



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

June, 2010



Comments From the President

Each month when I sit down to write this article, I find myself going through a period of reflection. This month is no exception. But this month is a little bit different. You see, June 2010 marks the third anniversary of our community crusade. The Greater Mission Bend Area Council had its humble beginnings three years ago when a group of citizens reacted to a series of brazen robberies that were taking place in the driveways of our community. It seemed there were individuals from a local apartment community who were venturing into our neighborhood and literally holding people up as they pulled into their driveways. This made the news and gave the Mission Bend area a kind of notoriety. They came to be referred to as the Mission Bend Driveway Robberies. It was the kind of notoriety we can all live without.

In response to these events, a meeting was held at the newly opened community fire station on Bellaire. The fire trucks were moved out of the service bay and seating was set up for a surprisingly large gathering of local citizens. If you were one of those in attendance, you got to hear Fort Bend County Judge Bob Hebert address the concerns of our community. You also got to hear representatives from various law enforcement agencies speak on the threat of crime in our neighborhoods. That was all well and good and was long overdue. There were a couple of very interesting events which followed this meeting.

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Another Greater Mission Bend Area Council Sponsored Event

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

Our goal is to get the Residents, Business Owners, Law Enforcement Officials and Local Elected Officials all working together to find better ways to fight the crime in our Community.

The Public is Invited

The Town Hall Meeting will include various law enforcement officials to give valuable information on how to better approach and combat crime in our community.

Speakers are:

John Healey, Fort Bend County District Attorney, was born in Hartford, Connecticut, and is the oldest of seven children. John graduated from South Texas College of Law in 1981, and within a year, began working as Assistant District Attorney in Fort Bend County.



John was appointed and subsequently elected to four terms to perform the duties of Fort Bend County's District Attorney.

John and his wife Theo, have been married for 31 years and have been Fort Bend County residents since 1982.

- **Gerard Argao** has been with the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Department since 1996 and currently works under the Community Services Division of the Sheriff's Office as a Crime Prevention Deputy.
- **Samuel Cerda** is a 20-year veteran of the Harris County Sheriff's Office. Sam was certified as a Texas Peace Officer in June of 1992. Sam's entire Law Enforcement career has been with Harris County Sheriff's Office. The areas in which he has worked include Detention Bureau, Community Oriented Policing (Cops Ahead Program) and the Crime Prevention Unit as a Certified Crime Prevention Specialist.
- **Raul Collins** is a 12-year veteran Officer of the Houston Police Department. He has been involved in traffic, security patrols, narcotics and auto theft. He is currently assigned to Special Investigations.

Crime Prevention Vendors and Service Organizations will be available to answer questions before, during and after the meeting.

The Greater Mission Bend Area Boundaries:



Newsletter Ideas Welcomed!

Please email

pictures & articles to:

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

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

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For one thing, we found out that the citizens of our community would stand up and speak out about the problems of gang activity and other criminal activity in this area. Who knew? Secondly, there was a redoubling of effort by local law enforcement agencies to bring an end to the driveway robberies. This happened very quickly as the perpetrators were caught shortly thereafter. I would say that the police agencies involved heard our concerns – and acted on them. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, a group of citizens came together in a quest to take the spirit of the community meeting to a new level. These concerned citizens began to meet and eventually became the founding members of the Greater Mission Bend Area Council. The rest, as they say, is history.

Well, three years have come and gone. Much time and energy have been expended in a quest to provide our collective neighborhoods an organization to address the many challenges we all face. The GMBAC has been successful in bringing awareness of our community to political leaders in both Harris and Fort Bend counties. We are hard at work defining problems and setting the stage for real solutions to the many challenges that face our community. And on June 26, 2010 we will host a special Town Hall meeting to celebrate our three-year history and to address our citizens' concerns about crime prevention.

Yes, crime is still a serious problem in this area. It is a problem in any area of the region. Unlike other areas in the unincorporated regions of Harris and Fort Bend counties, we now have an infrastructure to address the issue of crime. I think that I can say with all candor that crime is the first agenda item on the plate for the Greater Mission Bend Area Council. Just like three years ago, we want to invite all the citizens of this community to join us as we offer a second Town Hall meeting to address crime prevention. Our slate of speakers will be announced soon. I can tell you that the meeting will take place on June 26, 2010 beginning at 8:45 AM and lasting until 1 PM. The meeting will be held at Mission Bend United Methodist Church (www.mbumc.org) at 3710 Highway 6 South, across the West Park from Wal-Mart. Please check our web site at www.GMBAC.com as we post information and updates about the meeting. So, mark your calendars, come early and plan to stay late. We plan to have a program which will inform you and which will encourage you about the future of this area. I look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

Mike Martin - President
Greater Mission Bend Area Council
E-mail: mmartin@GMBAC.com

Hurricane Season Started June 1st

HOUSTON (KTRK) -- Local officials have a message they want to stress to the public -- prepare now for this hurricane season.

