



# 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

July, 2010



### Recap of **Crime Prevention Town Hall Meeting**

Saturday, June 26th, 2010

From 8:45 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.

Mission Bend United Methodist Church  
3710 HWY 6 South, Houston, Texas 77082

Attendance: Approximately 65 – GMBAC Board Members, HOA Board Members, Homeowners and Visitors

#### Guest Speakers:

- Fort Bend County District Attorney, **John Healey**
- Harris County Deputy Sheriff, **Lanny Hitchcock**
- Neighborhood Watch, Fort Bend County Deputy Sheriff, **Gerard Argao**
- Harris County Deputy Sheriff, **Samuel Cerda**
- Houston Police Department, **Raul Collins**

#### Other Guests attending:

- Community Volunteer Fire Department Fire Chief, **Steve Fowler**
- Candidate for the Texas House of Representatives, District 149 position, **Jack O'Connor**
- Harris County's Director of Intergovernmental Relations, **Ron Servis** (Judge Ed Emmett)
- Crime Stoppers, **Andrea Schmauss**
- Stage Stores, Inc. (Beals, Palais Royal, Peebles, Stage) Loss Prevention Dept, Organized Retail Crime Investor Manager, **Kenny Ochoa**
- Spartan Security, **Pedro Fernandez**
- ADT Security, **Adrian Gentry**
- Centurion Security, **Ralph Marchesano**
- Valflor Academy (Concealed Handgun Training), **David G. Valdez**

Mike Martin, President, GMBAC, gave a brief history of the purpose and goals of the Greater Mission Bend Area Council.

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The Greater Mission Bend Area Boundaries:



#### Newsletter Ideas Welcomed!

Please email  
pictures & articles to:  
[information@gmbac.com](mailto:information@gmbac.com)

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:

[Information@gmbac.net](mailto:Information@gmbac.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

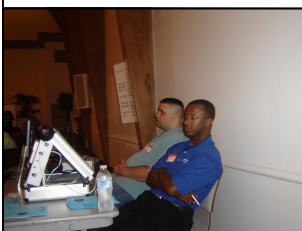
713-634-2861

##### Website & Blog

[www.GMBAC.com](http://www.GMBAC.com)



**Thank You Vendors for your donations and generous door prices.**



**Centurion Security**

Ralph Marchesano  
10223 Clodine Road  
Richmond, Texas  
281-277-7070



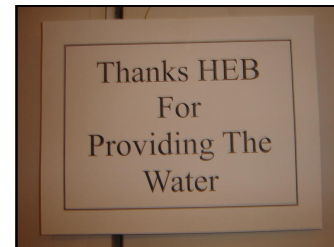
**Spartan Security**

Pedro Fernandez  
4004 Artdale  
Houston TX 77063  
281-589-7370



**ADT Security Services**

Adrian Gentry  
713-525-6357  
[agentry@adt.com](mailto:agentry@adt.com)



Thank You HEB & Jana for your continued support since the first GMBAC meeting.  
(Bellaire & HWY 6)

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Dianne Williams, Director, GMBAC, introduced guest speaker, Ft. Bend Co. DA, John Healey (281/341-4469).

Mr. Healey stated that “willingness of the members to work together is linked to the reduction of crime.” He further stated that:

- If a witness to a crime, everyone should be willing to go to court to testify when asked.
- Longevity of homeownership helps lower crime in an area, while poverty and high numbers of immigrants tend toward increased violence and crime.
- There is a web site that can be helpful in keeping track of crimes—National Crime Prevention Council [www.ncpc.org](http://www.ncpc.org).

Dianne Williams read written questions from the audience for the DA.

**1. What does a District Attorney do?**

The DA runs the law office of the county. They prosecute misdemeanors, felony cases, juvenile cases and Class “C” misdemeanor cases such as assaults and traffic violations.

**2. What can be done to get rid of panhandlers?**

Panhandling is not illegal; but it is a Class C Misdemeanor to impede traffic. Problems involving panhandling should be addressed with the police. A misdemeanor can lead to jail time and/or fines.

