

GARDEN OAKS GAZETTE

VOLUME 33

ISSUE 5

GOOD NEIGHBOR AWARD

by Megan Salch and Terry Jeanes

The Garden Oaks Good Neighbor Award this quarter goes to ...Maria Lawson.

Our special thanks go to Maria Lawson for "her special care for local animals." Several neighbors nominated this kind animal lover for the award, citing her concern for abandoned cats, finding homes for strays and even corralling pets who have escaped from their owners' yards.

"She went above and beyond in response to our note asking if anyone could provide a new home to an elderly cat," Mel Johnson said. "She is a lovely lady, who does more for the abandoned strays and all other animals in the neighborhood than most folks I know."

A resident of Garden Oaks since 1998, Lawson is no stranger to pet care. She proudly owns four cats and two dogs. When she is not working in the mortgage business, she's playing with her furry friends on 42nd Street. Upon learning that she was this quarter's honoree, Lawson seemed excited yet surprised.

"I'm honored to win this award," Lawson said. "But it really is all about the animals. I just love them all." Her humility bubbled over.

Even Casey Jo Farris with Cat Catchers commented on Maria's love of animals and commitment for finding them safe homes. "Maria is so quick to help stray or loose animals and spends lots of time doing this," Farris said. "I think she is a saint - for real."

The jury may still be out on this wonderful neighbor's sainthood, but her Good Neighbor dedication has been noted. Award sponsors Terry Jeanes of ReMax Metro and Megan Salch of Tell Your Tale marketing thanked Maria for her dedication to neighborhood pets with a \$25 gift certificate to Tony's Mexican Restaurant.

The next Garden Oaks Good Neighbor Award will be for the second quarter 2009 will be announced at the July civic club meeting with an article following in the August *Gazette*. Adult award winners receive a gift certificate while youth are awarded a savings bond.

To nominate your good neighbor for The Garden Oaks Good Neighbor Award, contact Terry Jeanes at 713-812-9154 or terry@terryjeanes.com or Megan Salch at megansalch@tellyourtale.com.

MAY 2009

CIVIC CLUB MEETINGS

May 5, 2009 Civic Club Meeting

Tired of being so grown-up all the time? Kick-off the summer this Cinco de Mayo by getting some great ideas on how to entertain your inner child with or without little ones afoot. Megan Salch, author of 100+ Activities for Houston Kids, will present "Activities for Houston Kids and The Kid in YOU". Books will be available for purchase for \$16.18 (including tax) so get ready to have some fun!

Meetings are held at Garden Oaks Elementary on the first Tuesday of the month at 7pm.

REMINDERS

Sunday May 17, 2009 1pm

GARDEN OAKS OLD-FASHIONED PICNIC

Bring your own picnic to Garden Oaks Spark Park. Traditional Picnic Games with Dessert Provided.

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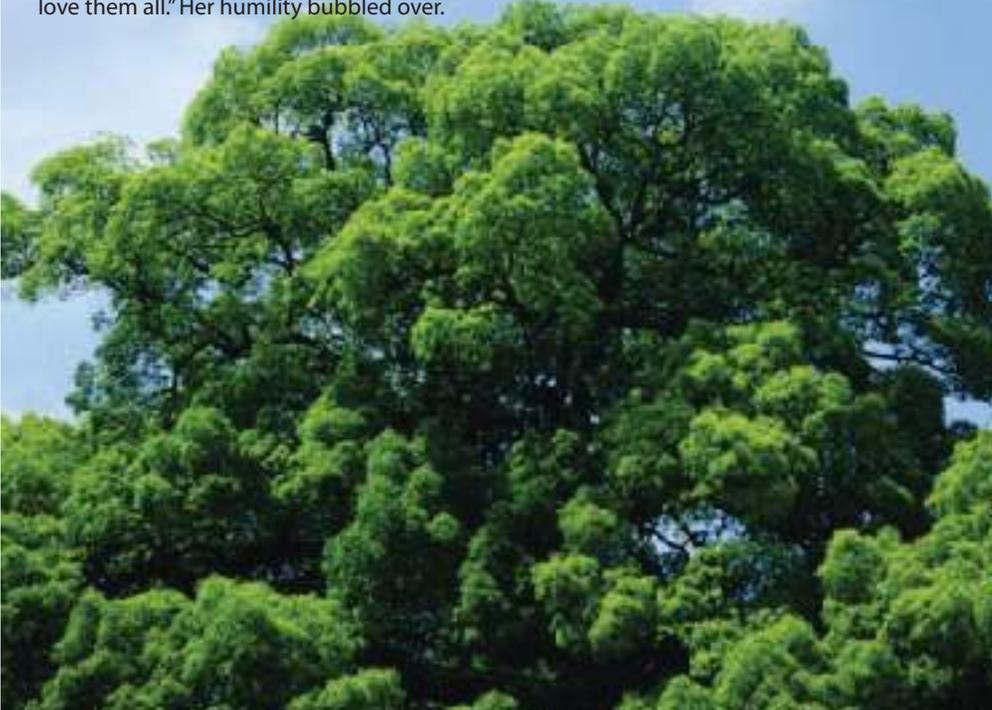
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HEARD UNDER THE OAK TREE

by Terry Jeanes

Welcome New Neighbors

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

1011 Althea **918 West 43rd**
1070 West 43rd **503 West 30th**
1507 Sue Barnett **1039 Althea**
511 West 31st

May Birthdays

Jeff Benjamin 7th
Linda Sparks 8th
Susannah (Susie) Heath 1 year old on the 8th
Riley Tatum 22nd **Daniel Ostrum** 22nd
Christopher Knauth 28th

Belated wishes to **Kylie Elyse Salch** April 7 and **Linden D'Amico** April 11

Celebrations

Happy Anniversary **Jason** and **Alisha Cunningham** May 16th.

