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President's Message

It was an honor to lead the first meeting since assuming the role of President of the Marilyn Estates Association. We had a great turnout and spoke about many items affecting our community. A big thank you to all who came!

Our new District C Council Member Abbie Kamin stopped by to introduce herself and let us know some of the changes she will be making to the communication process in her office. It is quite technical so taking some time to get rolled out. Her website is up so you can find her contact information: www.houstontx.gov/council/c/

The Council Member spoke at length about Super Neighborhoods and how important they are. Marilyn Estates is part of SN #31. A Super Neighborhood is a geographically designated area where residents, civic organizations, institutions and businesses work together to identify, plan and set priorities to address the needs and concerns of their community.

My favorite part was that she is pushing to get GPS on the solid waste trucks so that the city will get real-time information about missed streets!

We need volunteers for our 2020 Spring Social! Please contact me.

It is my pleasure to serve!

Elizabeth Santikos

SAVE THE DATE
SPRING SOCAL
SUNDAY, APRIL 26, 2020
3-5



Marilyn Estates CJ Yeoman Award

As a living tribute to CJ, we have established an award to recognize a member of our community who has given their time "above and beyond."

For this issue of the Marilyn Estates Gazette, we would like to recognize posthumously, **Bob Schwartz**.

In the decades Bob and Miriam Schwartz lived in Marilyn Estates, Bob was totally immersed in the good and welfare of our subdivision and the greater neighborhood.

Nothing says it better than the plaque at Willow Water Hole. In Bob's honor, The Gazebo was dedicated and named in Bob's honor.

Please visit the Willow Water Hole to see this living tribute to Bob.

. The Schwartz Gazebo

at Willow Waterhole Greenway

The Gazebo is named in honor of Bob Schwartz for his dedicated service to the community and the Willow Waterhole Greenway. Bob was a founding member of the Brays Bayou Association and Willow Waterhole Greenspace Conservancy. He tirelessly advocated and promoted flood control projects in the Brays Watershed, helping in the development of Project Brays and the Willow Waterhole Detention Project. His engineering background and knowledge of the area made him an invaluable advisor to the Harris County Flood Control District and other governmental authorities.

The BBA's efforts helped lead to the 1988 approval of a \$250M HCFCD bond issue and the passage by U.S. Congress of the Water Resources Development Act of 1996. This legislation allowed local authorities to handle flood control projects, greatly reducing their cost and time frame, and permitting aesthetics to be incorporated. In 1997 the BBA engaged noted landscape architect Kevin Shanley to develop a concept which would provide significant flood water detention and also serve as a natural greenspace. In 2000 Harris County Commissioner's

Court authorized \$480M for Project Brays, which included \$75M for the Willow Waterhole Detention Project. In 2001 the BBA sponsored a new 501(c)(3) organization, the Willow Waterhole Greenspace

Conservancy to act as the community steward.

A native Houstonian and a fifty-six year resident of the Marilyn Estates subdivision, Bob and his wife Miriam led the civic association for thirty years. Bob graduated from Rice University with both bachelor's and master's degrees in electrical engineering and had a distinguister that the project to bring electricity to the Willow's career with Schlumberger. He was awarded fourteen patents in various disciplines and led the project to bring electricity to the Willow's Greenway in 2013.







Security Report - Maury Sklar

We all need to continue to be aware of our neighborhood activity and report any suspicious people and vehicles in our area by calling Constable Precinct 5 dispatch at 281-463-6666 and provide the location and description. It is also important to provide them any video recordings from your security cameras to help our deputy Constables in capturing the criminals as was recently done. Law enforcement recommends every homeowner install cameras to record activity to be used as evidence that will lead to arrest and conviction, along with installing home alarm systems.

You can call Constable Precinct 5 dispatch to request vacation watch on your home and a deputy will stop by to get your information before your trip.

Here are some additional security tips and reminders from Pct. 5 to always keep in mind:

Keeping Your Home Safe

Residents are asked to do their part in reducing the number of offenses by making sure their doors and windows are locked at all times. Leave lights on outside, and do not leave valuable items in plain sight. If you have bushes near the house, keep them at a height where it is not easy for a potential burglar to hide behind them. If an incident does occur, call Precinct 5 dispatch at (281) 463-6666.

