

It is no secret that the economy this holiday season is still fragile. What we do and where we shop is important. Very Important. Every single dollar matters!

Please make every effort to support the local businesses in our community. These owners are your friends and neighbors. They sit next to you at church or at the stadium. They sponsor sports teams and contribute to local causes. They keep the community going.

Now they need your help.

Your dollars spent in local businesses have three times the impact on your community as dollars spent at national chains.

A multitude of local businesses, each selecting products based not on a national sales plan but on their own interests and the needs of their local customers, guarantees a much broader range of product choices.

This season and for 2013, when your family is thinking about where to spend money, think of the local families you are sustaining. Your dollars stay here in the community, which enable businesses to pay



**SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL ECONOMY
THIS HOLIDAY SEASON**

the rent, pay their employees (many of them your family members) and stay in business.

Sometimes shopping on the internet or buying from big national chain stores results in a less expensive price, but for a few cents more you will be contributing to a *wall of strength* against tough times.

Locally-owned businesses need you and are counting on you to spend with them. And when you think of buying a new car or new house - and this is a great time to be a buyer - let our area be the leader to show others how a community can come together and make a real difference.

If everyone reading this makes a commitment to shop local and patronize, as much as possible, the local businesses, then we will take control of our economy.

The way out of a recession is through spending - keeping our local businesses strong so they can keep paying salaries and keep the economy flowing.

America, Texas, and our community is only as strong as we want it to be. **It all begins and ends with you - our local consumer.**

News & Notes

November 20, 2012

Annunciation Orthodox School Gives Back for Thanksgiving

On Thursday, November 15, the Annunciation Orthodox School (AOS) participated in their annual Thanksgiving Food Offering. Students were asked to bring a bag of non-perishable food to school to share with those in need. The donations were given to Gulf Coast Community Service Association and Farias Early Childhood Center. During morning Chapel services at the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral, students brought one item to place at the altar as part of the donation blessing. With the holiday season upon us, AOS encourages participation in outreach and service programs as they help to build character, instill responsibility and develop compassion in our students.



Chapel Buddies Bronwyn Walsh (7th grade) and Harper Rives (Kindergarten).



Winning Bookmark Artists (l-r): back row-Jacob Arango 3rd grade, Maria Appleton Figueira 5th grade, Eleanor Phipps 4th grade; front row-Momoe Honjo 1st, Gyzelle Tobon 1st, & Clara Gronfor 2nd.; Not pictured: Alessandra Fernandez K & Sanaa Mia 3rd.. Photo by Debbie Shaw

Poe's All Star Book Fair

Poe Elementary's Annual Book Fair was the week of November 12. The theme of the Book Fair this year was "Every Reader is a Star"! Gearing up for the Book Fair a few weeks earlier, many Poe students proudly created bookmarks and submitted their designs to be chosen as the winning bookmark, one design for each grade level. Finalists were selected by the Book Fair Co-Chairs, Janet McMasters and Cathy Klaff, and the Poe teachers then voted for their favorite entries for each grade. Winners received a \$10 gift certificate to use at Poe's book fair as well as a bookmark with their personal design.

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November 20, 2012 Vol. 27, No. 25



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Miles: Stadium Park District Won't Happen In Next Legislative Session

By Kathleen Ballanfant

Proponents of a Stadium Park Management District ran into a buzz saw of public disapproval last week and found themselves out on a limb as the buzz saw cut them off.

A meeting room at Linkwood Park was packed Thursday night with residents - and some business owners-from throughout the Braeswood SuperNeighborhood area, a vociferous group who let

their elected officials know they were not ready for another layer of government.

And while elected officials assured them that residential property would not be "assessed" or "taxed" to pay for the proposed district, attendees were unconvinced that their wallets would not be tapped in the future. Many also said that plans for the district has been formulated without their knowledge, and if a letter had not been sent out (required by law) telling

them that a bill establishing the district would be introduced in the 2013 Texas legislative session, they would have been blindsided by the whole effort.

The district was conceived by Houston City Councilman Larry Green as an effort to revitalize the South Main corridor near Reliant Stadium. He says he's watched other management districts doing good work to increase security, clean up the streets, erase graffiti and more, and he believes a management district in the area surrounding Reli-

ant Stadium would provide the impetus for business investment in the area and economic development.

"We have pawn shops and motels," Green says. "I think we can do better."

The proposed district would include an area of 6.6 square miles centered on Buffalo Speedway and Interstate 610 South, and situated between the Greater Southeast, the Five Corners and the Brays Oaks Management Districts.

On paper, the gerrymandered boundaries resemble

See District page 13

Poor Farm Ditch Proposal Delayed

By Ben Ballanfant

Southside heard from their drainage expert last week, Mike Vandewater with KV Engineering, who informed them that due to some reorganization at the Harris County Flood Control District discussion has slowed on the Poor Farm Ditch drainage project.

