

# The Garden Oaks Gazette



## New Year's Greetings

Chris Lindsay, Civic Club President

Happy New Year to all! I hope that everyone had an enjoyable holiday season and that 2005 will be a wonderful year. If you haven't finished your New Year resolutions, I hope you will consider becoming involved in your Civic Club this year. I am certainly looking forward to serving as your Civic Club President for 2005 and thank you for the opportunity to do so. Serving with me this year as Civic Club officers are: Sheila Briones as Vice President, Mike Dishberger as Treasurer, Megan Salch as Secretary and Jonathan Lanz as Gazette Editor. Serving as committee chairs are: Carl Waters, Jr. GO COP, Brenda and Ed de Alba for Beautification, Terry Jeanes and Susan Saraine for the Constable Program, Joe Muscara for the website, Trey Wood for Membership and Sue Schmidt for the Home and Garden Tour Committee.

At this time, that leaves just one committee chair vacancy, for the 2005 Fall Festival! Last year, the Civic Club decided that we would alternate years between the Home Tour and the Fall Festival. With the Home Tour taking place in even-numbered years (2006) and the Fall Festival for the odd-numbered years (2005). Please let me know if you are willing to either chair or serve on the Fall Festival Committee. The last festival was in October 2002 and was a wonderful event held at the Spark Park at Garden Oaks Elementary School with lots of activities for the whole family. That does not mean we have to have a carbon copy of the last event, so let

your imagination go and let's see what ideas come forward. Another issue that will be decided this year is whether the Civic Club will become involved in getting Garden Oaks designated as an historic district. Trish Ricklesen is chair of an ad-hoc committee to gather information regarding the pros and cons on this issue so that we, as members of the Civic Club, may decide whether to pursue this as a Civic Club activity or not. No decision by the club has been made at this time. I encourage you to become educated on the subject so that you will be informed when the time for a decision comes. There is information contained in the Gazette this month from the ad-hoc committee. Opinions on both sides of the issue are coming forward and it is important that each of us weigh all the facts before making a decision. More on this subject will be discussed at our monthly Civic Club meetings (First Tuesday of the month at Garden Oaks Elementary School, 7:00 p.m.) and in future editions of the Gazette. As with any volunteer organization, it is the involvement of the volunteers who make the difference. I wish to extend my thanks to all who have and are serving on our committees and help make Garden Oaks such a wonderful place to live. If you want to become involved with any of the committees, contact the committee chair or me, we are always happy to have additional resources and ideas.

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### Civic Club Meeting

**Meets Every First Tuesday of the Month  
Tuesday January 4th**

The next Civic Club meeting will be on January 4th at 7:00 p.m. in the Garden Oaks Elementary School cafeteria.

Babysitting services are available at the meeting at a cost of \$1.00 per child.

Hope to see you there!

## Civic Club Officers

*President* **Chris Lindsay**  
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for publication the next month unless otherwise noted. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** Publication of any article does not imply endorsement by the Garden Oaks Civic Club and is solely the opinion of the author.

## From the Editor's

### Desk

Sue Schmidt

It was one year ago, December 26<sup>th</sup> to be exact, that I moved to Garden Oaks. I can honestly say it is the best move my husband, Chris, and I have ever made. We are very happy to be in such a great neighborhood, and have fallen in love with all the things to do in the area.

We have always been very active in the communities we have lived in. As soon as we settled in I started looking for ways to become a part of the Garden Oaks community. During the summer when it was posted in the Gazette that a new editor was needed, I thought about getting involved. I had taken on this position when we lived in Spring and made many friends along the way. I also feel strongly that a neighborhood newsletter keeps friends and neighbors in touch with each other and their community. I know I always look forward to reading the latest "news" in the Gazette.

When Jonathan Lanz took over the editor's position in September, I thought ...that is great! I wasn't sure I had wanted to take the whole process on myself. Later though when a call for an assistant came out, I decided to step forward. Jonathan and I have worked on the past two editions together, and I think we will compliment each other beautifully. I wholeheartedly admit his computer skills are way beyond me, and hopefully I can bring some writing and editing skills to the table. I look forward to working on the Gazette and being a contributing member of the community for years to come.

