

The Garden Oaks

Gazette



President's Message

Sheila Briones, Garden Oaks Civic Club President

2007 Annual Members Meeting and Holiday Party

The annual meeting and holiday party of the members of the Civic Club will be held Tuesday, December 4th beginning at 7 p.m. in the Garden Oaks Elementary School cafeteria, 901 Sue Barnett.

This year, immediately following a short business meeting, the holiday party will take place at a neighbor's home on Garden Oaks Blvd., which is within walking distance of Garden Oaks Elementary. Come with an empty stomach in order to enjoy the great holiday food afterwards!

The annual meeting will cover two very important business items. Those of the election of the recommended 2008 slate of officers and the approval of the 2008 operating budget, which was published in the November *Gazette*.

The recommended slate consists of James Flowers, president; Ivan Mayers, vice president; Jerry Butler, treasurer and Cindy Bartos, secretary. Nominations will also be taken from the floor.

For the holiday party we ask members to bring a covered dish to share with neighbors. The Civic Club will be providing the main meat course of

honey-baked ham, turkey breast and drinks.

Members are asked to bring the following food items for the holiday party based on the spelling of their last name:

- "A" through "F", a bread item
- "G" through "L", a dessert
- "M" through "R", a pasta dish
- "S" through "Z", a vegetable side dish

2008 Home & Garden Tour Needs a Theme

Win a Dinner for Two at Rainbow Lodge

By Sheila Briones, 2008 Home & Garden Tour Chair

Neighbors, come up with a theme name for the 2008 Garden Oaks Home & Garden Tour and win a \$75 gift certificate for a dinner for two at the Rainbow Lodge located at the corner of Ella @ T.C. Jester.

Deadline to turn in a theme name is Saturday, December 15th. Theme will be used throughout print materials related with the Tour.

Get your creative juices flowing and email your entry (or entries) to Sheila Briones at sbriones@hotmail.com or drop off/mail your idea to 412 W. 34th as soon as possible (meeting the Dec. 15 deadline).

Good luck to everyone!

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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, December 4th

The next Civic Club meeting will be on Tuesday, December 4th at 7 p.m. in the cafeteria of GO Elementary, 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

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sbriones@hotmail.com

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dishberger@aol.com

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Constable Program

Terry Jeanes & Susan Love – Saranie

Quick note, at the last Civic Club Board meeting, it was determined an increase in the supporter fees for the constable program is necessary. Just prior to the printing of the last edition of the Gazette, Harris County Commissioners Court voted their new contract fee for the program. As a result, the new supporter fee for Garden Oaks is now set at \$180. The increase is still less than the \$230 / 240 of previous years. Remember any support is always welcome!

Holiday Heads Up.....Just a reminder with the holiday season upon us, please remove all packages from your vehicles to avoid temptation and break ins of your vehicles. And as always keep your eyes open and call with anything suspicious.

Take a moment NOW ...and program in the Constable Dispatch Number in your cell phone or home phone....713 755 7628. Your call could make a difference.

Be on the look out for your Civic Club mailer including dues statement and a constable supporter form for 2008. You can always support the program via your supporter sponsorship via the form here in the Gazette, or on the website at the link, **http://www.gardenoaks.org/Resources/ContributorForm.pdf.**

Constable Program benefits included in the \$180 per year donation:

- 40 hours of a designated Harris County Constable (in addition to the GOMO contract of 40 hrs. per week) A total of 80 hrs per week!!!!
- Vacation watch by Harris County

Constable. Forms available at: **http://www.gardenoaks.org/Resources** Security Checks for insurance discounts.

- Alarm contact/ response by Harris County Constable
- Perceived value by prospective new neighbors considering buying in Garden Oaks because the neighbors work collectively to make the neighborhood safer
- Low Cost. The annual fee is \$180 per year (Jan-Dec), which is less than 50 cents per day. There are two payment options. An annual check of \$180 or a bank draft option of \$15 per month. Contact Terry Jeanes at 713-812-9154 or **terry@terryjeanes.com** with any questions

And remember you are an additional set of eyes and ears!!!! Constable Dispatch at 713 755 7628. No matter the time of day. Your call could make the difference.

2007 October Stats.

Miles Patrolled...2502
Court Citations..... 7
Alarm Responses....1
Written Warnings.....0
Vacations Watches.....75
Suspicious Vehicles.....30
Park checks...132
Criminal Offenses.....3
Arrests.....0

**PRECINCT ONE CONSTABLE
DISPATCH
713 – 755 - 7628**

Heard Under the Oak Tree

Terry Jeanes

Welcome new neighbors who recently joined the neighborhood.

