WLCA NEWSLETTER

Woodlawn Lake Community Association

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CODE ENFORCEMENT TOPIC AT MARCH 25th MEETING

Manuel Reyes, City Code Enforcement Officer, will address our meeting March 25th. Code Enforcement is a section of the City's Development Services Department. The Department is responsible for promoting the health, safety, and quality of life of the citizens of the City through regulation of land and building development and through enforcement of property maintenance and quality of life related codes.

Mr. Reyes has served at his current position for the past nine months. Before that, he was a supervisor in the Graffiti Division of Development Services. He is a San Antonio native and a graduate of South San High School. He is one of 73 City Code Enforcement Officers assigned to seven Field Enforcement Units. Each Unit provides inspections and enforcement services across the City, responding to complaints received from citizens, the City's 311 system, and on a proactive basis.

We will hear about common city code violations, code provisions of which we might not be aware, the process for making a complaint, and the manner in how a complaint is processed. We will have the opportunity to ask about problems that seem to recur or fester in our community. We will also hear about recent changes in the scope of City code enforcement.

ART PROJECT FOR PARK

The 2012 City Bond sets aside one percent of all monies for public art. A public art project will be placed at Woodlawn Lake Park on the triangular block bounded by Cincinnati, S. Josephine Tobin, and Goodrich. This project is also meant to compliment Cincinnati Street revitalization from the Park to St. Mary's University. The Artist Selection Panel that included WLCA President Alejandro Soto (D7 rep on Parks Board) recommended artist Marc Fornes for the project. We will have more information in a future newsletter and at a future meeting.

Courts Naming Fallout - see page 2
Earth Day...WLCA TBD - see page 3
Memorials at Park - see page 4

PARK TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS COMING, DETAILS APRIL 29th

The 2012 City Parks Bond allots one million dollars for Woodlawn Lake Park improvements. Two public meetings were held for input from residents. Most of the bond money will go to improve the trail at the Park. The trail continues to suffer from twisting, breaking, and cracking, and the City hopes to improve it so that it will hold up for several years to come.

Pat Schneider, Project Manager with the City's Transportation & Community Improvements Department, will describe the project and tell us how it came about. He is a Landscape Architect and has been in Project Management for six and one-half years. Before that, he was with the Department of Parks & Recreation. He is a 1974 graduate of Winston Churchill High School. He received a BS in Landscape Architecture from Texas A&M University in 1979 and was registered by the State as a Landscape Architect in 1980. We have worked with Mr. Schneider on other projects in our area and he has served us well.

WLCA MEMBER RECOGNIZED FOR LAKE ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY

WLCA Board member Ashley Hernandez, a senior at St. Mary's University, presented her research project on "The Potential Effects of Fireworks on Woodlawn Lake" on March 17th at the 48th Annual Meeting of the South-Central Section of the Geological Society of America (GSA) at the University of Arkansas. The project's focus was to examine potential effects from the annual 4th of July fireworks display on the water chemistry of our lake. Ashley selected three lake locations based on historical water quality information and weather records, and sampled these immediately both before and after the 2013 fireworks display. She used both field and laboratory techniques for evaluation. Her research has been published in the GSA Journal.

Ashley credits her mentor, Dr. David Turner, an Environmental Science Professor at St. Mary's, who helped her make her project possible. She plans further work on the project. We congratulate Ashley on yet another great achievement. We hope to learn more about her findings at one of our meetings.

WLCA EXECUTIVE BOARD

President: Alejandro Soto…….485-6168
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ON THE HORIZON

Pool. The Woodlawn Lake Swimming Pool opened for Spring Break. It, and the City's other three regional pools, will open again from May 3rd until the start of the regular pool season. The regular season for all of the City's 24 outdoor pools begins on June 14th and will run through August 16th. Most pools will be open Tuesday through Sunday from 1-7 pm. The four regional pools will also have lap swim on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 7:30-9:30 am. (The other regional pools are Heritage, Lady Bird Johnson, and South Side Lions.)

Senior Center. A new District 7 Senior Center has been approved. It will be at the site of the former Mervyn's by Ingram Mall along Loop 410. Construction will begin soon and should be completed this coming December. The City's senior centers are places where our age 60+ residents can gather to share meals, participate in activities, and access needed services. We ask for public input if the new center is to be named.

Síclovía. This City event is moving south. Síclovía will take place on Sunday, March 30th, from 11 am to 4 pm. It will start at S. St. Mary's Street and E. César Chavez Blvd and move south to Roosevelt, continuing south to E. Mitchell, west to Mission Road, and south to Concepción Park. Síclovía is a car-free day along the 2.5 mile route where residents can enjoy a day filled with fun, physical activity, and family togetherness. You can walk, run, ride a bicycle, and bring your dog (on a short leash). The new route will showcase a dynamic and growing part of the City with the rich history of Mission Concepción and nearby Mission Reach trails along the San Antonio River.

