



December 2025

Vol. 27 No. 12

<http://www.tgcfersoc.org>

**Our meeting this month will be “blended” by meeting in-person at the Judson Robinson, Jr. Community Center (2020 Hermann Dr., Houston, 77004) and/or via GoToMeeting – member’s choice.**

**TGCFS MISSION STATEMENT**

Organized in 1998 by a group of fern enthusiasts (a.k.a. fern lovers, fernies, pteridologists), to cultivate, foster, and promote interest in ferns and fern allies, the TGC Fern Society presents educational programs including “how to” sessions, presentations by local, national and internationally known fern experts, and field trips and tours-thus providing a forum for fern enthusiasts to visit, learn, share plants, ideas, information, and have a good time. A very informative monthly newsletter is published for members, and special events include presentations to other groups, fundraiser events, and a year-end holiday season party. **Doors open at 1:30pm and regular meetings begin at 2:00pm on the 3rd Sunday of each month at the Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center, 2020 Herman Drive, Houston, TX, 77004. (713) 284-1994.**

**A message from our President:**

Hi Everyone

**“Party” December 14<sup>th</sup> at 1p at Patrick and Diane Hudnalls House. Map in the newsletter.**

Larry has the food list if you need to know what to bring! We will have a gift exchange, and this is by drawing numbers. Gifts should be wrapped and have a value of \$15-\$25 so we can keep the trades pretty even between us. Ferns or plant related items, please. This is always fun and I hope all attending will participate.

Sorry for the mix-up on our Vice President, Olivia Carmo did say she would help with programs, she just did not agree to being the VP. So, Larry Rucker agreed to step in until we can find a new VP.

We did also vote on amending the by-laws on the amount of money that can be removed from the accounts without a second signature in the amount of \$500 and Treasure and President are the two signers on our account and now they cannot be married/couple without reassigning a signer. This is just a precautionary addition to the by-laws to protect everyone.

I would like to take a moment to thank everyone for the wonderful job they have done for the society this year. Our attendance is up and that is always a good thing. I know next year will be even better. I would like to hear from everyone on what programs they enjoyed this year and what they would like to see this coming year. The Raffel has been outstanding! The food is always outstanding! The comradery is the best!

January’s meeting will be on the “Diversity of Pyrrossa” - this will be a live plant presentation and will

show many different plants how they grow and some history on the genus, how to grow them and with a few extras if interested.

I hope to have the program calendar for the first half of the year in the next newsletter.

*Darla*



**Dues!**

Dues for 2026 are currently being collected. If you have any questions about the status of your dues, please contact Ruby Adams at [radams13@sbcglobal.net](mailto:radams13@sbcglobal.net)

Your dues may be paid in person at a meeting or sent by mail to: Ruby Adams, 3906 Woodmont Circle, Houston, TX 77045-3514

Checks should be payable to: Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society (TGCFS).



**December 2025 TGCFS Calendar**

Date	Topic	Speaker/Host
12/14/25	Winter Party (1pm)	Patrick and Diane Hudnell



**Board Meeting**

There will be a Board Meeting after the regular membership meeting on January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026, at the Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center at 2020 Hermann Drive. Board members and all interested members are welcome to attend.



**Door Prize:**



Christopher Goodgame wins the door prize, a *Microgramma heterophylla*!



**December Food Sign-up List:**

Name	Bringing
Betsy Robinson	Green Beans
Anne Swanson	Pigs in a Blanket
Larry	Turkey Dressing Cranberry Chutney
Ceil Dow	Bacon-wrapped Brussel Sprouts Garlic Candle Bread Dessert
Lynn Huber	Cheese & Crackers
Pat & Diane	Chocolate Cake Fruit Salad
Carol Smith	Honey Baked Ham
Darla & Joe	Beer Pumpkin Mousse Apetizer



**A Study of Platyceriums**  
The African/American Group  
By Darla Harris

*Platycerium alcicorne*

This is a group I would highly recommend to all Platycerium growers, even novices. They are easy and very forgiving. The only thing to watch is over watering, but even then, they can recover where some staghorns will just die.

