

# Garden Oaks Gazette

## Membership Committee Report

CHRIS LINDSAY

So far this year, 368 households have paid their Civic Club membership dues. Thanks to all of you who are new or renewing members. This number is 99 households short of our paid memberships for last year, and 132 away from our target goal of 500 households for this year. For those of you who have not yet sent in your Civic Club dues, we could certainly use your help in attaining our goal. Just fill out the form that is on the back page of the *Gazette* and mail your check to the address listed. Remember that all dues go toward Civic Club programs, including neighborhood beautification, Citizens on Patrol, the Home & Garden Tour, the *Gazette*, the membership committee, and our neighborhood website, as well as any other programs that we may initiate during the year.

As a reminder, here are the three different levels of participation available:

**Basic Membership – Crepe Myrtle:**  
\$25.00 (\$5.00 for seniors)

**Intermediate Level – Magnolia:**  
\$50.00 (\$10.00 for seniors)

**Patron Level – Golden Oak:**  
\$75.00 (\$15.00 for seniors)

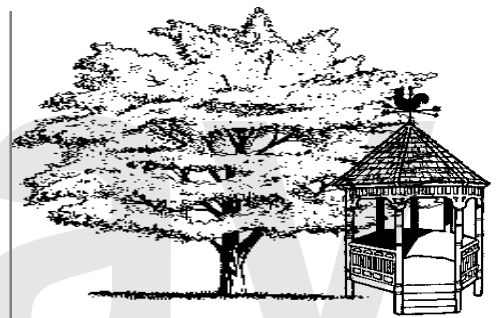
You can also write a check for more or less, plus make a separate contribution

to the Garden Club if you so desire. Unlike homeowner’s associations in which yearly membership dues are mandatory, we are a civic club. Joining is voluntary and the amount you donate is voluntary. We recommend various levels of contributions, but the only real requirement is that a minimum of \$25.00 is needed if you are going to vote on Civic Club matters. Other than that, what you give is up to you, and we will appreciate whatever you are willing to donate.

The winner of our prize drawing for membership dues received by March 31 goes to Dennis Duncan, at 729 W. 41<sup>st</sup> St. Congratulations Dennis! You have won a \$25 gift certificate to Kaplan’s Ben Hur, one of our long-time Civic Club supporters and *Gazette* advertiser. Your certificate is being mailed to you.

At each monthly meeting, we hold a drawing for a door prize—everyone who attends the meeting is eligible to win. The winner of the door prize drawing at April’s meeting was Lisa McBee, who won a pair of tickets to the 2004 Home & Garden Tour.

We provide a baby-sitter at our monthly Civic Club meetings at a cost of just \$1 per child. Hope to see you this month.



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### Civic Club Meeting

*Tuesday, May 4<sup>th</sup>*

The next Civic Club meeting will be held on May 4 at 7:00 P.M. in the Garden Oaks Elementary School cafeteria. **Our guest speaker will be State Legislator Dwayne Bohac.** There will be plenty of time for questions. 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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**WANTED:  
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AD DIRECTOR**

*No graphic design/layout  
experience required*

*Requires only 2 to 3 hours  
per month*

Contact **Jackie Adams**  
for additional information:  
gazetteads@gardenoaks.org  
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**Great volunteer opportunity!**



The Yard of the Month for May will be printed in the June issue of the Gazette. For more information, contact Brenda de Alba at [brenda.p.dealba@exxonmobile.com](mailto:brenda.p.dealba@exxonmobile.com).

## Garden Club Officers

<b>Ed de Alba</b>	<i>President</i> 713 694-5934
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<b>Susan Gunther</b>	<i>Correspondant</i>
<b>Brenda de Alba</b>	<i>Yard of the Month</i>
<b>Tina Nieto</b>	<i>Historian</i>

## Heard Under the Oak Tree

**TERRY JEANES**

### Welcome New Neighbors

959 West 42<sup>nd</sup> 231 West 31<sup>st</sup>  
1086 West 43<sup>rd</sup> 866 West 41<sup>st</sup>  
1007 West 42<sup>nd</sup> 1514 Sue Barnett  
855 West 43<sup>rd</sup> 721 Garden Oaks Blvd

Welcome to the neighborhood and we hope to see you at a Civic Club meeting soon.