Southside Place representatives continue to work towards their preferred plans and getting HCFCD to move ahead with it to improve the drainage situation for Southside. One of the hurdles is acquiring mitigation for the improvements.

Vandewater is meeting with the new project manager for HCFCD to make sure they are up to speed on the PFD project.

Southside City Council appointed members to the Citizens Park Advisory Board, a new board to work with the also new city parks department. Andy Chan, Judy Stanley, Daryl Hoover, and Jeremy Monthly will report and recommend improvements and special projects in an advisory role.

In related news the city will have the Winter Wonderland Carnival on Decem-

See Southside page 16

Enter Our Holiday Coloring Contest!

It's time for area youngsters to get out their crayons, colored markers and pencils, and turn on their imaginations in order to win the chance to turn on the holiday lights at Holiday Magic in Rice Village!

Each year, Village News sponsors the contest to determine who the lucky winner will be. The Grand Prize winner gets to flip the switch officially lighting the Village Christmas tree!

Winners in each category are presented prizes at the ceremony, and contest entrants have their masterpieces on display. Children can enter the contest by coloring the entry form in today's Village News on page 8.



LAWN & LANDSCAPING

Continued from page 11

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District from page 1

an aardvark about to take a bite out of Westbury. That's because, Green says, Fred Meyer, owner of Meyer Park and a board member of the Brays Oaks Management District, wanted his South Post Oak property included. That meant connecting the Reliant Stadium area to Meyer Park via a "neck" along South Braeswood. Green held a series of meetings with constituents shortly after taking office in January, and he told them he wanted to do something to stimulate redevelopment in the South Main area. While residents apparently "heard" his desire, it was not clear to many that he wanted to establish a management district. In the intervening months, Green says he met with various commercial property owners and professionals who would do the paperwork to legally establish such an entity. Those efforts culminated in a letter

sent out last week from David Hawes, whose firm HawesHillCalderon has done the legwork to create management districts in Montrose, Spring Branch, Brays Oaks and other areas. Hawes said the letter was sent to every residential and commercial property owner within the proposed boundaries of the Stadium Park District. Phone lines started to buzz and emails whizzed through cyberspace once the letter landed in mailboxes. The verbiage which set off the fireworks included this provision: "The District will have the power to levy ad valorem taxes and to impose and levy assessments on property within its boundaries, to impose and collect other revenues for its public purposes, and to issue bonds and other obligations that are secured by such ad valorem taxes if such bonds are approved by the voters of the District at elections called

for that purpose after receipt of required petitions." Hawes, Green and State Rep. Borris Miles were the main speakers at Thursday's meeting, which was officially a meeting of the Braes SuperNeighborhood. Both Hawes and Green offered their mea culpas to the clearly unhappy crowd. However Miles, who residents say they were told would sponsor the legislation (along with State Sen. Rodney Ellis), said he knew nothing of the project until the day before. Ellis was not at the meeting. Miles was not pleased that his name had been invoked as supporting the project. "I just found out about this yesterday," he said. "A neighbor brought it to me." Neither Hawes nor Green disputed Miles' statement that Miles had not been informed. Green said residential areas were included in the boundaries to give homeowners an option to


increase security. He also named several large medical entities, such as the Women's Hospital, who had been left out of the boundaries at their request. He said the Texans football organization was interested in the concept, but the property they occupy is owned by the county and so exempt from the assessment. Order was difficult to maintain in the meeting, with multiple comments loudly delivered simultaneously. Attendees told elected officials "no" in no uncertain terms: "To me it appears dishonest," one woman said; "This idea did not come from the residents," said another; "I want my house out of the district," from yet another. Many spoke of their distrust concerning future taxation on their homes; a small business property owner included in another management district complained of frustration about its leadership; many said they simply didn't

"trust" what was going on. It was Miles who ultimately brought the meeting to a close by declaring he would not sponsor a bill in January establishing the district. "I am making the executive decision that this will go on the table," he told the

crowd. "It will not come up this session." He left the door open for further exploration of the idea, saying that if he was convinced that residents wanted the management district, it could come up in the legislative session two years away.

Join the Fun!

St. Vincent de Paul School PTO is hosting their annual Breakfast with Santa. It will take place in the Msgr. Jamail Parish Family Center from 8:30-11:30 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 1. The theme this year is "12 Days of Christmas." Enjoy a pancake breakfast and breakfast tacos, as well as photos with Santa, performances by the SVdP school choir, a fantastic holiday shopping market and numerous crafts for the kids to enjoy. This year, each class decorated a mini-tree skirt and signed it. These will go around mini trees that will decorate tables and be up for auction at the end of the event. Join the fun musical celebration and get in the holiday spirit! Walk-ins welcome with an admission fee of \$35 for a family of 5, \$5 each additional immediate family member.



BREAKFAST WITH SANTA