

GARDEN OAKS GAZETTE

VOLUME 34

ISSUE 05

2010 HOME AND GARDEN TOUR 2010 GREAT SUCCESS

Outstanding efforts by all bring record attendance on a perfect day

by Sue Schmidt, Co-Chair

The 2010 Garden Oaks Home & Garden Tour, Something Old, Something New did not disappoint with beautiful weather and clear skies. The welcome mat was rolled out to guests of this sold out event at each of the homes and gardens!

This month's edition of the *Gazette* showcases our generous sponsors, auction donors and supporters. Neighborhood businesses and residents have stepped up once again to make this a record year for sponsorship contributions to Garden Oaks. This is especially gratifying in what many are calling the most difficult economy since the Great Depression...the years in which Garden Oaks began. Thanks to Susan Kostelecky, Sponsorship Chair, for once again stepping up to organize such a tremendous fundraising effort on our behalf. Each time you need a referral for a business, please check out the list of Garden Oaks sponsors and supporters! In fact, make a copy and keep it close at hand. These are the folks that are willing to donate their dollars to making our community a better place to live. Be sure you tell them why you chose to do business with them and thank them for

their commitment to Garden Oaks. They all help to make our neighborhood a great place to call home!

It has been an exciting time these past few months, and everyone involved in the Home Tour has worked very hard. The Beautification Committee has done a wonderful job getting the many parks and green spaces ready for the big event. The home and garden owners have worked diligently preparing for our guests. We would obviously not have a tour without homeowners being willing to open up their homes to the public. A HUGE thanks to all of them for being part of this year's tour

The Executive Committee deserves a standing ovation for all of their dedication and hard work in putting this Home Tour together. They truly have done an outstanding job. Each and every one has gone beyond the call of duty to make this Home Tour successful. More will be shared next month as we celebrate a record setting event for 2010. Great things continue to happen here in Garden Oaks!

MAY 2010

CIVIC CLUB MEETINGS

April 4 Civic Club Meeting

7pm at Garden Oaks Elementary School

Roland Altinger, Harris County Appraisal District's Division Director for Information & Assistance, will be on hand to answer questions about property tax valuations and the dispute process.

UPCOMING EVENTS

The Second Annual Garden Oaks Old Fashioned Picnic will be held Sunday, May 23 beginning at 1pm.

REMINDERS

Don't forget to complete your Constable and Civic Club membership forms found in this issue today!

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CITIZENS' PATROL

by Carl Waters, Jr.

Congratulations to patroller Gilda Evans who accumulated enough hours to earn her 85-hour T-Shirt and 100-hour patrol jacket!

Last year's trend of lower crime numbers continued through the first two months of this year. Through February only seven crimes were reported on the HPD website versus nine through February of last year.

February Crime Statistics: 2

Theft: 2

700 block of W. 41st St. on Sunday, January 31 at 10:00 p.m. (residence)
1000 block of Althea Dr. on Saturday, February 6 at midnight (driveway)

Please stay alert and report any suspicious activity to the constable's

office or the Houston Police Department.

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.

CONSTABLE PROGRAM

by Terry Jeanes & Susan Love Saranie

The Garden Oaks constable patrol is staffed with new deputies and has had a change in some of the routines.

Deputy JJ Tudman moved to the daytime patrol. Deputy Joseph Lane joined us in March for afternoon/evening patrol, and for our late night "wee hours of the morning" patrol, welcome Deputy Rene Rosa.

Remember supporter lists include those for the current 2010 supporter calendar year as our contract runs January to December and dictate how supporter contributions are credited. We need new or updated forms each year to keep you updated on the email distribution for important security alerts and notices.

Thank you to all who have already contributed. We need more funds to make our full years commitment. Check the updated supporter list at <http://gardenoaks.org/involvement/civicclub-consta>.

Vacation watch form: www.gardenoaks.org/Resources/VacationWatch.pdf
Supporter form: www.gardenoaks.org/Resources/ContributorForm2010.pdf

Precinct One Constable Dispatch:
713.755.7628

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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.

Standing Committee Chairs

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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.

