



P. O. Box 20411 Houston, TX 77225-0411

## Babbler – Harvey Edition!

### Need to know Flood Information, Good Stuff

#### Westwood

A Deed Restricted Community

#### Website:

[westwoodcivicclub.com](http://westwoodcivicclub.com)

#### E-mail:

[westwoodcc@outlook.com](mailto:westwoodcc@outlook.com)

#### Next General Meeting

Thursday, Sept 21<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 pm

Corpus Christi Church

9900 Stella Link, Houston, TX 77025

#### Tentative Agenda:

- ⇒ Hurricane Harvey – How did Westwood fare?
- ⇒ Super Neighborhood – What does it mean to us in a post-Hurricane Harvey world?
- ⇒ Esplanade Planters – Need work crews for repair work
- ⇒ Westwood Ho! – Where do we go from here?

#### Important HPD Phone numbers:

HPD (non-emergency) 713-884-3131

HPD Westbury Storefront 832-394-7520

#### Heavy Trash Pick-up

LOOK! HEAVY TRASH CAN ONLY BE PUT OUT ON THE WEEKEND BEFORE PICK-UP DAY.

#### JUNK WASTE

(Both junk and trees)

Oct 17,

Dec 19, Feb 20

#### TREE WASTE

(Tree/shrub waste only!)

Sept 19

Nov 21, Jan 16

The proper location for garbage and recycle bins is in the street with the wheels against the curb. The bins must be at least 3 feet apart.

#### Get Connected with Westwood!

Visit our **Website**: <http://westwoodcivicclub.com/>

Like us on **Facebook**: <https://www.facebook.com/westwoodcivicclub/>

Join our Neighborhood on **NextDoor**: <https://westwoodalbiontx.nextdoor.com/login>



**Important Hurricane Information:** (From our Friends at Corpus Christi Catholic Church)

This list of numbers and websites can provide necessary and important assistance to you. Not all relief inquiries will result in assistance but this should provide a good start.

- Police, ambulance: 911 or 713-884-3131
- City of Houston Emergencies: 311 or 713-837-0311
- FEMA, Federal Emergency Management Agency: 1-800-525-0321
- FEMA Hotel financial assistance: 1-800-621-3
- Harris County: 713-755-5000. (Main switchboard. Know which office you want)
- Office of Emergency Management: 713-881-3100
- The Red Cross: 713-526-8300; 866-526-8300
- Flood Control: 713-684-4000
- Houston TransStar (Transportation and Emergency Services) 713-881-3244
- Texas Catholic Council of Bishops: <https://txcatholic.org/harvey> This website can take you to other forms of assistance.

**Statement from City of Houston/FEMA Regarding Reports of Impostors:**

HOUSTON - There are disturbing reports of people impersonating City of Houston and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) inspectors. These individuals are reportedly knocking on doors and attempting to enter homes, presumably with the intent to rob residents. Both FEMA and Houston employees wear clearly labeled FEMA or City of Houston photo identification badges.

If you suspect someone of posing as a City of Houston employee or FEMA inspector, call 911 if it is an emergency. Otherwise, to report possible FEMA impersonators, contact the toll-free Disaster Fraud Hotline at 866-720-5721.

*Ed note: If you come across someone trying to scam you, call me and I'll come get them and make them serve on the Westwood Civic Club Board. That's playing hardball, but public service is a standard sentencing modality. Scammers beware!*

**The City of Houston Solid Waste Management Department** – (Courtesy of the Honorable Larry Green, Houston City Council, District K)

The Solid Waste Management Department will be suspending some of its collection services (yard waste, recycling and junk waste/tree waste).

Department operations are focusing on the current public health issues confronting the city of Houston in the wake of Hurricane Harvey's aftermath. Services for self-serve operations will be expanded to accommodate residents who have already begun property removal. Neighborhood solid waste depositories will immediately move to a 7-day schedule until further notice. The department is focusing its efforts on disaster debris efforts to speed Houstonians property damage issues.