Leslie Waters celebrated her 50th birthday in April by attending the Bruce Springsteen Concert and spending five days in Las Vegas with her husband **Carl** and friends Karen and Mike. They also enjoyed an Elton John concert.

Lindsey Pollock, principal of Garden Oaks Elementary, recently received her Woodbadge, the premier adult leadership experience in Boy Scouts of America. Ms. Pollock earned her badge by working with and promoting scouting to underprivileged youth in the Houston area.

New Additions

David and **Angela Winston** and excited siblings **Thomas** and **Kate** welcomed **Maryellen** on March 14

Out and About

Joe Crownover and kids **Taylor** and **Garrett** ventured to Pennsylvania, Baltimore and Washington DC on spring break. The kids loved visiting the 14 acres where Joe grew up.
Sandy Altman and **Dian Austin** spent

a fabulous vacation touring Prague and Budapest.

Lisa Qualls, local Garden Oaks artist, has an installation at Project Row Houses until June 21. "Spirit Level" is about family and community that invite others to record clothesline stories.

Jessica and **Eric Jarvis** welcomed Jessica's mother and sister who were escaping the cold in Ohio, for a visit. They spent a few days soaking in the serene setting of Wimberley, TX.

Special Thoughts and Concerns

Gustavo Wensjoe and 9-month-old son **Julian** died tragically in an auto accident in Santa Clara, Peru. Prayers go out to wife and mother **Joanne Housck** who was seriously injured and is recovering from sustained injuries.

Condolences to the family of neighbor **David Boyd**.

To highlight an event, celebration or other tidbit, contact Terry Jeanes at 713.812.9154 or terry@terryjeanes.com.

Garden Oaks Gazette

The Garden Oaks Gazette is the official publication of the Garden Oaks Civic Club and is published on a monthly basis. Submission deadline is the 15th of each month for publication the next month unless otherwise noted.

No exceptions.

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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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

You just never know what will get you involved. While celebrating dear friend and current GOCC President Scott Easterly's birthday last June, I succumbed to what my husband considers a serious weakness of mine, an inability to not volunteer when an opportunity is placed in front of me. Ed de Alba mentioned that a new editor was needed for the *Gazette* and I offered to look into it. With the great help of Sheila Briones, Joe Muscara, the delightful Oscar Ochoa and my partner in all things *Gazette*, James Burciaga, I decided to give it a shot.

I could not, and would not, have agreed to volunteer had it not been for James and his work as layout designer. With his time, talent, creativity and dedication, I was able to step in as editor. James has resigned from his duties to focus on the new business he will be launching and I want to extend my deepest heartfelt thanks for his willingness to work with me on the *Gazette* each and every month. Thank you, James! All the best to you in your new endeavors.

Over eight months later, I can say sincerely that I'm very happy to have finally gotten more involved in this wonderful community. Having lived here for nearly nine years, I know now what I'd been missing all that time. What a wealth of amazing individuals we have here in Garden Oaks! I've met so many great people in my new role and I'm the better because of it. Just one example of those people is our new ad manager, Tim Merritt, who has been such a blessing to me, and not just because he's amazing at tracking down new advertisers and making my life as editor so much easier! And I extend this sentiment to so many others, from article contributors, GOCC officers and committee chairs, to our many volunteers.

As someone slow to get more involved in our Garden Oaks community, I encourage you, whether a new or old resident, to look into opportunities to get to know your neighbors and to lend your hand in service. I've never felt more attached to this incredible area and community than I do now.

Respectfully – Jessica Jarvis, Editor

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Terms expire October of year in parentheses.

BEAUTIFICATION UPDATE

by Brenda & Ed de Alba

The Houston Chronicle recognized our neighborhood's charm and appeal in a very nice story on April 9. Garden Oaks distinguishes itself from most Houston neighborhoods through the effort and commitment given to developing and then maintaining our many parks and green spaces. New residents sometimes have the mistaken impression that the City of Houston is responsible for the upkeep of our green spaces. Not true!

Currently the only green spaces within the boundaries of Garden Oaks maintained by the city are the Art Park (W. 43rd and Sue Barnett) and Graham Park (W. 34th and Lawrence).

Beautification costs are included in the Civic Club's annual budget, and this year the Garden Oaks Maintenance Organization (GOMO) is reimbursing the Civic Club for beautification costs up to \$20,000. The Garden Oaks Garden Club, which is a separate group from the Civic Club, is composed of dedicated neighbors committed to maintaining Friendship Garden at Lawrence and W. 30th.

Recent Beautification Activity:

The Randall berm was weeded and

mulched with pine straw. Trees still leaning from Hurricane Ike were straightened and staked on Garden Oaks Boulevard and quarterly maintenance done on the boulevard.

A big **THANK YOU** goes to the following Garden Oaks neighbors who made a contribution to Beautification when they renewed their civic club membership in 2009:

N. Antinoff	M. Bell
C. Bresnahan	J. & B. Brown
P. & K. Chang	J. Dudley
E. Doherty & SJ Gonzales	
G. & J. Evans	J. & J. Evans
A. Flood	S. & T. Freeman
J. Gaige	M. & J. Gibb
P. & L. Gunter	A. Hamilton
D. Hansen & J. Rodriguez	
M.G. Hines	J. & L. Hitz
G. & J. Holt	D.A. King
G. Knigge	L. & L. Kopecky
L. Lopez	E. Maniha
K. & K. Mathews	R. & C. Meyer
O. Ochoa	O'Leary & Appling
J. & A. Perez	T. Sabuco
K. & S. Seyffert	D. & L. Sievers
R. & B. Smith	C. & M. Starustka
C. Stender	K. Thomas
D. & A. Winston	

GARDEN OAKS OUTREACH

a classified listing



Found: orange cat with collar.

