

WINLOW Place

A WINNING DEED-RESTRICTED NEIGHBORHOOD OF OVER 400 FAMILIES RIGHT IN THE HEART OF HOUSTON!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR for WPCC's FEBRUARY 7th MEETING!

Hello, Friends...

A new WPCC issue gives us another opportunity to proudly showcase our area's beautiful architecture while sharing news from one of Houston's greatest neighborhoods. This issue includes updates from several of our neighbors plus pertinent fire-related issues from President Mary Needham. Your WPCC newsletter is a great place for your announcements and information, so please be sure to submit news and utilize this forum to address your neighbors.

I'm sure you have enjoyed several weeks of stunning 70-degree winter days, and I have noticed that they have helped bring droves of friendly neighbors out to walk, jog and enjoy all the beauty of Winlow Place! Speaking of our fine community, are you seeking an opportunity to show your civic pride and/or enrich your neighbor relations? Our February 7th WPCC General Meeting is the perfect place (and is right around the corner (following Superbowl Sunday.) On behalf of the entire Civic Club Board, we genuinely wish to see you there to discuss your ideas, concerns and opinions of the events in and surrounding Winlow Place. As an all-volunteer organization, we genuinely need and ask for the support of *every* resident—both homeowners and tenants. This one-hour meeting is a great way to meet your neighbors and stay aware of what is going on around one of your most valuable investments!



Our Winlow Place meetings are also a great environment to brainstorm solutions to issues that you feel make our area anything less than highly desirable. Neighbors working together is one of WPCC's greatest strengths; by combining our collective talents, we can maintain the beauty, security, value and strong community that makes our neighborhood so unique inside such a large metropolitan area.

So please come as you are on Tuesday, February 7, to a short, well-organized general meeting. Agenda items will include neighborhood security, construction, deed restrictions, graffiti plus more new business. We will also discuss efforts to optimize our upcoming WPCC fundraiser. Upon entering Lanier's front doors, take the left staircase to the second floor and turn right to the Teachers' Lounge. We look forward to seeing each and every Winlow Placer, and don't forget, your 2006 dues are now due!

Kris Kelly
WPCC Editor/Publisher



ALL HOMEOWNERS and TENANTS!
WPCC GENERAL MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 7:30 p.m.
Lanier Middle School

PRESIDENT'S LETTER FROM MARY NEEDHAM

Most of us have heard about the house fire disaster experienced by our Kipling neighbors, Mr. & Mrs. Loe, during the early morning of December 23. The Loes were out of town and their daughter, Claire, arrived from Austin on the 24th to cope nobly with demolition crews, insurance agents, etc.

Having experienced a fire at my daughter's house in Austin last June – and subsequent arguments with her insurance company – I would like to share some common lessons that may be helpful if you are ever in a similar position.

Replacement Value: How long has it been since you updated your insurance policy and looked closely at the fine print to see what it covers? Do you know for what you are actually insured? Our experience in Austin (and in reading about the Katrina aftermath) leads me to believe that some insurance companies are extremely reluctant to pay and will use any and every excuse to stall. Be aware that you may find yourself fighting for many of the pennies! Could your insurance actually replace the value of your Winlow Place home, given our ever-escalating taxes? Be aware of demolition persons asking you to sign a contract that not only removes debris but also rebuilds. Delete that clause until you have had a chance to examine all of your options.

ALE: Look for a little item called ALE (Alternative Living Expenses.) This pays for you to stay in a hotel, rent another house, etc., while you are trying to figure out what to do about your destroyed house.

Contents: If you do have a fire, be aware of the fact that there is a whole industry of people waiting to rescue your belongings (at a price, of course.) We had three companies waiting to bid before the flames were even extinguished, and in moments of real stress it is difficult to make decisions. Our experience was that

these people were enormously helpful in packing and removing contents. However, they are paid by the box and many boxes were only half full (discovered long after the fact) and only partially labeled (not all in English.) Insist on an inventory list before you approve any bills sent to your insurance company! Our initial bill was not itemized and was twice what we authorized to be paid, even though the clean-up crew worked all night and into the next day.

Clothing: With careful packing, clothing that is sent to specialty cleaners can be "ozoned" and returned to their pre-fire condition. Be sure to take pictures of the damaged items, make lists, record approximate values, etc.