**DISASTER STORM DEBRIS - FLOOD AND WIND:**

Disaster Debris from Hurricane Harvey will be collected on an ongoing basis until all material has been collected. Please place your debris at the curb as soon as possible. It is essential the piles be accessible by the collection crews therefore please do not park on the street blocking piles, and make sure the material is clear of tree branches, fire hydrants and utility lines. Please divide debris into the following 5 categories.

- Vegetative Debris - leaves (do not put in bags), logs, plants, tree branches.
- Construction & Demolition Debris - building materials, carpet, drywall, furniture, lumber, mattresses and plumbing.
- Appliances & White Goods - air conditioners, dishwashers, freezers, refrigerators, stoves, washers, dryers and water heaters.
- Electronics - computers, radios, stereos, televisions, other devices with a cord.
- Household Hazardous Waste - cleaning supplies, batteries, lawn chemical, oils, oil-based paints, stains and pesticides

**YARDWASTE COLLECTION:**

Yard waste collection will be suspended until further notice due to the need of extra personnel for debris collection for disaster recovery.

**JUNK WASTE AND TREE WASTE COLLECTION:**

Normally scheduled Junk and Tree Waste collections will be suspended until further notice as all related personnel will be assigned to disaster debris collections.

**RECYCLING COLLECTION:**

Curbside single stream recycling collection will be suspended until further notice. All additional personnel will be assigned to debris collection for disaster recovery.

## SOLID WASTE DEPOSITORIES:

Houston residents may utilize these Solid Waste Management neighborhood depositories:

- North - N. Main Neighborhood Depository - 9003 N. Main
- Northwest - Sommermeyer Neighborhood Depository - 14400 Sommermeyer
- Northeast - Kirkpatrick Neighborhood Depository - 5565 Kirkpatrick
- South - Sunbeam Neighborhood Depository - 5100 Sunbeam
- Southwest - Southwest Neighborhood Depository - 10785 SW Freeway
- Southeast - Central Neighborhood Depository - 2240 Central St.

What will not be accepted at Solid Waste Depositories: Household garbage, electronics or household hazardous waste are not accepted at the neighborhood depositories.

ID required to use the Solid Waste Depository: Mon-Sun, 10am - 7pm, starting 8/31/2017

- ✓ A current Texas Driver's license (a current Texas Department of Public Safety issued I.D. may be substituted) or a Texas License to Carry and...
- ✓ A current utility bill or city property tax receipt. Documents must match Texas Driver's License or ID. \*Electronic records are NOT accepted.
- ✓ RECYCLING ONLY - No proof of residency required.
- ✓ NO PETS allowed on premises. (Leave Fido at home)

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [houstonsolidwaste.org](http://houstonsolidwaste.org), [facebook.com/houstonsolidwaste](https://facebook.com/houstonsolidwaste)

## **PLANTERS IN THE STELLA LINK ESPLANADE: Paul Sobieski**

If you drive down Stella Link from the South Loop, you'll pass an elevated brick planter featuring a Westwood Civic Club sign. Provides a really nice entry way for the Westwood neighborhood. There is a second planter in the Stella Link esplanade just north of Willowbend as well. These planters have been there for a good number of years. They are just one the many ways the civic club wisely spends its funds for the betterment of the Westwood neighborhood.

*Ed. Note: Folks, When Paul mentions Westwood Civic Club funds, he is talking about your voluntary civic club dues. If you don't pay dues we won't be able to maintain things like the planters. It takes some out-of-pocket cash money to keep the neighborhood from falling into neglect. Just saying...*