Sue Schmidt

### Thank You

Diane King

Dec. 15. I have just finished writing the last set of minutes for the Civic Club. I want to thank Sheila Briones for convincing me to put my name on the slate for club secretary last year. If she hadn't I wouldn't have had the chance to meet as many Garden Oaks residents as I have. I wouldn't have learned as much as I have about the goings-on in the area. And I wouldn't have had the chance to work with this varied and interesting group of folks. I thank Lori Kennedy for helping me assume the duties as club secretary after her tenure in the office. I also want to thank Megan Salch for accepting the nomination to be the secretary in 2005. As I said I am grateful for the experience, but I am happy that this tour of duty is over. I intend to continue active participation in the civic club in other ways, but writing minutes each month generally took me longer than the meeting lasted. As a writer, this is a silly thing to admit. Writing minutes was more challenging than I envisioned. I don't think I liked doing it actually. So there. That being said, I will also say that I probably would not have attended as many meetings if I had not been club secretary. I will continue to attend because of the relationships I have developed with neighbors and because the civic club is such a great venue for achieving neighborhood goals.

There is a lot of opportunity to serve your community through the civic club. If there is something you want to do in this neighborhood, you should bring your idea to the club. You can affect the club's future direction. Chris Lindsay is going to be a great president. But watch out: She has a great way of getting you to want to volunteer for things. Come to the January meeting and help start the new civic club year with Chris at the helm.

Secretary 2004,  
Diane King

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

## Get the Facts

Trish Ricklefsen

The organization known as Garden Oaks Property Rights Organization (GOPRA) is distributing inaccurate information about the historic designation. Some of the inaccurate statements include:

- \$500 a day fines or being arrested for not paying the fines
- Local churches could lose their rights to alter their buildings or construct new places of worship
- Preservationists want to control interiors of historic buildings

The FACTS are:

"There has never been a fine imposed by any municipal judge for failing to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness (CoA)." Randy Pace, the City of Houston Preservation Officer replied to this question as follows: "There has never been a fine imposed by any municipal judge. What this provision means, is that if you do not file for a CoA and you are required to do so, and you begin work without it, you CAN be issued ONE citation by the building inspector for that one violation. However, anyone can also be issued a citation for not getting a building permit for any type work that requires a building permit (since it is the law and a life safety issue) even if your property is NOT in a historic district.

Randy Pace states that:

- The preservation ordinance DOES NOT regulate **ordinary maintenance and repair, paint color or interior alterations**. The intent of the Preservation Ordinance is to maintain the character of the historic district. The vehicle that accomplishes compliance is through a process for obtaining a "Certificate of Appropriateness." For alterations, improvements and additions visible from the street, you must obtain a CoA. If your proposed changes are not 'appropriate' for your particular historic building, the City's preservation officer will provide FREE consultation to adjust the proposed changes in a manner that is compatible. This process seeks to help and protect you and your neighbors.
- Churches can sign a petition in support of a historic district designation or landmark designation. Several churches are included within the Norhill Historic District. Garden Oaks historic boundaries have NOT been determined to date. If boundaries include churches that are historic, then alterations and new additions could be completed. Whether proposed changes are appropriate or not, applicants could proceed with work after a 90 day waiting period and after a building permit is issued.  
(This applies to all buildings in a historic district.)

Expansion of 610 to the East and West is possible. There is concern that if there was a movement to widen the North Loop, N. Shepherd, Durham, or W. 34th, it would adversely impact the residential areas in Section 1 on W. 30<sup>th</sup> and both sides of Shepherd/Durham, including Garden Oaks Baptist Church. Any widening would likely include a process called eminent domain whereby the government acquires private property for public use with or without the owner's consent. However, Randy states that "historic designation on any level, including the city designation, WOULD authenticate that the area is historically and architecturally important to the City of Houston and such historic status COULD be beneficial in assisting the neighborhood in overcoming such a threat should it ever arise."

Please stay informed of the issues and become active in whichever side you choose. As always, if you are supportive of historic designation, you need to sign a petition to show your support. For questions or information, please call: Trish Ricklefsen at 832.618.1606 or 281.733.1003.

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## Citizens on Patrol

CARL WATERS, JR.

Happy New Year Everyone!  
Thanks to all the volunteers who gave their time last year to make the *Citizens on Patrol* program work. Without your time this program would not exist. As always we could use more volunteers to keep the program going. It takes just a few simple steps to become a member. First, you need to contact me by telephone at 713-864-1992, by email at GOCOP77018@AOL.com or through the Garden Oaks web site GardenOaks.org. If you chose the last option click on the get involved link and then click on our program. Once you have signed up you will need to complete a one hour training conducted by the Houston Police Department. The program is open to all Garden Oaks residents 18 years of age or older.