1035 Althea 950 West 43rd
954 Althea 235 West 30th
842 West 41st 231 West 33rd
327 West 33rd 983 West 42nd

Congratulations on joining us. We hope to see you at a civic club meeting soon.

Congratulations December Birthdays

Ron Williams - 1st
Margaret Rudd - 6th
Terry Jeanes - 11th
Brian O'Leary - 17th
Gary Hickman - 21st
Sandy Altman - 24th
J.B. Gavin - 25th
Happy belated 2nd birthday wishes to Maggie Veech (November 18th)

Thanks to **Tina Sabuco** and **Shellye Arnold** for another terrific Halloween gathering welcoming well over 1000 trick and treaters... This year's theme "favorite sports" with d Tina, Shellye, and Tina's Mom **Evie Sabuco** showing off their Green Bay Packer attire.

To highlight an event, celebration, or other tidbit, contact Terry Jeanes at 713-812-9154 or terry@terryjeanes.com.

GO Kids News

Moms' Night Out this month will be at Collina's on 19th St., on December 6 at 7 pm. Bring a bottle of wine, if you like, and we can all relax one more time before the holiday rush!

December's Family Potluck will be dinner and caroling! We will gather at 5:30 to eat on Saturday, December 22, at the home of Georgia Lister and Hal Bowman (and Lily and Jones Bowman), 927 Gardenia. We will then go caroling on their block. Drinks will be provided, and there will be a food signup list circulated on the Yahoo group.

Want to play? GO Kids has regular playdates for all ages at Graham Park, 34th and Lawrence (Section 1), on Wednesdays and Fridays at 10 am.

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@comcast.net.

GO Civic Club Minutes

Cindy Bartos

Welcome:

President Sheila Briones opened the meeting at 7:01 p.m. A motion was made and the October 2007 minutes were approved as they appeared in the Gazette.

Treasurer's Report:

Jerry Butler was not present but had detailed copies of the current income and expense report available at the meeting.

Standing Committee Reports:

- **Beautification:** Brenda DeAlba announced the next work day on Saturday November 10th on Garden Oaks Blvd.
- **Constable Program:** Terry Jeanes reported on the Garden Oaks Civic Club Officers' decision to raise the membership fee for the Constable Program to \$180. The amount listed on the membership form in the November Gazette does not reflect the new price. There will be a membership mail out in December and it will have the correct membership fee. Terry is looking for volunteers to help stuff envelopes with the Constable Program information. She also reported on a recent arrest by Constable Vest and encouraged residents to call the Constable's office if they notice anything suspicious. There were no reports of problems occurring the night of Halloween.
- **Gazette:** No report.
- **Website:** No report
- **Garden Oaks Citizen's Patrol:** Carl Waters said 6 crimes had been reported in the month of October with 80 crimes reported for the year. This is an increase of 10 crimes over the same time period last year. Carl reported having 3 or 4 more volunteers sign up but encouraged more residents to join the Citizen's Patrol Program.
- **Membership:** Dian Austin reported a current Civic Club membership total of 338. Her committee is working on updating the Welcome Packet for new neighbors. She reported having three "Meet and Greet" events this year and is planning on having two next year. Please contact her if you have a suggested location. The drawing of the \$25 gift certificate for Home Depot was won by Malcolm Taylor.

Continued on page 5

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GOMO Board of Directors

Section 1:

Graham Gips (2010)

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

Sean Jez (2008)

Cell: 713 305-4481
825 W. 31st Street
sean_jez@fleming-law.com

Section 2:

Ed de Alba (2010)

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

Lori Kennedy (2009)

Home: 713 691-6833
750 Sue Barnett Drive
lorikgomo@blue-funk.com

Jason Mercer (2008)

Work: 281 433-3150
726 W. 41st Street
jason_f_mercer@hotmail.com

Section 3:

Mike Dishberger (2008)

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862 W. 42nd 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)

Home: 713 956-8872
1030 W. 41st 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 Notes

Ed de Alba

Annual Meeting Held

Our Annual Meeting was held October 17th in the Garden Oaks Elementary School cafeteria. The meeting was very brief, approximately 35 minutes, and all matters of concern to the attendees were discussed.

GOMO presented Emily Thomas, Principal of Garden Oaks Elementary School, a check for \$35,000 for the Rick Englert SPARK Park, the construction of which is almost complete. These funds were approved by the membership at the Special Meeting held last May.

Election Results

All of the members who volunteered to run for the open director positions were elected by acclamation.