### One of our Newest Neighbors

**Laura Tanner Boone** was born on March 25 to proud parents Sabra & Jon Boone.

### Happy Birthday

**Linda Sparks** – May 8  
**Riley Tatum** – May 12  
**Daniel Ostrum** – May 22  
(Both Riley and Daniel will celebrate their first birthday.)

### Belated Birthdays

**Chad Points** – March 13, and son, **Ethan** – March 12 (another first birthday)  
**Keith Kostelecky** – April 9

### Happy Anniversary

**Tina Sabuco & Shellye Arnold** – April 6  
**Ed & Brenda de Alba** – celebrated at the home tour preview party on April 17  
**Matt & Kathy Deffenbach** – May 25

### Happy Travels

**Linda Sparks** will be returning shortly from a trip to England.

### Well Wishes

Wishing **Sandy Altman** a speedy recovery from her knee surgery!

It is also nice to see **Pat Walker** up and about again!

*To highlight a special event, birthday, anniversary, or accomplishment, contact Terry Jeanes at 713-812-915, or [jeanest@pdq.net](mailto:jeanest@pdq.net).*

# Only With Your Help

I am pleased to begin this month by announcing what a great success the Garden Oaks Home & Garden Tour was this year. Knowing the hard work put in by everyone involved, I am confident that this year's Tour produced record levels of income as well as fun! While there are too many people to thank here for the tour's success, I would be remiss if I failed to acknowledge Sheila Briones, chairperson of the Home & Garden Tour committee, for the countless hours she devoted to this event. I ask that all of you give Sheila your own special thanks the next time you see her.

Along these lines, one topic that should be addressed at the next Civic Club meeting is the frequency of the home tour. Should it be held every year, or just every other year? If we decide it should be a yearly event, there is a lot of work to do to start getting ready for next year. If you have an opinion on this issue, please attend the meeting on May 4, and let us know what you think.

If you were not at last month's meeting, you missed a good one. City Council member Toni Lawrence addressed our group and had a lot to say in just a short amount of time. Of particular interest to us was her idea to make Garden Oaks a pilot project for improving neighborhood drainage. Specifically, she indicated her belief that many of the culverts passing under our individual driveways could be replaced at minimal cost to the homeowner. While she was not sure of the exact cost, she indicated that she thought that the cost would range from \$500.00 to \$750.00 per home to replace the culverts. I also received a follow-up call from an engineer with the city who was interested in finding out which streets need the most attention. If you are interested in the possibility of making this idea become a reality, come to the next meeting and we'll talk about it.

**TREY WOOD**  
Civic Club President

I have to apologize to everyone about an announcement I made in last month's column and at the conclusion of our last meeting. I indicated that Tom Bazan, candidate for U.S. House of Representatives, would be our speaker. However, I had forgotten that our State Legislator, Dwayne Bohac, had previously committed to us for that date. In any event, we will have a speaker and it will be Rep. Bohac. I am sure he will provide us with an update on any special sessions that may be coming up, and how they may affect us. If you have any questions about matters pertaining to current issues with the State, please make sure you attend the meeting on May 4.

## GOMO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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# Thank You Gazette Captains!

**ROBERT & AMANDA CARLIN**

When we were first looking at homes in Garden Oaks, one of the houses we looked at had several extra *Gazettes* left out on a table for potential buyers to take. That night, we read the *Gazette* from cover to cover, and we knew we had found the right neighborhood. This friendly newsletter helps keep Garden Oaks residents informed about meetings, activities, and key neighborhood issues. It provides assurance that the neighborhood association is still active, and lists information about all of the primary neighborhood contacts. It encourages neighbors to become involved and participate in Garden Oaks events. Perhaps most importantly, it helps spread the word about the accomplishments of our community, and the hard work of individuals in the neighborhood.

Every month, everybody in this neighborhood gets a free, hand delivered *Gazette*. The printing costs are covered by the Civic Club membership dues, and the delivery is handled by some 44 volunteers each month. It is time we thank those volunteers. Did you know they deliver 1511 *Gazettes* each month? Did you know *Gazette* captains save our neighborhood over \$500 *each month* in postal fees? These generous neighbors save us over \$6000 per year! Again and again, we hear people comment on what an old-fashioned, neighborly community Garden Oaks is. Of course, all of the credit goes to the wonderful residents who have chosen to make Garden Oaks their home and continually give back to the community. So, when's the last time you thanked your *Gazette* block captain? Well Neighbor, that's too long! On behalf of our wonderful neighborhood, thank you Garden Oaks *Gazette* captains!