Inventory: Keep ongoing lists. Whatever you think you have inventoried, you will probably need more accurate records. For example, my daughter didn't remember that her best leather gloves were in her coat pockets until she needed them in the Fall (when she realized they had never returned along with 2-3 pairs of good boots.) Use your digital camera or camcorder and start making your lists as soon as possible!

Causes: As of Christmas morning, no cause had been assigned to the Kipling fire, but in general, faulty wiring and smoking are the two biggest causes of home fires (ours was accidentally set by an outside painting contractor.) Both of these major causes can be forestalled to some extent, so be proactive and deal with any signs of eccentric electricity before it becomes a problem. And as for smoking...well, I don't need to lecture you about that!

Subrogation: I wasn't familiar with this word before the fire, but have now learned it very well. In our case, both we *and* our painting contractor were insured. After our insurance company pays us, they will then attempt to refund their outlay from the contractor's insurance company.

Arbitration: This is a difficult one and we have been truly caught in it. The first adjuster knew more about raising carrots than he did about old houses, and his first repair estimate was by a contractor who was accustomed to NEW houses (not a 105-year-old-home as our was.) His estimate less than half the amount we KNEW would be needed, so we worked for months to force them to get a contractor who DID know about old houses (the one we wanted to use said it would cost at least two times the original estimate.) It took them three months to find a contractor who had experience with restoration. The insurance company's contractor and "our" contractor then met and tried to agree on a baseline figure. The rule is that if they *can* agree, then you move forward. If they *can't* agree, then there must be yet another third-party arbitrator who will agree with one or the other. Finally, when we were about 12K apart, I told our contractor to agree. Alas, now we are looking at possibly having to start over and over and build a house from scratch, as everything we thought we could do to make the house more livable and comfortable is turning out to be a construction nightmare. It has been six months since the fire and we have not yet even been able to start.

One last item...the painting contractor who set the fire actually billed us in December for his next payment of \$8000. This bill will be added to the long list of items that will be settled upon in the subrogation process. And so, neighbors, please learn from our sad, collective experience and prepare yourselves in advance for unforeseen homeowner disasters.

Meanwhile, our very best wishes go out to the Loe family. Many people have offered to help and we hope the Loes will call on their Winlow Place neighbors (as well as the army of good friends who have already assisted tremendously) to help them through this difficult time.

MN
WPCC President

GRAFFITI UPDATE

A recent anti-graffiti meeting at the Black Lab drew in over 80 participants, including several from Winlow Place and Mandell Place. Houston's Assistant Chief of Police, Brian Lumpkin, has been appointed to head the Neighborhood Protection Group and is working on a number of avenues to attack the clean up process quickly and effectively. Mayor Bill White has cited graffiti as a high priority and will be using those persons who have court-ordered community service to work on cleaning graffiti. Also, Southwestern Paint at Montrose and West Gray sells various products to coat oft-tackled places.

If you see a new tag in progress, call 911. If you see it after the fact, call COH at 311 to register the location. If possible, take a picture and clean the graffiti as soon as possible.

Several taggers, "GY", "RTL" and others have been particularly successful at defacing several nearby areas. If you or your children have any information, Crime Busters will soon be offering rewards.



CITY PRESERVATION

Below is a link to a recent *Houston Chronicle* editorial regarding neighborhood replatting. Unfortunately, preserving the character of Houston's older neighborhoods is becoming increasingly challenging. www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/editorial/3594092html

LANIER TEACHER

Jim Henley is a Lanier Middle School teacher from our District who is running for Congress. www.henleyforcongress.com

W. ALABAMA PURCHASE

Bradshaw-Carter Memorial & Funeral Services at 1734 West Alabama has purchased the apartments at 1738 West Alabama. The building was recently demolished to make way for parking and an addition to the funeral home. Former owner of the apartments, Jerry Sachs, has moved to Mariner's Village Retirement Center in Clear Lake.

STORE ROBBERY

Brian Stringer Antiques on West Alabama near Shepherd was robbed at gunpoint in December. Merchants along West Alabama from Dunlavy to Shepherd are exploring hiring additional security patrol.