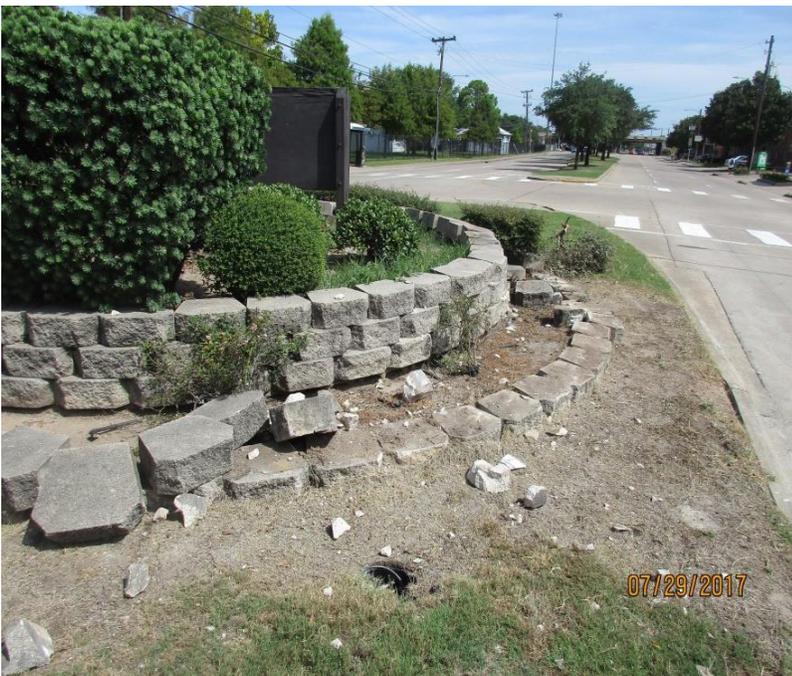
Westwood Civic Club has an arrangement with the City of Houston to act as an esplanade sponsor and we pay a local landscaping company (cash money) to maintain the planters.

Back in 2015, someone driving south on Stella Link drove up over the curb and took off part of the west side of the north end planter. They also damaged the watering system for the planter. We may not have ever been able to catch the culprit, but thanks to the good work of the CSI Westwood Team, we found car parts in the esplanade and were able to trace the ID numbers on those parts to a specific owner. Pretty neat, huh? Finally, after months and months of persistence by Bill “Hound Dog” Pennington (president at the time), the insurance company paid our landscapers a sizable sum, which we were able to apply against a year’s maintenance on the planters.

Again, at the end of July 2017, in the early morning hours, another driver plowed into the same north end planter. Damage this time consisted of breaking off 17 bricks, killing two plants and knocking down a school zone traffic sign. Because Bob Weber and I spent one morning repositioning the bricks, it looks good. At our next board meeting in September, we will be discussing the possibility of having both planters remodeled and updated.

*Ed. note: Don’t mean to be a prude, but anybody who is impaired enough to hit the planter is someone who should not be on the road. I’m thinking of installing Takata exploding shrapnel air bags around the planter. At the very least, let’s put a clipboard up, so when the next drunk hits the planter he can leave his insurance information. Yeah, like that would happen.*

Here’s the aftermath of the initial July attack on the north end planter:



Ed. Note: If I’m seeing this correctly, it looks like the perp (CSI Westwood talk) was headed west on Link Valley and intended to turn either right or left on Stella Link. Overwhelmed by the enormity of this decision, he/she must have decided to split the difference and ended up driving on the esplanade smacking into our planter. I think I can say with great confidence that our planter was not at fault.

Here's the temporary damage repair done by first responders Bob Weber and Paul Sobieski:



Ed Note: Still shoveling coal to the boiler, our stunt driver continued south on the northbound side of Stella Link (possible alcohol involvement?) and after losing a shredded tire, drove on the rim and ended up in the Stella Link Animal Clinic parking lot. Our player somehow got a new tire on his/her car and left the scene of the crime – one very lucky drunk driver.

**Westwood Quickies:**

New Construction: Ken Calvert, [k-calvert@sbcglobal.net](mailto:k-calvert@sbcglobal.net)

The following new houses have been reviewed and are under construction in Westwood: 4017 McDermed, 10301 Woodwind, 10602 Bassoon, and 4126 Woodfin. 4014 Woodfox has submitted plans for remodeling and expansion.

