

Henrietta Jacobsen

When former mayor Henrietta Jacobsen died in May at age 96, the City lost one of its staunchest champions.

Henrietta worked tirelessly to preserve our city's unique character and her influence can be seen everywhere from our Master Plan and the ordinances which buttress it, to the 300-acre Wild Basin Wilderness Preserve on our northern border.

"The people in West Lake look at it as a retreat. They know when they get home they will have their privacy... when you cross the low water crossing and go through the canyon, you have a sense of escape," she said in *Eanes*,

Portrait of a Community.

She will be missed by many.



THE CITY OF WEST LAKE HILLS

911 WESTLAKE DRIVE
WEST LAKE HILLS, TX 78746
P: (512) 327-3628 F: (512) 327-1863
WWW.WESTLAKEHILLS.ORG

Mayor:

Dave Claunch, x 823
mayor@westlakehills.org

City Administrator:

Robert Wood, x 825
cityadmin@westlakehills.org

Mayor Pro Tem, Council Place 3:

Stan Graham
wlhcc3@westlakehills.org

City Planner:

Ashby Grundman, x 838
planner@westlakehills.org

City Council Place 1:

Linda Anthony
wlhcc1@westlakehills.org

Police Chief: Cliff Spratlan

(512) 327-1195
chief@westlakehills.org

City Council Place 2:

Taylor Holcomb
wlhcc2@westlakehills.org

ZAPCO Chairman:

Robert Meisel
wlhczp15@westlakehills.org

City Council Place 4:

Darin Walker
wlhcc4@westlakehills.org

Wastewater Commission Chairman:

Steve Hudson
wcc3@westlakehills.org

City Council Place 5:

David Moore
wlhcc5@westlakehills.org

Wastewater Coordinator:

Robbie Davis, x 830
rjdavis@westlakehills.org



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911 Westlake Drive
West Lake Hills, Texas 78746



Is It Time for a Stoplight at Westlake and Redbud?

Traffic congestion continues to increase at the four-way stop where Westlake Drive meets Redbud Trail. Motorists trying to clear the intersection experience lengthy delays, with traffic backed up in all directions during rush hour. This congestion impacts the entire community, not just rush hour drivers who sit in their cars in long lines waiting to get through the log jam. Residents throughout West Lake Hills face delays going to and from their homes by way of this intersection. Adjacent neighborhoods are negatively impacted by cut-through traffic as frustrated motorists seek alternative routes on residential streets, endangering the safety of pedestrians, children, and pets. And next year, during construction on the widening of Bee Caves Road, the situation is likely to worsen as traffic increasingly diverts onto Westlake Drive, Redbud Trail, and into nearby residential neighborhoods.

The West Lake Hills City Council has agreed to study the problem. Recognizing the community-wide impact of the situation, and in response to a petition from an adjacent neighborhood, the Council has developed an action plan to take

input from all interested citizens and to seek expert advice.

A wide range of options are under consideration, including the possible installation of a four-way traffic signal at the intersection of Westlake Drive and Redbud Trail. Traffic calming strategies are also on the table.

The City is currently seeking proposals from traffic engineering consultants who can examine the congestion

at Westlake Drive and Redbud Trail and the impacts on adjoining neighborhoods. The Council will consider hiring a traffic consultant in July, and will then hold a public hearing on August 13 to allow for public input before the consultants conduct their formal review.

The consultants will conduct traffic measurements in September when vehicle traffic is higher due to the resumption of school activities. The City Council expects to receive a report from the traffic consultant in October with their recommendations for improving traffic flow and

reducing cut-through traffic in the area neighborhoods.

Your input on this important matter is needed and welcome. Any interested citizen of West Lake Hills is encouraged to participate in the



Traffic congestion on Redbud Trail forces vehicles into adjoining neighborhoods.

public hearing. Citizens are asked to come and tell the City Council their views on traffic control measures and on the potential installation of a traffic signal at Westlake Drive and Redbud Trail.

The first public hearing before the City Council will be held on August 13, 2014 at 7:00 p.m., at City Hall, 911 Westlake Drive. Additional public hearings are likely over the next few months as the Council considers the consultant's recommendations. Visit the city's website at www.westlakehills.org for meeting dates and times.

**NEW COUNCIL MEMBER PROFILE:
Darin Walker**

Darin Walker is the newest West Lake Hills City Council Member having been elected on May 10, 2014.

As a forty-plus-year resident, Darin's roots run deep in the community. He moved to West Lake Hills in 1974 where he attended Eanes ISD schools then went on to graduate the University of Texas at Austin with a degree in Economics.



Darin spent twenty years working with leading firms in the financial services industry before changing his discipline to real estate. Today, Darin is a highly-regarded real estate agent with Moreland Properties.

His background in finance and real estate coupled with being a long-time resident give him a unique perspective in addressing the important issues facing our city.