Unique in all the world found wandering and hungry. Was house cat; unaccustomed to harsh realities of street life. If you know this cat or have any information, please call 713-825-4283.

Classified Ads are \$20 per run for residents, and are for personal services only (help wanted, items for sale, infant care needed, etc.). Contact the Gazette Advertising Director for more information.



Yard of the Month

The Clarke Household
1352 Sue Barnett
red geraniums galore

GARDEN OAKS OLD-FASHIONED PICNIC

May 17, 1pm at the SPARK Park
by Terry Jeanes



Calling all Garden Oaks residents young and old to the 1st annual Garden Oaks Old-fashioned Picnic, Sunday, May 17 at 1pm in the Garden Oaks Spark Park, West 41 at Sue Barnett.

Mark your calendar for a truly fun day for everyone to meet, mix and mingle with old and new friends of Garden Oaks.

A traditional picnic dessert will be provided by event sponsor and coordinator, Terry Jeanes, neighbor and Re/Max Metro Realtor, in appreciation and celebration of 30 years of residency and 25 years selling Garden Oaks homes.

Traditional picnic games such as three-legged races, sack races, ring toss or horseshoes, and others will be there for all age divisions' enjoyment (youth, adult and combined). In addition, a children's bouncy game will be available thanks to the GO Kids group. Child fingerprinting will be done by Precinct One constables for updated records on your children.

An old-fashioned dessert contest will be held with judging to be at approximately 1:30 pm.

Bring your own picnic, drinks, blanket and/or chairs.

So join us for a day to celebrate in the spark park and enjoy games, fun and the joy of living in Garden Oaks, a truly great place to call home. For additional information or to assist with either dessert judging or games, contact Terry Jeanes at 713.812.9154 or terry@terryjeanes.com.

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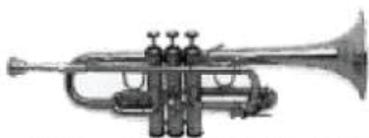
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| 516 W. 30th St. | 823 W. 43rd St. |
| 531 W. 32nd St. | 1026 Althea |
| 524 W. 34th St. | 1030 Althea |
| 527 W. 34th St. | 815 Azalea |
| 729 W. 39th St. | 975 Gardenia |
| 721 W. 41st St. | 1043 Gardenia |
| 750 W. 41st St. | 839 Lamonte |
| 818 W. 41st St. | 3205 Lawrence |
| 858 W. 41st St. | 1325 Sue Barnett |
| 862 W. 41st St. | 1458 Sue Barnett |
| 970 W. 41st St. | 1506 Sue Barnett |
| 718 W. 42nd St. | 1575 Sue Barnett |

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HCAD SPEAKER AT APRIL CIVIC CLUB MEETING
Info for Protesting 2009 Market Values

by *Dian Austin*

Roland Altinger, Director of Information and Assistance with the Harris County Appraisal District (HCAD), was the guest speaker at the April civic club meeting. He gave a brief presentation and then held an extended Q & A session.

Roland offered the following information regarding market value protests.

1. For 2009 market values, properties are being valued as of January 1 of this year. Sales data are generally used to develop an assessment of market value.

2. Protests must be filed within 30 days of receiving notice of 2009 market value, but no later than May 31.

3. Protests can be filed online via the unique 8 digit "iFile" number located at the top right corner of the information mailed to you from HCAD. This gives immediate confirmation that your protest was received.

4. HCAD offers the online "iSettle" process, which can eliminate the need to go to HCAD's office for your hearing. If you file your market value protest online AND give an opinion of the market value of your property, you may be eligible to receive an online "iSettle" offer from HCAD (which takes the place of an informal hearing). If you accept the "iSettle offer", then you are through with the protest process. If you do not accept the offer (or do not respond prior to the deadline), then you still have the right to a formal hearing before the Appraisal Review Board, but you will have to appear in person.

5. If you have a scheduled hearing, HCAD will provide you with the data used to develop your market value. These data can be retrieved online 14 days prior to your scheduled hearing date. To develop a successful protest, review the data and understand the

assumptions that HCAD has made about your property and how the calculations were made.

6. If you are protesting in person, you need to offer a brief and concise presentation, including estimates of repairs needed and pictures to prove your points.

7. If you sustained damage to your home during Hurricane Ike and that damage still was not repaired on January 1, 2009, then HCAD needs to know about it in order to value your property correctly. Again, pictures and estimates would be the best indicators of the impact on the value of your property.

Parents remember to bring your children to the Civic Club meetings for fun activities and child care with Hannah Stanchi.

GO RESIDENTS MOURN THE LOSS OF A DEAR RESIDENT

by *Matt Roesler*

Neighbors on 32nd street mourn the loss of a long-time Garden Oaks resident and friend. Dr. Gustavo Wensjoe and his nine-month-old son, Julian died in a tragic automobile accident in Peru recently. His wife, Joanne is recovering from her injuries and loss. Gustavo was head of the International Relations Department at St. Thomas University. He was in Peru working on his passion, developing a school to improve education of the children.

Neighbors who wish to give a donation in his memory can help fund the Peruvian Educational Project which he started. For more information, contact St. Thomas University or Matt Roesler at 713.862.8655.



GARDEN OAKS CIVIC CLUB MEETING MINUTES

April 7, 2009

by Cindy Bartos, Secretary

Welcome:

President Scott Easterly called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm. A motion was made and seconded to accept the March minutes as they appeared in the *Gazette*.

