



Greater Mission Bend Area Council On-Line Newsletter

Providing a Voice for the Citizens of Greater Mission Bend

GREATER MISSION BEND AREA COUNCIL UP-DATE

January 2010

Comments from the President

Mission Bend 2010

Well, here we are eagerly anticipating another year. Most of us are doing some kind of reflection of the past year. And most of us have some good memories and some bad memories of 2009. As we reminisce and contemplate the coming year, I would like to bring our community into the process. What are your thoughts about Mission Bend, Clayton, Kingsbridge and the surrounding neighborhoods? I know people, good people, who have given the area scarcely a thought. Are you in that group? Do you get up and go to work and somehow remain oblivious of the many issues facing the area? Or are you one of those who are concerned about the quality of life in what some of us are calling the Greater Mission Bend Area?

I ask that question in all sincerity because many times people assume that the problems and issues which concern them are concerns for others, perhaps for all people. Unfortunately, that is not the case. If you are a concerned citizen, do not assume that others share your concerns. And if somehow you have remained unconcerned about the area, please do not be surprised to find that there are neighbors who are very concerned. Some of them even want to take action, to actually "do" something about

Mission Statement

The mission of the Greater Mission Bend Area Council is to empower residents, businesses and organizations of the Greater Mission Bend Area by collectively addressing our common issues and concerns.



Sheriff Adrian Garcia



Sheriff Milton Wright

Meet the Sheriffs

Harris County Sheriff Adrian Garcia

&

Ft. Bend County Sheriff Milton Wright

Saturday, January 16th

From 10:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.

Mission Bend United Methodist Church

3710 HWY 6 South, Houston, Texas 77082

Sponsored by The Greater Mission Bend Area Council

the challenges which our community faces. I hope you are one of these. But just in case you are not, I have a few words for you. The concerned citizens of the Greater Mission Bend Area have stepped up to define and to face the problems and the challenges which face our community. These concerned citizens have come together to form the Greater Mission Bend Area Council (GMBAC).

This Council exists solely to identify and to address the problems and challenges which our citizens face. And so, as I sit here contemplating the past year and thinking about the year ahead, I have one overriding wish: to have all the citizens in

this community – all 60,000 of them – step up and join us in our crusade to make this community a better place for all of us to live. In the year ahead, the GMBAC is going to make a concerted effort to begin the process of bringing change, positive change, to the Greater Mission Bend Area. We will begin with a special meeting on January 16, when we bring the county sheriffs of our two counties to meet with our citizens. Watch

(Continued on page 5)

See contact information to the right for details on how your HOA can join the GMBAC and contribute to the efforts for maintaining and improving our Community.

The Greater Mission Bend Area Boundaries:



Newsletter Ideas Welcomed!

Please email
pictures & articles to:

GMBACouncil@SBCGlobal.Net

This will be a monthly newsletter filled with information that relates to the Greater Mission Bend area as well as "News You Can Use!"

GMBAC Contact Information

Email

To receive Newsletters & Up-Dates, please send us your email address to:

GMBACouncil@SBCGlobal.Net

Mailing Address

P.O. Box 720692

Houston, Texas 77272

Join the LinkedIn Group

<http://www.linkedin.com/>

Join the Facebook Group

<http://www.facebook.com/>

Fax Number

713-634-2861

Website & Blog

www.GMBAC.Com



Steve Fowler - Fire Chief

By Donna Kinerd

The **Community Volunteer Fire Department** currently protects an estimated population of 115,000 within a geographic area of approximately 25 square miles, which includes the Greater Mission Bend Area. The area serviced is primarily residential with



some commercial. In 1954, five members of the farming and dairy community, now known as Alief and far beyond what was then the city limits of Houston, formed a voluntary association with an estimated value of \$1,500. The charter stipulated the area that was to be served was a two-mile radius of the center of Alief, an unincorporated village in Harris



County, Texas.

Years passed without a lot of change until the 1960's. As subdivisions located off of Boone Road and Kirkwood began to fill with families, it was not long before it was determined that additional fire services were needed in the area. In 1971, the City of Houston loaned the



Alief Fire Department two fire trucks and they were parked at two different service stations near Boone and Wilcrest.

