

GARDEN OAKS GAZETTE

VOLUME 37

ISSUE 3

MAR 2013



RECORD BREAKING ANNUAL GOES PANCAKE BREAKFAST & SILENT AUCTION!

Continuing the unique 19-year community tradition at our local HISD magnet school, the annual Pancake Breakfast was held on Saturday, February 9. Volunteer dads and granddads served approximately 1200 guests thousands of free pancakes, served up Katz's hot coffee, and auctioned off thousands of dollars worth of merchandise in continuation of a 19-year tradition that has helped set Garden Oaks Elementary School (GOES) apart as an exceptional and diverse learning community.

Over 1100 pancakes served.

Thanks to the event's hard working co-chairs, Elizabeth Oliveras-Reed and Laura Childs, this year's event was a huge success, raising over \$36,000!!!! They led a hard working group of Garden Oaks parents that included committee chairs: Jennifer Perry, Alice and Mark Sarmiento, Devin Hunter, Cheryl McCosh, Martha Meyers, Kelly Chapin, Emma Moon, Libby Leal, Gaylynn Martin, Katrina Hagger, Mary Sharon Komarek, Phil Ramirez, Albert Lozano, Steve Pittman, Toni Valle, Julia Kramp, Cindy Torchia, Angela Winston, Jenny Espeseth, Sarah Cruise, and Shera Clair and countless parent volunteers.

Thanks to the event's hard working co-chairs, Elizabeth Oliveras-Reed and Laura Childs, this year's event was a huge success, raising over



GOES Pancake Breakfast Co-Chairs Laura Childs and Elizabeth Oliveras Reed have everything under control



Sharon Komarek and Phil Ramirez announce the highest bidders.

We wish to extend a huge thank you to the friends and neighbors who attended the 2013 Pancake Breakfast and Silent auction. We look forward to serving you again next year when we celebrate 20 years of the best free breakfast in town!

Continued on page 10.

UPCOMING EVENTS

March Civic Club Meeting

March 5, 2013
Garden Oaks Elementary
7 PM

GO Kids Easter Egg Hunt

March 23, 2013
Spark Park, 3:00 pm



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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.

958 West 43rd	1010 West 43rd
4239 Apollo	826 West 31st
308 West 32nd	919 West 43rd
934 West 43rd	938 West 42nd
974 Althea	

March Birthdays

Sydney Grace Null - 3
 Lori Kennedy - 5
 Chavonne Slovak - 10
 Dodie Davis and Jeff Martin - 11
 George Appling - 13
 Kenneth Santos - 14
 Curtis Hall - 15
 Marshall Heath - 18
 Will Zugheri - 30

Happy belated 70th birthday to 35-year resident Terry Williams – February 17.

Anniversaries

Jeff & Gaylynn Martin -21
 Mark & Susan Saranie –24
 Sean & Caroline McLean-27

Marlene Caldwell celebrated her second anniversary with her horse Notice in January.

Out and About

GO residents Isabella and Alexis Zamora attended the 2013 Presidential Inauguration with the award-winning Waltrip Ram Band, as chaperones. Isabella and Alexis attend University of St. Thomas.

Erica and Jessica Jarvis looked smashing at the GRAMMYS.

The place to be February 9 was the

Garden Oaks 19th Annual Pancake Breakfast. Kudos to the parents, teachers, staff, volunteers, donors, and all the neighbors who supported this successful event.

Carolina and Lucy McLean enjoyed skiing in Colorado.

Tina Rowe enjoyed a trip to Thailand.

Longtime Garden Oaks resident Don Stokey of Tommy Vaughn Ford celebrates a move to fleet services after 25 years in new car sales. He is still available for new car customers.

Thoughts and prayers go to Shreda Paire on the passing of her mother Vicki Paire in January and to the family of longtime resident Louise Paisley who passed away in January.

To highlight an event, celebration, or other tidbit, contact Terry Jeanes at

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 PROGRAM

by Carl Waters Jr.