Section 1:

Graham Gips, Secretary, re-elected, term ending October 2010

Section 2:

Edward de Alba, President, re-elected, term ending October 2010
Lori Kennedy, elected, term ending October 2009
Jason Mercer, elected, term ending October 2008

Surplus Funds Expenditures and Bylaw Changes Approved

GOMO proposed two expenditures:

Proposal 1) The funding of an additional constable patrol from January 1, 2008 to December 31, 2008. Approved: 235 votes for, 19 votes against, 92.5% in favor.

Proposal 2) The extension of the current nighttime constable patrol from August 1, 2008 to December 31, 2008. Approved: 239 votes for, 11 votes against, 95.6% in favor.

The anticipated costs of these programs are approximately \$65,000 and \$27,000 respectively.

The bylaw changes were also adopted. Now all paragraphs that mention proxies agree on the maximum term of the proxy. This also brings our proxy terms into alignment with Texas State law, which

limits a proxy to a term of 11 months from date of signature. Approved: 215 votes for, 17 votes against, 92.7% in favor.

An Open Invitation to our Meetings

We would like to personally invite all GOMO Members to all of 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 and 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 meeting 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.

Garden Oaks Sisterhood

The Garden Oaks Sisterhood wishes all our neighbors a very happy holiday season and we look forward to making new friends in 2008.

We meet the third Thursday of the month at 7:30pm so be sure to mark your 2008 calendars!

Our January meeting will be hosted by Tina Traugott Beddow at 858 West 42nd Street. Please bring a snack or a beverage (wine seems to be a favorite) to share and join in the fun. Our focus is meeting other neighborhood women and learning fun things to see and do in our area.

Questions? Just send me an email at dealarson@aol.com or call me at : 281-920-0325.

Look forward to seeing you there!

Dea Larson

Beautification Update

Ed and Brenda de Alba

Our 2007 objective was simply to continue the maintenance of the neighborhood parks. We met that goal and more with the help of a small but dedicated group of park captains and a number of neighborhood folk that gave a few hours of their time over the course of the year to help Garden Oaks look more like a garden and less like a concourse of weeds.

If you live near one of our green spaces (and even if you don't live near one!), please consider volunteering to help on the work days scheduled several times per year in each park. Even one hour of your time produces results!

We especially would like to thank our park captains, and if you see them around the 'hood, please thank them yourself for their efforts on all our behalf.

Rose Garden (W. 34th and Lawrence)
Captain: Sheila Briones (713-861-8091)

Gazebo Park (Sue Barnett and W. 42nd)
Captains: Bill Holden and Scott Easterly (713-691-3087)

Triangle Park (Alba and Azalea)
Captain: Tina Nieto (713-956-4822)

GO Esplanade (Garden Oaks Blvd. and Sue Barnett)
Captain: Shana Tatum (713-699-4166)
Randall Berm (Randall and W. 30th)
Captain: Matt Roesler (713-861-5568)

Art Park (W 43rd and Sue Barnett)
Captain: Ed de Alba (713-694-5934)

Garden Oaks Community Garden. If you have an interest in growing food organically we have a community garden in the neighborhood. Located on Alba, north of W 43rd St. just past Sue Barnett. Most of the produce goes to local food banks, the rest to the volunteers who grow it.

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GO Civic Club Minutes

Continued from page 3

Garden Club: Chris Lindsay announced that the Garden Club is co-hosting along with the Garden Oaks Civic Club, the speaker for tonight's meeting; Brenda Beust Smith. The next meeting will be a Christmas party at the home of Ed and Brenda DeAlba.

Garden Oaks Elementary and Rick Englert SPARK Park:

Reconstruction work is in progress on the park and is expected to be completed by November 12, 2007. The park dedication will be November 13, 2007 at 9:00 a.m. Various City and County officials have been invited to speak. A reception will follow the dedication.

Garden Oaks Maintenance Organization (GOMO): Ed DeAlba reported that at the October 17th meeting, all members who volunteered to run for the open director positions, were elected by acclamation. More than 90% of the ballots received approved the expenditures and by-law changes.

Old Business: none

New Business:

Fall festival: no report
Nominating Committee: Mike Dishberger announced the committee's recommended slate of 2008 Civic Club Officers:

President: James Flowers
Vice President: Ivan Mayers
Secretary: Cindy Bartos
Treasurer: Jerry Butler

Nominations from the floor will also be accepted prior to the vote at the December 4th meeting.

A representative from the Montessori Program at Garden Oaks Elementary announced a poinsettia plant sale they are having as a fundraiser. The plants are 15 inches tall and sell for \$10. The orders need to be made by contacting the school before December 16th.

Chris Lindsay introduced the program speaker, Brenda Beust Smith, writer of The Houston Chronicle's Lazy Gardener column. Sheila Briones and Scott Easterly were the winners of the two Brenda Beust Smith CDs that were awarded as door prizes.

