



THE NEWSLETTER FOR AND ABOUT THE "COMMUNITY THAT MEANS BUSINESS."

DataVox Breaks Ground on New Headquarters

Construction is scheduled to be completed in August 2012



The building features a unique three-story curtain wall lobby with sky bridges accessing the front entrance pods. It will feature an open concept designed office space, numerous break/meeting/huddle areas and multiple balconies.

Motorists on the West Sam Houston Parkway will notice the earthmovers and construction workers laboring practically round-the-clock on a three-acre parcel near Bellaire. In a recovering economy, construction is a pleasant sight to see. It's particularly so for the founders and employees of DataVox who will be occupying the building in late summer, thanks to an aggressive construction schedule.

Surrounded by all 145 employees, the Westchase-based technology company DataVox broke ground last fall on its new state-of-the-art headquarters. The new location will almost double DataVox's current leased space while giving the Westchase area a new jaw dropping edifice and making room for 50-75 new employees.

"After being in the Westchase District for 10

years, we realized that this area offers easy access to all parts of Houston," said Alan Ferguson, president of DataVox's SMB Solutions. "We have more than 7,000 customers in the Houston area, so accessibility is key. Westchase is a good fit for us."

Recognized by the *Houston Business Journal* five times for its exponential growth, it is no surprise that DataVox outgrew its previous office space. The decision to stay in Westchase was not a hard one. In addition to accessibility to clients and employees, Westchase's real estate market is still growing despite the economy.

"Our builder found our piece of land a year ago," said Steve Ferguson, president of DataVox Enterprise Solutions. "We searched all over the Westchase area and determined this was the best place for visibility and ease of access to service our customers."

The new facility should be completed by August. The \$10 million, three-story, 48,000-square-foot building is designed and constructed by American Commercial Contractors and features a glass curtain wall atrium. The design concept will accommodate numerous amenities including meeting and huddle areas, expandable meeting rooms, plus a large server room and networking operational center.

"When we made the decision to build, we told the builder that we wanted a cutting-edge, high-tech facility that looks like what we do," said
(cont. on pg 4)

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The Westchase District is a municipal management district funded by local property owners in a 4.2 square mile area centered on the Sam Houston Tollway between I-10 and US-59 in Houston, Texas. It is home to 81,000 employees and 28,000 residents. We promote and encourage economic development through programs that enhance public safety, area mobility, area marketing, area image and beautification.



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We welcome your comments and story ideas. Visit us online at www.westchasedistrict.com.

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Action/Reaction

Happy New Year! And Happy Year of the Dragon (or Water Dragon to be more precise)! The Asian concept of Ying/Yang and its constant balance corresponds well to one of the basic laws of physics: “For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.”



Jim Murphy
General Manager Westchase District

We at Westchase District conduct projects and programs designed to produce responses and in this issue of *Westchase Today*, we cover a number of our actions and a number of market reactions. But they aren't tied to each other directly. Westchase District, the political subdivision tasked with economic development for the area, is the actor and the reactors are private sector businesses operating in a free market. Our work is not the sole cause of their actions, but we do contend that developing and maintaining a positive environment for businesses to build, relocate or expand is a powerful factor in their decision making.

Keeping Westchase District attractive and identifying it as a unique business community are being achieved through the Gessner landscaping project and the underpass enhancements of the Westpark Tollway at Briarpark and Wilcrest. Our purchase of a third patrol vehicle for our expanded public safety program evidences our commitment to keeping the area safe. And in what is without question the headline on not just this issue but for 2012, we have broken ground on the Library Loop

Trail. This multi-purpose trail enhances our mobility and adds a key amenity to our community. It also provides the “local match” we used to secure funding for the next trail phase, Library Loop South.

The three “reactions” to these projects include renovations being made at Candlewood Suites and soon at the Westchase Hilton. The fact that these owners are making these additional investments tells us that the market is strong and they are confident about achieving even higher returns. The same can be said for Granite Properties, albeit at a much greater scale. Granite is one of our largest owners and has announced the construction of a new 300,000-square-foot office building called Granite Briarpark Green. With few large blocks of space available, Granite is well positioned to benefit from our improving market.

