

The Garden Oaks

# Gazette



## President's Message

*Sheila Briones, 2007 Garden Oaks Civic Club President*

### CANDIDATES FOR CITY COUNCIL AT LARGE #3

Candidates for the at-large #3 council seat have been invited to speak to the members at the April 3<sup>rd</sup> Civic Club meeting. A total of eleven candidates are running in the special May 12<sup>th</sup> election for the seat Shelley Sekula-Gibbs vacated last year for a brief stint in the U.S. House.

Candidates confirmed to speak are Roy Morales, a retired Air Force officer; Ivan Mayers, a Garden Oaks resident and former energy executive; Melissa Noriega, a Houston school official and wife of State Representative Rick Noriega; Andy Neill, a consultant involved in the Houston Downtown Alliance's emerging leaders committee; and Kendall Baker, a supervisor in the City's 311 service helpline call center.

Other candidates, who were contacted but not yet confirmed, include Noel Freeman, a city public works employee; David Goldberg, a high school student; Tom Nixon, lawyer and former Houston police officer who gained notoriety last year after his firing over criticisms of

HPD's vehicle-chase policy; and Sara Owen-Gemoets, a retired United Methodist minister.

Candidates that could not be reached because of insufficient contact information were Anthony Dutrow, a meat-packer and Alfred Molison, co-chair of the Harris County Green Party and a Social Security Administration employee.

If no one takes a majority of the vote on May 12<sup>th</sup>, a runoff between the top two vote-getters will decide the election. The winner will complete Sekula-Gibbs' term, which ends this year and the next full two-year term will be up for election in November.

Each candidate will be given three minutes to introduce themselves and present their positions. A Q&A session will follow.

**See you at the April 3<sup>rd</sup> Civic Club meeting. Remember meetings are always held in the cafeteria of Garden Oaks Elementary School.**

## In This Issue...

President's Message	1
Letter From The Editor	2
Spring Has Sprung at GOES	3
Beautification Update	3
GOMO Special Meeting	4
Critter Corner	5
Annual Membership Statement	6
GO Kids News	7
Chew Toy Thank You	7
Citizens Patrol Program	8
Advertising & Article...	9
Garden Oaks Civic Club Minutes	10
GO SPARK Park Plans Complete	11
GO Winers and Diners	12
GO Community Meeting	13
Constable Contributor Application	15
Calendar	16

### Friendly Reminder

Deadline for Submission is the 15th of Every Month.

**No exceptions.** No submissions will be accepted after this date.

This allows us to proofread, edit, and the printing to be done in a timely manner for delivery to all Garden Oaks Residents.

### Next Civic Club Meeting Tuesday, April 3rd

The next Civic Club meeting will be on Tuesday, April 3rd at 7 p.m. in the Garden Oaks Elementary School cafeteria, 901 Sue Barnett @ Garden Oaks Blvd. Babysitting services are available at a cost of \$1.00 per child. Hope to see you there!

## Civic Club Officers

### **President Sheila Briones**

713-861-8091 412 W. 34<sup>th</sup>  
sbriones@hotmail.com

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713-695-7916 862 W. 42<sup>nd</sup>  
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### **Treasurer Jerry Butler**

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### **Secretary Cindy Bartos**

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### **Standing Committee Chairs**

#### **Beautification Brenda de Alba**

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713-691-6833 750 Sue Barnett  
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#### **GardenOaks.org Co-chair**

##### **Josh Hamilton**

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#### **Membership Dian Austin**

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## Letter From The Editor

**Sue Schmidt**

It is official, Spring is definitely in full bloom in Garden Oaks. As the season of home tours and home/garden shows begins, the azaleas in Garden Oaks are in spectacular. The beautification committee, headed by Ed and Brenda de Alba, have done an outstanding job with all of our wonderful green spaces throughout the neighborhood. Thanks go to all of the volunteers who work so hard to keep our parks blooming for the rest of us to enjoy. Speaking of which, the next scheduled workday is April 7<sup>th</sup> at Garden Oaks Blvd. It is a great way to spend a Saturday morning and meet new friends.

Plans are also in the works for a new, improved Rick Englert Spark Park. The Spark Park Committee has been working since the fall to come up with plans that will enhance the park next to Garden Oaks Elementary School. These improvements will be funded by the SPARK Program and federal grants, student fundraisers, the PTA, and contributions from the Civic Club. A vote by GOMO membership will be taken May 1<sup>st</sup> at the Special GOMO Meeting following the Civic Club to decide whether \$35,000 of surplus funds will be distributed to the Spark Park renovation. This contribution is very important if we are to make all of the proposed enhancements to the park. Residents of sections 1,2,3 and

5 are encouraged to attend and have your votes count.

Finally, we have several openings for block captains throughout the neighborhood. These volunteers are critical in distributing the *Gazettes* and keeping the neighborhood informed of all the latest happening in the 'hood. The time commitment is at the most 30 minutes the weekend prior to the Civic Club meeting. This vital link is so important to the neighborhood. If you feel you can find 30 minutes each month to benefit your neighbors and friends, please call Sue Schmidt at 832-563-3402. We really need your help.

