

The Watering Hole

The Willow Waterhole Greenspace Conservancy Quarterly Newsletter



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Celebrating progress together

After a year apart, we are excited to welcome everyone to this year's MusicFest. It will be a time for celebrating community and ongoing conservation efforts in a lively, joyful atmosphere—with lots of good music, we'd add.

It's our neighbors, friends, and local partners who have made the Willow Waterhole Greenway a true community destination. Whether it's a solo run or a family picnic, we're grateful to have a space available for all to use and enjoy.

Coming soon: Paved parking lot and new trails near Westbury Lake

The Conservancy is pleased to announce that two major project efforts will be coming to fruition this year—(1) a paving project and (2) new trails.

The Greenway has reached an inflection point. Several decision makers see its potential to become a valuable asset to the community and are making large investments.

Harris County Precinct One Commissioner Rodney Ellis is funding 2.5 miles of new trails at Westbury Lake while District K City Councilwoman Martha Castex-Tatum and Brays Oaks Management District are funding the paving of the Dryad driveway.

Construction on the trails is expected to begin at the end of the year, and the Dryad paving project has been bid and is expected to be completed before MusicFest on October 30, 2021. The new Dryad parking lot will be asphalt.

Many years of advocacy and volunteer efforts to make improvements have helped raise the Greenway's profile. The Commissioner, Councilwoman, and BOMD Board see the ability to serve a large, diverse population as well as its unique physical beauty and natural habitats.

In addition to providing a space for community involvement, they've discovered that the property is a successful example of combining greenspace and flood mitigation.

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Saying goodbye to a bumpy road



“Thank you for taking the Greenway to the next level! Optimism abounds for even more investment in the coming years.”

—Bill Burhans, President,
Willow Waterhole
Greenspace Conservancy
Board

Board member profile: Cindy Chapman

Cindy Chapman has been a homeowner in Westbury since 1988. After retiring, she decided to become more connected to her community and started volunteering—first, with the Westbury Civic Club and then with other organizations.

She attended Clemson University and is a chemical engineer by training. Currently, she is president of the Westbury Civic Club, which serves about 5,000 homes near the Willow Waterhole Greenway. Cindy works with the Willow Waterhole Conservancy Board as a community representative.

Cindy is also actively involved in other Houston community groups and is a past chair of the Houston Super Neighborhood Alliance and is currently the delegate representing the Westbury Super Neighborhood (WSN).

It's interesting to note that most of the Willow Waterhole Greenway is located in the Westbury Super Neighborhood, and the WSN sponsors a monthly litter cleanup at Westbury Lake. She also serves on the board of the Brays Oaks Management District as the board secretary, chairs the BOMD beautification and urban design committee, and serves on other BOMD committees.

Cindy and her husband Walter enjoy walking at the Greenway and learning about nature.



Cindy Chapman

Earlier this year, Cindy and Becky Edmondson (another WWGC Board member) and Cindy's husband Walter participated in the international "City Nature Challenge 2021" competition by doing nature observations at Willow Waterhole.

The Houston-Galveston team placed #1 in Texas for number of species and observers, #1 in the nation for number of species observed, and #3 in the world for number of species observed.



FUN FACT:

Cindy's older son John completed the very first Eagle Scout project at Willow Waterhole.

MusicFest 2021 is here!

MusicFest 2021 is scheduled Saturday, October 30, from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

The eighth annual **FREE** MusicFest features a diverse line-up of professional bands (57 musicians), student-school musicians, Halloween fun, Southwest Houston Community non-profits, and some of Houston's finest food trucks.

The Festival promotes building community through music, less flooding, more green space, and kids in the performing arts. Over the years, MusicFest has grown into a much anticipated community event.

Join the **costume contest** for dogs and mortals at Schwartz Gazebo.

Want to learn more or volunteer?
www.willowwaterhole.org/musicfest



OCTOBER 30 SATURDAY 11AM - 7PM FREE
 WILLOW WATERHOLE @ 5300 DRYAD DRIVE - 77035
ART CONTEST RULES & ENTRY FORM

Create a Halloween inspired scene to fit in a 10'x10' space. Store-bought and handmade items allowed. Top 10 entries will win \$25, \$50 or \$100 Grand Prize.
 Examples: Witches & Cauldron, Zombie Wedding, Skeleton Family Outing, Graveyard, etc.

