

GARDEN OAKS GAZETTE

VOLUME 34

ISSUE 01



JAN 2010

CIVIC CLUB MEETINGS

January 5 Civic Club Meeting
7pm at 901 W. 34th St. The Bell Tower

Come and experience this fabulous meeting/party site here in our neighborhood which will be the location of the 2010 Home Tour Preview Party and Auction in April 2010.

VOLUNTEER NEEDS

The recent job change and relocation of *Gazette* Ad Manager, Tim Merritt, creates a big void in a critical role on our *Gazette* team. If you are interested in volunteering in this capacity, please contact gazette@gardenoaks.org.

REMINDERS

Be sure to check for the recent Civic Club and Constable membership mail-out and complete your forms today!

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT *by Mark Klein*

Nearly 12 years ago I drove slowly down the narrow lanes of Garden Oaks, a gentle breeze dancing through oak and pine canopies, and marveled at what surely had to be one of Houston's hidden gems. I spent months searching for a home in the Heights, perhaps the iconic neighborhood for Houston, and had nearly given up when an acquaintance suggested Garden Oaks. That first drive through this neighborhood – with its small town feel, graceful parks and tree-covered elementary school campus – was all it took.



Of course, back then few homes ever went on the market, so I spent several more months waiting for the right house, or at least one I could afford. Now, with two remodels, a soulful marriage and two remarkable children later, it's hard to imagine living elsewhere in Houston.

I am fortunate to have been elected President of the Garden Oaks Civic Club for 2010. It's a fine opportunity to give back to a place that's treated me well. I hope to add something positive to the enduring efforts of volunteers, our neighbors who work hard to keep neighborhood gem shining and I am thankful for their efforts.

Living here seems more a lifestyle choice than merely a decision on where to hang your hat each evening for the soul of any neighborhood worth its salt can be found in its people and the community they create.

Three of those community-creating events stand out in my mind: The Garden Oaks Elementary School Pancake Breakfast, the Home Tour and the Fourth of July Bicycle Parade. It's at these events, supported by countless dedicated volunteers, where people gather to better our elementary school, where Houstonians from all over tour our homes, and where a simple neighborhood parade becomes inspirational as a symbol of forgotten, small-town innocence that makes for a refreshing surprise in the middle of the nation's fourth largest city.

In the coming year, I hope the Civic Club can help our neighbors make the most of their lives here. That means improved parks and neighborhood entries, elevated events that increase funding and publicity, more willing volunteers, and keeping the constables patrolling our streets.

continued on page 17

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.

982 West 43rd 706 West 39th
926 West 42nd 1038 Lamonte
316 West 30th 403 West 31st
523 West 32nd 328 West 34th

January Birthdays

Garrett Langdon Crownover 3rd
Hannah Stender 4th
Patricia Semands 19th
Jennifer Langdon 21st
Lindsay Veech 24th
Allison Padon 28th
Joe Muscara and Shellye Arnold 30th

Congratulations

Rudy and Bonnie Hernandez celebrating their 37th wedding anniversary.

Special Thanks

To **Bill** and **Susan McMillian** for

providing the neighborhood with the annual Santa in the Gazebo Park and to all their helpers as well. The McMillians have hosted Santa for the past 27 years, and this was their last as they will be retiring to their Angleton home this year. Thank you for the many years of joy to kids young and old of Garden Oaks.

To *Gazette* Ad Manager **Tim Merritt** and best wishes to him as he takes on a new job in Irvine, California. Tim has brought a special level of professionalism and dedication to his volunteer role and he will be greatly missed. Thank you for all you have done!

Out and About

David Heiland spent the Thanksgiving weekend Christmas shopping in Paris, France. **Ray Trantham** spent a little over a week for fun and sun in Southern California and Palm Springs. **Dian Austin** and **Sandy Altman** enjoyed a week in New York City. **Terry Jeanes** and Patrick Kelley toured the

back roads of the Hill Country including Johnson City, Fredericksburg, Salado, and spent Thanksgiving in Austin.

Condolences

Special thoughts go to **John and Cindy Bartos** on the recent loss of their dear pet, Sonny Boy.

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



Emergency Numbers

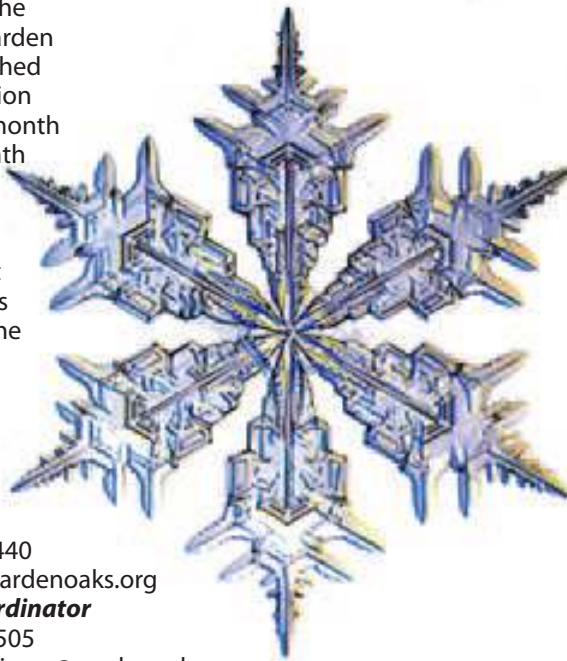
Emergency Services 911
 HPD Non-Emergency Services 713.884.3131
 Constable Dispatch 713.755.7628
 All Other City Services 311

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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CITIZENS' PATROL

by Carl Waters, Jr.