## Wanted Block Captain's For:

- **900 Blk. of 41st**
- **3102-3310 Lawrence**
- **4206-4219 Alba**
- **701-752 W. 43rd St.**
- **3004-3010 N. Shepherd**
- **1002-1078 W. 42nd St.**

**Gazettes can  
be picked up at  
Computer-Wiz until  
these positions are  
filled.**

**If interested call Diana at  
713-979-4500**

## Spring has Sprung at GOES

Students from the Garden Oaks Elementary Garden Club wish to express their gratitude to neighbor Mr. Mike Dishberger, Houston Garden Club Coordinator for GOES Jan Wallace and Urban Harvest teacher Ms. Sharon for their support of the Student Garden Club. Urban Harvest in partnership with the Houston Garden Club awarded GOES a grant to fund after-school gardening classes, school-wide garden curriculum and support as well as direct leadership in creating new herb and vegetable beds on the campus. Pictured here is the Wednesday garden class by the "Sunshine Garden", a new herb garden that Mr. Mike Dishberger helped create. Through Sandcastle Homes, he donated time and labor for masons to cut limestone used in two circular raised herb beds. On a long, cold and wet January day, two very generous workers used their skill cutting stones to help beautify the campus. The students take great pride in this work and at many times throughout the day, you can catch students peering into the gardens to discover what new green life is sprouting. "A campus collaboration of teachers, students and parents have led us to this point," says GOES Beautification chair Vena Golt. "Many community members such as Ed and Brenda de Alba, Dana Maloney and Lynn Seivers have joined in the effort to create harmony and balance with nature on the campus."

The Beautification committee has plans on campus that compliment the new SPARK Park, creating a Memorial garden and a labyrinth in the next few years. If you are interested in helping with these projects or with the after school program, feel free to call the school for more information at 713-696-2930. We appreciate Mr. Dishberger, the Houston Garden Club and Urban Harvest for seeing our potential. Happy Spring!



## Beautification Update

*Brenda de Alba*

### Upcoming Workday to put on your calendar:

Garden Oaks Blvd. – April 7<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 AM, 700 Block of GO Blvd., Section 2

### Gazebo Workday on March 10<sup>th</sup>

The Gazebo Park at the intersection of W. 42<sup>nd</sup> and Sue Barnett had its spring cleaning on March 10<sup>th</sup>. Vicki Lopez, Sheila Briones, Gary Harmon, Ivan Mayers, Juergen Mueller, Brenda & Ed de Alba, Bill Holden, Dian Austin, and Sandy Altman all gave a few hours of a beautiful spring Saturday morning to weed, trim, clean flower beds, set plants, and spread 8 yards of mulch in this pretty little park. Thank you all for making this jewel of a park really shine.

Did you have a chance to see the Mexican Plum Tree in flower? We planted it on the northwest corner of the park 9 years ago. It was spectacular this year and its fragrance was evident throughout the park.

### Randall Berm Park Clean up on March 17<sup>th</sup>

The Randall Berm Park at 30<sup>th</sup> and Durham, opposite Taco Cabana, had its spring cleaning on March 17<sup>th</sup>. A crew was hired to do the bulk of the cleaning and trimming. Brenda supervised and weeded the more difficult spots.

### Entrance Sign Adopted

Section 1 resident Jesse Lopez adopted the sign at Ashland and the 610 Feeder. He's even installed a flower bed. Way to go Jesse!

**If you enjoy the parks in our neighborhood but never volunteer your time to help on any of the workdays, please reconsider! Even one hour of your time can produce amazing results. We Need Your Help!!**

**Elyse & Mark Farrow**

### Welcome new baby boy

**Logan Thomas Farrow.**

**Born:**

**February 24, 2007.**

**7 lbs 4 o, 18.75 in.**

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## GOMO Board of Directors

### Section 1:

#### Graham Gips (2007)

Home: 713 824-9204  
408 W. 31st Street  
graham.gips@gmail.com

#### Kathy Horner (2009)

Cell: 713 385-2050  
527 W. 33rd Street  
kathy@associatedcounsel.com

### Open Position

### Section 2:

#### Ed de Alba (2007)

President  
Cell: 713 628-7008  
744 W. 43<sup>rd</sup> Street  
ferrocem@yahoo.com

#### Todd Prince (2008)

Home: 713 694-5415  
714 W. 43<sup>rd</sup> Street  
tprince@fbba.org

#### Jay Tatum (2007)

Home: 713 699-4166  
725 Garden Oaks Blvd.  
jay.tatum@hok.com

### Section 3:

#### Mike Dishberger (2008)

Home: 713 695-7916  
862 W. 42<sup>nd</sup> Street  
dishberger@aol.com

#### Lynn Sievers (2008)

Home: 713 691-4789  
851 Lamonte Lane  
sieverslynn@hotmail.com

#### Richard Stark (2008)

Home: 713 691-1067  
1335 Sue Barnett Drive  
rstark@lucasgroup.com

### Section 5:

#### Malcolm Taylor (2008)

Secretary  
Home: 713 956-8872  
1030 W. 41<sup>st</sup> Street  
malcolmtaylor@chevrontexaco.com

