

# Meyerlander MONTHLY

Official Publication of the  
Meyerland Community Improvement Association

Volume 6 | Issue 8

MEYERLAND.NET

AUGUST 2018



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## HARVEY, A YEAR LATER: REMEMBER TO TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

*By Elaine Britt*

Many of us have been affected by lots of stress over the past year (or more!). Maybe you were flooded or had to watch your neighbors and friends go through such trauma. As we approach Hurricane Harvey's anniversary, remember to take care of yourself and keep an eye on your fellow community members.

When we've experienced or witnessed trauma, we often feel powerless and anxious. Don't withdraw or isolate yourself, but use this opportunity to reach out to your friends and neighbors and talk. Discuss your feelings and simply listen to others – just listening can help! You don't have to have solutions, just empathy.

Stay active and healthy – when feeling stressed or anxious take a walk and enjoy nature. Yes, I know that it can create more stress to watch houses being razed or see empty homes, but go to a park or walk the bayou. There is a lot of beauty out there!

Meditation can also help, and if you don't know what you're doing there are a lot of resources out there – apps such as Calm or online meditation tools such as [www.mindful.org](http://www.mindful.org) can help you clear your mind. Be present, take deep breaths and simply listen to your breathing and heartbeat. Start with 5 minutes and increase to longer. Breathe in and out and relax!

Be positive – I know it can be hard, but it will get better. Sometimes a simple smile and interchange with someone can do wonders for your outlook. Start a journal and make yourself write down one item you are thankful for each day. Maybe you're grateful for the perfect cup of coffee or maybe for rain that did not cause flooding. Reminding yourself of the good things in your life can help reframe your perspective.

Finally, please reach out for help if all else fails. You, your family member or your neighbor does not need to go through this alone and there are a lot of resources available for assistance. The Disaster Distress Helpline, 1-800-985-5990, is a 24/7, 365-day-a-year, national hotline dedicated to providing immediate crisis counseling for people who are experiencing emotional distress related to any natural or human-caused disaster. This toll-free, multilingual, and confidential crisis support service is available to all residents in the United States and its territories. Stress, anxiety, and other depression-like symptoms are common reactions after a disaster. Call 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746 to connect with a trained crisis counselor.

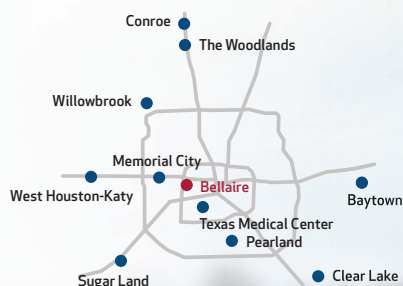
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## BOND FUNDS FOR FLOOD RISK REDUCTION PROJECTS

*By Charles Goforth, Section 1 Director & Brays Bayou Association President*

Bond Funds and other monies may soon be available for flood risk reducing projects in our area. Please go to the Harris County Flood Control District's website [www.hcfcd.org](http://www.hcfcd.org) or to the direct link <https://www.hcfcd.org/bond-program/watersheds/brays-bayou-bond-program/submit-feedback-brays-bayou-watershed/>. Please provide your input and or comments. It is very important that the community's desire on how to allocate, not ONLY possible Bond Funds, but any monies that might be made available to the state, county or city be communicated. One project that would provide relief for the Meyerland area is the Critical Stage Storage. The CSS would divert street drainage directly to Brays. For example drainage would flow to Brays through culverts under S. Rice/Chimney Rock instead of the ditches. By utilizing control devices at the mouth of the ditches, valuable storm water storage capacity can be retained until the critical point right before home flooding occurs. The drainage that would normally be held in the ditches would already be "downstream" before Brays nears flood stage.

Bond Election is August 25th, early voting starts August 5th.

## GOODBYE SUMMER, HELLO SCHOOL

*By Joyce Young*

The end of summer playtime is drawing to a close and the new school term is right around the corner. The first day of school for the Houston Independent School District and nearby private schools is as follows:

August 13 – St. Thomas More Parish School (age 3 – Grade 8)

August 15 - Beth Yeshurun Day School (age 15 months – Grade 5)

August 16 – Westbury Christian School (age 3 – Grade 12)

August 20 - Pilgrim Lutheran School (age 18 months – Grade 8)

August 21 – The Emery/Weiner School (Grades 6 – 12),

The Shlenker School (age 15 months – Grade 5)

August 22 - St. Thomas' Episcopal (Grades K – 12)

