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Meyerland Community Improvement Association



Volume 6 | Issue 1

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JANUARY 2018



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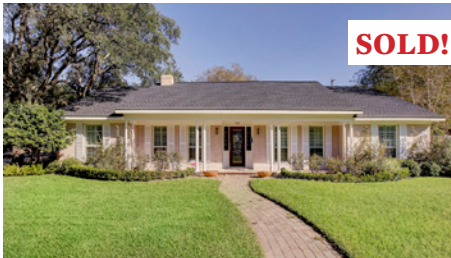
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GOODBYE TO OUR HOUSE

By Naomi Wittlin



Dear House,

I'm starting to wonder if maybe you and I were closer than I realized. A few months isn't long to be apart when we've been together for 7 years, but I miss you. I'm making the best of living in an apartment because I realize having a place to live is a privilege some don't have. Still, I feel like I'm on a long trip and that we will return to you.

In case you're looking for us or wondering when your repairs will begin, here's the situation. We aren't coming back. You see, we would always wonder when some extreme weather would come again, leaving us vulnerable to continually feeling unsettled. And, to us, that is not what home is supposed to feel like.

When water started coming over your threshold, we escaped to our upstairs room above the garage, but I came back a few hours later. I may never forget the rush of water flowing into the house as I opened a door to a surreal scene. It took a surprising amount of force to push against it and close the door. That image has come to mind many times since and each time, I can't believe it really happened.

We left in a rush, ripping out sheetrock and carpets, exposing all your walls. We filled more than 200 contractor trash bags with our ruined belongings and emptied your closets into boxes, tossing items into boxes and taping them shut so quickly that we didn't make the best decisions.

This situation caused us to re-evaluate all our plans, thinking about where we live and why, only to choose again the same life we'd been living, in the same place, but in a newly built home. We love Meyerland: its location, its people, and its sense of community. We will build anew.

On behalf of us and the family who lived with you for 40 years before us, I'd like to honor you and express my gratitude. Your kitchen was the hub of our home. Many a meal was prepared there and I spent hours at the desk, looking out the front window while paying bills or organizing one of my volunteer events. The living room was where we gathered as a family for games and movies. There were times that we moved furniture to the sides of the room to set up folding tables for an extended family gathering. Our dining room table was the perfect spot to work a puzzle or art project. We opened Chanukah presents there and peered out the windows if we were expecting anyone. Our office walls were decorated with Father's Day cards and homemade artwork. I turned it into an art space for myself and found my footing as I experimented with new techniques.

And Hannah's room, like any room of a young child, transformed quickly. The crib became a toddler bed, became a double bed, became a loft bed. Diapers became pullups, became day-of-the-week undies.

I will miss our new sofa, our custom-made shelves, the screened porch, and the kitchen valances I made. I know, it's "just stuff," but since it was our stuff, it had meaning. A kitchen countertop is only a slab of granite, but it's also where my mother-in-law taught her granddaughter how to make homemade applesauce and where we topped birthday cakes with candles numbered 3 through 8. A bathroom consists of the usual amenities, but in this one I remember potty-training on a little Dora seat with red handles. Our mailbox was just a piece of metal, but the familiar clunk of its lid dropping will probably stay with me forever. There is the bench I used to use in my closet that Hannah secretly decorated with 100 happy-face stickers a few years ago. I was angry at the time, but it was heartbreaking to see it in the front lawn pile.

Nothing is perfect. Your ceilings were low. We never felt that you let in enough light. I would have loved it if your hallways didn't feel cave-like. Yet overall, we loved you. We made you our own, pouring in love and care. Thinking of saying goodbye is catching me unawares and often bringing tears to my eyes. It isn't even the tangible loss of walls (though we just bought a brand new roof and that hurts a bit)... it's invisible memories and a feeling of safety. I will always treasure you and remember our time together in fondness and gratitude.

2018 ASSESSMENT BILLS

By the MCIA Office

The 2018 annual assessment invoices have been mailed to the Meyerland homeowners. Many residents are not currently living in Meyerland due to Hurricane Harvey and therefore, it is even more critical to keep an eye out for this important letter.

All payments are to be mailed to a PO Box address in Arizona. Why do we mail our assessments to Arizona instead of Texas? We use a bank that specializes in homeowner association accounts. The bank processes over 100,000 payments monthly from hundreds of homeowner associations around the country. Their expertise ensures the safe transmission of your payment directly to your account. There is no charge to the Association for using this service which would be quite costly if we used a local bank. Using a lockbox payment system is much more efficient than using the MCIA office to manually process over 2,300 payments. The cost savings by using this system are passed onto you. Please mail your payment to the lockbox rather than dropping off your payment at our office, as we, in turn, have to forward your payment to the processor.

If your mortgage company pays your assessment from your escrow account, please forward this information to them to ensure prompt payment.