#### Tim Weltin (2008)

Home: 713 540-5315  
1567 Sue Barnett Drive  
timweltin@mycase.info

#### John Ciccarelli (2009)

Home: 713 688-8285  
4310 Apollo Street  
ciccarelli@intergate.com

Terms expire at end of October of the Year in parenthesis.

## GOMO Special Meeting

*Ed de Alba*

### Special Meeting to be held May 1st at the Garden Oaks Elementary School Cafeteria following the Civic Club Meeting.

There are 2 issues on the agenda for this meeting:

- The Disbursement of Surplus Funds
- Election of a Replacement Director in Section 1.

### Surplus Funds

Early this month we will bring forward to all GOMO members our suggestions for the use of surplus funds. This will be in a separate mailing sent to each member household. Our spending plans reflect the sentiments overwhelmingly supported by you, the members, in the survey we sent out late last year. It was abundantly clear from the responses that security, the SPARK Park and our greenspaces top the list.

### Section 1 Director Position Open

Jeff Toxey, GOMO Director for Section 1, took an overseas posting to Jakarta, Indonesia. Jeff resigned his office effective January 20<sup>th</sup>. The term for this position runs through October of 2008. If you are interested in running for this position, please contact any of the GOMO Directors listed in the Gazette prior to April 20<sup>th</sup>. On that date we will close the application process. Section 1 members will vote to fill this position at the May 1<sup>st</sup> meeting.

The requirements of the position are:

- Must be 18 or older
- Must own property and live within the Garden Oaks section for the Director's position that you are volun-

teering to stand election for

- If no member residing in the Section stands for election, then a Member who is an owner in that section, but lives in another section, may stand for election as a "Non-Section Director", whose term is 1 year.

- All property owned in Garden Oaks must be in compliance with the Garden Oaks Deed Restrictions, excluding violations that existed before your ownership of the property.

- Must sign a statement attesting to the above.

### An Open Invitation to our Meetings

We would like to personally invite all GOMO members to our meetings. Democracy works best in an open environment and that is as true at the neighborhood level as it is at the federal and state levels. There is no better way for the people of our community to see for themselves how we evaluate the building plans brought to us and how we reach consensus.

It is also the best way to get your questions answered. The GOMO Board is made up of 12 people. The Board doesn't have an "opinion" about a topic unless a majority of a quorum forms a consensus view. So no one board member is able to tell you what GOMO "thinks" about an issue or idea until we have an opportunity to deliberate and form a collective opinion. The formation of GOMO policy and opinion takes place every third Wednesday of the month at our business meetings held at the GOMO Office, 7:00 PM, Garden Oaks Professional Building, 4001 N. Shepherd, Suite 216. You are very welcome to attend, make suggestions, propose ideas, ask questions, clarify rumors, or simply observe the process.

## Critter Corner

Casey and Mau Mau Farris

Happy April! Animals, as happy for the warmer weather as we are, roam around more often in the Spring. The number of stray animals also goes up dramatically this time of year. Don't let your pet be a stray. Make sure your dog or cat is wearing a collar and identification tag at all times. Even if your pet lives exclusively indoors, accidents can happen. This month we talk about Easter bunnies. Our Pet of the Month is a springy feline and ready or not our backyards are springing alive with color, song and courtship.

**Pet of the Month:** "Mr. April" is Piggy Pennington who will be six years old on April 15<sup>th</sup>. Piggy is black and gray tiger striped. He lives in Section I with his mother, Patty, a sister feline, Zelda (black), and a brother feline, Fred (orange/white). Piggy does enjoy eating and the gravy from his can food is his favorite snack. I don't have enough space to describe all the comedic antics, but Piggy is very active. He leaps, springs and dances all over the house especially after the feather pole. However, Piggy's favorite toy is his brother, Fred. When he is not doing standup comedy Piggy calms down and turns into a real lover. He loves to snuggle and every day when Patty returns from work, Piggy is waiting at the back door where he extends his front legs for her to pick him up for hugs. Piggy has been with Patty since he was a very young kitten and he would sleep in her hair at night. He stays out of her hair now but he has taken over her heart and mine. Love and kisses on your birthday sweet Piggy!

