



PATRONS *for* BELLAIRE PARKS

April 13, 2007

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Bellaire Park Group Sees Continued Surge in Donations from Residents

The Bellaire-wide informational campaign launched in March by Patrons for Bellaire Parks has resulted in a well-timed surge in donations and pledges by residents eager to help Patrons meet its June 2007 deadline for earning a \$250,000 donation from the Wortham Foundation to benefit Bellaire Town Square.

The non-profit parks group is trying to meet the Wortham Foundation's challenge-grant goal of raising \$500,000 for Bellaire Town Square between June 2006 and June 2007. If Patrons meets this goal, the Foundation will add its own \$250,000 donation.

Patrons rolled out its City-wide campaign about the Wortham Challenge Grant in mid-March to complement the targeted letter-writing campaign it initiated in January and its ongoing corporate networking efforts. It mailed large postcards with a color rendering of the new park's conceptual plan to all Bellaire homes, and sent informational flyers and green donor forms inserted in city water bills.

Donations and pledges through April 13 now place Patrons' Wortham Grant receipts at approximately \$350,000. Between mid-March and mid-April, Patrons received almost 150 donations and pledges from Bellaire residents, made primarily on the green forms that had been included in the water bills. Those attributable to the Wortham Challenge goal totaled about \$80,000.

The water bill form donations ranged from a crisp \$2 bill to a \$30,000 pledge representing the largest amount ever given by an individual to the non-profit group. The latter donor, a retiree who prefers to keep her name private, moved to Bellaire from West University Place 35 years ago and still lives in the same home she and her husband bought in 1973. She said her donation was spurred by the Patrons postcard and motivated by her love of Bellaire. The second largest donation was a \$10,000 pledge from a relative newcomer who moved to Bellaire only 1½ years ago, but wanted to contribute to his new community.

The Patrons corporate networking campaign also had successes over the last month, most recently thanks to a generous \$15,000 pledge from Tradition Bank. Craig Wooten, Tradition Bank CFO/COO and President of Tradition Bank's Bellaire Banking Center, and Toni Franklin, Tradition's Senior Vice President and a Patrons Ex-officio Board Member, presented the pledge to Patrons in April.

Patrons President Mandy Nathan reported that the park group has been extremely pleased with the response of residents to the water bill insert and postcard and is optimistic that continued support from residents and area businesses like Tradition Bank will get Patrons to its \$500,000 goal.

"We don't want to leave the Wortham Foundation's \$250,000 on the table," said Nathan. "Bellaire residents have responded enthusiastically to the need to raise this challenge grant money now to secure the Wortham Foundation's \$250,000, and we are optimistic that this enthusiasm will continue and ensure that we get these funds." she added. "This is a critical time and we are encouraging residents and area businesses to step up to the plate in the next month to support Bellaire and Bellaire Town Square. We would love to be able to tell the Wortham Foundation next month, in advance of our deadline, that Bellaire has met their Challenge."

For information about Patrons for Bellaire Parks, visit www.bellaireparks.com or call 713-661-PARK (7275).