



# THE SCHOOL ZONE

By Barbara Lallinger



Some of you may remember an article written by me several years ago regarding what our area schools had to do with our property values since you didn't have students in school and never would. As noted, it matters because if you own property within the school district boundaries, you pay annual taxes to CFISD, period. Also, the performance of these schools directly affects the value of your home.

At the monthly Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS) meeting held March 6th at the Berry Center, Leslie Francis, CFISD Director of Marketing and Business gave us an overview of the Special-Called board meeting of the CFISD Board of Trustees held on 2/27/14. At the meeting, the Board unanimously voted to call a May 10, 2014 bond election.

A **\$1,209,280,000** (*yes that's \$1 billion..it takes close to a million to build a high school these days*) bond package was recommended by a community long-range planning committee that met to discuss the following district needs through the year 2020. Some of the highlights and tax implications are listed below.

1. Security and Safety (bulletproof glass in vestibules, more cameras in buildings and parking lots);
2. Student Growth (support facilities, school sites and buses, including GPS & video cameras and purchase of new buses to

reinstate the 2 mile rule, if passed buses will roll again within Willowbridge/Stonebridge);

3. Technology; and

4. Instructional/Support Facilities Renovations (at most schools and major renovations at the older schools such as Holbrook, Adams & Bane ELs) A detailed breakdown of the committee's recommendation is available on the district website (CFISD.net) by accessing "Vision 2020 – Bond 2014" logo.

Once phased in, the bond would affect the Interest & Sinking (I&S), or debt service tax rate by a maximum of 4.5 cents per \$100 of property valuation by 2019. Based on a conservative estimate, this would amount to an annual increase around \$62.25 for a home valued at \$200,000 (**there will be no increase for homeowners with a 65+ taxpayer exemption**).

CFISD started as a 1 room schoolhouse. It is now the 3rd largest in the state (encompassing 186 square miles) and 24th in the nation. It is rated #1 in Texas for academic and financial performance by the Education Resource Group for Academic and Financial Performance. The district has over 112,000 students (speaking over 100 languages and dialects) and 14,000+ staff members (educators, administration, bus drivers, maintenance personnel, janitorial staff, etc.). With the development of Bridgeland and other new subdivisions, the numbers have nowhere to go except UP!

CFISD's last bond election was in 2007. The one before that was in 2004, which included the construction of the Berry Center. Voter turnout at this election was low and a lot of people complained later (they didn't vote or they didn't research the bond issue) about the Berry Center aka the "Taj

*(Continued on Page 3)*

# Willowbridge - Stonebridge

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Billing ..... 800-585-7928  
Trash – Royal Disposal & Recycle ..... 713-526-1536  
Vacation Watch - Harris County District 5 .... 281-290-2100  
W. Harris County MUD #11 ..... 281-807-9500  
Willow Place Post Office ..... 281-890-2392  
Willowbridge Website ..... www.willowbridgehoa.com  
Cable/Internet/Phone...COMCAST ..... 713-341-1000

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Homeowners Association ..... 281-497-4320  
Graham Mgmt - Tracy Graham .....  
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Clubhouse/Reservations  
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Pool Parties/Tags  
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## HOA INFORMATION

Willowbridge Homeowners Association Inc. - Graham Mgmt  
Tracy Graham ..... 281-497-4320  
E-Mail ..... grahammanagement@sbcglobal.net  
Fax ..... 281-870-1654  
If you have any questions or comments regarding the  
neighborhood please contact the numbers above.

## HOA MEETINGS

**Willowbridge/Stonebridge Homeowner's Association**  
Meetings are held the fourth Thursday of each month at  
the community clubhouse at 7:00 pm.

## WELCOMING COMMITTEE

The Welcoming Committee meetings are the last Monday  
of each month.

## HARRIS COUNTY ROAD AND BRIDGE

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(Continued from Cover Page)

Mahal” being built. As I noted in an article, back then, it was needed and it would eventually pay for itself by the district not having to rent other places for high school graduations, sporting events, etc. In addition, it has been rented out for many events since being built, including church services, Cy-Fair Home and Garden Shows, quilting shows and even for performances by Cirque du Soleil! Yes, I’m sure we’re probably still paying off these bonds, but Rome wasn’t built in a day either.

Dr. Mark Henry, Ed.D., Superintendent of CFISD, notes that over the next 8 to 10 weeks, CFISD staff members will be providing educational presentations throughout the district, where materials about the proposed bond referendum will be available. He also encourages you to stay tuned to updates on the district website to stay informed as the May 10th election approaches.

Please vote (regardless if you or for or against the bond issue) and encourage your friends and neighbors to do the same. In my opinion, (and I no longer have a student in school or children teaching in the district), a maximum increase of taxes to \$62.25 by the year 2019 is not only a good investment for my property value, but also for the children that I still spend a lot of time with through volunteering for the district.