### **Critters 101: You're Nobunny 'till Somebunny Loves You**

Its Easter time and the pet store windows are filled with adorable baby bunnies. Your kids are begging you to buy one. It's so hard to resist. Think again! Rabbits and children aren't a good match. Rabbits have become the third most popular house pet in the USA. Rabbits are not "low-maintenance" pets. They have a life-span of 10 years and require as much work as a dog or a cat. Rabbits are not passive and cuddly. They are ground-loving creatures who feel frightened and insecure when held and restrained. The exuberance of even the gentlest toddler is stressful for the sensitive rabbit. Your home must be bunny-proofed or Thumper will chew cords and furniture. Rabbits must be neutered or they will mark your house and they should live as members of the family. Domestic rabbits are inquisitive, intelligent, and very social by nature. A rabbit is a delightful companion animal as long as you remember: he is not a child's toy. He is a real, live, 10-year commitment! If you think you're someone who would enjoy sharing life with a rabbit, please visit [www.rabbit.org](http://www.rabbit.org) for lots of information.

Casey Farris is owner/operator of Bone Voyage Pet Sitting Services and Go Dog USA, **Home of the Go Dog Social Club** and **Go Dog Academy @ Urban Tails**. 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**.



# Terry Jeanes

your Garden Oaks neighbor  
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HOUSTON, TX 77206

## ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES STATEMENT

January - December 2007

**TO: GARDEN OAKS  
RESIDENT**

Membership is open to all residents whether you own or rent. Please choose the level you feel most comfortable supporting. **While all memberships are voluntary, at a minimum you must contribute \$25 (or \$5 for Seniors 65 years or older) in order to be eligible to vote on civic club matters.** Membership dues are for the calendar year.

*Fill in Amount*

\$\_\_\_\_\_ CREPE MYRTLE: \$25.00 (\$5.00 for Seniors)  
Basic Household Membership

\$\_\_\_\_\_ THE MAGNOLIA: \$50.00 (\$10.00 for Seniors)  
Intermediate Level – Household Membership

\$\_\_\_\_\_ THE GOLDEN OAK: \$75.00 (\$15.00 for Seniors)  
Patron Level – Household Membership

\$\_\_\_\_\_ OTHER (Contributions other than the levels above)  
Fill in amount you would like to contribute

\$\_\_\_\_\_ BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP: \$50.00 (non-voting membership)

\$\_\_\_\_\_ CONTRIBUTION TO GARDEN CLUB

\$\_\_\_\_\_ CONTRIBUTION TO THE SPARK PARK

\$\_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL

Membership dues go toward supporting all Garden Oaks Civic Club Activities: Beautification, Citizens on Patrol, The *Gazette*, Home Tour, Membership Committee and Website. The more you give, the more we can do!

**Please mail this completed form along with your check payable to:**  
Garden Oaks Civic Club, P.O. Box 10273, Houston, TX 77206.  
**THANK YOU!**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## GO Kids News

Tonya Knauth

Get your baskets ready! GO Kids' first annual EASTER EGG HUNT will be Saturday, April 7, from 11 am - 1 pm, at the SPARK Park. There will be different areas for kids under 3 and kids over 3. This event is generously sponsored by Deanna Zugheri, of the Metropolitan Keller Williams Realty, and Will Zugheri, of First Houston Mortgage, Ltd. If you'd like to help, please contact Deanna at (281) 658-4514 or [Deanna@gardenoakshomes.com](mailto:Deanna@gardenoakshomes.com). Moms' Night Out for April will be Thursday, April 5, 7 pm, at the Zugheri home,

1054 Gardenia. We will be stuffing eggs for the Easter Egg hunt, and will have pizza and beverages.

GO Kids was started by a group of parents who want to build a family-friendly neighborhood where children and parents know each other and grow together -- all Garden Oaks families are welcome! Aren't on the GO Kids list serve? Want more information about GO Kids? Contact Tonya Knauth at (713) 628-8243, or [tknauth@houston.rr.com](mailto:tknauth@houston.rr.com).

## Chew Toy Thank You

We would like to thank everyone who came out to the Spark Park on Saturday March 10, 2007 and donated chew toys, rawhides and towels to the animals at BARC. Because of your generosity we were able to take two large boxes and several garbage bags full of items to BARC. I'm sure the items have provided hours of chewing pleasure for the animals. Garden Oaks is such a wonderful and generous neighborhood and again thank you for taking time out of your day to stop by and donate. Thanks go to: Casey Jo for spending your morning with us at the Park.

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721 W. 41st St.	1043 Gardenia
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## Citizens Patrol Program

*Carl Waters Jr.*

The New Year did not start well in terms of crime reported in the neighborhood. Nine crimes were reported on the HPD list for January. This is six more than in January 2006.

### Jan. Crime Statistics (9)

#### Burglaries (5)

2900 block of N. Shepherd Dr. on Wednesday, January 3<sup>rd</sup> at 10:00 p.m. (unknown).

900 block of W. 41<sup>st</sup> St on Monday, January 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:45 a.m. (residence).

2900 block of N. Shepherd Dr. on Friday, January 12<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 p.m. (unknown).

700 block of W. 41<sup>st</sup> St on Friday, January 26<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 a.m. (residence).

