

GARDEN OAKS GAZETTE

VOLUME 36

ISSUE 08



NEW GROUP ADDRESSES HALF-BURIED CULVERTS AND MOSQUITOES

By Cathy Wahren, P.E.

A new group is evolving in Garden Oaks: GOROW. It was unveiled at our July 2 Civic Club meeting by Section 4 resident and land development engineer, Cathy Wahren, PE. She began with an introduction to the water pollution regulations that have been in place since the mid-1970s, and ended with ideas on how to resolve certain problems that have been developing in our Garden Oaks Right of Ways.

The first water pollution regulations worked to clean up significant "point" sources of pollution such as effluent from factories and sewage treatment plants. More recently the focus has been on "non-point" sources such as vehicle and road runoff, fertilizer runoff and pet waste. The term "best management practices" has evolved to describe modern methods to help solve non-point source pollution problems. Continued on Page 7...GOROW



Crowds gathered at the SPARK Park on July 4th for the the 5th annual Red, White, & Blue July 4th Bicycle Parade. Photos on Page 14.

AUGUST 2013

UPCOMING EVENTS

GOKids Beach Bash 10 am to 1pm
Child Fingerprinting 10 am to 12
August 3rd, SPARK Park

Civic Club Meeting

August 6, 7 pm.

Garden Oaks Elementary School

Civic Club Meeting.

Sept. 3, 7 pm

Guest Speaker:

Mayor Annise Parker

Save the Date for **REDS,
WHITES... AND THE BLUES -
Annual Constable Fundraiser**
Sat. October 19, 4-6 pm.

VOLUNTEER NEEDED!

Beautification Chair

Please contact Mark Klein at
president@gardenoaks.org

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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.

517 West 31st	1020 West 42nd
951 West 41st	508 West 30th
934 West 43rd	308 West 30th
851 West 43rd	870 West 41st
818 West 42nd	967 Althea
721 Garden Oaks	1345 Sue Barnett

Birthdays

Elizabeth Klein - 4th
 Katherine Knauth - 4th
 Rick Knauth - 9th
 Gracie Marie Mulry - 9th
 Elizabeth Johnson - 20th
 Matt Veech - 22nd
 Tony Padon - 23rd
 Isabella Ramirez - 23rd
 Trent Salch - 23rd

Bridgette Martinez - 26th
 Emma Kathryn Carvell - 28th
 Debbie Padon - 28th

Happy Anniversary

Pat Buron and Shelly Rogers - 5th
 Sheree' and Ron Peoples - 7th

Out and About

Heard **George Appling** sat next to **Bill Cosby** on flight a to New York. Nice. **Kenneth Santos** and **Robert deVeau** enjoyed Santa Fe. **The McLeans** visited Vancouver, British Columbia, while **Margarita Barcenas** visited Madrid. **Jessica and Eric Jarvis** enjoyed a big birthday trip to Big Bend, and **Jessica** arrived back to a surprise 40th beach ball party given by hubby **Eric, Tina Sabuco** and **Shellye Arnold**. **John R. Bartos** attended the National Audubon Convention — at Skamania Lodge. **The Carlin Family** saw the Houston Astros vs Tampa

Bay Rays at Tropicana Field, St. Pete FL. **Heather Anderson McKeown** and the family had a great time at the Lazy River at the Hyatt Lost Pines. **Sarah McGee Heath** and her crew had a blast in South Padre. **Sally and Jim McDaniel** and family enjoyed California visiting Sequoia National Park and Yosemite. **Terry Jeanes / Patrick Kelley** ventured to Memphis July 4th for a family reunion and of course some Memphis blues and Bar B Q. **Sue Schmidt** enjoyed a recent winetasting event at Union Station, along with son Matt and his girlfriend Mandy.

A Speedy Recovery to **Chris Schmidt** who is recovering from ACL surgery. Thoughts and condolences to the family of long time Garden Oaks resident **Herb Kellner** who passed away July 7th.

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

Garden Oaks Gazette

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

No exceptions.

Publication of any article not related to the Civic Club does not imply endorsement by the Garden Oaks Civic Club and is solely the opinion of the author.