# Civic Club Meeting Minutes – 04/06/04

DIANE KING  
Secretary

President Trey Wood called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. The March meeting minutes were approved as published.

## Treasurer's Report

President Trey Wood presented the monthly treasurer's report. It was approved as submitted by treasurer Mike Dishberger.

## Standing Committee Reports

**Beautification.** Rick Grochoske reported that the berm on Randall Street was completed two weeks ago.

**Citizens on Patrol.** Carl Waters, Jr., Section 1, who has been coordinator of Citizens on Patrol for 8 years, reported that he met with the City of Houston's new police chief, Harold Hurtt. One of Hurtt's primary goals as the new police chief is to restore police officer credibility with the community. Another goal is to restore the integrity of Houston's crime lab.

**GardenOaks.org.** No report

**Gazette.** No report. Member O. D. Ochoa stated that editor Rebecca Ferguson was doing a really good job with the *Gazette*.

**Membership.** Chris Lindsay reported there are currently 344 paid memberships for 2004. The goal is still 500 members for the year.

## Ad Hoc Committee Reports

**Garden Oaks Home & Garden Tour 2004.** Sheila Briones announced that with only twelve days remaining until the 2004 home tour, five more volunteer docents were still needed. To date, seventy bidders had submitted bids of \$5700 on items worth \$29,000. Online bidding will end on April 16. Proxy bids are available for bidders who do not attend the preview party on April 17. The recently published and distributed *Heights Pages* dedicated a page to publicizing the up-

coming tour. An article about the Garden Oaks Elementary School water habitat, one of the stops on the tour, appeared in the *Houston Chronicle's* neighborhood section. Fifth graders will greet people at the trolley stop at the school and second graders will be docents for the habitat tour. There will be another article about the Home & Garden Tour in the *Houston Chronicle's* garden section the weekend of April 10. The tour was also mentioned in the *Heights Tribune*.

## Other Reports

**Garden Club.** Ed de Alba announced that the next Garden Club meeting will be on April 8 at 507 W. 31<sup>st</sup> St. A master gardener will speak on plant propagation.

**GOMO.** Sam Stengler announced that on March 31, Judge Baker of the 151<sup>st</sup> court granted GOMO's motion to dismiss the lawsuit against GOMO brought by Victor Moore. The next board meeting is April 21, at 7:00 p.m., in the Kroger upstairs meeting room on W. 43<sup>rd</sup> St. Sam emphasized the need to bring plans to GOMO before beginning any rebuilding or remodeling process, to allow enough time to get GOMO approval. Chris Lindsay added that there is a regular email distributed by the City of Houston, listing construction activity by permit records. This list also provides permit applicant responses to the question, "Is this subdivision subject to deed restrictions?" Saying no to this question is lying on an official government document if your permit concerns property in Garden Oaks.

## Unfinished (Old) Business

There was no unfinished business.

## New Business

There will be a garage sale April 24 at Garden Oaks Elementary School. Table rentals are \$25.00. For more informa-

tion contact Pamela Anderson at 713-861-8896. There was a motion for the club to rent a table to sell leftover auction inventory at the sale. The motion carried.

## Guest Speaker

This month's guest speaker was Toni Lawrence, Houston City Councilperson for District A. Lawrence explained that this was her first term on the council, but that she had been active in local issues for a long time. A native Houstonian, she attended Garden Oaks Elementary School. Lawrence spoke at length on several key issues. The council has to balance the city's budget by July 1. So far they have reduced a \$150 million shortfall to \$130 million. Lawrence explained briefly the process by which the city's pension fund, currently in the news, got to its present financial condition. Of the thirty-nine levels of municipal employment within the City of Houston, only the top levels benefited from recent changes to its pension plan. On May 15, Houston voters will have the opportunity to opt out of the amendment to the State constitution passed last fall that prohibits political entities, such as the City, from ever reducing retirement benefits for retirees and employees. [See <http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/tconst/sections/cn001600-006600.html>. This is the section of the state constitution in question. Clarification by secretary Diane King.]

Regarding flooding and drainage, Lawrence said that historically the city council has "closed our eyes." She said this was one of her biggest priority issues. There is currently no money in the sewer/water fund, which should have \$6-7 million. Instead, those funds have been expropriated for ALP (any lawful purpose) by the mayor and council. Fearing any such funds would be spent for other reasons, the council voted against the

*Continued on page 11*

# Notes from GOMO

SAM STENGLER

Recently, the Garden Oaks Maintenance Organization (GOMO) has received many questions regarding our plan approval process for new construction and remodeling projects. This month, I'm going to take some time to explain this process, as well as what is required of the homeowner prior to this process.

