

The Official Publication of the Woodland Hills Homeowner's Association

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December 2010

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Representing the board of directors for the Woodland Hills Homeowners Association I'd like to extend my warmest wishes to everyone during this holiday season. We've finally gotten a well-deserved break from the warm weather and the trees are displaying their magnificent fall colors. Just think how much fun we're going to have keeping them out of the pools over the next month or two! I don't mind, though. It's a very small price to pay for their beauty and shade from the Texas summer heat.

I have received several emails from WHHOA members in response to the President's Letter in November. In that letter I discussed the idea of increasing the annual homeowner's dues to provide needed revenue for ongoing maintenance of common area infrastructure. Some suggested operational changes, others referenced enhancements. All of these emails acknowledged the significant positive impact of beautiful, well-maintained parks and common areas on our property values and quality of life here in Woodland Hills. I believe, as do the other board members, that this beauty and quality of life are essential and every effort should be used to ensure the parks and common areas are maintained to the highest standards possible.

These improvements were constructed almost thirty years ago. Routine maintenance has kept them in good condition. Trees have grown larger over that time and costs to clean up and maintain them increase commensurately. Some physical improvements have reached the end of their useful life and will need to be replaced and not just repaired. Much like a faithful car that been paid for some time, the cost of repairs begin to exceed the cost of buying a new one. The question then becomes...what can we afford?

I feel a great deal of responsibility to be prudent with the funds we currently have and to plan for the future. It's like planning for retirement, except that "retirement" in this case is ensuring the long-term financial integrity of the property and the association itself. I believe the entire board is like-minded in this respect. The reality of the situation is that under the current income/expense picture the WHHOA will not be able to properly maintain, improve, and replace the park and common area infrastructure. Some tough decisions are forthcoming. Determining what we can "afford" at this time is not an easy task.

One way to assist the association in determining future costs is to conduct a "reserve study." This is an evaluation of all hard assets owned (or those assets that are the association's responsibility to maintain) and an estimation of what it will cost to maintain or improve those assets going forward. It may appear to be a simple process on the surface, but when you really get into it, it is a technical process that factors types of improvements, age, original construction methods, Celebrations!

Submitted by Linda Bond, Bowden Hill Ln. E.

It is with a full and happy heart that I announce the marriage of my youngest son, Lee Bond to Emily (nee) Southard. The wedding was in Houston on June 6, 2010, at La Columbe D'or . They met at the University of Houston, where Lee recently graduated and Emily will next month. My oldest son, Zachary Bond, has the tenured bass trombone chair with the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra and is leaving Sunday for Kuala Lampur where he will perform as a visiting artist with the Malaysia Philharmonic.

MAINTENANCE UPDATE By Darlene Page

There has been much going on lately for repairs in the neighborhood. Among the actions taken were the following:

- Trees trimmed in the park. Broken branches removed
- Pond pump repaired changed out pumps to streamline the flow of water between the two ponds
- Fence repairs completed
- Clean up from major storm
- Resolved electrical issues in the park
- Normal mowing, edging of common areas

(Continued on Page 2)

Woodland Hills

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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PUBLISHER

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CLASSIFIED ADS

Personal classifieds (one time sell items, such as a used bike...) run at no charge to Woodland Hills residents, limit 30 words, please e-mail <u>helenharvey@att.net</u>

Business classifieds (offering a service or product line for profit) are \$50, limit 40 words, please contact Peel, Inc. Sales Office at 888-687-6444 or *advertising@PEELinc.com.*

President's Letter - (Continued from Cover Page)

anticipated life spans, and economic components such as inflation, and future materials costs. We have entered into a contract with Reserve Advisors to conduct this study for WHHOA and the results should be available for review in January of 20 11.

I believe this study will verify "empirically" what the board has "intuitively" sensed for the past year...we must initiate immediate action to increase income in order to afford to keep maintenance in step with the membership expectations. An increase of 10% in that annual dues structure will produce approximately \$22,000 in additional revenue. While significant, that will only allow us to maintain. It will not allow us to make any major erosion control, walkway, or playground improvements. However, it will also allow us to escrow approximately \$5,000 per year into a reserve savings fund for capital improvements or emergencies like flood damages.

Each of us has our own vision of how we'd like life to play out. It comes from who we are and what we've experienced. Like snowflakes, no two visions are exactly the same. Some may appear to be similar, but there are always small nuances that differentiate them. I believe we all share one common aspect of this vision. It's the vision of a beautiful park, well-maintained landscaping, flowing fountains, and magnificent trees clothed in a pallet of their seasonal colors that everyone can enjoy. This board will continue to work towards that vision!