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CITIZENS' PATROL PROGRAM

By Carl Waters Jr.



Here is another reminder National Night Out will be celebrated in Houston and Harris County on **Tuesday, October 1, 2013**. Start planning your block parties now and let me know so we can have HPD and or the Constable stop by for a visit.

June Crime Statistics (6)

Robbery (1)

200 block of W. 32nd St. on Friday, June 21 at 2:30 p.m. (residence).

Burglary (1)

900 block of W. 42nd St. on Tuesday,

June 4 at 2:30 p.m. (residence).

Theft (3)

500 block of W. 31st St. on Friday,

June 14 at 9:00 a.m. (residence).

700 block of W. 43rd St. on Friday,

June 14 at 10:00 p.m. (residence).

200 block of W. 32nd St. on Monday,

June 24 at 6:00 p.m. (street).

Auto Theft (1)

800 block of W. 30th St on Wednesday, June 26 at 8:00 p.m. (driveway).

So far this year 41 crimes have been listed on the HPD website for the neighborhood. Last year there were 49 crimes reported through July.

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.

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Terms expire October of year in parentheses.

**GARDEN OAKS CIVIC CLUB
MEETING MINUTES**

By Mark Klein, President

Location: Garden Oaks Elementary
July 2, 2013

Welcome: President Mark Klein called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm.

A motion was made and carried to accept the June 2013 minutes as published in the June 2013 Gazette.

President's Announcements:

Upcoming GOCC Speakers: City of Houston Mayor Annise Parker will be the featured speaker at the September 3rd GOCC meeting. President Klein encouraged neighbors to attend, emphasizing that the Mayor's attendance at the GOCC is a sign of respect for the political involvement of its residents and the strength of the GOCC, which is one among nearly 800 civic clubs registered in Houston.

Beautification: President Klein thanked GO Residents Tina Marie Sabuco and Shellye Arnold for years of taking care of the mowing/trimming at the Triangle Park, Alba and Azalea. No one asked them to volunteer covering the costs for the park upkeep. Volunteer efforts like this are the type of commitment that truly helps a neighborhood. In June, Tina and Shellye asked if the GOCC could take over this responsibility, which the GOCC did. Since then, the GOCC has weeded the Triangle Park's beds and added 51 bags of mulch.

President Klein also thanked Ed de Alba for stepping up to fix the sprinkler systems at Triangle Park, Gazebo Park and Garden Oaks Boulevard. De Alba went out the same 100-degree day that he was called in order to take care of the sprinklers. De Alba also plans to work on the other GO

Parks systems soon. President Klein encouraged residents to notify the GOCC if they see that our parks' sprinkler systems are not working properly.

Also, bids are underway to repair the leaning wood boundary markers along Garden Oaks Boulevard. The GOCC will be conducting tree trimming in its parks during the fall, when the weather adds less stress on the trees.

Guest Speaker: Cathy Wahren, "Looking Back on Low-tech Drainage and Circulation Techniques of the Future". Wahren, President of the Garden Oaks Garden Club, provided a comprehensive look at how Garden Oaks' grass-lined drainage swale system is supposed to work, its environmental and drainage benefits, plus issues with City regulations requiring deep culvert pipes under driveways. She demonstrated how the Garden Oaks swales are old-fashioned, yet state-of-the-art, and also proposed a box-style culvert that could reduce ponding under driveways. Wahren is working on obtaining a neighborhood grant for a pilot project to replace deep, water-holding culverts with box-style versions. Neighbors who would like to help with the pilot project can contact Wahren at gardenclub@gardenoaks.org.

Treasurer's Report: The July Treasurer's report will be submitted in August, as Treasurer Phil Ramirez was out of town.

Standing Committee Reports:

Membership: A new neighbor in Garden Oaks drew a \$25 gift card during the meeting. Dian Austin discussed the fall 2013 Wine Walk, now in its 5th year, slated for Saturday, October 19. The popular event is a significant Constable Program fund-

raiser that collected \$14,000 last year. The event sells out fast, even drawing political leaders from Houston, and is limited to 200 tickets. The cost is \$50/per person and tickets go on sale in September. Austin said different levels of sponsorships are still available by contacting membership@gardenoaks.org.

