



## HOA ANNUAL MEETING DATE CHANGED!

Historically the HOA Annual Meeting is normally scheduled on the 4th Thursday in October. This year's meeting has been moved to THURSDAY, OCTOBER 13TH , STARTING AT 6:30 P.M. The meeting will be held at the clubhouse located at 9330 Willowbridge Park Blvd. You should have received the official Notice of Meeting and Proxy from Graham Management no later than September 17th. If not, please contact them at (713) 334-8000. If you do not plan on attending the meeting, please complete your Proxy and return to Graham Management by method indicated on Proxy or give to a trusted neighbor to bring to meeting. Please remember that each residence is allowed one vote only for these proceedings. Your Official Proxy has (2) purposes. It allows you to appoint a Designated Proxy to let the individual named thereon (usually the HOA President or Secretary) to vote for you. If you choose to appoint a Designated Proxy other than the person named on the Proxy you MUST fill in the name of your Designee, otherwise the voting privilege is negated and your Proxy will be used to establish a quorum only.

The official ballot received will have names of persons interested in becoming a board member. Our By-Laws require that (2) members terms expire each year to keep a consistent number of (5) board members. In addition to the names on the Proxy, nominations may be made from the floor. In both scenarios, NOMINEES MUST BE PRESENT.

PLEASE MAKE THIS MEETING A PRIORITY IN YOUR SCHEDULE. IT IS YOUR BEST OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE A SAY IN AND LEARN MORE ABOUT THE MANAGEMENT OF YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD AND TO SUPPORT THE "VOLUNTEERS" THAT WORK ALL YEAR, MASSING COUNTLESS HOURS (UNPAID) ON YOUR BEHALF.

**GARAGE SALE SET FOR  
SATURDAY OCTOBER 15th  
RAIN OR SHINE!**

## WHAT DOES YOUR MUD DO FOR YOU?

Do you know why we have a MUD, how MUDs work and the purpose(s) it serves? Have you been keeping up with the latest news about MUDs in the media (not Nextdoor)? The Houston Chronicle edition on Sunday, August 21st had a front page article titled "Deep in the MUD" about how Fort Bend County MUD No. 187 was created when a Houston developer arranged for two (2) people to move their trailer onto a 519 acre site on the edge of Richmond in Fort Bend County, which at the time was an empty field. As the only residents within the MUD's boundaries, they were able to vote for Texas to approve confirmation of the establishment of MUD 187 and approval of \$188 Million in bonds for water and sewage systems, drainage, parks, recreational facilities, roads and a fire station. The vote was unanimous 2-0. There were several editorials and comments following this article. One of those editorials was written by Steven R. Spillette, President of Houston based CDS Community Development Strategies, formally known as CDS Market Research. It was published in the Chronicle in the Editorial Section on August 31st. CDS was formed in 1971 for the purpose of providing professional market and economic research and consulting services. They address all types of residential, commercial, industrial and recreational real estate development for both Public and Private Clients. CDS has assisted with the creation, reporting and development of several types of special districts, including municipal utility districts (MUDs); tax increment zones (TIFs), management districts, economic development zones and other special districts. CDS project examples include Houston Downtown Management District, NASA Area Management District and Municipal Utility District (MUD) #2.

When Mr. Spillette was contacted to ask permission to reprint his Chronicle article, he said he couldn't give permission to reprint that particular article. However, we were directed to a website that contained the same information the Chronicle's article was gleaned from and we were given permission reprint that information. If you read the Chronicle article, please note this is basically the same information. On the CDS web-site, Mr. Spillette noted that the Houston Chronicle published an article about the powers of MUDs to tax property owners and issue debt. The article, in his opinion, was slanted toward an angle that MUDs represent a developer-

*(Continued on Page 3)*

# Willowbridge - Stonebridge

## IMPORTANT NUMBERS

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Harris County Sheriff.....	713-221-6000
Harris County Animal Control .....	281-999-3191
Cy-Fair Hospital.....	281-890-4285
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CenterPoint Energy.....	713-659-2111
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Best Trash.....	281-313-2378
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

## ASSOCIATION DIRECTORY

### Beautification Committee

Jennifer Y'Barbo .....jhybarbo@gmail.com

Homeowners Association .....