Publishing Community Newsletters Since 1991

Annual Meeting February 7th

Please mark your calendars now and plan to attend the annual meeting of Woodland Hills Homeowners Association. Your participation is vital. First, we need a quorum of homeowners to hold the meeting. Second, your input is really important to all who serve on the Board and to the neighborhood at large. Finally, you will find it enlightening and informative to know what is going on now and what is planned for Woodland Hills. Have a say in what you want for your community. Get involved and share your time and talents.

The meeting will be on Tuesday, February 7, 2010 at 7pm. The meeting location is at the Colleyville Citizen's Center. The address is: 5301 Riverwalk Drive, Colleyville, TX 76034. (This is behind Market Street Grocery.) Thanks in advance for your time!

<u>Woodland Hills</u> Just ONE Thing....

Would you be willing to help with "just one thing" over the next year? Not a whole bunch of things – Just One Thing... We have lots of social activities planned for the coming year. Can you spare just a couple of hours? That's all it takes!

Volunteer for just one event and it will be the most fun you've ever had! Upcoming activities: Easter Egg Hunt, July 4th Parade and Picnic, Neighbor Night Out, and more. We want your ideas! A committee of people volunteering together makes every event more fun and not a lot of work for anyone.

Please consider giving your time. And then – sign up with our Social Chairperson – Terri Nielsen. Thanks to everyone who has volunteered in the past! Please let your friends know what a fun experience you had. Contact Terri Nielsen @ 817.684.0450 or 817.475.1389 cell. Email tanderson3312@sbcglobal.net.



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Woodland Hills Homeowner's Association Newsletter - December 2010 3

<u>Woodland Hills</u> December Gardening from Calloway's Nursery

Working in your garden is an excellent escape during the holidays. It is a perfect time to plant trees and shrubs so they can develop a strong root system for next Spring. Cool weather color such as Pansies, Snapdragons, Cyclamen, Flowering Cabbage and Kale add splashes of color to your landscape. Spring flowering bulbs can be planted now once they have been properly chilled.

Prune summer flowering shrubs and vines now. They will bloom on new growth. Remember-do not top your Crapemyrtles! Simply prune to remove seed heads and shape. Trim evergreens only to reshape.

Prepare for the cold weather before it hits! One of the best things you can do for your landscape plants is to provide a 2-to 3-inch layer of mulch. Mulching is necessary year round but during the colder periods it provides a layer of insulation for the roots. Secondly, water your landscape well before a cold spell. A drought stressed plant is more susceptible to freeze damage. Thirdly, for more tender plants, purchase frost cloth for extra protection. Frost cloth is a fabric which adds 3 to 4 degrees of warmth. Cover the plant completely allowing the edges to come all the way to the ground. We are utilizing the heat which radiates from the ground.

Become a member of our Garden Club and you will receive email notices prior to any weather crisis. Visit www.mytexasgarden.com to join.

This is also an excellent time to start planning changes or additions to your landscape. Bring a sketch or photo and let our Texas Certified Nursery Professionals assist you!

New Idea on News to Share!

Something NEW! At the suggestion of one of our residents, I am removing any deadline for submissions to the newsletter. You can send your news to me anytime! Depending on when I receive your news, it will be included in the upcoming month or two months out. Please submit information and photos via e-mail to helenharvey@att.net.

We'd love to have family news: births, marriages, graduations, etc. We can also post items for sale, babysitting services, etc.

Put the name of your organization or article in the subject line of emails. Please include the name of the submitting person at end of articles.

Questions? Call Helen Harvey Sink at 214-460-7072 or email me at helenharvey@att.net. Thanks for your contributions!

Select Management Company

Everyone buys a home for a different reason but all owners attribute some degree during their decision making to the "feel of the community". Remember, it is not only how the community looks, but how its residents judge their quality of life within the community. Creating a community where residents get involved, interact with each other, and use the management resources to reach each other is the ultimate goal when describing the true meaning of community.

Communication plays an important role in the effective management of any association. Good communication is now more critical than ever with the advances in technology and the need for quick response time. Some owners may feel that the Association could communicate even more; therefore Select Management utilizes several avenues for owners to access information, receive updates and get quick responses to inquiries. With the cost of community mailings taxing the Association's budget, Select Management can utilize e-reports, online surveys and electronic newsletters to get information to the owners.

While keeping owners informed is one of the main goals at Select Management, we also strive to provide the Association and the Board with many other various administrative avenues to assist with daily operations. Each Association that Select Management Company professionally manages is provided with a designated Community Manager. The duties of a manager vary depending on the contract agreement, but generally the manager directs association operations, including: selecting and directing vendors, collecting resident fees, managing funds, paying accounts due, and maintaining the buildings and grounds. This includes paying city fees, taxes and keeping up with the City requirements for pools and inspections. The success of the working relationship between the community manager and board depends upon clearly defined roles, open lines of communication, and effective delegation of tasks. Close and frequent contact between the board and the community manager enhances this relationship and helps fulfill the contract agreement.