Keeping Your Vehicle Safe

Residents are asked to do their part in reducing the number of offenses by locking their cars at all times, even if you're "just running inside for a second." If someone is watching, the moment you walk inside they could be in your car and gone before you get back. Please remove all valuable items from your vehicle, as well. If an incident does occur, call Precinct 5 dispatch at (281) 463-6666.

Lock your garages!

Thanks for all of your help and awareness in fighting crime. Be sure to program Constable Precinct 5 dispatch phone number 281-463-6666 into your cell phone and notify your alarm company to have this number entered into their system, preferably as first responder.

Marilyn Estates Association Minutes: Quarterly Meeting

Monday, Jan 27, 2020 Jewish Community Center



President Elizabeth Santikos called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm. The Minutes were approved from the previous meeting as written.

Abbie Kamen, newly elected as the Houston District C Council Member, was the speaker. Ms. Kamen is working to improve communications with constituents. She can be reached at:

DistrictC@HoustonTX.com 832.393.3004 On Facebook as "Council Member Abbie Kamin, Dist. C"

Houston has over 100 civic-type clubs. There are several super neighborhoods that incorporate these clubs and give communities another route of access to city government. Marilyn Estates is a member of the Meyerland Super Neighborhood. All civic clubs in the super neighborhood have representatives who attend the meetings.

Ms. Kamen has asked the Super Neighborhoods to compile a list of outstanding projects and needed improvements for her to follow up with.

She is looking for ideas for the best ways to communicate with her constituents. She will have Neighborhood Office Hours twice a month at various times/locations to meet with constituents – no appointment necessary. These are advertised on her Facebook page.

She is monitoring the flood control projects to ensure minimal impact on the neighbors. Also working to get better/more consistent information about the status of flood assistance.

Please use 311 to report problems, and upload pictures if possible. Make a record of the case number. This provides a trail that Council members can use to follow up if needed.

Committee Reports:

Treasurer: Martin Stalnaker reported for Robert Gehring. We had low revenue collection in the fourth quarter or 2019, which is normal for the time of year. There were higher than normal legal fees due to a couple of issues. We ended the year over budget by about \$5,000, part of which we will eventually recoup.

Home values in the neighborhood are down by about 10%.

New budget - Security fees have been raised to \$325 from \$310. The communications item was increased a little to allow for work to update the website. We have budgeted to have the utility box at S. Braeswood & Chimney Rock painted. This will be done after the bridge is rebuilt, and we may end up not having to pay for it.

Architectural Control: Michael Strickland reported that we've had almost 100% cooperation. There are about 8 "thumbs up" signs currently in use, people are even requesting them.

Any work to be done on your property that is visible from the street – roofs, painting, window and doors, etc. must be approved by the committee before the work is done.

Deed Restriction Enforcement: Linda Miner reported that things have really calmed down. There are only 6 cases pending, 5 have been resolved. The block directors are helping by being the first line of defense.

Maintenance & Beautification: Linda Miner reported that everything is fine. New plantings have been done.

Security: Maury Sklar recommends that everyone keep their garage doors closed and locked. There have been some incidents where items have been taken from garages and porches. Video cameras are very useful in helping to identify criminals. Try to get the license plate # if you see any crimes in progress. This is the best way to identify people. Remember to call the Constable for assistance or to request vacation watch. Their number is 281.463.6666.

Communications: Marge Mayer talked about the upcoming Gazette and thanked Elizabeth Frankowski who is now compiling all articles for the final copy of our newsletter.

Welcoming Committee: Susan Gubitz reported that block captains are helping to update her with new purchases/rentals. She delivered 2 welcome bags in the past 2 weeks. Vendors who provide items for the welcome baskets come and go. Vogue Cleaners and Home Depot hare recently joined. She is working on getting donations from some vendors from the Farmer's Marker.

Communications: We are working to update the block captains list.

