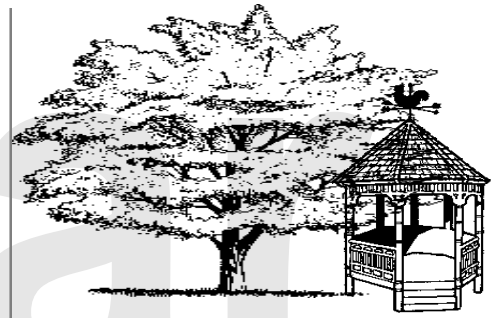


# Garden Oaks Gazette



## Home & Garden Tour Showcase

SHEILA BRIONES

2004 Home & Garden Tour Chair

Garden Oaks' annual showcase of homes and gardens will be held Sunday, April 18. The collection of five homes and four gardens will be shown from 12:00-6:00 p.m.

The 2004 Garden Oaks Home & Garden Tour is a guided open house concept. It features a unique combination of quaint cottages, charming bungalows, and plantation, ranch, and traditional style homes and gardens.

For a detailed description of the homes and gardens featured on the tour, go to the Home Tour page on the Garden Oaks website at [www.gardenoaks.org/hometour.html](http://www.gardenoaks.org/hometour.html), and click on the **show-cased locations** link.

Volunteers are still needed to fill in as docents, ticket takers, greeters, trolley guides, and members of the set-up crew. Volunteers will receive a t-shirt and one tour ticket. Volunteers will be honored at a "Volunteer Thank-You Party" following the tour. To volunteer, contact Nelda Prince at 713-694-5415 or [nprince@kingphillips.com](mailto:nprince@kingphillips.com).

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## What are YOU Doing March 1<sup>st</sup>?

TINA SABUCO

I know! You are going to click on [www.gardenoaks.org/auction](http://www.gardenoaks.org/auction) and start bidding on more than 50 amazing items and services donated by our neighbors and friends of Garden Oaks! As of March 1, the "auction" portion of the Garden Oaks website goes live. This auction is held every year in conjunction with the Garden Oaks Home & Garden Tour. It is a wonderful way to contribute to our neighborhood and get a lot of good stuff at the same time!

In addition to being able to bid online, you can also donate, either as an individual or as a business. Just click on the **become a supporter** link. It only takes a few minutes to fill in the needed information. Plus, if our little neighborhood auction generates as much interest as it has before, there will be over 1000 people looking at your information and linking to your business website!

While we are interested in businesses donating, we would also love to hear from local artists, and anyone else who

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### Civic Club Meeting

*Tuesday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>*

The next Civic Club meeting will be held on March 2 at 7:00 p.m. in the Garden Oaks Elementary School cafeteria. Please attend a Civic Club meeting for a chance to share your ideas and meet some of your neighbors. Baby-sitting services are available at the meeting at a cost of \$1.00 per child. Hope to see you there!

## Civic Club Officers

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## From the Editor's Desk

**REBECCA FERGUSON**  
*Gazette Editor*

Just when I thought I was finished with layout, I realized that I had a whole page left over. I gave a few attempts, but everything I thought about writing just sounded like a variation of something covered in another article. So I tried to think if anything I've been doing lately was interesting enough to write about. It took no time at all to realize that the answer to that inquiry was a big, fat "No." So I left the desk, frustrated and tired, when it occurred to me that I do have a hobby that I think many people could benefit from knowing about.

I am very skilled in the art of gluttony. It is not uncommon for my favorite part of a night out to be the meal. When the weather starts warming up—as it has in the last few days—there is little that is more satisfying than sitting out on the patio of a nice Mexican restaurant with some hot food and a cold drink. This love affair has led me on a tireless search for the perfect fajitas. The following information is a compilation of the most favorable results.

At the very top of my list is the Tortuga Cantina on Kirby Dr. I try to go there at least once a month, if time permits. They have a great selection of entrees and drinks, with a very Tex-Mex flavor and atmosphere. The service is spectacular—the waiters are always very prompt and attentive. My favorite thing to order is the Del Mar fajitas, which comes with a combination of beef and chicken, as well as shrimp brochette. For those of you who have not had the pleasure of eating shrimp brochette, it is simply a few large shrimp, each wrapped in bacon and stuffed with cheese. The patio area leaves a bit to be desired, but the atmosphere inside

is festive. It's a great place to go to have a drink and a good time. Or, if it's the middle of summer, and you're having one of those days when you just want to see some Christmas lights, there is no shortage of them hanging from the ceiling.

Traveling across town a bit, I also recommend the Noche Cocina on Montrose near Westheimer. Many of the entrees are of a more traditional Mexican style, and the beef fajitas are spectacular. The meat has a very smokey flavor, and I love the handmade tortillas. There is new and interesting art on the walls every time I go there, and the restaurant is typically quiet, making it a great place for conversation. Plus, on Tuesday nights, you can sit back and listen to some pretty good jazz.

Great fajitas can also be found at Cafe Red Onion at 290 not far from W. 43<sup>rd</sup>. This style of food is more Carribean (referred to literally as "Latin fusion"). The margaritas are terrific, but the desserts are what stand out in my mind. The mango sorbet is my favorite, but it is rare for me to have room for dessert by the time I throw in the towel with the fajitas. The fajitas come in three serving sizes instead of the typical two, for those of us who occasionally want something between a half-pound and a full-pound serving.