Meeting adjourned at 8:22
Attendance: 37

Terry Jeanes

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2008 Home & Garden Tour in Full Swing

Sheila Briones

Planning for the 2008 tour is currently underway. Six amazing homes and four gardens will be featured on Sunday, April 20 from 12 to 6 p.m. with the preview party scheduled the night of Saturday, April 19 from 7-11 p.m.

The homes and gardens chosen are representative of the eclectic flavor of the neighborhood. They are:

1. **Flowers/Beard home** and garden located at 223 W. 31st. This is a great new home with stunning décor. Garden will also be featured.
2. **Murphy home** located at 236 W. 34th is an adorable family home with great décor with a great floor plan.
3. **Pena home** located at 713 W. 41st. This is a nice remodel of a typical Garden Oaks cottage with great front and back views. Beautiful views of the pool.
4. **Ayers home** located at 750 W. 41st. Harry James did the remodel on this home with is right across from the SPARK Park.
5. **Flanagan home** located at 815 Azalea. Home is contemporary with tranquil and stunning views of the gardens. Home owner is an artist and her art is featured throughout.
6. **Bowman/Lister home** located at 927 Gardenia is a small remodeled family home which displays owners outgoing and free spirited personalities.
7. **Suhler garden** located at 4206 Alba is seen as a therapy and inspiration to the home owner who has done all the work himself as a labor of love.
8. **Earl/Shaver garden** located at 966 Gardenia is full of color with a deck and plenty of yard art.
9. Garden Oaks Elementary School garden located at 901 Sue Barnett has added much more to their water habitat area including an orchard of citrus trees.

As I mentioned previously, the preview party takes place the evening of Saturday, April 19 and is held to honor the home/garden owners and sponsors. The party features a silent/

live auction, dinner and dancing. A location for the party will be announced next month and it promises not to disappoint.

Of course, for a successful tour, a lot of volunteers are needed. Thank you to those that have stepped forward to help with the planning:

- Susan Saranie**, Finance Committee Chair & House Captain
Terry Jeanes, Florist Committee Chair and House Captain
Holly Veech, Preview Party Committee Chair
Caroline McLean, Preview Party Committee Co-chair
Mark Saranie, Garden Captain
Brian O'Leary, Auction Helper
Jan Forster, Printing/Graphics Committee Chair
Nelda Prince, Volunteers/Staffing Committee Chair
Todd Prince, Set Up/Concession Committee Chair
Joan Baron, Pre-Sale Tickets & Posters Committee Chair
Tina Sabuco, House Captain
Will Zugheri, Set Up/Concession Committee
Dian Austin, Command Center Committee Chair & Docent Scripts
Sandy Altman, Command Center
Sue Schmidt, Docent Scripts
Deanna Zugheri, Preview Party
Scott Easterly, House/Garden Captain
Tina Parks, Volunteer Party Host
Vena Golt, Garden Captain

We are currently in need of a lot more volunteers to oversee the following committees: Underwriting, Publicity/Marketing and Transportation/Traffic. If you would like to participate by volunteering or chairing a committee, donating an auction item or sponsoring a home or garden, please contact me (Sheila Briones) by calling 713-861.8091 or by email at sbriones@hotmail.com

In addition, we are looking for a theme for the Tour and if you're interested in entering an idea (theme) email it to sbriones@hotmail.com or drop off/mail it to 412 W. 34th to my attention by December 15th. If your idea is chosen, you'll win a \$75 gift certificate to the Rainbow Lodge.

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Citizens Patrol Program

Carl Waters Jr.

Here are a few crime prevention tips to keep your holiday season safe:

- Keep the outside of your home well lit. Lock your doors and keep the curtains drawn.
- If you display gifts beneath the Christmas tree, do so in a manner where they are not visible from outside.
- Cut up gift boxes and put them in nontransparent trash bags to avoid advertising all those wonderful presents you received.
- Make sure to keep fresh cut trees well watered to reduce the possibility of fire in your home.

Narcotics (1)

2900 block of N. Shepherd Dr. on Friday, September 21st at 6:45 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.

September Crime Statistics (6)

Assault (1)

900 block of W. 43rd ST on Sunday, September 9th at 8:00 p.m. (residence).

Burglary (1)

3100 block of Randall on Wednesday, September 26th at 8:45 a.m. (residence).

Robbery (1)

300 block of W. 34th ST on Wednesday, September 12th at 10:23 a.m. (residence).

Burglary of a Motor Vehicle (2)

2900 block of N. Shepherd Dr. on Friday, September 7th at 1:41 p.m. (restaurant parking lot).

