

The Nor'westener Online

October 20, 2008

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From HPD Officer Trautwein - October 22 PIP

Hello Everyone!

Well, we missed September's meeting due to IKE but we are back in a October with another GREAT speaker. Some of you may remember, Captain Glen Yorek as the Captain of Central Division, but he is now over Vice Division. He has agreed to come and talk to us about Vice Division and listen to any concerns you may have for him.

This will be an informative presentation and I know he will enjoy seeing everybody.

The meeting will be **Wednesday, October 22, 2008, at 7 PM.** The location, **1600 State,** is the usual meeting spot at The Houston Police Officer's Union Building in the "Mad" Martin hall.

Officer Carol Trautwein
Ana Maria Lopez Storefront
713-222-5196
713-222-5199 (fax)

Early Voting

If you are a Harris County resident and are registered to vote at a Harris County address, you can vote early for the Nov. 4 election just by walking in to any the locations shown below during the following times. Reports are that the first day and the last two days of early voting are typically very busy. You may face some wait time to vote on those days. Choosing another day to vote might be a good idea.

As they say in Chicago "Vote early and vote often!"

For a sample ballot please click on this link:

http://www.harrisvotes.com/Sample_b/Spanish/Sample_EngSpanish.pdf

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Oct. 19	20 8:00am-	21 8:00am-	22 8:00am-	23 8:00am-	24 8:00am-	25 7:00am-

	4:30pm	4:30pm	4:30pm	4:30pm	4:30pm	7:00pm
26 1:00pm- 6:00pm	27 7:00am- 7:00pm	28 7:00am- 7:00pm	29 7:00am- 7:00pm	30 7:00am- 7:00pm	31 7:00am- 7:00pm	Nov. 1
2	3	4 Election Day	5	6	7	8

Any voter registered in Harris County can vote early at ANY of the following locations.

- Bayland Park Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet near Hillcroft
- Tracy Gee Community Center, 3599 Westcenter Drive (One Block East of Sam Houston Tollway - Off Richmond)
- Alief Regional Branch Library, 7979 South Kirkwood
- Lac Hong Square, 6628 Wilcrest Dr.
- Downtown, Harris County Administration Building, 1001 Preston, 1st Floor
- Fiesta Mart, Inc., 8130 Kirby Drive just south of O.S.T.
- The Power Center, 12401 S. Post Oak Road
- Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Gray
- Ripley House, 4410 Navigation Blvd.
- Sunnyside Multi-Service Center, 4605 Wilmington
- Freeman Branch Library, 16616 Diana Lane, Clear Lake
- Galena Park Branch Library, 1500 Keene Street, Galena Park
- Palm Center, 5300 Griggs Road (Enter JP/Constable Door)
- Baytown Community Center, 2407 Market Street, Baytown
- Harris County Courthouse Annex #25, 7330 Spencer Highway, Pasadena
- IBEW Hall, 4345 Allen Genoa Road, Pasadena
- Houston Community College, Southeast College, 6815 Rustic
- Acres Homes Multi-Service Center, 6719 West Montgomery Road
- Bear Creek Park Community Center, 3055 Bear Creek Dr.
- Barbara Bush Library, 6817 Cypresswood, Spring
- Franz Road Storefront, 19818 Franz Road.
- Jersey Village City Hall, 16327 Lakeview Dr.
- **NEW:** Spring Branch Community Center, 1414 Wirt Rd.
- Tomball Public Works Building, 501 B James, Tomball
- Pondersosa Fire Station No. 1, 17061 Rolling Creek Drive
- Octavia Fields Branch Library Annex, 1503 South Houston Avenue, Humble
- Julia C. Hester House, 2020 Solo St.
- **NEW:** Humble ISD Instructional Support Center, 4810 Magnolia Cove, Kingwood
- Moody Park Recreation Center, 3725 Fulton
- Hardy Senior Center, 10901 West Hardy Road
- **NEW:** Northeast Multi-Service Center, 9720 Spaulding
- North Channel Library, 15741 Wallisville Road
- Cypress Top Park, 26026 Hempstead Highway, Cypress

- **NEW:** Lone Star College Willowchase Campus, 9449 Grant Rd.
- **NEW:** Courtyard at Marriott, 12401 Katy Freeway
- **NEW:** Glen Cheek Education Bldg., 16002 Westheimer Parkway

Thinking About Home Back-Up Power or Maybe Going Solar?