Respectfully Submitted by – Shonda Britton, CMCA® Woodland Hills Community Manager

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4 Woodland Hills Homeowner's Association Newsletter - December 2010



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<u>Woodland Hills</u>

Welcome New Homeowners!

Please extend a warm and friendly welcome to the following new neighbors:

> MARY AND CLEMENT OTTO 3412 MIDDLETON WAY

Welcome to Woodlands Hills!



REMINDER SURVEY RESULTS

At the 2010 Annual Meeting, we asked for your input as how to prioritize the limited funds available for maintenance and appearance of our neighborhood. As we prepare for 2011 budget process, I thought it might be helpful to share the excerpt from the last survey to remind us all of the survey response priorities:

"Many surveys were received and tabulated for the Woodland Hills Annual Meeting on February 1st. Of those surveys returned, homeowners overwhelmingly said that trail completion, erosion control, repairing the leaking pond, and beautifying entryways were the most important areas to be addressed in the future. The less important areas to be addressed were the playground equipment, a new gazebo for the park and the need for more social activities."

The Board is working hard to address these areas of interest despite the extreme flood damage this year and no increase in dues for many years. The difficulty in just maintaining our aging infrastructure means that we are forced to focus on only the "must have" items and some things must by necessity be placed on the back burner. We will be asking your opinions again at the next Annual Meeting so please be sure to mark it on your calendars to attend.

Electricity is ON SALE at StarTex Power!



Alan "Petrodamus" Lammey, host of 'Energy Week', can be heard every Sunday on 1070 KNTH in Houston.

I'm Texas Energy Analyst, Alan Lammey. In case you didn't know, electricity rates are currently at lows not seen in years, which means that NOW is the time to lock in a very low electricity rate with the provider that I highly recommend to all my radio show listeners: StarTex Power. StarTex Power is local and reputable, with some of the most competitive rates available in all of Texas. You can switch right online at www.StarTexPower.com



Woodland Hills

Social Activities

By Terri Nielsen

Due to the flooding in the park this year and its resultant repairs, the WHHOA has had to reevaluate its ongoing expenditures due to this one-time event. One of the casualties of this situation is that the WHHOA sponsored Holiday Party has been cancelled. However, the Board is looking forward to numerous neighborhood get-togethers in 2011 including, to name a few:

> Spring - Movie Night in the Park Spring – Easter Egg Hunt Summer – Fourth of July Parade and Picnic Fall - Movie Night in the Park

Details of these and other events to follow in subsequent News Letters. If you have any ideas for additional WHHOA sponsored events or want to get involved in organizing upcoming occasions, please contact Terri Nielsen at 817.684.0450 (home) 817-475-1389 (cell) or tanderson3312@sbcglobal.net. *January 23, 2011 5-7 p.m.* - *Quarterly Block Captains Party will be at the home of Terri Nielsen, 2913 Scarborough Lane West.*

NEIGHBORHOOD DIRECTORIES - We are planning to publish new directories next year. If you have any changes you want made to your listing, please get with your Block Captain. We also would like to add everyone's email address, so please be sure your Block Captain has the address.

NOT AVAILABLE ONLINE



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What's Happening in Woodla



- \star 7 Properties Currently Listed For Sale Average List Price - \$448,143 Average Price Per Sq.Ft. - \$122.51 Average Days on Market - 82
- ★ 2 Property Currently Under Contract Average List Price - \$380,750 Average Price Per Sq.Ft. - \$121.14 Average Days on Market - 24
- \star 15 Properties Sold in the Last 6 Months Average List Price - \$382,110 Average Price Per Sq.Ft. - \$112.31 Average Days on Market - 85

(As of 11/21/10)

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Woodland Hills

Tackle Hunger in Texas with the Souper Bowl of Caring!

What would happen if every American that celebrates the Big Football Game donated one can of food or \$1 to fight hunger and poverty in their local community?

The result would be an astounding \$90 million in cash and cans to help feed the hungry, provide shelter to the homeless and help our neighbors in need.

With all eyes on North Texas this year as they host the Big Game, you can join the Souper Bowl of Caring and help make this vision a reality! For more than 20 years, groups all over the country have joined forces to demonstrate the power of caring. To date, more than \$71 million in cash and cans has been collected and 100% was donated in communities throughout the U.S. Every penny stays local and every collection matters!

Last year, 1,900 schools, churches, businesses and grocery stores in Texas collected more than \$4.5 million for local charities that fight hunger and poverty. The need is growing and we need your help!

Join the Team. Get started today!