GO Citizens Patrol: Carl Waters reported 6 crimes in June, with another 6 crimes reported at the Reserve at Garden Oaks, which is just outside the borders of the Garden Oaks neighborhood. You can help prevent crime by volunteering for the GOCOP program. You need to be eighteen years old and pass a background check to be a citizen patroler. Report anything suspicious in the neighborhood to the Constables, (713) 755-7628, or call 911 if you see an emergency.

Constable Program: No report this month.

Garden Oaks Home Tour 2014: Brenda de Alba reported that the HT committee chairs have been filled for Command Center and Florists. A Volunteer Chair is still needed. To step up for the position, or to suggest someone appropriate, please contact hometour@gardenoaks.org. The Garden Oaks Home Tour is the GOCC's largest fundraiser for its Constable program, contributing around \$30,000 each biannual tour.

Beautification: Please see the report in the President's comments above.

Gazette: President Klein thanked Gazette Editor Chavonne Slovak for another "fine" edition of the Gazette during June. He also thanked Lori Kennedy, Gazette Delivery Coordinator, for handling distribution with the volunteer Gazette delivery teams.

GardenOaks.org Website: No update, other than the website continues to work smoothly.

Garden Oaks Elementary School: In June, Principal Pollock participated in a week-long Harvard University seminar called Enhancing Teacher Effectiveness (please see this month's Gazette for an article about the program). The fall 2013 school semester begins Monday, August 26. Orientations by grade level run 5:30-7pm August 21-22. A Montessori Parent & Child Orientation for Children's House Students will be held 9-10:30am Friday, August 23.

Thanks to Brother's Pizzeria, 3820 N Shepherd Dr., for once again providing pizza for the GOCC meeting. Brother's has graciously fed the Garden Oaks Civic Club meeting attendees for a year now. Please support Brother's Pizzeria and other neighborhood businesses who in turn support us. President Klein adjourned the meeting at 8 pm.

MAYOR TO ATTEND SEPTEMBER 3RD CIVIC CLUB MEETING

Mayor Parker is Houston's 61st mayor and one of only two women to hold the City's highest elected office. Now in her second term as mayor, Parker previously spent six years as a City Council member and six years as City Controller. She is the only person in Houston history to have held the offices of council member, controller and mayor.

Parker's record as mayor includes job growth exceeding the number of jobs lost during the recession, resulting in Houston being named the job growth capital of the nation. In addition, she bucked the trend

of most other major U.S. cities, balancing three city budgets during the tough economic times without raising taxes or having to eliminate police or firefighter jobs.

The mayor's tenure includes passage and implementation of Rebuild Houston, a pay-as-you-go street and drainage improvement; voter approval of a \$410 public improvement bond program; creation of an independent organization to oversee the City's crime lab operations; a unique sobering center for public intoxication cases; adoption of a long-term financial plan that ensures the stability of the City's water department and reorganization of City departments to achieve cost savings and more efficient operations.



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CONSTABLE PROGRAM -

By Terry Jeanes

SPECIAL NOTE

The Constables are scheduled to do **Child Fingerprinting at the SPARK Park on Saturday August 3rd from 10am to 12noon.** Stop in to have your children's records done.

REMINDER:

Check with your alarm company and put Precinct One Constable Dispatch 713 755 7628 on the list as first responder.

Please notify constable's office of any solicitors in the neighborhood.

Note that the front porch furniture thieves have been at it again. Please secure these items if possible.

PLEASE JOIN TODAY AND SUPPORT OUR PROGRAM via the form in the Gazette, the link below, or the email previously sent to past supporters. Even if you are on Draft we would like your updated info.

Supporter Link / Form " <http://gardenoaks.org/constableform>
Vacation Watch Form: <http://www.gardenoaks.org/Resources/VacationWatch.pdf>

-For all neighbors to receive timely notices on crime alerts please provide your name, email, and street address to secretary@gardenoaks.org.