We had seven crimes reported on the HPD Website for January. Last year we had eight. So we are off to a better start this year. I received information from Terry Jeanes in late January that several constructions sites in the neighborhood had been hit by thieves. While it may not seem like much, these thefts add to construction costs which we all may pay for later. If you live near a construction site and see suspicious behavior please report it the authorities and the builder if they have contact information posted at the job site.

January Crime Statistics (7)

Robbery (1)

700 block of W. 43rd St. on Saturday, January 12 at 9:45 p.m. (street).

Burglaries (2)

1000 block of Gardenia Dr. on Thursday, January 17 at 1:30 p.m. (residence).
500 block of W. 33rd St. on Monday, January 28 at 7:14 p.m. (residence).

Theft (4)

300 block of W. 30th St. on Saturday, January 12 at 11:30 p.m. (driveway).
200 block of the North Loop West on Thursday, January 17 at 11:00 p.m. (convenience store).
3200 block of N. Shepherd Dr. on Thursday, January 17 at 5:30 p.m. (church).
200 block of W. 31st St. on Sunday, January 27 at 9:00 p.m. (driveway)

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 713-864-1992.

Emergency Numbers

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Constable Dispatch
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Terry Jeanes

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Terms expire October of year in parentheses.

GARDEN OAKS CIVIC CLUB MEETING MINUTES

By Mark Klein, President and Heather Leverett, Secretary

Location: Garden Oaks Elementary School

February 5, 2013

Welcome: President Mark Klein called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

A motion was made and carried to accept the January minutes as published in the *Gazette*.

President's Announcements:

Brother's Pizzeria: Thank you again for supporting the Civic Club and neighborhood. Attendees of the Civic Club enjoyed excellent pizza, courtesy of Brother's Pizzeria, 3820 N Shepherd Dr.

Ch. 42 City Development Code

Amendments: This proposal allows the same urban density standards applied to developments outside 610 as are applied inside the loop. Builders would be allowed to put 27 units per acre instead of 8 units per acre without any change in the requirements for related infrastructure. There is significant concern about what the impact could be to some communities and related traffic, drainage, and other issues. President Klein urged concerned GO residents to email all City

GOMO Review Meetings

take place prior to Civic Club meetings at 6:30p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month and on the third Wednesday of the month. Meetings are open to anyone interested in attending. Additional information about the Garden Oaks Maintenance Organization is online at GardenOaks.org. Property owners in Sections 1, 2, 3 and 5 are all members of the Garden Oaks Maintenance Organization.

Council Members, using a sample letter available from the Super Neighborhood Alliance. Interested residents can contact president@gardenoaks.org for the sample letter and "talking points."

Cottonwood Restaurant: Parking issues are impacting Section 1 as customers are sometimes parking along 34th as well as Lawrence. The noise level and related disturbances late at night has caused some complaints.

The GOES 19th Annual Pancake Breakfast: February 9, with free breakfast with a silent auction to support the neighborhood school.

Public Montessori Educators Conference: A statewide Montessori educators conference will be held March 1-3 at Garden Oaks Elementary School and Booker T. Washington High School.

Ash Rowell Passing: Ash Rowell, well-known among members of Houston's craft beer community, as well within Garden Oaks, was shot on the doorstep of his Montrose home on Feb 1. He was the former owner of Duff Beer Distribution, which is headquartered in the Garden Oaks-area warehouse complex east of Shepherd. President Klein.