Graham Mgmt - Tracy Graham  
..... grahammanagement@sbcglobal.net

### Clubhouse/Reservations

Adrienne DelGiorno..... 713-334-8000

### Pool Parties/Tags

Graham Management..... 713-334-8000

### Marquee Coordinator

Barbara Lallinger..... bllallinger@hotmail.com

### Newsletter Coordinator

Barbara Lallinger & Krystina Cotton  
..... willowbridgenews@gmail.com

### Soccer Field Coordinator.....

Jay Guarino ..... jvguarino@hotmail.com

### Website Coordinator

..... willowbridgehoa@live.com

### Yard of the Month Committee

Nominate your favorite at: willowbridgehoa.com or Contact

Jennifer Y'Barbo .....jhybarbo@gmail.com

### Lost Pet Coordinator

Sonia Moore ..... msrco@aol.com, 281-955-8068

### Welcoming Committee

Gracie Galvan ..... 281-732-0009

..... galvangracie@hotmail.com

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Brian Fisher .....	President
Jennifer Y'Barbo .....	Secretary
Leah Protz .....	Treasurer
Barbara Lallinger .....	Director
Rebecca Peters .....	Director

## HOA INFORMATION

Willowbridge Homeowners Association Inc. - Graham Mgmt  
Tracy Graham..... 713-334-8000  
E-Mail ..... grahammanagement@sbcglobal.net  
Fax ..... 713-334-5055  
2825 Wilcrest Dr., #600 Houston, Tx. 77042

*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 quarter (Jan, Apr, Jul, & Oct) 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

To report street or curb damage, missing/damaged street signs and street flooding: (281) 353-8424 or www.hcp4.net.

If a resident wants to request a new sign or replace a damaged one, they have to go online and fill out a request.

## STREET LIGHT OUT?

If you notice a street light out PLEASE report it to CenterPoint Energy. We pay for all of the street lights in our subdivision... every month...regardless if they are illuminated or not!! This is also a serious safety issue. To report an outage, follow these steps:

- By Phone: During normal business hours (7 am – 7 pm)
- Call (713) 207-2222
  - Give the Customer Service Representative the 6 digit pole number (located approximately 6 feet up the pole), the street name and closest address.
  - Online (anytime): centerpointenergy.com

## NEWSLETTER ARTICLE SUBMISSION

Newsletter Article submission Deadline is 3rd of each month. Please give a 2 month advance notice.

(Continued from Cover)

run local government agency run amok, with little oversight and unchecked taxation power. He said what this article fails to provide is the overall economic benefit that MUDs provide and the reason for their existence in the first place. Also, it doesn't explain who truly bears the cost of the initial infrastructure...the DEVELOPERS.

All developments in an economically advanced society need to have access to a safe water supply, sanitation services and drainage infrastructure for each household or business. In rural areas, on-site wells, septic systems and on-site detention and permeable surface typically satisfy this need for households because residential lots are usually large enough to adequately accommodate these facilities. Conventional suburban, development doesn't have this luxury, so common systems shared by all the property owners must provide such services. Obviously these common systems aren't free to construct, in fact, they comprise a very significant component of development costs.

Municipal utility districts are a type of special district used in the Houston area, and elsewhere in Texas, to provide this infrastructure while facilitating the smooth functioning of the housing market in response to market demand. MUDs have the power to tax property owners and issue debt. While these powers are noteworthy, they are also central to the public benefits provided by MUDs. They successfully facilitate an economical, fair and efficient provision of this infrastructure in several ways.

- They properly allocate the financial risk to the developer. MUD bonds don't fund the water, sewer or drainage infrastructure. It is the developer who funds these items up front. MUD bonds are a means of paying back the developer for the common (public) portions of this infrastructure at a later date when enough property value has been generated to adequately fund debt service through property taxes. Thus, the primary risk is with the developer...fail to successfully execute and market the development, then there won't be a payback to the developer through bonds.
- The fact that MUDs reimburse developers for their risk-taking expenditures creates financial feasibility for new development that might not have otherwise existed. If there was no future reimbursement, a developer would have to either persuade a nearby city to annex the project and fund the infrastructure (which may not be fair to that city's taxpayers), or recover the up-front infrastructure costs by increasing the sale prices of the homes or the lots. In the latter case, this means that new homes would be more expensive, and some entry-level home markets might not be served at all.
- In the city annexation scenario, a developer has to wait for municipal approval processes to play out and deal with political risk. These also add cost, plus they slow down the provision of housing, which can also lead to increased home prices in a strong demand market, decreasing affordability.

Developments in MUDs still have to meet infrastructure and subdivision standards and receive consent from the city whose extraterritorial jurisdiction they are building in, so it's not as if the city has zero control to ensure a quality development, even if annexation is not intended in the near term.