In order to acquire the funds needed to build a building for the fire department, a door-to-door fund drive was held. Each resident was asked to donate \$12 per year. The initial drive raised nearly \$20,000.



A fire station was constructed on donated land near Boone and Bissonnet by volunteers working nights and weekends and opened in November of 1971.

In 1972, the Alief Volunteer Fire Department and the Community Volunteer Fire Department merged. In 1985, the name of the fire department was changed to the Community Volunteer Fire Department because the area that it served was much more than just Alief.

Today, the fire station is located at 16003 Bellaire Blvd. in a building that was constructed a few years ago with two Bays that house the fire trucks as well as ambu-



lances and other equipment.

There is also a comfortable facility for the fireman to use between runs as well as a training room.

The training room is occasionally used by several community organizations, including the Greater Mission Bend Area Council, who hold their monthly meetings as well as other events sponsored by the Council at the fire station. The firemen have even given up the bay area of the fire station for large meetings.



Even though most of us just take for granted that we can call 911 and will be taken care of; the whole community joins the GMBAC in saying

"Thanks" to Steve Fowler and his crew for their dedication and professionalism.

"We need you and appreciate your being there for our community."

<http://www.communityvfd.org>

The Mother of one of the Greater Mission Bend Area Council Members, Terry Blair, took the firemen home made deserts at Thanksgiving time as a special Thank You from the GMBA Council.

GMBAC Board Members

Donna Kinerd

Clayton, Sec. 1, 2

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Chuck Machauer

Clayton Woods

*

Veronica Rogers

Great Oaks South

*

Michelle Gabel

Keegan's Ridge

*

Wayne Thompson

Kingsbridge Com. Assoc.

*

Kingsbridge Village

Jodie James

*

Bob Leitner

Mission Bend Civic

*

Mike Martin

Mission Bend HOA

*

Christine Clark

Mission Bend North, Sec. 3

*

Joyce Nible

Mission Bend South

*

Kevin Jackson

Parkside @ Clayton Park

*

Dianne Williams

Wingate HOA

*

At Large Members

Winetta Billings

Terry Blair

Bert Garner

Non-Emergency

Harris Co. Sheriff

713-221-6000

Fort Bend County Sheriff

281-342-6116

Emergency 911

Useful Resources

- Alief ISD
<http://www.aliefisd.net>
- Fort Bend ISD
<http://www.fortbend.k12.tx.us/>
- The People Lawyer
<http://www.peopleslawyer.net/>
- Track the criminal activity in your area
<http://spotcrime.com>
- Sex Offender Registry
https://records.txdps.state.tx.us/DPS_WEB/Portal/index.aspx?Redirected
- Texas Department of Public Safety
<http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/>

Share Your Useful Resources

There has been a change at

Harris County MUD #120

(Most of the Clayton HOA's)

New Payment Information

(Also, New Account Number)

for

Water & Sewer Services

EDP

(Environmental Development Partners)

P.O. Box 690928

Houston, Texas 77269-0928

832-467-1599

If you are unable to open any of the links in this newsletter, copy and past the website address to your browser.

Elected Officials Representing

Greater Mission Bend

Ft. Bend Co. Commissioner Andy Meyers,
Precinct 3 (281/494-1199)

<http://www.andymeyers.com/>

Harris Co. Commissioner Steve Radack,
Precinct 3 (713/755-6306)

<http://www.co.harris.tx.us/Pct3/>

Fort Bend County Judge

Robert Hebert

(281-341-8608)

<http://www.co.fort-bend.tx.us/>

Harris County Judge

Ed Emmett

(713/755-4000)

<http://www.judgeemmett.org/>

State Senator, Dist. 17

Joan Huffman

(713/662-3821)

<http://www.senate.state.tx.us/>

State Senator, Dist. 18

Glenn Hegar

(281/391-8883)

<http://www.senate.state.tx.us/>

State Rep. Dist. 28

John Zerwas

(512/463-0657)

<http://www.johnzerwas.com/>

State Rep. Dist. 149

Hubert Vo

(281/988-0212)

<http://www.hubertvo.com/>

Texas Legislature Online

<http://www.legis.state.tx.us/>

State and Local Government

State of Texas

<http://www.texasonline.com/portal/tol>

Harris County Government

<http://www.co.harris.tx.us/>

Fort Bend County Government

<http://www.co.fort-bend.tx.us/>

News You Can Use

One in four Texans has unclaimed property from forgotten bank accounts, uncashed checks, security deposits and utility refunds. It's your money. Texas is currently holding more than **\$2 billion** in cash and other valuables waiting for the rightful owners to claim.