Now it's past midnight and I'm starving. If anyone has any restaurant suggestions, I would love to hear them. My search will continue, and I welcome all the help I can get. Perhaps the next time I discover a blank page when I "finish" layout, I'll write up a summary of my research on Italian food.

# Only With Your Help

*Way to go, GO!* Last month's meeting was a tremendous success. I could not be happier with the turnout and the well-thought questions that our neighbors had for our guests, including BNSF representative Dennis Kearns, and State Representative Dwayne Bohac. After the meeting, Mr. Kearns told me how impressed he was with our civic association and the reception he was given. We have laid a great foundation, and now all we have to do is keep building.

I don't think anyone expected all of our questions (or our prayers) to be answered at the meeting, nor did we expect the train noise to immediately cease. However, the information we received at the meeting will certainly aid us in our quest for a more tranquil neighborhood. All worthwhile endeavors require patience, dedication and hard work, and this will be no exception. We now know that if our "squeaky wheel" is going to get any grease, we are going to have to squeak even louder, and in the direction of county and federal officials. Now we just have to decide how we will accomplish this.

At next month's meeting, I will propose that an ad hoc committee be formed to explore, report, and organize neighborhood efforts aimed at reducing railroad traffic and noise. I expect this to be an on-going committee, much like the Home & Garden Tour committee. This project will not likely have a simple solution—it will likely be an on-going and uphill fight. That means that it is more important than ever that we all *get involved* and help fight the good fight. Remember, this is an issue that can be overcome, but only with your help!

TREY WOOD  
Civic Club President

## Attention all Home Owners

Finally, let me start this month off by getting us in the mood for April's Home & Garden Tour. The guest speaker at this month's Civic Club meeting will be Pamela O'Brien, principal of the interior design firm, Room Redo. Pamela's practical and cost-effective tips on home design and décor have been featured on *The Deborah Duncan Show* and *Oprah*. Bring your creative minds to the meeting and be prepared to walk away with some great ideas on how to improve the look of your home.

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# Garden Club Work Day – 03/13

ROBERT DE VEAU  
Garden Club Vice President

On Saturday March 13, Garden Club members and friends will be at Friendship Park performing our annual spring clean up. Located in Section 1 at Lawrence and W. 30<sup>th</sup>, this pocket park was long ago adopted by the Garden Oaks Garden Club. The park's landscape maintenance, hardscape, and upkeep are paid for by the Garden Club as a way of giving something back to our neighborhood community and the Civic Club. Club members and friends will be out in full force on Saturday, March 13, at 9:00 a.m. If you would like to lend a hand, please stop by—even for just 30 minutes of weeding.

### Garden Club Officers

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713 694-5934

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*Vice President/Treasurer*  
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**Chris Lindsay**  
*Secretary*  
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**Susan Gunther**  
*Correspondant*

**Brenda de Alba**  
*Yard of the Month*

**Tina Nieto**  
*Historian*

Download recent Gazettes at

<http://www.GardenOaks.org/>

# Civic Club Meeting Minutes – 02/06/04

DIANE KING  
Secretary

President Trey Wood called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. The January meeting minutes were approved as published.

## Officer's Reports

Treasurer Mike Dishberger presented the treasurer's report, noting the positive response to civic club dues notices that had been mailed in early January. We received \$8,110 in membership dues in January. The report was approved as submitted.

## Standing Committee Reports

**Beautification:** No report.

**Citizens on Patrol:** Carl Waters reported that there were five incidents in December, including one robbery in the 3400 block of North Shepherd, which may have been at a business. One burglary occurred at a new home construction site. Carl promised a full accounting of neighborhood crime for 2003 next month. Terry Jeanes and Jeff Toxey reported five incidents in the 24 hours preceding the meeting: one car theft in Section I; one bike theft (Jeff's) in Section I; an incident near 42<sup>nd</sup> and Alba where two men presenting themselves to the homeowner as City of Houston employees claiming to need to check something in the home and then robbing the owner. They were identified as two Hispanic males, both tall, one slender, driving a 1990-93 maroon Pontiac SUV. Carl questioned the auto description because Pontiac didn't make an SUV in those years. Two additional auto thefts occurred on W 43<sup>rd</sup>. Carl reminded everyone to keep cars and garages locked. Thieves know "we have stuff." He can still use volunteers for GOCOP. Terry said she was still avail-

able to resurrect the constable program if there was interest.

**GardenOaks.org:** No report

**Gazette:** Oscar Ochoa donated a \$25.00 gift certificate to Tony's to the *Gazette* deliverer of the quarter. Congratulations to Marie Gregory, a 34<sup>th</sup> St. deliverer who volunteered to work two routes.

**Membership:** Chris Lindsay reported that this year's membership goal is 500 members. 268 households have submitted dues for 2004 and \$9315 has been collected to date. The membership form is now in the *Gazette*. Chris encouraged those in attendance who had not yet paid to write their checks before leaving. She said she would remain as membership chair until April or May.