There are two distinct forms of *P. alcicorne* one from the African continent which is aptly named *P. alcicorne* "African". This is one pups easily and is the easiest to find here in the US. It is a beautiful fern with almost neon green shield fronds that are kidney shaped and does not

form any type of basket, just hugs its mount. When this shield starts to age to die for winter it turns brown from the center in a very uniform circle. The fronts grow upright and stay upright if grown in very bright light. If grown in the shade they will start off upright and then take a uniformed downward arching form, still very attractive.

The second form is *P. alcicorne* 'Madagascar' telling you where it is from. This one has the same shaped shield frond but is a flat green color and not like the neon one of its cousin. This one with age will develop a waffle effect on the upper part of the shield frond. When the shields die for winter, this one turns brown and then black, so don't panic. This is not a fungus, that is how they grow.

The *P. alcicorne* from Madagascar also is the easiest to grow from spore and produces a lot of spores, but fewer pups. This is much more difficult to find in the US but was the easiest to find in Europe.

Within in the two groups of *alcicorne*, they both have cultivars that have a range of frond sizes, wide, thin, tall, short and gives you several different looks with in the species.

You may also hear this referred to as *P. vassi* as that was the name back in the 1960s, but old collectors will sometime use this name or you may still find it on a tag now and then.



*Platycerium alcicorne* 'African'



*P. alpicorne* 'African'



*P. alpicorne* 'African'



*P. alpicorne* 'African' neon frond



*P. alpicorne* 'Madagascar' thin form



*P. alpicorne* 'Madagascar' waffle shield frond



*P. alcinorne* 'Madagascar' sori



*P. alcinorne* 'Madagascar' top-down view



*P. alcinorne* 'Madagascar' broad form

### The November Meeting

November 16, 2025

Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society

The meeting was called to order at 2:05pm at the Justin Robinson Community Center in Hermann Park.

Approximately 22 members were present. The "Go to Meeting" was streamed to members who could not make it to the in-person meeting.

Business Meeting was held first:

There will be a change in officers at the first of the year.

President: Darla Harris

Secretary: Carolynne White

Treasurer: Ceil Dow

Vice President: Larry Rucker

Members-at-Large: Anne Swanson & Christopher Goodgame

- Olivia Carmo has volunteered to help with TGCFS with programs but does not want to be Vice President. Larry Rucker volunteered to be V.P.

Larry Rucker reminds everyone who plans to attend the Christmas party, to please sign up for what you want to bring to the party. It is BYOB. The parties are well attended.

**"Thinking Outside the Box"** by Darla Haris.

- A coffee cup tree is modified to use it as a fern ornament holder. A 3" glass ornament is used as a decorative terrarium. Ferns are inserted inside

the glass ornament and permanently plugged with a cork to seal it. You can add little doodads like a tiny house or tiny fairy inside the ornament to make it creative. ***Microgramma heterophylla*** is a tiny fern that fits perfectly into this kind of terrarium/ornament. Sphagnum moss is mixed with perlite as the soilless medium.





- Can also add the tiny sized *Microgramma heterophylla* to a moss ball or plant in between the grid of a wire basket. A decorative ball started out as a Styrofoam ball, then surrounded it with moss and added *Microgramma heterophylla*.



- A novelty project that the TGCFS created a few years ago was using a 3-hole brick. A Bird's Nest Fern was planted in the middle hole with two different kinds of Rabbit's Foot fern planted on either side. It turned out to be very pretty.



- Plastic grid cells are used instead of mounting on boards to prevent root rot. The open grid provides air circulation. These plastic grids are called "pot elevators", "plant risers" or "plant trivets" [Editor's note: see last photo from the P. alcicorne article just prior to these notes to see what they look like]. Use small cells for younger plants. Works better than planting them in a pot. Pile moist sphagnum moss onto the plastic grid and gently place fern onto moss. Use a fishing line & large embroidery needle, thread fishing line through the open grid work to secure moss and fern into place. Epiphytic ferns and Rabbit's Foot ferns work well in this way. Bird's Nest ferns also work well mounted like this. Use Bird's Nest fern from a 4" pot. Plant it so that the fronds are upright when the backing is mounted on a tree.
- Darla showed a beautiful, tall wire vase stand. She added sphagnum moss to the top half of the stand. A Hurricane Bird's Nest Fern would work well here at the top. *Microgramma heterophylla* could be planted in between the wire grid for vertical interest. This structure would look great if grown on a patio. It has interesting texture.





both sides of this tray. Because the trays are very light, you can mount giant ferns on them. The trays last a very long time.