<http://www.window.state.tx.us/up/>

Cash for Clunkers for Appliances

What you need to know about the \$300 million State Energy Efficient Appliance Rebate Program.

<http://energysavers.gov/financial/70020.html>

Learn to Winter Sow Seeds Outdoors!

Winter Sowing is easy to do! With this creative and easy germination method you will be able to start hardy seedlings for pennies. Winter Sowing is done outdoors during Winter using mini-greenhouses made from recyclables; there are no heating devices, no energy wasting light set-ups or expensive seed starting devices.

<http://www.wintersown.org/wseo1/index.html>

Can't Afford Wood for Home Projects?

Build wood projects with FREE wood from wood pallets that are being discarded by businesses everyday!

<http://www.ehow.com/tag/pallets/>

Pay 2009 Property Taxes by January 31, 2010 without penalty.

<http://www.hcad.org/>

<http://www.fbcad.org/Appraisal/PublicAccess/>



"What fits your busy schedule better, exercising one hour a day or being dead 24 hours a day?"

Reaching Age 65!

Things we need to know

By Donna Kinerd

Most of us work day in and day out looking forward to the day we can retire so that we can enjoy the golden years.

But, all of a sudden we find ourselves at retirement age and realize we are not prepared in more ways than just financially.

Most of us don't know what we should know to take advantage of what is available once we turn 65. We all know that we are eligible for a Senior Discount at most restaurants but either forget or are too proud to ask for it most of the time.

The internet is a wonderful place to find the information we need to make informed decisions. For some of us, the internet can be very intimidating. But, we have dealt with scarier stuff in the past so like with everything else in life, and the help of the Grandkids, we jump in with both feet. Because there is a lot of stuff we need to know:

- When to apply for Social Security
- How & when to apply for Medicare Health Benefits plus a supplement insurance to cover what Medicare doesn't.
- What is the best Drug (Part D) Coverage based on each individual.
- Don't forget to file for an over 65 Homestead Exemption.

See link below for details on the over 65 and other Property Tax Exemption.

<http://www.window.state.tx.us/>

Social Security Retirement Benefits

There is no perfect time to apply for Social Security. You can claim early and take a smaller monthly payment for a longer period of time. Or you can claim later, collecting a larger benefit that is based on a shorter life expectancy.

For more information click on the Kiplinger link below and click on retirement.

<http://content.kiplinger.com/>

Social Security On-Line

<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/>

'Free trial' or Internet scam?

NEW YORK (CNN) -- Free trials are not always free. And in some cases, they are very expensive. The FTC, Visa and the Better Business Bureau are warning today about deceptive advertising.

You may have seen those "free trial ads" on the Internet for things like acai berry, teeth whiteners or colon cleansers. In some cases, when you click on the free trial, you may (or may not) get the product; but then -- if you don't cancel the product, or opt out -- down the road, you get charged repeatedly for products or services you haven't asked for.

According to VISA, almost 30% of online consumers have been victimized by this deceptive marketing. One company that sells acai berry supplements received more complaints this year than BBB receives about the entire airline industry in one year.

Sometimes, these free trial offers are buried inside what looks like a fake news site. These sites are all about looking official. Even the logos of big media companies -- CNN included -- are used to make this site LOOK legitimate. Below the fake news article are links to "free trials." You may see phony testimonials or consumer comments. Typically, on these Web sites, the deadline to sign up for a free trial is the next day. Often the details of the offer are buried in the terms and conditions. Legitimate companies do not bury cancellation policies or other charges.

Be cautious, don't hand over your debit or credit card number to a business you've never heard of without checking it out first with the Better Business Bureau. You can also check in with your state attorney general.

Pay attention to any pre-checked boxes before you give your credit card number. If there is a check in one of these boxes, delete it. A pre-checked box is a big red flag. Otherwise, you could be bound to terms and conditions that you don't want.