Traffic and Safety: Closing Lawrence as a cut-through in Section One, revamping speed bumps around the elementary school, and Cottonwood parking/traffic have become recurring neighborhood concerns. While President Klein has done the initial investigations into both the street closure and Cottonwood parking, he asked if there was interest in forming a GOCC Traffic and Safety committee. Potential volunteers can contact

Special Guests: Harriet and Joe Foster YMCA Executive Director Landrum Turner and Board Member/GO resident Paule Anne Lewis. Turner and Lewis spoke about the positive changes at the YMCA and the strength of the programs which support community outreach via after school programs, summer camps, team sports, scholarships, and senior social/physical programs. The YMCA needs community support to make these programs available to the less fortunate who need assistance, including children from Garden Oaks Elementary. Currently 15-20 children from Garden Oaks Elementary are covered via donations and have access to a positive, safe, environment after school. The local Y's Partners Campaign is targeting raising \$150,000 to support the programs. One hundred percent of all dollars raised from the campaign stay at the Harriet and Joe Foster Family YMCA, and are invested directly into programs serving our community.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Phil Ramirez was not present to give an update but copies of the financials were available for review. If anyone has questions please email treasurer@gardenoaks.org.

Standing Committee Reports:

Membership: Dian Austin reported that 216 people paid their Civic Club Dues for 2013 by February 1st and were eligible for \$100 gift card drawing. David and Peggy Tinkey are the winners of the \$100.

GO Citizens' Patrol: Carl Waters reported seven crimes in January. The majority were robberies and thefts. More occurred in the evenings than usual. Please encourage neighbors to join the Citizens Patrol. Contact gocop@gardenoaks.org.

Constable Program: President Klein reported that the contract for 2013 has been executed at the same rates as 2012 to cover three shifts of neighborhood patrols. Additional neighborhood support would keep our constable program fully funded.

Beautification: No update.

GO Gazette: Chavonne asked for all submissions by the 15th.

GardenOaks.org Website: No update.

Webmaster: No update.

Garden Oaks Elementary School: Principal Lindsay Pollock had multiple announcements about the GOES Annual Pancake Breakfast and the Public Montessori Educators of Texas (PMET) conference. She has also volunteered to be on the trustee board of the Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS). It is an elected position with a seven-year commitment. She needs votes from teachers to get the seat.

Garden Oaks Maintenance Organization (GOMO): No update.

President Klein adjourned the meeting at 7:46 pm.

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A GO-GOs SUPPORT GROUP

by Tina Sabuco

The "Alzheimer's Group of Garden Oaks" (aka "A Go Go") - a support group for family and friends with loved ones who have Alzheimer's Disease or Dementia, has been meeting on the first Monday of the month since May of last year. We welcome anyone to join us, be it for a single meeting or on a regular basis. The March meeting date will be Monday, March 4th.

Our meetings are from 7:00 – 9:00 pm at 859 Azalea Street, the home of Tina Sabuco, who is also the foundress of the group. If you are interested in joining us and would like to rsvp to an upcoming meeting, or if you have any questions, contact Tina at goddess@abundanceretreat.com or 713-692-6778. Please also make a note of the future meetings scheduled for **April 1st** and **May 6th**.

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 Vacation Watch form: <http://www.gardenoaks.org/Resources/Vacation-Watch.pdf>
 For all neighbors to receive more timely notices on crime alerts please provide your name, email, and street address to secretary@gardenoaks.org.

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GARDEN OAKS NEWS

Timely information about information and events can be found on the Garden Oaks Yahoo group which can be found at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Houston_GO.

Also join us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/groups/35914307130/

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2013 CIVIC CLUB MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

By Dian Austin

Thanks to those of you who have already paid your annual civic club dues. As we go to press, about 235 families in the neighborhood have stepped up to be civic club supporters. If you haven't yet paid, please do so soon. There is a form in each month's Gazette, or you can go to <http://www.gardenoaks.org> and pay online.

Membership is open to all residents, whether one owns or rents. Membership entitles each household to one vote on issues decided during monthly meetings. The civic club holds the biennial Home and Garden Tour (our neighborhood's main fundraiser), the annual Wine Walk, and other events such as the Fourth

of July Parade. The civic club also publishes the Gazette newsletter that is delivered to your door monthly by volunteers, operates the citizens' patrol, maintains the gardenoaks.org website, coordinates the Harris County Constable patrols, maintains and beautifies our green spaces throughout the neighborhood, and is currently looking for people to help with traffic and safety issues.