Deep fry baskets can be used as a container. Take handle off the deep fry basket, take plant out of plastic pot and then place it into the top of the wire basket.

If using a large basket container, be careful not to use too much sphagnum moss. Instead, add coco fiber to the mix to prevent the moss from getting too wet. Rabbit Foot Fern looks especially nice planted this way.



Tiki Torches can be used as interesting planters. She plants Lycophytes in them; pot & all. If you want to use it as a tiki torch, then just take out the plant.

The roots of the Cedar tree are found to make good containers for ferns. These are often found in the Hill country around Austin.

Fern Bird's Nest, *Microsorium punctatum* 'Grandiceps'/ 'Cobra', can be grown in a pot and it looks nice but looks fabulous mounted on a board. Rhizomes grow downward and leaves grow upward. These ferns can also grow on a ½ basket. They are very fast growers.

*Microsorium punctatum* 'Dragon's Whiskers' have upright growth. Planted at the top of the container, it will start growing down around the container.

*Drynaria*, Basket Ferns, are characterized by their epiphytic growth on trees or rocks. They makes little shield fronds all over but grow fronds out of the top. These ferns look great when mounted on boards.

Darla showed an example of a red plastic bread tray which is about 30 years old. You can mount ferns on



Darla doesn't like using plastic pots for epiphytic ferns. They do not drain as well.

There is a gift exchange at the Christmas party. The gifts are usually plant related item and in the range of \$15 to \$20. There is no stealing.

The TGCFS directory was created by Diane Hudnall. Please check with her if you do not want your photo in the directory. These will be available in March. The e-copy will be available sooner.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:10pm.  
Respectfully submitted By Ceil Dow



### From the Library:

*Ferns: Wild Things Make a Comeback in the Garden*; edited by C. Colston Burrell; New York: Brooklyn Botanic Garden; 1995; 112 pages; photo illustrations.

by **Bob Swanson**

OK, let's face it. After a while it gets a bit tough to review fern books. So many of them consist of a twenty-five to seventy-five page introduction to all aspects of ferns followed by some sort of encyclopedic listing of the species the author wants to highlight.

This is definitely one of those books.

"Ferns: Wild Things Make a Comeback in the Garden" is edited by C. Colston Burrell and published by the Brooklyn Botanic Garden. It is part of the 21st-Century Gardening Series and spans 112 pages of well-organized, accessible content. The book's tone is inviting, making it suitable for beginners while still offering some depth for seasoned gardeners.

It begins with an introduction to what makes a fern unique, followed by practical sections on propagation, growing from spores, and container gardening. Contributors like Judith I. Jones and Nancy Swell provide expert advice on cultivation techniques, while Burrell himself offers an "Encyclopedia of Ferns" and regional recommendations for top species. The selections lean towards the Northeast, as one would expect of a work from the Brooklyn Botanic Garden. There is a short but helpful section on garden design.

Descriptions of the plants can get a bit florid. Check this out as an example:

"Use glade ferns in drifts with wildflowers and bold-leaved plants such as hostas. They combine well with the strap-like leaves of Siberian iris and the spiky inflorescences of foxgloves and astilbes. The russet autumn fronds are a nice accent with evergreen ferns."

Overall, this would be a decent introduction to anyone new to ferns. Next month, hopefully, I'll get to a more uncommon book.