814 West 43rd 733 Sue Barnett
323 West 34th 519 West 31st
757 West 42nd 970 Althea

May Birthdays

Linda Sparks & Susie Heath 8th
Riley Tatum 22nd
Trent Kuchar 23rd
Christopher Knauth 28th

Happy Anniversary

Jason and Alisha Cunningham 16th

Congratulations

Miranda Leonard on her upcoming graduation from TCU this month!
Eric Jarvis who was recently elected Vice President of The Texas Chapter of the Recording Academy, effective May 1st.

Out and About

Brian O'Leary and **George Appling** had a big 2 x 2 animal themed party for daughter **Arya's** 2nd birthday in April.

Miguel Facundo, resident and area builder, recently appeared on TLC's program "The Little Couple."

Mel Johnson recently attended a convention in New Orleans.

Condolences

To **Rich** and **Rebecca Stark** on the recent loss of Rich's mother.

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

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Terms expire October of year in parentheses.

GO CIVIC CLUB MEETING MINUTES

April 6, 2010

President Mark Klein called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. at Garden Oaks Elementary School.

President Klein introduced the first speaker of the meeting, State Representative (District 138) Dwayne Bohac. Currently living in the Spring Branch area, Dwayne has parents and in-laws in the Garden Oaks and Oak Forest communities. His district spans the west and northwest sides of Houston, from Highway 6 to the Shepherd area and includes Garden Oaks.

Representative Bohac spoke about the legislative bills most pertinent to the community. Highlights included:

- Passed a conservative budget with a 3.7 percent increase, focusing on public education and health.
- A school-supplies tax-free holiday, which would run concurrently with the tax-free weekend.
- Tax relief for veterans. The relief percentage would mirror the percentage of disability.
- An increase in small business tax exemptions – from \$300,000 to \$1 million.
- Hurricane preparedness: Allocation of \$150M to rebuild Galveston's University of Texas Medical Branch, Level 1 trauma center and educational facilities.
- Hurricane Ike: Allocation of \$425M to help those counties hardest hit.
- Pay increases for educators of \$800 a year on average.
- The classification of University of Houston as a Tier 1 university
- Allotment of budget to increase border security and battle international street gang violence.
- Eminent domain reform: Wording added to the Texas constitution to support reversal of the Kelo decision

GOMO Review Meetings

take place at 6:30p.m.
 prior to the Civic Club meetings.

so homeowners are can no longer have property condemned and reallocated for multi-use functions.

- Local quality of life related to apartment buildings: Requires regular re-inspection of multi-family dwellings and apartments using a checklist of 35 items related to safety and condition. The city adopted the ordinance and inspections began in April. Ella Square will likely be razed. By moving to an inspection-related process as opposed to a complaint-driven process, the city can proactively address issues.

For more information, contact Representative Bohac's district office, 713.460.2800.

President Klein introduced the second speaker of the meeting, Brenda Stardig, Houston city council member, District A. She is a member of the City of Houston, District A, Apartment Task Force and involved in Houston planning committees.

Councilmember Stardig spoke about activities impacting District A. She recognized that there have been three District 1 shootings: a homeowner shooting an intruder, an officer shot on Bunker Hill and a gang-related teen shooting. She mentioned positive happenings. She believes District A has the best opportunity for development in Houston. With tax incentives being maxed out by the Dynamo stadium development, the councilmember
Continued on pg 5

GARDEN CLUB OFFICERS

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2nd Vice President

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Cathy Wahren 713.686.8686

Yard of the Month selection committee

Mary Lynn Porter

GARDEN OAKS OLD FASHIONED PICNIC PLANNED

by Terry Jeanes

The 2nd Annual Garden Oaks Old-Fashioned Picnic is set for Sunday, May 23, at 1 p.m. at the Garden Oaks SPARK Park.



Join us for games and races for all ages such as whiffle baseball, washer, tetherball and more, or just relax and enjoy the day. Competitive races, including an egg race, balloon race and sack races for all age divisions and teams will begin at 1:30 p.m. Team up with folks from your block or family members. Ribbons will be awarded for all contests.



Bring your own picnic, drinks, chairs and blankets. Ice cream and games will be provided.

For additional details, contact event sponsor Terry Jeanes at 713.812.9154 or terry@terryjeanes.com.



