

Volume 4 | Issue 7

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JULY 2016



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Meyer Branch Library
Godwin Park Community Center713-393-1840
CENTERPOINT ENERGY
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Suspected natural gas leak

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Meyerlander MONTHLY



The stunning house with beautiful landscaping that graces the cover of this month's issue is 5159 Jackwood in Section 2.



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Bayou Greenways 2020

by Joyce Young

On June 2, 2016 the Houston Parks Board announced a \$3 million gift from the Brown Foundation, Inc., in support of Bayou Greenways 2020. This is a city-wide public-private endeavor that will create a 150 mile network of connected parks and trails along Houston's major waterways. It will transform more than 3,000 underutilized acres along the bayous into public, accessible greenspace. Eighty new miles of hike and bike trails will be added along the bayous. It is anticipated that when the project is completed, approximately 60 percent of Houstonians will live within 1.5 miles of a Bayou Greenway.

In 2012, Houston voters overwhelmingly approved a bond proposal that set aside \$100 million for Bayou Greenways 2020. The Houston Parks Board is raising a matching \$120 million and is managing the acquisition, design and construction of the Bayou Greenways. With this latest gift from the Brown Foundation, the Parks Board has raised \$103 million.

Deed Restriction Renewal Update

By Shirley Hou

After just one month of releasing the revised Deed Restrictions for Sections 7-C and 8-I, the required number of 7-C residents has passed the new set. Some of the more significant changes include forward-facing garages no closer than 10 feet behind the front build line (usually the house structure), permitting circular driveways, and allowing stucco as a masonry material. A complete draft of the final revisions is available at www.meyerland.net. It is anticipated that the new set will be used by the Meyerland Review and Control Committee (RCC) for new construction applications. Projects currently in progress are not impacted by the new set of Deed Restrictions.

At press time the signature gathering for Section 8-I's revised Deed Restrictions is still in progress at about 40% of required residents. The signature page must be signed in front of a notary by a legal owner of the property and returned to the MCIA Office. Residents can take advantage of free notary services at the MCIA office during regular office hours.



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Meyerlander MONTHLY

Let Freedom Ring

by Joyce Young

Independence Day which is commonly referred to as July Fourth, is a federal holiday commemorating the adoption of the Declaration of Independence. On July 2, 1776, the Second Continental Congress voted to approve a resolution of independence declaring the United States independent from Great Britain. The Declaration of Independence, a statement explaining this decision, was prepared by the Committee of Five with Thomas Jefferson as the principal author. Other committee members included John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman, and Robert Livingston. Congress debated and revised the wording of the Declaration and finally approved it on July 4, 1776.

With some prophecy John Adams wrote to his wife, Abigail, the day before, the following:

"The second day of July, 1776 will be the most memorable epoch in the history of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary festival. It ought to be commemorated as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires and illuminations from one end of the continent to the other, from this time forward forever more".

Although John Adams had the day wrong by two days, he was correct in his prognostication that America would celebrate the day with fireworks, parades, carnivals and fairs. The City of Houston will be hosting its annual July 4 celebration at Eleanor Tinsley Park on Buffalo Bayou (along Allen Parkway) from 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. Darius Rucker, formerly of Hootie and the Blowfish will headline the event. In addition, there will be a free July 4 celebration at Bayou Bend from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. A reading of the Declaration of Independence will begin at 3 p.m. and will be followed by birthday cake. There will be a giant replica of the Declaration of Independence for all to sign.



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Tips from Flood Survivors

By Shirley Hou

Over one-third of the homes in Meyerland sustained some flood damage in the Memorial Day Flood of 2015, and a subset of these homes flooded again on the Tax Day Flood of 2016. These survivors have formed support groups to offer love, support, and advice to each other. When one person asked the Houston Flood Support & Resource group on Facebook, "what should I do if I think my house will flood?" members flooded (no pun intended) the post with comments. The following tips are listed in no particular order. Note that much of the advice is applicable not just for flood events but other disasters as well. Like all sorts of disaster preparation, it is best to take action before the unfortunate event occurs.

Before the flood:

- Get rid of clutter now
- Pull everything off the floor, preferably on high closet shelves or at least countertop level
- Move large furniture up on risers or cans
- Roll up rugs
- Buy boots if you don't already own a pair
- Get all paperwork in order and easily accessible insurance records, medical records, identification, etc.
- Put all the irreplaceable stuff, photos, baby books, etc. in one place and move to a high location
- Turn off the power. If you don't know how to do that, find your electrical panel and learn how!
- Have a plan to put your pets in a safe place or take them with you
- Pack an overnight bag per person with a mix of outfits for work, school, play, and sleep
- If you are planning to stay inside the house when the flood water comes, make sure you have a place of egress in the event the water rises, e.g., second floor of the house
- If you are not planning to stay in your house, make hotel reservations to beat the crowd
- Think through where you might stay if you had to be out of your house for a long time (family or relatives, rental, second home)
- Take photos of your home and stuff NOW. Take a video of your belongings and record yourself describing the items in detail
- Be sure to have flashlights and extra batteries
- Read your insurance policies thoroughly and understand what is, and what is not, covered
- After the flood:
- Call insurance company with a claim as soon as possible
- Take photos and video of the damage and back-up the files to the cloud (internet). Don't throw things away until you have taken photos
- Don't rush and sign with the first contractor. Take your time to check out references.