### 2025 Officers and Committees:

President:	Darla Harris
Vice President:	Carolynne White
Secretary:	Ceil Dow
Treasurer:	Larry Rucker
Board Members-at-Large:	Anne Swanson Christopher Goodgame
Education Chair:	Darla Harris
Hospitality Chair:	Anne Swanson
Library:	Fred Robinson
Membership Chair:	Ruby Adams
Newsletter:	Christopher Goodgame
Spore Exchange:	Patrick Hudnall
Ways and Means:	Larry Rucker

Raffle, Store, etc. Rick Dow  
Web Master: Malcolm McCorquodale  
Welcoming at Door: TBD



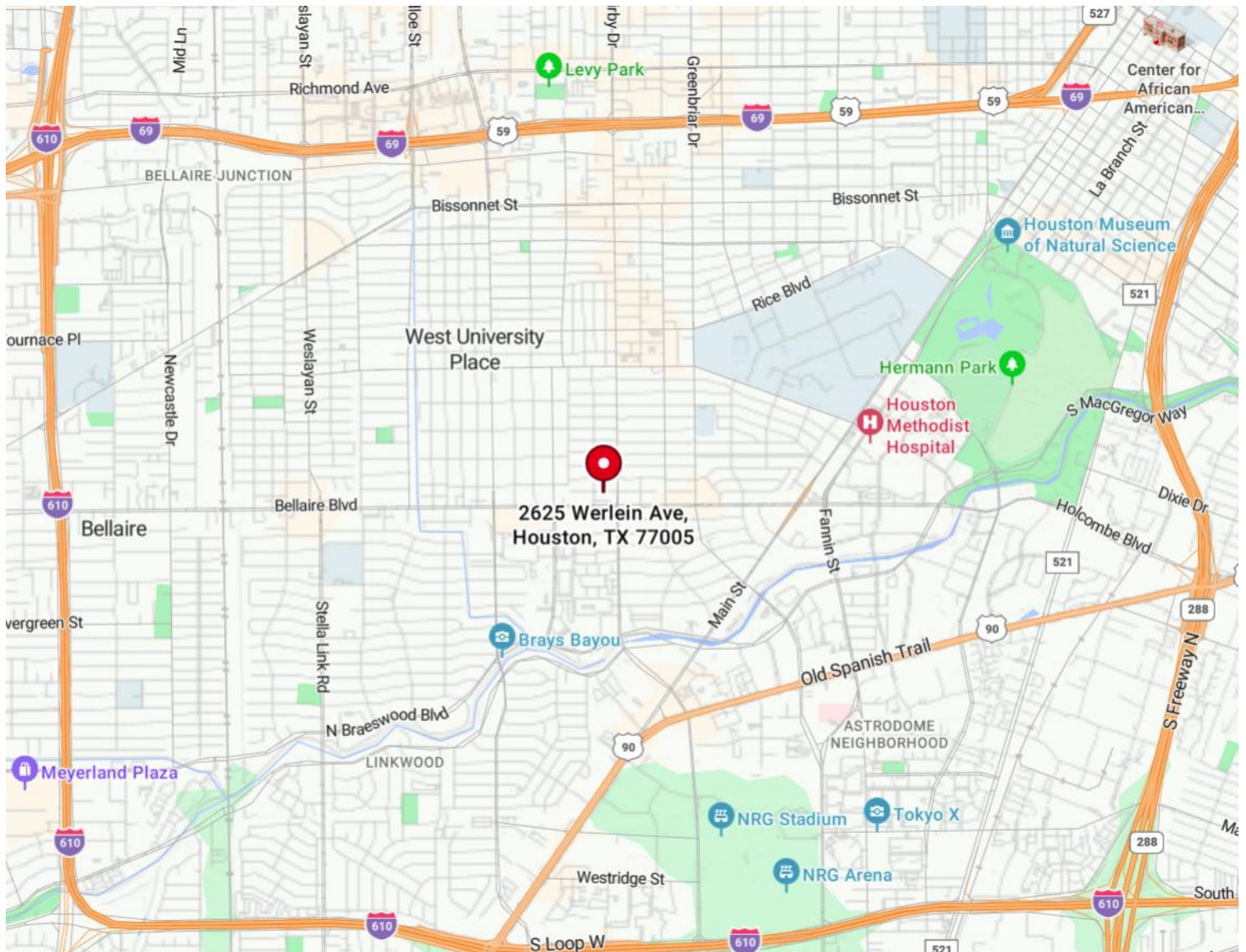
### The American Fern Society (AFS)

The American Fern Society is over 120 years old. With over 900 members worldwide, it is one of the largest international fern clubs in the world. It was established in 1893 with the objective of fostering interest in ferns and fern allies. It exchanges information and specimens between members via their publications and spore exchange.