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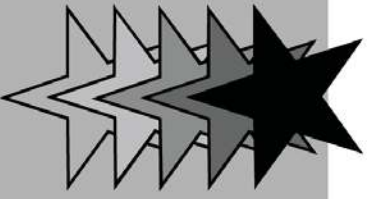
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Civic Club Mtg. Minutes

Continued from pg 4

is working on new initiatives to attract developers to the area. Stardig mentioned the Inwood Forest neighborhood had a recent victory: Its homeowners association won the lawsuit against the developers who bought the golf course, which the city is in line to purchase.

Stardig said bad apartments are one of her passions. She noted that Ella Square’s problems started with raw sewage issues and that the owners have now agreed to voluntarily close the property and raze it. Brenda is working on the complaint process for crime-ridden or dangerous apartments. She asks local citizens to participate in keeping the community safe by reporting issues related to crime or property safety. Brenda encouraged constituents to leverage the 311 system by calling in issues. If issues are not being addressed, escalate it by calling her office, 832.393.3010. Citizens should have the service request number when escalating issues reported to 311.

On May 19, a town hall meeting subject will be crime at the VFW on Campbell at Long Point. The discussion will include drug cartels and the related gang activity in the community.

Regarding the city’s lawn leaf bag ordinance, Stardig noted the mayor’s claim that prices on compostable bags should go down as usage increases. She brought a case of the new bags that President Klein raffled off to the civic club audience.

Garden Oaks Home Tour: Dian Austin reminded everyone that the tour is Sunday, April 24, and is the largest fundraiser for the GOCC. Questions can be sent to hometour@gardenoaks.org.

Approval of March 2010 Minutes: The minutes were approved as published in the *Gazette*.

SPARK Park Fence Discussion: Vice President Scott Easterly provided

background on the status of the Spark Park Fence. Last year, a volunteer committee was working with HISD on the fence. A standard fence is a 6’ black chain fence with 4” x 4” black posts. The committee representing the community wanted a 4’ wrought iron fence with four gates and special 20” x 20” columns with artwork ceramic tiles painted by school children integrated into the columns. The design would be unique for all SPARK parks. HISD has agreed to the design changes and the cost for the wrought iron fence, which is approximately \$20,000. HISD will not, however, pay for the cost of the custom gates, which is \$3,800. HISD agreed to wait for the May civic club meeting for a decision on whether the GOCC would fund the gates.

GOCC Treasurer Phil Ramirez noted that while the GOCC has the money to pay for the gates, he did not agree with using the funds to pay for decorative columns. Senior citizens consistently donate \$5 to 15, he said, and the amount of money seems significant and not in line with how many of those neighbors might consider the best use of their donations. He recommended that “the hat be passed,” seeking donations for the project outside of GOCC funds.

A motion was made and seconded to pay for the upgraded columns but the vote was tabled until the May meeting. However, after the meeting the GOCC agreed to use the existing Beautification Committee budget to pay for the upgraded SPARK Park fence columns, which does not require a vote.

Treasurer’s Report: Phil Ramirez reported that the balance sheet is strong for now, which is typical of this time of year when the majority of funds are collected. The Constable Patrol is \$20,833 short of its 2010 goal, though further than it was this time last year.

GO Citizens Patrol: Carl Waters reported that there were three crimes, one burglary and two thefts. Two of the

crimes were in early morning hours in the 1000 blocks of Sue Barnett, West 43rd and Lamonte. One was a construction site.

Constable Program: Terry Jeanes confirmed that all three permanent deputies are on duty and on a regular schedule. The evening deputy moved to the daytime shift and the newest deputy finished training and started his regular shift. She noted that issues seem to occur with more frequency around construction sites. She encouraged use of the vacation watches.

Beautification: Brenda de Alba noted that the neighborhood is ready for the home tour. Many of blooming trees in the neighborhood public areas are the result of GOCC’s Beautification ongoing planting efforts. The small green space near 43rd and Ella will need to be hand watered, but area residents are going to help.

Gazette: Jessica Jarvis (not present) reported no update.

GardenOaks.org Web site: Joe Muscara reported no update.

Membership: Dian Austin noted that there are 339 members. Many people think they are members but paid for 2009 and have not yet paid for 2010. On GOCC issues, there is one vote per paid household. Dian has a list if anyone wants to know if they are currently members.

Garden Oaks Maintenance Organization (GOMO): Ed de Alba reported that there has been minimal activity over the past few months. There are currently four activities, including builds and remodels but mainly expansion and remodels. The drive to include Section 4 in GOMO is about 50 percent for, 50 percent against, according to de Alba. Details will be provided in the next business meeting. GOMO volunteer have done block walks and mailers and will do additional activities prior to the vote in October.