David and Peggy Tinkey who live in the 800 block of W. 42nd are the winners of our \$100 gift card drawing. The Tinkeys are longtime civic club and constable program supporters. Congrats David and Peggy!

Please join us for a civic club meeting. We meet 7 PM every first Tuesday of the month at Garden Oaks Elementary School (GOES).

The meetings last about an hour, and lately we've been enjoying free pizza from Brother's Pizzeria on N. Shepherd. Also, we have a door prize drawing for a \$25 gift card at each meeting.

We hope to see you at a civic club meeting soon!



Dear Garden Oaks Civic Club,

We would like to thank you for helping our band represent you, our school, Houston, and Texas at the 2013 Inauguration.

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CHILDREN AND NATURE

By Lindsey Pollock

As urban dwellers, we sometimes forget the wonder of the natural world. Just the other day, a visitor to our beautiful campus remarked that she was amazed at all the animals living at the school. As we walked to the front office, two squirrels ran across the sidewalk in front of us to which she exclaimed, "Where do you get those?" Such a comment from an adult is hard to fathom among individuals who have had experiences and exposure to the natural world. Likewise, a recent substitute to the campus refused to eat produce from our school gardens because she told me, "I only eat vegetables from the store because I know they were grown clean."

What can we do to ensure that our children develop an accurate awareness of and respect for our place in the cosmos and the responsibility we

bear to ensure a sustainable world? According to Linda Paisley, Houston area environmental designer and researcher in bio-mimicry, nature reveals many lessons that teach us ways to preserve our environment. When we study nature and learn from the successes of many species, we are able to replicate winning strategies. Using the model of termite colonies in Africa, architects in Zimbabwe designed an office complex that stays cool without air conditioning. Scientists were inspired to develop Velcro by seed burrs on clothing. Modeling echolocation in bats, inventors designed a cane for the visually impaired. These are only a few of the lengthy and growing list of inventions and innovations inspired by nature.

By ensuring that our children spend time outdoors in our yards, on our playgrounds, in our local and state parks, we provide our children the opportunity to learn from the vast

lessons nature has to offer. Spend time together with your child observing the natural world. From the ant between your sidewalk cracks to the longhorns, to the big tree registry, Texas has flora and fauna to inspire your child's wonder of nature. Keep a naturalist "kit" in your car or on your bike for your outings. A pair of moderately priced binoculars, a measuring tape, magnifying lens, digital camera, pencil and notepad and sunscreen will adequately keep you prepared for an afternoon adventure. Plan a trip to Waugh Street bridge to see the bat colony at sunset, walk the bayou along Allen Parkway, take the boat ride in the Ship Channel or visit the Houston Arboretum and nature Center in Memorial Park. Plant a garden, visit the Farmer's market or watch the stars at night. Whatever it is that you choose, share the wonder of nature with your child and nurture a spirit of curiosity and innovation for years to come!

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SMALL DONATIONS MAKE HUGE IMPACT AT THE YMCA

By Landrum Turner

The Harriet & Joe Foster Family YMCA has been serving the Near Northwest Houston Community for the past 75 years. During this time, we have been able to provide programs and services for all regardless of their financial ability. Currently, we are raising funds to give access to children, families and seniors at the YMCA. You have the opportunity to impact people just like these actual members from the Foster YMCA:



Susan didn't plan on needing assistance from the YMCA. As a single mom, she had been able to afford to send her children to Y AfterSchool care on her own. However, when she was laid off, she thought that opportunity would no longer be available. A YMCA staff person who understood the value of the program, encouraged Susan to apply for financial assistance. Susan was thankful that she could utilize the time her children were in a safe and encouraging environment, to find employment. Today Susan donates to the Partners campaign to help other families in the way she was helped. You can help others, like Susan, to have peace of mind that their children are in a safe and caring environment, while they work to provide for their families. Provide a child a safe place after school by donating \$260 for one month of care.



