



Aug / Sep 2014

## Civic Club Meeting August 14, 2014 **NEW TIME: 6:30P – 7:30P** **Meadowcreek Village Community Center**

**Speaker:** HISD Police Officer Mercedes Lopez on "Back to School" Safety. **Agenda:** Civic Club Officer Elections

It is that time of the year again when we elect new officers for the 2014/2015 year. Most of us in the executive committee have served the maximum consecutive 2 year term in the same office. Anyone who has been a member for the preceding 6 months is eligible to hold office. The officers of the organization are: President, 1st Vice President (Membership), a 2nd Vice President (Deed Restrictions), Treasurer, and Secretary.

If you want to make a difference in your neighborhood, come out and make your nominations and make your vote count. Much of our work has been accomplished through social media such as Facebook, email and good old fashioned eyeball-to-eyeball contact and interaction with our community leaders — The President.

**Dog Walker Watch:** This year's National Night Out is spearheaded again by our VP of Membership, Ms. Michelle Flores. In addition to the yearly NNO, is organizing a "Dog Walkers Neighborhood Watch Program" that is composed of residents in the neighborhood who are dog owners/walkers. This program is an initiative from the NNO organization in an effort to keep neighborhoods safe. The program is free to join and consists of a training from HPD on how dog walkers can be citizens on patrol for the neighborhood. If you are interested in being part of this training and program for you *and* your dog, please contact: [membership@meadowcreekvillage.org](mailto:membership@meadowcreekvillage.org)

### Upcoming events:

### National Night Out

**Oct 7th, 2014, 6:00PM**

As of July 29, we have 5 Host Homes!! YAY!!

Host Names and Locations:

**The Feldman Family** 5514 Berry Creek Dr (Berry Creek/Woodbine St.) **(Flag D)**

**The Rocha Family** 5207 Sleepy Creek Dr **(Flag C)**

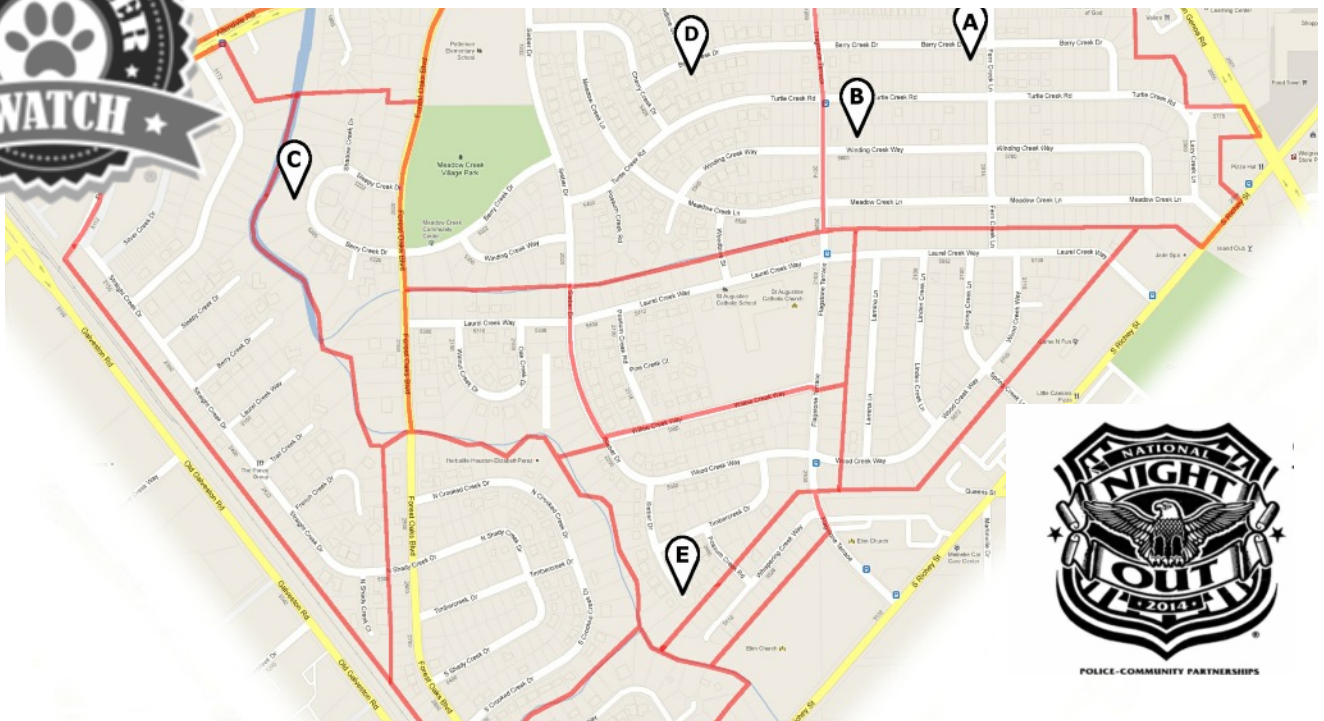
**The Vaughn Family** Sieber Dr Cul-de-sac **(Flag E)**