GARDEN OAKS

There was a drawing for a gift card and leaf and compostable lawn bags. Several participants won lawn bags. Garden Oaks Elementary School Update: Lindsey Pollock, principal, has scheduled work days to get the school ready for the home tour. She said the school is proud to be part of the tour. HISD's Magnet Application Process is underway. A letter went out to parents with an update from Dr. Michelle Pola, HISD chief of staff. The HISD board of trustees is scheduled to vote April 8 on the program (editor's note: The HISD board approved the magnet application proposal with GOES included).

Announcements:

Terry Jeanes communicated that a Garden Oaks family who wishes to remain anonymous has a young child with cancer and a fundraiser will be held on Saturday, April 10, at the Petrol Station.

The Garden Oaks Family Picnic is scheduled for Sunday, May 23, from 1-5 p.m. Sponsored by Terry Jeanes,

the picnic will feature fun family games and a dessert contest. The rain date is the Sunday of Memorial Day weekend. Everyone is welcome.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:31 p.m.

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Terry Jeanes
Your Neighbor & Area Specialist

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Garden Oaks Picnic

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HOME TOUR AUCTION WRAP UP

by *Dian Austin*

One of the big factors in the success of the home tour is the revenue generated by the auctions. This year's auctions included the online auction, and both a live and silent auction at the preview party. We had a great array of items donated by neighbors and area businesses. In the June *Gazette*, we'll give the tally of how much the auction made, and we'll find out who was the high bidder on the original letters "G" and "O" from the Garden Oaks Elementary School!

Big thanks to the auction committee and others who worked long and hard: Cindy Bartos, Debbie Padon, Susan Gavin, Martha Kennedy, Becky McCullough, Mark Saranie, Susan Saranie, Linda Sparks, Shelley Rogers and Terry Jeanes.

Listed below are the donors to our auction. Please thank your neighbors for participating, and give extra thought to supporting businesses that stepped up in support of our neighborhood's biggest fundraiser.

A Peaceful Pet
Adolf Hoepfl Garage
Adrian & Carey Berry
Alley Theatre
Another Place in Time
Anthony & Debbie Padon
Baking Divas of GO (Jeanes, Saranie, Rogers, Sievers)
Batterton Chiropractic Clinic
Buchanan's Native Plants
Brandy Stoesz Photography
Brent & Joanne Austin
Brian O'Leary & George Appling
Carol Smith
Cavallini's Creations
Central Market
Claire School of Dance
Crave Cupcakes
Cridler's Cabins on the Frio
Dessert Shoppe
Dian Austin & Sandy Altman
Discover Gymnastics
Ed & Brenda de Alba

Eric Arbiter Photography
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HOME TOUR FLORIST THANKS

by *Terry Jeanes and Sandy Altman, Florist co-chairs*

For every home and garden tour, florists donate their time and their creativity to make sure that each of the homes really dazzles with floral arrangements.

We were fortunate to have another amazing group of florists this year. Some of these florists have been sponsoring for many tours. Please remember that each these businesses supported our neighborhood. Next time you're looking for a good florist, please try one of these!

A big thanks to:

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HOME TOUR SPONSOR THANKS

by Susan Kostelecky

Below is a list of all the area businesses and neighbors who stepped up to contribute monies to the home tour. The support of these individuals and businesses is vital to the biggest neighborhood fundraiser we have, and we are so appreciative of their help. The monies that they donate help fund neighborhood activities and projects throughout the year. We all benefit from their support. Please recognize that these folks care about our neighborhood, and in return, please support their businesses.

Thank you so much for our generous 2010 Garden Oaks Home & Garden Tour who have collectively provided \$18,250 in sponsorships!

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AMERICAN LEGION POST 560

by Jim Acker

The Garden Oaks American Legion Post 560, located on Alba at Fisher, was formed in 1946 by a group of WW1 and WW2 veterans from the Garden Oaks area. They originally purchased five acres on the corner of Golf and Judiway, put in playground equipment, a ball diamond and a small building with the intention of building a permanent meeting facility there. In 1949 the present location on the corner of Alba and Fisher became available at an attractive price when a medical office closed shop. After moving in, they donated the original 5 acres to the City of Houston and it became American Legion Park. The Alba building has been improved and expanded through the years. The aircraft in the rear is an F4 Phantom Jet bomber used during the Vietnam conflict.