ONLY ONE (1) ENTRY FORM PER APPLICANT.
 Entry Form must be received by 6pm, October 15, 2021
 email form to ggStarbuck@gmail.com
 Contestants must set up between 8am-10am at MusicFEST and will be notified of their location prior to the event.

CONTEST DIVISIONS:
 • Children 9 and under
 • Pre-teen 10-12
 • Teen 13-19
 • Adult 20+

Name: _____ Age: _____
 Address: _____
 Email: _____ Phone: _____
 Art Display Entry Description: _____

Enter by Oct. 15

Scare us with your spooky art at MusicFest

Want to engage your fun, creative side and possibly win a prize? Then, MusicFEST 2021's Halloween Art Contest is the event for you!

We're looking for Halloween-inspired scenes designed to fit a 10'x 10' space. Let your imagination run wild! Use handmade or store-bought elements. Winners will be selected and cash awards handed out during the day.

Fill out the Online Entry Form [here](#), or download the PDF on our [website](#).

Step by step: Master planning starting soon for Levitt Pavilion Houston

We've made major progress to build Levitt Pavilion Houston at Willow Waterhole Greenway. Despite hurricanes, floods, a possible toll road running over the original site, economic downturns, and, of course, Covid, we have an exciting plan!

Brays Oaks Management District will lead the master planning of the Gasmer property (former Shell Gasmer Technology Center) and will announce the Design Team (i.e. concepts for buildings, landscape and engineering) that has been awarded the work this fall.

Its focus will be the location of Levitt Pavilion Houston, the repurposing of buildings and structures, as well as its integration with Willow Waterhole Greenway.

You, the community, are a vital stakeholder and will be invited to participate at future meetings. Master planning is scheduled to take six months, and Levitt Pavilion Houston hopes to launch capital fundraising in mid-2022.

Currently, Levitt Pavilion Houston is managed by the Friends of Levitt Houston. They are building a coalition of supporters to help us bring the Levitt Pavilion to light.

In order to fund Levitt Pavilion design work, legal fees, and marketing materials prior to the capital campaign, please consider joining the "Founder's Circle" at: www.levitthouston.org/founderscircle



For updated details and to support "building community through music," please stop by the Levitt Pavilion Houston booth at Willow Waterhole MusicFest 2021 on Saturday, Oct. 30, 2021.

Levitt Pavilion—the home of future MusicFests



Can you spot them? Identifying common butterflies at Willow Waterhole

Part of the mission of Willow Waterhole Conservancy is to lead nature conservation.

To conserve nature, it's important to know what nature there is. Butterflies are a beautiful part of the Greenway's nature. They are colorful and easy to see, don't bite or sting, fly around when the weather is nice, and visit the native plants and flowers.

The butterfly life cycle has four parts, and they all happen at Willow Waterhole. Adult butterflies lay tiny eggs on a few related plants. Caterpillars are picky eaters and need the right plant to grow. When a caterpillar is big enough, it forms a chrysalis, from which an adult butterfly emerges. Adult butterflies eat nectar and carry pollen from flower to flower to help make seeds.

Many species of butterflies are found at Willow Waterhole. The smallest fits on the tip of an adult pinky finger while the largest is the size of an adult hand. Colors range from nearly white, to yellows, oranges, pale blues, greys, browns and blacks. Many have patterns such as spots or stripes.

As part of a national citizen science project, Irma Willcockson has been observing and recording butterflies at Willow Waterhole for four years.

If you are interested in butterflies and can walk along a trail once a month between March and November looking for butterflies, please contact her to find out more about the butterflies of Willow Waterhole at butterflymonitorstx@gmail.com.

Butterflies at Willow Waterhole

- Checkered Skipper
- Little Yellow
- Common Buckeye (pictured here)
- Black Swallowtail
- Fiery Skipper
- Gray Hairstreak
- Cloudless Sulfur



The devoted trio of gardeners who maintain Willow Waterhole's native prairie garden

While walking the trails at Willow Waterhole, many of us have wondered, “What plant is that?” You could certainly download an app or bring your plant guide.