From the Editor: Dan Ballard, [d Ballardpmp@sbcglobal.net](mailto:d Ballardpmp@sbcglobal.net)

I'm still on the job! One of my longest gigs ever! Here's where you can vent your Westwood concerns: [d Ballardpmp@sbcglobal.net](mailto:d Ballardpmp@sbcglobal.net) or on my cell at 832-875-3326

**Sound Off:** How about some feedback on these topics from Westwood residents?

- Do we need a traffic light at Woodwind and West Belfort?
  - o Got some good feed-back on this from a resident who mentioned that the Two Brothers Smoking Oak Kitchen blocks his (and our) view of traffic eastbound on Belfort. Maybe they could work with on this. We'll see....

## **HURRICANE HARVEY EFFORTS IN WESTWOOD:**

To have lived through what will end up being the worst economic disaster in US history is hard to put into words. Westwood was very blessed: no resident got water in their home. The streets filled up then drained, particularly where neighbors made sure their storm sewer drains were cleaned before the storm. (The rebuilding of our streets fourteen years ago was a real blessing, and even though it is noisy when trains go by, the railroad tracks acted as a levee and kept the bayou from flowing into Westwood.) Most of us jumped right in to help relatives and neighbors with rescue efforts, providing food and shelter, and with rebuilding. Below are photos from two Westwood organizations that put together efforts to help.

### **Shearn Elementary School**

Principal Mayra Romero organized the teachers and staff to collect donations of food, clothing and other items to deliver to the families of students and staff who were flooded, and for Westwood residents who couldn't get out on their own.



### **Corpus Christi Catholic Church**

Pastor Fr. Tom Smithson organized hundreds of parishioners who volunteered to provide meals for hurricane victims (they served over 1500 meals in four days), crews of repair people who helped move furniture and tore out sheetrock, and even provided temporary babysitting service during the days so parents could concentrate on repairs and rebuilding.



**On a lighter note:** Paul Sobieski expounds on GARDENING, RAIN BARRELS and CHICKENS

Gardening is a wonderfully relaxing endeavor and can produce great vegetables and beautiful flowers. In our back yard, my wife, Mary, and I have a shade garden with a gazebo, a butterfly full sun garden, a rock garden, an olive tree garden, a water garden, and lots of citrus and other fruit trees. Lots of work but it's so enjoyable to sit in the gazebo and view nature in all its glory!

If you are thinking of adding a garden and don't know where to begin, there are lots of classes offered by various organizations around the city: Urban Harvest ([urbanharvest.org](http://urbanharvest.org)), Harris County Master Gardeners ([hcmga.tamu.org](http://hcmga.tamu.org)), Galveston County Extension Service ([aggie-horticulture.tamu.org/Galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.org/Galveston)), Buchanan's Native Plants in the Heights ([buchanansplants.com](http://buchanansplants.com)), and more. Depending on what you put in your garden(s), there are also various societies you can join such the Houston Rose Society, Native Plants of Texas Houston Chapter, Fern Society, Begonia Society, etc.

There are two really good books you can purchase that help with gardening in Houston:

"Year Round Vegetables, Fruits and Flowers for Metro-Houston: A Natural Organic Approach Using Ecology." By Dr. Bob Randall, PhD - written by our own Westwood neighbor, Dr. Bob, it's my opinion that it is the "bible" for gardening in Houston.

"Texas Month-by-Month Gardening: What to Do Each Month to Have A Beautiful Garden All Year." By Skip Richter of the Harris County Extension Service.

If you are interested in adding a few fruit trees to your spread, mark your calendars for Urban Harvest's big Fruit Tree Sale held the second weekend in January each year in the parking lot of Rice Stadium. This sale specializes in fruit trees that will actually grow and bear fruit in the Houston area.

**RAINWATER HARVESTING:** *Sure wish we'd have put these in before the 40" rain we got from Harvey!"*

Did you know: (1) Lawn and garden watering make up nearly 40% of total household water use during the summer. (2) Capturing rainwater will help protect your lawn and garden during periods of drought. (3) You can install rain barrels in series or at multiple downspouts in order to collect more water. (4) One rain barrel can conserve approximately 1,050 gallons per year! And State Bill 198 passed in 2013 makes it legal throughout the state to have compost bins, rain barrels and drought-resistant landscaping on your property.