WLCA Birthdays

March: flower - jonquil; birthstone - aquamarine

Olivia Arriaga, Esther Castro, Mark Cooper, Bertha Diaz, Tim Tucker, Gilbert Gonzales, Richard Holgin, Sharlene Johnson, William Phalen, Yolanda Santos, Philip Schuback, Deborah Vasquez, Vivian Olmos, Derek Wauson

April: flower - sweat pea; birthstone - diamond

Alice Almaraz, Jeanna Balreira, Ines Benavides, Jesse Galvan, Humberto Guerra, Isabel Herrera, Mary Lou Reyna, Jose L. Rodriguez

BOARD, BUNGLE, BOND

Alejandro Soto, WLCA President

In 2007, I was appointed as District 7 Representative to the City's Parks and Recreation Board by then-Councilman Justin Rodriguez. This past February 25th, I tendered my resignation to Councilman Cris Medina. I have a fundamental disagreement with the Councilman over an issue involving Woodlawn Lake Park. The issue has put me in the news lately, which I believe would have been improper had I stayed on the Board.

The issue involves the naming of the tennis courts at the Park. WLCA voted at our February meeting to oppose the Councilman's proposal. This is consistent with our previous positions. We opposed the naming of Phil Hardberger Park and the Howard Peak Linear Creekways because the honorees are still alive. We opposed private monuments in our Park in 2003 (done before we knew about it) and 2007 (not done) (see page 4). The current proposal goes against both of these principles and in addition leaves pending certain City Code and merit issues.

In moving on naming a City facility, certain procedures must be followed. This includes notifying by mail all residents within a 200-foot radius of the affected facility, and by public service announcements, press releases, and other appropriate community bulletins to the entire city. Any earnest efforts to comply with these requirements, if any, were sloppy and ineffective.

The 200-foot radius requirement has to be the Park itself, as 200 feet around the tennis courts is still within the Park and no one would be notified. Thus, all people whose homes front a street that borders the Park should have received a letter about this pending action. We find that this was not the case. If you live around the Park, please let us know if you did or did not receive a "Notice of Public Hearing" on the tennis courts naming.

Until March 12th, six days before the hearing, notice had been published only in the *Southside Recorder*. This was not notice "to the entire city." It was not even notice to the people of this area. Who decided to publish in that distant newspaper, and why? This practice is not new. In 1999 or 2000, public hearing on a zoning change for the Finesilver property at Babcock and Crestline was posted only in that south side paper. We are asking the City to review the process used in the current action.

On February 27th, a meeting was held to announce projects at our Park to be funded by the 2012 City Parks Bond (see page 1). One attendee questioned what he considered a small benefit for our Park. Actually, at one million dollars, Woodlawn Lake Park is receiving one of the larger amounts. Nonetheless, I sat on the 2012 Parks Bond Committee and saw only one person come forth to advocate for our Park. More District 7 residents came to speak for Gilbert Garza Park. A large number of District 2 residents came before us to advocate for Martin Luther King Park. In the end, MLK's allotment was doubled. We cannot sit back in silence and then complain when we do not like the result.

This is your LAST NEWSLETTER if you have not renewed your membership (see your email).
Your 2013 membership ends on Earth Day. Please renew now.

Woodlawn Lake Community Association—Membership 2014

CLIP OR COPY

Name:_____ DOB Mo & Day:_____

Name:_____ DOB Mo & Day:_____

Address:_____ Zip:_____

Phone:_____ E-mail:_____

Membership type _____Individual [$5.00 per year] _____Family/Household [$10.00 per year]
(please check) _____School, _____Non-profit, or _____Business [each $10.00 per year]

Please fill out this form and bring it with your dues to a WLCA meeting or to our Earth Day booth (if any - see below), or mail the form and dues to: WLCA, PO. Box 28374, San Antonio TX 78228

Make your check payable to the Woodlawn Lake Community Association

EARTH DAY SA 2014

April 12th - WLCA Participation To Be Decided

San Antonio's Earth Day 2014 is on Saturday, April 12th, from 9 am to 1 pm, at Woodlawn Lake Park. It will feature environmental information, giveaways, vegetarian food booths, gardening ideas, and music and entertainment for the whole family. Alcohol is never allowed at the Park and smoking is not permitted at the event.