## Ad Hoc Committee Reports

**Garden Oaks Home Tour 2004:** Sheila Briones announced that Becky McCullough, Shannon Nelson, and Trish Rickelfsen are corporate sponsors of the Home Tour. **Volunteers are still needed for the day of the tour, April 18, to serve as ticket takers, do-cents, and trolley guides.** To volunteer, please contact Sheila at [HomeTour@GardenOaks.org](mailto:HomeTour@GardenOaks.org).

**Garden Oaks Cookbook:** No report. Trey Wood encouraged submitting recipes at the Garden Oaks website at [www.gardenoaks.org](http://www.gardenoaks.org).

## Other Reports

**Garden Club:** Sheila Briones reminded members of two Saturday garden workdays: February 14 at the rose garden on Lawrence at 34<sup>th</sup> St., to cut back the rosebushes; and February 21 to plant 35 trees, including pine seedlings,

at 8:00 am in Graham Park. Bring wheelbarrows, shovels, and trowels for planting.

**GOMO:** Sam Stengler announced that a plan approval meeting takes place immediately after each civic club meeting. The next board meeting is February 18, at 7:00 p.m., in the Kroger upstairs meeting room on 43<sup>rd</sup> St.

## Unfinished (Old) Business

Mike Dishberger came with 35 new civic club meeting announcement signs. They cost \$196.00. He asked for volunteers in each section to take signs and agree to put them up a few days before each meeting.

## New Business

No new business.

## Speakers

Four people addressed civic club members on the railroad noise and traffic issues. They were Dennis Kearns, Legislative Counsel for the Burlington Northern & Santa Fe Railway Company; Edward Emmett, President of TranSystems Advisors; Ron Quarles, administrative assistant to Toni Lawrence of Houston City Council District A; and Dwayne Bohac, our state representative.

Mr. Kearns gave a brief history of rail traffic in Houston to explain the increased traffic in our neighborhood. He explained that whenever a train stops it must blow whistles (horns) each time it starts moving again, and also said that train horns are louder than in the past, in part due to increased sound insulation in automobiles. Trains are permitted to move no more than 20 mph in our area. County Judge Bob Eckels and

*Continued on page 8*

# Citizens on Patrol

**CARL WATERS, JR.**

I received a call in early February from a citizen in Section 3. He told me had been robbed that day by three Hispanic males posing as City of Houston employees. The men told him they needed take measurements along the easement at the back of the property. They took some measurements and told him to write his name, address, and phone number on a pad of paper. When he took the pad the three men began bumping him around until one of them got his wallet out of his pocket. They left with the wallet and some cash. One of the men was around 6'2" and weighed around 245 pounds. The other two were described as slender and around 200 pounds. They were seen leaving the area in a red 1990 to 1993 Pontiac SUV. The men were not wearing City of Houston uniforms, nor did they display city ID badges. If someone comes to your door claiming to be a city employee, please ask for their identification. If they don't have any, don't let them in your home. Call the police and have them come check out the person at your door.

There is a bit of good news to report this month. The total number of crimes reported by HPD for neighborhood has dropped from 103 in 2002 to 98 in 2003. Crimes against persons (robbery and assault) dropped from 10 to 7, and crimes against property (burglary, auto theft and burglary of a motor vehicle) dropped from 89 to 84. What I have labeled victimless crimes (narcotics and DWI arrests) rose from 4 to 7.

## December Crime Statistics (4)

### Burglaries (4)

900 block of W. 43<sup>rd</sup> St. on Monday, December 1, at 11:00 p.m. (residence)

700 block of Garden Oaks Blvd. on Sunday, December 7, at 9:15 a.m. (unknown)

200 block of W. 30<sup>th</sup> St. on Saturday, December 20, at 4:00 p.m. (vacant residence)

700 Block of Sue Barnett on Sunday, December 21, at 2:59 a.m. (garage).

Inquires about joining the Citizens on Patrol program can be sent to me through the neighborhood website at [www.GardenOaks.org](http://www.GardenOaks.org), by email at [GOCOP77018@aol.com](mailto:GOCOP77018@aol.com), or by phone at 713-864-1992.

### Reference Numbers

Emergency Services	911
HPD Non-Emergency	713-884-2121
All other City Services	311

## ...March 1<sup>st</sup>

*Continued from page 1*

has anything to contribute— like landscaping services, a weekend at your beach house, a homemade dinner, or anything else you can dream up!

The auction will draw to a close at the preview party. Although the online bidding will have ceased, you can still win the item or service of your dreams even if you can't be at the party (but we hope you *will* be there!). Let us know your highest bid for the item you want, and we will assign a member of the auction committee to bid for you by proxy! What more could you ask for?

If you have any questions, or if you want to donate, contact Tina Sabuco, auction chair, at 713-692-6778 or [tinamarie@houston.rr.com](mailto:tinamarie@houston.rr.com).

Now *what* are you going to do on March 1? See you online!



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## Membership Committee Report

CHRIS LINDSAY

Keep those checks coming in! As of February 15, we have received dues payments from 301 Garden Oaks households. If this trend continues, we can make our goal of 500 memberships by March 31. The Civic Club dues pay for our basic programs, such as Beautification, Citizens on Patrol, the *Gazette*, Membership Committee, website, and Home & Garden Tour.