Yet the story that we find most gratifying is about DataVox's new 48,000-square-foot headquarters. They became the most recent company that outgrew their leased space and stayed in our area. What's more, with the construction of their own building, they are now investor/owners here as well as an employer.



Mark Taylor
Board Chairman Westchase District

These great decisions by these private companies in turn inspire us to take additional actions needed to keep our area safe, mobile and attractive -- which we expect will generate more positive developments. So the cycle continues. In balance.

Competitors Prep For 15th Annual Corporate Challenge



With less than a month remaining before the Westchase District's annual Corporate Challenge, two types of teams are emerging: those that plan to practice and compete to win and those that are determined to have the most fun. Sometimes it is hard to tell the difference.

Granite Properties team captain Charlotte Young and her team donned under-eye paint and matching t-shirts bearing their team name “The Knuckledusters” to come out and play last year.

They offered an imposing presence, but were really only there for the fun. “We always say we're going to practice, but we never do,” says Young.

Young wouldn't reveal what their team name or theme will be this year. “It will be a surprise,” she says with a laugh. “We like to look tough, but we're really there to have a good time.”

The Houston West Chamber of Commerce is a long-time participant in the Corporate Challenge. This year, they'll have two teams. One will represent the members of the Chamber's Health & Wellness

Added Curb Appeal is Coming to Gessner Esplanades



The next installment of the Westchase District's master beautification plan will soon bring landscaping enhancements to the spacious esplanades on Gessner between Richmond and Meadowglen. When completed, the landscape designs will complement improvements already in place throughout Westchase District. Landscape crews began work on Gessner in early February and should be finished in April.

Motorists and pedestrians, as well as adjacent office tenants and residential neighbors, will soon see a wooded scenery of bald cypress, live oaks and crape myrtles. A splash of color will be provided by an understory of Asian jasmine, society garlic, variegated flax lily, foxtail fern, prostrate juniper, drift roses and knockout roses. Several dry creek beds will be created to aid drainage and provide additional visual appeal. These esplanades are twice the size of the average esplanades in Westchase, which makes for a larger landscaping palette. The flowerbeds are spread out and the dry creek beds interrupt their meandering design.

"The bald cypress trees complement the dozens of cypress trees that the Westchase District has planted in the Westheimer esplanades, while the deciduous live oaks offer a texture that's different from the evergreens so often incorporated into roadside landscaping," said Irma Sanchez, vice president of projects for Westchase District.

"We were a bit skeptical about the bald cypress when we first incorporated them into our Westchase plant and tree palette," said Sanchez, "but they have become one of our favorites. They add a different

dynamic to the appearance in terms of shape, texture and color. The live oaks, as we have discovered, are very hardy trees and have proven to weather the test of time in Westchase."

These improvements cost \$202,000 and are being funded in collaboration with the Westchase Community Association I. The landscaping is being done under the City of Houston's Deed of Gift program, whereby Westchase will install and maintain the landscaping and irrigation system, while the City provides the water. WCA I and the Westchase District have enjoyed a long history of partnering on improvements that not only bring beauty, but also provide long term value for business.



With its master beautification plan, Westchase District has been making steady progress at sprucing up the area. The Gessner esplanade improvements



come after one of the busiest intersections in Westchase District was recently treated to similar landscape enhancements. In late 2011, crews landscaped the slopes of the underpass where the Sam Houston Parkway crosses Westheimer. The nearly 100,000 motorists who travel through the intersection on a typical day have been treated to the sight of live oak and bald cypress trees towering over flowerbeds brimming with yellow flag irises, prostate juniper and dwarf oleander bushes.

Committee; the second will be made up of the Chamber's young professional organization. Committee member Robert Bazemore, who will lead the Health and Wellness team, says, "We want to promote health and wellness, not just with lectures and literature, but also by being a good example in the community. We also like the idea of helping meet the Quillian Center's mission in the community." They'll also have fun, bringing along a cheerleading squad.

Visit www.westchasedistrict.com to see a complete list of participating teams and sponsors, or to register your team. Space is limited and, as of press time, only a few openings remain.