If you do not receive your bill in the mail by January 31st, we strongly urge you to contact the MCIA office to request another copy. You may call us at 713-729-2167 or email office@meyerland.net with your property address. The payment is considered delinquent if it is not received by February 1, 2017. We appreciate your prompt payment.

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IT'S....SNOWTIME!

by Cary Robinson

It was a day like any other day. I wake up very early for work and boy, was I surprised to see a fresh, white blanket of snow on the ground. And the snow was still coming down. It rarely snows in Houston because we are so close to the Gulf of Mexico, but Houston was transformed into a Winter wonderland.

Of course, not everyone was as thrilled to see the snow as I was. No, my dogs needed to go outside to do their business, but when I opened the door, they immediately knew something was different. They stood there in the doorway, craned their heads around in unison, and gave me the look. If I had to guess, I would say they were thinking, "Where is my grassy yard that I love so much and who put all that white, cold, wet stuff all over the place?" They eventually and gingerly made their way out to the Houston version of the North Pole and did their business. They came back in a flash.

I couldn't help myself. I threw on a coat, took pictures, looked longingly up to the sky to watch the glorious snowflakes falling, and even made a few snowballs. Sadly, no one was awake yet for me to throw them at. Oh, I had several people in mind. Maybe another time. But probably not too soon as snow is a rare occurrence in Houston. I did forgo the snow angels. I loved the snow but not enough to get soaked wet and cold.

It looked like everyone in Houston was overjoyed with the snow – excluding my dogs. I watched as post after post showed up on social media. For a brief moment, people forgot about their troubles and worries. Isn't it amazing how something as simple as a snowfall in Houston can affect a positive attitude adjustment? I love that.

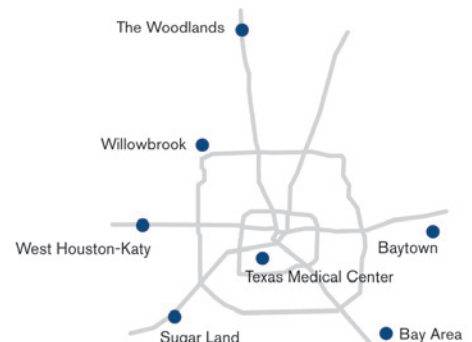
I hope you were here and awake to witness our Houston snow flurry. Brrrr.... I'm getting cold just thinking about it. But it didn't last long. And who knows when the next one will occur. Enjoy it while you can. At least for a brief moment, Houston really did have a white Christmas. Happy new year!



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SUPPORT YOUR FARMERS MARKET

By Rick Fritz and Shirley Hou

The Meyerland Farmers Market celebrated its first anniversary this past November. Located at the Pilgrim Lutheran Church and School parking lot at 8601 Chimney Rock, the market is open every Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. rain or shine.

Like so many residents, Hurricane Harvey greatly disrupted the market and farmers' lives. Plant It Forward, a farm located at Fondren and Willowbend, lost everything in Harvey. They have replanted and are still re-planting their crops. Gundermann Farms, a 500-acre farm in Wharton Texas and anchor for the market, also suffered greatly. Flood waters completely covered the farm and also flooded the owner's house.

The market needs more customers to encourage farmers and vendors to come. Yet many of the core customers flooded in Harvey, and they are now living elsewhere. It is a cruel catch-22: customers are not coming because of Harvey and lack of vendors, and there is a lack of customers because of fewer vendors.

But we can stop this cycle. We need everyone who is able to spread the news that the Meyerland Farmers Market is up and running. The farmers want the neighborhood to know that THEY ARE BACK.

Gundermann Farms, Katerra Exotics (eggs and wild meat), Mad Hectic Foods (power oatmeal), Nisha's Indian Food are just some of the two dozen vendors who faithfully show up each week. Whether you have flooded, please think of how you can support the market through these lean times, and together, we will rise again.



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LET IT SNOW, LET IT SNOW

By Joyce Young

It's not a common sight in Houston to go to sleep or wake up to a blanket of snow. And yet, that happened this year. Seems only fitting that the city go from one extreme weather condition to another in the span of a few short months. Houston officially registered .1" of snow on December 7 and another .6" of snow on December 8.

No one seemed to complain about the temperature dropping and the white stuff falling, however. It was a welcomed sight as children and adults alike went outside and whooped and hollered. The excitement was definitely in the air.

This isn't the first time Houston has seen snow. In fact, this year's snowfall was the 36th snowfall since 1895. On February 14 and 15 of that year the city was coated with 20 inches of the white stuff. Houstonians would have to wait another 30 years when the next decent snowfall appeared in 1929 with 2.5 inches of snow. The second largest snowfall in Houston came on February 12, 1960 with 4.4 inches of snow recorded that year. There have been various other snow events in Houston and even though they don't occur very often, it's always exciting to see snow fall on a city that is known for its high temperatures and high humidity. This year's snowfall was a welcomed respite as it descended on the city with a fresh blanket of snow that brought with it a sense of renewal and joy.