**3. What should citizens do when they see tagging?**

Tagging (gang markings on walls, fences, etc.) is against the law. There are three things that should be done immediately—Record, Report, Remove.

**4. Does the program *Scared Straight* still exist?** No, it is no longer in effect because of several problems with the program.

Wayne Thompson, Director of GMBAC, introduced Harris County Deputy Sheriff, Lanny Hitchcock, [Hitchcock@Sheriff.HCTX.net](mailto:Hitchcock@Sheriff.HCTX.net), 281-463-2648, who discussed crime statistics in Harris County.

- Property crimes are up 200 calls this year, while violent crimes are staying steady in number. Mission Bend ranks 3<sup>rd</sup> most active of the 5 crime areas he covers, with the Little York area ranking No. 1.
- Panhandlers do have certain restrictions such as they are not allowed to stand in the roadway unless they receive prior permission from the Precinct Commissioner, which is hard to get.
- Upside down license plates are illegal. If you see one, call the Sheriff’s office. You can remain anonymous.
- To stop 18-wheelers from parking within your subdivision, you must go through the legal process of having signs posted, stating the hours they are not allowed (10 pm – 6 am). (Big box trucks do not fall in this category.)

Wayne Thompson introduced Harris County Deputy Sheriff, **Samuel Cerda** and Houston Police Officer, **Raul Collins**, who gave a very informative power point presentation.

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One of the easiest ways to identify someone who is in a gang is to watch their style of dress, the colors and symbols, shoes, shoelaces, hats, etc. that they wear. Even the direction in which they let the end of their belts hang can be significant. However, sometimes kids just want to mimic what they see, and will wear some of these same clothes, so it's not a guarantee of gang membership.

Deputy Cerda did not recommend the use of Facebook. Gangs can reach more recruits and even targets by getting information from the internet. Cerda mentioned that he has seen gang members as young as 9 years old. Gangs often recruit the youth to keep gangs going as older members die off.

There are several ways gangs hold initiations—Beat-ins (a prospective member must endure beatings anywhere from 30 seconds to several minutes); Born-ins (through family members); proof of committing a serious crime; even sexed-in (females, primarily) who must have sex with members, usually several at a time. These females are not respected by their own gang, and many times will choose beat-ins instead.

The reason so many join a gang is because they want to be wanted, to belong, to gain peer respect, relief from peer pressure, or from just plain boredom. Warning signs that your youth is in a gang are poor grades at school; the use of a nickname; sporting gang-related tattoos; having large amounts of money; and of course, gang clothing (although some just like wearing gang-looking clothing). Gang membership requires a completed application.

Some common tattoos of gangs usually involve numbers and letters; i.e. M (13<sup>th</sup> letter in the alphabet = 13; PTB; Houstones (The Texans's Football star symbol); Tangos; Dango Blast; OMG (does not stand for *oh, my God*), but rather are motorcycle gangs. Another motorcycle gang is the Banditos. Gangs are involved in all major crimes. Many numbers such as 713, 281, 832, etc. identify the general location of the gangs by telephone area codes.

When reporting a gang problem, call the Sheriff's Department immediately (ASAP)! When doing so, ask for an incident report (Case No.) so you can follow up on the call.

It is illegal to sell gang shirts; but many retailers have them for sale at the back of their stores anyway.

Unfortunately, gangs are definitely on the increase now. When gangers are picked up, everything about them is entered into a data base, which will show up in any background checks, and will follow them all of their life. It is almost impossible for any gang member to get out of a gang, even if they would like to. Only a very few ever make it out. The Harris County Mayor's office has a task force to help gang members try to get out.

Mission Bend ranks 5<sup>th</sup> on a scale of 1-10 in the number of gangs and gang incidents.

Mike Martin called for a break in the meeting and door prizes were drawn. (1) ADT Security Services donated a digital camera; (2) Centurion Security donated two monitored wireless video home security systems; and (3) Spartan Security donated a Sony camera.