### October Crime Statistics: (10)

#### Robbery: (1)

- 1000 block of W. 41<sup>st</sup> ST on Monday, October 25<sup>th</sup> at 2:10 p.m. (street).

#### Burglary: (2)

- 1300 block of Sue Barnett on Thursday, October 14<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. (residence).
- 200 block of W. 33<sup>rd</sup> ST. on Friday, October 29<sup>th</sup> at 7:15 a.m. (residence).

#### Burglary Motor Vehicle: (2)

- 400 block of W. 33<sup>rd</sup> St on Friday, October 8<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 p.m. (street).

- 1000 block of Lamonte Ln. on Saturday, October 9<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 p.m. (driveway).

#### Auto Theft: (1)

- 3000 block of N. Shepherd Dr. on Tuesday, October 26<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. (residence).

#### DWI: (4)

- 3100 block of N. Shepherd Dr. on Friday, October 1<sup>st</sup> at 8:40 p.m. (street).
- 3200 block of N. Shepherd Dr. on Friday, October 8<sup>th</sup> at 3:12 a.m. (street).
- 3400 block of N. Shepherd Dr. on Sunday, October 24<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 a.m. (street).
- 3100 block of N. Shepherd Dr. on Wednesday, October 27<sup>th</sup> at 1:47 a.m. (street).

This brings to number crimes listed on the HPD crimes to 89 through the month of October. During the same time period in 2003 the total number of listed crimes was 85.

**As always inquires about joining the Citizens on Patrol program can be sent to me via neighborhood website GardenOaks.org or to the COP email account at GOCOP77018@AOL.com. or by phone at 713-864-1992.**

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

# Letter To The Editor

Ron Sorum

To the Editor,

On Sunday night, December 12, I attended the first meeting of the Garden Oaks Property Rights Association (GOPRA). Following the advise of Trish Ricklefsen in her December Gazette article entitled "Garden Oaks- Quite Possibly the Last Small Town in Houston." I went to the GOPRA meeting with an open mind to learn more about the push that is on by a group of people associated with the Garden Oaks Civic Club to designate Garden Oaks as a Historic District.

I came away with lots of *facts* about what the Historical Designation would mean to me as a property owner in Garden Oaks. I must say that I am now strongly opposed to the proposal to make Garden Oaks a Historical District for the following reasons.

1. Failure to comply with the restrictions could result in fines of \$500 per day.
2. The City of Houston and the Preservation Officer would be able to control any alterations and construction on *my property*.
3. It would delay any construction projects on *my home* because of the complicated permitting process and inevitable red tape that accompanies any governmental permitting process.
4. Ordinary maintenance and repair work to correct or prevent deterioration, decay or damage to a building or object could require a *special permit* if the work changes the design, character, texture or material of any exterior feature.
5. Local Churches could lose their rights to alter or construct their buildings.

I understand that there is a 90-day waiting period and then I could make any changes that I wanted to make without going through the approval process. My experience says that this is just a first step in the reduction of our rights. History shows that groups behind this type of effort will come back in a year or two and try to extend the waiting period beyond the initial 90 days. That is exactly what happened to a current historical district in Houston a few years ago. This proposal is just a first step down a slippery slope towards other people having ultimate power over what you do with your home. That is why I feel we should stop this attempt here and now.

I feel the proposal for historical designation is just a way for people who I don't know, to control the use of my property that I worked hard to acquire. If this group wants a say in how I build or maintain my Garden Oaks property, they should first offer to help me pay my property taxes. Then, I might be more willing to give up my property rights.

Ultimately, I would probably be in favor of this proposal if there were a clear benefit to property owners. I don't agree with the *assumptions* made by the proponents of this issue that it would benefit Garden Oaks property owners. There is quite a lot of data that indicates just the opposite.