1000 block of Gardenia Dr. on Tuesday, September 25th at 1:00 p.m. (driveway).

Reference Numbers

Emergency Services

911

HPD Non Emergency Services

713-884-3131

All other City Services

311

Constable Dispatch

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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 15th 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.

Size	Single	Six Months	Twelve Months
2 1/4 x 2 3/8	\$60.00	\$300.00	\$580.00
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Letter to the Editor

Brian Klein

I am the "crazy" neighbor with the signs out front at the corner of Shepherd and 43rd. My point is that Garden Oaks has accepted the continuous litter, urination/defecation, prostitution, drugs and general lawlessness allowed and accepted by the city and Metro. I have dealt with these problems for three years, conventionally calling 311, Metro PD and HPD. I have had petty theft through-out but when three flowering plants were stolen out of the ground it was the last straw.

The city is content to enforce codes, ordinances, and laws upon home owners, property owners, drivers, and car owners. These "owners" are easily identified, their assets can be attached, and by in large they are law abiding citizens. It is much more difficult to enforce, find, and compel the anonymous pedestrian or Metro patron to follow the law. Furthermore, Metro is so large and such a hybrid type organization (City, State, Federal, and Commercial) they are unaccountable for their sites, patrons, and the problems that they bring.

I am trying to protect my family, and my neighborhood, yet the city threatens me with a \$500 a day fine if I didn't remove a single strand of barbed wire, laid on top of my bushes that seemed to be effective. Each time I have taken proactive steps to find a solution to these problems the city, some of our neighbors and GOMO have come by the next day to micro manage my property, and unable to explain the code that regulate. I put up no trespass, political signs on Friday, 7pm and by 8:37am Monday the inspector is telling my wife they would have to be removed. Our neighbors and our city are more concerned about signs and barbed wire than the problems that they are intended to address.

The bus stops at Shepherd & 43rd are major transit hubs, transfers between lines 9, 23, 44, 50 these are vital lines for the city. These bus stops are extremely high volume stops, with connecting routes rivaling area transit centers that are properly equipped with property and facilities to manage the extreme volume of people passing through. This is high volume commercial use in the front yard of a Garden Oaks home. GOMO has been unwilling to enforce deed restrictions upon this violation. I suggest that these bus routes overlap on Crosstimbers to Garden Oaks Blvd. east of Shepherd. This would

enable the apartment complex at 500 Crosstimbers access to all of these lines at their front stoop. Additionally, the Pine Forrest Business Complex at that corner and along Garden Oaks Blvd. to Shepherd could benefit by increased clientele and employee access of this route alteration. These locations are purely commercial with existing Metro customers that are crossing Shepherd's 7 lanes of traffic just to connect. Another benefit of this alteration places the 66 line within 1/4 mile of lines 9, 23, 44, 50, and all with in a commercial corridor. http://www.ridemetro.org/Schedules_and_Maps/bus_routes.asp

Shepherd (Spur 261) is a by pass for I-45. TX dot is often concerned with the flow of traffic to the point that they deny businesses and home owners driveways along Shepherd fearing accidents and general congestion. Metro's south bound stop on Shepherd is roughly 80 feet from the corner at 43rd, yet TX dot does not allow driveways closer than 400 feet from an intersection.

This 3/10 of a mile change is a simple solution that provides a win win situation for Metro, its patrons, TX dot, and Garden Oaks. Anonymous foot traffic and loitering are reduced; policing and neighborhood constable programs can be more effective because waiting for the bus excuses no longer apply. Traffic and pedestrian safety increase and traffic flow along spur 261 is smoother. Metro patrons have increased access to safe transit and area businesses have more access for employees and increased customer traffic.

Metro must be forced to recognition the benefits for all that this route change provides. My concern is that the status quo is likely to continue without the out cry of our neighborhood. Please contact the following official as often as you can;

Mayor White at 713-247-2200
mayor@cityofhouston.net,
our Councilwoman Toni Lawrence at 713-247-2010
districta@cityofhouston.net,
and Metro's Paul Wesseir at 713-615-7223
pw03@ridemetro.org

*The opinions expressed therein are those of the writer and are not necessarily the opinions or views of the Garden Oaks Civic Club or any particular members or members, other than its author. This letter has not been altered in any way and is being printed as it was received.



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Rick Englert SPARK Park Dedication

Darla Englert

Due to the time of day, many Garden Oaks residents and neighbors were not able to attend the dedication of the new Rick Englert SPARK Park on Tuesday, November 13, at 9:00 a.m. I was very fortunate to be invited and able to attend.