Treasurer's Report:

Phil Ramirez presented the current income and expense report for the civic club and had detailed copies available at the meeting.

Standing Committee Reports:

- Constable Program: Terry Jeanes had membership forms available. Deputy C.J. Mangelo urged residents to call if they see suspicious activity.
- Beautification: Brenda de Alba was not present.
- *Gazette*: James Burciaga, the Layout Designer for the *Gazette* has resigned. Contact Scott Easterly if you or someone you know is interested in taking the position.
- Garden Oaks Citizen's Patrol Program: Carl Waters reported the neighborhood had four crimes reported in the month of March; two less than last March. The number of reported crimes to date is the same as reported at this time in 2008.
- Garden Oaks.org website: No report.
- Membership: Dian Austin reported the Civic Club has 320 household/members. Phil Ramirez won the raffle, a \$25 gift card for Lowe's.

President Easterly welcomed new attendees and introduced Lindsey Pollock, Principal of Garden Oaks Elementary School.

Garden Oaks Maintenance

Organization (GOMO): The monthly meeting was held immediately

following the civic club meeting.

Garden Club: The next meeting will be April 9 in the community room in Kroger and visitors are welcome to attend.

Old Business:

President Scott Easterly recognized resident Rob Kibler's successful efforts in having the city remove a telephone pole that was leaning and in a dangerous position in Graham Park.

W.G. Eickenhorst reported on his continuing efforts to have the ditches cleaned out in his area.

The speaker for the May civic club meeting will be Garden Oaks resident Megan Salch, author of the book 100+ Activities for Houston Kids.

Good Neighbor Award: Terry Jeanes announced that Maria Lawson has been selected as the recipient of this quarter's Good Neighbor Award for her efforts in maintaining the safety and security of the neighborhood's pets and stray animals.

Old Fashioned Picnic: Sunday, May 17, 2009 at 1:00 p.m.; Spark Park. Bring your own picnic lunch. Dessert contest, picnic games and finger printing by the Constable's program.

Wine Walk: Saturday, October 10, 2009. Currently sold out, but contact Dian Austin to get on the waiting list. Proceeds will go to the Constable Program.

Gazette distribution: Phil Ramirez is in the process of surveying the neighborhood for possible changes to the *Gazette* distribution which may include a combination or possible option of receiving it via print or online. Contact Phil with your opinions concerning the matter.

Speaker and Program: Dian Austin introduced Roland Altinger, Director of the Information and Assistance Division with the Harris County Appraisal District (HCAD). Mr. Altinger covered



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the history of property taxes, the makeup of the Appraisal Districts and a variety of ways to approach and file a protest on your property taxes. The program was followed by a question and answer period.

Meeting adjourned: 9:06 pm
Attendance: 43

GARDEN OAKS



CONSTABLE SUPPORTER HOUSEHOLDS

as of 4/10/09



Section One

Dreiss	Theaker	Salch	Faulkner	Stanfield	Morris	Lewis	Lutz
Villman	Christian	Blount	Waters/Ryan	Charlton	Falschlener	King	
Gomez/Hendrickson		Winford	Dimmitt	Spinks	Lee	Hamilton	Gips
Holter	Glenn	Strange	Rausch	Smith/Evans	Perez	Neathery	Meyer
M. Hamilton	Starustka	Oriot	A. Smith Capfer/Peters		Elmore	Saranie	Forbes
Debien	Briones	Caudill	Lightfoot	Edwards	Alexander	Deaton/Sarlay	Dilley
Jez	Engelhardt	Amalfi	Lewis	Ball	Hayes	Runge	Graham
Murray	Munden/Holcomb		Lange/Piske	Winston	Williams	Jevremovic	
Anderson-Wood	Duggin	Seale	Elizalde	L. Neff	Jobe/Schwartz	Lilly	Thomas
Evans	Porter	Van Zeelst	Weber/Brockman		Robinson	Mullins	Perkins
McQuade/Reno	M. Neff	Hutson	Flores/Dansby	Wilson	Bresnahan	Adkins	B. Morris
O'Guynn	Rogers/Buron	Fruge/Adams	Bewley	C. Smith	Kirshner	McClard/Segotta	
Barr/King	Lengyel	Matthews	Fletcher	Rosier/Ammon	Kasischke	Cheney	Marquis
Winter	Kopecky	Garcia	Bain	Gabriel	Lopez	Roberts	DePaul
Bishop/Hutson	Gould	Doran	O'Brien	Rahman	Sirignano	Herzog	Bell

Section Two

Sonnier	Duncan	Altman/Austin	Puff	Knauth	Blassingame	Boyd	de Alba
Janssen	Ayers	Roanoake/Kolbinger		Rennie	Garcia	Martinez	McMillian
Cotterman	Thomas	Morgan	Ho/Bang	Synott	Gorman	Pina	Berry
Tatum	Marquez	Sanborn	Doherty/Gonzales	Klein	Easterly/Holden	Nondorf	Eickenhorst
Heiland/Russell	Armstrong	G. Smith	Cribbin	Johnson	Muscara/Kennedy		Hines
O'Leary/Appling		Clark	Gallagher/Kasperek		Epstein	Belanger/Voth	
Kalisek	Sarmasag	Montgomery/Gurski					

Section Three

Dyer/Kelly	Mayers/Mueller	Ream	Richards/Talley	Gibb/Reid	Thomas/Larson	Bartos	Sledge
McKeown	Arnett	Butler	Lozano	Hartman	Newlin	Veselka	Reichle
Gavin	Crownover/Langdon		Free	Armstrong	Sabuco/Arnold	Matthews	Neal
Chang/Gordon	Taylor	Stark	Horowitz	Dupre	Gray	Brown/Fisher	Tinkey
Comstock	Clemence/Bos	Lyn/Campbell	Nasir	BurciagaGurrola	Morrison	Guglielmi	Bell
Sultanik	Sievers	Tate	Longshore/McKay	Syzdek	Chvatal	Schwarzbach	Arouty