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GOROW.... CONT from Page 1.

As it turns out, several of these best management practices (nick-named "BMPs") have been in place in Garden Oaks since our neighborhood was first developed in the late 1930s. This "Looking Back - At The Future" presentation encouraged appreciation of the new-age BMPs that we see right outside our front doors every day. Every story has its dramatic challenges, however, and these were the subject of the second part of the presentation.



Hold on pardner - just what are these so-called BMPs, you say? If you're curious about what this is about, the associated problems that affect many, if not all, residents, and what GOROW might do to help resolve these problems, please read on.

Narrow pavement. Grassed shoulders. Vegetated open ditches. These are the trademarks of rural (as opposed to urban) roadways and they are some of the BMPs that give Garden Oaks some of its charm. BMPs such as these have been identified as helpful in reducing the amount of pollution that reaches our water ways. How? Well, pavement in and of itself pollutes - as it is slowly worn away by passing traffic - so less is better than more in that respect. Also, less pavement (within a fixed right-of-way width) allows for more vegetation. And more vegetation is good, because it filters the first flush of rainwater off the pavement, also slowing it and allowing more pollut-

ants from wheels and undercarriages to infiltrate the soil and biodegrade. The same goes for open ditches. There are additional benefits, too, unrelated to water quality. Narrow pavement is a proven method for "calming" traffic. Open ditch drainage is easier and cheaper to build, inspect and maintain. And a well-functioning open ditch system is less likely to accommodate the pockets of stagnant water that provide breeding areas for mosquitoes.

So now we come to the part about the inevitable challenges - the problems that always seem to crop up, no matter how well-intentioned the effort. Though our drainage system as initially designed worked well for many years, there have been changes that have led to dysfunction. City of Houston standard specifications for driveway culverts no longer allow the open-bottom "bridge-type" culverts that were used for a time to replace the original "valley gutter" types - you know the type: the ones that dip down anywhere from 6 inches to 1 ½ feet to let the ditch drainage flow over the pavement. (Not everyone liked those!) But the newer "pipe culverts" required by the City seem to almost always end up deeper than the ditch they've been built into, and often trap water for days and days - certainly long enough for mosquitoes to be a real problem.

But that's not the only issue. Believe it or not, should the day come when our roadside drainage system does "evolve" to meet current City specifications, we will end up with ditches that are 3 feet deep and 18 feet wide all around the block, without a level shoulder for walking and parking. And until then, we'll have to deal with the occasional scooped out sections here and there, and water standing in half-buried pipes for days and days, chock full of mosquito larvae.



Is this acceptable? Or is it something we'd like to change? And, if so, how? These are questions Cathy would like to involve more neighbors in through the GOROW group. To find out more (Yes, there's a lot more to know!) please send an email with your comments or questions to GardenOaksROW@Yahoo.com. At a minimum, you can decide whether or not you'd like to add your name to a non-official roster of residents who want to try to help the City - and the nation - come up with an urban roadside ditch design and associated maintenance policies that function as intended. Those with time and energy to help may find opportunities to volunteer for related activities.

* **GOROW** stands for Garden Oaks Right-Of-Way. Our street right-of-way is the public strip of land that contains our pavement, shoulders, street signs, light poles and roadside ditches.



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WINE WALK SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

By *Dian Austin*

The 5th Annual Garden Oaks Wine Walk will be held on **Saturday October 19th, from 4-6 pm**, right here in our neighborhood.



Our annual constable program winetasting fundraiser always shows what a fun-loving committed neighborhood we have. And a thirsty crew too. We already have a full slate of 13 generous neighbors and businesses who will be providing the wines and foods for our "Reds, Whites, and Blues" tribute to US wines and blues music. (If you want to get on the Table Host Waiting List in the event someone should drop out, please email Shelley at srogers@sheehyware.com.)

Last year we raised in excess of \$14K for our constable program. Currently we have 3 constable patrols that keep us covered almost 24/7. We are fortunate to have a constable presence throughout the neighborhood, able to respond promptly to any calls of suspicious activities. However, our constable program funds are usually lacking, which is why we have the fundraiser.