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HOPE AFTER HARVEY

A MUSIC FEST FOR A GOOD CAUSE

By Pauline Mathiesen

What's better than spending a beautiful afternoon with good people, listening to great music and having some food and drink along the way? ... Doing all this for a good cause!

Hope for Harvey was the brainchild of one determined Lovett mom, Seema Dawson. When asked why she wanted to take on the task of putting this event together, she explained that there were so many families who were just beginning to feel the huge financial and mental impact involved in rebuilding after Harvey and it was absolutely critical that we all continue to pull together and help out our friends and neighbors. While most of the city of Houston is back to a normal routine, thousands are still in temporary housing working with FEMA, insurance companies, and contractors to rebuild.

Seema, along with a small group of volunteers, spearheaded an event that would raise money for the over 90 families at Lovett Elementary who were affected by Hurricane Harvey. In just a few weeks, they secured a location, 5 bands and over \$3,500 of raffle items to raise money! Seema found creative ways to advertise the event on social media and spark interest. For example, since the event was right around the height of Astros Fever, Seema stood in line to get a photo with Houston Astros Pitcher Lance McCullers Jr. just so she could talk to him about Hope for Harvey. He kindly donated an autographed picture and posted the event on his Facebook page that was retweeted on the Astros twitter page.

Pub Galleria on Richmond generously offered their venue along with some proceeds. It was an excellent venue to showcase the following bands who lent their amazing talent to the cause: Paperwolf (winner of the Houston Rodeo RockStar), Soul Sound System, Pin Oak Stage Band, Bayou City Ramblers, and Tribus (fronted by a Lovett mom, Rebecca Gomez). The local Girl Scouts even participated by having a little store and making posters showing the impact of Harvey. When asked what she thought of the event, Seema said, "Fun! It was truly a group effort which was beautiful to see. I think everyone had a great time and felt a connection during the event." I have to agree...the overall atmosphere was very positive and the event was well attended. People enjoyed the awesome music and were happy to give to the cause. In the end, the event raised over \$9,000 for the affected families at Lovett Elementary!



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HEROD AT THE OPERA!

By Natalie Johnston



Kristen Burke, Micki Hoevelman with students Shelby Brown and Emma Johnston

On December 5, 2017, the Herod Show Choir took a trip downtown to see the Houston Grand Opera (HGO) perform their holiday special, *The House Without a Christmas Tree*. It was a wonderful experience for the students, and the first time for many to see an opera. The crew of the Houston Grand Opera has done a phenomenal job of creating a new temporary venue at the HGO Resilience Theater at the George

R. Brown Convention Center. Their home stage, the Wortham, was damaged due to Hurricane Harvey and is currently under repair and renovation.

It was a special treat for Kristen Burke, Production Stage Manager at HGO and Herod parent, to have her daughter, Shelby, on the field trip. "This performance was extra special for me to have my daughter and her choir in the audience. Though my daughter has been around the opera her entire life, it is different for her to experience a performance without sitting next to me. This was the first time she came to the opera as a part of school which made it extra special for her. One of the perks of having a mom work for the opera is that after the show I was able to take them backstage and onstage so they could see what it was like. These boys and girls are so observant and curious that it reminds me what I take for granted everyday."

Micki Hoevelman, Herod's choir teacher, was thrilled for her students to see the opera. "It was a fantastic experience for our students. Not only did we experience Opera at its finest, but the opportunity to go backstage at their temporary location and see how the magic happens was a special educational experience that our students won't forget. The students really connected with how Hurricane Harvey impacted HGO since many of our students, and even our school, were so greatly impacted. Once we returned to Herod, the students continued asking questions and reflecting on their experience. I am so grateful they are growing with an appreciation for The Arts. Their love and passion makes my teacher heart soar!"



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- * Reduces compaction
- * Improves oxygen content
- * Enhances nutrient absorption

For more information
visit our website

Help your turf recover

Has your turf taken a hit this summer from Sod webworm and/or Cinch bug damage?

Have you been in a battle with excessive weeds all year?

Do you feel like you spend more money and time watering to keep your grass alive than you should?

There are many things you can do to optimize root growth and minimize weed development so that you can reduce water usage, recover quickly from recent damage and help it to withstand future pests, diseases and fungal infestations.

Call us to schedule a consultation so that we can help you develop a recovery program that works long term to create a beautiful more stress free lawn.

Why Aeration?

Aeration is a process of penetrating a surface in order to create a permeated surface in order for air or rather, oxygen, to enter. Oxygen is critical for the ability of roots to uptake nutrients. Core aeration where plugs are actually removed, also allows creates areas where roots will have the ability to grow in when sod is trying to grow through our compacted gumbo soil.

2007 Recipient of Mayoral Honorable Mention Award, Keep Houston Beautiful