I would like to report that community service is still alive and doing well in the Garden Oaks Community! Rick Englert was the epitome of community service. He participated in the Garden Oaks Civic Club including the Home Tour Committee, Garden Oaks Gazette, and the Beautification Committee. He also supported Garden Oaks Elementary School through Fall Festivals, Spaghetti Dinners, Pancake Breakfasts, and Auctions, even though our son attended private school. Rick was also very involved in St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church and All Saints Catholic Church. Rick and I both were Youth Directors for 9 years. He served on the Financial Committee, Auctioneer at both church auctions/bazaars, and supported St. Mathew's and St. Michael's even though he was Catholic. He loved the Garden Oaks Community and everything it had to offer. Both of our families live out-of-state and when we moved to Garden Oaks in the early 80's, Garden Oaks neighbors became our family.

We lived in and enjoyed the Garden Oaks Community for nearly 20 years. After Rick lost his fight to cancer in the Spring of 2001, many neighbors and friends worked very hard to rename the park from the SPARK Park to the Rick Englert SPARK Park. Gary Harmon and his wife, Joan, along with Principal Jeannie Daniels of Garden Oaks Elementary School, to name just a few

spearheaded that committee. Their dreams became a reality in April, 2001, when a dedication was held to rename the park. Dave Bell, then President of the Garden Oaks Civic Club, Principal Daniels, Garden Oaks Elementary School, Trey Englert and I were headlines in the Gazette. Dave wrote a beautiful tribute to Rick in that same issue of the Garden Oaks Gazette.

Gazette@gardenoaks.org

A lot of things have happened in the Garden Oaks Community since 2001. Our son, Trey, went off to college in 2003 and I moved closer to my work. I sold Haute Groceries, Rick's take-out restaurant on Ella & 34th and it has worn many faces in the last couple of years. The Bill Moraz Dance Hall burnt down. Tony increased his space at Tony's Restaurant. The Shops of Oak Forest will happen! New builders have moved in and have changed the look of homes in Garden Oaks. However, some things have not changed. The community service phenomenon is ever so present in Garden Oaks. I enjoyed the Rick Englert SPARK park dedication. The Garden Oaks Elementary School is in good hands. The youth of the school gave me a nudge that day. They reminded me to get involved, be a mentor, and do something positive.



Scoop Du Jour

**Holly Days*

Holiday entertaining with ease
Alamo Tamale has great tamales to purchase ahead of time and have on hand for guests. They offer machine made tamales in beef, chicken or pork for \$4.50 a dozen. The preferred handmade (and larger) tamales are chicken, pork or bean and are \$7.50 a dozen. Open 7 days a week from 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. 809 Berry Rd. 713/692-6363

Kojak's Café offers in-house dining as well as catering. Visit their website for daily lunch and dinner specials (www.kojakscafe.com) Open for breakfast M-F 7-10; lunch M-F 11-3; Dinner T-F 5-8. They have a good selection of items available for catering pick up. Check out their shrimp cakes – they are very tasty and well priced.

Nundini – don't let the location fool you; the interior is a feast for the eyes, nose and palate! Originally opened as a wholesale showroom for Italian food importers, several years ago the owners added wide selections of wine, olives, pasta, olive oils, meats, gelatos and more. They have a deli counter with paninis and other sandwiches, pastas, olives, etc. They will also provide catering and deli trays. Check out their website for events, coupons and an interior view of the restaurant/shop, along with menu items. Seating is available inside. Open 10-6 Monday-Friday, 10-5 on Saturday. 713/861-6331. 500 N. Shepherd Drive. www.nundini.com

Still Shopping? Make it fun!
"Wishful Wednesdays" features several Heights shops open until 8 p.m. on Dec. 5, 12 and 19th. Stroll, sip and shop....these stores offer you the option of creating a "wish list" so your friends, family or significant other can then go into the shop and pick out the perfect item for you. The participating shops are Tulips & Tutus (238 W. 19th), What (603 W. 19th), The Home Stretch (617 ½ W. 19th) and my personal favorite, Bliss on 19th (235 W. 19th). Bliss has wonderful, unusual and funny cards, a great selection of home accessories, unusual candles such as the Woodwick line as well as Northern Lights. They also sell "Wine-a-Rita" mix in a decorative gift bag. This mix is **Continued on page 13**

Critter Corner

Casey and Mau Mau Farris

The Holidays are here and many folks give pets as gifts. This month we talk about why this is not such a good idea. Our Pet of the Month is a trio of hope, promise and happiness South African style.

Neighborhood News: The Go Dog Social Club is having its December holiday party on Wednesday, December 12th from 7-9pm at The Shady Tavern. These socials are almost as much fun for the people as they are for the pooches. Please call the club office for information on membership 713.688.6363 or www.GoDogUSA.com.