Tickets to the Wine Walk will go on sale next month in the Gazette and on the www.gardenoaks.org website. We will only sell 200 tickets and they have always sold out quickly. One way to insure that you get a ticket is to become a sponsor. We have sponsorships at the \$125, \$250, and \$500 levels and each includes advertising,

signage, and a ticket or several tickets to the event, depending upon the sponsorship level. Sponsors and table hosts also get first priority on purchasing additional tickets before they go on sale to the general public. A full list of sponsorship benefits can be found at <http://gardenoaks.org/downloads/2013WineWalkSponsorshipBenefits.doc>

table hosts also get first priority on purchasing additional tickets before they go on sale to the general public. A full list of sponsorship benefits can be found at <http://gardenoaks.org/downloads/2013WineWalkSponsorshipBenefits.doc>.

Thanks to our committed sponsors to date, many of whom are returning from previous years:

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2014 GARDEN OAKS HOME & GARDEN TOUR

By Brenda de Alba

Two more hardy souls have stepped forward in the past month to chair vacancies in two of the three committees I mentioned in my last report. Elizabeth Klein will chair the Command Center team and Becky McCullough will chair/coordinate the florists. Thank you, ladies, for leading these important activities.


The Volunteer/Staffing Chair position is still vacant and needs to be filled. I just know there is a neighbor out there who can make a significant contribution by taking on this challenge. The bulk of work for this position begins early next year and we have a great database of volunteer contact information so you will not be starting from scratch. As reported earlier, owners of the selected tour homes and gardens will be asked to help find volunteers for their loca-

tion through their family, friends, and neighbors with any open volunteer slots being filled through the Volunteer/Staffing committee.

Thanks to everyone who sent tour nominations in to the Selection Committee! If everything goes as planned, we will announce the tour locations in next month's Gazette.

Questions can be emailed to me through Hometour@gardenoaks.org.


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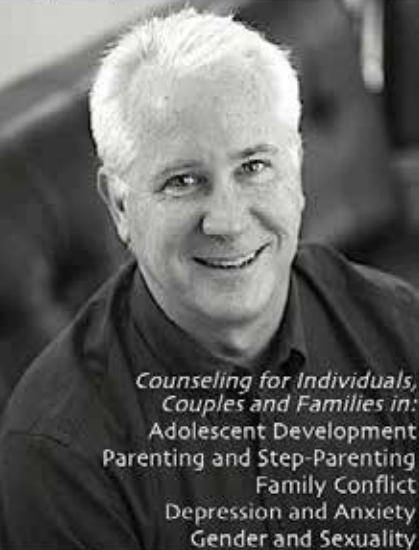
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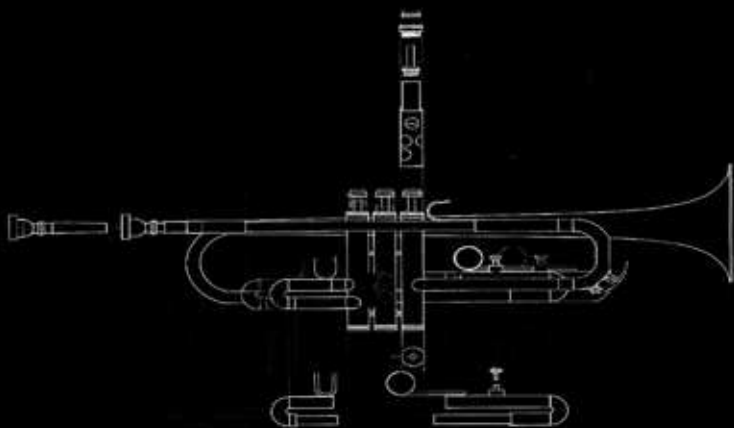


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GRIT*By Lindsey Pollock*

I spent a week in June at Harvard University immersed in a seminar called Enhancing Teacher Effectiveness. One of the main components of the course was a section entitled “Grit”, presented by Dr. Angela Duckworth. Building on the work of Carol Dwek’s growth mindset, she said that instilling habits in students that emphasize hard work, practice and persistence to achieve long-term goals are greater predictors of long-term success than “talent” or predisposition in academics or sports. In her research, she has found that individuals who develop habits such as completing homework or practicing targeted skills (for example students who win spelling bees, debate tournaments or track meets) have spent countless hours working toward the goals they set and more often than not, have a caring adult who supported and encouraged them in reaching that goal.