Respectfully,

Ron Sorum

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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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713 694 5934

**Robert De Veau**  
Vice President/Treasurer  
713 686 6012

**Chris Lindsay**, Secretary  
713 819 8412

**Susan Gunther**, Correspondent

**Kathy Wahren**, Yard of the Month

**Tina Nieto**, Historian



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Bwoods@zieglercooper.com

1. Eat breakfast. Breakfast truly is the most important meal of the day. Studies have shown that breakfast eaters actually eat fewer calories per day than breakfast skippers. It is a great way to kick start your metabolism. Try a bowl of oatmeal made with skim milk and berries added or for something quick spread a tablespoon of peanut butter on a piece of whole wheat toast and wrap around a banana.
2. Take a multivitamin. It is true that you can get all of the vitamins and minerals that you need through food, but the question is will you and will you do it every day. Taking a multivitamin daily is a good safeguard. It is not as effective if it just sits in your medicine cabinet so get into a routine of taking it every morning.
3. Keep a food diary. Most people tend to eat better when they write it down, because it becomes more of a focus in their life. Commit to keeping a food diary for a few days or a few months. Be sure to include time that you eat, portion size and calories as well. [www.calorieking.com](http://www.calorieking.com) or [www.fitday.com](http://www.fitday.com) both have programs online to help. Do it for yourself or even better have a dietitian review it and give you tips on how to attain your goals.
4. Eat only when you are hungry. In our society everything revolves around food, therefore we tend to eat even if we are not hungry. We also eat when we are happy, sad, bored, angry etc. Learn to eat only when your body is slightly hungry, but not starving either. Ask yourself "Am I hungry enough to eat \_\_\_\_?" In that blank fill in a food that is edible, but you aren't crazy about. This will help you determine if it is true hunger or just a craving or desire.
5. Stop eating when you are 80% full. The vagus nerve takes approximately 20 minutes to communicate to our brain that our stomachs are full. If you stop eating at 80% full then 20 minutes after the meal you will be perfect. Slowing down while you eat can help you recognize your level of fullness better.
6. Eat a minimum of 5 servings of fruits and vegetables per day. And eating 10 servings has been shown to reduce blood pressure and your risk of heart disease, diabetes and cancer. Frequent fruit eaters have been found to gain less weight over time compared to people who eat only a small amount of fruit. Researchers speculate that the fiber in fruits and veggies is filling and thus controls your appetite. Choose a variety of different colored fruits and vegetables to ensure you get a good mix of vitamins, minerals and disease-fighting phytochemicals.
7. Eat every 3-4 hours. This not only prevents you from getting too hungry between meals. It also gives your body an extra calorie burn, thus increasing your metabolism. Make sure to combine a protein with a carbohydrate at snack time. Such as: low-fat yogurt and a banana or a piece of low fat string cheese and an apple.
8. Eat 3 servings of low fat dairy products per day. Studies have shown that people who meet the recommended dietary allowance for calcium (1000-1200 mg per day for women) have lower body weights and lower body fat. Calcium is believed to boost your basal metabolic rate and it can aid in fat burning. Calcium in foods is preferable to calcium from a supplement.
9. Drink a minimum of 64 oz of hydrating fluid (decaffeinated and nonalcoholic). Staying well hydrated is essential to flushing the body of toxic byproducts that are released when fat is burned. Cold water may also give your metabolism at least a small boost because energy is required to heat the body.
10. Cut down your caffeine consumption. High blood levels of certain inflammatory proteins caused by excessive caffeine have been linked to an increased risk of heart disease.

**713-316-2707 ckruppa@houstonian.com / [www.adviceforeating.com](http://www.adviceforeating.com)**

# Civic Club Meeting Minutes: December 7, 2004

Diane King

President Trey Wood called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

**Minutes** of the November meeting were approved as submitted. They were incorrectly identified in the *Gazette* as December minutes.

Trey asked whether there were any committee chairs who needed to make a report. Trish Ricklefsen said she had the required first report of the historic district committee. Trey asked for a motion to dispense with the usual club business, other than the report of the historic district committee in order to attend to the election of officers and board of directors and to vote on the 2005 budget. The motion was made, seconded, and passed.