As a reminder, here are the three different levels of participation available:  
**Basic Membership – Crepe Myrtle: \$25.00 (\$5.00 for seniors)**  
**Intermediate Level – The Magnolia: \$50.00 (\$10.00 for seniors)**  
**Patron Level – The Golden Oak: \$75.00 (\$15.00 for seniors)**

You can write a check for more or less, and make a separate contribution to the Garden Club if you so desire. Everyone who sends in their membership dues by March 1, 2004 will be eligible for a special prize drawing and will be announced in the April *Gazette*. If you haven't sent in your payment, please do so. If you have misplaced your invoice, there is one in this month's edition of the *Gazette*. You can also fill out the membership form on the back page, or download a form from the Garden Oaks website at [www.GardenOaks.org](http://www.GardenOaks.org)

We also hold a drawing for a door prize at our monthly Civic Club meetings, which is open to everyone who attends the meeting. Joan Baron won the February door prize, which was a \$25 gift certificate to Merle Norman Cosmetics and Gifts at 4216 Ella Blvd. at 43<sup>rd</sup>st. The owner, Diane Morish, is a long-time Garden Oaks resident and Civic Club supporter.

## GO's Workin' on the Railroad

CRAIG LEE

Last month, a large crowd turned out at the civic club meeting to listen to Dennis Kearns, representative for Burlington Northern Sante Fe (BNSF) Railroad. Mr. Kearns was invited to discuss many neighborhood railroad issues, including horn noise, and an increase in daily train traffic. Also in attendance were railroad consultant Edward Emmett, district State Representative Dwayne Bohac and district City Council Member Toni Lawrence's representative, Rob Quarles.

**Among Mr. Kearns' Comments Train traffic.** The number of trains running through the neighborhood on a daily basis has more than doubled in the past year, from 6-8 trains a day to 16-18. What's more, it will probably get worse before it gets better. Although I knew that my house was by a railroad track when I bought it, I was initially told there were at most 10 trains a day.

**Train 'whistles.'** There is a federally mandated minimum volume for the horns on trains, but a number of the horns we hear exceed that volume. Mr. Kearns explained that the louder horns are designed to compensate for the improvements in car sound insulation. Accidents between trains and cars cost the railroads valuable downtime and potential litigation. Certainly there should be some balance between BNSF trying to avoid accidents and the neighborhood's right to peace and quiet. The horns today are louder than the loudest rock concert you can possibly imagine or have ever been to. Even my dog goes nuts when the train goes by. Remember, also, that car/train safety should not be entirely contingent on the

Continued on page 8

# Home Tour Showcase

*Continued from page 1*

Beginning March 15, tour tickets will be available for \$13. Tickets will also be sold on the day of the tour for \$15 each. Pre-sale tickets are available at the following locations:

**Bell's MyOwn Cleaners**  
1362 W. 43<sup>rd</sup> 713-680-8404

**Buchanan's Native Plants**  
611 E. 11<sup>th</sup> 713-861-5702

**Kaplan's Ben Hur**  
2125 Yale 713-861-2121

**National Pet Center**  
3820 N. Shepherd 713-691-5222

**Olive Anne**  
238 W. 19<sup>th</sup> 713-802-2021

**The Frame Shop**  
3444 Ella Blvd. 713-682-4578

**Yale Street Coffee House**  
2617 Yale 713-862-2050

All pre-sale tickets must be redeemed at the Command Center/Trolley Station located in the Garden Oaks Shopping Center, on the 3800 block of North Shepherd between W. 38<sup>th</sup> and Garden Oaks Blvd. Tickets can also be purchased on the day of tour at the Command Center. From the Command Center, catch a free Trolley (generously underwritten by METRO) to all nine tour stops. Parking at the Command Center is recommended because this will help relieve traffic congestion along the tour route.

Tickets are also available for the Tour Preview Party on Saturday evening, April 17. The party will honor the home and garden owners, sponsors, underwriters, and volunteers and is planned at the historic Bill Mraz Dance Hall, 835 W 34<sup>th</sup> from 7-11:00 p.m. Entertainment will be provided by The Texas Crude Band playing a rip-roaring mix of blues, R&B, and rock & roll ([www.texascrudeband.com](http://www.texascrudeband.com)). The public is invited and tickets are \$50 per person. The tickets include dinner ca-

tered by [www.2BusytoCook.com](http://www.2BusytoCook.com), music, dancing, our silent and live auction, "A Chair-ished Affair" sealed bid, and a Saturday night preview of homes and gardens. Special table rates are available. There is also a \$10 rate for all "long-term, old time residents of Garden Oaks" (residents prior to 1960). Contact Trish Ricklefsen at 281-733-1003 or visit the Garden Oaks website for more information.

To add to the excitement of the preview party, we will hold a silent/live auction. This year, you will also be able to bid online for auction items at your own convenience before the preview party. Bid online at: [www.gardenoaks.org/auction](http://www.gardenoaks.org/auction).