Additionally, these students track their progress toward their goal by monitoring their results – this may be reading fluency, test scores, or sprint times. More than even innate ability, grit is the attribute that is the greatest predictor of success. Some of us call that stick-to-it-“ness”, determination or just plain stubbornness, but above all else, they just refuse to give up! This weekend I had lunch with a former Olympian who shared that in following his dream, he had many people who tried to dissuade him from his path, who told him that trying to reach the top would be wasting his time. But he found a coach here in Houston who believed in him and trained him to move to the top. In his words, “The pain of discipline (practice) is far better than the pain of remorse.”

You may have been uncomfortable reading the stories contained in Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mom which detailed the dogged determination of one mom who went to extremes to ensure that her children were pushed to succeed. This was an example of one parent who worked (an extreme example) to instill the trait of “grit”. What is reasonable for most people when working to instill these habits at home? Here are a few ideas:

Have a homework routine. Children need to connect effort with outcomes. Homework is an opportunity for students to practice and share what they have learned at school. Ensuring that homework is complete and you have checked over it instills in children the importance of following through on a task.

Chores. This helps build self-confidence and instill responsibility. Assign age-appropriate chores for children to contribute to the household. Starting at 3 or 4 years old, children can begin to understand that they are contributing members of the family. This may be something as simple as carrying plates to the sink or putting shoes away but the message for the child is that their efforts or contributions are important to the life of the “community”.

Try something new. Children may be afraid to try new things, whether it is a different food, a new social setting or working at a new skill such as learning an instrument or sport. Go with your child and try new things – attend a concert, take an art class or simply read a literary genre that is different. Try reading a different poem to your child every day and find a new word. Play music from different cultures in your home, try different radio stations on the dial and talk about the differences and perspec-

tives of different people. Being open to change and possibility will open new horizons to your child!

Stick-to-it. Set goals and stay with a project even if it is sometimes difficult. Model for your child perseverance by setting goals and practicing or discussing how you will work toward success. This may be playing catch with your child and talking about the impact of repetition, listening to your child practice the piano or going over spelling words. We’ve all heard the cliché, “winners never quit and quitters never win”. Reading the biographies of famous inventors, statesmen and accomplished academicians, we see this story repeated. Help your child understand that “failure” is an opportunity to learn and refine. Stick-to-it and your efforts will pay off!

I was reminded of the importance of “grit” just this morning when my personal trainer (my son) pushed me to new limits! He told me that the brain will tell you to stop before your body has reached its new potential. Why is this? We are genetically predisposed to maintain the equilibrium (status quo). Change creates disequilibrium and discomfort - we must work to overcome obstacles and barriers that may stand in our way. Helping our children learn to persevere and overcome obstacles may be one of the greatest foundations for our children’s long-term success! To learn more about the importance of “grit” see Dr. Duckworth’s TedTalk at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H14bBuluwB8>.

HOUSTON, A GREEN LEADER

By Mayor Annise Parker

The City of Houston continues to set the standard for other cities when it comes to being "green." Houston is already known as the energy capital of the world, but we are committed to becoming the alternative energy capital of the world as well.

We recently signed an agreement with Reliant Energy, an NRG Energy company, to purchase over 140 MW of renewable power for the next two years. During this time period, the City's purchase of green power will account for half of its annual electricity demand. We will be using almost 623,000 mWh of green power per year, which is equivalent to the amount of kilowatt-hours needed to power over 55,000 homes each year.

Purchasing green power reduces the environmental impacts of electricity use, decreases the cost of renewable power over time and supports the development of new renewable generation - a triple win for Houstonians.