**The Flores Family** 5654 Berry Ck Dr (near Fern Ck Ln) **(Flag A)**

**The Garcia Family**, 5611 Winding Ck Way (near Flagstone Terr) **(Flag B)**

Please let us know by email: [secretary@meadowcreekvillage.org](mailto:secretary@meadowcreekvillage.org)  
Phone: Suzanne, President: 713-890-2356 or by Facebook.

Because City of Houston Recreation Supervisor position has not been filled. We are not sure if the COH will open the community center this year, for NNO.





Meadowcreek Village  
Civic Club  
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Houston, Texas 77287

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#### 2013-2014 Officers

##### President

Ms. Suzanne Rigganbach  
713-890-2356

[president@meadowcreekvillage.org](mailto:president@meadowcreekvillage.org)

##### 1st Vice President (Membership)

Ms. Michelle Flores

##### 2nd Vice Pres (Deed Restrictions)

Mr. Stuart Snow

##### Treasurer

Mr. Mark Clemmons

##### Secretary

Ms. Elizabeth Perez

##### Newsletter Publisher/Editor (Acting)

Suzanne Rigganbach

This newsletter is a publication of *Meadowcreek Village Civic Club, Inc.*, the author for copyright purposes. It is distributed to nearly 1,500 homes and institutions throughout the Meadowcreek Village neighborhood in southeast Houston.

We welcome your comments, suggestions, and story submittals. We can be reached through the E-mail or postal address shown above. For advertising information, please visit our web site or write to us.

This newsletter is published the first week of February, April, June, August, October and December. The deadline for all materials is the **20th** of the month prior to publication. Advertising content is the responsibility of the sponsor. The Civic Club does not guarantee or endorse any product or service advertised herein

## Become a Member!

\$4.17/Month is the average monthly cost of the annual household membership. Our membership fiscal year runs from Oct to Sep. You can pay anytime that is convenient to you whatever month! Please visit: [www.meadowcreekvillage.org](http://www.meadowcreekvillage.org) to pay via PayPal or send \$50 to the PO Box address listed in the lefthand column.

The Meadowcreek Village Civic Club Board is made of hard working people that volunteer their time, labor and a lot of times their own money on behalf of the neighborhood. The board is in constant contact with our area political representatives, local schools, local law enforcement and City of Houston departments to help resolve a variety of issues. Want to help?! We need you! Become a Board member a part of a committee! Or if nothing else support the Club with your membership dues!

Be informed, Get Involved, Make a difference!

## Last Month At-A-Glance

July's meeting was themed on neighborhood safety tips from our neighborhood HPD Officer Jerry Rodriguez & Michelle Flores, VP of Membership along with a representative from Center Point Energy as a guest speaker on smart meters.

## HPD Officer Rodriguez on How to Address Crime in Meadowcreek:

Currently, HPD is short-handed on the number of police officers on patrol due to budgetary reasons with only 10 officers per year joining the force. However, the doing the following tips will help keep you and the neighborhood safe.

**KNOW your neighbors** – Introduce yourself to your neighbors, get their names and contact information, and be sure to exchange your information as well. Being neighborly creates awareness on your street, and has the added bonus of having a phone tree handy for when the need arises.

**Smart phones & Cameras** – If you have a smart phone, be sure to video record or take pictures of suspicious individuals and/or activity. If you capture suspicious activity, please submit the video and/or pictures to HPD.