Being without electrical service for as much as two weeks or longer following Ike, many homeowners opted to purchase gasoline powered generators to provide for some lighting, running a refrigerator, television, a fan or two and even room air conditioners until service was restored. These units certainly fill a niche need even with the downsides of being noisy, smelly, polluting, not that efficient, having to secure fuel, storage of the unit and the requisite fuel containers when not in use - and don't forget to follow the unit's long-term storage instructions least the engine not be operable when next needed. There are some bi-fuel and tri-fuel portable units now coming to the market priced a bit beyond \$1,000 which provide for operation off natural gas or propane in addition to gasoline which can solve some of the issues and for \$10,000 or so one can even opt for a permanently installed natural gas powered unit that will power your entire home during outages. All these options come at a significantly higher daily cost to operate than utilizing utility company supplied power. Having electric power during outages is the "payback".

There is always a flurry of interest in solar applications for individual homes each time there is a spike in energy prices or a major disruption in electric service and we had both immediately following Ike. Energy prices do tend to abate and fluctuate however and interest wanes, but this time around the issues are a bit different with the additional general concerns over global warming and man kind's potential impact on that situation.

During the last big bubble of interest in solar, the industry did not perform too well. Fly-by-nights and well meaning, less than well informed, contractors and general electricians offering pie-in-the-sky promises for their systems' performances left the industry with a bit of a black eye with many consumers. Always, caveat emptor - buyer beware, in making investments in solar equipment, In dealing with most new energy efficient devices experience has shown that marketing and sales folks will frequently push the edge a bit on creditability in claims of payback times devices.

But with that caution, the solar industry and their products have matured and there are quality products and installers to be had. Recent breakthroughs in being able to mass manufacture thin-film solar cells offers the promise that individual homeowner solar installations may become more affordable. Current general readings in the area though indicate that no matter what size system one might opt to install the payback on the original investment in solar home applications - at current energy costs - takes generally around 25 - 30 years. The life of a typical solar system? Thirty or so with an anticipated 10% to 20% reduction in energy output as the system ages.

Prices? Be sure to check that your purchases qualify, but there is up to a \$2,000 federal tax credit on solar energy systems through 2008 and a 30% credit beginning in 2009.

I've read of homeowner cobbled together systems that provide either nightly exterior landscape lighting or emergency backup home lighting or maybe even powers a small t.v. for \$1,500 or so.

Around \$6,000 begins to appear systems that would power an energy efficient refrigerator, some lighting and maybe some small appliances.

\$35,000 to \$40,000 brings a system to power the entire home except central a/c.

\$60,000 and up brings systems that basically makes you grid free. Using roughly 700 to 800 square feet of solar panels the sun powers your home entirely.

"Electric Living" was all the rage when much of the Timbergrove and Lazybrook homes were being built out and from a payback standpoint solar hot water systems might be another solar application to be considered. Simply having hot water was a luxury to many during the recent power outage and these systems offer a continuing payback by supplying most or all of your home's ongoing daily hot water needs while top-end systems can even provide part of your home's heating needs. Systems vary from simple batch styles that a homeowner with some modest skills might plumb to more complex automated systems best left to a skilled contractor to install. I've seen much pricing variation and time-to-payback on these units so I'll offer nothing more than saying the cost can run from several hundred to several thousand dollars.

Which brings us to the **Annual Houston Solar Home Tour from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, October 25th.** With homes scattered from far north Houston to the coast and applications varying from whole home systems to solar powered attic fans visiting one or more of these homes will provide information almost sure to be helpful in your decision process concerning whether to Go Solar or not. A copy of the tour guide is attached at the end of this newsletter and note there is one home on the tour right here in Timbergrove.

36th Annual Bike Houston Moonlight Bicycle Ramble

Sunday, October 26, 2008 at 2:00 a.m.. Onsite registration and packet pick up begins 11:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 25th and the ride starts exactly three hours later. The ride begins and ends downtown at the George R Brown Convention Center, 1001 Avenida de las Americas. More complete information, a down-loadable registration form, online pre-registration etc available at <http://www.bikehouston.org/> Besides being a bit of a "rolling party" proceeds from the ride fund Bike Houston's many initiatives including bike safety, awareness and educational programs.

If the old bike needs a bit of a tune-up for the ride don't forget the conveniently located ICycle bike shop in the east end of the W.18th Street H.E.B. strip mall where owner Matt Wurth and his capable crew will get your bike ready to ride.