Pet of the Month: "Mr and Misses December" are three Staffordshire Bull terriers belonging to the Groves family in Section I. Mr. Bongani (happiness in Zulu) is six years old; Thembi (Hope or Promise in Zulu) is nine years old; and Zinzi (same name as Nelson Mandela's daughter) is four years old. Vanessa and David are from South Africa and the Staffordshire Bull terrier is like the dog of choice there. This breed is so sweet, so good with people, especially children, that they are called the Nanny Dogs. Thembi was born in the USA but Zinzi and Mr. Bongani came from South Africa. Mr. Bogani was 10 weeks old when he immigrated to the States on September 11, 2001. He was on a plane in the air when the Twin Towers were hit. His plane was rerouted to Canada where the airlines put him in a kennel until planes and schedules were sorted out. Finally, ten days later he arrived at his new home. Zinzi and Mr. Bongani are both show dogs and Mr. Bongani has done well in the Terrier Group. Out of the ring Mr. Bongani claims the baby of the family spot and Zinzi is the squirrel chasing queen. Earlier this year Thembi went missing. After 10 days of signs, constant searching, and loud prayers, Vanessa was exercising and something told her to pick up this free newspaper for another section of town and there was an ad about a found dog – it was Thembi – she was 15 miles from home. Vanessa and David are wonderful people and have been blessed again and again. They have two beautiful daughters, Camilla and Ruby. These three little dogs exude happiness and hope and when they are around so is lots of laughter. Mau Mau and I wish all

of you laughter and happiness throughout the holidays and the coming year.

Critters 101: No Christmas Pets, Please!

To many people, puppies and kittens are the perfect symbol of the true spirit of Christmas. They represent wonderment, innocence, love, and hope for the future. While gifts like this may seem irresistibly appealing in pictures, art, advertising or fiction, the future for those real-life kittens and puppies who start out under the Christmas tree, in all probability, will turn out not so wonderful.

Pets can be expensive and require time, energy and patience. The entire household should be included in on the decision of adopting a pet. The atmosphere of Christmas morning frightens the new pet. The new pet needs to be introduced to its new home and family during a relaxed, quiet, and gentle time. A puppy or kitten who makes its first appearance as a gift under the tree is more likely to be thought of by children as an object, like a toy. A living animal should not be thought of in the same category as a toy. Children need to learn that a living animal is being adopted as a family member who will contribute much, but who will also have needs of its own, which the rest of the family is making a commitment to try to meet. According to the Humane Society of the United States, many animals are brought to the shelters because owners did not understand what it would involve to properly raise their new pet or did understand but did not do the necessary work.

If you are absolutely set upon getting a pet for Christmas, consider this alternative instead: Purchase some supplies like a collar, a book on raising a kitten or puppy, a gift certificate for a veterinary checkup, or a gift subscription to one of the pet magazines. Wrap these up and put under the tree. Then after the Christmas tree is taken down and the frenzy of the holiday season is behind, the family can adopt the new pet. It will be a better start for the pet, and for the long-term relationship between pet and owners.

An animal with a good introduction to its adoptive family is much more likely to become a long term companion rather than just another tragic statistic.

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 is owner/operator of Casey. Please forward your questions and pet news to Casey@GoDogUSA.com or call 713-688-6363.

Santa Claus is Coming to Town!

William Holden

MAKE PLANS NOW TO COME AND SEE SANTA CLAUS AT GAZEBO PARK ON **TUESDAY, DECEMBER 18TH AND WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 19TH.**

A CONFIRMED EMAIL FROM MS. CLAUS SAID SANTA WOULD BE ARRIVING AROUND 7:30PM AND PROBABLY STAY UNTIL 9:00PM OR UNTIL ALL THE CHILDREN HAVE PRESENTED THEIR LISTS TO SANTA.

MS. CLAUS ALSO MENTIONED THAT SANTA WOULD BE MOST HAPPY TO HAVE HIS PICTURE TAKEN WITH THE KIDS, JUST BRING ALONG A CAMERA.

MS. CLAUS IS HOPING TO BRING SOME HOT CIDER OR PUNCH AND ASK THAT YOU MIGHT BRING SANTA AND HIS HELPERS SOME COOKIES OR BROWNIES TO SHARE WITH OTHERS.

THIS IS ALWAYS AN EXCITING TIME OF GET-TOGETHER FOR FAMILIES AND THEIR KIDS. COME SEE ALL THE LIGHTS AND DECORATIONS.

ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CALL OR EMAIL:

BILL HOLDEN
holdingsweet@earthlink.net or
832-443-8593

Beautification Update

Continued from page 5

Captain: Bob Gabrych (713-686-5493)
We would like to thank Shana Tatum and the crew that worked in the Garden Oaks Esplanade the weekend of November 10th.