Section Four

Amsden	Araiza	Johnson	Stender	McCormick	Funk	Theriot	Larson
Chisholm/Callahan		Gardiner/Carmelo	Motzel	Tacker/Fleming	Curran/Jennings	Trantham	Schultz
Corbett/Hrdlicka	McKinney	Testerman	D. Smith	Broughton/Anastasia		Jeanes	Lindsey
Cunningham	Williams	Ochoa	Bergen	Gaige	Shaver/Earl	Ramirez/Pecorino	
Spear	Warhol	Van Dyke	Feit/Zindler	Cody	Stein	Swick	Lindsay
Singer	Larsen	Londono/Chamberlain		Price	Cornell	Caldwell	

Section Five

Shepperd	Terrell	Heath	McKay	R. Smith	Hansen/Rodriguez		Osowski
Pruitt	Willburn	Gloriod	Sellis	Munoz	Jorgensen	I. Smith	Hester
Bishop	Naff	Owen	P. Smith	Bayol	Antinoff/Stovall	Blanton/Broglio	Padilla
T. Mehrkam	J. Evans	Pfeiffer-Traum	Martin/Harbert	Daly	Torres	W. Mehrkam	Staffa
Terrett	Gilmore	Rude	Carlin	Keegan	Kelly	Restrepo	Myers
SeyffertSims	Hitz	Roca	Peoples	Marruffo	Cronin/Sestak		

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Remember new profiles are needed each year.

CONSTABLE PROGRAM

The call not made....it would have made a difference.

by Terry Jeanes & Susan Love – Saranie

As the chair of this committee, I did not heed my own encouragement. I hesitated the other day in making a call when a young Hispanic teen, in what appeared to be a school uniform, caught my eye as he was lazily walking down my street. Something in my mind called attention to him and I watched him pass street side, from west to east, just prior to noon on a school day. It appeared that he approached a construction site just east and disappeared. After returning to my computer an hour later, I was appalled to realize that this young Hispanic male, dressed in khakis, dark black or blue polo shirt, about 5'6" with short hair, was caught peering into a neighbor's back French doors about 30 minutes later. Just prior he had banged on the front door of another neighbor repeatedly, and when the owner appeared at the door from the back of the house, the youth immediately dismissed himself. He then moved on two doors further east. My intuition told me something and I failed to act, missing the opportunity to move this person along and prevent a younger mom-to-be from being startled. Fortunately she called dispatch right away. I am now sure to heed my own preaching each time in the future, and I encourage you to do so as well. Had I made the call there might have been

a different outcome. We can make a difference, we just need to act.

So as a reminder, if you take note of something that looks strange and you think "what is this?", then it is time to make the call to constable dispatch at 713.755.7628.

Continued thanks to all of you who, through your actions, support our program. An updated list of supporters is included in this issue. To those of you who just may have forgotten, please take the time now to complete and return your supporter form. We need you!

Constable Supporter form: www.gardenoaks.org/Resources/ContributorForm2009.pdf
Or pay via the website and Pay Pal at www.gardenoaks.org/involvement/civicclub-consta.html

Vacation-watch form: <http://gardenoaks.org/Resources/VacationWatch.pdf>

PRECINCT ONE CONSTABLE DISPATCH 713.755.7628

March 2009 Statistics

Miles Patrolled...2499
Court Citations.....36
Alarm Responses....3
Written Warnings.....2
Vacation Watches....46
Suspicious Vehicles.....20
Park checks...107
Criminal Offenses...3 Arrests.....1



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CITIZENS PATROL PROGRAM

by Carl Waters, Jr.

February Crime Statistics: 4

Assault: 1

700 block of W. 39th ST on Wednesday, February 18th at 4:05 pm (residence)

Burglary: 1

400 block of W. 34th ST on Sunday, February 15th at 11:30 am (residence)

Narcotics: 1

1000 block of W. 43rd ST on Monday, February 9th at 11:40 am (street)

Auto Theft: 1

700 block of W. 39th ST on Sunday, February 1st at 8:24 pm (street)

Inquiries about joining the Citizens Patrol Program or about other community safety issues can be directed to me via neighborhood website GardenOaks.org, the COP email account at GOCOP77018@AOL.com or by phone at 713.864.1992.

Emergency Numbers

Emergency Services 911
HPD Non-Emergency Services
713.884.3131
Constable Dispatch
713.755.7628
All Other City Services 311

GO KIDS NEWS

by Tonya Knauth

After 3 years of starting and growing GO Kids, I am handing over its leadership to Sarah Heath. Sarah is a mother of three preschoolers who is active in the neighborhood and will take great care of the group! It has been my privilege to serve in this role, and I am thankful for all the support I've been given. GO Kids is thriving, with many young families in the neighborhood involved.

Moms' Night Out for May will be Thursday, May 7 at, 7 pm, at Cedar Creek on W. 20th.

Our neighborhood abounds with joyful new additions these days! We know how overwhelming a new baby can be, so we provide several meals for the family during those stressful first weeks. If you are expecting or know a neighbor who is, please let us know!

Please join us for our standing playgroups on Mondays and Fridays at 10:00 am at Candlelight Park.

GO Kids was started by a group of parents who wanted to build a family-friendly neighborhood where children and parents knew each other and grew together -- all Garden Oaks families are welcome! Not on the GO Kids list serve? Want more information about GO Kids? Contact Sarah Heath at 713.812.1355, or sarahmheath@gmail.com.