After the break, Mike Martin introduced several guests in the audience, one being Jack O'Connor, and mentioned that Hubert Vo, his political opponent, had also been invited. Mike mentioned that Pat Lykos, Harris County DA had been invited but because of her schedule, she was unable to attend. Also introduced were Fire Chief Steve Fowler and his wife, Connie, who works at the United Mission Bend Methodist Church, where the meeting was being held. Mike offered the GMBAC's heart-felt appreciation to the church for all of their support in allowing the use of their facilities to hold so many community-wide meetings.

Prison Chaplain, Romeo Pena, also a VP of Great Oaks South HOA, presented two of their HOA members a plaque of appreciation—Frank Medrano and Veronica Rogers (Director of GMBAC).

Mike Martin introduced Crime Stoppers, Andrea Schmauss. Crime Stoppers (713/222-TIPS; [www.crimestoppers.org](http://www.crimestoppers.org)) supports law enforcement and educates the public. All calls to Crime Stoppers are anonymous. Houston has the largest Crime Stopper organization in the country.

Wayne Thompson introduced Neighborhood Watch, Fort Bend Co. Deputy Sheriff, Gerard Argao, who once lived in Mission Bend for 21 years in Harris County.

The best way to help protect your neighborhood from crime is to know your neighbors; share their phone numbers; watch each other's home in their absence; and know their cars so you will recognize if strangers are at their home in their absence.

To form a Neighborhood Watch, call the Sheriff's office for the Risk Assessment Program, and complete the paperwork. Host a meeting with block neighbors. Put up "Crime Watch" signs.

The Harris County Deputy to contact regarding establishing a Neighborhood Watch program in Harris County, is Lanny Hitchcock, and can be contacted through the Highway 6 Storefront location. Deputy Argao will arrange to work this program together with Harris County.

Mike Martin announced that the GMBAC will try to plan a community Neighborhood Watch meeting with both Fort Bend and Harris counties in the very near future.

(Meeting adjourned at 1:00 PM)

**GMBAC Board Members**

**Donna Kinerd**

**Clayton, Sec. 1, 2**

[www.ClaytonHOA.com](http://www.ClaytonHOA.com)

[board@claytonhoa.com](mailto:board@claytonhoa.com)

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**Chuck Machauer**

**Clayton Woods**

\*

**Veronica Rogers**

**Great Oaks South**

[greatoakssouth@ymail.com](mailto:greatoakssouth@ymail.com)

Facebook: Great Oaks South Community

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**Michelle Gabel**

**Keegan's Ridge**

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**Wayne Thompson**

**Kingsbridge Com. Assoc.**

\*

**Kingsbridge Village**

**Jodie James**

[www.kbvhoa.org](http://www.kbvhoa.org)

[boardmembers@kbvhoa.org](mailto:boardmembers@kbvhoa.org)

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**Bob Leitner**

**Mission Bend Civic**

<http://missionbendhouston.com/>

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**Mike Martin**

**Mission Bend HOA**

\*

**Christine Clark**

**Mission Bend North, Sec. 3**

**Chantel Citizen  
Mission Bend South**

[missionbendsouth.com](http://missionbendsouth.com)

[lizm@houcomm.com](mailto:lizm@houcomm.com)

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**Kevin Jackson**

**Parkside @ Clayton Park**

\*

**Dianne Williams**

**Wingate HOA**

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

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**At Large Members**

**Winetta Billings**

**Terry Blair**

**Bert Garner**

**Non-Emergency  
Harris Co. Sheriff  
713-221-6000**

**Mission Bend Store Front  
281-564-5988**

**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/>
- **SPCA**  
<http://hspca.convio.net/site/>
- **The People Lawyer**  
<http://www.peopleslawyer.net/>
- **Harris County Public Health & Environmental Services**  
<http://www.hcphe.org/>
- **Report Street Lights out (# on Pole)**  
<http://cnp.centerpointenergy.com/outage>
- **Texas Department of Public Safety**  
<http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/>

**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

### Just one step away from being a Bad Customer?

What makes a online shopper a bad customer? According to the website <http://www.badcustomer.com/> all you have to do is dispute a credit card charge, charge back, without contacting the merchant first.