- Ultimately, of course, the incidence of MUD taxes (the group that truly bears the cost) falls on property owners within the district. And that's as it should be. One of the great economic "tests" of taxes is whether those bearing the incidence are also those who receive the benefit of the projects or services funded, and MUDs meet this test. Property owners outside the MUD bear no tax burden from the district's water, sewer and drainage infrastructure and services at all, unless the district is annexed by a city and the MUD dissolved.
- While MUDs, like any government entity, need to abide by good government and open meetings rules and be subject to oversight. There is a natural check on excessive MUD taxation, particularly in districts such as MUD 187, where new home development is still occurring...market demand and competition. Raise taxes too high, and the developer and builders will have difficulty marketing lots and homes at desired pricing levels, because the end consumers (the home buying public) won't find it palatable.

Mr. Spillette believes that before enacting any changes that might impede the functions of MUDs and/or diminishing their public benefits, the development community and local governments should engage in a cooperative education effort to provide homeowners an understanding of why MUDs exist and how they have assisted in the growth of Houston and Texas.

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# Willowbridge - Stonebridge

## PROFILES IN VOLUNTEERISM

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all mean Volunteer in different languages. No matter what you call them, they are needed and appreciated. They save entities millions of dollars per year and in many instances, perform their duties from the goodness of their hearts. July's WillowTalk front page article titled "The Most Hated Job in America" ending paragraph promised the beginning of a series profiling Unpaid Volunteer positions that our community members engage in, beginning with the HOA Board of Directors.

Brian Fisher – President/Director is VP of Operations and Corporate Partnerships of the Sturge-Weber Foundation based in Randolph, New Jersey. He has been actively involved with Boy Scouts and has two sons that have achieved the rank of Eagle Scout. He served 5 years as a Scouts Den Leader and 6 years as Boy Scout First Assistant Scoutmaster; served on the Boy Scouts District Executive Committee as Development Chair and has volunteered in various positions with Cub Scouts. He has been involved with various schools his children attended including Gleason EL (PTO Board and class parent); Cook MS (CPOC member, Title I committee member, orchestra and band volunteer parent and was named a 100 hour volunteer 4 years in a row); and Houston Christian HS as Founding VP of Promotions Parents Council and Parliamentarian of the Parent Council. Brian has also volunteered many hours at Tallowood Baptist Church serving as their high school Sonlight Choir Sponsor for 5 years; middle school Heartlight Choir Sponsor for 5 years; Sunday School Teacher for 15 years and as their Property & Grounds Chairman for 3 years. A well rounded volunteer, he has also volunteered as a baseball and soccer little league coach; as a political party campaign volunteer; and at the Houston Food Bank for 7 years.

Jennifer Y'Barbo – Secretary/Director is our longest serving board member (since October 2011) volunteering in many board sponsored activities. She has been a Girl Scout Leader for over 7 years, serving in numerous roles and participating in many aspects of the Girl Scouts. She has served on the Community Leadership Team Cypress Bend for 2 years. Prior to moving to Willowbridge she lived in Westbridge and served on their Community Association Board of Directors for 13 years. Jennifer served as the Box Tops for Education coordinator at Gleason EL from 2011 – 2015. She is a member of Foundry Church.

Leah Protz – Treasurer/Director was elected to the HOA board October 2015. Prior to being elected to the board and including this year she organized the neighborhood's Spring Festival for several years. She also volunteers with Habitat for Humanity and Bountiful Baskets, a fruit and vegetable co-op, helping with distribution twice a month. Unfortunately for us, her company has transferred her to the other side of the state and we'll be soliciting someone to take over her position on the board and as Spring Festival Committee Chair. We'll miss you Leah!

Rebecca Peters – Director has served on the board for 3 years. She is currently engaged in the workforce and along with her husband raising their two year old daughter.

Barbara Lallinger – Director has served on the board for 2 years and aided in numerous volunteer activities for 18 years prior to being elected to the board. She has written articles for WillowTalk for several years and is the Marquee Coordinator. As a Global Volunteer for CFISD, she organizes volunteers for several schools to screen students for Hearing and Vision deficiencies. She is also a coordinator for Box Tops for Education at Gleason EL and Bane EL. As a volunteer at Gleason EL for 13 years she has served on the PTO Board, coordinated volunteers for Book Fair, Health Services and Rose Sales and has been actively involved with the Auction Committee. Barbara also volunteers for the American Petroleum Institute – Houston Chapter "Cowboy Days", setting up and manning the Hospitality Tent. In her former life in the financial field she served as a board member for the American Institute of Banking and the Bank Administration Institute (Houston Chapters) and was editor of the Houston Banker.