August 27 - Trafton Academy (Pre-K – Grade 8); HISD schools, including Herod, Kolter and Lovett Elementary schools; Meyerland Performing and Visual Arts Middle School (formerly known as Johnston Middle School), and Bellaire High School



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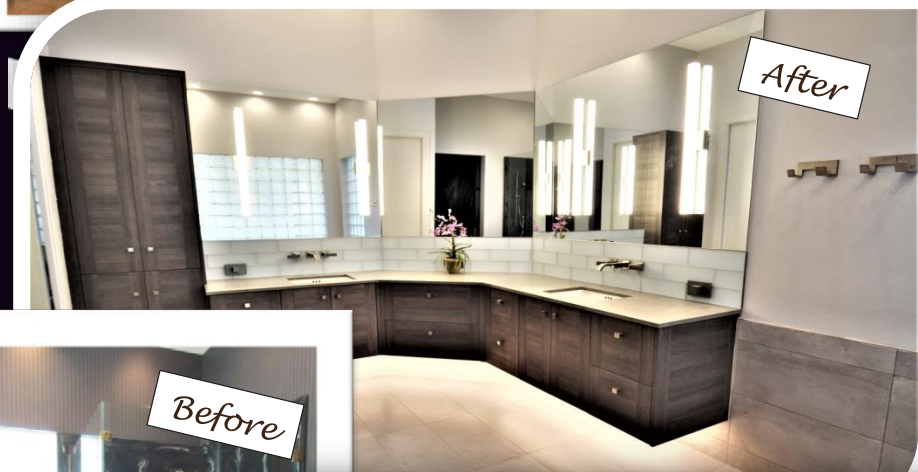
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## Trash/Recycling Schedule

August, 2018						
Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7 T/R	8 Junk	9	10	11
12	13	14 Trash	15	16	17	18
19	20	21 T/R	22	23	24	25
26	27	28 Trash	29	30	31	

September, 2018						
Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
						1
2	3	4	5 T/R	6	7	8
9	10	11 Trash	12 Tree	13	14	15
16	17	18 T/R	19	20	21	22
23 30	24	25 Trash	26	27	28	29

**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.

**At Press Time** - if you still have Hurricane Harvey Heavy Trash on your curb, please call 311 to have it picked up - subject to change.

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## SALES TAX HOLIDAY

*By Joyce Young*

School is just around the corner and the dog days of summer will soon be over. It's time once again to purchase back-to-school clothes and supplies. In order to save a few dollars on these items, this year's Sales Tax Holiday will take place from August 10 - 12. During this time most clothing, footwear, school supplies, and backpacks priced under \$100 will be exempt from sales and use tax. Qualifying items subject to the sales tax exemption include items sold online, by telephone or mail orders. Lay-away plans also qualify. More information can be found at <https://comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/publications/98-490/>.



## NEW NEIGHBORHOOD GROCERY STORE

The new H-E-B Bellaire location opened its doors on June 27 at 5106 Bissonnet. It is the first double decker store in the Houston area with 78,000 square feet. It is twice the size of the original Bellaire store. Meyerland residents can now include the Bellaire H-E-B location as one of its grocery store options in addition to Belden's, Kroger and Randalls, which are located nearby. The Meyerland H-E-B is scheduled to open in September 2019 and will be approximately 96,000 square feet.





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## BEGINNER'S FREE FENCING CAMP

*By Joyce Young*

Louise Lepie, owner of Houston Athletic Fencing Center located at 4997 West Bellfort, is offering a free fencing camp during the week of August 13 – 17. The camp is for children ages 8 – 15 with little or no fencing experience. It will take place Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. All equipment as well as snacks and drinks will be provided. Campers only need to bring a lunch. To reserve a spot, please call 832-338-9808 or email [deycohen@aol.com](mailto:deycohen@aol.com).

## STRONG HOUSTON HOME SALES

*By Joyce Young*

According to the Houston Association of Realtors (HAR), Houston reported the strongest month ever for home sales in June 2018. The June single-family home sales of 8,518 broke the previous record of 8,367 homes sold in June 2017. The median price (the point at which half of the homes sold for more and half sold for less) increased 2.6 percent to \$245,000. The year-to-date average price home sale was \$316,463, an increase of 4.3 percent.



## Hurricane Harvey Federal Tax Deduction For Flooded Homes

### If you or your clients flooded from Hurricane Harvey:

- They may qualify for a significant casualty loss tax deduction (regardless of flood insurance coverage) by having a real estate casualty loss appraisal performed.
- Tax deductions typically range from 10% to 30% of the property value prior to Hurricane Harvey.
- Tax deductions can be applied to their 2017 income tax return and carried forward for up to 20 years.
- Deductions may apply even if flooding was minor (i.e. garage or crawl space).
- The appraisal will be completed by a licensed real estate appraiser.