Consider putting in one or more rain barrels to collect water to use on your lawn or garden. You can download instructions for making your own barrel(s), or you can buy them from

various locations during the year: City of Houston offers 50 gallon rain barrels – and compost bins – for pick up this coming October 14, 2017 (place order on line by Oct. 7).

Here's the COH webpage: [rainwatersolutions.com/products/city-of-houston-gbrc](http://rainwatersolutions.com/products/city-of-houston-gbrc)

Harris County Master gardeners offers a class every so often at their location in Bear Creek Park, Galveston Bay Foundation offers an opportunity in Late August each year for 35 gallon rain barrels. (*Ed note: What do we have to do to get these bad boys?*)

The good news is that if you take along a tax exemption certificate, you don't have to pay sales tax on components to make a rain barrel, and there is also a form you can file with Harris County Appraisal District so that you don't pay property tax on the value of your rain harvesting equipment. See Galveston Bay Foundation website for info on that form.

*Ed note: Folks, remember that any water you save may one day make its way into beer!*

#### CHICKENS IN WESTWOOD: (bruck, bruck, bruck!)

Houston ordinances have made it nearly impossible for residents of the city to raise chickens on your property. Some may view that as a good rule in keeping property values in place, etc. However, the Texas Legislature just passed a new law (State Bill 1620) stating that homeowners may have up to six (6) backyard hens but NO roosters starting September 1, 2017. This law overrides local ordinances but there can still be sanitary ordinances by cities and common sense says to go lightly if you're thinking of adding chickens. Please no roosters and no more than six hens - we want all Westwood residents to follow the law!

#### FARMERS MARKETS and FOOD STANDS:

For many years, my wife, Mary, and I have bought fresh produce each Saturday at the Urban Harvest Farmer's Market on Eastside Street just north of Richmond Avenue (two blocks east of Buffalo Speedway.) We love the selection of fresh LOCAL produce. Farmer's markets can be found all over the metro area but now we have a FARM STAND in our own neighborhood.

Plant It Forward, a local non-profit that helps area residents get started in urban farming, has a warehouse at **4030 Willowbend** (northside of Willowbend next to the railroad tracks) and **each Tuesday from 3:30 - 5:30** they operate a Farm Stand where you can purchase LOCALLY Grown FRESH produce. It's just around the corner! For more information, visit their website at <http://plant-it-forward.org/our-produce/farmstands>

## **CARING FOR YOUR GARDEN AND YARD AFTER THE FLOOD**

**All gardens need water, but what do you do when we get too much of a good thing?** Floods and long-standing water can be devastating to a garden. The damage that is done will depend on the duration of the flood, the types of plants, the type of soil they are growing in and whether there have been any contaminants in the flood water. When plants are subjected to water-logged soils for long periods of time, roots are deprived of essential oxygen. Water fills all of the pore spaces in the soil and roots can begin to suffocate and die.

For a very good guide to what you can do to help your garden recover, visit the Arbor Gate (plant nursery in Tomball) website and read the blog by Angela Chandler on recovering from a flood: <https://arborgate.com/caring-for-your-garden-after-the-flood/>

### **MEET THE BOARD:**

Listed below are some of our friends and neighbors who donate their time to the Westwood Civic Club. I had hoped to get bios from all the members, but instead all I got were a bunch of excuses. A couple of the better ones:

“I’m in the witness protection program... I’m a person of interest in a case of mistaken identity... Can’t they just look me up on Facebook?”