Old Business:

We are still looking for a website manager – we prefer someone who knows WordPress or PHP. Please let us know if you or someone you know is interested.

New Business:

We are trying to get the administrative access to the Facebook page figured out. We may have to create a new page if we can't. UPDATE – this has been resolved.

We are looking for someone to chair the SPRING SOCIAL this year. There are great notes from last year ready to help whoever takes it over.

Question from the floor about AirBnB type short term rentals – can we prohibit them? Our current (new) deed restrictions do not protect us from these types of rentals. It will take another deed restriction update to address this issue. However, the laws about quiet hours and public nuisances are in effect for everyone.

Terry Cominsky, president of the Meyerland super neighborhood said that the super neighborhood consists of 9 subdivisions. The meetings are the 4th Monday of every month at the JCC. Everyone is welcome. Lynn Busch is our delegate and Carter Hixon is the alternate. The next meeting is February 19. They are hoping to have the candidates running for the powerful County Commissioner position there to speak. The Braes Bayou Assn. meeting is the third Monday of every month at Willow Meadows Baptist Church.

A move was made to move our association meetings to the second Monday, every third month so we don't conflict with the Meyerland super neighborhood meeting. The movement passed.

The meeting was adjourned.

Yards of the Quarter

Four mystery judges will be cruising through our subdivision four times a year. The **YOTQ** will be judged mid-January, mid-April, mid-July, and mid-October. In addition, there will be a Winter Holiday Front Yard Decoration contest that will be judged in mid-December.

The criterion considered for **YOTQ** will be:

- Overall appearance of the front of your home.
- Excellent maintenance of total front yard i.e. grass mowed and edged.
- Bushes and trees trimmed
- > Ornaments or decorations tastefully displayed
- Except for pick up day, no garbage, recycle container or yard bags at curbside.
- Innovation and creativity will be taken into consideration.
- > To qualify for YOTQ, homes must have their address clearly visible from the street (this is a city ordinance).

For the **YOTQ**, we are selecting a maximum of one home per block. In order to provide opportunities to recognize more homes, the **YOTQ** will only be awarded to a property <u>only one time during the calendar year</u>.

In rare instances, if no home qualifies, there will be no home recognized on the street.

5503 Braeswood	9714 Kit	5419 Yarwell	5503 Queensloch
9730 Braesmont	5402 Valkeith	5530 Yarwell	9714 Burdine
9706 Chimney Rock	5539 Valkeith	5415 Rutherglenn	9726 Checkerboard
5447 Paisley	5414 Dumfries	5514 Rutherglenn	9723 Atwell
9315 Oasis	5506 Dumfries	5434 Queensloch	

$TREASURERS\ REPORT\ -\textit{by Robert Gehring}$

Marilyn Estates Association Q4 - 2019, Financial Summary

INCOME	<u>Q4</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Security Assessment	\$1,801	\$102,168
Dues	\$554	\$30,927
Fees - Refinance	\$50	\$400
Fees - Resale Certificate	\$225	\$440
Fees - Transfer	\$1,100	\$2,810
Advertising	\$0	\$40
Dividend Income	\$117	\$896
Interest Income	\$931	\$3,887
Credit Card Fees	\$0	\$72
NSF Fee	\$0	\$12
TOTAL INCOME	\$4,778	\$141,652
EXPENSES		
Security	\$27,074	\$108,294
Lawn & Maintanence:		
Contractual	\$2,814	\$11,256
Flower Planting	\$2,000	\$2,000
Flag Service	\$160	\$160
Architech Committee Signs	\$0	\$250
Landscaping & Irrigation	\$0	\$220
Tree Project	\$0	\$6,592
Insurance	\$0	\$4,381
Legal Fees	\$3,814	\$11,665
Tax Preparation	\$450	\$450
Admin:		
ACH & Credit Cards Fees	\$1	\$176
Meeting Expenses	\$100	\$200
Office Supplies	\$0	\$559
Postage, PO Box	\$0	\$244
Bank Charge NSF	\$0	\$12
Newsletter	\$22	\$84
Website	\$0	\$286
Constant Contact (email marketing)	\$0	\$0
Socials	\$0	\$19
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$36,435	\$146,847
NET INCOME	(\$31,657)	(\$5,196)
BALANCE SHEET		12/31/19
Chase Operating Acct		\$44,887
Chase Savings Acct		\$43
Fidelity Investment Account:		
Fidelity Government Money Mrkt Fd (SPAXX)		\$19,484
Community West Bk @1.95%, 1/26/21		\$100,000
Wells Fargo CD @ 2.55%, 8/27/2020		\$70,000
TOTAL ASSETS		\$234,414