Many thanks to the volunteers who gave their time last year to make the *Citizens Patrol* program work. Without their time this program would not exist. However, our program could use more volunteers.

If your New Year's resolution is to become more active in the Garden Oaks community, our program could use your help. It takes just a few simple steps to become a member. First, you need to contact me by telephone, email or through the Garden Oaks web site GardenOaks.org: click "get involved" and then click on our program. Once you have signed up you will need to complete a one hour training class and pass a criminal background check conducted by the Houston Police Department. The program is open to all Garden Oaks residents 18 years of age or older.

November Crime Statistics: 8

Murder: 1

900 block of Lamonte Ln. on Friday, Nov. 6 at 4:09 p.m. (residence).

Assault: 1

1000 block of W. 43rd St. on Tuesday, Nov. 3 at 10:45 a.m. (street).

Burglary: 1

900 block of Althea on Wednesday, Nov. 11 at 7:00 p.m. (vacant home).

Theft: 4

300 block of W. 31st St. on Thursday, Nov. 5 at 8:51 p.m. (residence).

900 block of Lamonte Ln. on Thursday, Nov. 19 at 10:30 a.m. (driveway).

200 block of W. 34th St. on Friday, Nov. 20 at 11:00 a.m. (residence).

3100 block of N. Shepherd Dr. on Wednesday, Nov. 25 at 10:30 a.m. (restaurant).

Auto Theft: 1

300 block of W. 34th St. on Monday, Nov. 23 at 9:00 p.m. (residence).

Through November the total number of crimes reported is 55. Through November of last year 65 crimes had been reported for about a 15% reduction in reported crime this year.

Inquiries 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 713.864.992.

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Terms expire October of year in parentheses.

FREEZE DAMAGE CLEANUP: RESTRAIN YOURSELF

by Mark Saranie

When I got home from work the evening after the snow and freezing temperatures, the green smell of thawing plants hung in the air. The next morning our front and back garden beds looked as if a flamethrower had burned amok. It looked even worse the next day.

I heard, then, the siren song of my garden tools urging me to prune, prune, prune! I unloaded the garage of the potted plants I placed there before the freeze so I could get to my tools.

Next came cleanup, but in a restrained way. The colony of gingers growing around our pecan looked like patches of dried up corn stalks. The run of cardamom gingers became a cascade of unhealthy looking green waves spilling into and completely blocking the path to my compost bins. Other plants looked freeze dried, and the ferns throughout both yards were toast.

I cleaned up the gingers because that was the largest job and they really looked bad. The rhizomes from which they spring are protected by a nice deep layer of leaves from previous seasons so I have no fear that a future freeze this year will harm them, except for the young stalks on their way up now. The elephant ears, ferns, crinum, and other crispy items will have to wait. My compost grew very large after the work was done.

After a freeze do not give into the urge to totally prune of your damaged plants. The dead tissue from the first freeze protects from further damage. When you prematurely cut the damage away on woody plants and snip into living tissue, the new growth that will appear will get burned by a possible next freeze. Worse yet, that new damage can reach deep into the plant and kill it. As far as fleshy plants and succulents are concerned, most probably froze to the ground and slimed out during the thaw. I try not to do much to those other than mulch them. If they come back, fine; if not, oh well.

The ideal situation for plant life to come through our winter is a gradual cool down. This signals plants to prepare for cold weather by sending sap down into its root system, thus assuring its return next year. We've had the cold thing in fits and starts so far. The cold, then warm, then cold messes with vegetative cycles. So when we get the freezing temps, well, you can see the results in your yards.

In Houston, spring normally gets here in early March. Wait and watch. Your best, "prune here, not there," clues will come when new growth appears. Then is when you should prune.

As unsightly as your landscape may look, you run the risk of losing some important, if not prized specimens, in your garden by pruning too soon. Instead, pull off the dead and hanging bat-like leaves and leave the bare limbs intact. This way the yard will look presentable.

Pick your clean-up battles with care and accept these facts: all of our yards are in the same wheelbarrow. Plants will do their best to protect themselves during a freeze, and most will rise like phoenixes the following season.

Enjoy winter, and rest up. Spring will be here soon enough.

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2nd Vice President

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Cathy Wahren 713.686.8686

Mary Lynn Porter

GOMO Review Meetings

will now take place prior to, rather than following, the Civic Club meetings.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Special thanks to our Ad Manger

by Jessica Jarvis

Happy New Year! 2009 brought many wonderful blessings to me, one of which was a critical member of the *Gazette* team, Ad Manager, Tim Merritt.