This purchase makes Houston the largest municipal purchaser of renewable power in the nation, and places us in the top 10 overall in


the nation, according to estimates from the Environmental Protection Agency. The City has purchased renewable energy credits (RECs) that are Green-E certified.

Taking advantage of more cost effective and cost competitive REC prices, the City is able to maintain a relatively flat power price while also increasing its percentage of renewable energy in its portfolio. The City has committed \$2 million for this 2-year agreement, less than a \$0.01 per kWh on top of the City's power price. In addition to investing in wind power, the City has been designated as one of the Department of Energy's Solar America Cities and is developing its own solar powered sources of energy.

In addition to purchasing green power and building renewable energy projects, the City is also working to reduce its emissions. The City's municipal operations emissions have realized a 26% decrease from the 2007 greenhouse gas emissions inventory. The City has committed and invested in many programs that reduce cost, improve efficiencies, and decrease greenhouse gas emissions. Projects such as the municipal energy efficiency retrofit program that upgraded 6 million square feet

of the City's buildings to achieve 30% energy reductions to increasing the City's hybrid and electric fleet, have helped the City achieve and surpass its Multi-Pollutant Emissions Reduction Plan goals.

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The 2013 Red, White and Blue Bicycle Parade, sponsored by Deanna Zugheri, was enjoyed by over 150 participants. Deanna is pictured above with Brenda de Alba and contest judges Emily and Sean Dupre.



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CRITTER CORNER

By Molly Taylor

Pets of the Month: Ares and Luna



Ares and Luna are two beautiful "GO" Great Danes. Mom describes Ares as laid back, happy and loving everyone. His job these days is supervising his sister Luna. Luna is a princess who loves to explore and get in trouble when given the chance, but she knows how to look innocent and is forgiven quickly.

Great Danes were bred by the Danish to hunt deer and wild boar. Later, there was a blend of the Great Dane and the English Mastiff which made the breed larger and what you mainly see today is the English line of the Great Dane. Germany actually tried to claim that the Great Dane originated with them, but the Kennel As-

sociations have held Denmark as the original origin of the Great Dane.

If you think your dog should be the "GO" Pet of the Month, please drop us a line and tell us why we should feature your baby. Email gazette@mutthouse.com along with a picture.

Critters 101: Bloat & Torsion one of the Leading Causes of Deaths in Canines

Bloat & torsion (Gastric Dilatation-Volvulus) is one of the main causes of death in dogs. This occurs when the stomach swells with gas and fluid and then turns restricting the dog from vomiting or belching. Once the stomach turns, the chances of survival greatly decrease and require emergency surgery to repair. Most dogs do not survive after the stomach turns. Certain breeds are more prone to "bloat" than others such as larger breeds (Great Danes/German Shepherds). But it is also commonly seen in medium dogs (Basset Hounds) and larger chested small breeds (Dachshunds). Bloat appears mainly around eating and drinking too much food at once, eating right before or right after exercise or drinking too much water too fast after eating. If "bloat" is ever suspected, go straight to your veterinarian. Bloat without torsion is correctable if treat-

ment is given quickly.

Signs of Bloat:

- Abdomen Swells
- Signs of discomfort
- Pacing and Salivating without vomiting
- Lethargy

Things to Help Prevent Bloat & Torsion:

- Smaller meals (not one large meal per day)
- Thirty Minutes of rest before and after eating (not panting)
- Limit water intake to small amounts at a time
- Soak food before feeding
- Do not use a raised food bowl
- If you have a dog prone to bloat, discuss with veterinarian about tacking the stomach. It will not prevent bloat, but will prevent torsion.

Molly Taylor operates Molly's Mutt House and co-owns Mutt House Relief Effort pet sitting. Please forward your questions and pet news to gazette@mutthouse.com.

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HELP YOUR A/C KEEP YOU COOL DURING THIS SCORCHING SUMMER *by Mitch Weigand*

Now that 100-plus degree temperatures are the norm in Houston, we definitely depend on our home air conditioners to keep us comfortable. Here are some simple maintenance tips to help keep them running smoothly all summer long.