GOMO requires that all Garden Oaks property owners submit plans for any significant modification to or construction of any existing structures or buildings on the property. These plans must be submitted before any construction starts.

We attempt to hold plan approval sessions twice a month, but occasionally, not all of our directors can be at a particular meeting. Thus, you should not wait until the last minute to obtain GOMO's approval of your plans. We recommend that you allow at least three to four weeks for the approval process.

To begin the approval process, you must submit a full set of plans, including:

## A "Site Plat Plan"

This is a view of the buildings and structures correctly situated on the property. The drawing must either be to scale (and the scale itself accurately defined and shown on the plan), and/or have all relevant dimensions clearly marked. In addition, all property lines must be shown. We are looking for compliance with the front, side, and rear setbacks and easements for each existing, new, or modified building or structure.

## An "Elevation Plan"

This shows the heights, drawn with the dimensions clearly marked, of all existing or planned buildings or structures on the property. Here we are looking for compliance with the height restrictions for the main residence, and between the main residence and any planned or existing outbuildings.

## A Story View

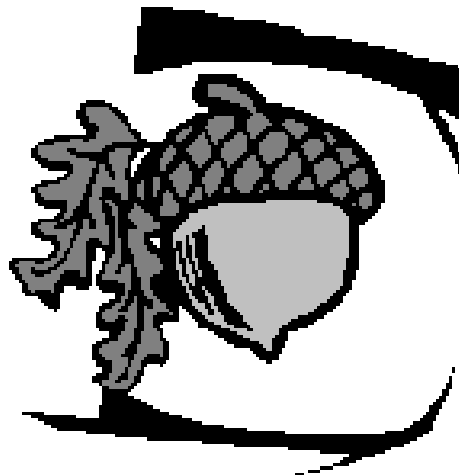
This must show the number of stories of the main residence and/or any outbuildings on the property.

GOMO's directors will examine the plan set that you submit. The plans will then be marked with our approval or rejection, signed and dated, and kept on file. If you would like a signed and dated copy for your own records, please submit two sets of plans. You will then receive a letter stating whether or not your plans were approved, and the reason(s) why they may have been rejected. If your plans are rejected, you must resubmit corrected plans and obtain approval of those plans before you start construction.

GOMO's plan approval process carries no fee or cost to the property owner, other than the cost of the plan copies.

Please remember that GOMO's approval is for compliance with the Garden Oaks deed restrictions only, and is not a permit to build. You must still comply with all applicable building permits and codes before and during construction.

If you have any questions about plans or need to submit some, please contact the GOMO director for your section (see page 2) or contact me at 281-773-3478.



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## Citizens on Patrol

CARL WATERS, JR.

Maybe you were inspired by last month's home tour to get out and see more of the neighborhood. Maybe you were inspired to see other remodeling projects or get more ideas for your own home. Whatever the reason, joining the Citizens on Patrol program may be your year-round ticket to see new projects and get some great ideas for your home. Joining the program only requires about an hour of training from the Houston Police Department, and a ride-along with one of our veteran patrollers. Then you are out on your own, protecting the neighborhood and getting ideas to improve your home. We ask that you commit an hour a week to the program.

### February Crime Statistics (7) Burglaries (4)

900 block of W. 41<sup>st</sup> St. on Tuesday, February 3, at 4:30 P.M. (residence)

800 block of W. 43<sup>rd</sup> St. on Wednesday, February 11, at 7:00 A.M. (garage)

700 block of W. 30<sup>th</sup> St. on Friday, February 13, at 2:30 P.M. (garage)

400 block of W. 43<sup>rd</sup> St. on Wednesday, February 25, at 2:10 A.M. (residence)

### Burglary of a Motor Vehicle (1)

3100 block of N. Shepherd Dr. on Tuesday, February 24, at 7:00 P.M. (specialty store)

### Auto Theft (2)

800 block of W. 31<sup>st</sup> St. on Wednesday, February 4, at 7:30 P.M. (parking lot)

1000 block of W. 42<sup>nd</sup> St. on Sunday, February 22, at 7:30 P.M. (driveway)

The auto theft listed on W. 31<sup>st</sup> St. was either a bad location code or a bad address as there are no parking lots on W. 31<sup>st</sup> St. in our neighborhood. The total number of crimes listed on the HPD website for the neighborhood for January and February was 15. Last year

there were only 11 crimes reported for the same time period.