The Granite Knuckledusters know how to have fun at Corporate Challenge.

New Lighting Project Makes Westchase Brighter

Walking and motoring through and past the Westpark Tollway underpasses at Briarpark and Wilcrest now offers a refreshingly new Westchase experience.

All work was completed in February, transforming the Westpark Tollway underpasses at Briarpark and Wilcrest into a brighter, safer and more appealing pathway for pedestrians and motorists. The \$119,000 project was designed and installed by Highlights Electrical.

As part of Westchase District's commitment to make the area more attractive and pedestrian friendly, the organization implemented lighting upgrades consistent with the recent improvements of the West Sam Houston Tollway underpasses at Briar Forest and Richmond. In an effort to reduce noise and traffic delays, work on the two underpasses was performed during nighttime hours. The District kept any public inconvenience to a minimum, limiting lane closures.

"Our goal is always to improve the Westchase District without creating a disturbance to our



residents, businesses or people traveling to work in the District," said Irma Sanchez, vice president of projects for Westchase District

The lighting enhancements powerfully highlight and characterize the Westchase District boundaries and enliven the area into a more pedestrian friendly passageway. A key feature of the lighting elements is the installation of the 22 custom-made sconces, identical to those at the tollway underpasses at Richmond and Briar Forest, which so brightly and cheerfully mark that entry point into Westchase District.

"With the new lighting, we anticipate that people will feel like they are walking in a safer and more enjoyable environment," said Sanchez. "The underpasses are adjacent to METRO bus stops, so the new lighting make it more convenient for bus riders to get to and from the stops and their destinations."

Previously, the Westpark Tollway underpasses at Briarpark and Wilcrest were illuminated from dawn to dusk by low-pressure sodium fixtures that emit a dull yellow glow. The illumination from the newly installed stylishly shaped sconces is a bright white, which presents a more modern appearance.

"Our aim is to encourage people to get out of their cars and enjoy more walking and bicycling," said Sanchez. "This is only one of our steps toward fulfilling this vision."

DataVox Breaks Ground on New Headquarters

(cont. from pg. 1) Steve Ferguson. “We designed a state-of-the-art technology center that will serve as a showcase for the advanced technologies that we offer.”

Founded in 1988 by Ross Ferguson and his sons Steve, Alan and Neil, DataVox started out as a telephony and telecommunications company. According to Steve Ferguson, DataVox has grown to be a trusted partner for businesses looking for technological solutions. The company offers advanced technologies such as structured cabling, network infrastructure, videoconferencing and IP video surveillance solutions.

DataVox worked with Jim Rozman, general manager of American Commercial Contractors and its in-house architect to design a building that communicates distinction and success with its location and high-tech architectural design. According to Steve Ferguson, the added amenities offer employees a “home away from home.”

“We strive to define a business through architecture. In the case of DataVox, style and substance created a corporate ‘home’ for the company and an architectural landmark for Westchase District,” added Rozman.

“We’re so pleased that DataVox not only decided to stay in Westchase District, but is also investing in Westchase as an owner,” said Jim Murphy, Westchase District general manager. “In the world of economic development, it’s always a plus when you can retain your current companies while you’re working to attract new businesses to the area. DataVox’s decision is a testament to the kind of work that the Westchase District staff and board are doing to make this area the best address in Houston for business.”

For more information, visit www.datavox.net or call (713) 881-5300.

Westchase HPD Officer Is Fulfilling His Childhood Dream



He was college educated to become an accountant or a politician – relatively safe, challenging and rewarding careers.

Instead, he chose to pursue a more dangerous job packing a firearm, wearing a badge and protecting the peace. Today, he is one of the top lawmen on the Westchase beat.

Houston Police Department Officer John Jones brings a unique advantage as an officer due to his educational background. He graduated from the University of Houston with Bachelor’s degrees in both accounting and political science. This combination of education, which would prepare someone for public office or balancing business finances, has proven quite useful to Jones in law enforcement.