East TM's Annual Halloween Parade and Haunted House

Several neighbors from TM-West stepped forward to volunteer to help make this event happen last year and all I spoke with reported having a truly rewarding and fun time. The

event is happening again and all TMers are invited to once again participate and to help make this community binding event happen.

Forwarded from East TM neighbor Stewart Davis:

Dear Halloween volunteers, past volunteers and TMNA Executive Committee,

The annual Halloween Parade and Haunted House will take place on **Friday, October 31, 2008**.

The judging of the neighborhood kid's costumes will begin at 6:00 PM at the home of Pamela Fickes-Miller & Jonathan Miller at 902 Worthshire. We then begin the parade down Turnpike, south on Nashua to Glen Oaks and end up at the Haunted House at Dorothy and Bill (the Judge) Hatten's home at 1526 Glen Oaks. The Hattens' home is in the middle of the Glen Oaks cul-de-sac. Phil & Susan Schawe live to the left of the Judge and are planning to serve cookies and treats. John & Edna Giles live to the right of the Judge and usually serve popcorn and snow cones.

Here are the volunteer needs:

1. We need folks to help set up the Haunted House. The time commitment will be about two- three hours. All volunteers should meet at Judge Hatten's house at 1526 Glen Oaks on Saturday, October 25 at 1:30 PM.
2. We will also need a group of volunteers to do the last-minute touches on the afternoon of October 31. If you have a flexible schedule during the day, we could use your help. I am planning to leave work early and will get there around 4:00 PM.
3. Alycia Clark needs volunteers to serve as judges and to make prizes for the kids' costume judging. She is cc'd on this message and her phone number is 713-863-8151.
4. For those folks who don't have kids, we need creepy ghouls to scare the kids in the Haunted House. All volunteers should meet at Judge Hatten's house at 1522 Glen Oaks on Friday, October 31 at 6:00 PM. If you want to wear a costume, please bring it, but don't feel like you have to wear one. I am not planning to wear one. We will work from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM.
5. We need cookies and treats. Drop them off at Phil and Susan Schawe's place at 1522 Glen Oaks before 5:00 PM on October 31. Their phone number is 713-869-8635.
6. We need folks to help serve popcorn in front of the Haunted House at the Giles' home.
7. We need folks to help break down the Haunted House. The time commitment will be about two- three hours. All volunteers should meet at Judge Hatten's house at 1526 Glen Oaks on Sunday, November 2 at 1:30 PM.

Please reply to this message and let me know what you will be able to do.

We still need more volunteers so please spread the word I can be reached at 713-869-7517 or via e-mail to stewart_n_davis@sbcglobal.net

Many thanks to everyone for answering the call!

Halloween is a very special time for Timbergrove Manor and the Judge is looking forward to seeing everyone.

Best regards,

Stewart

Stewart N. Davis
1028 Waltway Drive
stewart_n_davis@sbcglobal.net
713-869-7517- H
713-798-1275- W

Timbergrove Rummage Sale!!

Information for the following provided by West-TM neighbor Leslie Hillendahl:

Attached at the end of this newsletter are copies of the general information flyer and rules for the annual TMCC Rummage Sale to be held **Saturday, November 8th from 7:30 to 11:30 a.m.** The attachment contains an application form to be completed and submitted if you wish to reserve booth space.

TIMBERGROVE MANOR ANNUAL RUMMAGE SALE

*Saturday, November 8
7:30am-11:30am
(Rain date Sat., November 15) (Set-up 6:30 am)
2025 West 11th Street

**Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church
Call: Leslie Hillendahl at 713-862-6832**

\$15 per booth for all Timbergrove Manor residents who have paid 2008 dues, \$25 for all other Timbergrove Manor residents. Plus, 10 canned Booths will be assigned on a first come, food donation to Church pantry. First served basis. Fee must be paid in advance.

**Fee includes: Advertising for event in local newspapers
Distribution of event flyers and neighborhood signs
Event Security- a Constable will be present**

Event Insurance

Restrictions: No Vehicles or Pets may be sold!

***TMCC reserves the right to cancel the event due to low involvement. All money will be refunded in the event of cancellation due to low involvement.**

Please share this information with your neighbors as you see appropriate. If you wish your name removed from this group please reply to sender and simply request removal.

Ben Crabb