

News & Notes

June 7, 2011



Frozen in Time

Karin Davis and her kindergarten class stand in front of the new Horn Elementary, where Davis' Darlings buried a time capsule filled with memorabilia from their kindergarten year. The students will return to Horn in 2023 when they are graduating high school seniors to open the capsule. Pictured are Mrs. Davis, Kent Cantrell, Will Hickman and Davis' Darlings: William Baker, Alexis Clark, Jacob Dodson, Kayden Gray, Zoe Howell, Emilie Krauss, Cole Manley, Annaka-Joy Bronk, Lauren Clarke, Matthew Evans, Emma Hickman, Maximillian Hsu, Emma Lai, Portia Papagni, Wellesley Papagni, Jase Schmalz, Tyler Sisk, Brennan Stanley, Marko Samardzija, Haley Schultz, Emily Soroos and Tom Bradley.



WMDS Turtle Class Holds Art Exhibit

The Westbury Methodist Day School four-year-old Turtle Class prepared and hosted an art exhibit especially for their parents as an end of year thank you. Each child displayed several pieces inspired by artists Claude Monet, Vincent Van Gogh, and Jackson Pollock. One parent wrote a review of the art exhibit for the children and congratulated them on being "very talented artists." The Turtle teachers hope the exhibit encourages parents and students to get creative together this summer and paint!

METRO President Speaks at Meyerland Area Democrats Club

George Greanias, Metropolitan Transit Authority president and CEO, will speak at the Monday, June 20, meeting of the Meyerland Area Democrats Club. The meeting will be at Fadi's Mediterranean Grill, 4738 Beechnut across from Meyerland Plaza. Dinner is at 6:30 p.m. and the meeting starts at 7 p.m. There is no charge to attend, but attendees pay for their own food and drinks.

Project Brays Gets Influx of Cash - But Keep Those Letters Coming!

By Craig P. Howard

Project Brays got a huge boost last week when the Army Corps of Engineers parlayed some unexpected freedom into a \$23.2 million outlay for local flood control.

"Some outstanding news!" Brays Bayou Assn. President Bob Schwartz wrote local citizens and officials who wrote letters and sent e-mail to officials in

Washington, D.C. "Thanks for your efforts. They did make a difference, a big difference."

Raouf Farid, program manager for Project Brays at the Harris County Flood Control District, anticipated the possibility of full funding, generally \$20 million a year for the next 10 years, and has a series of projects ready to go, Schwartz said.

Subject to approval, these

include bayou widening from Old Spanish Trail to Wheeler and replacement of the Wheeler bridge, widening from Wheeler to Calhoun, removal of a contaminated zone in Compartment 4 of Willow Waterhole, and a resumption of excavation of Compartment 5.

The appropriation for the regional flood control project on Brays Bayou represents seven or eight times the

amount that was included in the federal budget President Obama sent to the U.S. House.

When Congress failed to reach agreement on appropriations by the April 15 start of the current fiscal year, it approved agency spending at FY 2010 levels. However, the act did not specify individual project amounts in the Energy and Water Development title of the bill that funds

the Corps of Engineers, which was told to develop a work plan for spending.

Working closely, the Office of Management and Budget and the Corps gave Project Brays a great infusion of capital.

"That's incredible, out of the blue!" said Rosemary Gendusa-Glick, president of the Braeswood Place Homeowners Assn. "It's a shot in the arm, that's for

sure."

"The communications that both (OMB and the Corps), along with our congressional delegation, received from you played a major role in proving an imperative need to fund and construct the project based on very strong community support," Schwartz wrote the e-mailing group.

Schwartz "has been the

Women Turn Easement Into Showcase for Wildflowers

By Craig P. Howard

Wildflowers and prairie grass flourish with other native plants along Bankside Ditch, a drainage canal in Westbury, but their seeds weren't blown there by chance.

A few years ago neighbors Betsy Cross and Noreen Hoard began to plant what was to form a Coastal Prairie Garden, which recently debuted as a bonus stop on the Westbury Garden Tour.

The two women live on a cul-de-sac that backs up to an easement as wide as a street, running along the ditch at the 10900 block of Burdine. A small, colorful sign and a patch of wildflowers at the bridge tell people the garden is near.

"I've always called it the Shell pipeline," says Hoard, "but Shell doesn't own

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Westbury residents Betsy Cross and Noreen Hoard are shown in the coastal prairie garden they created along an easement. Photo by Rob Nielsen

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Bellaire Run-off This Saturday, June 11

By Craig P. Howard

In Bellaire's runoff election this Saturday, June 11, perhaps the greatest question for candidates is how they plan to balance the budget despite rising costs and a stagnant tax base.

Candidates Brenda Cauthen and Roman Reed weigh in on this central issue as they seek to fill the Position 1 seat vacated earlier this spring by Will Hickman, whose company reassigned him to a post in Canada for

the rest of the year.

"My whole campaign has centered around controlling spending," says Reed, who says he commissioned a private study of the city budget with an eye toward savings. He says he would present the study at his first City Council meeting and seek input from others on Council.

Cauthen, on the other hand, says city staff has the first word on where savings can be made and, in fact, has already been asked to pro-



Roman Reed

vide a spending blueprint that does not increase the total tax rate.

"I believe the city has gone about this the right way," she says. "City Council reviews



Brenda Cauthen

the budget. It doesn't make the budget. I'm not going to go in slashing costs as an individual."