Houston Mayor Annise Parker and Harris County Judge Ed Emmett have four steps they want everyone to keep in mind as this hurricane season gets underway, from June 1 to November 30.

- Make a plan
- Build a kit
- Stay informed
- Know Your Neighbors

Local leaders boiled the priorities down to this list. They say prior to the immediate threat of a hurricane, you should know whether you live in a flood zone, how to evacuate if the need arises and how to contact friends and family if you get separated. For instance, you might need to have a back up copy of all those cell phone numbers you haven't memorized.

Officials add you should have enough food, water and first aid equipment to last at least three days and have at least a half tank of gas in your car at all times during hurricane season. They add that if you were living in the area during hurricanes Rita and Ike, it's a good idea to review your plans from years past, particularly following last year's very calm hurricane season.

Mayor Parker promised "The city will do its part, the county will do its part, the state of Texas will do its part, but each one of us who lives in a coastal region has to know what our role in that is."

"We live in a hurricane-prone zone," Judge Emmett added. "We all hope and pray that we don't get hit, but if you operate under the assumption that a hurricane is going to come our way, then we're all much, much better prepared."

Judge Emmett also met with Galveston's mayor and said as soon as tropical force winds threaten the area, those coastal residents will be the first to evacuate. Anyone who needs special assistance including transportation, should call 211 now to be put on a list of those needing help in the event of an emergency. If you have called to be placed on this list before, you are asked to call again for this hurricane season.

Everyone is urged to get started on plans now, since this is anticipated to be a very busy hurricane season.

Are you still dealing with Hurricane Ike problems?

The statute of limitations for most claims will be in just a few months, so now is the time to review your legal rights. If you have legal questions, contact the Hurricane Assistance Program at the Texas Consumer Complaint Center.

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

Payment Options Available for Delinquent Harris County Property Taxpayers

Avoid Additional Penalty

Because economic times are tough right now, the City of Houston would like to remind Houstonians who may be struggling to pay their 2009 real property taxes that were due January 31, 2010, that there are options. Prior to July 1, 2010, you can arrange to pay your taxes in monthly installments. In doing so, you can avoid the additional 20% collection penalty that will become due on July 1, 2010, if taxes remain unpaid.

If there are no delinquent taxes from a prior tax year, an installment agreement can be set up by contacting the Harris County Tax Office Call Center at 713-368-2000, or by going to your local Harris County branch office listed at <http://www.hctax.net/MiscTax/LocationsList.aspx>. While the property owner will not avoid paying penalty and interest under the installment agreement, you will avoid the additional collection penalty of 20% on the outstanding balance by signing the installment agreement before July 1, 2010 and by making payments on time.

Harris County Appraisal District

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

Fort Bend Appraisal District

<http://www.window.state.tx.us/taxinfo/proptax/ARBvid/player.html>

Mosquito Control

When requesting service, make sure they are aware that we are in the County, outside of the City Limits.

Fort Bend County - 281/342-4513

www.co.fort-bend.tx.us/getSitePage.asp?sitePage=5741

Harris County (Precinct #3)

281-531-1592

<http://www.pct3.hctx.net/>

If you find yourself in a hole, stop digging.

Will Rogers

GMBAC Board Members

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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.hcphes.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

A new VA Clinic now open on U.S. 59

Information Provided by Fort Bend Herald

The outpatient clinic is located in the professional building near OakBend Medical Center, close to U.S. 59. The building is new and the clinic will be staffed by "highly qualified and experienced VA physicians, nurses, technicians, and administrative staff," according to a release from the Michael E. DeBaakey VA Medical Center in Houston.

Beginning May 17, the clinic will be open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The clinic will provide primary health care, mental health care, laboratory and X-ray services to veterans in the Richmond-Rosenberg area. Emergency medication needs will be met on a local contract basis.

Veterans interested in transferring their care to the new Richmond VA Outpatient Clinic should speak with their current VA primary health care provider to ensure smooth transition of prescriptions and other medical information, the release said.

Veterans needing more information should call the VA Network Telecare Center at 713-794-8985 or toll-free 1-800-639-5137.