In the meantime, we are fortunate to have several plant experts. Hazel Potvin and Noreen Hoard are master gardeners, and they, along with Mila Anton, are the primary caretakers of the native prairie garden located on the north side of Triangle Lake.

Every Thursday, you'll find the dedicated team of three pulling weeds to keep our small plot well-maintained.

Several years ago, it was suggested that our green space should include a native plant garden. It was hoped that this area could be used to educate visitors on the important role native plants play in flood control and animal habitat.

So, in early 2017, the site was selected and prepared for planting. The City of Houston Parks Department provided the plants, and Hazel, Noreen, and dedicated volunteers worked their magic to develop our garden.

The different seasons bring a changing variety of blooms. This summer we have several grass species, including the gray green, Indian and Eastern gama grasses.

The beds also have goldenrod and sky blue salvia growing tall. These plants provide a habitat for many of the birds, insects, small mammals and reptiles that call the Willow Waterhole their home.

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Mila at the prairie garden

Prairie Lake: Preserving Texas prairie dawn and growing our amenities

Willow Waterhole's Prairie Lake is located on the east side of South Post Oak just north of South Main.

The lake is surrounded by a 15-acre coastal prairie management area, which is home to a federally-listed, endangered plant species—the Texas prairie dawn.

As Willow Waterhole has grown so has interest in developing its green space. This summer, Ray Runge and volunteers from Boy Scout Troop 434 installed three benches along Prairie Lake.

The Willow Waterhole Greenway Conservancy is currently fundraising to provide more amenities as more residents enjoy the Prairie Lake area.

Donations can be made at willowwaterhole.org or mailed to 11415 Chimney Rock Rd, Suite 201, Houston, TX 77035. Volunteers are needed as well.

Funding will support the following projects:

- Benches/picnic tables
- Bike racks
- Education center
- Outdoor classroom space
- Parking at Gasmer
- Restrooms
- Tree planting
- Trails and signage
- Trash receptacles
- Viewing areas
- Windwood footbridge

Learn more about the Willow Waterhole Prairie Management Area on the Harris County Flood Control District's [website](#).

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Prairie Lake view



Texas Prairie Dawn



New bench

Thanks to our newest Willow Waterhole Greenspace Conservancy members and continuing donors

Thank you to our local community members whose yearly contributions keep Willow Waterhole a beautiful urban green space. The list below reflects new members and donors from mid June 2021 through August 2021.

Individual Members	Supporting Members	Sustaining Members
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alan Bernstein• Debra Tice• Donna Philips• Marc Philips• Ren Mitchell	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alvin Ubiera• Ian & Sherri Taxman• Kelley Tobin• Toni Blankmann	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Altar'd State• James Walzel• Ralph & Genevieve B. Horween Foundation• The Peters Family

Donation from Altar'd State City Center

Altar'd State, a women's fashion brand, hosts [Mission Mondays](#) at its stores across the U.S. On Mondays, 10 percent of each store's net proceeds can go directly to a local charitable organization.

Earlier this summer, the Altar'd State in City Center selected the Willow Waterhole Greenspace Conservancy as its organization.



In addition to providing a substantial donation, a team of volunteers from Altar'd State oiled the new wood sculptures in the Naturescape. In August, store managers G.A. Villareal and Camille Marcel presented Bill King with a check for more than \$4,600. We are extremely grateful for the hands-on support and generous spirit of the City Center team!

Conservancy Membership

There are lots of wonderful causes to support, and for us at Willow Waterhole, the Greenway is near and dear to our heart. We wanted to share a bit about why membership matters to us.



Why does WWGC need an annual membership base?

Financially, we have certain fixed expenses that must be covered by voluntary contributions, as well as what seems to be an unending list of improvements.

Many have realized what a great place it is and how much greater it can be. Events for the entire community must be planned, bills must be paid, and environmental enhancements such as tables, benches and most importantly, TREES, are needed.