Account Recievable:

- -22 homeowners are past due total delenquent = \$18,873.40
- -9 homeowners are past due more than 1 year

Home Sales:

- * 9 homes sold in Q4 2019
- * 28 homes sold in 2019
- * 33 homes sold in 2018
- * 17 homes sold in 2017

The Amazing World of Monarch Butterflies - Nancy Hixon







Throughout most of the year Houston is privileged to enjoy the delightful sight of Monarch butterflies flitting around in our yards. As you may be aware, these butterflies are in great danger as their food sources and habitats are quickly disappearing. More than 90% of North American Monarchs have been wiped out over the last 20 years.

It takes 4 generations for the Eastern population of butterflies to make it from breeding grounds in Canada to their winter home in the high forests of Michoacán, Mexico. Their food source of milkweed is vital for this migration.

Many Marilyn Estates neighbors have been good of stewards of these delicate creatures. If you are new to gardening or working on replenishing your landscape, please consider planting several milkweed and butterfly bush as you prepare your spring gardens. Be mindful to ask your nursey if the plants are insecticide free.

Other plants that provide nectar for the Monarch and other butterflies, are purple coneflower, black-eyed Susan and sunflowers. If you plant parsley and dill you will also provide host plants for the Black Swallowtail butterfly.

For kids of all ages there is a small book "How to Raise Monarch Butterflies: A Step-by-Step Guide for Kids" by Carol Pasternak that is a great primer on these amazing creatures. You can also purchase mesh habitats to protect the caterpillars from birds & lizards, but you will have to provide fresh leaves for their growth. Again, it is a terrific experience to be able to nurture the next generation.

Lina Hidalgo

Harris County Judge



Groundbreaking Upgrades to FEMA National Wireless Alerting System to Improve Targeting, Message Size, and Accessibility for Harris County Residents During Emergencies

Last month, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) <u>announced major improvements</u> to Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) messages, which are used to communicate risks and threats through mobile devices like smartphones that are connected to cellular data networks. We will now have the ability to geo-target WEA messages to a specific geographic area. For example, an alert can now be delivered to a specific neighborhood affected by a specific reservoir or dam facing a threat. Also, public safety agencies will now be able to send messages of up to 360 characters in both English and Spanish. Previously, WEA messages were limited to only 90 characters and could be transmitted only in English.

"The ability to better micro target alerts in both English and Spanish will substantially reduce over alerting and make sure the alerts we do send contain the life-saving information residents need to act fast," said Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo. "With this vital improvement, we are applying state-of-the-art technology to help us better respond to the reality of 21st century threats."

This improvement came after five years of work between the Harris County Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Management (HCOHSEM), the Federal Communications Commission, FEMA, the National Weather Service, major wireless carriers, and the emergency management community.



Congresswoman Fletcher's first major piece of legislation passed with bipartisan support on the House floor. This bill, H.R. 2548, the *Hazard Eligibility and Local Projects (HELP) Act*, removes unnecessary delays and red tape in allowing recovery projects to begin without risking loss of federal matching dollars in the wake of flooding. Rep. Mark Meadows, a Republican from North Carolina, cosponsored the legislation, making it a bipartisan effort. Now it will be on its way to the Senate for approval.

Other legislative priorities in the last few months include H.R. 3, the *Elijah E Cummings Lower Drug Costs Now Act*, which Congresswoman Fletcher cosponsored, and the U.S.-Mexico-Canada (USMCA) Trade Agreement, for which she participated in meetings with U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer in her role as New Democrat Coalition Trade Task Force Co-Chair. As her second year begins as representative for Texas' Seventh Congressional District, the Science, Space, and Technology Committee elected her to Chair the Energy Subcommittee, recognizing the importance of Houston's role as the Energy Capital of the World.