[http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/38022188/ns/business-consumer\\_news/](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/38022188/ns/business-consumer_news/)

### Knowing When to Buy an item can save You BIG Bucks!

<http://abclocal.go.com/ktrk/story?section=news/consumer&id=7553050>

### Problems with creditors and debt collectors?

Although everyone wants to pay his or her debts, and wants to pay them on time, it is not always possible. Sometimes there just is not enough money to go around. If you find yourself in this position, knowing the law regarding debt collection can help you negotiate the best settlement with your creditors. Here is a brief look at what your creditors may do, and may not do, when you don't pay your debts.

<http://www.peopleslawyer.net/legal-topics/debt-collection.html>

### HOA Resale Certificate Up-Date

When a house is under contract to be sold, State law requires an HOA to issue a resale certificate. Texas Property Code 207.0003 (f) now provides that the property owners association is required to update the resale certificate not later than the 7th day after written request by the owner or the owners agent or title insurance company, confirming the status of the unpaid special assessments and of any changes in the information provided in the prior resale certificate. The request must be made within 180 days after the date the original resale certificate was issued.

### Is your house wired for fire? Check these warning signs

Electricity continues to be a leading cause of home fires, according to a new report from the [National Fire Protection Association](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/HAW2/english/disaster_prevention.shtml).

[http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/HAW2/english/disaster\\_prevention.shtml](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/HAW2/english/disaster_prevention.shtml)



Picture of the Jackson Family Yard

### Temps are UP, Need to water the GRASS!

By Laura Beth Jackson

#### July Garden Checklist...

Your watering needs depend on your grass type, your soil, mow height, and your sprinkler system. With St. Augustine grass, always mow on the highest setting your mower will go. This helps crowd out weeds and keeps in moisture.

With temperatures in the 70's and 80's, 1 1/2 inches is okay. BUT we have been consistently in the 90's, so your grass will need 1 1/2 to 2 inches of water about every three days, at least. When highs are only in the high 80's, you need to water about every 4 to 5 days. St. Augustine needs the most water...more than Bermuda grass. Water as early as you can when the water pressure is the best. Don't water late at night because you will get fungal diseases, like brown patch. To see how long it takes your sprinklers to dole out 1 1/2 inches of water, put out empty tuna or cat food cans around the watering pattern. Check it after 15 to 30 minutes, to see how much you get. Just sprinkling your yard with the hose promotes shallow roots and grass that dries out. Get some automatic timers at Wal-Mart, so you don't forget to turn your sprinklers off.

Other stuff in the month of July is trimming your roses lightly. Now is the time to put down a slow release 4-1-2 Fertilizer for your lawn, like Easy Grow Premium Gold

(19-5-10). Do not use the weed and feeds, because the Atrazine is harmful to trees, shrubs and the water supply underground. Don't do heavy pruning of trees and shrubs during these warmest months. Try to plant heat loving annuals, like Copper Plants and Plumbago. Look at the medians of commercial properties to see what still looks good in this heat and plant that!



"Preventing the loss of life and minimizing the damage to property from hurricanes are responsibilities that are shared by all."

Throughout this Web site, information has been provided regarding actions that you can take based on specific hurricane hazards. The most important thing that you can do is to be informed and prepared. Disaster prevention includes both being prepared as well as reducing damages (mitigation).

Disaster Prevention should include:

[Developing a Family Plan](#)

[Creating a Disaster Supply Kit](#)

[Having a Place to Go](#)

[Securing your Home](#)

[Having a Pet Plan](#)

One of the most important decisions you will have to make is "Should I Evacuate?"

[http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/HAW2/english/disaster\\_prevention.shtml](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/HAW2/english/disaster_prevention.shtml)

### Hurricane Preparations for People with Disabilities

June 1<sup>st</sup> through November 30th is hurricane season. Texans with disabilities should begin preparing for hurricanes and other natural disasters that may strike with very little warning. People with disabilities, their families and attendants must consider matters of mobility, transportation, and electric/ electronic assistive devices and service animals that may make evacuation more difficult.

DARS urges our consumers to pre-register for transportation assistance with the Texas 2-1-1 Information and Referral Network and inform your family, friends and neighbors in advance that you might need their assistance throughout the hurricane season.

<http://www.dars.state.tx.us/announcements/20100629.shtml>

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