**Description** – Stay calm when witnessing suspicious activity and get a good description of the individual(s) – gender, clothing, age, ethnicity, distinctive features, such as tattoos/piercings, etc.

**Vehicles** – License plate – full or partial plate number, make & model of vehicle, color and distinctive features, such as tinted windows, stickers, embellishments, etc.

**HPD** – Notify, report and forward the above information to HPD via phone. Register for HPD's crime prevention website: [www.nextdoor.com](http://www.nextdoor.com) and report the information there as well. By registering on this website, you give HPD immediate access and information that allows HPD to see/map occurrences in the neighborhood.

**Facebook** – If you have an active account, be sure to join the "Meadowcreek Village" group page. Neighbors often post lost pets, welcome new neighbors, announce community events and report suspicious activity.

<b>Useful Contacts:</b>
<b>HPD non-emergency:</b> 713-884-3131
<b>HPD Eastside Dispatch</b> 713-928-4600 (press '0' then '#' to connect to dispatch)
<b>HISD Police:</b> 713-892-7777 Constable
<b>Pct. 2 Dispatch:</b> 713-477-2766 HPD Emergency: 9-1-1
<b>City General Concerns</b> (lights, streets, animals): 3-1-1

Continued:**How to Address Crime in Meadowcreek:**

**Patrols** – Want more HPD car units patrolling Meadowcreek Village? Contact Council Member Dave Martin’s office and request more patrols. Contact Evan Austin, Adm. Asst. via phone: (832) 393-3008 or via email: [evan.austin@houstontx.gov](mailto:evan.austin@houstontx.gov) .

**Center Point Energy on Smart Meters:**

Center Point Energy maintains the lines for all energy/electric providers. This means that whenever there is a power outage the customer notifies his/her electric company, the electric company then notifies Center Point of the outage to be addressed.

Smart meters are now used. Center Point no longer uses meter reader workers. There should not be any workers wanting to go into your backyard to read your meter. If this happens, call HPD immediately.

To know about a power outage specific to your house and street due to weather or other circumstances, register your information at: [www.smartmetertexas.com](http://www.smartmetertexas.com) to receive this information via text message, phone call and/or email notification.

**Neighborhood Burglar Prevention Tips**

1. **People are your best defense** -- be a visibly nosy neighbor. Let anyone walking the neighborhood or sitting in a parked car see you watching them. Make a note of car license plates and if anyone behaves suspiciously or stays in their car for a lengthy period, call the police.
2. **Tell close neighbors you trust** if you plan to be away or expect any deliveries. If they're in the know they're more likely to notice something you didn't mention and spot unexpected callers at your home (burglars often call at the front door of a house to check if anyone is there).
3. **And, if you are going away**, use timers to switch lights on and off at random, cancel newspapers and put a hold on your mail deliveries -- or, to guard your schedule, arrange for the trusted neighbor to collect them.
4. **Having a dog is a huge deterrent.** Ironically, burglars are far more likely to avoid a house with a small dog than a big one -- small dogs tend to be nervous and less easy to trick into calming down. They're less trustful and bark louder and longer.
5. **Take a walk around your home**, inside and out, to figure where the weakest link in your security might be -- like leaving a window open in a secluded spot. High-risk places include the door from your garage into the house, back doors, side "breezeways" where a burglar would not be seen, and large shrubs close to the residence where thieves could hide.
6. **Take action to increase protection** in these vulnerable places -- like installing keyed window locks and deadbolts on doors and using toughened glass in windows and doors. Remove those shrubs. If you leave windows open on the second floor, make sure your extension ladder is locked away.
7. **Be wary** about who you allow into your home and how much information you give about your belongings and schedule. This applies even with neighbors you don't know or fully trust ("inside" jobs are not uncommon). And don't leave valuables in view, inside or from outside the house.
8. **If you're able**, vary the times you leave and return home. If your household has several cars, vary who drives them, making it more difficult for an observer to know who is home and when.

**Street light Repair**

**800-332-7143**; choose a language; then press 5. Before you call have the Nearest street address & 6 digit light pole number.



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Remember Meadowcreek Village has a Facebook site: search for **“Meadowcreek Village.”** This site now has **296 422** members as of 8/2.