I moved to Garden Oaks in 1996 after marrying Linda Ward, who grew up across the street in the 700 block of 42nd. I passed by the American Legion almost daily, but it wasn't until last year I pushed the doorbell button on the front door to get more information. I have never been

a member of American Legion or VFW. At one time, I was a member of a raucous organization called Texas Association of Former Marines.

What I learned at the Garden Oaks American Legion Post was that it is a very caring organization and the largest Legion Post in Houston with more than 500 members. It is a non-profit organization that supports the Fisher House (a free housing facility connected to Veterans Hospital for families of hospitalized veterans) and many other charities. It also supports a baseball team, scholarships, Boys State and charitable causes related to veterans.

The heart of soul of the Post has been the many WW2 veterans, who are disappearing rapidly. At its peak, the membership was over 1000. Currently, the majority of the members are from the Viet Nam era; however, many of those members are over 60 years old. The Post is actively seeking members who served in the military during the period when US forces were in Lebanon, Granada, Panama, or the Persian Gulf wars; and a veteran is eligible regardless of whether actual combat service.

The Post has a minimum of two events each month which are open to the public: barbecue night and steak night. The price for a good rib eye steak, baked potato and salad is \$12.00. The barbecue plates vary depending on what you order. The bar is, of course, open to the public during these events. There is always live music and interesting people. The profits go toward maintaining the facility and for charitable causes. In short the American Legion Post is much more than a good old boy's social club.

You are eligible for membership if you served in the military during time of war, married or widow of a veteran, son or daughter of a veteran. The SAL (Sons of American Legion) and the Ladies' Auxiliary are vital parts of the Post.

The Post also has a hall for rent. The hall is free for members (except for a \$75 cleanup charge and \$375 to non members).

If you have ever wondered about the Post, now you know. Join us for BBQ night May 1 or Steak Night May 21. The food serving begins at 6p.m. Come early and have a beverage of choice.

AIR CONDITIONING TIPS FOR THE SUMMER

by Mitch Weigand

In 18 years of servicing and installing air conditioning systems, I have come up with two principles that are of utmost importance to my customers.

Rule 1: Buy the highest quality equipment you can.

Some A/C brands have an operational life of seven to ten years. Others, the best crafted and most reliable units, can be expected to provide you with cool air for up to 15 to 20 years. The higher quality units also are more efficient. Again, invest in the highest quality equipment you can afford. It will save you money in the long run

in operational costs, repairs and early replacement.

Rule 2: Getting your A/C system checked in the spring is your best bet for a cool and comfortable summer.

Don't wait until the summer to suddenly find out your system is leaking or can't be repaired and needs to be replaced.

I've seen the following scenario too many times. It's 10:00 p.m. on a hot July night. The air temperature outside is 93 degrees, and the humidity is 95 percent, which makes 93 degrees feel closer to 105. The A/C unit suddenly breaks down. The house is fast becoming an oven, and you're sweltering inside waiting for the A/C man to respond to your emergency call.

All this hardship could have been averted by preventive maintenance. A competent technician could have detected any possible errors ahead of time and the appropriate repairs or recommendations could have been made. Do this in the spring when your comfort and sanity don't depend on an operational A/C system. Service checks are the secret to air-conditioning happiness.

Mitch is the owner of Air Wise and a member of the Garden Oaks Civic Club. He and his wife Nancy live at 1590 Sue Barnett in Garden Oaks. You can write Mitch with A/C questions at mitchw@pdq.net or 1590 Sue Barnett Drive, Houston TX 77018

Mitch wants you to have a cool and comfortable summer.

Who is Mitch?

A neighbor.

A member of the Garden Oaks Civic Club.

Mitch and his wife, Nancy, have lived at 1590 Sue Barnett in Garden Oaks for over 14 years.

Mitch is also the owner of *Air Wise*[™], one of the leading air conditioning and heating companies in Houston.

Mitch embraces the concept that the highest value in business is serving others. He works every day to earn customer loyalty.

He's a straight shooter. Why does he want you to get a service check on your A/C system now? Because preventive maintenance is your best bet for a cool and comfortable summer!