MARSHALL BURGARY

Sometime between 11:00 p.m. December 7 and 8:00 a.m. December 8, two full-size chairs and a small glass-top table was taken from the Marv's backyard at 1912 Marshall. The theft was reported to HPD.

UPCOMING FUNDRAISER

We all had a great time at our last Winlow Place fundraiser, and once again, Bruce Smith has graciously offered his and Tony Carroll's house for another fun neighborhood gathering! Mary Needham has also again offered to donate a beautiful piece of stained glass for the evening's auction. If you would like to donate any item or service to this very worthwhile cause, please contact Mary at 713.521.7979. Watch for a February or March fundraiser date!



BUSINESS RELOCATION

Morehands Maid Service owner Marcia Norrell has been notified by the Winlow Place Civic Club Board that operating a business out of a home is a violation of our deed restrictions. Marcia has been looking for space to relocate her business (and hopes to sign a new lease in January.) It may take several weeks for a build out, but she will be moving the business from the current Harold location.

TRAFFIC LIGHT

Bob Mercado, 1900 Block Captain, has been working to get a traffic light installed at Hazard and Alabama. The response has not been encouraging, but he will continue to follow up with Houston's Public Works Department. During our recent Board meeting, it was suggested that a resident petition might help. Paul Cobb, 1900 Block Captain, will bring a letter and petition to our February 7th general meeting for any residents wishing to sign and add support for the traffic light.

TREES FOR HOUSTON

Thank you to Kelly DeHay, 1501 Marshall, for his donation in honor of Winlow Place for the planting of a 15-gallon tree in the "Trees for West Alabama Project." This organization's planting season is from November 2005 to March 2006.

WP

UPCOMING WINLOW PLACE GENERAL MEETING!

CALLING ALL WINLOW PLACE RESIDENTS...

**PLEASE SUPPORT YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD
AT OUR NEXT ONE-HOUR GENERAL MEETING!**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 7:30
P.M.**

2006 WP OFFICERS:

PRESIDENT Mary Needham
VICE PRESIDENT Bruce Smith
SECRETARY Kay Warhol
TREASURER Jim Cooney
NEARTOWN REP Audrey Cook

2006 COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS:

SECURITY Vernon Durke
MEMBERSHIP Jim Cooney
**NEWSLETTER/
PUBLICATIONS** Kris Kelly
**DEED RESTRICTIONS/
CITY ORDINANCES** Denise Hanks
HISTORIAN Audrey Cook
SPECIAL PROJECTS OPEN

2006 WP BLOCK CAPTAINS:

1700 Hawthorne	Pam Jenkins	1707 Hawthorne	713.927.2880
1900 Hawthorne	Paul Cobb	1900 Hawthorne	713.522.8030
1700 Harold	Bill Barton	1742 Harold	713.294.2465
1800 Harold	Connie Reilly	1829 Harold	713.524.9821
1900 Harold	Bob Mercado	1901 Harold	713.522.4433
1700 Kipling	Kris Kelly	1756 Kipling	713.523.2721
1800 Kipling	John Bradley	1720 Kipling	713.524.2245
1900 Kipling	Donia Caspersen	1902 Kipling	717.522.6543
1700 Marshall	Audrey Cook	1745 Marshall	713.522.9398
1800 Marshall	OPEN	NEED VOLUNTEER!	
1900 Marshall	Denise Hanks	1911 Marshall	713.520.1277
1700 W Alabama	Tripp Carter	1726 W Alabama	713.520.5686
1800 W Alabama	Erick Borlasca	Welcome!	713.523.6194
1900 W Alabama	Randy Mitchmore	Welcome!	713.592.9300
1700 Westheimer	OPEN	NEED VOLUNTEER!	



**WINLOW
Place**

WINLOW PLACE CIVIC CLUB • PO BOX 980712 • HOUSTON TX • 77098

**PLEASE EMAIL YOUR MARCH/APRIL 2006 NEWSLETTER INFORMATION
TO:**

kriskelly@houston.rr.com or mail to: PO Box 980712, Houston, TX, 77098

All news is welcome and encouraged!

Forward your neighbor news, security issues, thanks, anniversaries, yard sales, classifieds, etc.