Darin is eager to engage in the pursuit of creative solutions to address the needs and concerns of the citizens and he is committed to work within the city council on issues in a fair and balanced way. His focus is centered on forest management, managing wild fire risk, improving water and wastewater infrastructure, traffic conditions, and in fostering civility in city government.

Dead Brush Pickup Returns

The City Council recently voted to conduct another free citywide dead wood and brush pickup project starting August 4 in order to reduce wildfire fuel loads.

Dead wood and brush greatly increase the risk of wildfire, which is why the City's Code of Ordinances requires all property owners to keep their properties clear of dead brush, fallen trees and dead limbs at all times. This project relies upon residents to clear dead wood from their properties and stage it along the street for collection by City crews prior to the collection date.

In the coming weeks, residents will receive a letter from the City explaining the details and logistics. To maximize efficiencies and minimize

costs, the city will be divided into two areas during the collection period. The first area to be picked up is for those streets north of and including Redbud Trail to the city limits.

Residents in this area are asked to place all dead brush for collection along the roadway in front of your property by 7 a.m. on August 4. Pick up in your area will begin that day. The second area is for all streets south of Redbud Trail to the city limits. Residents in this area should have their brush ready for collection by Monday, August 18.

To help reduce the risk of wildfire during this collection period, we ask residents not to stack their brush along city streets until just prior to their scheduled collection date.

Join the 9th Annual 4th of July Parade

The parade starts at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, July 4th in the parking lot of parade sponsor Northstar Bank at the corner of Westlake

Drive and Bee Cave Road. The parade proceeds down Westlake Drive to Rocky River Road, then to Reveille Road and back to the

bank parking lot. Our friends at the Westlake Chamber of Commerce have arranged for food and entertainment for the whole family including a brass band playing

patriotic marches, a bouncy house, a dunk tank, and more games and fun for the kids. Food and drink will be provided by Texas Honey Ham

Company, Amy's Ice Cream, P. Terry's, Randall's and many others – including some new area restaurants.

Paint your dog red, white and blue, decorate your car, bike or stroller, or dress up like Uncle Sam for a chance to win the prize for "most patriotic." We hope to see you there!



Coyotes Among Us: A Resident's Perspective

By Melody Lytle

As a twenty year West Lake resident, I am pleased to live in a community which takes pride in our natural surroundings. Our wooded neighborhoods contain the abundant species unique to western Travis county and we understand our obligation to protect them. A healthy ecosystem includes predators such as great horned owls, gray fox, and coyotes and, fortunately, we have them here.

While most of us are thrilled to spot an owl or a fox, seeing a coyote can cause alarm. Though seemingly threatening, urban coyotes present little danger to humans. In fact, the secretive coyote often lives nearby in our prey-rich ravines.

Coyotes are members of Canidae or dog family. Like dogs, coyotes are smart and adaptable. They live in social groups which adjust their breeding to control population size. They are opportunistic omnivores eating almost anything. Though normally reclusive, they will approach a residential food source if unchallenged.

In much of Texas, they are the only remaining predator of significance, controlling populations of white-tailed deer and rodents. This is beneficial where dense population of white-tailed deer cause collisions and over-grazing of natural vegetation. This high populations of prey species

will inevitably attract predators and some predation of fawns and elderly deer is to be expected. The only way to extirpate a predator population is to extirpate the prey and this is unrealistic. Additionally, coyotes sometimes eat carrion removing a source of odor and pathogens. Much of this is good news for urban dwellers.

Given that any predator perceives

elderly pets to be prey, good pet stewardship demands that small and/or elderly pets remain indoors or near their owners when outside. Such pets are subject to predation by great horned owls, gray fox and large dogs as well as coyotes.

So why are coyotes occasionally seen in the open away from their hidden territories? The answer is the irresistibly easy pickings we unwittingly provide. Urban coyote food includes backyard pet food, fallen tree fruit, bird food under a feeder and the resulting rodents, compost, deer corn and scraps left for raccoons. The smart and sneaky coyote quickly learns the location of these tidbits and can become sufficiently emboldened to be seen by people if unchallenged. This

newly habituated coyote may lose its natural fear of humans and need a bit of retraining or hazing.

Hazing is an alternative to traps

Coyote hazing is a scare technique which restores an animal's natural fear of humans. Several YouTube

videos show humans jumping around, shouting, shaking cans of coins and similar noise makers.

Similar to a

grandmother on Prancercize, this bit of undignified silliness must be instigated when a habituated coyote is seen near a residence and repeated at least twice. The coyote will relearn that people are dangerous and cease to approach. This does not mean that they are gone, just out of sight. This retrained coyote will continue to hold the territory against newer possibly bolder coyotes.

Hazing is cheaper, more humane and more effective than trapping. For my personal opinions, see <http://www.karenmelody.com/Coyote/slide01.htm>. If yelling, waving your arms and making loud noise is not your idea of an evening's entertainment, call me, Melody Lytle, at 512 327 4748. If I am in town, I will come over and help.



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