Ralph came to the Y on doctor's orders, and wasn't too happy about it in the beginning, at least. During one of his first visits, Ralph was introduced to one of the Active Older Adult programs and found his place at the Y. As long as he has coffee with his new Y friends, he doesn't mind the mile he walks each day. Last month they remembered his birthday and it was the first time in years he had gotten a birthday card. Ralph thanked his doctor for forcing him to go to the Y. With your support, you can provide seniors like Ralph an opportunity to better their physical, mental and social health. Give the Gift of a Senior membership by donating \$37 per month or \$444 a year.

Did you play sports as a child? Do you enjoy watching your kids participate in youth sports and learning valuable life lessons? Make this possible for a child who would not otherwise be able to participate by donating \$50 for a season of sports.

All of these vital services are made possible only through community partners such as you. If you would like more information, to donate or get involved, please contact: Landrum Turner; Landrumt@ymca-houston.org or call 713-869-3378.

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Silent Auction kept in order by Deputy Constable Le and Sharon Komarek.

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Principal Pollock with Deputy Constables.



Council Member Ellen Cohen, Mark Klein and Precinct One Constable Alan Rosen.

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GO KIDS

By Lisa Rentschler

Garden Oaks is a vibrant and friendly neighborhood in Houston, TX. With over 300 families, GO Kids has age-based playgroups, a Moms' Night Out, new parent dinner drops, a book club, a babysitting co-op, potlucks, and many other scheduled activities. The ages of kids in the group range from newborns to school-aged--- all Garden Oaks families are welcome.

Current GO Kids Monthly Group

Outings: (Look for more details on bigtent.com)

Annual Easter Egg Hunt

Sponsored by:

Deanna Zugheri, Keller Williams Realty and Will Zugheri, Envoy Mortgage
GO Kids Easter Egg Hunt - Saturday, March 23rd, 3:00 pm at SPARK Park. Bring your baskets to fill. There will be an egg toss competition for the dads and an Easter hat contest for the Moms (\$50 restaurant gift certificate to the 1st place winners)

Moms' egg stuffing party - Thursday, March 21st, 7:00 at 1054 Gardenia. (Pizza and wine)

Playgroups -

GO Babies - 0-2 Years
Go Buddies - 2-5 Years

GO Babies & Buddies are having playdates every two weeks, so watch your calendar for some fun mommy and kiddo time!

Weight Loss Challenge:

We need a new coordinator for the Garden Oaks weight loss challenge. Please contact Devin at devin@provishr.com or 832-647-9405 if you are interested in taking on the fun role.

Running Club:

Running club generally meets every Tuesday at 8:30pm in Section 1. Interested in joining? Contact Devin at devin@provishr.com or 832-647-9405.

Cookbook - Order today at GardenOaksCooks.com. All proceeds go to the Garden Oaks Constable Program.

Bouncy House - LOOKING FOR A NEW BOUNCY HOUSE KEEPER!! Annual bouncy house money due this March to use the bounce houses in 2013. It is a \$30 donation.

Payment by mail (check or cash):
Lisa Rentschler-832-752-7510
lisa.d.rentschler@sbcglobal.net
1050 Gardenia Drive
Houston, TX 77018

Website / Communication - www.gardenoakskids.com. Our website now offers information on contributing to our annual bouncy house fund, and purchasing your Garden Oaks Cookbook.

Help Houston Win \$50,000 in Mayor's Challenge Fan Favorite

Vote now for One Bin for All and change the way the city handles trash.

Houston, what if everything you put in a waste bin could be recycled? What if trash became extinct? And what if you no longer had to sort your plastic cups from your glass jar from your banana peel? One Bin for All is a revolutionary idea for residents to discard all materials in one bin, treating trash as valuable assets, dramatically increasing recycling using game changing technologies.

Houston is one of the 20 national finalists chosen by Bloomberg Philanthropies to receive a generous grant to help implement One Bin for All. You can help the city of Houston's idea become a reality!

Vote now for One Bin for All in the fan favorite contest at:

<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/02/19/vote-mayors-challenge>.

Vote today and then tell your friends, family and colleagues to vote until the contest ends on **Wednesday, March 6, 2013**.