## Big Welcome to our New Neighbors!

Willowbridge - Coon family  
Willowbridge - Olivas family  
Stoney Lake - Dogan family  
Willacy Ct - Tran family  
Ballinger - Atauz family  
Therrell - Belleville family  
Ricaby - Taylor family  
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# Willowbridge - Stonebridge

## NEWSLETTER NEWS

We are constantly looking for newsworthy articles for WillowTalk. We want to know what you want to see in your newsletter. Submit articles to willowbridgenews@gmail.com no later than the 8th of the month. Due to space restraints from the publisher (advertisements take priority), we may not be able to publish your article until the next issue, therefore, if it is time sensitive, please email it as soon as possible.

Don't forget, you may receive your WillowTalk by email (contact peelinc.com and furnish the requested information). According to the publisher, the newsletter is available online after the first of the month. It's really nice to review it this way because the pictures, ads and graphics are in color, adding so much to it (Yard of the Month, Christmas Winners, etc. actually show up as if you were seeing them in person). But, beware, you'll wish it came out in color all of the time. If you would like to review it go online at peelinc.com, click on newsletters, click on view newsletters, click on Houston (they do many subdivisions in Houston, Austin, San Antonio and Salt Lake City and you can read theirs also) and click on Willowbridge.

## TALKING TRASH

By: Barbara Lallinger

Several meetings ago a question was posed to the board regarding having yard waste (grass trimmings) picked up and processed separate from regular trash (to be recycled for such things as fertilizer). Royal Waste was contacted to see if they provided this service. They do, however, Royal estimated that it would add \$3 - \$5 increase, per house, per month to our current billing. The HOA would be charged for all 827 homes in Willowbridge and Stonebridge, regardless of the number of homes actually utilizing the service (just as we are for trash/recycle). The board feels adding \$2,481 to \$4,135 to the monthly bill (or \$29,772 to \$49,620 annually) does not appear economically feasible at this time. Don't forget, most experts recommend cutting your grass higher, less often and leaving the clippings on lawns so that they benefit from the nutrients. Does anyone have other ideas? If so, please come to a monthly meeting and express them.

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# WINCHESTER HURRICANES SWIM TEAM REGISTRATION

Make a splash this summer! Register for the Winchester Hurricanes Swim Team on Saturday April 5th at the Winchester Country Clubhouse at 9607 Rio Grande Road, from 10 am to noon. Who Can Join? You Can! The requirements to join the team are simple:

• You must be between the ages of 4 and 18 and be able to swim one length of the pool unaided. The "6 & under" age group can stop and hold the lane line if necessary.

- We especially need swimmers in the "6 & Under" age group.
- The Hurricanes will again sponsor the FREE Guppy School (April 21-23) for younger swimmers who would like to learn from the swim team experts and see if swim team is right for them



You can fill out the registration forms ahead and bring them with you by visiting our website: <http://winchesterhurricanes.com/>.

The cost is \$95 each for the first 2 swimmers, \$50 for the 3rd swimmer, and \$40 for the 4th swimmer. This is a great deal for 10 weeks of practice and swim meets! A refundable volunteer deposit check is required at registration. Fees include a trophy, a team t-shirt, and the team party.

Each year the Winchester Swim Team serves over 200 neighborhood kids who live in neighboring communities along West Road; Willowbridge & Stonebridge children come join our team!

### LATE REGISTRATION

Last day of Guppy School, Wednesday, 4/24/13 - 6pm at Winchester Country Pool or First practice, Monday, 4/29/13 from 5pm - 7pm at Winchester Country Pool.

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# Willowbridge - Stonebridge

COMING SOON

## The "Tree Dude" Returns

After several requests by long term residents, we've prevailed upon our very own "Tree Dude", former board member, Glen Telge to resubmit his wonderful articles on the various trees in our neighborhood. There are many new residents in our neighborhood and we hope they will enjoy seeing them for the first time as much as we did. Look for the first installation in May's issue (the pecan tree).



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View answers online at [www.peelinc.com](http://www.peelinc.com)

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The goal is to fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9. Each digit may appear only once in each row, each column, and each 3x3 box.



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# The Recipe Box

## Lemon-Poppy Seed Zucchini Bread

*Southern Living Magazine (August 2012)*

**INGREDIENTS:**

- |                            |                         |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| ½ cup butter, softened     | ½ c. sour cream         |
| 1 & 1/3 c. sugar           | 3 large eggs            |
| 1 & ½ c. all-purpose flour | 1/8 t. baking soda      |
| ½ t. salt                  | 1 c. zucchini, shredded |
| 1 T. lemon zest            | 2 t. poppy seeds        |

1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Beat butter at medium speed with a heavy-duty electric stand mixer until creamy. Gradually add sugar, beating until light and fluffy. Add eggs, 1 at a time, beating just until blended after each addition.