Johnston Middle School Has a New Name

By Shirley Hou

The HISD Board of Education approved new names for seven schools at their meeting on Thursday, May 12. Johnston Middle School, located at 10410 Manhattan Dr., was renamed to the Meyerland Performing and Visual Arts Middle School. The new name will go into effect for the upcoming 2016-2017 school year. Johnston Middle School was named after Albert Sidney Johnston, a Confederate army general. The impetus for changing the name was part of a larger movement by the HISD Board to remove names of people associated with the Confederacy.



Flood Information Meetings

Brays Bayou Association will host the following speakers in July and August to update Meyerland and area residents on City and Harris County Flood Control District (HCFCD) plans to address flooding.

Monday, July 18, 2016, at 7:30 p.m. Gary Zika, Program Manager for Project Brays, will discuss the updated schedule and what we can expect. Project Brays is the HCFCD project, which includes the widening of Brays Bayou.

Monday, August 15, 2016, at 7:30 p.m. Steve Costello, the new City of Houston "Flood Czar", and former Councilmember, will discuss his responsibilities and what his job will entail. Street storm water drainage is within the City's area of responsibility.

Both presentations are open to the public and will take place at The Gathering Place, 5310 South Willow Drive, Houston, TX 77035.

For more information, please contact Bob Schwartz, bobx206@ gmail.com.

Meyerlander MONTHLY

Trash/Recycling Schedule

July, 2016					August, 2016								
Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
					1	2		1	2 T/R	3	4	5	6
3	4	5	⁶ T/R	7	8	9	7	8	9 Trash	10 Junk!	11	12	13
10	11	12 Trash	13 Tree!	14	15	16	14	15	16 T/R	17	18	19	20
17	18	19 T/R	20	21	22	23	21	22	23 Trash	24	25	26	27
24 31	25	26 Trash	27	28	29	30	28	29	30 T/R	31			

MCIA Deed Restriction Rules: Weekly - Put garbage and recycling containers, as well as yard trimmings, etc., on the curb no earlier than 6:00 p.m. the evening before pickup. Remove containers no later than 10 p.m. on trash pickup day. Monthly - Put heavy junk/tree waste at the curb no earlier than Friday 6 p.m. before the 2nd Wednesday heavy junk/tree waste collection.



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Meyerlander MONTHLY

Places to Swim Near Meyerland

by Shirley Hou

Summer is here, and that means swimming! While Meyerland doesn't have a community swimming pool, there are different options nearby from which to choose. Each pool has its own membership rules, hours, and fees. Call for specific information before going.

Maplewood South/North Community Pool

10425 Rampart Street Houston, TX 77096 (713) 721-4185

Willow Pool 10500 1/2 Cliffwood Houston, TX (713) 723-7669

Westbury Swimming Pool 10605 Mullins Drive (@ Willowbend Blvd.) Houston, TX 77096 (713) 723-2192 Evelyn Rubenstein Jewish Community Center

5601 S Braeswood Blvd. Houston, TX 77096 (713) 729-3200

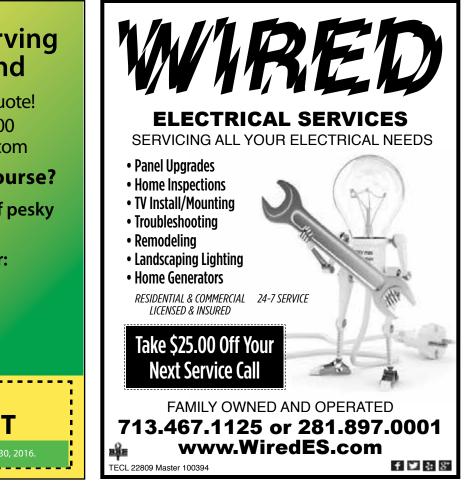
Evergreen Swimming Pool 4500 Evergreen Street Bellaire, TX 77401 (713) 662-8284

Bellaire Town Square Family Aquatic Center 7001 5th Street

Bellaire, TX 77401 (713) 662-8280

Weekley Family YMCA

7101 Stella Link Blvd. Houston, TX 77025 (713) 664-9622





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Texting and Cell Phone Use during Driving

By the National Highway Safety Administration (edited for space)

In 2014, 3,179 people were killed in crashes involving a distracted driver. One of the most alarming and widespread forms of distracted driving is cell phone usage. According to a study by the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute (VTTI), sending or receiving a text takes a driver's eyes off the road for an average of 5 seconds, the equivalent of driving blind at 55-mph for the length of an entire football field. And a 2014 special article in the New England Journal of Medicine found that the risk of a crash or near-crash among novice drivers increased with the performance of many secondary tasks, including texting and dialing cell phones.