GO WEIGHT LOSS CHALLENGE

by Sarah McGee Heath

The 2009 GO Weight Loss Challenge was a huge success and "tons" (pun intended-haha) of fun! Seventeen neighborhood ladies joined in for a twelve week challenge and a prize jackpot of \$340. Congratulations to our winner Mindy Vance, who lost 11% of her body weight and is looking mighty fine these days! Since every challenge deserves a reward the group gathered at Buca di Beppo after it

Garden Oaks Elementary School – Now Enrolling!

Tuition-based PK also available



901 Sue Barnett
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Phone: 713-696-2930
Fax: 713-696-2932

Garden Oaks Elementary is just north of 610 at Shepherd in the Garden Oaks subdivision. We are just a few minutes away from Memorial Park, the Heights, and downtown Houston.

Compelling Reasons your child should be enrolled at Garden Oaks Elementary:

- *Excellent academic program enriched with "Green" focus to be environmentally responsible*
- *Small school community with safe and nurturing environment*
- *Beautiful outdoor gardens and pond*
- *Montessori Program for 3 years to 6th Grade*
- *Computer Lab*
- *Outdoor Science Lab*
- *Rigorous, cutting-edge curriculum; higher level thinking skills related to real-life*
- *Spark Park facility and playground spaces*
- *Neighborhood Vanguard Program*

Programs to Meet Your Child's Needs

We offer children a variety of learning experiences ranging from the traditional classroom for grades PK to 5th to our multi-age Montessori classes for children ages 3years to 6th grade. We have a complete Neighborhood Vanguard Program for students who meet the criteria as Gifted and Talented. For students who require additional services, a full range of Special Education programs are provided on our campus. Children with special needs are included in campus activities to the greatest extent possible. This sense of community and caring for one another pervades the culture and climate of Garden Oaks Elementary.

"A Place Where Children Grow"

Garden Oaks Elementary School is committed to fully educating all students to the best of their abilities. Our students will be prepared to succeed in their immediate and long-range futures! Believing this, the parents, the community and the school assume responsibility for:

- *Developing the whole child: physically, mentally, emotionally and socially.*
- *Providing a clean, safe and positive learning environment.*
- *Preserving and enhancing student dignity and self-esteem.*
- *Teaching students to accept responsibility for their learning.*

TEA Recognized School – 2008

was all over for our celebratory "Binge Dinner." Hopefully, we didn't gain all our weight back! The group really rallied together sharing recipes, weight loss tips and even trying new workouts together. The motivation and laughs shared by all are what made this such a big hit. We had a great time and have

many new, skinny friends to celebrate our lifestyle change. Thanks ladies!

Stay tuned for more details regarding the 2010 GO Weight Loss Challenge. We hope to have another great turnout and many more success stories!

GO QUIET ZONE UPDATE

by Craig Lee

Recently, I and a couple others had an opportunity to meet with Council member Toni Lawrence in her office downtown. The topic of our meeting was Garden Oaks Quiet Zone status. Lawrence herself bailed out at the last minute so her Chief of Staff met with us instead. He also arranged for two senior staff members from the Public Works Department to join us, one being the project manager for the Quiet Zone initiative.

As a prerequisite, here's what we already knew when we arrived. The pilot project to implement a Quiet Zone from Bellaire to San Felipe was completed a year or so ago. Having no major issues, the City then defined 16 'zones' (or segments of railroad) for potential future implementation. The project team visited every crossing within each of these zones plus worked the railroads to apply a ranking based on a set of criteria, including traffic volume, surrounding land use and residential density, cost, train accidents at the intersection, existing safety devices, number of trains per day, pedestrian traffic, and so forth. (Note that there are a couple of zones – presumably just one or two crossings each – that will be privately funded by developers working in the area. These are not part of the 16.) The Garden Oaks zone -- which consists of the Cornell, N. Main, Cortland, Yale, Brinkman, Alba, Golf, Ella, Oak Forest, E. TC. Jester and

W. TC. Jester crossings — was ranked #9, but it was also the most expensive of all zones to implement at \$3mm. This is because Cornell, N. Main, Yale, Brinkman, Ella and Oak Forest all require major railroad upgrades for something called “a constant warning device”, which is a system used to determine the location and speed of a train.

What will be funded: The City allocated about \$8mm over the next three years to fund the upcoming phase of Quiet Zone conversions. Picking the zones in order of ranking, this is only enough to pay for the top 6 zones: East End Quiet Zone: (Navigation to Telephone), Mykawa (: Airport to Dixie), East End III: (Milby to Attic), Washington Ave: (Sherwin to National), Candlelight Oaks: (Watonga to W Little York), and Hwy 3/ Galveston Rd: (Pineloch and Eldorado). At the current rate of funding allocation, the Garden Oaks zone will probably make the next funding cycle, but that which won't occur until 2012 or so at the earliest. The two zones ranked higher than Garden Oaks have a total cost of only \$610,000. The project manager is also checking to see if she can use some federal funds thru the Federal Signal Program to pay for some of the needed improvements.

Check out www.gardenoaksquietzone.com for any updates. Please do contact the Mayor's office and the City Council from time to time to urge faster progress on this.

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EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE

GAZETTE BLOCK CAPTAINS

OF THE MONTH

by Dian Austin



Congratulations to Bill and Jennie Edwards for being selected as *Gazette* Block Captains of the Month for May! Bill and Jennie live in the 400 block of W. 30th with their feline, Milo. They have delivered *Gazettes* to the 400, 500, and 600 blocks of W. 30th for about two years.

Section One has been home to Bill and Jennie for four years. They are civic club members and constable program supporters. They were drawn to Garden Oaks because of its location, the older homes and trees and the large lots.