She hopes you will reach out to her office should you need any help with federal agencies. Call her Houston office at: (713) 353-8680 or use the form online at https://fletcher.house.gov. Please use her website to keep an eye on upcoming events, including a Community Conversation on Health Care on February 19 (location TBD) and the Congressional Art Contest, which all high school students in the district are invited to participate in!

SUPPER NEIGHBORHOOD 31

Our subdivision of Marilyn Estates is part of an organization called Super Neighborhood 31 (SN 31). The City of Houston website states, "A super neighborhood is a geographically designated area where residents, civic organizations, institutions and businesses work together to identify, plan, and set priorities to address the needs and concerns of their community." The city is divided into 88 super neighborhoods.

SN 31, like the others, has a council comprised of area residents. I am the recently appointed delegate to SN 31 from the Marilyn Estates Association, and Carter Hixon is the alternate delegate. SN 31 delegates meet once per month (although we did take December off because of the holidays).

At the November 2019 meeting of SN 31, candidates (or their representatives) in the City Council election runoff came to speak to us and answered questions. The participating candidates were Abbie Kamin, Shelley Kennedy, Raj Salhotra, Sallie Alcorn, David Robinson, Michael Kubosh, Janaeya Carmouche, and Letitia Plummer.

Charles Goforth, President of Brays Bayou Association (BBA), talked about the status of Project Brays to reduce flooding along Brays Bayou. (See the Facebook page of the BBA and projectbrays.org for more information.) Mr. Goforth explained that the plan for bridge and intersection reconstruction at Rice, Chimney Rock, and Hillcroft would cause extreme disruption to the area during the process, and the design would leave us with the same type of dangerous and inefficient intersections that we currently have. The SN 31 delegates voted to support the proposals from the BBA for a widely supported, better plan for the reconstruction.

At the January 2020 meeting of SN 31, Mr. Goforth reported success with the Harris County Flood Control District (HCFCD). The hard work and input by the BBA and others resulted in a much safer and better plan for the reconstruction of the bridges and intersections, and the process will be much less disruptive. Many thanks to Mr. Goforth and the other dedicated individuals who worked tirelessly to promote these improvements and get approval for the plans.

The Super Neighborhood Alliance is comprised of the heads of the Super Neighborhoods, and it advises our mayor and the city on community issues. At the SN 31 January meeting, the soon-to-be chair of the Alliance, Juan Antonio Soto, taught us about the SWOT analysis. This process is designed for a Super Neighborhood to assess its interests and priorities, to serve as a "road map" for the organization. SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats, and we began by listing what we believe those to be in our community and in the city. This will be an ongoing process.

Abbie Kamin, newly elected to City Council for District C, came to the SN 31 January meeting. She is currently on a listening tour and said she plans to have a strong presence in the area and be available to everyone. She welcomed residents to send problems and issues to her and also to send any ideas for communicating besides social media and email. She plans to bring on additional constituent services staff. Flooding and infrastructure are priorities for her as well as for other council members.

A delegate reminded us that our At-Large Council Members should be as responsive to residents as our District Members. A representative of newly elected Council Member At-Large Letitia Plummer also attended the January meeting. He talked about the importance of At-Large Council members being responsive to residents and conveyed that message from Council Member Plummer.

Plan to attend the next Supper Neighborhood Meeting: February 19th @ 7 PM @ JCC.