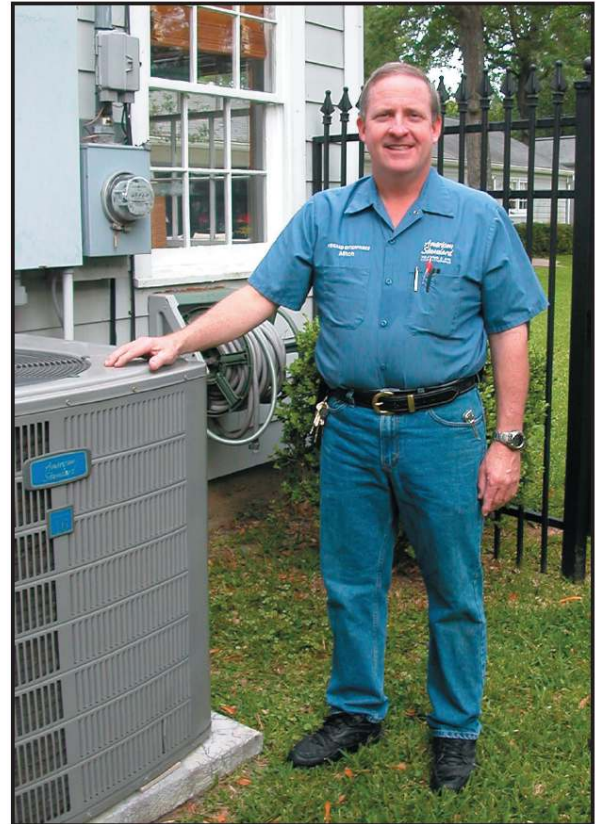
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Mitch Weigand, owner of *Air Wise* and
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GOES GRANT SUBMISSION APPROVED

by Lindsey Pollock, GOES Principal

On Thursday, April 8, the Houston ISD school board approved the inclusion of Garden Oaks Elementary in the Federal Magnet School Assistance Program (MSAP) grant. The grant submission deadline is May 3 with notification in August as to the status of the application. Should you have any questions or suggestions, contact me at 713.696.2930 or via email lpollock@houstonisd.org. Visit the HISD Web site and to the Magnet Department link to learn more about magnet programs.

The SDMC ad hoc committee for the grant implementation will meet this Thursday, April 22, at 3:30 p.m. to brainstorm topics of discussion for the grant implementation.

A special SDMC budget session will be held on Wednesday, April 21, from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. to discuss budgetary consideration. The session will review budget questions regarding years past and donations provided to Garden Oaks Elementary.

Will there be bilingual classes in the Montessori program? Yes. We will start with the early childhood classes and add to the program each year. Currently, there are bilingual Montessori classes at Wilson Montessori in HISD and at Los Ninos Charter school. If you are interested in touring one of these schools to observe a bilingual Montessori classroom, you may call the school to arrange a visit. Montessori programs are offered in many countries all over the world in many different languages. It is a teaching philosophy and methodology, not a language-based program.

Do I have to pay tuition for the Montessori program? No, not for grades kinder and up. Free pre-K programs are offered to all children in HISD who

qualify based on income and/or home language status. If a child does not qualify for the free Pre-K program, a parent may enroll and pay tuition. This is the same for traditional and Montessori programs.

Will my child have to go to another school if I don't want the new program?

Students entering kindergarten fall 2010 and currently in grades 1 – 5 who are enrolled in the Garden Oaks traditional program will continue in traditional classes.

Will my child have to take a test to attend the magnet program?

No. Children who are zoned to the program are admitted first followed by non-zoned siblings of students already in the program.

Will the whole school be Montessori right away?

No. Should Garden Oaks receive the grant, there will be a gradual transition to a full Montessori program. The emphasis on environmental sciences school wide will be effective immediately.

What about children with special needs?

Children served by special education are provided accommodations, modifications and placement options as determined by the ARD committee. Program options presently in place at Garden Oaks will remain the same.

What is environmental science?

Environmental sciences emphasize our interrelatedness to the Earth and ways in which we can safeguard our future through developing science- and math-based initiatives for sustainability. The focus has been an interest of the neighbor and integrates with Montessori. Examples of this include recycling, rain water catchment, composting, conservation, gardening and alternative energy.