In recognition of their dedication to on-time *Gazette* delivery, Bill and Jennie receive a \$25 gift certificate to Tony's Mexican Restaurant, courtesy of OD's Printing (Oscar Ochoa). Thanks Bill and Jennie for your help!

If anyone else wants to join the Great *Gazette* Delivery Team, please call Dian at 713.691.6505. If you'd like to nominate your Block Captain for the monthly prize, call or email me at fallingwatert@yahoo.com. (And if you never ever get your *Gazette* on time, please let me know too!)

GO SISTERHOOD

by Dea Larson

April showers bring May flowers and the Garden Oaks Sisterhood May meeting will be blooming in a new location as it goes “on the road.” This month we will be meeting on Thursday, May 21, from 7 to 9pm at one of Garden Oaks' own local retailers - The Bead Atelier --located in the Garden Oaks Plaza at 3838 N. Shepherd Drive. Bring your bead projects to work on or just come and enjoy the ambience of this lovely shop which has thousands of beautiful beads -- you will be surrounded by artistic designs and crafty ideas. Feel free to bring a beverage or snack to share!

The Garden Oaks Sisterhood meets the third Thursday of the month and all Garden Oaks women are invited to attend. Questions? Feel free to contact Dea Larson at 713.695.3634 or dealarson@aol.com.

DINNER'S ON US!

The GO Winers and Diners Report
by Sue Schmidt

It's been a while since the Winers and Diners broke bread and partook of a little vino. Seems everyone has had WAY too many distractions in life. Last month no excuses were taken, and all the diners came together at the new Benjy's Restaurant on Washington Ave. Even though the parking lot is much bigger than most nearby restaurants on Washington, we were lucky to find a spot on the street at 7pm on a Monday evening. The buzz about this restaurant is spreading fast!

We were warmly greeted by the hostess and our waiter, Jonas. We were seated in our own private, sunken dining area surrounded by polished driftwood posts where we were perched on barstools at a high table. I guess you could say we were "corralled"! It was nice to be seated separately and still have the view of the main dining area. The restaurant is minimal and chic, but the noise level limits conversation between members of large parties. We could, however, get up and visit others at the table without disturbing other diners. The ambience at this location has a completely different feel than the original Rice Village location.

We were seated near the display kitchen and were able to check out many scrumptious-looking entrées.. The presentation of the food is quite impressive, and we *certainly* were not disappointed.

We tried to order a well-rounded selection from the menu. However it was very hard not to just go with the Pork Osso Bucco and take the easy route! Not these GO diners though. After much discussion, we ordered the Beef Filet, Osso Bucco, Crunchy Chicken, Crispy Tofu Steak, Surf and Turf, Sweet Potato Risotto, a few of the small plates and a Baby Arugula Salad with pomegranate. We paired that with a couple of different wine selections in the \$28 to \$35 a bottle range that were very good.

Where to begin! The filet was cooked to perfection; very tender and juicy. After Dharma's Café, I thought no one would ever top that fork tender Osso Bucco, but Benjy's more than met the challenge; it was moist and deliciously flavored. A real surprise and crowd pleaser was the Sweet Potato Risotto with walnut, mushrooms, parmesan and free range poached egg. Yum, everyone was asking for more. The small plates included a lump crab au gratin on potato skins and pistachio-crusting goat cheese cakes. Both left you begging for seconds. In terms of misses, the chicken was a bit of a disappointment as was the pork dumpling as a small plate. Neither would ever keep us from recommending or returning to Benjy's though.

After trying to decide which dessert we all would share, somehow three spectacular desserts made it to our table. How did that happen! There was not a crumb to spare. Honestly, every single dessert was someone's favorite. Mom's chocolate cake for the chocolate lovers, butterscotch hazelnut bread pudding and banana cream cake with bananas foster. We all had to try each several times and still could not come up with only one winner.

The menu definitely offered something for everyone. It was very difficult to narrow it down to a just a couple of the small plates. I was really hoping to try the crab cakes (always the ultimate test for me!). This, of course, provides the perfect excuse to revisit and make a few more selections from that side of the menu. Better yet, a Sunday afternoon visit for a happy hour drink (\$5.00) and appetizer specials may set the stage for a perfect end to an upcoming weekend.

In reviewing the restaurants we have visited as a group, Benjy's would definitely be in the top three. The ambience is very appealing, the food delicious and service impeccable. All in all, the Winers and Diners always have a great time even when the food is not what we had hoped. Benjy's on Washington more than

met our expectations for a fun-filled and delicious dining adventure! Bon Appetite.




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CRITTER CORNER

by Casey and Mau Mau Farris

Something about spring makes you want to clean things, but for many of us, we simply exchange the dirt and grime for a coating of some of the most dangerous chemicals on the planet. This month we are going to talk about those cleaning products and how harmful they are to our pets and our children.

Critters 101: Good (and Safe) Housekeeping

Most people, even those who do not like to clean, enjoy the feeling of a sparkling fresh home. We take pride in the way our home looks and smells after we have spritzed, scrubbed, wiped, polished, vacuumed and mopped. But have you simply exchanged the dirt and grime for a coating of something even more dangerous? Take a look at those household cleaners under your sink and in your laundry room. Many of them list an abundance of toxic ingredients including petroleum distillates, mineral

spirits, formaldehyde, and others that have been proven carcinogens and mutagens.

According to the EPA, 50% of all illnesses can be traced to indoor pollution, which can be directly related to the use of household cleaners. Animals have faster metabolisms and smaller lungs so their bodies have to work harder to eliminate toxins.

Dogs can sense odors at concentrations nearly 100 million times lower than humans; for example they can detect one drop of blood in five quarts of water. Cats can smell 30 times better than humans.