With One Bin for All, residents can put soda cans, paper, plastic, food scraps, rubber, wood and glass into one bin-then technology does the rest! By relying on state of the art technology and new process systems to sort trash from recycling, Houston would be able to achieve recycling rates of up to 75 percent. Help bring to Houston an easy to use service that will increase Houston's recycling and waste diversion, improve air quality and lower costs to our city!

To learn more about One Bin for All and watch Houston's video, visit: <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/annise-parker/mayors-challenge-houston>.



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Dinner Drops
Are you or someone you know an overwhelmed, sleep deprived new parent? Don't worry 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, Angelica Sullivan, at angelicapuerto@hotmail.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

families are welcome. Not on the GO Kids list serve? Want more information about GO Kids? Contact Lisa Rentschler (lisa.d.rentschler@sbc-global.net) for all the details.




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Yard of the Month: 859 W. 42nd



The landscaping provides a structured look using tropicals and pruned evergreen shrubbery. The addition of azaleas creates a striking accent, particularly during Spring.



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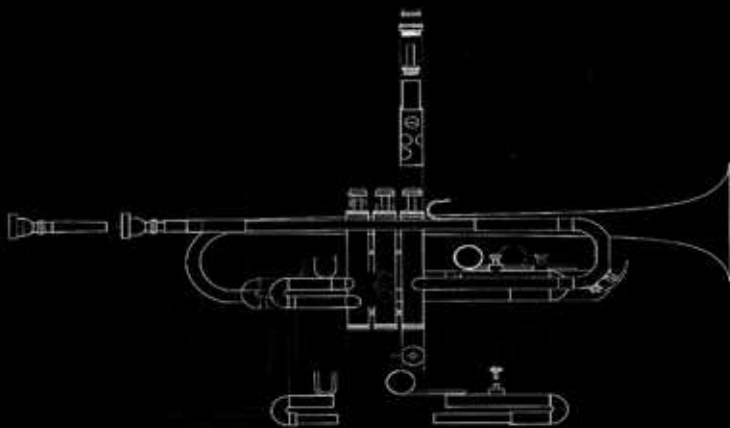
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CRITTER CORNER

Casey and Dorothy Dan Farris

March is a very full month. Spring will begin (so spring forward an hour) and the days will be longer so more time with your pets in the evening. Saint Patrick's Day is also in March so wear the green. It is also Easter time so get all dressed up and go find those eggs and bunnies. Today we will be talking about the many ways you can best love your cats. Also our pet of the month family are a couple of sisters, yes cats, and the wonderful love they have given their humans.

Pets of the Month:

Sasha and Kelly Johnson are 18 months old. They live in Section II with their humans, Mel, Ken, and Elizabeth Johnson. Kelly (Calico) is tender tempered while Sasha (mostly black) is sassy. They were part of a litter of four, born on 7/5/11. When Mel and Elizabeth showed up at the SPCA in early September 2011, the kittens had only just been brought in for adoption. Elizabeth initially picked the tuxedo and the calico, but the tuxedo had been adopted earlier that day. So another black littermate was substituted. Both kitties bounded in to the open arms of Mel and Elizabeth as soon as they came in the room. It was a mutual cuddle fest all round.

Since the first day they entered the home they have made it clear that they are a "set" and they love their people. Kelly meets her humans each evening. From a perch near the door, she reaches out to bat them as they walk in. Sasha on the other hand tends to wait until the humans sit down and some evenings that requires a lot of patience. Sasha also hops up on Mel as soon as she gets into bed but Kelly prefers to curl up

beside the humans. Each morning they wait at the end of the bed for Mel to wake up. At first sign of "life", Sasha is on her person! They are indoor girls, but recently Sasha snuck out. After 24 hrs she showed up at the back door. Kelly gave her long lost littermate a good telling off for a few days. These sisters are unconditionally loved by their humans and the cats have done the Johnson family the honor of deciding they are worth their time.