**Treasurer's Report.** *None was given. Written copies of a YTD Profit/Loss statement were available at the meeting.*

## Ad Hoc Committee Reports

**Historic District.** Trish Ricklefsen. The committee met twice since the November civic club meeting, November 04 and December 02. Trish was elected chair. Other elected officers are Lisa McBee, secretary, and Loyd Stegent, treasurer. Committee rules were approved. A proposed budget was submitted to the civic club executive committee November 11. To accomplish its mission of determining feasibility and interest, the committee decided to conduct a random sample of forty homes in Section One. The sample is ongoing, with some owners yet to be contacted. Sample results as of the meeting are twelve signed petitions, and four owners opposed to signing. Information packets have been distributed to those in the sample and volunteers have taken more to others in all sections of Garden Oaks. Thirty-nine petitions have been received from all sections, including those in the sample. Those outside the sample came from committee members and those who responded to distributed information without solicitation. Education activities have included articles in the *Gazette* in the August, September, November, and December 2004 issues, and participation in the Kroger Open House November 13 with a table and volunteers. Poster homes are being selected for promotion of designation. The committee voted to support distributing information packets with the January 2005 *Gazette*. The committee will prepare them to be distributed in one package with the *Gazette* at no additional expense to the *Gazette*. The next committee meeting will be held January 06, 2005 at the Kroger on W. 43<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00 p.m.

## New Business

2005 Budget. The proposed budget as printed in the October *Gazette* was approved by a vote of the members present.

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(Continued on page 8)

# NEW HORIZON



## LANDSCAPING

Jackie Hanson  
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### CALL FOR GARDEN OAKS HISTORICAL ARTIFACTS

Do you have any early documents related to Garden Oaks?

- A flyer?
- An advertisement?
- A house plan?
- Early photographs of the neighborhood?

I am attempting to assemble a collection of Garden Oaks ephemera and artifacts. Ultimately I hope to gather enough to provide it all to the City of Houston Public Library for their Local Subdivisions History Collection.

I can photocopy, or scan any original item you want to retain. If the library accepts the collection, you will be credited as a donor. Such artifacts will be welcome by urban historians who investigate the mid-twentieth century in the United States, the South, Texas or just Houston.

Please contact me, Diane King, at [dianepe2king@yahoo.com](mailto:dianepe2king@yahoo.com). I'll be happy to make a "collect call" to your home.

Diane King

## Civic Club Meeting Minutes, December 7, 2004

Continued from previous page

### *Unfinished (Old) Business*

Terry Jeanes reported that the Constable program had received enough financial support to enable it to commence. It will begin approximately February 12.

Trey re-announced the nominating committee's slate of officers for the civic club for 2005. They are: President, Chris Lindsay; Vice-president, Sheila Briones; Treasurer, Mike Dishberger; Secretary, Meagan Salch. Trey called for a motion to accept the committee's recommendations. The motion was made, seconded, and passed.

Chris Lindsay, incoming president, spoke briefly, saying she was looking forward to serving as president, and expressed an interest in exploring and developing relationships with Garden Oaks' Super Neighborhood neighbors.

Craig Lee, chair of the railroad ad-hoc committee, said that December 18 was the deadline for the city to take applications for quiet zones in areas where trains traveled through residential areas. Craig noted that in recent conversations with Burlington Northern officials who had been at the civic club earlier this year, they had not mentioned this date to him. A motion was made to allow the civic club executive committee take the necessary steps to complete an application for a quiet zone in Garden Oaks.

### *Announcements*

The next civic club meeting is January 04, at 7:00 p.m., at Garden Oaks Elementary.

At the conclusion of the historic district committee report, Trish Ricklefsen announced that Santa Claus would be touring Garden Oaks December 19 in a fire truck before stopping at the Gazebo to see children.

Trey adjourned the meeting at 7:40. Nearly everyone remained to enjoy all the refreshments and goodies they had brought.

Twenty-six people attended the meeting.

## Santa's Visit to Garden Oaks

Sue Schmidt

Santa arrived in Garden Oaks Sunday, December 19<sup>th</sup> in a big red fire truck escorted by Houston firefighters. Residents could hear the siren and horn as they made their way through the neighborhood. He also stopped by Monday, December 20<sup>th</sup> as well.

A festive time was had by all the children that sat on Santa's lap (or observed). Lots of moms and dads shared wassail and cookies while they enjoyed the holiday fun. This holiday tradition has been experience every year for the past twenty years in Garden Oaks.

Thanks go to Santa, his adorable elves and the Houston Fire Department. Susan McMillan once again organized the activities. Sue Schmidt and Trish Ricklefsen, both with Keller Williams Realty, sponsored Santa's visit.



Happy 2005! Most of us at one time or another have made New Year's resolutions in the interest of self-improvement. This year, why not make some for pet improvement? Our Pets of the Month were both abandoned once upon a time but with love and resolve they became wonderful family members.