For up-to-date information call the Tour Hotline at (713) 267-7800 or visit the web site at [www.gardenoaks.org](http://www.gardenoaks.org)

Thank you to the following 2004 Home & Garden Tour Underwriters (*as of Sunday, February 15*):

#### Corporate (\$1000)

Houston Structural, Inc.  
Metro  
Shannon & Associates, Inc.  
termite terrace studio  
Trish Ricklefsen, Keller Williams Metropolitan

#### Platinum (\$500)

AMS Remodeling  
Campos Roofing  
Harry James, Building & Design  
Pat Walker & Debbie Kotzur, Keller Williams Realty, The Garden Group  
Terry Jeanes, RE/MAX Metro  
SK Designs

#### Gold (\$250)

All Star Construction, Inc.  
Bos Lighting Design  
CenterPoint Energy Houston  
Clouse Hardwood Floors  
The NET Church

All tour proceeds directly benefit the Garden Oaks community and programs, including Garden Oaks Elementary, Garden Oaks Citizens on Patrol, the *Gazette*, and beautification.

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## GO's Workin' on the Railroad

*Continued from page 6*

train whistles. Drivers must take it upon themselves to not drive through flashing crossings.

**Locomotive exhaust.** When we mentioned that the train exhaust can set off carbon monoxide sensors inside a home (a fact that I can absolutely attest to) seemed to catch Mr. Kearns off guard. He said that if trains sit idle "too long," we can contact the dispatcher. But wait—isn't it the dispatcher who has the trains idling to begin with? Besides, we don't know when it's been idling for too long until after it's already too long. A couple years ago, it was not uncommon for a train to park for more than 6 hours at a time.

### Light at the End of the Tunnel

**Rail corridors.** BNSF, Harris County, Tom Delay, and the Houston Port Authority are lobbying the federal government to fund the multi-billion dollar construction of three primary railroad corridors in the Houston area. Our trains would be rerouted to the northern route, which runs parallel to the Hardy Toll Road. We need to contact Sheila Jackson Lee, Kay Bailey Hutchinson, county commissioner Jerry Eversole, and other representatives of our area to gather more support for this action.

**Quiet Zones.** This is proposed federal, state, and local regulation that allows trains to pass specially equipped road crossings without blowing their whistles. You can read more about this at [www.fra.dot.gov](http://www.fra.dot.gov).

There have been several articles about this in the Chronicle, which are worth perusing. Very soon, the City of Houston will determine which railroad crossings to fund for quiet zones if and when

they decide to begin funding. We need to be proactive and get our intersections on that priority list.

If anyone wants to contact BNSF directly about excessive whistles or idling trains, you can call 800-832-5452. You can also send me an email at [Lcraig5@houston.rr.com](mailto:Lcraig5@houston.rr.com), and I will forward it to Mr. Kearns. For those who mentioned the railroad bar ditches that need to be cleared, send me your address so I can forward the locations to BNSF.

Many thanks to BNSF, Representative Bohac and Toni Lawrence for taking the time to come. The meeting provided some very interesting and useful information. Thanks also to all of you for your strong show of support. Other neighborhoods and communities are doing this, and we need our voices to be heard as well.

## Civic Club Meeting Minutes

*Continued from page 4*

Commissioner Eversole are working to develop support and rationalization for corridorization of rail traffic in the Houston area. This long term effort would involve additional north/south rail lines along an extended Hardy Toll Road. East-west through rail traffic would no longer go through the city, but on routes south of the city along 90-A parallel to the south end of the port's navigation channel and west toward Sugarland and Rosenberg. The railroads are in favor of this as well because it would enable them to move more rail traffic more efficiently to and from the Port of Houston and through the Houston area. Los Angeles, Chicago, and Kansas City have been successful with corridorization efforts. Kearns fielded many questions regarding carbon mon-



oxide detectors going off inside homes near "resting" locomotives, how BNSF monitored its engineers as a way to mitigate excessive horn blowing, and garbage in railroad rights-of-way.

Emmett and Quarles addressed concerns of idling trains and excess train horn blowing. Mayor White has created a commission to evaluate the potential for Quiet Zones at railroad crossings in response to the Federal Railway Administration's notice of rule changes that permit them. Quiet zones at grade crossings require a specified upgrading. Harris County and Galveston are funding a study to evaluate which grade crossings will be upgraded. Quality information if needed for this evaluation and we are invited and encouraged to work with this commission if we want quiet zones. Carolyn Cook, 512-282-8412, is the Texas contact with the Federal Railway Administration. Kearns and Emmett identified her as a valuable contact regarding local efforts for quiet zones. Quarles encouraged the Civic Club to work with other clubs to speak regularly to the City council on this issue and frame them as quality of life issues. Section One resident Craig Lee, who procured all the speakers, will be the point of contact for Mr. Kearns of BNSF. Craig will post contact numbers on the Garden Oaks Forum as well as set up a topic for all of us to discuss these ongoing issues.

#### Announcements

Joan Baron won this month's door prize: a \$25 gift certificate to Merle Norman.

The next Civic Club meeting will be Tuesday, March 2, 2004 at 7:00 pm. The speaker will be interior designer Pamela O'Brien.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30.

## Say It with Flowers

**ROBERT DE VEAU**  
Garden Club Vice President

*There is a language, little known.  
Lovers claim it as their own.  
Its symbols smile upon the land,  
Wrought by Nature's wondrous hand;  
And in their silent beauty speak,  
Of life and joy, to those who seek  
For love divine and sunny hours  
In the language of the flowers.*  
F. W. L., 1913

Flowers have always been a thing of beauty, but when they first became imbued with attributes of human emotions is unclear. Perhaps it was simply inevitable that such a thing evolve since a love of flowers is universal. One thing is certain: while the language of flowers has atrophied in recent years to simple phrases such as, "Say it with flowers," it was once a well-developed language.