I can't speak highly enough of what Tim has done for the *Gazette* in the past year since he offered to fill that role. Not only did he pour himself into the task of securing new advertisers, he also lent his very personal touch and professionalism to the job by making sure each and every advertiser knows just how special and important they are to our publication and our neighborhood. He was rock-solid in his dependability, as well as flexibility, in working with me and did it all with great heart and humor. Even as he was leaving town for training all across the country, he worked to ensure that all our advertisers were reached for 2010 renewals and for the January edition.

Tim has an incredible career opportunity in California that can't be passed up and we wish him all the best.

If you are interested in volunteering as Ad Manager, I cordially invite you to join the team. Because Tim has done such a good and highly organized job, stepping into the role shouldn't be difficult.

The role's basic responsibilities involve regular advertiser renewals, invoicing and payment confirmation, answering advertising questions, getting new advertisers set up, and working with me on ad creation, placement, and scheduling.

If you're looking for a little more of a challenge, an enterprising ad manager like Tim can choose to seek out other area businesses or personal ads to increase advertising revenue so that we can do more with the *Gazette* and give back more to our neighborhood.

In either capacity it's a critical role to the success of the *Gazette* and I'm happy to work with you at any level to which you are willing to commit.

Once again, thank you, Tim, for all your hard work and for being such a great friend and neighbor. Cheers to you and the best of luck in all your new adventures!

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GARDEN OAKS CHRISTMAS WINERS AND DINERS

by Sue Schmidt

The Winers and Diners tried a neighborhood venue in the Spring Branch area that has gotten rave reviews. The Hollister Grill, at Hollister and Long Point, can be described as a hidden oasis. Owner Chuck Pritchett and Sandra, waitress extraordinaire, joined forces to pull off a Christmas dinner not to be forgotten.

We called the restaurant for a reservation, never dreaming that this quaint residential restaurant may not open on a Tuesday. The owner was willing to open to accommodate our third annual Christmas dinner and white elephant foodie exchange! Wow, they had gotten my attention already. One of our diners suggested we pre-order, which pleased the owner. Our table was waiting, hot grilled garlic bread was delivered, and, because it is BYOB, several wines were uncorked and ready to be served. Sandra proved to be a one-woman wonder seeing to the

needs of our table.

We started with tomato bisque, the soup de jour, which was rich and wonderfully flavored. Appetizers of Italian-style fried eggplant and fried mozzarella were shared and were very tasty. Several of the diners decided on apple and arugula salad with pink lady apples, candied pecans, dried cherries, and blue cheese tossed with apple-honey vinaigrette. It was so good as was the spinach salad, also with candied pecans.

The shrimp and scallop risotto entrée was a hit, and a wonderful presentation of the pan seared snapper made it almost too pretty to eat but all agreed it was scrumptious. The filet was cooked to perfection, and the braised lamb shank was fabulous. Also a crowd pleaser was the country fried rib eye with jalapeño gravy. The gravy was not quite as spicy as some thought it might be, but the overall opinion was the lightly breaded rib eye was wonderful. "The roasted chicken was succulent, the fingerling potatoes were perfectly

cooked," were the raves of one diner. "Everything on that dish was made a star with the broth. It had a depth of flavor that satisfied every taste bud." By this time, the Winers and Diners were bursting at the seams, but crepes with fresh berries and fruit, bananas foster, and house special bread pudding could not be resisted. The owner remained throughout our fun-filled evening even. The chef visited our table at dinner's end to make sure all had gone as anticipated.

It was truly a rare dining experience and required an attention to detail second to none. Some of our best dining experiences have been of the "mom and pop" restaurant variety. The Winers and Diners highly recommend venturing over to The Hollister Grill in 2010 for any occasion.

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SUPPORT NEEDED FOR GOES PANCAKE BREAKFAST AND SILENT AUCTION FEB 6

by Diane Pittman

A call for donors and underwriters is under way as Garden Oaks Elementary School and Friends of Montessori (FOM) get set to host the 16th annual Community-wide Pancake Breakfast and Silent Auction, Saturday, February 6, 2010, from 8:00- to 10:30 a.m.

This year's theme is "Learn 2 Love 2 Learn."

"A primary goal of Montessori education is for children to develop a lifetime love of learning, and students in the program at Garden Oaks are doing just that," said Tonya Knauth, Garden Oaks chapter president of FOM.