“My familiarity with accounting helps with financial crimes,” said Jones, “while my political science degree taught me to look at situations from multiple sides. I know that my personal experience differs from others, and I am able to put myself in their shoes.”

Jones’ desire to become a police officer came to him as a child. Shortly after college, he was accepted into the Houston Police Department Academy, and knew then that he had found his true calling in life and would be fulfilling his life-long dream.

“All the officers I know really

like their job. They enjoy helping people and the day-to-day diversity of the career,” said Jones. “I also liked the fact that I would be in the field all day.”

He has worked with the HPD for five years, and last year transitioned from a patrol officer to an investigative first responder in the Westside Station. As a patrol officer, he was not always able to see how the story ended. The new position allows Jones to tackle a crime from start to finish. It’s a combination of patrol and detective work.

He enjoys taking a break from his position with HPD to patrol the peaceful streets in the Westchase District, an assignment that he has worked for more than three years.

His favorite part of the job is the people.

“Everyone I have worked with is very nice,” said Jones.

“When I am patrolling, businesses and residents are happy to see me.”

According to Jones, Westchase enjoys a low crime rate, and HPD doesn’t have any serious concerns about safety in the area.

When he has spare time, Jones engages in trail running. “I enjoy getting out on local trails to clear my mind,” said Jones. “I am very excited about the new trail being created here in Westchase.”



New Safety Initiatives for 2012

Over its 16 years in existence, Westchase District’s public safety program has evolved and changed to take advantage of all the latest technologies and trends in law enforcement. This year is no different as the District and its Public Safety Director Mark Hubenak are stepping up security measures to ensure that Westchase District continues to be a safe environment in which to live and work.

“We are expecting great results from our new public safety initiatives,” says Hubenak. “These programs will help us raise the bar as we continue to implement proactive enforcement efforts and measures.”

Westchase District has added a vehicle to its fleet, allowing for an additional 30 hours per week of patrol visibility. The District’s newest vehicle is a 2011 Ford Expedition. Like its predecessors (also Expeditions),

this vehicle is outfitted with a light bar, mobile data terminal and a caged rear seat (for holding or transporting criminals).

“With their distinctive Westchase District markings, these vehicles are easily identified as patrol vehicles,” added Hubenak. “They really give our law enforcement program a high degree of visibility.”

Two more proactive initiatives have been launched in response to identified crime trends. Burglary of a Motor Vehicle (BMV) continues to be a frequent crime throughout Houston. In Westchase District, officers are conducting strategic stakeouts to catch repeat criminals.

Also, uniformed officers are going door to door in apartment communities to share valuable crime prevention tips with residents and ask about any public

safety threats to the community. According to Hubenak, this so-called “knock and talk” effort has been well received by apartment community residents. “We believe the increased visibility by our officers deters criminals from coming here.”



More than 30 officers make up the Westchase District Patrol. Pictured, above, with the three patrol vehicles and two patrol bikes are Sgt. Justin Kennedy, Officer Jon Jorsch, Officer Andy Supelveda, Sgt. Paul George, and Officer John Jones.

New Shopping Center Caters to Residents Who Live and Work in Westchase



The newly re-designed and re-built Woodlake Square features nationally popular retailers mixed with local favorites to provide Westchase employees and residents great dining options and the accessibility to everyday necessities.

“People can casually circulate through Woodlake Square to buy groceries or visit one of the retail stores before catching lunch or dinner with a friend or colleague at one of the new or updated restaurants,” said Ron Lindsey, AmREIT’s managing vice president of development.

AmREIT and its partner, AEW Capital Management, are responsible for the redevelopment of Woodlake Square, creating a more cohesive and reinvigorated property.

“Soon, a luxury apartment complex will be built at the northeast corner of the center,” added Lindsey. “Its residents will have easy access to Randalls, retailers and the fabulous restaurants. The wide variety of eateries offer something tasty for just about every palate.”

A LITTLE SPICE IS NICE

Ragin Cajun is a family-owned restaurant started by the legendary Mandola family. In 1974, they moved from Lake Arthur, LA to Houston to open their first Ragin Cajun restaurant, bringing New Orleans cuisine to the Lone Star State. The restaurant features the Mandola’s famous seafood and specialty po-boys, boudin, two styles of gumbo, red beans and rice, mouth-watering bread pudding, along with other classic Cajun favorites.