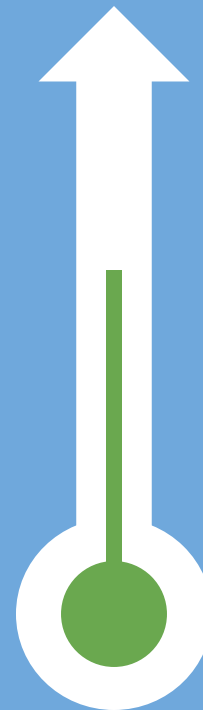
This park belongs to the community, and the more people who become involved in these projects, the more enjoyment it will provide for all.

We need a minimum of 200 members to form the base for this organization.

- **Individual Member:** The Conservancy is asking for an annual contribution of only \$50 from each of these members.
- **Supporting Member:** For those who can afford to pay more, a contribution of \$100 or more is necessary to become a Supporting Member.
- **Sustaining Member:** For those who wish to provide funding for long term projects, a donation of \$500 or more will be needed to be designated as a Sustaining Member.

If you are a Supporting or Sustaining Member, your spouse will automatically be considered a member. Donations will either be credited to operating funds or can be designated for special projects, if desired.

Yearly Goal:
200 members



Current Count:
122 members

Conservancy Membership

We reached our 100th member this year, but we are grateful for each and every member that contributes to the Willow Waterhole because they help us do what we do every day.



Grateful for our 100th member!

Our 100th member for 2021 is David Naff. He and his wife, Colleen, have lived in Meyerland for 20 years.

He has served in various capacities in his community, but he sees the Willow Waterhole as an especially worthwhile endeavor.

This is a place where every citizen can fulfill a role, as a donor, as a volunteer, or just finding a place to experience the beauties of nature in the middle of the city.



David + Colleen Naff

David is eager to participate in the growth the Conservancy will ultimately attain. You can join him. Our neighborhoods deserve a major park. The Willow Waterhole is a hidden jewel and can provide a model for the future on how to combine flood control and greenspace!

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Oct 6:** Waste Management Executive Conservation Workday
- **Oct 16:** YES Prep Cross Country Invitational
- **Oct 17:** Interfaith Environmental Conservation Workday
- **Oct 20:** St. Thomas Episcopal Cross Country Meet
- **Oct 23:** Texas Association of Private Schools Cross Country Meet
- **Nov 4:** Shell Oil Company Conservation Workday
- **Nov 6:** Mustang Cub Scout Rocket Launch
- **Nov 13:** Troop 601 Conservation Workday
- **Nov 20:** Tree Planting Troop 21721 Cub Scouts

Conservation updates

Highlights from our volunteer projects and other conservancy efforts:

- Security cameras installed
- Recognition plaques installed on benches/tables at Schwartz Gazebo area (BOMD, WWGC, HISD, HPARD)
- **July 3:** Eagle Scout project to install two Eastern Bluebird houses and add bluebird sidewalk mural
- **July 24:** Westbury High School Honor Society conservation workday at Naturescape Garden
- **July 31:** Eagle Scout project to add three benches to Prairie Lake
- **August 28:** Eagle Scout project to paint ten park benches, add Scout logos and signage on the sidewalk at the Dryad parking area
- Tours provided for the following:
 - Dixie Meynier and Fred Stow (Waste Management and Waukesha Pearce)
 - Beth White (CEO Houston Parks Board)
 - Kenneth Allen (Director HPARD)
 - Claudia Vassar (President Houston Botanic Garden)



Snapshots: Supporting local artists

We recently featured Rona Lesser's artwork on our Snapshots page, but she's back again. Prints of her iconic watercolor scene of the Westbury Lake bridge below will be available at MusicFest 2021. You can purchase in person on the day or connect with the Conservancy on [Facebook](#). We're grateful to the creative, active community that supports the Willow Waterhole!



A final word: Send us your photos!



We'd love to feature your photos in The Watering Hole newsletter. Clear, simple snapshots of landscapes, wildlife, and the lakes are ideal. Email photos to volunteer@willowwaterhole.org or tag us on Facebook.

Willow Waterhole Greenspace Conservancy

Park Address:
5300 Dryad Drive, Houston, TX 77035
Email: info@willowwaterhole.org
www.willowwaterhole.org