2900 block of N. Shepherd Dr. on Sunday, January 28<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m. (residence).

Burglary of a Motor Vehicle (1)  
800 block of Azalea St. on Thursday, January 25<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 p.m. (driveway).

#### Auto Theft (1)

700 block of W. 38<sup>th</sup> St on Wednesday, January 24<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 a.m. (street).

#### Narcotics (1)

700 block of W. 38<sup>th</sup> St. on Friday, January 26<sup>th</sup> at 1:54 a.m. (street).

Driving While Intoxicated (1)  
2900 block of N. Shepherd Dr. on Friday, January 26<sup>th</sup> at 2:41 a.m. (street).  
As always inquires about joining the

Citizens Patrol Program or about other community safety issues can be directed to me via neighborhood website GardenOaks.org or to the COP email account at GOCOP77018@AOL.com. or by phone at 713-864-1992.

## Reference Numbers

### Emergency Services

**911**

### HPD Non Emergency Services

**713-884-3131**

### All other City Services

**311**

### Constable Dispatch

**713-755-7628**



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## Advertising & Article Submission Guidelines

The Garden Oaks Gazette is the official publication of the Garden Oaks Civic Club and is published on a monthly basis. It is hand delivered to 1,550 homes the first week of each month.

The Gazette's primary purpose is to disseminate information about Civic Club activities and community events.

Advertising rates are shown to the right. If you would like to purchase ad space, please contact the Editor. (See page 2 for contact information.)

All articles must be submitted by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month for publication the following month. Contributing articles will be printed at the Editor's discretion and edited according to space availability. Publication of any article not related to the Civic Club does not imply endorsement by the Garden Oaks Civic Club and is solely the opinion of the author.

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## Garden Oaks Civic Club Minutes

Cindy Bartos, Secretary

### Welcome:

President Sheila Briones called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. A motion was made and the February minutes were approved as they appeared in the Gazette.

### Treasurer's Report:

Jerry Butler presented the current income and expense report and had detailed copies available at the meeting. He also reported that the funds for the Constable Program may not be sufficient to complete the year and suggested considering a plan in the future to raise funds and participants in order to keep the Constable Program functioning.

### Standing Committee Reports:

- **Beautification:** Ed de Alba reported the next workday is scheduled for Saturday, March 10<sup>th</sup> at the Gazebo Park. They have hired a crew to do the initial clean up for the Berm Park in 2 weeks.

- **Constable Program:** Constable David Vest reported on a foot chase that began in the 700 block of Sue Barnett and resulted in an arrest in the 700 block of 38<sup>th</sup>. He also reported on several motor vehicle break-ins and again emphasized the importance of keeping vehicles locked, valuables out of sight, parking closer to a residence and investing in additional security devices for your vehicle. He encouraged residents to call the Constable's office if they see anyone suspicious or not familiar. The phone number for the Constable's office (713-755-7628) appears monthly in the *Gazette*. Deputy Stacy Martin mentioned a recurring break-in at a house in the 700 block of W41st and urged everyone to keep an eye out for any unusual activity.

- **Gazette:** Sue Schmidt and Jonathan Lanz were not present. Sheila reminded everyone of the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month deadline for Gazette articles.

- **Garden Oaks Citizen Patrol:** Carl Waters announced there were 9 reported crimes for the month of January: 5 burglaries, one motor vehicle break-in, one auto theft, one DWI and one narcotics arrest. While he had the floor, Carl also announced the Chew Toy Drive for BARC taking place this Saturday, March 10<sup>th</sup> at the Spark Park.

- **Membership:** Dian Austin was not present. Sheila reported for Dian that we have 295 paid members. She also reminded everyone of the "Garden Oaks Meet and Greet" taking place Thursday, March 22 at The Rainbow Lodge from 6 – 8:00 p.m. Ed de Alba was the winner of the Home Depot Gift Card raffle drawing.

- **Garden Club:** Next meeting is Thursday; March 8<sup>th</sup> 7:00 p.m. in the GOMO office.

- **Garden Oaks Elementary:** Principal Emily Thomas not present – no report.

**GOMO:** Ed de Alba announced that there would be a meeting immediately following tonight's Civic Club meeting. An election to fill the Director vacancy from Section I and a vote to determine the distribution of excess GOMO funds will take place at the May 1, 2007 GOMO meeting.

**Old business:** none

**New Business:** President Sheila Briones reported on the Community Meeting held two weeks ago to hear a presentation from The Brownstone Development Group on their plan to purchase Carter's Grove Apartments. The short notice and a deadline given by the Brownstone Group prevented this presentation from being held at a scheduled Civic Club meeting. The Civic Club officers met and decided not to support or oppose the Brownstone plan and heard that Brownstone decided not to go forward with their plan. There were no questions from the Civic Club members present.

Ivan Mayers, a Garden Oaks resident, introduced himself as a candidate for Houston City Council At-Large Position 3. He presented his background information and his specific concerns for the city of Houston. Mr. Mayers also encouraged everyone to get out to vote in the May 12<sup>th</sup> Special Election.