### Directions to Patrick & Diane Hudnall's Home for the December Party

Their address is 2625 Werlein St, Houston, Texas 77005. Below are a few maps of varying scales with a few directions provided. Since there are numerous directions many folks come from, the directions originate from the Judson Robinson Community Center where we hold our meetings.





← Directions



A Judson Robinson, Jr. Community

B 2625 Werlein St, Houston, Texas 7

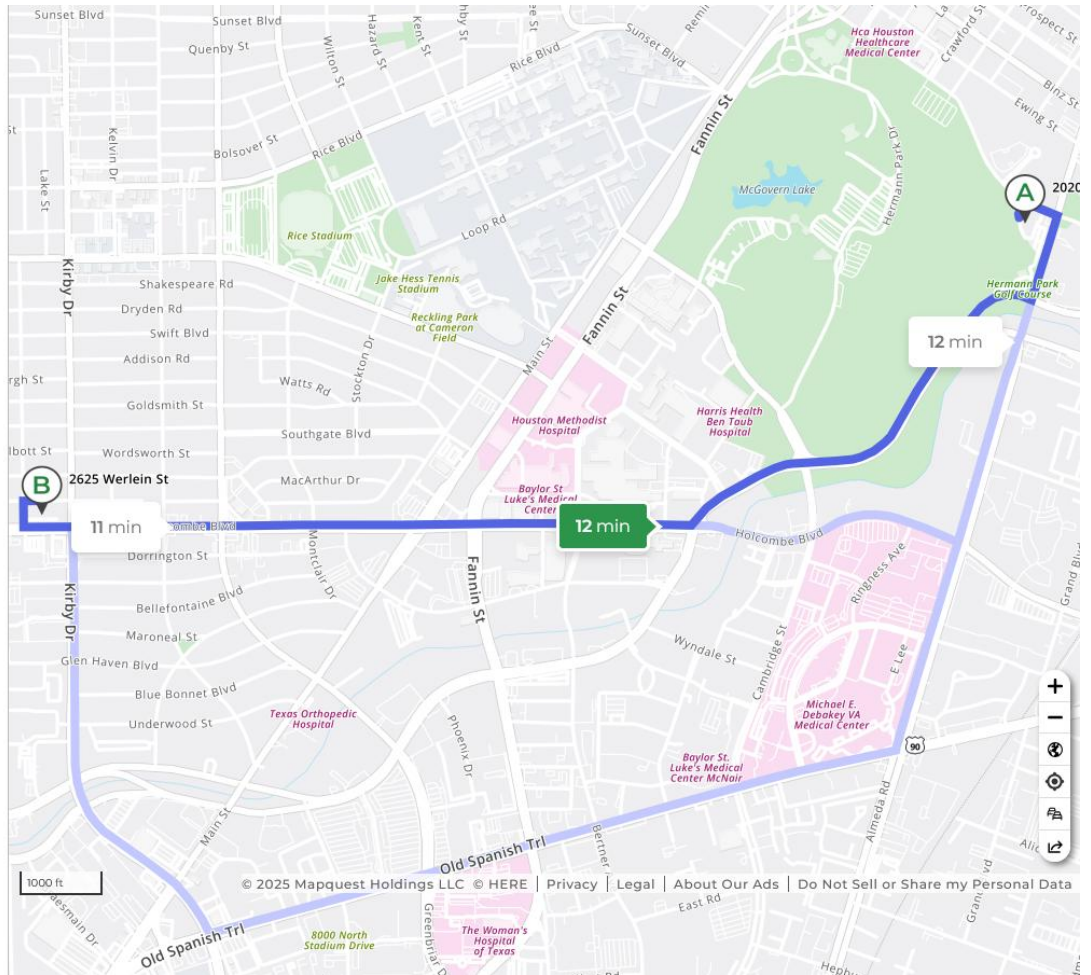
+ Add stop ⚙️ Route settings ⏱️ Leave now

Choose your route

Route #1	Route #2	Route #3
via W Holcombe Blvd and Holcombe Blvd		
12 min	3mi 🚗	Medium traffic
<a href="#">View Route Directions</a>		

### Directions from Judson Robinson, Jr. Community Center to 2625 Werlein St

Get step-by-step walking or driving directions from Judson Robinson, Jr. Community Center, 2020 Hermann Dr, Houston, TX to 2625 Werlein St, Houston, Texas. Avoid traffic with optimized routes.