Since the success of the first restaurant, the Mandola family has expanded to four Houston locations. Robert Hyatt, general manager of the Woodlake Square location, proudly says his restaurant is the best Ragin Cajun.

“The variety of lifestyles



and amenities of the newly redesigned Woodlake Square shopping center provides us with a unique clientele,” said Hyatt. “We are equally busy during lunch and dinner hours and are looking forward to more business with the on-going construction from apartments and other retailers in the Westchase area.”

Ragin Cajun is a casual dining restaurant, but offers high-quality service with separate lunch and dinner menus, delivery service, box lunches, on-site catering, private party rooms and even private crawfish boils.

For more information on Ragin Cajun, visit www.ragin-cajun.com, find them on Facebook or on Twitter.



CRAVING A JUICY BURGER?

In 1986, Jerry and Janie Murrell advised their four younger brothers, “Either start a business or go to college.” Conclusively, they decided to open a carryout burger joint – Five Guys Burgers and Fries. Today, there are 770 locations coast-to-coast, including 120 corporate locations.

Currently operating 23 restaurants in Houston, the delicious and powerful aroma of Five Guys is unavoidable, wafting like a cloud enveloping nearby sidewalks and streets. “We are looking forward to see the growth from our new location in Woodlake Square in the Westchase District,” said Bob Higgins, regional vice president in Houston. “Since the opening in November, we have been flourishing and are hopeful for good endeavors from the surrounding businesses and neighborhoods.”

With the majority of their business coming from the Westchase community, Five Guys has the advantage of being able to produce delicious food for customers on the go. Using only peanut oil, Five Guys serves more than 300 pounds of fries each day and uses 150 pounds of fresh ground beef to mold their hand-formed patties.

Tyson Mosley, general manager of the Westchase Five Guys expresses his excitement for this new flavorful experience. “We have been very pleased with the rapid growth of the Woodlake Square shopping center and think it can only bring in good

business for Five Guys. Many of our employees live right here in the Westchase District.”

There are more than 250,000 ways to customize your burger at Five Guys. They also offer online ordering through their website, www.fiveguys.com. The Woodlake location is open daily from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Socially connect with Five Guys on Facebook and Twitter.

SUPERIOR SOUPS, SALADS AND SANDWICHES

Corner Bakery Café is another restaurant that succeeds at providing high-quality food, but also blossoms from their café style approach, which was formulated in 1991 with the philosophy of “creating a place to relax and gather with friends and family.”

The casual atmosphere features innovative, seasonal menu options ranging from hot breakfast and signature panini sandwiches to handcrafted salads and irresistible pastries. Offering great tasting food that’s served quickly from fresh ingredients makes Corner Bakery Café stand out.

“Westchase is located in an area that both employees and guests can reach,” said Sarah Greenberg, general manager of the Woodlake Square location. “Many staff members live within walking distance of the bakery. Our cafés thrive in both suburban and urban markets; Westchase gives us both.”

“We are pleased to be part of the revitalization of the Woodlake Square shopping center. It is always a pleasure to be able to grow within a community,” said Greenberg. “Here at Corner Bakery Café, our vision is to be the place where your neighborhood gathers for food and friendship, and Woodlake Square shopping center gives us that opportunity.”

For more information, visit www.cornerbakery.com or find them on Facebook.



How Passion Leads to Success



U.S. Elite Masters Martial Arts Hall of Famers Eric Williams and Hai Nguyen, are expert trainers in physical fitness, self-defense, life skills and co-owners of one of the largest mixed martial arts training facilities in the nation, Elite Mixed Martial Arts (Elite MMA).

Founded in 1999, Elite MMA has two locations in Houston and Baytown. With the rapid growth of the practice of martial arts in the community, the Elite MMA location in Westchase District is in the process of expanding, more than doubling its space to 18,000-square-feet. The expansion will allow individuals and families to receive age-specific classes simultaneously. The additional space will accommodate more students by including a second level to its current building.