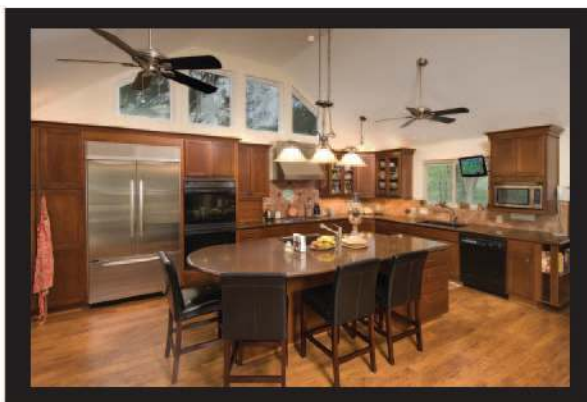
The GOES FOM program was started in 1994 by a group of neighborhood parents and teachers who wanted to improve their neighborhood public school. Traditional funding sources do not cover the program's cost, and private revenue raised by parents and

community partners is necessary to keep it going. Donors are needed for silent auction items. FOM also needs financial support throughout the year.

To become a financial supporter of Friends of Montessori, or to donate auction items, please contact FOM at 713.320.7294, or friendsofmontessori@yahoo.com. Montessori program applications for the 2010-2011 school year are available in the school office. The deadline for applications is January 8, 2010. For more information, call Garden Oaks Elementary School at 713.696.2930.



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CONSTABLE PROGRAM

Thank you for your support with your dues and of the toy drive

by Terry Jeanes & Susan Love-Saranie

Thank you to all who have contributed for the 2010 constable program. Supporter forms steadily are rolling in, but we still need more to fill the upcoming year. A list of supporters through Nov. 5, 2009 is listed here in the *Gazette*.

For those of you who have not joined to support out daytime deputy contract and keep him here, see the form in this month *Gazette* or the link provided later in this article. You do make a difference!

Also, thank you to those who gave toys for the deputies' annual "Cruising for Smiles Toy Drive." Without you, the deserving children of precinct one would not have had as nice a holiday.

Constable Dispatch
713.755.7628

Form Reminders:

Vacation watch form:
www.gardenoaks.org/Resources/
VacationWatch.pdf

Constable Supporter Form:
www.gardenoaks.org/Resources/
ContributorForm2010.pdf

Keep those eyes and ears open and call constable dispatch anytime of day with suspicious activity.

NOVEMBER 2009 Statistics

Miles Patrolled...3200
Court Citations.....27
Alarm Responses....6
Written Warnings.....0
Vacations Watches...33
Suspicious Vehicles...26
Park Checks...97
Criminal Offenses...16
Arrests....5

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(as of 11/5/09)

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Saranie	Adair	Forster	Jobe/Schwartz	Frazier/Phillips
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SECTION TWO

Bailey	Seghers	Gaillot	Tatum	Duncan
Austin/Altman	de Alba	Prince	Blossingame	Clark
Janssey	Montgomery/Gurski		Cotterman	Russeel
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SECTION THREE

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UNDERWRITING LEVELS & BENEFITS

2010 Garden Oaks Home & Garden Tour

by Susan Kostelecky

Sponsorship opportunities are now available for the 2010 Garden Oaks Home and Garden Tour. The Tour is scheduled for Sunday, April 25, 2010 from 12 noon until 6 p.m. There will be six wonderful homes and three gardens on the tour which feature the various building and gardening styles prevalent throughout the five sections of Garden Oaks. This event is the primary fundraising event for our area and provides funding for beautification and other improvements for the neighborhood.

Sponsoring the Home and Garden Tour is a wonderful way to support the neighborhood and its residents, as well as to advertise your company and services. It is a great way to showcase not only the neighborhood, but the role you and your business play in our community.

Below is an outline of the various levels of sponsorship and the benefits received by each level. There are four levels of sponsorship this year with increased advertising benefits.

Thank you for your consideration. We sincerely appreciate your help and support!

SILVER Underwriter - \$250 donation benefits:

- Company name printed as an underwriter in the Garden Oaks newsletter (circulation of 1500 homes) prior to and following the Tour scheduled for Sunday, April 25. Your sponsor recognition begins with the month following your sponsor payment.
- Company name on the Garden Oaks Home Tour website as a Silver Underwriter
- Company name, address and phone number printed on all "day of Tour" tickets under the listing of the home or garden you are

sponsoring

- Company name printed on a large easel sign displayed at the Preview Dinner Party (for Saturday evening, April 24, 2010) and also at the Command Center on Tour Day
- Two (2) tickets to the Sunday, April 25 Tour (noon to 6 p.m.)

GOLD Underwriter - \$500 donation benefits:

- All of the Silver Underwriter benefits (above), PLUS
- Two (2) half-price tickets to the Preview Dinner Party (Saturday evening, April 24, 2010)
- Company name on a large easel sign at the Tour home or garden's entrance or exit, with a pocket available for your flyers/brochures/business cards.