Turn slightly left onto S Braeswood Blvd.  
Go for 1.7 mi.

Turn right onto Kirby Dr.  
Go for 0.6 mi.

Turn left onto W Holcombe Blvd.  
Go for 0.1 mi.

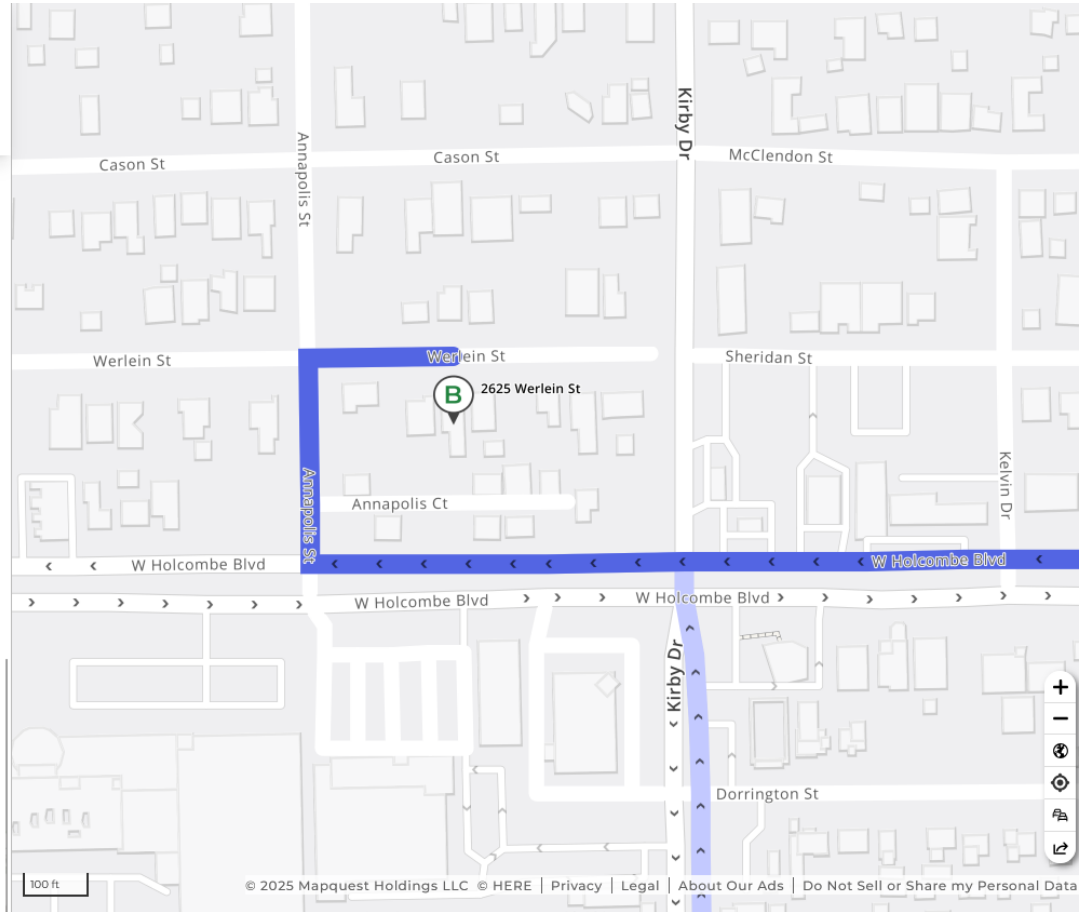
Turn right onto Annapolis St.  
Go for 315 ft.

Turn right onto Werlein St.  
Go for 220 ft.

End at  
**2625 Werlein St**  
Houston, Texas 77005-3957

IRS Reimbursement: \$1.99

Directions from Judson Robinson, Jr.  
Community Center to 2625 Werlein St



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