Critters 101: How to Love Cats

Kitten adoption doesn't include instructions on how to love cats. But how do you show your cats you love them? What sort of mother love does your fur-kid want? To our cats, we are surrogate parents so every day is Mother's Day.

Love Cats with Attention. And that can involve any one or combination of the below—plus so many other ingredients specific to your special cat companions. It may simply be lap cuddling each evening, or sharing a pillow on the bed at night. Sitting quietly with a cat's adoring gaze from across the room says volumes. What a gift!

Love Cats with Petting. Simply stroking your cat, from nose to tail, gives an all-over feel-good massage that lowers Kitty's blood pressure--and yours! Pay special attention to the places he likes best, such as the base of the tail and under the cheeks.

Love Your Cat With Good Communication. Learn to understand what your cat's telling you, with his meows, his tail, his ears and more. How do you feel when someone ignores your attempts to tell them something? Your kitty knows you love him and returns the purrs when you respond to

his language in an appropriate way.

Love Cats with Grooming. Cats spend 50 percent of their awake-time self-grooming. Not only does the comb/brush feel good like an all-over massage, it keeps fur mat-free, skin clean, reduces fur balls, and serves as a bonding session between you and the fur-kids.

Casey Farris is owner/operator of Bone Voyage Pet Sitting Services and Go Dog USA.

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

GARDEN OAKS OUTREACH

Classified Ads are \$20 per run for residents, and are for personal services only (help wanted, items for sale, infant care needed, etc.).



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AIR CONDITIONING TIPS FOR THE SPRING

by Mitch Weigand

The Spring Check: Think of It as Spring Cleaning for Your A/C

After a rather uneventful winter here in Houston, Spring has finally arrived. Azaleas are blooming, pollen is floating in the air (gesundheit!) and robins are returning from their winter homes. Spring also means that summer will be here very soon and with it, the demand for air conditioning.

With the current mild temperatures and lower humidity, air conditioning may be the last thing on your mind. However, now is the perfect time to arrange for the annual spring check for your A/C system. Think of it as a necessary task on your spring cleaning list!

Pump it up!

During the spring check, inspecting your system's freon level and adding some as needed is the most impor-

tant step. Being just one pound low of freon can increase your monthly electrical bill by nearly \$50! Replacing lost freon and repairing the leak that caused it will cost around \$200-\$350, but it's sure a lot cheaper than replacing a burned-out compressor at \$3,000 or more.

What else is done during the Spring check?

OUTSIDE

- Check start capacitor and potential relay.
- Check compressor contactor.
- Check all wiring and connections.
- Check condensing coils.

INSIDE

- Check voltage and amperage to all motors with meters.
- Check air temperature drop across the evaporator coil.
- Check secondary drain pan.
- Lubricate all moving parts.
- Check and adjust thermostat.
- Check filters.

Schedule your Spring A/C check today!

Spring Quiz:

1. The first official day of spring is called the _____.
(a) Spring Solstice, (b) Spring Equinox, (c) Both
2. In North America, spring starts in which calendar month?
(a) January, (b) March, (c) May
3. In Japan, citizens celebrate the arrival of Spring by hosting mass viewings of which flower?
(a) Peach blossoms, (b) Tulips, (c) Cherry blossoms
4. Who wrote "In the spring, a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love"?
(a) Alfred Lord Tennyson, (b) T.S. Eliot, (c) William Blake

ANSWERS: 1. b, 2. b, 3. c, 4. a

Mitch is the owner of Air Wise™ and a member of the Garden Oaks Civic Club. You can email Mitch with any A/C questions at mitch@airwisehouston.com or write to 1590 Sue Barnett Drive, Houston, TX 77018. All of his previous columns from the Garden Oaks Gazette can be found at www.airwisehouston.com.



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MICKEY'S MINUTE*By Mickey Morales*

A new year and a new location. These are the words that have been going through my mind for the last few weeks. The Farmstand at Petrol Station is temporarily locating a bit further down Wakefield on Saturday mornings, between Alba and Golf, at 954 Wakefield.