**Program:** Bethany Foshee, Outreach Coordinator for the Buffalo Bayou Partnership, presented a program on the history of Buffalo Bayou and an update on past and future BBP projects.

**Meeting adjourned: 8:00 p.m.**  
**Attendance: 20**



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## Garden Oaks SPARK Park Plans Complete

Tonya Knauth

Garden Oaks' new, improved SPARK Park is moving forward! The architect has completed the plans and they have been approved by our SPARK Park committee and HISD. The work is currently out for bid. As the contractors are chosen by HISD, the work will begin. The hope is that the park will be completed by the time school starts next August.

The park will include: a new playground area with play sets for different age groups, a climbing structure, and a playhouse; an outdoor theater area with a grassy slope for seating (and for kids to play on!); and new fitness and stretching stations. The walking track and baseball/soccer fields will remain. The plans are posted at Garden Oaks Elementary, on a bulletin board near the cafeteria.

The SPARK park renovation is funded

by the SPARK program, which includes Federal grants as well as HISD, School and Neighborhood contributions. Garden Oaks Elementary Students and the PTA continue to raise funds for the project. The Civic Club has contributed \$3,000 and recently, the Board of Directors of GOMO voted to distribute \$35,000 of surplus funds to the SPARK Park renovation.

However, before the GOMO funds can be made available for the SPARK Park, they must be approved by the GOMO membership. A vote which will be held at the Special GOMO Meeting scheduled for May 1st, following the Civic Club meeting. Please support this spending and be sure to attend the meeting. This contribution will be very important in fulfilling the goals for our park, a jewel in the heart of our neighborhood!

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### VOTE MAY 12 -- SPECIAL ELECTION

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**Garden Oaks Resident  
For Houston City Council**



**Ivan Will Fight For:**  
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**Learn more:  
[www.Ivan4You.com](http://www.Ivan4You.com)**

Pol. Adv paid for by Ivan Mayers Campaign, Juergen Mueller treasurer

## GO Winers and Diners

Sue Schmidt

---

Don't know about everyone else, but March Madness has definitely been the theme in my life lately. Why does March always seem like such a hectic and fast paced month? With that in mind the Winers and Diners decided to slow it down a bit and enjoy a good old fashioned St. Patrick's Day celebration at Brian O'Neill's Traditional Irish Pub in the Rice Village area. With the weather pretty close to perfect these days, it is a hard decision between dining on the patio and a cozy private room just perfect for our group. Since we love to chat and share food opinions, among other things, we opted for the room. It wasn't easy though to pass up the balmy evening!

As we walked up to the restaurant, the patio was full, and it was a perfect night to enjoy people watching in the Village. Greeted warmly, we were seated promptly in the room we had reserved. The atmosphere is definitely "Irish Pub" with many relics of the Emerald Isle decorating the walls. First off was the choice of beverage. What is St. Paddy's day without an ice cold beer, preferably green! Although not Irish, the beer of choice that night was Blue Moon. Others at the table decided to stick with the tried and true Guinness. All were served cold and the service was unbelievably fast.

Our group included houseguests from Italy. We all enjoyed being able to carry on a conversation that sometimes needed translation, but was easily

heard and shared by all. Around 8:00 p.m. that evening, a trivia quiz game started and we had to decide to move to the larger dining area in order to play or stay in our quiet, secluded dining room. Although we would have liked to play, we elected to stay put and enjoy the company. Wednesdays through Saturdays, Brian O'Neill's offers live music. In another area of the Pub, darts is the game of choice. Seems like there is always something happening at this University spot.

Entrees were ordered and disappeared quickly. The tried and true spinach and artichoke dip was divine. The chips served with it were light and crisp. Another choice that proved to be a crowd pleaser was the Fried Olives. As we snacked on appetizers, we looked over the menu trying to decide on a selection of entrees. The menu was extensive with items ranging from a variety of burgers (ranked in the top 5 in Houston in 2006 per City Search website) to Irish Whiskey Chicken. Our waitress was more than willing to walk us through the menu and make suggestions she felt we would enjoy. Some of the entrees the group settled on were a Cobb Salad, a Black and Blue Burger with wedge cut potatoes, Shepherd's Pie, Irish Whiskey Chicken with mashed potatoes and Pork Medallions served on a bed of rice. Once again, the speed which this kitchen works is amazing. It was absolutely no time

before our entrees were served and beverages refreshed.