GO KIDS NEWS

by Sarah Heath

A huge thank you to Deanna and Will Zugheri for the fantastically fun Easter egg hunt! It was a perfect day, and I saw hundreds of happy, smiling faces. A great time was had by all!

Join us for a Moms' Night Out! The weather is perfect for a nice night out on the patio. We will meet on Tuesday, May 11, 7:00 p.m., at Cedar Creek at 1034 West 20th. Look for a balloon and group of laughing ladies if you are new to the group. Please contact Maricela Pina at pinamaricela@yahoo.com for more information. Hope to see some new faces!

We have a new bouncy house! Thank you so much to Selena Crochet, Catlin Harlow and Katie Swick for collecting donations and finding us another great neighborhood bouncy house, which is available to all Garden Oaks families.

The rules are designed to prolong the life of the bouncy, protect our investment and create a fun and clean play environment for our children.

The rules:

1. You must make a donation before your first use. That donation goes toward maintenance and/or the purchase of a future bouncy.
2. You must be willing to share and be respectful of other neighborhood families that may want to use it the same weekend.
3. You must take care of the bouncy and follow all the rules and guidelines set forth on the GO Kids Web site. A copy of the rules is included in the bouncy.

You can reserve the bouncy house on the GO Kids Yahoo calendar or contact Catlin at catlin_tucker@yahoo.com or Selena at selenacrochet@gmail.com. Happy bouncing everyone!

Dinner Drop

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.

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 832.724.3325 or sarahmheath@gmail.com.

HELPING CHILDREN COPE WITH CHANGE

by Lindsey Pollock, GOES Principal

Life is full of changes big and small. While adults tend to focus on the big changes in life, such as a move to a new house, children are sensitive to seemingly minor changes, such as a different place at the table or change in diet. Try to see the perspective from a child and to understand that the child is not emotionally equipped to handle the mix of emotions that he or she may be feeling. The fact that the child may be simultaneously experiencing joy and

sadness can, in itself, be a confusion and frightening sensation.

An upcoming change for children, such as the school year coming to an end, may signal a mixed emotion. Though there may be fun ahead, some components of this change may cause stress for children. Changes in routines and the absence of familiar adults and friends in a child's life can be a source of stress for a child. Children try hard to make sense of their world and when life is unpredictable, changes in behavior may occur. These behaviors may be driven by a need to self-soothing such as thumb sucking, or by a need to gain attention, such as temper tantrums, or whining and clinging or even attempts to gain control of the situation such as talking back or refusing to listen to adults.

How can children learn to cope with change effectively? Children learn from the loving and supportive adults around them. The first and most important teacher in a child's life is their parent(s). What you do will impact your child. Here are some strategies:

- Create a familiar routine and offer your child a limited number of

choices to help them feel in control

- Give your child know the schedule for the day.
- Tell your child when time is coming to an end. Give them a warning 15 minutes before you are preparing to leave and then again at five minutes.
- Be consistent with routines such as bedtimes and meals.
- Validate your child's feelings even if you think they are unfounded or unrealistic. They are your child's true feelings.
- Remember you don't have to be perfect. Everyone does something they don't mean sometimes. Children learn from our example even when we make a mistake as long as we acknowledge our error and are ready to apologize. This is an important part of change, too.

Most importantly, let your child enjoy their childhood and try to ensure that they are not unduly burdened with adult decisions or information. Relish in you child's joy and discovery of each new day and try to see things from your child's point of view. These are the years to make life-long memories so take time to be together.

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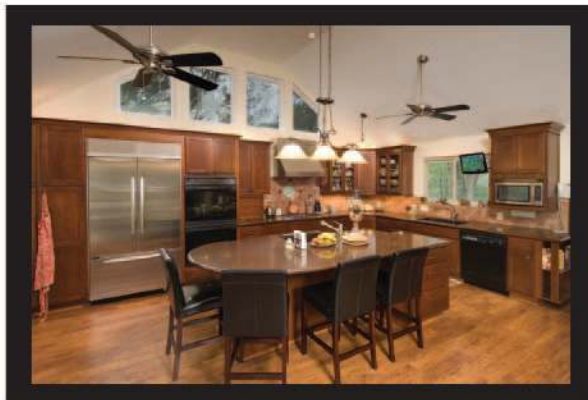
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Day of Home Tour photos by David Ziff

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PHOTO OF THE MONTH



The ladies of the 2010 Garden Oaks Weight Loss Challenge celebrated their weight loss victories at a delicious binge dinner at Buca de Beppo.