## Neighborhood Burglar Prevention Tips continued:

9. **Make it tough** for home burglary prowlers to know whether they're under surveillance. Fake cameras can be good -- but only if they could be taken for the real thing, not cheap plastic devices with flashing lights, which home burglars easily identify. A good camera system can cost around \$500 – if you install it yourself.

Fake security stickers or signs don't work either, but, if you have an alarm, real stickers and signs work.

10. **Control access** to and around your property. Consider motion-activated lights, even on the street outside your home. Neighborhood Watch, Video Surveillance, No Parking, and No Outlet signs can be effective against home burglary too. This way, would-be thieves know you mean business.

11. **Motion-activated cameras** are another powerful weapon -- both as a home burglary deterrent and, linked to a computer (and, better yet, to a home network), to record images of your unwelcome visitors. These days, these devices are inexpensive. Network-linked cameras costing around \$85 can even email images so you have an off-site backup (it can send images automatically to a separate email account, so that even if the camera is disabled, the pictures are still available online).

12. **An alarm system**, preferably with a visible box outside the house, will not only deter crooks but sound an immediate alert of a home burglary. You might seriously consider a system that's monitored 24/7 by a security company who will quickly notify law enforcement of an incident. (beware of the big names however, there are monitoring services that cost as little as \$15/month.

13. **Gates to your property** can also be a home burglary deterrent, (even if there is another way out).

Renters could have a temporary sticker they must surrender at the end of their lease, while visitors collect a pass which they must return on leaving.

14. **Avoid creating temptation.** Don't leave things like lawn mowers and bikes unattended outside; lock them up. Inside, burglars are more likely to go for "middle of the road" valuables than expensive jewelry and appliances -- because they're easier to redeem for cash.

15. **Don't hide a key.** Home burglary crooks know all those "secret" places. One reporter recalls: "I interviewed a burglar who hit the same house every few years for 30 years. Astonishingly, as he was showing us what he liked about it, he jumped out of the car to show us where they had hidden the key, over the door, for about 10 years!"

**Connect to the Meadowcreek Village Facebook Group Page!** Where you can get instant updates on any suspicious activity in our neighborhood! We must stick together and watch out for one another!



- **Make a Plan**
  - **Build a Kit**
  - **Stay Informed**
  - **Know Your Neighbors**

There were about seven of us in attendance at the most recent of the monthly **PIP** (Positive Interaction Program) meetings held at the Houston Police Department's Eastside Division sub-station, on 7525 Sherman (one block from Harrisburg & 75th St) every 3rd Monday of the month. We had a chance to meet the officers that patrol the neighborhood.

For this month's topic Captain Dobbins invited Jackie Miller from the City of Houston Public Safety Department. Ms. Miller discussed disaster preparedness including weather related and human-caused disasters.

Some websites that were sited to stay informed is [houstontx.gov/emergency](http://houstontx.gov/emergency) for accurate information. Houston's residents can receive emergency notifications by signing up at [alerts.houstonoem.org](http://alerts.houstonoem.org). For individuals with access and special functional needs they should register State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR) by visiting [texasstear.org](http://texasstear.org) or dialing 211. All this information can be found the "**Disaster Preparedness Guides**" which will be available during the August civic club meeting. Also discussed at the meeting was the increased criminal activity. (See News on page 7.)



**August** Yard of the Month:  
Congratulations to the Rivera Family at  
5217 Sleepy Creek. The beautiful  
Canary Island Palm, Queen Palms and  
colorful pansies were landscaped by 3  
Sisters Nursery. Job well done!



**August** Yard of the Month runner up:  
The Winfield family  
5471 Cherry Creek



**July** Yard of the Month  
The Malone Family  
5223 Berry Creek



Through the efforts of the MVCC Board, the Beautification Committee, community residents, and our local law enforcement, Meadowcreek Village has managed to make a dent in a recent spike in graffiti vandalism that has occurred throughout the neighborhood.

As the author of one article on this problem points out:

*“Far more serious than the economic ramifications associated with cleaning up the graffiti is the insidious perceptions of disorder, contempt for the law, fear, and lawlessness that the tagging image leaves behind...”*

We must understand this is an ongoing battle. If there are any graffiti tags in the neighborhood that you see please feel free to contact the Beautification Committee:  
[beautification@meadowcreekvillage.org](mailto:beautification@meadowcreekvillage.org)  
 We will do our best to clean it up! Please show your support by paying your dues!