**Pet of the Month:** Mr. and Miss January are Squeaky and Pinta Flores-Dansby. Squeaky is a 13 year old black lab mix and Pinta is a Dalmatian. They live in Section I with their parents, Joy Dansby and Mary Ann Flores. Joy found Squeaky when he was less than two years old. He was a stray who was very sick and very weak. With a lot of love and octor visits he blossomed into a fine lap dog. Pinta was abandoned in a field near Katy just under one year old. The Dansby-Flores household fostered her for one weekend and decided to keep her. She was highly energetic and very unruly. Through lots of exercise, patience, training and love she became a wonderful, loving pet. Happy New Year sweet angels!

**Critters 101: Resolutions for Healthier Pets**

**Resolution #1** *Spay or neuter your pet.* By doing so, not only do you not add to the horrible problem of pet overpopulation (five to twelve million animals are euthanized each year in US shelters), but you also decrease the odds of certain health problems.

**Resolution #2** *Microchip your pet.* The microchip is the size of a grain of rice and is inserted into the loose skin on the back of the pet's neck. 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 national database with information that is stored about the dog and its owner.

**Resolution #3** *Get your pet on a good diet.* The quality of your pet's diet has impact on his or her health,

and once you switch from a supermarket brand to a premium brand, you will see the difference in your pet's coat.

**Resolution #4** *Keep your pet well groomed.* Keep up with brushing as necessary for your breed and don't let it get away from you. Grooming can be an excellent opportunity to bond with your pet. Dogs should be bathed every month or two with a good quality pet shampoo.

**Resolution #5** *Conduct periodic at home checks on your pet.* This is in no way meant to replace his annual exam with a vet. However, take a few minutes every month to nip some potential problems in the bud.

**Resolution #6** *Exercise your pet every day.* Play fetch with him. Take him for walks.

**Resolution #7** *Stimulate your dog through training.* Adult dogs find stimulation through taking advanced classes, many trainers offer classes in areas such as agility, fetching, or coming when called.

**Resolution #8** *Learn Pet First Aid & CPR.* You can never know too much about your pet's health or how to save their life.

**Resolution #9** *Learn Safe Housekeeping.* Get rid of the harsh and toxic cleansers in your home. It is possible to clean naturally making a much safer place for your children, your pets, yourself and the environment.

**Resolution #10** *Resolve to spend lots of quality time with your pet.* Your love and affection will make your pet happier – and thus healthier in the New Year, and all those that follow.

Casey Farris is owner/operator of Bone Voyage Pet Sitting Services® and Go Dog Usa, Please forward your questions and pet news to Casey@goDOGusa.com or call

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A few weeks ago, I discovered an article at the Houston Public Library. The article talked about Garden Oaks and the people who lived here. It first appeared in the September 1979 issue of Houston Home and Gardens Magazine. I was struck that Garden Oaks residents spoke of their neighborhood in 1979 just as I have in recent weeks. There were many more original owners alive then than now, but some of those quoted still live in Garden Oaks. Several people who were interviewed discussed how they remodeled and expanded their homes rather than rebuild, in order to preserve them. For accuracy, I have placed brackets where there is a break in the transcription, and have added a few notes or text in brackets where necessary for clarification.

Susan McMillian was interviewed for the magazine article and she has endorsed our placing it in the Gazette. If anyone has an original, I would love to make a copy. Diane King, dianepe2king@yahoo.com

**A Neighborhood With Roots**  
By Janis Wilson-Williams.

In a city nationally hailed as Boomtown, USA, Garden Oaks is an anomaly. [. . .] [Houston's] as urban an environment as you'll find anywhere, and the prospect of finding a neighborhood community in the old-fashioned sense – with that “roll up your sleeves and pitch in” trait that contributed so much to the development of small towns in early Texas – seems remote indeed. But Garden Oaks is a small piece of East Texas in our midst – about eight miles north of downtown [actually only about five] and it sports a refreshing provincialism where everyone knows everybody else. That southwestern small-town charm, which we all thought we had given up when we left home for the big city, has been right here in Houston all along. [. . .] the area has been preserved and now has a uniquely rural atmosphere. To turn into Garden Oaks is to drive through an area which is familiar, yet

strikingly unusual for a city. It is a neighborhood which is hidden behind tall trees, and in which the houses, old by Houston standards, are consistently well-maintained. [. . .]