Make sure you review your credit card statements when you get them for any unauthorized charges. If you do see unusual activity or unauthorized charges, call the company and try to resolve it with them. If that doesn't work, dispute the charge with your credit card issuer.

Swine Flue Vaccination Information from the State of Texas

(Now available to everyone)

<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/>

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for the announcements. The meeting will be at the Mission Bend United Methodist Church on Highway 6 across West Park from Wal-Mart. We will be discussing the problems of crime and security in our community. You can take part in this discussion by attending the meeting. After this meeting, there will be more actions taken by the GMBAC, which are designed to address our common problems and challenges.

To help with providing information to our residents, the Council has set up a web site at

<http://www.GMBAC.Com/>

Please check with the web site to see our updates. Better yet, join our community by registering on the web site. This will allow you to share your thoughts and ideas with others and with our board. Or, you can send us (the board) a private message at our new email address:

info@GMBAC.com.

And so, as I contemplate the coming year, my wish is that we come together as a community and work to make our area a better place in which to live. We won't get it all done in one year, but we can certainly come together to lay a foundation which will support this work for the years to come. I cannot wait until next December to look back on 2010 and contemplate the progress which we made, together.

Happy New Year,

Mike Martin

President, Greater Mission Bend Area Council

Alief & Mission Bend History

Click on the links below to learn about the history of Alief as far back as 1861 & Mission Bend back to 1980's.

<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/>

Where is Your *Fire Hydrant*?

By Donna Kinerd

Most of us do not give our fire hydrant the attention and appreciation it deserves unless we need it.

Do you know where *your fire hydrant* is? I bet every dog in your neighborhood does!

Now that you are going to located your fire hydrant, check it out for damage. If your fire hydrant is in need of repair, report it to your MUD District not the Fire Department.

MUD District Contact Information

http://www.hcphe.org/cph/new_page_9.htm

History of the Fire Hydrant

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fire_hydrant

MLS Sales & Leasing Activity for the Greater Mission Bend Council Area.

By Donna Kinerd - Broker

Below is the activity as of the end of December 2009, as it compares to the same period in 2008.

The data is based on the Median numbers.

December	2008	2009
Sales Activity		
Total # of Sales	46	27
Total # of F/C*	27	12
Year Built	1983	1992
Non-F/C* Sales Price Per SF	\$.57 per SF	\$.60 per SF
F/C* Sales Price Per SF	\$.42 per SF	\$.37 per SF
Days on the Market	94	39
Total Current Sales Listings	185	200
Total F/C* Sales Current Listings	21	18
Rental Activity		
Total Rented	26	15
Rental Rate	\$.69 SF	\$.60 SF
Active Listings	61	72
Price per SF for Active Listings	\$.66 SF	\$.65 SF
Year Built (Active Listings)	1982	1983

* F/C=Foreclosures

For More Information about the Houston Real Estate Market

<http://www.har.com/Newsroom/>

West Oaks Mall Has a New Owner

Steve Plenge with Pacific Retail Capital Partners, a Los Angeles-based Company, told the Houston Chronicle he thinks it's a really solid location in a great trade area.



Magnolia Park

Magnolia Park is located behind Petrosky Elementary on a five acre plot of land between a residential area and a well hidden sewer treatment plant.

It has taken 32 years of persistence and the changing of a few laws for the land to finally be available for purchase from AISD by Mission Bend MUD #2.

With a lot of thought and planning, it has been made into a Zen Garden for the use and peaceful enjoyment of area residents, young and old.

The Mission Bend MUD #2 Board is made up of five ladies, Judy Villagomez, Mary Bertrand, Marlene Weppner, Susan (Cricket)



Johnson and Diana Littlefield. All are long-term Board Members, Diana has been a member of the Board for 32 years. Their persistence finally paid off when the Grand Opening of the park was held on October 17, 2009.

A Mosaic Tile art contest is planned for the children that attend the four schools in the MB MUD #2 area. A winner will be chosen from each school. The winning designs will be displayed in the park with the hope it will help the children to have a feeling of ownership in the park. Panels will be constructed to display children's art.

With the help of surveillance cameras, there is a zero tolerance policy at the park, which is open from dawn to dusk.