As always, 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), through 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

## Is There a Sago Palm in your Yard?

DR. JENNIFER GARCIA  
[drgarcia@gcvs.com](mailto:drgarcia@gcvs.com)

Sago palms (also called King palms or King Sago palms) are hardy, ornamental plants, found throughout the Houston area.

Given their prevalence, you or someone near you may have one of these Sago palms growing in the yard. But did you know that this plant can be harmful to your pets? Dogs in particular are likely to chew on these palms or ingest the seeds. As a result, the animal may become extremely ill. While it is not well understood why these plants are so toxic, we do know that they primarily affect the liver, and can lead to liver failure and death.

Please supervise your dog around these plants if it has access to them. If your dog does eat or chew on the bark or seeds of a Sago palm, please seek veterinary care immediately. The sooner the exposure is handled, the less likely the risk of long-term complications.

# Make a Splash in the Landscape

**ROBERT DE VEAU**  
*Garden Club Vice President*

Every sense is both stimulated and soothed by having a pond in your garden. Its invitation for you to sit by it and reflect with it makes the pond a main focal point among the foliage.

The creation of this tranquil little world within the garden is not difficult. There are as many ways to accomplish it as there are individual people and settings. It can be tiny—even in a container on the porch or patio, or it can be huge—a natural bottomed wetland environment, teeming with wildlife. For most of us, it is somewhere in between, and the planning and building of this special feature can be as much of a joy as the end result.

On Thursday, May 13, the Garden Club will have Anita Nelson of Nelson Water Gardens as our guest speaker. Anita will conduct a presentation on basic water gardens, covering everything from design techniques and construction, to stocking and maintaining the pond. Anita is considered to be an eminent lecturer on water gardening. She and Rolf, her husband of 25 years, started their own business in Katy in 1996 and have a long history in the water gardening community. Together they have introduced two waterlilies to the market: 'Texas Shell Pink' and 'Lindsey Woods.' This exciting meeting will be held on May 13 at 7:00 P.M., at 811 W. 41<sup>st</sup> St.


Water holds an immense attraction for all people. For centuries, people have enjoyed the beauty of fountains and water gardens in their public squares and private estates. Water gardens create a "natural" focal point, whether located in the home garden, shopping mall, or office building. The earliest planned gardens, which included ponds, were probably in Egypt, documented as early as 2800 BCE. Decorative ponds and fountains were a major feature in gardens of

the Middle Eastern civilizations of Mesopotamia, stimulated by the need for irrigation canals. The design typically included four water features in the form of a cross, thought to symbolize the four rivers of the Garden of Eden and the concept of "flowing to the four corners of the earth." The later Persian and Islamic empires greatly influenced garden design in such nations as Spain and India. Residential water gardens began growing in popularity about a decade ago. Fountains, overflowing barrels, statuaries, and flower-fringed ponds have become commonplace in condominium courtyards, on suburban decks, or around ranches and farmyards.

Last month, master gardener Donna Fay Hilliard educated Garden Club members on plant propagation. With the snip of her pruning shears, a scrape of her knife and some judicious leaf plucking, Donna taught us how easy it is to propagate any plant from our garden. Club members and guests left the meeting with useful information on how to increase their own garden bounty and with armloads of pass-along plants from Donna.

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 P.M. Most meetings feature a guest speaker followed by a brief business meeting. In addition, the Garden Club is responsible for the maintenance of Friendship Garden, and we conduct two workdays (spring and fall), dedicated to adding new plantings, replacing the mulch, and tidying up the beds. We hope to see you at 7:00 P.M. on Thursday, May 13, at 811 W 41<sup>st</sup> St.

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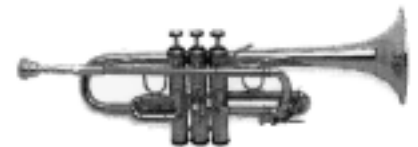
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Owner

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# Spring Clean Your Kitchen

## Guidelines for a Kitchen Makeover

CATHERINE KRUPPA MS, RD, LD

713-316-2707/ckruppa@houstonian.com/ www.adviceforeating.com

**Stock your kitchen with good fats** such as nuts, nut butters, olive oil, avocados, fish, soy, and flaxseed. These foods contain primarily unsaturated fat, which is good for your heart and blood vessels because it helps lower your bad cholesterol and may increase your good cholesterol.