Come join us on Thursday, March 11, at 7:00 p.m. when our featured speaker, Michael Bettler, co-owner of *Lucia's Garden*, will educate us on the ancient—and fascinating—language of flowers known as "floriography." Michael will explain the long history of this language and its meaning. The Garden Club will meet in the second floor community room in Kroger at 1352 W 43<sup>rd</sup> St.

Plants and flowers have been given meanings through myths, legends, and folklore all over the world. The Myrtle was sacred to Aphrodite and the Lotus flower has represented divine female fertility in the Orient for more than 5,000 years. Flowers can represent nouns, verbs, and entire sentences or questions. A variable as small as a color or type can completely change the message. A common rose declares love, for example, but a Japanese rose dismisses a romantic partner with the message: "Beauty is your only attribute."

*Continued on page 11*



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- 721 W. 41<sup>st</sup> St 1026 Althea
- 818 W. 41<sup>st</sup> St 1030 Althea
- 858 W. 41<sup>st</sup> St 4232 Apollo
- 862 W. 41<sup>st</sup> St 815 Azalea
- 970 W. 41<sup>st</sup> St 855 Azalea
- 718 W. 42<sup>nd</sup> St 839 Lamonte
- 847 W. 42<sup>nd</sup> St 1325 Sue Barnett
- 870 W. 42<sup>nd</sup> St 1458 Sue Barnett
- 823 W. 43<sup>rd</sup> St 1506 Sue Barnett
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## Heard Under the Oak Tree

TERRY JEANES

### Welcome New Neighbors

The following residents recently purchased their homes:

- 821 W. 34<sup>th</sup>
- 1435 Sue Barnett
- 211 W. 32<sup>nd</sup>
- 1003 Gardenia
- 855 LaMonte
- 717 W. 41<sup>st</sup>
- 216 W 30<sup>th</sup>
- 911 W. 41<sup>st</sup>
- 1547 Sue Barnett
- 512 W. 30<sup>th</sup>

Congratulations, welcome, and we hope to see you at a Civic Club meeting soon!

### Happy Birthday and Additional Wishes...

**Sydney Grace Null** celebrated her first birthday on March 3.

**Taylor Crownover** celebrated her second birthday this month.

**Emi Joubert** celebrated her first birthday this month with family and friends and parents **Meredith** and **Stephane**.

**Rob & Terry Jeanes** celebrate their 26<sup>th</sup> anniversary on March 17.

### Congratulations to...

**Susan Kostelecky**, whose company, SK Designs, has been selected to participate in the Texas Home Show on

March 21, at the George R. Brown Convention Center.

**Randy Evans**, who has recently been promoted to Executive Chef at Brennan's.

Neighbor and local Artist **Lisa Qualls** will be making many Garden Oaks lips famous. She has been busy casting lip molds of many neighbors for an upcoming sculpture. Looking forward to the finished product, Lisa!

### Welcome Home...

**Stan & Jan Bohon**, who just returned from a fabulous action-packed cruise to Belize, Cozumel, and other great ports of call!

As an added note to last month's Tamale Mama's tamale making class, hosted by **Sheila Briones**, yours truly, **Terry Jeanes**, was left off of the list of graduates.

To highlight a special event, birthday, anniversary, or accomplishment, contact Terry Jeanes 713-812-9154 or [jeanest@pdq.net](mailto:jeanest@pdq.net).

Check out the new Garden Oaks  
Neighborhood Forums at  
[www.GardenOaks.org](http://www.GardenOaks.org).



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# Greener View

Bev Raney, Garden Oaks Resident

# Say it with Flowers

*Continued from page 9*

Flowers have played important roles in society from ancient times to the present. In ancient Greece and throughout the Roman Empire, flowers were used as symbols of human feeling and passion. There are also numerous biblical references to flowers. Throughout time, each culture has ascribed its own meanings to individual flowers. It was Victorian England, however, that raised the meaning of flowers to an art form. Not only did each flower have its own meaning, but the way it was presented was equally important. Combinations of flowers were used to express various shades of sentiment and meaning, subtle or otherwise. Flowers were also used to pass coded messages between people, most often between lovers who had to conceal their emotions from watchful chaperones. The color, combination of flowers, and the way they were presented were all significant elements within this coded language.

In February, we heard from Deanna Krause, Consulting Rosarian, member of the Houston Rose Society and Texas Rose Rustler. Deanna spoke on old garden roses (often called heritage, antique, or simply old roses), which are well-suited for Houston's climate. Old roses are loosely defined as roses in existence prior to 1867.

Careful consideration must be given to placement of these roses, since they can often grow to heights of 10 feet. However, unlike modern hybrid tea roses, old roses require very little care and some, like the China roses, can bloom for 10 months of the year. Give your old roses a spring feeding and a light fall feeding using "Alfalfa Tea" but keep the chemicals away. Two outstanding sources for old roses are right on our

backyard. The Vintage Rosery is located at 16630 Hwy 36 in Needville (just 25 minutes south of Sugar Land) and The Antique Rose Emporium on 9300 Lueckmeyer Rd is in Brenham. Both of these gardens are well worth the drive for an up-close look at these wonderful roses.