Susan and Bill McMillian grew up in Garden Oaks and live there still. [. . .] “There’s a strong sense of pride here. [. . .] It’s like a small town. Once you come, you don’t want to leave. My parents live here, my husband’s parents live here, my husband’s grandparents live[d] here. He and I went all through the grades and to church here. [. . .] The McMillians bought their house in 1971. [Susan became president of the civic club in 1979, was very active with the club for many years and has signed a petition supporting historic district designation.]

“It’s in a constant state of remodeling,” Bill says, “but that’s not unusual for this neighborhood. People are always working on their houses.” [Susan:] “You know how you’ll cherish a memento from, say, a grandparent? Well, I feel that way about Garden Oaks. It’s been saved for me, preserved like an heirloom. I feel grateful toward the older residents here, because I know they’ve gone to a great deal of trouble through the years to preserve the neighborhood.” [. . .] [T]he actual developer of the neighborhood, E. L. Crain of the Crain Co., set a tone of integrity and responsible community involvement from the beginning. He took a special interest in Garden Oaks, desiring to preserve it as a small town within the city. To that end, he carefully plotted the neighborhood into six sections, though only Garden Oaks 1 through 5 were actually developed. He took care to preserve trees and to leave large yards. Also, the winding roads were built to encircle small parks of lush grass and tall trees. There isn’t a straight street in the entire subdivision, which was also a part of Crain’s plan.” [. . .]

Deed restrictions in Garden Oaks are probably no more stringent than  
**(Continued on next page)**



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in other older areas of Houston, but they are more strictly enforced. [. . .] Many Garden Oaks residents have the deed restrictions memorized. People appreciate this guarding of the overall neighborhood, though. [. . .] "Ten years ago" [*now thirty-five*] adds Susan, "the Board of Trustees went to the Texas Supreme Court over a carport, and the board won the case. [. . .]" [*The Board of Trustees no longer exists. GOMO is the property owners' association now charged with enforcing deed restrictions.*]

[Several owners were quoted in this article. Some still live in Garden Oaks. A few have passed on. Here are a few quotes of what they said about living here:]

"This subdivision goes so much deeper than remodeled homes and winding streets. Tennessee Williams could write a great play about this area."

"When I was a child my father was in

the oil business, and we moved every summer of my life. Garden Oaks is really the first place I have lived I could call home. When the time came to move, [they] found they didn't want to – the 'temporary arrangement' was going to last."

"It doesn't take long and you're acclimated to this area."

"I wouldn't move. They'll have to carry me out feet first."

***(Be the next person to tell the rest of your neighbors what you like about Garden Oaks and why you would support designation of the neighborhood as a historic district. Please share and send your thoughts to [dianepe2king@yahoo.com](mailto:dianepe2king@yahoo.com) or 3310 Lawrence, Houston, TX 77018 by January 10, and include what section you live in, and how long you have lived here. Many Gazette readers and all of the committee want to hear from you! Diane King)***

## H. O. T

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# January 2005

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4 <b>Civic Club Meeting</b> 7:00 P.M. Tuesday	5	6	7	8
9 <b>Open House</b> 1567 Sue Barnett Dr.	10	11	12	13 <b>GO COP Training</b>	14	15 <b>Newsletter Deadline</b>
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27 <b>GO COP Training</b>	28	29
30 <b>Waltrip Ram Classic Golf Tournament</b>	31					

### Useful Numbers

All City Services (city information or services ranging from traffic court dates and sewer concerns to pothole problems and neighborhood complaints) \_\_\_\_\_ **311**  
 One Call Program (Heavy trash and more) \_\_\_\_\_ **713\_956\_6589**  
 Recycling Hotline \_\_\_\_\_ **713\_837\_9130**  
 Deeds Restriction Violations 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**

### 2005 Garden Oaks Civic Club Membership Form

**Name(s):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### (A) Annual Dues

\$25.00 Crepe Myrtle (Basic)      \$50.00 Magnolia (intermediate)      \$75.00 Golden Oak (Patron)  
 Senior Citizen \$5.00      Senior Citizen \$10.00      Senior Citizen \$15.00

#### (B) Garden Oaks T-Shirt \$15.00 each or \$10.00 Member Price

Quantity/Size: Small \_\_\_\_\_ Medium \_\_\_\_\_ Large \_\_\_\_\_ XLarge \_\_\_\_\_ XXLarge \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total

© Contribution to Garden Club \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a \_\_\_ new or \_\_\_ renewing member? Do you \_\_\_ own or \_\_\_ rent your house?

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

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