GO WEIGHT LOSS CHALLENGE

by Sarah Heath

The GO Weight Loss Challenge was a huge success! Or should I say “not so huge” because we’re all a few pounds lighter? Our not-so-big winners are Joanna Graham from the women’s division and Doug Mischlich from the men’s division. Joanna lost 17.44 percent of her body weight, and Doug lost 14.29 percent. Congratulations to Sarah Heath and Kerry Taylor who took second and third place, respectively.

The ladies celebrated their victory at a delicious binge dinner hosted by Buca di Beppo.

Several of the women got right back on the wagon and started up Round Two. Good luck to everyone and congratulations on all your hard work!

GO SISTERHOOD

by Beverly Jernigan

Join us n the third Thursday of the month for fun with your neighborhood sisters.

For more information, to volunteer or if you have questions contact Beverly@beverlypr.com or 713.494.1733

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CRITTER CORNER

by Casey and Dorothy Dan Farris

The pollen count is off the charts and a high allergy spring is predicted. Sneezing, runny nose, watery eyes — yes, seasonal allergies are a pain. The same pollens and dust that bother people can plague our pets too.

Critters 101: Pollen Season Can Affect Pets Too

As allergies have us reaching for facial tissues and nasal spray, dogs and cats are experience extreme levels of discomfort and are scratching at itches that won't go away because the same pollens and dust that bother people can plague our pets.

Pollen settles into fur and is absorbed by the skin, which in allergic dogs can lead to anything from a mild itch to an infection and hair loss. Symptoms are subtle at first and easily missed by owners. Affected pets may start by licking or biting their pads, among the first spots pollen may permeate.

From there, the claws are out to scratch such irritable areas as belly, chest, neck, muzzle, just about any spot that can be reached. The skin can be scratched raw, resulting in hair loss and scabbing. Skin inside ears can become inflamed and irritated, resulting in ear infections.

No one breed is more allergic than another but dogs with skin folds, such

as pugs and Shar-Peis, may suffer more as pollen is trapped within those folds.

While most cats spend their time indoors, they too can suffer from allergies. Pollen drifts in through open doors or on clothing, settling on the resident feline(s) and leading to itchy skin. Cats also may suffer sneezing and watery eyes. To reduce allergic impact, use air filters and low-dust cat litters. An oatmeal cat shampoo can remove pollens from fur and soothe the skin. If symptoms are mild and involve occasional licking or sneezing, owners should watch and wait. Should they become more severe and the cat is distressed, a trip to the vet is in order.

If your pet seems to be scratching more than usual, vets suggest medicated shampoos and spray-on lotions available at pet and discount stores. Take care to wipe your dog's coat several times a day with a damp cloth to remove as much of the pollen as possible. You can sprinkle pet food with fish oil, supplying needed omega-3 fatty acids. Those seeking to medicate their dogs with over-the-counter antihistamines should check first with their vets. Some can contain caffeine, which is bad for animals. And dosing can be tricky.

If conditions worsen and sores develop, a trip to the vet would be best earlier than later. If untreated, secondary infections can set in and treatment can become even more expensive.

Either way, pet allergies are nothing to sneeze at.

Casey Farris is owner/operator of Bone Voyage Pet Sitting Services®, and Go Dog USA, Garden Oaks companies offering many services and products dedicated to the welfare of our pets and the people who love them. Dorothy Dan Farris 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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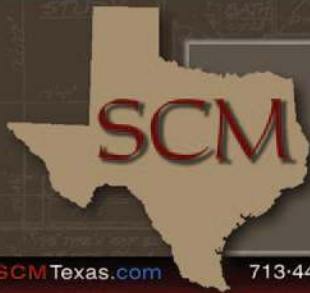
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| 2 | 3 | 4 Civic Club mtg 7:00pm, GO elementary school  | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 9 | 10 | 11 GO Kids MNO 7pm, Cedar Creek | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16 | 17 | 18  | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23 GO Picnic 1 pm, SPARK Park | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 GO Sisterhood 7:30pm | 28 | 29 |
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