Garden Club meetings are open to all residents and friends of Garden Oaks. If you would like to become a member of the Garden Club, annual dues are only \$10. For more information about the Garden Oaks Garden Club, call me at 713-686-6012. We meet on the second Thursday of every month at 7:00 pm. Most meetings feature a guest speaker followed by a brief business meeting. In addition, the Garden Club is responsible for the maintenance of Friendship Park and we conduct two workdays (spring and fall) when we add new plantings, replace the mulch and tidy up the beds. We hope to see you at 7:00 pm on Thursday, March 11, in Kroger at 1352 W 43<sup>rd</sup> St. in the second floor community room.



## Yard of the Month

The Yard of the Month for March belongs to Margaret Riebling at 4212 Apollo. Congratulations, Margaret! The yard looks wonderful!



# Critter Corner

**CASEY & MAU MAU FARRIS**

I want spring to be here so badly that I've decided to March it in (no pun intended). I am going to throw myself into the two weeks of Mardi Gras parades, the three weeks of Rodeo, and last but not least, St. Patrick's Day. Have you noticed all these events include parades and marching? After two months of lying on the sofa, marching is just what the doctor ordered. Marching is unbelievably fun and rejuvenating, and dogs love it too. Even some cats—like our pets of the month—love a parade. So grab your banner and your pets and *march on!* This month, Mau Mau will tell us about names, and the backyard report explains why some birds become kamikaze pilots.

### Pet of the Month

Elvis (grey tabby) and Muneca (black/white longhair), both 2 ½ years old, are King and Queen of March. They have always been wonderful cats, but recently their parents adopted an abandoned 10 year-old border collie named Gabby. They loved her so much they decided to adopt another senior dog right away. They found 9 year-old Re-Mo (golden retriever), who was rescued by Golden Beginnings and nursed back to health for one year before his adoption. The Rios family wants to encourage anyone who is thinking of adopting an animal to consider a senior pet. The whole family, as well as Elvis and Muneca, have now taken to daily walks. Cats rarely join in on walks, so it is truly a comical sight. Watch out for the Krewe of Rios Parade!

### Pet News

Sir Starlight Streeter (white domestic), Gentleman of Leisure, former Man About Town, wishes to announce his

*Continued on page 13*



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According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about 61 million Americans live with coronary heart disease. That is one quarter of the population! But don't be discouraged. You can prevent and even reverse high blood pressure and clogged arteries. Most medical experts agree that food can protect and heal your heart, but poor food choices can also lead you to being another statistic.

Use food as your weapon. It is the best defense that you have to ensure a long and heart-healthy life. Below are a few foods that can promote a healthy heart.

### Chocolate

With all of its fat and calories, it is hard to believe that chocolate is heart-healthy. Research shows that chocolate contains the same phytochemicals (disease fighters) found in red wine. A 1.5 oz piece of dark chocolate has the same amount of phenols as a 5 oz glass of red wine. A cup of hot chocolate made with cocoa powder has about 75% of red wine's phenol level.

Phenols have an impact on many areas of cardiovascular health, including blood pressure, blood vessel function, platelet activity, and lipid oxidation.

- A recent clinical study indicated that subjects who consumed a polyphenol-rich dark chocolate had lower blood pressure than those who consumed a polyphenol-free white chocolate.
- Scientists are examining the potential for polyphenol compounds, such as cocoa flavanols, to improve platelet function in ways similar to that of taking a baby aspirin daily. This helps support healthy blood flow and prevents blood clots.

Blood clots can be lethal, potentially blocking an artery vital to proper blood flow through the heart

- Consumption of flavanol-rich chocolate may help regulate signaling molecules, called eicosanoids, which are important in inflammatory responses.
- Preliminary clinical studies suggest that eating certain flavanol-rich chocolates may increase epicatechin levels in the blood, thereby resulting in an increase in serum antioxidant capacity. Antioxidants help to neutralize free radicals, which are natural by-products of metabolism. Free radicals can damage healthy tissues and cells if they are not counteracted by an antioxidant. Importantly, antioxidants appear to help reduce the oxidation of LDL or bad cholesterol.

The other good news is that the fat in chocolate, which accounts for more than 50% of chocolate's calories, does not seem to raise blood cholesterol levels. Chocolate is high in stearic acid, a type of saturated fat that leaves blood cholesterol levels alone. It contains heart-healthy monounsaturated fat that has the same beneficial effects as olive oil. When eaten in small amounts early in the day, chocolate balances the brain chemistry by increasing the serotonin levels.

Remember, however, that with chocolate, moderation is the key. Most Americans eat just over 10 pounds of chocolate per year. Besides keeping portion sizes small, stick with dark chocolate, which has the greatest phenol content. Or make hot chocolate with cocoa powder and non-fat milk. Then you will get a dose of phenols along with calcium and only a small amount of fat.

# Critter Corner

*Continued from page 11*

retirement from public life. He will now spend his time writing his memoirs. He can be found on or around the sunny decks of 963 Gardenia. Publication of his reputedly spicy memoirs is eagerly anticipated. I print this announcement with great pleasure. Sir Starlight was a neighborhood feral cat that is now tame, fixed, and the object of someone's affection.