From the new Patterson Elementary Principal:

Dear MeadowCreek Village Community,

I want to express how excited I am to be a part of an active community that supports the mission of a school and the children that attend it. I am an experienced principal in HISD with elementary, middle and high school experience. My vision for Patterson Elementary is to make it the best magnet elementary in our area. Parents should not have to send their children across town to attend a good school. I want you to know that I will work hard to make you proud of our school! We all know that it takes the school, businesses, organizations, and involved community members to make a community vibrant, safe, and a desirable place to live in. During your June meeting, I was able to speak and meet with several of you regarding my new assignment. I know that I will have your support to accomplish the goals of our school and I look forward to earning your respect and support in the Meadowcreek Village community.

I look forward to working with you in the years to come!

Juan M. Gonzalez, Principal

Patterson Elementary



**Other Neighborhood News:** Our “sister” neighborhood, Mount Vernon, located off of Queens Rd and Allen-Genoa, has a little crowing to do. One of their long time residents and also long time school board member Pasadena ISD, for 18 years, is Nelda R. Sullivan. July 29th, the PISD Board voted to rename Queens Middle School the Nelda R Sullivan School.

### Neighborhood news and updates –

One of our civic club members wrote an email to District E Council Member Dave Martin. The subjects of concern were the crime rate in our neighborhood, street racing, and, most recently, graffiti or "tags" that plagued many of the signs and flat surfaces in the area. Mr. Martin was asked, if there were any "out-of-the-box" ideas to decrease the crime and street racing.

Correspondence from Mr. Martin's office replied: that Meadowcreek Village has been extremely engaged on a variety of issues for the betterment of the community, and that he for one has been truly impressed with the dedication and organization exhibited by the Meadowcreek Village Civic Club.

Regarding the continuing problem with break-ins and street racing, email from Mr. Martin's office states that it is the, understanding that Captain Dobbins and his team are doing whatever they can to alleviate these unfortunate issues. At the HPD Eastside Division PIP meeting, a few weeks ago Captain Dobbins expressed the difficulty in reducing the number of break-ins due to the fact that many arrested perpetrators make bail and return to their criminal activities before they go to trial. It was stated further that understands that HPD has made many recent arrests in the area in the past month or so and there is hope that once these individuals face trial the instances of theft will be greatly reduced. In response to an earlier email by another concerned resident regarding the illegal street racing, Captain Dobbins noted that he was going to have his patrol units increase their visibility along Allendale and HWY 3.

Mr. Martin's office statement: "We greatly appreciate the initiative you and your club take in pursuing betterment for the Meadowcreek Village community. As the city has a limited number of resources, it truly aids us in our ability to best do our job when communities like yours are such engaged partners. We will continue to be in touch with Captain Dobbins and his team to follow up on these issues, and please feel free to contact us any time with any further questions or concerns."



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## Save the Dates!

### August 2014

Aug 14, Thursday - Civic Club Meeting – Speaker: HISD Police Officer Mercedes Lopez on “Back to School” Safety \*\*Meadowcreek Village Civic Club Officer Elections\*\*

Aug 25, Monday - 1<sup>st</sup> Day of School for HISD

Aug 26, Tuesday - 1<sup>st</sup> day of school for PISD

Aug 4 - Heavy Trash, Junk Waste North of Allendale

Aug 11 - Heavy Trash Junk Waste South of Allendale

Aug 4 & 18 - Recycling (Green Bins)

### September 2014

Sep 1 – Monday - Labor Day

Sep 2 – Recycling Bin

Sep 7 – Sunday - Grandparents’ Day

Sep 11 - Civic Club Meeting (Wear your patriotic colors to honor those who went before us on this day.)

Sep 25 - Rosh Hashanah

Sep 2 - Tuesday, Tree Waste Pickup North of Allendale

Sep 8 - Tuesday, Tree Waste Pickup South of Allendale

Sep 1, 15, 29 - Recycling Green Bins

### October 2014

Oct 7 - National Night Night Out Texas

Oct 9 - Civic Club Meeting

Oct 13 & 17 Recycling Green Bins