Pretty pathetic, huh? But here are bios for a couple of Westwood’s stand-up players:

**Bob Weber & Wanda Weber** (Bob is our Vice President and Director of CSI Westwood)

“This year is our 40th anniversary of living in the Westwood subdivision. Our two daughters grew up here in the shadow of Astro Dome/World. I believe that, all in all, Westwood is a very good neighborhood. The location is great, the houses are reasonably priced and the neighborhood is quiet. One of the best things about the neighborhood is our neighbors. Our neighbors are great!!! We have the best neighbors in the whole world. We have been involved in the Westwood Civic Club in varying capacities over the years. For the last 5 plus years I have been Vice President of the Civic Club. Presently, I am looking for my replacement. Any volunteers?” (Ed note: an opportunity to learn at the feet of the master)

**Linford Herschberger** (Linford is our Section 2 Rep. He helps get the Babblar in your hands and he is a contributor to our Neighborhood Night Out party. Linford is also a professional actor and is currently an A.D. Players company member. This guy’s been around the block a time or two.) “My wife and I moved into our Westwood home in 2009. We showed it to our 3-year-old girl, and the first thing she asked was, “Is that MY tree?” I love the big oak trees in

our neighborhood. These trees tell me that Westwood has been around for a long time. Our neighborhood has a wonderful future if we just put a little effort into it. Let's keep it beautiful!"

**Ken Calvert** (Ken is our Section 1 Rep and head of the Architectural Review Committee)

"I moved into Westwood in 1978 into an 800 square foot house that had been badly infested by termites at one time. Active in Civic Club for most of that time. Have been past president of Civic Club and head of the Deed Restriction committee. My wife Rogene, is also a past president of the Civic Club. I organized and planned the planting of the original trees on the esplanade and, along with some other dedicated Civic Club members, kept them alive during a scorching summer drought by trucking in water in 55 gallon barrels. Also helped with the original neighborhood signs in the locations where the present ones are now. Am currently Section 1 representative and head of the Architectural Review Committee. I have an undergraduate degree from UT Austin, undergraduate degree in Architecture from UH, and a Master of Architecture from UH. Enjoy playing golf and collecting diecast model cars."

- Oldest ride in Westwood Subdivision? Take a look at these bad boys!



This beautiful 1959 Chevy Apache pickup was bought new and used on a farm west of Corpus Christi. It has well over 800,000 miles on it and still runs like a top. It currently resides with Kathy's Johnson's son as "not everyone in the neighborhood is a fan of an older pickup sitting in my driveway." DB: Folks, this Chevrolet Apache pick-up body style first hit the American road in 1955. It was the first truck to have a wrap-around front window and the first GM truck to offer power steering and power brakes. Prior to this time, pick-up trucks were sold only to wrestlers.



Another classic from Kathy Johnson’s collection is this fifth-generation El Camino. The El Camino design was the result of a 1932 letter from the wife of a farmer in Victoria, Australia, asking for “a vehicle to go to church in on a Sunday and which can carry our pigs to market on Mondays.” With over 200,000 happy miles on the odometer, this car has seen lots of church—and maybe an ice house or two. Here’s too many more miles before this classy ride crosses over to its final resting place in Cool Car heaven.



Charles Seidel of O’Meara submitted this picture of his 1978 VW Westfalia camper. “I am the original owner and it is a driver”. For those of you from another planet, the VW camper was the preferred ride of hippies, surfers and seekers of great truths. I asked Mr. Seidel how many Grateful Dead concerts he’d taken it to, but he declined comment. Rock on, Charles. Thanks for submitting this great ride for the rest of us to enjoy. Surfs up!

Westwood Civic Club Board - Who’s who in the Zoo...					
Officers			Section Reps		
President	Paul Sobieski	paulsobieski@att.net	Section 1	Ken Calvert	k-calvert@sbcglobal.net
Vice President	Bob Weber	w_weber@sbcglobal.net	Section 2	Linford. Herschberger	Linfordh2001@yahoo.com
Recording Secretary	Alice Kuchera	roy.kuchera@comcast.net	Section 4	Bill Pennington	Penn43@earthlink.net
Correspond Secretary	Dan Ballard	dballardpmp@sbcglobal.net	Section 5	Omar Hinojosa	gatorhinojosa@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Josh Rea	joshdrea@gmail.com	<b>At Large</b>	<b>Volunteer</b>	<b>You are needed!</b>