2. Stir together flour, salt and baking soda. Add to butter mixture, alternately with sour cream, beginning and ending with flour mixture. Beat at low speed just until blended after each addition.

Stir in zucchini, lemon zest and poppy seeds. Spoon batter into 3 greased and floured 5 x 3 inch aluminum foil loaf pans (about 1 & 1/3 cup batter per pan).

3. Bake at 325 degrees for 40 – 45 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool in pans on wire racks 10 minutes; remove from pans to wire racks, and cool completely (about 30 minutes).

The tender, fine-crumbed texture and bright citrus flavor offer a refreshing change from traditional spiced zucchini bread. Repackage the bread in aluminum foil pans or packaging of your choice. These little loaves freeze (and thaw) wonderfully, so keep on hand for last minute gifts. Download gift tags at: [southernliving.com/food-gift](http://southernliving.com/food-gift). Share your favorite recipe at: [leroylallinger@live.com](mailto:leroylallinger@live.com)

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## Choosing a Summer Camp

By David Ettenberg, co-owner of Camp Shane

Summer camps come in a wide variety of interests and themes -- from music and sports camps to weight-loss and peace corps camps -- there is a camp for every child who has ever said, "I'm bored." How do parents sort through them all to find the right one for their child? Dave Ettenberg, co-owner of Camp Shane (a weight-loss camp for kids), recommends that parents consider these six guidelines before registering your child.

**1. The Staff** What are the camp's hiring procedures? Do they check references and run complete background checks? Also - many camps hire teens as junior counselors, which can be a wonderful experience for all, but it can cause problems if the camp relies too heavily on this cheaper workforce. It is important that a number of experienced adult staff members are on hand to deal with any problems that may arise. Also, ask to speak to the camp's director, he or she sets the tone for absolutely everything and will be able to give you an immediate sense of the camp's culture.

**2. Referrals** Get them, but get meaningful ones. Don't make the common mistake of relying solely on the names offered to you by the camp—these are typically hand-selected and will undoubtedly be positive. Instead, try to get five names of families that live within 20 minutes from you to ensure a more random sampling. It's ideal if you can ask someone you know whose child has attended the camp. If you don't know anyone personally, ask around in your community, chances are you'll find people.

**3. Healthy Atmosphere** If possible, try to visit the camp during the summer while in session to ensure there is an active, "happy" atmosphere, with a non-cliquey and non-threatening environment. It should be a place where your child can find strong support and make lifelong friends. Also, ask about the kind of food that is served at the camp—make sure they provide healthy, balanced meal options. You would be shocked to see what's on the menus at some "reputable" camps.

**4. Marketing Materials** Read all marketing materials carefully. If they are sloppy and unimpressive it may reflect how they run the camp. On the flipside, beware of materials that appear super-slick; a surprising

number of camps are now owned by corporations or investors who produce the marketing materials but have zero contact with your child. Look for realistic reflections of the camp and specific information that will give you insight to determine if the camp's philosophy, people and procedures will create the best experience for your child. Also, make sure to read the fine print; some weight-loss camps in particular advertise insurance reimbursements – but check with your particular carrier, as this is often times not the case.

**5. The Facilities** Are the buildings in good repair? Has everything been freshly painted? Has the grass been cut? Chances are if they don't take care the facility, they won't do such a good job with your child.

**6. Kid's Choice** Make sure to keep your child involved with the decision-making process. He or she needs to be comfortable with the camp, or the experience won't be optimal. Also, does your child want to focus in on a special skill or sport? Be sure to consider his or her specific interests and needs. State-of-the-art athletic fields are great but they won't do anything for a kid who loves music.

Taking time to research summer camps is key to ensuring a fun, safe, and enriching environment for your children - but it doesn't have to be overwhelming," said David. "By focusing your search based on a few key factors and by asking the right questions, you can easily find a great match that suits your child's particular needs."

### ABOUT CAMP SHANE.

For more than 45 years, David Ettenberg's family has owned and operated Camp Shane, successfully helping children shed pounds and establish a healthy, confident lifestyle at Camp Shane ([www.campshane.com](http://www.campshane.com)) Currently Camp Shane operates in Georgia, New York, California and Arizona; Camp Shane Texas will open this summer in San Antonio. Kids shed unwanted pounds, gain self-esteem and learn how to live a healthy lifestyle while having a blast. An average weight loss for campers is 10-15 pounds in three weeks; 20-25 pounds in six weeks; and 30-35 pounds in nine weeks. For more overweight campers, it is not unusual to lose more than 50 pounds over the summer. Camp Shane has been featured in all national media, including NBC Nightly News with Brian Williams, 20/20, Oprah, Dr. Phil, MTV and Family Circle.