It's time to throw out those toxic chemicals. You can still get your home spic and span, while keeping your families, pets, and the environment safe. It's easy to switch gradually to natural cleaning products. As you run out of existing supplies, start buying natural products such as borax, hydrogen peroxide, vinegar, and baking soda. If you don't feel like you have the time to create your own home cleaning

products then look for products made by companies such as Method, Seventh Generation, Ecover, Life Tree and Naturally Yours. Target carries all of Method's products and some of Seventh Generation and Whole Foods carries quite a few natural and/or safe products.

We owe it to ourselves, our families, and our pets to make our homes as toxin-free as possible. We want to spend as many years with our loved ones as we can, and a naturally cleaned home will help us toward that end.

Casey Farris is owner/operator of Bone Voyage Pet Sitting Services and Go Dog USA. Mau Mau is owner/operator of Casey. Please forward your questions and pet news to Casey@GoDogUSA.com or call 713.688.6363.



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LANDSCAPING GARDEN DESIGN

by Chris Lindsay, GOGC President

Our gardening topic for April was supposed to be on Bromeliads, unfortunately, our guest speaker had to cancel. However, Janet Cones, the Garden Club's 1st Vice-President stepped up to the plate and spoke on the topic of "Garden Design," explaining the basic principles of landscape design and color schemes.

Starting with color schemes, **complimentary colors** are those directly across from each other on the color wheel. The most common successful complimentary combinations you will see in gardens are yellows and purples, reds and greens or blues and oranges. They are called complementary because when used together, they become very vibrant and have strong contrast with each other. **Analogous colors** like red and orange or blue and green are colors right next to each other on the color wheel. They usually match extremely well but do not create much contrast; color combinations like these are good for a very soothing design where you want to create a comfortable calm atmosphere. This type of scheme often uses three colors to get good effect. Choose one color as the dominate display, a second one next to it on the color wheel as support and a third color or a neutral (black, white, or silver/gray) as an accent. **Triadic schemes** use three colors equally spaced around the color wheel. These types of combinations tend to be very vibrant. The colors should be carefully balanced. One main color should be chosen as dominant with the other two colors used as accents. **Monochromatic color schemes** use variations of a single color. A good example of this is a paint swatch card that has several different values of one color. This type of scheme is very simple and pleasing, especially within the green to blue range of the color wheel.

Next, we talked about the basic principles of landscape design. You

don't have to apply every principle to your garden, but having an understanding of these principles will help guide you as well as help you generate ideas of your own.

Unity should be one of your main goals, think of consistency and repetition. Repetition creates unity by repeating like elements such as plants, plant groups or décor throughout the landscape. Consistency creates unity in the sense that some or all of the different elements of the landscape fit together to create a whole. A simple way to create unity is by creating themes. For example, create a theme using plants that attract butterflies, then use statues, ornaments, and other décor that are related to butterflies. Repetition means having a variety of elements and forms in the garden but repeating certain elements, giving a variety of expression. Unity is achieved by repeating objects or elements that are alike. However, too many unrelated objects can make the garden look cluttered and unplanned.

Simplicity is one of the principles in design and art, and is one of the best guidelines you can follow as a beginner. Keep things simple to begin with, you can always add more later.

Balance is just as it implies, and in landscape design there are two types, symmetrical and asymmetrical.

Symmetrical balance is where there are more or less equally spaced matching elements of the garden design. With a garden equally divided, both sides could share all or part of the same shape, plant height, colors, bed shapes, etc. Symmetrical balance in design results in somewhat of a mirror image or reflection.

Asymmetrical balance may be better understood as actually being unbalanced, abstract, or free form, while still creating unity and balance through the repetition of some elements. An example would be where bed shapes or paths differ on both sides of the landscape dividing line while still sharing some of the same elements and

plants. One side could be curved with a sense of flow while the other side is straight. Unity and balance will be created through other elements.

Color adds dimension and interest to the landscape. Bright colors like reds, yellows and oranges seem to advance toward you and make an object seem closer to you. Cool colors like greens, blues and pastels seem to move away from you.

Greys, blacks and whites are considered neutral colors and are best used in the background with bright colors in the foreground.

Natural transition is gradual change. An example of transition is from taller to shorter plants, which can give a sense of depth and distance, making the garden seem larger than it really is.

Line is one of the more structural principles of landscape design. It is mostly related to the way beds, walkways and entryways move and flow.

Proportion refers to the size of elements in relation to each other. For instance, a 7-ft. garden statue in a small courtyard garden would be out of proportion. On the other hand, a small 4-ft. fountain placed in the center of a large open yard would get lost in the expanse.

The next meeting of the Garden Club will be on Sunday, May 17. We will be taking tours of three of our members' gardens and then proceed to the Civic Club's Picnic in the Park.

GARDEN CLUB OFFICERS

President

Chris Lindsay 713.819.8412

1st Vice President

Janet Cones 713.822.2532

2nd Vice President

Trish Merkhams 713.688.4008

Treasurer

Robert DeVeau 832.659.7797

Co-Secretaries

Cathy Wahren 713.686.8686

Mary Lynn Porter

PHOTO OF THE MONTH

Good Neighbor Award Recipient Maria Lawson



Terry Jeanes (left) and Megan Salch (right) caught award-winner Maria Lawson playing with cats in her yard when they delivered the award certificate.

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MAY 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5 Civic Club mtg 7pm	6	7 GO Kids 7pm, Cedar Creek	8	9
10	11	12 	13	14	15	16
17 GO Garden Club	18	19	20 GOMO mtg 7:30pm	21 GO Sisterhood 7pm, Bead Atelier	22	23
24	25	26 	27	28	29	30
31						

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