but we aren't always so lucky.

**On Thursday, December 17,** around 1:00 in the afternoon, **Kathy Lynn**, from **Afton Oaks**, was found by an off duty constable in the 610 feeder by the CVS on Westheimer, the **victim of a hit-and-run driver.** Reports are that she was crossing 610 to visit a coffee shop on Post Oak, a path she often took with friends. She was walking alone that day when she was struck and killed. Inconceivably, the driver left her lying in the road.

A basic internet search reveals that tragic vehicular crimes of this sort occur at an alarming rate in our city. Please, please, please! when you go for a walk, keep these shocking incidents in mind and **Walk Defensively!**

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

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**JANUARY**

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	<b>11</b>	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	<b>25</b>	26		28	29	30
31						

**FEBRUARY**


Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	<b>8</b>	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	<b>22</b>	23	<b>J</b>	25	26	27
28						

**MARCH**

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	<b>8</b>	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	<b>22</b>	23		25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

**APRIL**

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
				1	2	3
4	<b>5</b>	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	<b>19</b>	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	<b>J</b>	29	30	

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

Weekly household trash pick up on Mondays. 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.”

**Membership Drive.** Please take a moment to review the enclosed **membership materials**. Now would be a good time to write a check for your 2021 dues! If you don’t know what a check is, don’t despair, we are working to add a service to our website that will enable you to pay online. We’ll send around an email alert when it’s up and running.

**Sign up for Email Alerts.** If you have not done so yet, you can add your email address to receive periodic alerts of significance to West Lane Place. To sign up, visit our website, [www.wlpca.org](http://www.wlpca.org), click the “Contact Us” link, and select the “Subscribe to Email Alerts” option under the “I am writing to” heading.

**Service Recommendations?** We need to update the list on our website of your recommendations for service, maintenance, etc. (You can find the list under “Around the Neighborhood – Referrals.”) If you’ve had a good experience with a contractor, handyman, seamstress, tailor, dog sitter, or any other business or service that you’d like to share, please use the “Contact Us” link on the website, under the “Other” option. Include a brief description of why you recommend that particular service or vendor, and please refrain from using the list to advertise for friends or relatives.

**Letter to the Editor:**

As a former assistant to the recycling chairman, I take it seriously. As the decals on the top of our containers have now worn off, I think a mention needs to be done in our newsletter. Such as what is/is not picked up in our cans. As I see the cans around our neighborhood, I see some problems including:

- Styrofoam is not picked up** so if you want to recycle it, you need to bring it to the Westpark recycling center, as I do (especially at Christmas with so many gift packages.)
- Supermarket plastic bags are not allowed** as they get caught in the gears of the crusher. Central Market accepts them at containers at their front doors.
- All items are sorted at recycling center, separated between paper, metal, glass, hard plastic. I see many people throw a whole trash bag of recyclables into their bin. This makes it hard for them to sort, and the plastic bag has the same problem as above. **If people collect their recyclables in a plastic bag lined bin, they need to empty recyclables from bag into bin.**

Can we get the official recycling rules printed as a reminder to our neighbors?

Thanks,  
**John Gorman**, Mid Lane

Look for the complete and official recycling rules at:  
[houstontx.gov/solidwaste/recycling-items.html](http://houstontx.gov/solidwaste/recycling-items.html)