“Owning a mixed martial arts facility that allows families to share what is possible in life through martial arts



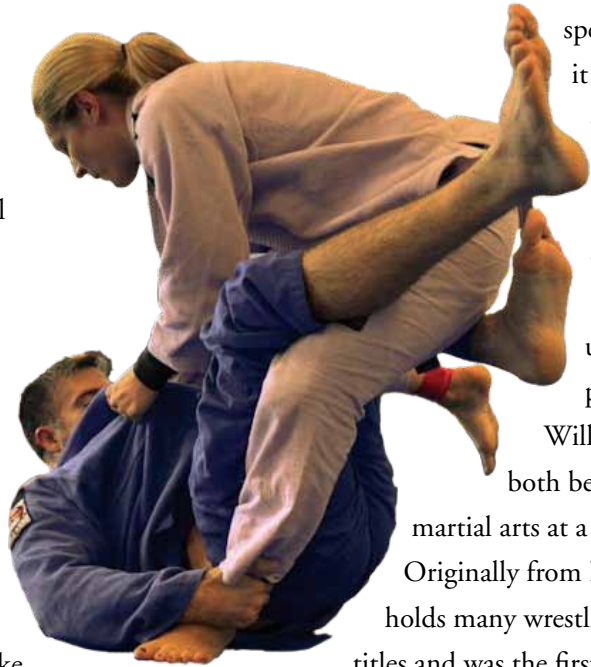
together has always been a dream of ours,” said Williams. “Dad doing MMA and mom working with a personal trainer while their children learn MMA that’s focused on personal character development is going to be awesome.”

Elite MMA has grown from 14 students and has always focused on family, offering a variety of MMA classes for all ages. Adults striving to meet personal fitness goals will find classes like Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu (BJJ), kickboxing, self-defense and private one-on-one classes conducted simultaneously with children’s classes. “It’s a way for everyone to get their needs satisfied,” said Nguyen.

Children can work on physical education and fitness while their parents practice BJJ and other MMA classes upstairs. “Parents are really attracted to this feature because their children want to come to Elite MMA to practice and not just sit in a waiting area while their parents workout,” said Nguyen.

Elite MMA’s concept focuses on using martial arts as the vehicle that teaches discipline, self-respect and integrity. Nguyen explains BJJ: “It’s like playing chess, except you use your body. To control someone else, you have to be able to control yourself first.”

Nguyen continued, “We place physical objects in front of our students to act as mental obstacles they are striving to overcome that will help them reach their



specific goals, whether it pertains to fitness, career, weight loss or any other personal goals. We discuss custom objectives with each student upon entering the program.”

Williams and Nguyen both began training in martial arts at a very young age. Originally from Kansas, Williams holds many wrestling championship titles and was the first Houstonian to achieve his black belt in BJJ and the second American ever to win a world title in the black belt division of BJJ. Williams’ passion for martial arts has helped him overcome several injuries that had left him temporarily paralyzed. He has regained the use of his body through rehabilitation and continues to teach as one of the most technical BJJ practitioners in the world.

Born in Vietnam, Nguyen emigrated with his family to the U.S. when he was two-years-old. He began his martial arts training in Houston at age 14. Nguyen was one of Williams’ first students.

Elite MMA is located at 10640 Westheimer Rd. Find them on Facebook and Twitter or visit www.Elite-MMA.com.



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(713) 781-9195 | qmc@quilliancenter.org

Keeping Westchase Beautiful Just Got Easier

On the second Saturday of each month, from 9 am to noon, Westchase District offers a **free and convenient** opportunity to recycle.

We’ve partnered with Republic Services to provide recycling bins at the Carillon Center on Westheimer.

So save your aluminum, glass (all colors), paper, and plastic (types 1-5 and 7 – sorry no foam products) for the next Westchase District Community Recycling Day. Drop them off at 10001 Westheimer.