The Black and Blue Burger was as advertised...delicious. This burger featured bacon, blue cheese and black pepper and was cooked to perfection. The wedge potatoes disappeared in a flash. The Irish Chicken was flavorful and was a crowd pleaser. Several at the table expected juicy pork loin medallions and were slightly disappointed when the medallions were thin slices of ham. It was good, but not what we expected. The salad and Shepherd's Pie were both good selections. Portions were large, and there was plenty to share. In fact, we *almost* skipped dessert, but when the option of chocolate eruption was presented, there was no doubt dessert was on the way. Chunks of cheesecake dropped in chocolate mousse on a layer of devil's food cake covered with chocolate, caramel and almonds. Tell me please, who could walk away from that sinfully delicious dessert? One slice was delivered to the table and we shared. It was all over in less than two minutes. What can I say!

For an evening with friends in a relaxed fun atmosphere with good food, Brian O'Neill Traditional Irish Pub fits the bill. I think we all agreed we would definitely make the trip back to Rice Village for a burger and beer and people watching at Brian O'Neill's. It was the perfect way to celebrate the "wearin' of the green".

**Bon Appetit!**

## Garden Oaks Community Meeting Re: Carter's Grove Apartments/Brownstone Development Tuesday, February 20, 2007

Minutes submitted by Cindy Bartos  
7:00 p.m. President Sheila Briones welcomed all and called the meeting to order. Introduction of officers present: Secretary Cindy Bartos and Treasurer Jerry Butler.

Introduction of:

### **Community Representatives:**

Lois Stromberg, Neighborhood Liaison, Office of State Representative Dwayne Bohac

Will Dabney, Community Liaison, Office of Council Member Toni Lawrence

Emily Thomas, Principal, Garden Oaks Elementary

Constables S. Martin and Lieutenant Rois

### **Brownstone Development Group**

#### **Representatives:**

William L. Brown, President

Doak D. Brown

Wil C. Brown

Amay Inamdar

Mike Clark, UAH Property Management Company

#### **Presentation by Brownstone Group:**

(A. Inamdar): Brownstone Affordable Housing, Ltd. plans to purchase Carter's Grove Apartments for a price of \$4.1 million and spend approximately \$6 million to renovate the property close to brand new, down to the studs, new entrances, gates and stairwells.

Funding would be with the use of Housing Tax credits issued by the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs. Rents will run from \$600 - \$700 - \$800 a month.

(Wm Brown): Mentioned others wanting something other than multi-family housing on the property but pointed out the lack of access from Shepherd (property does not include the strip center). In talking with Mr. Penner, owner of Carter's Grove, Brown indicated that

Penner was not interested in selling in a conventional manner, but would agree to the Tax Credit Program.

(M. Clark): Described 3 types of low-income housing: Public housing under HUD, Project based Section 8 and Tax Credit Housing, the later being the type proposed. He described the plan being for working families with 10% of the units designated for very low income and 90% for low income. Incomes would range from \$36,000 to \$42,000. Under the Section 8 voucher the owner would be required to determine rental qualifications for any tenant. Qualifications include a credit check and criminal background checks. Resident services would include a hot lunch program for children in the summer, homework assistance and computer centers. Per IRS penalties they must maintain habitability and appearance for 15 years. Illegal immigrants may not live there.

7:22 p.m.

#### **Questions and answers from the community members present:**

Q.How long of a period of time before rents float to market value?

A.In order to receive Housing Tax Credits the owners are committed for 15 years and may sell after that time at the debt price. The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs hold the option.

Q.How many units currently in Carter's Grove?

A.136 units; 1-2-and 3 bedrooms. Rents will go up approximately \$150

Q.Is the complex for sale?

A.The property was found through a broker, price paid through the Tax Credit Program is about 1/3 more than a conventional purchase

Q.What about the current residents?

A.The current residents will be displaced; no one will be grand fathered in. There is a fund available to assist with moving expenses. The manager of Tax Credit Program must document every new tenant under the Land Use Restriction Agreement to be eligible to live there. There is an application process for the potential owners that must be presented by March 1, 2007 and they won't know if the application has been accepted until late August 2007. If approved, rehabilitation would begin in spring of 2008 and would be in service in less than 12 months. All current residents would receive at least a 30-day notice.

Q.When will voting take place?

A.As soon as Brownstone leaves the meeting

Q.You say the complex will be safe and secure, how?

A.The tenants will feel a part of the community. There will be restricted access gates and monitored cameras recording the license numbers of vehicles entering the property. (Constable Rois said it would definitely be safer than it is now).

Q.Why not town homes or condominiums?

A.The city of Houston requires 10 units per acre density (24 inside the Loop) and would not be economically feasible for Brownstone.

Q.Are there any other tax credit areas near?

A.No. This area was not a Qualified Census Tract. Mayor White has been focusing on rehabilitating blighted areas – wanted Revitalization Zone. All of Harris Co. is now a Qualified Census Tract due to Hurricane Katrina.

## Garden Oaks Community Meeting

*Continued from page 13*

Q.How will this be different than the current complex (going from 'frying pan to frying pan')

A.The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs will visit the apartment complex on a regular basis to make sure they are following strict leasing guidelines and have not let the property fall in to disrepair. Under requirements outlined by the IRS they must do yearly audits on tenants' income and repeat criminal and credit checks.