Please remember that your board members serve without pay, while still maintaining their family/home lives, in addition to their "paying" jobs. If you would like to honor someone in the Willowbridge/Stonebridge community for their volunteerism, please submit their name, address and telephone number (so that they may be contacted/interviewed) to: willowbridgenews@gmail.com.

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## THE SPOOKIEST NIGHT OF THE YEAR HALLOWEEN

Whether you are planning on participating in the spookiest night of the year, Halloween, it is likely that your neighbors and outsiders are. This means that the streets will be filled with loud noises, new faces and all manner of things that can stress out your four legged friends. The ASPCA (American Society Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) recommends taking these simple, common sense precautions to keep your pet happy and healthy all the way to November 1.

### Stash the Treats

The candy bowl is for trick-or-treaters, not Scruffy or Fluffy. Several popular Halloween treats are toxic to pets. Chocolate in all forms, especially dark or baking chocolate, can be very dangerous for dogs and cats. Sugar-free candies containing the artificial sweetener xylitol can cause serious problems in pets. If you suspect your pet has ingested something toxic, please call your veterinarian or the ASPCA Poison Control Center at (888) 426-4435 IMMEDIATELY!

### Watch the Decorations and Keep Wires Out of Reach

While a carved jack-o-lantern certainly is festive, pets can easily knock over a lit pumpkin and start a fire. Curious kittens are especially at risk of getting burned or singed by a candle flame. Popular Halloween plants such as pumpkins and decorative corn are considered relatively nontoxic, but can produce stomach discomfort in pets that nibble on them.

### Be Careful with Costumes

For some pets, wearing a costume may cause undue stress. The ASPCA recommends that you don't put your dog or cat in a costume unless you know he or she loves it. If you do dress up your pet for Halloween, make sure the costume does not limit his or her movement, sight, ability to breath, bark or meow. Check the costume carefully for small, dangling or easily chewed off pieces that could present a choking hazard. Ill-fitting outfits can get twisted

*(Continued on Page 6)*

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# Willowbridge - Stonebridge

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on external objects or your pet, leading to injury. Be sure to have your pet try on the costume before the big night. If he or she seems distressed or shows abnormal behavior, consider letting them wear their "birthday suit" or don a festive bandana instead.

## Keep Pets Calm and Easily Identifiable

Halloween brings a flurry of activity with visitors arriving at the door, and too many strangers can often be scary and stressful for pets. All but the most social dogs and cats should be kept in a separate room away from the front door during peak trick-or-treating hours. While opening the door for guests, be sure that your dog or cat doesn't dart outside. And always make sure your pet is wearing proper identification. If for any reason he or she does escape, a collar with ID tags and/or a microchip can be a lifesaver for a lost pet.



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## Inspecting For Bed Bugs

Before the holiday travel season begins, it is wise to know what to look for when traveling so you do not bring home unwanted guests. Bed bugs are small, dark brown to reddish colored insects with no wings. Their bodies are oval and the color and size often depends on if the insect is engorged with blood. Immatures, or nymphs, resemble the adults but are smaller and lighter in color. Usually adults are about the size of a watermelon seed.

Most feeding occurs at night when bed bugs pierce skin while people sleep. The bugs inject a fluid while feeding that can cause some people (about 50%) to have an allergic response. The allergic response causes the skin to become irritated and itchy at the bite location.

After feeding (it takes about 12-15 minutes for a bed bug to become fully engorged), bed bugs crawl away into hidden areas—mattress seams, headboards, nightstands, behind baseboards as well as other locations. They prefer to hide in locations that are close to where they feed, but they will crawl several feet to get to a meal. Bed bugs hide in their chosen location for about 3 days while they digest the blood meal. Over time, congregation areas become marked with blood, fecal material, hatched eggs and cast skins of molted bugs.

When travelling, always inspect rooms thoroughly for bed bugs before moving luggage into the room. Luggage should be placed

until the bathtub until the room has been inspected. Make sure to carry a small flashlight with you to help with inspection. When you return home, place clothing in the dryer (before washing) on high heat for about an hour.

Tips on inspection:

- Look in sleeping areas (bed, pull-out couches)
- Inspect linens as they are removed from the bed
- Check mattress and box spring seams, bottom of the box spring and near the mattress tag
- Inspect the dust ruffle
- If possible, lift the boxspring and inspect the bed frame
- If possible, pull out or remove the headboard to inspect behind it
- Check bedside tables and everything on them, including opening all drawers

If you find bed bugs, go to the front desk to inform them of what you found and request a different room. Do not get a room that is adjacent, above, below or across from the infested room (bed bugs can travel through wall voids to adjacent areas).

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600.

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