Learn more at westchasedistrict.com

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A Hike and Bike Trail Ten Years in the Making



The Westchase District broke ground Feb. 14 on the Library Loop Trail that will connect the Robinson–Westchase Library on Wilcrest to the U.S. post office on Rogerdale. Westchase District General Manager Jim Murphy and Houston City Councilman Oliver Pennington, among other government and elected officials and community leaders, gathered behind the library to celebrate and expressed their excitement for the trail, which will provide a new option for outdoor fitness in the area as well as a route for residents to visit the library or go to work.

“This trail was envisioned 10 years ago,” said Murphy. “This trail is a system connector. What makes it particularly important is that it will connect the Buffalo Bayou trail system to the Brays Bayou trail system.” He went on to emphasize that the trail “is critical for our community

and is a huge amenity.”

Designed by Brown & Gay and SWA and constructed by Millis Construction, the 1.35-mile trail should be completed by late summer. Thanks to support from adjacent land owners, the \$700,000 Library Loop Trail will be built on a Harris County Flood Control District drainage way.

Lovebirds may soon have a local path to stroll and celebrate time with each other, or enjoy family fun. The 8-10 foot wide concrete trail will feature water fountains, fences, exercise stations and additional landscaping, creating a scenic space for all.

This is only the first phase of the trail system that will eventually connect Terry Hershey Park at Buffalo Bayou to Arthur Storey Park south of Bellaire. “We hope to provide users an off-street connection to numerous apartment communities and employment

destinations,” said Irma Sanchez, Westchase District vice president of projects. “The trail also will give residents an opportunity to connect to the City of Houston’s on-street bikeway system and METRO’s Harwin Park and Ride.”

“This project has the potential to improve the environmental health of the area by providing an alternative to motor vehicles. The area will benefit from reduced vehicle emissions and noise pollution,” said Sanchez. “We also hope that it will inspire people to exercise more and improve their health.”

For more information, visit www.westchasedistrict.com



Westchase’s Easy Access Inspires Granite to Expand its Presence



The Westchase District enjoys a near 90 percent office occupancy rate and continues to be a coveted spot for a variety of industries requiring quick access to

downtown Houston and other business areas. Granite Properties, a leader in diversified real estate investment and property management for more than 20 years, is taking advantage of Westchase’s convenient location and appeal by building a 300,000-square-foot office building at 3141 Briarpark Dr.

“The Westchase District is wonderful to work with and is always looking for ways to improve the area,” says Scott Martin, executive managing director for Granite in Houston. “Simply put, I can find no better

place in Houston to invest and develop.”

Briarpark Green will be the fourth asset that Granite owns and manages in Westchase, accounting for 1.2 million-square-feet of attractive office space. “Westchase has been one of our primary markets for years. The central location along the West Sam Houston Parkway and Westpark Tollway makes accessibility to the entire city an ease, and the environment with all the amenities makes it very conducive for business,” said Martin.

The \$75 million building is not only unique in design and structure, but is one of the few development projects that is self-funded, allowing Granite additional freedom and flexibility for future developments. Planning on breaking ground this year, Granite is already receiving an overwhelming amount of interest from possible tenants, especially those looking for Class A space. The new addition will be visible from the West Sam Houston Parkway. It should catch the eyes of motorists with its exterior elevations as well as make a nice addition to the Westchase area with its planned illumination accents and detailed landscaping. Tenants will also

enjoy the building’s amenities.

“We have included a complimentary wellness center, restaurant and conference room,” said Steve West, director of leasing for Granite. “We find these amenities have proven to be extremely successful in the Westchase area.”

The building was designed by PGAL and will be built by Hoar Construction, both Westchase District businesses. “It is the highest level of quality building that we’ve built in Houston,” said Martin. “Not to say that our other Class A developments aren’t nice too; we just pushed it up a notch on this one!”

All of Granite’s Westchase properties are LEED certified and Granite is the only property manager that has been recognized by the Environmental Protection Agency as an Energy Star “Leaders Top Performer” three times. According to Martin, the new development is pre-certified as a Gold LEED building in addition to being an Energy Star.

“Granite was the first company to break ground on a new building during our last building boom,” noted Sherry Fox, vice president of communications for Westchase District. “Their Granite Westchase Two building has performed well and is a great asset. Briarpark Green will likely set the bar for future Class A office development in Westchase District as well.”