A big welcome to the neighborhood goes to the Perez gang: Peanut (mini dachshund), Chino (long haired Chihuahua), and Toby (mini schnauzer).

As some of you know, the Harris County Appraisal District has been working our neighborhood lately. One day, a lost schnauzer followed an appraiser all through the day. Leslie (human) and Sasha (border collie) Saunders talked the guy into taking the little fellow home until the family or a good home could be found. Soon the word was out, and Stacy Christ of Section IV adopted Jake. Jake has since given up the tax appraisal business.

There was a lot of excitement in the 700 block of 43<sup>rd</sup> when a dog was found injured. Stacy Kelly (human) took the dog to the vet but its injuries were too severe and the dog did not make it. However, the vet noticed that the dog was a nursing mother, which meant there were puppies somewhere. Stacy organized a search party, and they found the puppies (four boys and one girl) underneath a house on 43<sup>rd</sup>. They were just three days old. Heights Vet has temporarily taken the puppies to give them round-the-clock care and bottle feedings. They will be ready for adoption in a few weeks. These puppies are labrador-mixes and adorable. Three of

the boys are black, one is gray, and the little girl is black/brown. If anyone is interested in adopting a puppy, please call Stacy Kelly at 713-691-2727.

## **Critters 101: Oh When The Saints Go Marching In!**

A big complaint of many dog owners is having a dog that pulls on the leash, turning a walk into an ordeal. With a little practice, this can be cured, and you too can walk and march with the saints. Work on it for a few minutes a couple of times a week. The reward will be worth any trouble, I promise! First, you will need a 6-foot leash and some small treats.

One technique is called "controlled walking," which basically teaches the dog not to pull by having the handler make a u-turn every time the dog isn't paying attention. Most dogs quickly learn to avoid this by staying more or less in position and keeping the leash slack. When they do the right thing, give them a treat. Another good tactic is to make them sit when they begin to pull—they get a treat for that, too.

A third method for controlling leash pullers is to pull the leash down the dog's chest and under one "arm." Then pull the leash back up through and under the back of the collar, making a loop under the dog's arm. This arrangement takes all of the pressure off of the dog's throat and puts it on his chest and arm. It is completely humane, and far more effective than a pinch or choke collar. Of course, you could not use this technique in the obedience ring, but most people are just interested in being able to take a quiet and relaxing walk with their pets. And when the saints go marching in, you *and your pet* can be in that number.

## **Dear Mau Mau**

*What should I name my new cat? D. Whitaker*

Congratulations, you have been chosen by a cat! This is a tremendous honor and privilege, and if you work hard, you could eventually become worthy of him. Deciding on something as important as his name should not be done lightly. We cats will wait patiently for you to discover our names. We know our name already, of course, and will give you all kinds of hints as to what it is. Just be observant and it will be revealed. There may be something about the cat's personality or its appearance that speaks its name to you. When I was a kitten, my mother tried a few names. Every time she called me by the wrong name I would correct her by saying, "Mau." It took her a couple of weeks, bless her heart, but she finally got it. *Mau Mau*

## **Backyard Report**

The Kimbrough's in the 1000 block of LaMonte have a female cardinal that is driving them crazy. She repeatedly flies right into the window at a pretty good speed. The reason is that cardinals defend their territories aggressively, and this cardinal is seeing her reflection in the window. Hopefully this behavior will only last a short time. If it continues, use anything necessary to kill the reflection of the window, including paper sacks, garbage bags, or whitewash.

*Casey Farris is owner/operator of Bone Voyage Pet Sitting Services©, a Garden Oaks company offering many services and products dedicated to the welfare of our pets and the people who love them. Mau Mau Farris is owner/operator of Casey. Please forward your questions and pet news to [Casey@goDOGusa.com](mailto:Casey@goDOGusa.com) or call 713-688-6363.*

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City of Houston Legal

Department

713-247-2000

Toni Lawrence (District A)

713-247-2010

Dwayne Bohac

713-460-2800

John Whitmire

713-864-8701

# March 2004

Sunday      Monday      Tuesday      Wednesday      Thursday      Friday      Saturday

	1 Garden Oaks <b>Online Auction</b> begins <a href="http://www.gardenoaks.org">www.gardenoaks.org</a>	2 <b>Civic Club Meeting</b> G.O. Elem. 7:00 p.m.	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11 <b>Garden Club Meeting</b> Kroger on W. 43 <sup>rd</sup> st. 7:00 p.m.	12	13 <b>Garden Club Workday</b> Friendship Park Lawrence & W. 30th 9:00 a.m.
14	15 <b>Gazette Article Submission Deadline</b> <hr/> <b>Home Tour Tickets on sale</b>	16	17 St. Patrick's Day	18	19	20
21 First Day of Spring	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	<b>Upcoming Events:</b> -Home & Garden Tour Preview Party - 04/17 -Home & Garden Tour - 04/18		

### 2004 Garden Oaks Civic Club Membership Form

Name(s):

Phone:

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Email:

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\$50.00 Magnolia (Intermediate)

\$75.00 Golden Oak (Patron)

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#### (C) Contribution to Garden Club \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_ (A)+ \_\_\_\_\_ (B)+ \_\_\_\_\_ (C) = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total

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