Lynn Busch

Marilyn Estates Association Officers

(Please note that emails are formatted with at instead of the @ sign to prevent spoofing)

President, Elizabeth Santikos 281-788-3220 esantikos at yahoo.com

Vice President, Martin Stalnaker 713-721-2752 mstalnaker at acumenpc.com

Treasurer, Robert Gehring 281-773-7135 <u>treasurymea at outlook.com</u>

Recording Secretary, Susan Sides 713-705-4144 <u>susansides at earthlink.net</u>

Corresponding Secretary, Steve Blechman 713-723-9884 sblechman at gmail.com

Parliamentarian, Ed Fastow 713-553-7399 <u>efastow at sbcglobal.net</u>

Marilyn Estates Association Committees

Architectural Control

Michael Strickland 713-961-1323 ms at michaelstrickland.com
Nancy Hixon 713-728-9386 nshixon at att.net
Elizabeth Frankowski 713-305-6372 elizabethfrankowski at gmail.com
Gary R. Chandler 713-398-3888 gary at grarchitecture.com

Deed Restriction Enforcement

Linda Miner 713-826-8077 <u>lindaminer999 at att.net</u>
Sam Musachia 713-501-5255 <u>sam.musachia at sbcglobal.net</u>
Marla Cotten 832-270-7282 <u>marlacotten at gmail.com</u>
Linda Maraldo 832-264-3546 <u>lmaraldo at sbcglobal.net</u>
Jim Taylor 832-269-1500 j.stay at hotmail.com

Maintenance and Beautification

Linda Miner 713-826-8077 <u>lindaminer999 at att.net</u> Jonathan Shear 832-689-4274 <u>shearhouse at hotmail.com</u>

Security

Maury Sklar 713-248-2257 <u>masklar at swbell.net</u> Sheryl Sklar 713-248-2257 <u>sherylwsklar at swbell.net</u> Steve Blechman 713-723-9884 <u>sblechman at gmail.com</u>

Welcoming Committee

Susan Gubitz 281-630-0642 steve.gubitz at att.net

Communications

Marge Mayer 713-721-1230 margemayer8008 at aol.com Lynn Busch 713-410-6910 lynncarol8236 at aol.com Nancy Hixon 713-728-9386 nshixon at att.net Debra Suhl 713-7724-3137 dlsuhl at me.com Curt Taylor 303-722-3352 curtant at hotmail.com

Contact Information

Marilyn Estates P.O. Box 35144, Houston, TX 77235 www.marilynestates.com

Harris County Constable 281-463-6666 For a direct link for Vacation Watch contact: constablepct5.com

Marilyn Estates Association Block Directors

5400 Lymbar - Linda Miner 713-826-8077 lindaminer999 at att.net

5500 Lymbar - Randee Smolensky 713-729-9682 ransmo at aol.com

5400 Cheena - We need a volunteer for this position.

5500 Cheena - We need a volunteer for this position.

5400 Wigton - Doug Irr 713-295-0539 dmi2x at hotmail.com

5500 Wigton - Michael Bryant 713-504-2700 mbryant29 at gmail.com

5400 Yarwell - Jim Taylor 832-269-1500 j.stay at hotmail.com

5500 Yarwell - Sam Musachia 713-501-5255 sam.musachia at sbcglobal.net

5400 Dumfries - Elizabeth Santikos 281-788-3220 esantikos at yahoo.com

5500 Dumfries - Linda Maraldo 713-729-7086 Imaraldo at sbcglobal.net

5400 Valkeith - Janice Fastow 713-410-0067 ifastow at sbcglobal.net

5500 Valkeith - Julie Fordes 832-969-8349 fordes.julie at gmail.com

5400 Rutherglenn - Ginger Flannery 713-723-2016 ginflannery at yahoo.com

5500 Rutherglenn - David Karesh 832-562-5519 kareshjunk at gmail.com

5400 Queensloch - Jim Taylor 832-269-1500 j.stay at hotmail.com

5500 Queensloch - IRA Bleiweiss 713-898-3102 ira at roamer.net

5500 Queensloch - We need a volunteer for this position.

Paisley/Chimney Rock - Maury Sklar 713-248-2257 masklar at swbell.net

Braesmont/Kit/Oasis - We need a volunteer for this position.

Atwell /South Braeswood - Diane Gardner 832-876-1234 dianenativetexan at gmail.com

Burdine/Checkerboard - Debbie Gehring 713-927-8934 Debbie g7482 at hotmail.com

SAVE THE DATE:

NEXT MARILYN ESTATES ASSOCIATION MEETING MONDAY, April 13th @ 7pm

THE END