**Clear your shelves of foods that have trans fats.** These fats clog your arteries and raise your LDL cholesterol and lower your HDL cholesterol. Trans fats are found in margarine, doughnuts, cookies, chips, candy, pastries, and crackers. Trans fats will be found on a nutrition label in 2006. Until then look at the ingredient label for “hydrogenated” or “partially hydrogenated” oils.

### Foods Containing Trans Fats

- Eggo Waffles
- Uncle Bens Rice Bowls
- Wheaties
- Slimfast bars
- Apple Cinnamon and Multigrain Cheerios
- Grape Nut Flakes
- Total Raisin Bran
- Pepperidge Farm Harvest 7-Grain Bread
- Blueberry Morning cereal
- Great Grains cereal
- Bisquick baking mix
- Chex Milk 'n Cereal bars
- Stouffer's Macaroni and Cheese
- Nutri-Grain Yogurt bars
- Quaker Quakes rice snacks
- Fig Newtons

**Place seasonal fruit in an easily accessible spot in your kitchen.** Having nutritious fruit available makes it more likely you will eat it and get your recommended 3-5 servings per day. In the summer, there is a larger variety of fresh fruit available. In the winter, try pears, apples, navel oranges, pink grapefruit, and grapes.

**Designate a certain area in your home an “eating only” zone, and don't eat anywhere else!** Not in the TV room, in front of the refrigerator or pantry, at the kitchen counter, or in the

bed. When you eat while watching TV, checking e-mail, or talking on the phone, you tend to eat mindlessly. You don't taste your food, and you may eat a lot more than you intended.

**Fill your pantry with whole grains** rather than refined-grain products such as white rice and white flour foods. Whole grains offer fiber, folic acid, magnesium, vitamins E and B6, copper, zinc, and dozens of phytochemicals. Just because the food is brown, do not assume that it is whole grain. Look for whole grain, whole wheat, or rye as the first item in the ingredient list. Whole grains contain more fiber than white flour products, making it easier for you to get your recommended 25 grams of fiber each day.

When you prepare a healthful dish, **make enough so that the leftovers can be frozen for additional meals.** Then separate the meal into individual serving sizes before freezing. Having a meal ready to defrost is a timesaver and an easy way to reduce stress. It will also control your portions.

**Never pour dressing over your salad; place it to the side in a dipping bowl.** A tablespoon of salad dressing often contains 100 calories or more, and many people use 2-4 tablespoons on a salad. Serve your salad dressing on the side and dip your fork into the dressing first and then take a bite of the salad.

**Throw away any food that you are likely to eat more than one portion of in one sitting.** If it is not in your house, you can not eat it! Chips, cookies, crackers, desserts, and nuts are the common culprits. Replace them with fresh fruits and vegetables.

*Continued on page 11*



# Critter Corner

CASEY & MAU MAU FARRIS

Hi Neighbors! Loose and stray animals seem to be in abundance these days. Even in the securest of situations, you just never know what might happen. As hard as we try, sometimes our pets get loose and run amuck, threatening their own safety. Pets should wear their collars and ID tags at all times. Microchipping is also recognized as the most effective and secure way of permanently identifying a pet. Speaking of microchips, our Pet of the Month is a real chipper guy. This month, our backyard report focuses on lizards, and Mau Mau focuses on hunting lizards.

## Pet of the Month

“Mr. May” is Chip Caldwell, a Chihuahua in Section IV. Chip lives with his mother, Marlene, along with Tucker (Cairn terrier) and four cats, Nic, Ivy, Zena, and Felix. Like all Chihuahuas, Chip is expressive, vocal, mischievous, and so affectionate. He loves to eat snacks and bark at things in the yard. He also takes things like keys and hides them in his bed. A few years ago, Chip appeared on Sue Barnett and was a stray on that block for six months, including through the winter. The neighbors got together and finally caught him. He then moved into the Caldwell household. As much as he loves comfort now, you would never believe he lived outside for so long. Chip is small in stature but large in personality.

## Pet News

There are three kittens (5-6 weeks old) available for adoption – one gorgeous longhaired white male and two tabby females. Please call Paulette Hall at 713-686-6487 if you are interested.