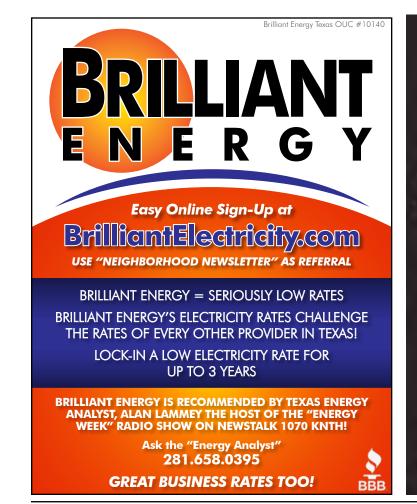
Text messaging is of heightened concern because it combines three types of distraction – visual, manual and cognitive. In other words, texting involves taking your eyes off the road, your hands off the wheel, and your mind off the task of driving.

NHTSA's message is simple – "One Text or Call Could Wreck it All." Legislation is being passed across the nation to

discourage distracted driving. We hope drivers get the message loud and clear.

So the next time you are pressed for time, and it seems like multitasking in the car is the best decision, remember those 3,179 lives that were taken because someone decided they could do two things at once. A text or call is not worth your life, or anyone else's.







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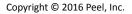
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FACT OR HOGWASH?

By Cheryl Conley, TWRC Wildlife Center

I think we've all heard that one should never touch a baby bird or the mother will not accept it again or may even kill it. This is simply not true. There are many misconceptions about wildlife. Let me help you separate fact from hogwash on a few of the most common ones.

MYTH: MOTHER BIRDS WILL ABANDON THEIR BABIES IF TOUCHED BY HUMANS

FACT: Mother birds will not abandon their offspring if touched by a human. For this to be true we would have to believe that birds can pick up on human scent. In fact, most birds have a rather poor sense of smell. For more information on what to do if you find a baby bird, see our website.

MYTH: IF YOU FIND A FAWN ALONE, IT HAS BEEN ABANDONED.

FACT: It is common to see fawns alone. Since they are incapable of keeping up with mom, she will leave the fawn, sometimes for hours, while she goes off to eat. The doe will visit the fawn two to three times a day. This will continue until the fawn is about 4 weeks old. It's best to leave fawns alone unless you know that the mother is dead and/or fawns are crying incessantly.

MYTH: IF YOU SEE A RACCOON OUT DURING THE DAY, IT'S RABID

FACT: Raccoons are typically nocturnal but are opportunistic creatures and can appear whenever food is around, day or night. In spring and summer when the mother's energy levels are depleted by nursing cubs it is not uncommon to see them out during the day. However, if the animal is acting disoriented or sick, such as circling, staggering or screeching — in addition to being seen during daylight hours — contact TWRC Wildlife Center or animal control.

MYTH: RACCOONS WASH THEIR FOOD

FACT: Raccoons have very sensitive feet and it is believed that dipping their food in water heightens that sensitivity so they can better feel the food before they eat it. They will also use water to soften food.

MYTH: IF YOU GET CLOSE TO A SKUNK, IT WILL SPRAY YOU.

FACT: Skunks only spray to defend themselves, such as when a dog runs up and grabs them. Before they spray, they will stamp their front feet as a warning to get you to back off. Skunks are also nearsighted so if you come across one, simply talk softly and back away.

MYTH: LIVE TRAPPING AND RELOCATING ANIMALS IS HUMANE

FACT: Most animals are very territorial. Residents of an area will more than likely attack and kill a newly relocated animal.

MYTH: OPOSSUMS LIKE TO HANG BY THEIR TAILS

FACT: The opossum's tail is capable of grabbing onto a limb to help with balance but it is not strong enough to support the animal's weight.

MYTH: TOADS CAUSE WARTS

FACT: Warts on people are caused by a herpes virus, not toads! Toads

do, however, have wartlike bumps behind the ears that contain a poison that can irritate your skin.

MYTH: OPOSSUMS ARE DIRTY ANIMALS AND ARE VICIOUS

FACT: Opossums are fairly clean when compared to other animals. They groom themselves frequently. While in the care of a rehabilitator, they can even be trained to use a litter box. Like any other wild animal, they are more afraid of you than you are of them. They hiss and show teeth to scare you away, so, GO AWAY!

MYTH: IF AN ANIMAL IS FOAMING AT THE MOUTH, IT HAS RABIES

FACT: There are other reasons why an animal may be foaming at the mouth. Some of them are distemper, ticks, worms, diabetes, liver failure, poisoning, and many others.

TWRC Wildlife Center is currently looking for volunteers to help at our center in Houston. If you have a passion for animals and are looking for a worthy organization to help, check our website at www. twrcwildlifecenter.org or call 713-468-8972.



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