PLATINUM Underwriter - \$1000 donation benefits:

- All of the Silver Underwriter benefits (above), PLUS
- Two (2) tickets to the Preview Dinner Party (Saturday evening, April 24, 2010)
- Company name printed on a banner at the Command Center on the day of the Tour
- Company name submitted in all Tour news releases and printed on all Tour posters
- Company name on a large easel sign at the Tour home or garden's entrance or exit
- Designated space available at every tour location and Command Center for handouts or business cards for distribution to attendees.
- Half-page ad in the Garden Oaks Gazette to be used between June-December, 2010
- **NEW:** Your company's link (in color and with your logo) on the Garden Oaks' website's Home Page as a Platinum Underwriter (on the site for the six month period from 4/2010 to 9/2010)

CORPORATE Underwriter - \$2500 donation benefits:

- Company name printed as an underwriter in the Garden Oaks newsletter (circulation of 1500

homes) prior to and following the Tour scheduled for Sunday, April 25. Your sponsor recognition begins with the month following your sponsor payment.

- Company name on the Garden Oaks Home Tour website as a Corporate Underwriter
- Company name/address/phone number on all "day of Tour" tickets as a Corporate Underwriter
- Company name printed on a large easel sign displayed at the Preview Dinner Party (for Saturday evening, April 24, 2010) and also at the Command Center on Tour Day
- Four (4) tickets to the Sunday, April 25 Tour (noon to 6 p.m.)
- Four (4) tickets to the Preview Dinner Party (Saturday evening, April 24, 2010)
- Company name printed on a banner at the Command Center on the day of the Tour
- Company name submitted in all Tour publicity and printed on all Tour posters
- Company name on a large easel sign at the Tour home or garden's entrance or exit.
- Designated space available at every tour location and Command Center for handouts or business cards for distribution to attendees.
- Full page ad in the Garden Oaks Gazette to be used between June-December, 2010
- **NEW:** Your company's link (in color and with your logo) on the Garden Oaks' website's Home Page as a Corporate Underwriter (on the site for the *eighteen month* period from 4/2010-9/2010)

Our first sponsors are active members of the Garden Oaks community and donate both time and money to support the many activities that benefit our neighborhood. Thanks for your support!

Platinum Sponsor: Chris Schmidt-SCM Construction Services

Gold Sponsor: Home Tour Co-Chair Sue Schmidt-Keller Williams Metropolitan

For more information on becoming a sponsor contact me at 713.697.4110.

GARDEN OAKS HOME AND GARDEN TOUR: SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW

Home Tour Preview Party Location Announced

by Sue Schmidt

The location for the 2010 Home and Garden Tour Preview Party has been selected and the executive committee is very excited about the upcoming event! The Bell Tower on 34th will provide the perfect setting for a fun filled evening honoring the generous homeowners and sponsors of this year's tour. A fabulous dinner in the wine cellar and outdoor water wall patio area will be followed by a high spirited silent and live auction. The auction committee has already begun their search for exciting auction packages that are sure to generate lots of bidding activity.

Several members of the executive committee recently attended a bridal extravaganza at the Bell Tower that featured a full set up of not only the wine cellar and patio areas, but the chapel, grand ballroom and upstairs party areas as well. It was absolutely stunning. A generous dinner buffet was served. Wine and champagne flowed freely and what can I say about the scrumptious wedding cakes but *yum!* Overall, every member was satisfied that the Bell Tower on 34th would guarantee an enchanted evening of fine dining, gorgeous surroundings and moments to remember!

The mission style building located on the site previously occupied by the historic Mraz Dance Hall is deceiving from the exterior. Once the valet opens the car door and you step into the opulence of the two-story Grand Ballroom with double sided spiral staircases or enter the elegant confines of the wine cellar featuring a barreled brick ceiling and warm woods, the sheer size of the venue is unexpected. The night time view of the "wall of water" on the patio area is spectacular. To have such an event venue within minutes of the neighborhood is

exciting news in itself. To have the opportunity to share an evening with friends and neighbors in such an awe-inspiring setting will definitely guarantee a night to remember!

The buffet dinner selected will include appetizers of seasonal fruit, assorted cheeses and spicy raspberry cream cheese torte served with gourmet crackers. Dinner will start with a mixed green salad with peppercorn dressing. There will be a pasta station featuring several different varieties of pasta. The main course will be slow roasted inside round of beef served with a cognac black pepper cream sauce and marinated grilled vegetables.

Tickets to the event will include dinner, three drinks (your choice of house wines, beer or well drinks), an opportunity to preview all the homes and gardens that evening, and both the silent and live auctions. A cash bar will be available for additional or specialty drinks. Valet parking will be included. Tickets will be \$100 for individual tickets in the patio area or \$1250 for a reserved table of 10 in the wine cellar. Only 150 tickets will be available for this event. Tickets will go on sale February 1. Watch for updates and news on this and other information about the 2010 Garden Oaks Home and Garden Tour on the Garden Oaks website, www.gardenoaks.org, and on the Facebook page coming soon.

SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW

The new owners of the Bell Tower on 34th located at 901 W. 34th have been generous enough to offer a preview of the venue for this year's Preview Party by hosting the January Civic Club meeting. The meeting will be January 5 in the wine cellar of the Bell Tower. You won't want to miss it!