- 1. REGISTER your school, church or business at tacklehunger.org and designate an organizer for your Souper Bowl of Caring event. You'll receive a free Resource Kit!
- 2. COLLECT money and/or canned foods anytime January 17-February 6, 2011. Super Bowl Sunday is February 6, 2011.
- 3. REPORT the amount of your collection to the Souper Bowl of Caring so it can be added to the national tally.
- 4. DONATE 100% of your collection to the charity of your choice in your own community. *Learn more at tacklehunger.org.*

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HEALTH BRIEFS

NEVER TOO EARLY TO SCREEN KIDS FOR HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

Children with high blood pressure may not feel sick or experience serious symptoms like adults, but if the condition goes untreated it could cause serious damage to their overall health later in life, said a pediatric hypertension specialist from Baylor College of Medicine.

"The good news is that we do not see heart attacks and strokes in children as a result of high blood pressure," said Dr. Daniel Feig, associate professor of pediatrics - renal at BCM. "The bad news is that the blood pressure will continue to go up and could cause permanent damage to the heart and kidneys. Without intervention childhood hypertension almost always results in hypertension in adulthood."

Beginning at age 3, children should be screened for high blood pressure at their annual check up, Feig said. If it is high, he or she will be asked to return a week later to see if the high readings persist.

If the child has elevated readings in three consecutive visits, he or she should have an evaluation for the cause of hypertension and risk of organ injury. Diet and exercise modifications are common treatments for high blood pressure, but if this is insufficient, there are a variety of antihypertensive medications that have been tested and proven to be safe in the short- and long- term.

TEACH KIDS TO ENJOY HOLIDAY TREATS IN MODERATION

Cookies, chocolates and other treats seem to be within arm's reach from Halloween to the end of year. But according to experts at Baylor College of Medicine, the holidays are no excuse for parents to let kids overeat and divert from their normal eating routine.

"You have to keep meals and snacks under some control no matter what day of the year it is," said Dr. Karen Cullen, associate professor of pediatrics at the USDA/ARS Children's Nutrition Research Center at BCM Be sure children are not overindulging

on treats and therefore skipping regular meals, she said.

Save holiday treats for scheduled snacks or after-meal deserts, and be sure that they are an appropriate portion size. "One of the good things about the cookies, chocolates and breads that you receive as gifts is that you can freeze them for later use," said Cullen.

Kids learn from watching their parents, so parents should be good role models. Parents should continue to serve regular balanced meals and snacks and eat with their children.

<u>Woodland Hills</u>

FINANCIAL FUCUS Still Time for Year-end Financial Moves But Hurry 'Cause... • Be generous. If you've been thinking of making charitable f



Which year-end moves should you

consider? You will want to talk to your financial advisor and tax and legal professionals first, but here are a few ideas to get you started:

- Boost your IRA contributions. You have until April 15, 2011, to fully fund your IRA for the 2010 tax year, but the sooner you finish with your 2010 contribution, the quicker you can get started on your 2011 contribution — and the earlier in the year you fund your IRA, the more time you give your account the opportunity to grow.
- Put more money into college savings plans. If you have a 529 college savings plan for yourself or someone else, consider putting more money in before year-end. You can gift up to \$13,000 (\$26,000 per married couple) per person per year without gift tax consequences. However, this must be accomplished by year-end.

- Be generous. If you've been thinking of making charitable gifts, don't put them off any longer. As long as you make a donation to a qualified charity before the year ends, you can claim a deduction on your 2010 tax return. For example, if you donate \$100 to a charitable group [either a religious organization or one that has received 501(c)(3) status from the Internal Revenue Service], and you're in the 25% tax bracket, you can deduct \$100 (with a tax benefit of \$25) when you file your taxes for 2010, providing, of course, that you itemize. If you donate stocks or other types of assets, you may also be able to save on capital gains taxes, because it will be the charity, not you, that eventually sells those assets.
- Sell your "losers." If you own investments that have lost value since you purchased them, you can sell them before 2010 ends and then use the tax loss to offset capital gains you may have earned in other investments. If you don't have any capital gains, you can use up to \$3,000 of your tax losses to offset other ordinary income. If your loss is greater than \$3,000, you can "carry over" the excess and deduct it from your taxes in future years. However, if you then want to repurchase the investment you sold, you'll need to wait at least 31 days to avoid violating the IRS' "wash sale" rules.
- Take capital gains. In 2011, the tax rate on long-term capital gains is scheduled to increase to 20% for most investors, up from the 15% rate it's been the last several years. If you have stocks or other appreciated assets that you were thinking of selling in the near future, you might want to do so before the year comes to a close. However, it's generally not a good idea to make investment decisions strictly because of tax consequences. If your appreciated assets are still a part of your overall financial strategy, you may be better off holding them for the long term, even with a higher capital gains rate.

Considering these moves before the year ends may help you better prepare to address you financial picture in 2011.







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