# BLOOD PRESSURE

TAKE CONTROL OF THE SILENT KILLER

High blood pressure, or hypertension, is sometimes called the silent killer because there are often no symptoms. That's why keeping track of blood pressure is one of the most important things a person can do to stay healthy, said doctors at Baylor College of Medicine.

Left untreated, hypertension, can cause organ damage over time, leading to heart attack, blindness, kidney failure or stroke, said Dr. Biykem Bozkurt, professor of medicine at BCM.

Some factors that are associated with hypertension are diabetes, family history of hypertension, being overweight, taking in too much sodium, drinking excessive alcohol and smoking. Generally a healthy reading is 120/80, and hypertension diagnosis is made at 140/90. People considered prehypertensive generally have readings that fall between 120/80 and 140/90. Doctors always check blood pressure as part of appointments and there are also many locations where blood pressure machines are available for anyone to have their pressure checked. Bozkurt advises talking to a doctor to determine if your reading is at a healthy level rather than taking the machine's reading at face value.

"For a relatively healthy person not suffering from any other illnesses, only a few lifestyle changes like diet modifications and exercise may be needed," said Bozkurt.



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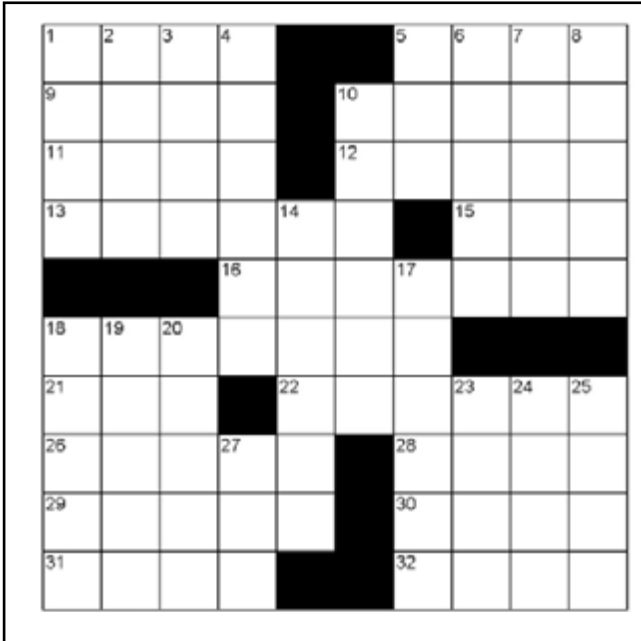
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# Willowbridge - Stonebridge

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5. Capital of Western Samoa
9. Healing plant
10. Canned chili brand
11. Baby powder
12. Howdy
13. Mexican food brand
15. Billion years
16. Smash
18. In abundance
21. Scarf
22. Prejudice
26. Living
28. National capital
29. Fathers
30. Margarine
31. Entertainer
32. Nightly tv show

### DOWN

1. North Atlantic Treaty Organization
2. Winged
3. Fastening device
4. What the confederates tried to do
5. Dined
6. Whiter
7. Ice house
8. Hurting
10. Brand of soda
14. Literature
17. Baron
18. Embarrass
19. Crippling disease
20. Dens
23. Island
24. Killed
25. Cow noises
27. Animal doctor

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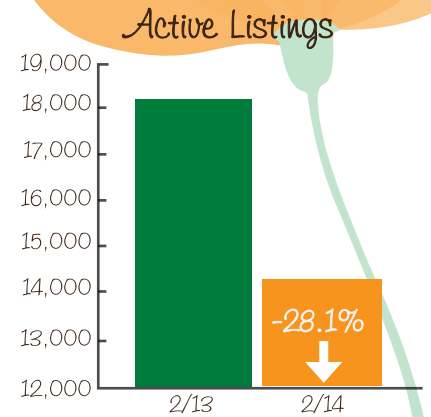
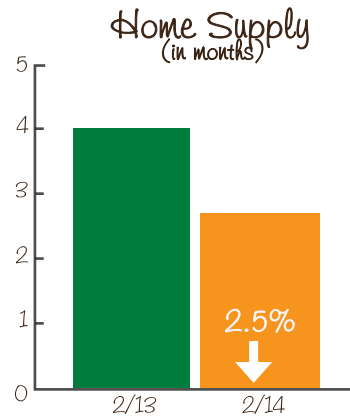
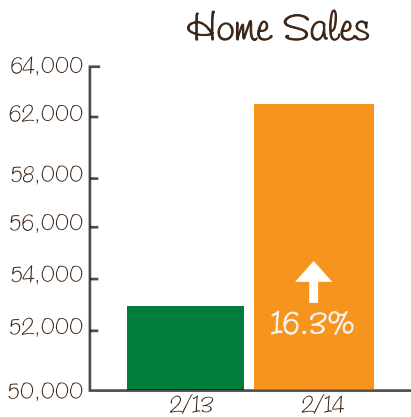
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