GOES REAL MEN READ

by Catharine Perry

The Houston Real Men Read program is made possible through a grant that Garden Oaks Elementary was selected to receive in a competitive process. The program allows the school, after it recruits its "real men" from the community, to receive free books for all the 2nd and 5th graders in the school five times during the school year. It is modeled after a very successful program in Chicago. A community volunteer, a "real man," reads the book to "his" class and enriches the material using both a mentor guide which is supplied by the grant and his own personal knowledge. The volunteers are encouraged to stray from the story if the children ask questions - it is the relationship that is important. The five sessions allows a real relationship to develop. It gives the children an opportunity to interact with the larger community, and brings the community into the school. Feedback from the "real men" has been very positive, and the kids really look forward to their visits.



Featured in the photos are two of our own neighborhood "real men" Ed deAlba and Chad Modad reading to students through the Houston Real Men Read program grant. They have read twice and will read three more times to the same 2nd or 5th grade class during the school year, each time giving the students a copy of the book they read, and developing a close relationship with the students as they interact with them. Other mentors in the program are Steve Pittman, Mark Countryman, Michael Maltbie, Ben Perry, Ray Torgerson, Sam Stengler and Mark Edge.

PHOTOS OF THE MONTH



Top: Ed de Alba reads to students at GOES. Bottom left: Chad Modad reading to GOES students. Above: GOES students create a winter garden.

GO KIDS NEWS

by Sarah Heath

Happy New Year! I love the fresh start that a new year brings and I hope 2010 brings you all much happiness. Now, time to get started on those resolutions! Get organized, lose baby weight, spend less money, get more sleep...the list goes on and on.

A huge THANK YOU goes out to Georgia and Hal and kids for hosting a fantastic caroling party and neighborhood potluck. We all had so much fun and it was a great night! Hope to see even more friendly faces at our next potluck in a few months.

It's that time again! The 2010 GO Weight Loss Challenge is set to begin January 11. Losing weight is TONS (get it-tons!?) more fun when you have a group of friends to support you. And there is the delicious "Binge Dinner" to look forward to after it's all over! For more information and a list of rules please contact Sarah Heath **before** January 8 at sarahmheath@gmail.com.

Let's ring in the New Year with a

Moms' Night Out. This month we'll be meeting at Block 7 Wine Company, 720 Shepherd Drive, on Tuesday, January 12, at 7:00p.m. For more information contact Maricela Pina at pinamaricela@yahoo.com. Hope to see you there!

Come play with us at the GO Kids All Ages playgroup! We meet at Candlelight Park, 1520 Candlelight Lane, every Friday from 10-12.

Are you or someone you know an overwhelmed, sleep deprived new parent? Take heart because help is on the way! We are happy to provide several meals to new families during those stressful few weeks. If you are expecting or know a neighbor who is, please contact our Dinner Drop coordinator, Amber Berend, at amber.berend@yahoo.com and she'll set you right up.

GO Kids was started by a group of parents who wanted to build a family friendly neighborhood where children and parents know each other and grow 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.



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Join us at Garden Oaks Elementary School for an energy-saving workshops series presented by Greener Living in Houston.

The five classes will be held on Wednesdays: Jan 13, 20, 27, and Feb 3 and 10.

To save energy, it is time to make changes to our homes and to the way we live in them. This series of workshops will help homeowners save on electricity, natural gas, gasoline, water, and teach recycling efforts that are low or no cost.

The facilitator is Debbie Antoon, who has taught this course many times and has taught after-school gardening at several Houston ISD elementary schools, including Garden Oaks.

Registration is limited to 25 households.

The cost is \$25 per person and \$10 for parents of current Garden Oaks students or alumni. To register, send your fee to School Secretary, Garden Oaks Elementary, 901 Sue Barnett, Houston TX 77018.

Call the school at 713.696.2930 if you have questions. Thank you!



GARDEN OAKS OUTREACH

a classified listing

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.

GOES JANUARY DATES

- Jan 5 - students return to school
- Jan 8 - book study begins
- Jan 8 - Montessori applications due
- Jan 12 - PTA meeting
- Jan 13 - early dismissal

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NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS FOR OUR KIDS

by Lindsey Pollock, GOES Principal

As you begin the New Year, take time to talk to your children about setting realistic goals. This exercise can give you and your child(ren) the opportunity to discuss the importance of planning ahead and working to achieve their dreams! You might try these ideas based on suggestions from the American Academy of Pediatrics:

Practice Good Hygiene

- I will brush my teeth twice a day.
- I will apply sunscreen before going outside and stay in the shade when possible!
- I will take care of my body through physical activity and nutrition.

Be Responsible

- I will clean up my toys.
- I will always wear a helmet when riding my bicycle.
- I will talk to an adult when faced with difficult decisions.

- I will keep my room organized and my bed made.
- I will do my best in school.

Practice Safe Habits

- I will show respect to animals and never tease cats or dogs. I will ask the pet's owner before approaching the dog or cat.
- I will be safe on the internet and never give out personal information online.
- I will resist peer pressure and instead do the right thing.
- I will always wear a seat belt or use a car seat or booster to stay safe!
- I will choose safe TV shows and ask an adult for help if I feel uncomfortable.