Local animal shelters are spreading the word that current female gang activity is affecting the pet population. It seems that one of the gang’s initiation rites is to take pets from one location and drop them off at another. This means they are

taking pets from the safety of their own yards. Please take time to examine your enclosures and make them extra secure. This is another good reason to have your pet microchipped.

There was a lost pet rabbit on 42nd street right before Easter. Somehow he got out of his nice pen and went on a tour that lasted four days. He hopped over to the Duncan household and just about gave Tex and Major (greyhounds) heart attacks. Erica Duncan (human) secured him in her bathroom, and by word of mouth his family was found and he hopped himself back home. He was very affectionate and friendly, and he highly recommends the Duncan house salad.

Tucker Streeter (orange tabby) recently passed away from cancer. His last days were spent chasing butterflies and basking in the sun.

Olive Sabuco-Arnold (black cat)—the socialite of Azalea—has taken a fancy to Kraig Jankowski. Every night she shows up at his house at just around bedtime, and curls up with him for a couple of hours until he is good and asleep before waking him up to let her back out. What a sweetheart!

## Critters 101: Get a Chip on Your Shoulder!

Microchip technology has been around since 1989. Since then, approximately 1.5 million dogs and cats have been microchipped. The microchip is the size of a grain of rice and is encased in a biocompatible glass, the same used in human pacemakers, to prevent rejection from the animal’s body. The microchip is implanted in the loose skin on the back of the dog’s or cat’s neck using a specially designed implanting device. Insertion is a quick and easy process that causes no more discomfort than a usual vaccination. Each microchip carries a unique number that is logged onto a na-

*Continued on page 11*

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## How to Select a Printer

JONATHAN LANZ

713.884.8982

[www.computer-wiz.net](http://www.computer-wiz.net)

There are several factors to consider when purchasing a home printer. These days, you can get a lot of features at a bargain price—printers come in several varieties, including combo units available with a flatbed scanner. However, the primary focus of this article is on the process of selecting a basic ink jet printer.

### Price

Keep in mind that most of the time, you get what you pay for. If you want top of the line, it will invariably cost more. The price of an ink jet printer is usually relative to its options, you will typically be able to find a good quality printer for around \$200, or a printer that will suffice for under \$100.

### Replacement Ink

When you are looking at the total cost of the printer, keep in mind the cost of replacement ink cartridges. The newer printers have separate color cartridges, which means that users can replace one color at a time as they run out, rather than replacing a whole three-color cartridge. If you are looking at two printers with comparable features, but a new black ink cartridge costs \$32 for one, and \$12 for the other, then there is clearly a financial benefit to purchasing the latter.

### Speed

If you have several jobs to print at once, or if you're just the impatient type, print-

ing speed will be an important factor to consider. It is easy to compare this on printers because many manufacturers consider this to be one of the printer's most important features. This information is usually easily attainable while you are comparing printers.

### Connection Type

This has recently become something to examine closely. In the past, you at least had the fail-safe option of connecting your printer to a parallel port, which has been a standard on every computer for over 20 years. However, manufacturers are now producing printers with only USB connectivity. For those of you with later model computers, you need to make sure that you don't bring one of these home only to discover that your computer doesn't have a USB port or that you're out of USB ports (although in this case, you could buy a USB hub to add more ports to your existing USB connection).

The most important thing to remember when shopping for any computer peripheral is bargain hunting. The two local stores we prefer for bargains and comparison are Fry's and Micro Center. Between sales and rebates, you can usually get some really great deals. Our professional preference for home printers is the Epson Stylus line, especially Epson Stylus C84.



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# Greener View

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Bev Raney, Garden Oaks Resident

# Meeting Minutes

*Continued from page 4*

drainage fee proposed by former mayor Lee Brown. Mayor Bill White has taken all CIP for drainage and flooding to the top of his priority list. Between 2 and 4 billion dollars in water/sewer debt is being refinanced on more favorable terms. Among the several issues Lawrence discussed, one concerned the possibility of cleaning ditches on a street by street basis. Shared funding may be available for such a project. The cost of new culverts is \$750 to \$1000 per driveway. She suggested that we explore possible interest in this and consider requesting it. Residents on a street would need to do this together and determine if they want to pursue it. Any decision would be needed before the 2005 budget approval deadline of July 1 to have possible access to city funds for such a project.