City Manager Bernie See Candidates page 9

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it anymore. "This easement goes all the way to Willow Waterhole."

Hoard has lived in her home for more than 30 years, she says, and she has tried gardens in the easement before. But maintenance workers always came through and mowed down what she planted.

"Let's plant on the right-of-way," Cross suggested when she arrived two and a half years ago.

"Been there, done that," Hoard thought. "They'll just mow it."

Cross persisted, however, and they started small, planting wildflowers in a 3- by 20-foot strip along the ditch, at the edge of the open space of the easement. The pair stretched orange tape around the plot to discourage mowers, and they put up signs in English and Spanish, hoping workers would at least read the pleas to leave it alone.

The first few times, no one noticed, including walking crews with weed whackers and herbicides, Hoard says. Eventually, though, the signs carried some weight, and mowers left the plants alone.

"I've been a gardener and naturalist right out of the womb," says Hoard, whose focus is coastal prairies and native plants. She joined the Native Plant Society, which led her to the Coastal Prairie Partnership and Gulf Coast Master Naturalists.

"There's a lot of overlap," she

says, with all of those organizations interested in protecting the eco-systems.

Cross is more at home with wildflowers, but she slowly came to understand Hoard's point of view after taking a class on permaculture (sustainability of plants) through Urban Harvest. Cross would mention various speakers at the class, and Hoard would invariably respond, "Oh, I know him."

At first, Cross and Hoard were content to plant strips immediately behind their homes. Cross, whose home is in the middle of the cul-de-sac, eventually stretched her plot along a 200-foot stretch of easement and people began to notice.

A woman living across the ditch, where there is no easement, offered a wooden bench for the garden.

The linear garden features such plants as Mexican hat, stiff-stem flax, lemon mint, firewheel, and clasping cornflower. Some plants were already in place. Others came without cost from seeds through such outlets as the Coastal Prairie Partnership and the American Seed Company.

Early morning and early evening are the best times to see the garden, says Hoard, because the light is just right. "Bring a camera!" she suggests.



Troop Helps Japanese Students

Around the time, Girl Scout Troop 4130 was putting the finishing touches on planning for the annual Delta Skies Father/Daughter Dance, Japan was hit by an earthquake and tsunami. Although the Troop had planned on a Food Drive as a service project for the dance, they quickly switched gears and decided on something to benefit survivors of the tsunami.

"Operation Backpack" was being organized by Girl Scouts of Misawa. The Misawa Air Base, where the Girl Scouts of Misawa belong, is located about 232 miles from Sendi, which was devastated by the tsunami. The Girl Scouts of Misawa collected backpacks, school supplies, blankets and other necessities to be distributed to school children in that area in hopes of helping them return to some sense of normalcy.

Troop 4130 spread the word to other local area Girl Scouts hoping to receive a few items to supplement what they collected at their



dance. Daisy Troop 21201 created blankets for donation. Additionally, Troop Leader Becky Truitt requested donations from employees at her place of employment, Central Bank of Houston. Central Bank's Green Committee donated 25 new backpacks and the Loan Operations area donated supplies to fill the backpacks.

The response to the collection both at the dance and after was overwhelming. In all, over 200 lbs of backpacks, school supplies, blankets and small toys were shipped to Japan. This includes 45 backpacks, 37 boxes of crayons, 167 pens, 104 pencils, 11 packages of notebook paper,

tables, folders, shampoo soap, Kleenex, markers, blankets, toothbrushes and toothpaste, stuffed animals and of course, two cases of Girl Scout Cookies!

Houston Express Soccer Club Camp

Boys and Girls ages 6-14, all skill levels, can participate in soccer camp August 1-5, 9-11:30 a.m., at Bellaire Town Square's Great Lawn. Cost: \$175. Instruction will be led by Mark Gibbs, director of coaching for Houston Express Soccer Club. For more info contact Gibbs at gibbon1@aol.com.



Roman Reed
Strategic Visionary Leader
for Bellaire

Roman F. Reed

Bellaire City Council Position 1



-  **Endorsed by former Mayor Mary Ann McKenzie Goode**
-  **Endorsed by former Position 1 Councilman Will Hickman**
"I have studied the two runoff candidates and Roman is terrific. I think he is the best qualified of the candidates to serve on City Council," said Hickman.
-  **Endorsed by Mike Luncford, HISD School Board Trustee District 5.**
-  **Endorsed by past candidates Jane McNeel and Susan Downs.**
-  **Endorsed by David Johnson, former Chairman of the Bellaire Planning & Zoning Commission.**
"A proud and active Bellaire Homeowner with a strong background in the Financial Industry makes Roman the best candidate for Council," said Johnson.
-  **17+ years Bellaire Homeowner; Married 24 years, 3 children.**
-  **26+ years combined Public Accounting & Global Wealth Management Experience.**
-  **Texas A&M University, B.B.A. Accounting 1985, Member of Corps of Cadets, Football Letterman.**
-  **Commissioned Officer, 1985, US Army Infantry Reserves.**
-  **Top Priority – Control Spending.**
"Roman Reed has centered his campaign around controlling spending, increasing City security, and accelerating infrastructure development to improve City drainage, and his background in the financial industry has him well positioned to assist the City in its goal to improve infrastructure in a fiscal responsible manner," said Hickman.



Roman F. Reed for Bellaire City Council Position 1
Election Day June 11, Centerpoint Energy Community Center