Early in December a tree crew will do trimming work in several of the parks. They will trim trees in the Rose Garden, Friendship Garden, and in the Esplanade along Garden Oaks Boulevard. This will be funded almost entirely by a grant made by GOMO a few years ago.

* REMINDER *

SPARK Park is reserved for use by Garden Oaks Elementary from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The community can use the park before 8 a.m. and after 3 p.m. Monday through Friday plus any time on the weekends.

Scoop Du Jour

Continued from page 10

added to ice and your choice of wine to make a frozen wine drink in the blender. Your wine selection is what changes the flavor of the frozen drink. Pair a decorative gift bag of Wine-a-Rita mix with a bottle of wine and you have a great gift.

* Holly Days is this month's secret identity for Susan Kostelecky

**the above content and information is based on the experiences and perception of Susan Kostelecky and does not represent endorsement by the Garden Oaks Civic Club, Gazette, or any other official entity of Garden Oaks; the content is an effort to provide residents with information about area services and merchants in the hopes that these businesses will survive and thrive and GO residents will benefit from these area providers. None of these businesses solicited or paid for inclusion in this article.



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And the Nominees are..

Chris Lindsay

Meet the nominees for the 2008 Civic Club officers. Below are brief bios of the people who have agreed to put their names forward. The election will take place at the December 4th civic club meeting. Voting is open to those who are paid civic club members. The term of office runs from January thru December 2008.

James Flowers – President

James recently returned to live in Garden Oaks after a brief stint of living in the Heights. He is the President and CEO of Health Trust, a behavioral research company. James received his undergraduate degree in business administration. Both his Master's and Doctor of Philosophy degrees are in counseling psychology. James is a former marathon runner with hopes of returning to that sport. He is also an avid pilot. He and his partner, Michael Beard, share their home on W. 31st Street with three yellow Labrador retrievers; Cole, Jackson and Lily.

Ivan L. Mayers – Vice President

Many of you may recognize Ivan's name from his campaign signs as he ran for the Houston City Council in the May 12, 2007 special election for the At-Large 3 position. He is a long-time Houston resident of 30 plus years. Ivan currently serves as a consultant to non-profit organizations helping them develop and implement long-term strategies to achieve their goals. He is also a member of the faculty of Ellis College where he teaches Managerial Strategy. He has served on numerous community boards such as the Houston Area Urban League, and the Executive Service Corps of Houston to just name two. He received a Bachelor of Science degree from New York University and Master of Business Administration from Indiana University.

Jerry Butler – Treasurer

Jerry is completing his first year as Treasurer and has agreed to run

again for this office. Jerry is originally from San Antonio, has lived in Houston for 22 years and moved to Garden Oaks about a year and a half ago. He has a bachelor's and master's degree in accounting from Texas Tech University and is a CPA with his own accounting firm. He lives with a misbehaving beagle named "Courtney" who he adopted through the Houston Beagle Rescue organization.

Cindy Bartos – Secretary

Cindy is also completing her first year of service as Secretary and has agreed to run again for a second term. She moved into Garden Oaks in 1982 with husband, John and their Golden Retriever, Sonny Boy. Cindy is on her 31st year of teaching in the Aldine Independent School District. In her spare time Cindy and her husband try to get out as often as possible to canoe and kayak in our area bayous & bays.

A new shopping experience this season
NORTHLINE
Commons

Visit us at
I-45 & Crosstimbers

The advertisement features a stylized illustration of Santa Claus with a long white beard and red hat, riding a white scooter. He is carrying several wrapped gifts on the back of the scooter. The background shows a city skyline at night with a crescent moon and stars in the sky. The text 'A new shopping experience this season' is at the top, followed by 'NORTHLINE' in large bold letters and 'Commons' in a script font. At the bottom right, it says 'Visit us at I-45 & Crosstimbers'.



December 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	Civic Club Meeting 7pm	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	Santa Claus @ Gazebo Park 7:30pm	13	14	15 Deadline for Gazette Submissions
16	17	18	GOMO Business Meeting @ 7pm	20	21	22
23	Christmas Eve	Christmas Day	26	27	28	29
30	New Years Eve					

Useful Numbers

All City Services (city information or services ranging from traffic court dates and sewer concerns to pothole problems and neighborhood complaints) _____ **311**

Emergency Services _____ **911**

Constable Precinct 1 Dispatch _____ **713-755-7628**

HPD Non Emergency Services _____ **713-884-3131**

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**

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Deanna's Garden Oaks Listings Sold in 2007