We were made aware of the need to move from the lot across from Petrol on the eve of celebrating our first full year in the neighborhood. The owners of the lot are building a swimming school for young kids on part of that property, and while construction is going on, the market will be just around the corner.

Currently Randy, owner of the soon to open Wakefield Crowbar (954 Wakefield), has offered his parking lot in front of the sand volleyball courts for as long as it takes to revamp the lot across from Petrol Station. We hear through the grapevine that the new Petrol parking lot will feature major improvements including lights, stripes and parking curbs.

Thanks to Andrea and her very kind boss at Ergos Technology for allowing us to use their parking lot for our first anniversary weekend.

Many thanks to all the folks who have made and continue to make the transition as painless as possible and thanks in advance to all our neighborhood supporters for taking the time to search us out. Now down to market business. Spring has sprung, but of course we're not really out of the woods until the pecan trees tassel. Tomato and peppers are being planted, along with all the other spring and summer crops we are all so looking forward to. Of course we will continue to baby the winter veggies as long as the cool weather allows, so it's not too late to get your greens on. We are located at **954 Wakefield on Saturdays from 9 am to 1 pm.**

SAUTEED SWISS CHARD*By Jeremy Goodwin*

At this time of year, prior to the weather getting hot, chard is at its best, its sweetest. There are many different varieties of chard, but white and rainbow are the two most commonly found, named after their stem color. No matter which variety, a lot of people are intimidated by the huge leaves and the thick stems, and miss trying one of the tastiest greens available during the Texas winter. The trick to chard is to treat it like two different vegetables, the stems like celery and the green part of the leaves like spinach.



Chard also goes well with other vegetables, even toasted nuts, dried berries and one of my personal favorites, papaya slices. This recipe is a basic starting point for cooking chard that will serve you well, and lends itself easily to modification.

Ingredients:

1 bunch chard
1 green onion (or small white onion)
1½ tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
2-4 ounces sweet white vermouth (substitute any sweet wine)
½ teaspoon grated nutmeg
Salt and pepper to taste.

Wash the chard well and spin or pat it dry. Cut the stems out and chop them into ½ inch pieces just like you would with celery, chop the white part of the green onion to a similar size. Roll the green parts of chard into cylinders and chop the roll every 1 inch or so to make a coarse chiffonade. Heat the oil to medium and throw in the onion and chard stems. Cook them for about 5 minutes, tossing occasionally, until the stems are beginning to turn translucent. Add the vermouth and then immediately the leaf chiffonade and turn them with the tongs until the leaves are coated with vermouth and olive oil. At this stage the greens will wilt, shrinking to about half their original volume. Grate some fresh nutmeg and black pepper on them and cook 2 more minutes at medium heat before serving, turning them once or twice. At this stage they can be held for about five minutes by turning off the heat and covering.

Jeremy Goodwin is a chef, food writer and farmers' market advocate who lives on the border of Garden Oaks and Oak Forest.

MARCH 2013

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 Farmers Market, 9AM-1 PM 954 Wakefield TX Independence Day
3	4 A-Go Go Meeting 859 Azalea, 7 PM	5 Civic Club Meeting-GOES Elementar  7 PM	6	7	8	9 Farmers Market, 954 Wakefield 9AM-1 PM
10 Daylight Savings Time	11	12	13	14 Garden Club, 7 PM	15	16 Farmers Market, 954 Wakefield 9AM-1 PM
17 St. Patrick's Day	18	19 	20 GOMO Monthly Meeting -GOES Elementary, 7 PM First Day of Spring	21 Heavy Trash-Yard Waste Moms' Night-Out-egg stuffing, 1054 Gardenia, 7:00	22	23 GO Kids Easter Egg Hunt, Spark Park, 3:00 pm Farmers Market, 954 Wakefield 9-1.
24 Palm Sunday	25	26	27	28	29 Good Friday	30 Farmers Market, 954 Wakefield 9AM-1 PM
31 Easter Sunday						



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