WLCA has recently been invited to participate as a neighborhood association this year. We will decide at our next meeting whether to accept this invitation. WLCA saved Earth Day San Antonio in 2003 and had been an active part of the event until last year. Because of policy changes with which we could not agree, we opted not to participate in 2013. We have been told by the District 7 Council Office that we can be a part of this year's event without meeting the requirements imposed last year.

Should we choose to have a WLCA booth, we will feature an environmental or recycling program, have our petition to ban smoking in City parks, and sign up members for WLCA. We can discuss other options at our meeting, so bring your ideas. The annual Spring Membership Drive edition of our newsletter (right column) will give notice of our participation. Please check your copy of this publication. If we have a booth, we hope that you will stop by, talk about our Park and community, and help out for a while. Whether or not we participate, we plan to work for a return to our 2003 grass roots efforts and for more community input and environmental education for next year. Friends of the Earth tells us to "think globally, act locally." WLCA hopes to keep a local focus on our City's Earth Day celebration.

GRADUATES

If you or a member of your family is graduating or receiving a degree this year, please let WLCA know. Tell us who it is, the accomplishment and where it is being received, and the honoree's next step (school, job). We will recognize the graduate in our next newsletter.

Next Meeting:
March 25th, 6:30 pm
Community (Wi-Fi) Room
Woodlawn Lake Park Gym Building
Remaining 2014 Meetings: Apr 29, May 27, Jun 24, Jul 29, Aug 26, Sep 30, Oct 28, Nov 25 (tentative)

APRIL DRAWINGS

At our April 29th meeting, we will have 2 drawings, each for a $15 gift card for HEB. One will be for returning members and one will be for first-time members. The winners must be at the meeting.

HELPERS NEEDED

We will be distributing the annual Spring Membership Drive edition of our newsletter to all of the residents within WLCA's boundaries. Once a year we tell our entire community about WLCA as a way to recruit new members. To save on hundreds of dollars in postage, we hand-deliver the newsletters door-to-door. In past years this effort has been highly successful in bringing people to our Earth Day booth and in recruiting new members. We need helpers during the period of March 31st to April 10th.

If we do take part on Earth Day, we will need volunteers for our WLCA booth. Let us know if you can spare an hour or two on April 12th. We will need help at 8:30 am to set up, then throughout the day, and after 1 pm for take down.

Please let us know if you can help, or if you have a group that can help with either of these tasks. The more volunteers we get, the easier it will be for all. Please call (485-6168) or email (wlca@att.net) Ester Soto if you can participate.

Woodlawn Lake
Community Association

P.O. Box 28374
San Antonio TX 78228

PRIVATE PARK MEMORIALS

In 2002, during heavy rain and a massive flood, a man was caught and drowned in a channel near Hillcrest and Babcock. His body was carried downstream by the rapid water and was recovered at the Park. Then-Councilman Julian Castro allowed the victim's family to place a private monument at the Park near W. Woodlawn and Kampmann. This was done without notice to WLCA or the nearby residents. Today, Councilman Cris Medina is attempting to name the Park tennis courts for a former elected official. Although technically following public notice rules, it is being done extremely low-keyed, seemingly to keep opposing public input to a minimum (page 2).

Actions initiated by Council members are considered legislative and do not have to go before any citizen board or commission for review or recommendation. This process opens the possibility of misuse of City landmarks, avoidance of the voice of the community, and political and familial cronyism. We feel that a workable and predictable policy is needed to protect the heritage and integrity of Woodlawn Lake Park.

The Park should not be used to memorialize or permanently recognize anyone or anything. Woodlawn Lake Park is a single use historic district, having become so in the year 2000. The Deed of October 24, 1918, that gave the Park to the City states: "This property is to be used exclusively for park and pleasure purposes for the benefit of the residents of San Antonio, Texas, and the public generally, and for no other purpose…." The historic and recreational purposes of the Park should preclude the use of the whole or any part of the Park to memorialize or otherwise pay tribute to any particular individual or group when neither of these characteristics will benefit or be enhanced. A proper policy should include the following:

•No private memorials will be erected or demarcated for any person on the grounds of the Park. No existing part or feature of the Park will be named for any person, group, or cause. No new addition to the Park is to be named for any person, group, or cause when the named honoree is not the contributor of the whole of the funds or material necessary to bring the addition into being. Any such addition has to be within the Park's Master Plan and be approved by the City's Department of Parks and Recreation and Office of Historic Preservation. Any signage for any appropriate names will conform to the size and style of the other signs at the Park.

•Persons can be honored at the Park by donation of an approved tree, bench, picnic table, or other park-complimentary item, placed in an approved location. The donated item can bear a brass plaque of an approved design, no larger than 3 inches by six inches. Questions as to any application of this policy are to be referred to the Historic Design and Review Commission and the Parks and Recreation Board for adjudication and approval.