**If your property was damaged and you would like a FREE ESTIMATE of the potential federal tax deduction, call us at 713-239-0587 or email [info@napllp.com](mailto:info@napllp.com).**

## HARVEY'S HUBRIS AND MY HUMBLE REPLY

*By Rabbi Scott Hausman-Weiss*

Harvey was a most unwelcome guest to a party none of us planned. And despite the fact that Harvey was such a party pooper, he didn't push people away from the party – in fact, the more Harvey poured himself on to our party, the more and more the people came. By foot, by boat, by plane and train, rescuing, saving, offering their most sincere efforts to save lives. And we were rescued too.

Carried by boat from Braesvalley to Endicott to Jason and then onto 610, then shlepping through the rain, walking northbound on the southbound, trying to stay in contact with our friend and our rescuer, we finally arrived at their home, our safe haven. Our hosts declared with glee, "We have food and drink and bed and even clothes to warm and comfort and assure you that you are not alone."

Food piping hot, delivered to the table, served onto our plates, a blessing of respite offered just shy of tears at the ready. As we sat and ate and began to feel the warmth of safety once again, despite the memories of pasta and garbage and furniture floating by in 3 feet of water, our hosts chimed, "We are so glad you are here. We are so happy that we could welcome you."

Dinner comes to a close and as "good guests," we have been trained to clear our plates and offer to help clean up. "No, please," the hosts insist. "You are our guests. Look what you've been through. We can do this." Following a bit of argument and not a little consternation, finally undermined by pure exhaustion, we accept the gracious offer to simply go to bed.

In the morning, we are sure to offer thanks. The gratitude we feel pouring from our hearts, we say, "Thank you." And the hosts, with generous smiles, offer in return, "Don't worry about it." "It was nothing." "We are of course happy to do it."

And so goes the banter of unrequited receiving and giving. It's a trap, a mantra, if you will: not wishing to be in need of support, not wishing to accept the thanks. This resistance to the humble reception of gifts offered and acceptance of thanks earned, may be the most tragic result of our modern day pledge to independence and self-reliance.

Why must we so often resist the kindness and generosity of others? Are we afraid to be seen as vulnerable? Do we fear that to admit need makes us appear like we don't have it all together? Does the shame fall upon us because we didn't have a plan or because we didn't evacuate or because we simply "should" have known better? And why must we resist their gratitude? "It was nothing." Or "Think nothing of it." Or "I'm sure it was nothing you wouldn't have done if the tables were turned."

But the tables weren't turned. Why must we resist the recognition that we did indeed act with righteous intent and effect? Are we so afraid that others might think it presumptuous of us?

Gratitude is the lifeblood of relationships but it requires a common understanding that to do for the other and to be done for by the

other are the reciprocal actions that make the blood of relationships flow. So let us then be willing to say the simple words in response to someone's gratitude. Not, "It was nothing." Or "Think nothing of it." Or "You don't need to thank me." But see, I do need to thank you. I NEED to recognize my vulnerability and say, "were it not for your kindness, I don't know how or where we would be right now. Your opening your home to us created a space in our hearts to love life even more than we thought possible." This openness may be scary but it's true and our world is made better when we can live these feelings into the world.

Being vulnerable isn't a choice we make. Vulnerability is the reality of being alive. All the efforts otherwise, to somehow protect ourselves, to guard ourselves, to build a fortress of self-reliance, so as to never be a burden, so as to never be a weight upon someone else's shoulders, are done in vain. All we have is our inter-connectedness. None of us is our own source of power and strength and hope and faith. Thank you Harvey for this grand reminder.

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## GUESTS IN YOUR ATTIC

*By Cheryl Conley, TWRC Wildlife Center*

Who doesn't enjoy seeing squirrels scamper from tree to tree? Everyone loves seeing birds at their feeders. Who doesn't love seeing the does with their fawns? We live side by side with wildlife. Is it any wonder that conflicts arise between humans and the animals?

This is baby season for raccoons. You may find that a mama raccoon has taken up residence in your attic or garage. The best advice we can offer you is to leave her alone. Within a couple of weeks, she will lead her babies out of your attic or garage to live in the wild. If you just can't wait, here are a couple of things you can try. Put a bright light in the area at night and play some LOUD music. Some say talk radio is best. You can throw some moth balls in the area or ammonia-soaked cotton balls. She will probably choose to move the babies to a darker, quieter place outside. When she moves out, it's your responsibility to find out how she got in and block the entrance or your attic will always look like an apartment for rent to wildlife.