For more information about Granite and its projects, visit www.graniteprop.com



Who's Who in Westchase



WESTCHASE DISTRICT COMMUNITY FUND WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBER

Shannon Stricker, who lives in Westchase District, is the Community Development Director for the Arthritis Foundation – South Texas Chapter and is coordinating the organization's Houston fundraising walk, scheduled for Saturday, June 2 at Quillian Center. Stricker is new to Houston, but she quickly became involved in the community. She's active in the Houston West Chamber of Commerce Young Professionals and the Chamber's Health & Wellness Committee. "Shannon brings considerable fundraising and event experience to our organization," says Board Chair Donna Flowers. The Westchase District Community Fund is the 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, associated with Westchase District.

BE PART OF ENHANCING THE LIBRARY LOOP TRAIL

The Westchase District Community Fund is soliciting donations for enhancements to the Westchase District's Library Loop Trail, the first phase of which is under construction

(see page 7.)

Community



organizations and
businesses can donate as
little as \$100 or more than

\$10,000 toward trail amenities, including trees, benches, water fountains, bike racks, exercise stations and public art. The contribution, which may be tax deductible, will be recognized by a plaque on the donated item. Visit westchasedistrict.com/wdcf.htm

for more information or contact Sherry Fox at 713-780-9434.

PATHWAY BECOMES 28TH BLUE STAR COMMUNITY

Congratulations to Pathway Apartments, located at 2901 Elmside, for becoming the latest Westchase District apartment community to receive Blue Star certification from the Houston Police Department.

To achieve Blue Star certification, a community manager must attend an eight hour training class. Then the property is inspected by HPD to make sure there are no violations of city code. HPD officers



also inspect perimeter fencing, mail room lighting, laundry room access, dumpster access and ensure that building numbers are all visible and that landscaping is not overgrown, allowing criminals an opportunity to hide. The third stage of the certification process is for the community to host a safety social for residents to learn all about their participation in the Blue Star program.

With the addition of Pathway, there are now 28 Blue Star communities in Westchase District – more than any other area of Houston.

NEW WEBSITE PROMOTES BLUE STAR COMMUNITIES

Westchase District has launched a new website promoting the 21 apartment communities participating in the Westchase Exclusive Apartment Communities (WEAC) program. "Exclusive communities are all Blue Star-certified by the Houston Police Department," noted Sherry Fox, vice president of communications for Westchase District. "Plus, they're active in the Houston Apartment Association and the activities of Westchase District. Because these communities have made an

enhanced commitment to the community and to resident safety, we want to promote them to prospective apartment residents, particularly those who work for area businesses." Visit www.westchaseexclusiveapartments.com

for a complete list of participating communities and to download a special savings certificate, redeemable only at Exclusive communities.



CANDLEWOOD SUITES RENEWED AND REFRESHED

The newly updated suites will feature all new furniture and fixtures in the living area, sleeping areas and bathrooms, plus upgraded fixtures and cabinetry in the in-room kitchens.

According to Anne Sepesi, director of sales, the renovation will also feature electrical outlets integrated into the nightstand, bright, decorative lighting and updated artwork, plus 32-inch and 37-inch flat panel televisions in the bedrooms and bedroom suites. General Manager Felicia Mitchell says that many hotel guests stay for three or four months while they work on a local contract assignment. This renovation will make the 123-room all-suite hotel more comfortable for longer term guests. "We want them to move in, relax, and stay as long as they need to," says Mitchell. Candlewood's renovation will begin in April. Visit them at 4033 W. Sam Houston Parkway.



8th annual Wonderland brings holiday fun to Westchase



Kids are all smiles when they see Santa Claus. He and his reindeer have never missed making an appearance at Wonderland in Westchase.



Thanks to the Saldivia family from Saldivia's South American Grill, who offered tasting samples of their restaurant specialties as part of our Wonderland epicurean event.



Area school choirs, including the Walnut Bend Elementary School choir, share their talents with Wonderland guests.



A live camel – and even a live baby – added authenticity to the live nativity scene at Wonderland.