Goal-setting and New Year's resolutions go hand-in-hand to support our children's growth and development. Happy New Year!



I want to pass along my recommendation of Deanna Zugheri.

I recently sold my house and was so pleased with Deanna's help from start to finish. Her initial walk through of my home was invaluable. Not only did her recommendations mean it showed better, but it made the home a more pleasant and beautiful place to live. Thereafter, she made sure my home was well publicized and that showings were happening regularly.

She was equally helpful during the negotiating and closing Process, making everything clear and keeping things moving forward.

I highly recommend Deanna to anyone who is looking to buy or sell their home. She is a real pleasure to work with.

Sincerely, Janna Charlton

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GO CIVIC CLUB MEETING MINUTES

December 1, 2009

O'Leary/Applying residence 710 Garden Oaks Blvd

by *Cindy Bartos, Secretary*

Welcome:

President Scott Easterly called the meeting to order at 7:20 pm and thanked Brian O'Leary and George Applying, our hosts for the December meeting/holiday dinner.

A motion was made and carried to accept the November minutes as they appeared in the *Gazette*.

Treasurer's Report: Phil Ramirez had copies of the current Profit and Loss report available.

Standing Committee Reports:

President Easterly asked to hear only from Committee Chairs with reports.

- **Constable Program:** Terry Jeanes announced the upcoming Constable's Toy Drive with locations to be posted on the Garden Oaks list serve. Terry made a motion to offer membership in the Constable's Program to businesses and residents not in Garden Oaks, but located on the perimeter of the current route of the Constables. Yearly membership fee for businesses will be \$300. Motion carried.
- **Beautification:** Brenda de Alba reported on recent bed maintenance at the Rose Garden, Garden Oaks esplanade and the Randall Berm Park. Two flowering trees were planted in the Gazebo Park, five along the Garden Oaks Blvd. esplanade and three in the Rose Garden. The Gazebo, now 14 years old is in need of maintenance. Some repairs have been done but replacement parts will be ordered from the company from which the gazebo was purchased.
- **Membership:** President Easterly reported for Dian

Austin having 351 family memberships.

- **Home Tour:** Sue Schmidt reported that the Bell Tower on 34th will be the site of the Home Tour preview party on Saturday, April 24, 2010.

Garden Oaks Maintenance

Organization (GOMO): Ed de Alba announced that beginning in January, the GOMO review meetings will take place prior to, rather than following, the Civic Club meetings.

New Business:

Nominating Committee: Terry Jeanes reported the recommended partial slate of 2010 Civic Club officers:

Treasurer: Phil Ramirez

Secretary: (open)

Vice President: Scott Easterly

President: Mark Klein

Nominations were asked for from the floor, hearing none, a motion was made to accept the slate by acclamation. Motion carried.

2010 Budget: A motion was made and carried to accept the proposed 2010 Budget as it appeared in the November *Gazette*.

Announcements: The January 5th Civic Club meeting will be held at the Bell Tower on 34th.

Come help to decorate the Gazebo Park on December 5th in preparation for Santa's visit December 15th and 16th. Bill and Susan McMillian will be retiring after this year following 27 years as Santa and Mrs. Claus. To carry on the tradition established by the McMillians, a motion was made and carried for the Civic Club to purchase a Santa Suit for a future Santa to wear.

President Scott Easterly awarded secretary, Cindy Bartos a lovely poinsettia plant in thanks for her service as secretary for three years. He also thanked the Committee Chairs for their help and support during his term as president.

Meeting adjourned: 7:40 pm

GO SISTERHOOD

by *Beverly Jernigan*

Make one of your new year's resolutions to join a great group of neighborhood ladies: the Garden Oaks Sisterhood. We meet on the third Thursday of every month and it is always a great time.

Our January 21 hostess is Margarita Barcenas, at 1067 West 42nd

The fun begins at 7:30 p.m. and we will enjoy a White Elephant gift exchange – bring a gift you received that you can live without and trade it for something you can't live without. Please bring a snack or beverage to share.

Questions? Beverly@beverlypr.com or 713.494.1733

NEW YEAR'S TRIVIA

1. *The United States and Europe celebrate the New Year on January 1 of which calendar?*

a) Lunar calendar b) Julian calendar c) Gregorian calendar d) Saka calendar

2. *What country did the famous New Year song "Auld Lang Syne" originate from?*

a) Canada b) Great Britain c) Ireland d) Scotland e) Australia

3. *What does "Auld Lang Syne" mean?*

a) New Year's Day b) Til we meet again c) Sweet memories d) Old long ago

4. *Kwanzaa is a seven-day holiday that begins Dec. 26 and extends through Jan. 1. What does the word mean in Swahili?*

a) First fruits b) First people c) First days d) First dance

5. *New Year trees are popular in*

a) China, Iran b) Russia, Poland c) Turkey, Vietnam d) Pakistan, India e) Germany, Austria

6. *In Jewish tradition, what is used to symbolize a sweet New Year?*

a) Chocolate pie b) Ice cream c) Apple cake d) Candy e) Honey

continued on pg 17

Letter From the President

continued from pg 1

Luckily for all of us, 2009 Civic Club Scott Easterly has agreed to stay on as Vice President, along with Treasurer Phil Ramirez. Scott's diplomatic and intelligent approach during the past year has made the Civic Club meetings more effective. We will miss Ivan Mayers, who is stepping down as Vice President, and I thank him for his fine efforts.