Q.Who is subject to checks?

A.All occupants 18 yrs and older

Q.What are the lease requirements?

A.Gross income must be at least 3 times the monthly rent and have 6 months of credit history. The IRS guidelines prohibit transient housing. Tenants must sign a minimum 12-month lease to start, then 6 months.

Q.How do we know the complex won't be flipped?

A.Under the Tax Credit Program the deal is nontransferable and owner cannot sell. After 15 yrs. if sold, must be at debt price.

Q.Asked for verification from Wm Brown that he would not sell within 15 yrs and he replied he would not sell.

R.Will Brownstone do something to cover the loss to Garden Oaks Elementary School due to the loss of students from Carter's Grove during the time when they are rebuilding?

A.They will maintain the same number of units as Carter's Grove, but the school will lose students who currently live there for a small period of time

Q.How will they prevent dumping over in to the easement?

A.Tenants will feel a sense of community and property management will try

to prevent this.

Q.What will happen if owners go bankrupt?

A.Tax credit lenders will make monthly checks to make sure the complex is in compliance. Corporations that buy the tax credits will step in to keep bankruptcy from happening.

Q.Question repeated concerning bankruptcy

A.Large corporations buy the tax credits, package and sell them – they will not let bankruptcy happen.

Q.What kind of tax credits?

A.\$996,000 every year for 10 years, no other tax credits

Q.Asked if Wm Brown would want a similar complex near his own home

A.yes

Q.You mentioned you need 4 letters of recommendation – do you have any at this time?

A.Brownstone has a confirmation from St Matthews and is still waiting to hear from 2 other churches.

Q. Asked for clarification on the minimum income required for leasing an apartment

A.Could be as low as \$28,000 and as high as \$42,000

Q.How will this help our community (as opposed to a different use for the property)?

A. Repeated earlier statement that to do anything else with the property is not feasible.

Question and Answer period concluded and the members of the Brownstone Development Group left the meeting.

**Community representatives spoke:**

Will Dabney: Toni Lawrence met with the Brownstone Group and had a favorable impression, but will support whatever Garden Oaks residents decide. When asked what the city is doing to get Carter's Grove to comply with city code he mentioned alerting the city to the problems through emails and phone calls to 311. In about 2 months "The Apartment Ordinance" should take affect that should put pressure on the landlord to take care of existing problems.

Lois Stromberg: Rep. Bohac will support any decision made by the Garden Oaks residents. She also explained a 'points' system applied to the final decision as to whether or not the application is granted to Brownstone Development. The State Senator's decision is awarded the most points, then the Civic Club's decision will get fewer points. The City Council is not awarded any points, but their input will be considered in the final decision. Any letters stating our decision must be received by March 1, 2007.

The motion was made and seconded to take a straw vote to vote against the proposed plan by the Brownstone Group. This vote will assist the Civic Club Officers in making the decision on the Brownstone proposal. In discussion by the members present it was noted that the property in question is 5.34 acres. Emily Thomas stated that 66 out of the 550 GO Elementary students come from Carter's Grove. 8:40 p.m. A straw vote was taken. 43 members voted in favor of the motion (to oppose the Brownstone proposal) and 28 voted against the motion as stated.

**Attendance: 89+**

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**CONTACT INFORMATION**

\_\_\_\_\_NEW or \_\_\_\_\_RENEWAL

(INVOICE MAILER)

MEMBER 1 (M1): \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBER 2 (M2): \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PH: \_\_\_\_\_

M1 EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ M2 E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

M1 WORK PH: \_\_\_\_\_ M2 WORK PH: \_\_\_\_\_

M1 CELL PH: \_\_\_\_\_ M2 CELL PH: \_\_\_\_\_

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**PAYMENT OPTIONS**

Enclosed find my payment for 2007 Of \$140.(Make checks payable to Garden Oaks Civic Club)

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I/We will participate via bank draft. (Complete DRAFT AUTHORIZATION FORM below only if NEW)

**Many of our neighbors live on limited, fixed incomes. Are you willing to adopt a neighbor?**

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- Please take \$15 out of my account monthly for the Garden Oaks Constable Patrol Program.
- This authorization includes a debit for an additional \$\_\_\_\_\_ monthly gift to the program.
- This authorization includes permission for a \$15 cancellation fee.

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*Attach voided check & mail to Garden Oaks Constable Program PO Box 10273 Houston Tx 77206



# April 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 April Fool's Day	2	Civic Club Meeting 7pm GOES Cafeteria & GOMO Plan	4	5	6	7 Workday @ Garden Oaks Blvd 9:00am
8 Easter	9		11	12 Garden Club Meeting at GOMO Offices 7pm	13	14 Easter Egg Hunt 11am-1p @ SPARK Park
15 Deadline for Gazette Submissions	16	17	18 GOMO Mtg. 7 PM GOMO Office	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	May 1st Special GOMO Meeting @ GO Elementary 8pm				

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