We often receive calls from homeowners asking for advice on how to stop raccoons that are getting into trash cans. Solution: try using some bungee cords to secure the top. Another issue we hear about is that raccoons are eating food that is being put out for feral cats. Since raccoons are nocturnal, simply removing the cat food at night

will fix the problem except in the spring when mama raccoons can be seen looking for food during the day. No, they are not rabid! They are just hungry. Some homeowners ask about trapping and relocating. While removal may seem like a solution, it usually only creates an enticing vacancy for another animal in search of a meal. Remove raccoons from an area and it's only a matter of time before others move in to take their place. Additionally, the survival rate of relocated raccoons is very low. Raccoons are territorial and putting a lone raccoon into an area already populated with other raccoons can often result in death as the other raccoons will consider him/her as an intruder.

There are products available that may help not only with raccoons but other animals as well. One such product is the motion-activated sprinkler. When an animal gets close to the food source, the sprinkler goes off and scares them away. Just do an internet search and I'm certain you'll find other products that may work as well. With urban sprawl and loss of habitats, we need to learn to live in harmony with wildlife. TWRC Wildlife Center can often help you find solutions to your issues. Check our website at [www.twrcwildlifecenter.org](http://www.twrcwildlifecenter.org) or call us at 713-468-8972.



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## Did You Know?

The Houston Zoo has organized an initiative to remove plastic straws and find more sustainable alternatives for customers who want to use a straw. This year the zoo removed single-use plastic straws from its concession stands and is concerned about the harm plastic straws can do to sea turtles and other marine life. The city of Houston has no municipal initiative, however, numerous restaurants and establishments have curtailed their usage. Starbucks and McDonald's are planning to phase out plastic straws and the city of Seattle has banned them outright along with plastic utensils.



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## THE TOP DOG

By Cheryl Conley, TWRC Wildlife Center



Living just a few miles north of Houston, it's not uncommon for me to hear coyotes howling at night. I get a little nervous when I hear them because they have been known to attack domestic animals. I saw on the news a few weeks ago where a coyote jumped a fence in broad daylight

and attacked a small dog. Luckily, the owner was able to scare the coyote and no harm was done to the dog. Because natural habitats are disappearing, more and more coyotes are being sighted in urban settings.

TWRC only accepts coyote pups and we get very few of them but they are very interesting animals and I thought you might enjoy learning about them.

- They are about the size of a small German Shepherd. They have yellowish eyes.
- They are highly intelligent members of the dog family and are described by wildlife experts as clever, cunning and sneaky. They have a strong sense of hearing, smell and sight.
- Dogs run with their tails up; coyotes run with their tails down.
- They are classified as carnivores but will eat almost anything.
- The coyote is very vocal. A long howl lets others know its location. Short barks warn others of danger. They "yip" when reuniting with other pack members and will growl to establish dominance within the pack. They whimper and whine when bonding and make a high-pitched bark to call its pups.
- They can live up to 14 years in the wild.
- Some consider them a nuisance and attempt trapping and other nuisance-control measures. This will never eliminate them. Remove one and another one will move in to take its place. In The Woodlands, Texas, a few years ago several coyotes were removed. The result was that feral pigs moved in and destroyed lawns. According to Texas Parks and Wildlife, "The real solution and the greater need facing Texans right now is public education. We need to inform and empower people to take steps to coexist with coyotes and other urban wildlife."
- Coyotes can run up to 40mph.
- Coyotes are 100% monogamous according to a study by scientists at Ohio State University in 2012. "I was surprised we didn't find any cheating going on," said study co-author Stan Gehrt, a wildlife ecologist with Ohio State's School of Environment and Natural Resources.
- Coyotes are great swimmers.

If you have questions about wildlife, please refer to our website at [www.twrcwildlifecenter.org](http://www.twrcwildlifecenter.org).

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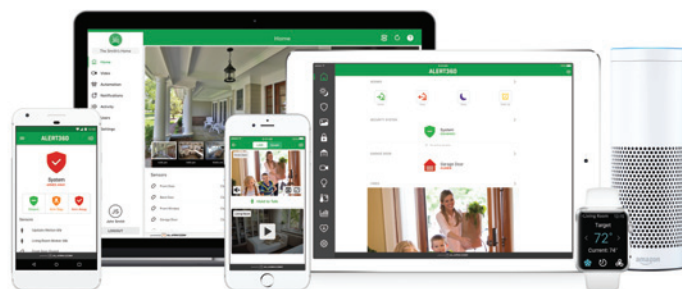


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