This holiday season, I encourage each of you to reflect on your neighborhood, what makes it special, and why you chose to live here. Then, make the decision to become part of the Garden Oaks Civic Club. Come to our meetings and get acquainted with the fine work accomplished by our Standing Committee heads, including Brenda de Alba (Beautification), Carl Waters Jr. (Citizen Patrol), Joe Muscara (GardenOaks.org), Dian Austin (Membership and Gazette Delivery) and Terry Jeanes (Constable Program). We welcome your ideas and support.

Speaking of support, a household

membership is only \$25 a year, while seniors may join for \$5 and businesses for \$50. Think of what could be accomplished, and how much more beautiful our neighborhood could be, if all 1,400 neighborhood homes contributed to this ambitious undertaking.

My wife Elizabeth and I have seen our neighborhood change over the years in many, many ways. Still, when I see Cade, my four-year-old son, and Sarah, my six-year-old daughter beam brightly as they bicycle down West 34th Street, the excitement I felt 12 years ago, the sense of belonging all comes roaring back. In the coming year, I wish some of that excitement and soulful satisfaction grabs each of you, and reminds you what makes our neighborhood special.

Please join us January 5 for our next Civic Club meeting.



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Trivia continued:

7. The name January is derived from the Roman god Janus. What is he the god of?
a) Wine and grapes b) Babies and childbirth c) Clocks and calendars d) Gates and doors

8. The first Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve took place in?
a) 1970 b) 1971 c) 1972 d) 1973 e) 1981

Answer Key:

1)c 2)d 3)d 4)a 5)c 6)e 7)d 8)c

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CRITTER CORNER

by Casey Farris

Happy 2010! Now that the holidays are over we have a couple of months of winter to get through. I know we have mild winters but with the wind chill and humidity factors it is still cold; too cold for our pets. This month we talk about preparing your pets for winter.

Critters 101: Preparing Your Pets for Winter

As temperatures lower, our instincts are just to curl up by the fire, but we need to remember to keep our beloved pets happy and healthy too.

Don't leave pets outside when the temperature drops. People put dogs outside in winter because they think dogs enjoy themselves, but most dogs want to spend time with people. If your dog is outside, keep old towels by the door so every time you bring your animal in, you can rub him with a towel to dry off.

Dog houses should have just enough

room for the dog to stand up and turn around, but no more. They should face away from the wind and be elevated a few inches off the ground. Don't keep towels on the floor of the dog house or anything you think the dog might want to lie on that could draw their body heat away from them; cedar shavings or straw are good choices. The doorway should be covered with waterproof burlap or heavy plastic. Pets that spend a lot of time outside need more food in the winter because keeping warm depletes energy. Use plastic or ceramic food and water bowls instead of metal.

Even indoors, provide a comfy old blanket for your pet to burrow in and snuggle. Tile and hardwood floors get cold!

Unless your pet was bred for cold weather, consider coats or booties in extreme weather. Especially at risk during colder months are very young or very old animals, animals with chronic conditions, animals with short hair, and outdoor pets.



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GARDEN OAKS

Staying active with pets can be challenging in cold weather, but there are substitutes for running, like pet day care, play dates, or long rides in the car. If you run with your dog, make sure he is in condition. Dogs will try to keep up with you so it is important not to overdo it. If you are uncomfortable, chances are your dog is going to be uncomfortable.

If you wouldn't leave a child in the car, don't leave a pet there either. Warm engines in parked cars attract cats and small wildlife that may crawl up under the hood. To avoid injuring any animals honk the horn to wake up any sleeping animals or look under the hood.

Be aware that antifreeze is a deadly poison but has a sweet taste that may attract animals and children. When using antifreeze, wipe up spills and store out of reach.

As for cats, they are safest kept indoors, and winter is the perfect time to train an outdoor cat to be an indoor one. This is done by moving the cat's food bowl further and further from the door each time he comes inside. Once the cat is used to an indoor environment, entertainment is crucial. Bird feeders are like kitty TV.

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





Bone Voyage
 Pet Sitting Services
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Casey Farris
 Owner/Pet Lover
www.goDogUSA.com

JANUARY 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 HAPPY NEW YEAR	2
3	4	5 Civic Club mtg 7:00pm, The Bell Tower, 901 W. 34th St.	6	7	8	9
10	11	12 GO Kids MNO 7pm, Block 7 Wine Company, 720 Shepherd 	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21 GO Sisterhood 7:30pm, Barcenas home 1067 W 42nd	22	23
24	25	26 	27	28	29	30/31



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