The quickest way to double your money is to fold it and put it back into your pocket.

Will Rogers

How to Sue in Small Claims Court by Professor Richard M. Alderman The People's Lawyer

Small claims court is the real "People's Court." Small claims court provides a place where you can go to get back money that someone owes you. In small claims court, trials are informal. Most people who appear in small claims court do not have a lawyer. The purpose of small claims court is to provide an informal, uncomplicated proceeding to resolve small disputes which do not involve enough money to warrant the expense of formal litigation. There is only one major restriction in small claims court, the amount involved cannot exceed \$10,000.

New farmers market in Katy

It is located at E. 3rd @ Katy Fort Bend Road. The Produce is grown locally.

<http://abclocal.go.com/ktrk/video?id=7450923>



Cucumbers have many uses. Taken from the New York Times.

1. Cucumbers contain most of the vitamins you need every day, just one cucumber contains Vitamin B1, Vitamin B2, Vitamin B3, Vitamin B5, Vitamin B6, Folic Acid, Vitamin C, Calcium, Iron, Magnesium, Phosphorus, Potassium and Zinc.

2. Feeling tired in the afternoon, put down the caffeinated soda and pick up a cucumber. Cucumbers are a good source of B Vitamins and Carbohydrates that can provide that quick pick-me-up that can last for hours.

3. Tired of your bathroom mirror fogging up after a shower? Try rubbing a cucumber slice along the mirror, it will eliminate the fog and provide a soothing, spa-like fragrance.

4. Are grubs and slugs ruining your planting beds? Place a few slices in a small pie tin and your garden will be free of pests all season long. The chemicals in the cucumber react with the aluminum to give off a scent undetectable to humans but drive garden pests crazy and make them flee the area.

5. Looking for a fast and easy way to remove cellulite before going out or to the pool? Try rubbing a slice or two of cucumbers along your problem area for a few minutes, the phytochemicals in the cucumber cause the collagen in your skin to tighten, firming up the outer layer and reducing the visibility of cellulite. Works great on wrinkles too!!!

6. Want to avoid a hangover or terrible headache? Eat a few cucumber slices before going to bed and wake up refreshed and headache free. Cucumbers contain enough sugar, B vitamins and electrolytes to replenish essential nutrients the body lost, keeping everything in equilibrium, avoiding both a hangover and headache!

7. Looking to fight off that afternoon or evening snacking binge? Cucumbers have been used for centuries and often used by European

trappers, traders and explores for quick meals to thwart off starvation.

8. Have an important meeting or job interview and you realize that you don't have enough time to polish your shoes? Rub a freshly cut cucumber over the shoe, its chemicals will provide a quick and durable shine that not only looks great but also repels water.

9. Out of WD 40 and need to fix a squeaky hinge? Take a cucumber slice and rub it along the problematic hinge, and voila, the squeak is gone!

10. Stressed out and don't have time for massage, facial or visit to the spa? Cut up an entire cucumber and place it in a boiling pot of water, the chemicals and nutrients from the cucumber will react with the boiling water and be released in the steam, creating a soothing, relaxing aroma that has been shown to reduce stress in new mothers and college students during final exams.

11. Just finished a business lunch and realize you don't have gum or mints? Take a slice of cucumber and press it to the roof of your mouth with your tongue for 30 seconds to eliminate bad breath, the phytochemicals will kill the bacteria in your mouth responsible for causing bad breath.

12. Looking for a 'green' way to clean your faucets, sinks or stainless steel? Take a slice of cucumber and rub it on the surface you want to clean, not only will it remove years of tarnish and bring back the shine, but it won't leave streaks and won't harm your fingers or fingernails while you clean.

13. Using a pen and made a mistake? Take the outside of the cucumber and slowly use it to erase the pen writing, also works great on crayons and markers that the kids have used to decorate the walls!!

According to the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, the best time to plant cucumbers in Harris County is the end of March and during the month of April. I am sure the same applies for Fort Bend County. After reading this you may want to consider growing some next Spring. They are easy to grow, just need lots of sun and water.

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

Five ways grocery stores rip you off

For most of us, going to the grocery store is unavoidable. And if you're not careful, leaving too much money in stores' hands will be unavoidable, too.

<http://www.walletpop.com/blog/2010/05/14/five-ways-grocery-stores-rip-you-off/>

ABOUT GROWING OLDER...

Eventually you will reach a point when you stop lying about your age and start bragging about it.

Will Rogers