## Announcements

Lisa McBee, a new Garden Oaks resident, won this month's door prize drawing: two tickets to the home hour and preview party. The next Civic Club meeting will be Tuesday, May 4, 2004 at 7:00 P.M. The speaker will be state legislator Dwayne Bohac.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 pm. Terry Jeanes, Re/Max-Metro Realtor and Garden Oaks neighbor, provided refreshments at the meeting. Twenty people signed in at the meeting.

# Critter Corner

*Continued from page 9*

tional database. Against this number, key information is stored about the dog and its owner, including the dog's name, the owner's name and address, and a record of the dog's vaccinations.

When your pet is picked up, veterinarians and shelters will pass a scanner over the microchip. Low-frequency radio waves created by the scanner acti-

vate the microchip, allowing the unique number to be read. Once the number is determined, a quick phone call to the microchip company will reveal all of the animal's information on file.

This is an inexpensive investment as it should last for the life of your pet. It is completely permanent; it can not be cut off or altered. It is still no guarantee that you will get your pet back if he becomes lost, but it does reduce the risks. Contact your local veterinarian, animal shelters, or dog control officer for advice and prices. The Houston Humane Society will perform the microchip process for \$25, which includes a lifetime registration. They also give multiple discounts.

## Dear Mau Mau

*Do you hunt lizards? D. Peters*  
Does a dog have fleas?! Yea, I can't help hunting lizards. There are so many of them and the way they move is so intriguing. My mom doesn't want me to eat the lizards and ruin my dinner, so I usually spit them out after I carry them around for a while. I like everyone to see my catch so if they are preoccupied then I just drop it at the door because they will surely see it there.

*Mau Mau*

## Backyard Report

Lizards play a key role in consuming insects. There are more species of lizards than any other reptile. The life span varies depending on the species. Typically, the larger species live longer. Some small lizards live an average of one year, while some large lizards can live for decades.

Most lizards have a general color and pattern that makes them blend in well with the natural background. Some lizards are able to lighten and darken their overall color pattern depending on temperature and mood.

Lizards are "cold-blooded," which means that they cannot generating heat internally like mammals or birds. Because of this, lizards need places to bask in the sun, often on rock piles or rock walls. Lizards can also find cover from predators or the elements by crawling into or underneath these rock structures.

*Casey Farris is owner/operator of Bone Voyage Pet Sitting Services©. Mau Mau Farris is owner/operator of Casey. Please call 713-688-6363, or forward your questions and pet news to [Casey@goDOGusa.com](mailto:Casey@goDOGusa.com).*

# Kitchen Makeover

*Continued from page 8*

## 15 Foods to Toss

Toss	Replace With	Benefit
Whole milk (1 cup)	Skim milk	save 64 cal, 8 g fat
Full fat ice cream	Skinny cows	
Butter (1 Tbsp)	Olive oil	save 6.2 g of sat fat
Full fat cheese (1 oz)	Reduced fat cheese or soy cheese	save 13-52 cal, 4-7 g fat
Mayonnaise (1 Tbsp)	Light or fat free mayonnaise	save 50-75 cal, 6-11 g fat
Potato chips (1 oz)	Light microwave popcorn (3.5 cups)	save 80 cal, 9 g fat
White bread	Whole grain bread	gain 3 g fiber
Salad dressing (1 T)	Light or fat free salad dressing	save 75-85 cal, 7-14
White flour pasta (1/2 c)	Whole wheat pasta	save 25 cal, gain 4 g fiber
White rice (1/2 c)	Brown rice/ whole wheat couscous	gain 2-3 g fiber
Soda (12 oz)	Water	save 150 calories
High fat lunch meat (1 oz)	Oven roasted turkey breast	save 52 cal, 7 g fat
Sugary cereals	Whole grain cereal	gain 5 g fiber
70-85% ground beef (3 oz)	Extra lean (90-95%) ground sirloin	save 65 cal, 10 g fat

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Toni Lawrence (District A)

713-247-2010

Dwayne Bohac

713-460-2800

John Whitmire

713-864-8701

# May 2004

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 May Day
2	3	4 Civic Club Meeting 7:00 p.m. G.O. Elem.	5 Cinco de Mayo	6	7	8
9 Mother's Day	10	11	12	13 Garden Club Meeting 811 W. 41 <sup>st</sup> St. 7:00 P.M.	14	15 Gazette Article Submission Deadline
16	17 Shavuot	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

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\$50.00 Magnolia (Intermediate)

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

Make checks payable to: Garden Oaks Civic Club

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