(1) If you haven't already, have an A/C check-up done NOW. This is the most important tip I can offer. During a check-up, the freon level, compressor, condensing coil, evaporator coil, drain pan, filter, thermostat and wiring will all be inspected and any minor mechanical issues will be fixed. This will help prevent most problems and maintain your A/C system at its peak operating efficiency.

(2) Replace your A/C filter every month. A clean air filter protects you and your A/C system from dust, pollen and other airborne contaminants. However, a clogged

filter forces the compressor to work harder than it should, plus shortens its lifespan. See last month's issue of the *Gazette* for recommendations on which filters to use.

(3) Have realistic expectations with your home's indoor temperature.

Regarding outdoor temperature versus indoor temperature, the standard in the HVAC industry is 20 degrees maximum difference. That means when it's 90 degrees outside, probably the coolest your house will get is 70 degrees. Count yourself extremely lucky if your system can lower the temperature beyond that.

(4) Purchase a programmable thermostat and use it! Program the thermostat to automatically raise your home's temperature about 30 minutes after you leave in the morning and lower the temperature about 30 minutes before you return in the evening. Also, you can ease the load on your A/C system by adjusting the thermostat to the highest temperature that you're comfortable with and use other appliances such as ceiling fans which help keep you

cool by evaporating moisture on your skin. Also, we must allow our bodies to acclimate to the intense Houston heat.

(5) Keep the outside condenser unit clear of debris.

Plants and lawn debris can build up around your outdoor condenser unit throughout the summer and restrict its airflow. As a homeowner, one thing you can do is take your garden hose and spray thoroughly about six inches from the condenser's fins to clear them of dust and leaves. This simple action will go a long way in keeping your condenser running efficiently.

Call an A/C service technician as soon as you suspect a problem-before the problem gets worse. These tips can greatly reduce the possibility of A/C issues this summer, there's always a chance that something can go wrong.

Mitch is the owner of **Air Wise™** and a member of the Garden Oaks Civic Club. Visit www.Airwisehouston.com.

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MICKEY'S MINUTE

By Mickey Morales

We're happy to see that our Saturday farmers' market customers have managed to find us next door to Texas Auto Group on Wakefield between Alba and Golf. We have had a steady flow of folks the last few weeks, which speaks volumes when you consider that a lot of families take their summer vacations about now. But soon school will be back in session and some normalcy will return to our lives and the temperatures will begin to moderate, or is it that we'll just adjust to it? Either way we will be there each and every weekend-rain or shine- on Saturdays from 9 am to 1 pm.

We added a new vendor this last month: Matt Keller and his wife Britany, of Market Gourmet. They make spice rubs, pickled veggies and such, and we look forward to a few others waiting in the wings, perhaps a

baked goods vendor in September and a lady that makes organic doggie treats any day now.

Thanks again for your continued support, especially during these "dog days of summer". I know it sounds cliché, but we do indeed admire yawls' devotion to our market.



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FRESH FROM THE FARMERS MARKET & EASY LONG BEANS

By Jeremy Goodwin

Buying from farmer markets can be a little intimidating to some people. Even things like yellow tomatoes, purple carrots and white eggplant can inhibit one's willingness to purchase them. If you are one of those people, here are a couple of things to keep in mind: First, ask the farmer about the vegetable, as they usually have some idea of what they are growing, and often there is also an enthusiast like me hanging around who can explain how to cook them. Secondly, it will probably be fresh picked, packed full of flavour and nutrients, so you really cannot go too far wrong, and last of all, it is supporting your local economy. The reason I put that last one in, is that I have a hard time supporting the view that a Chilean tomato makes better economic sense than a local grown one, and just who is it you are trust-



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ing with your food supply? Here, at least you can look the farmer in the eye, and give positive or negative feedback. Good luck getting that in a grocery store.

The unusual vegetable at our local market at the moment is long beans. There are so many kinds of legumes in the world of plants that the sheer number of ways of preparing them is daunting, and these, although like French or green beans, have a distinct flavour and texture that responds well to one particular method.



- 1 bunch Long beans
- 1 teaspoon Toasted sesame seeds
- 2 tablespoons Butter
- 2 tablespoons Sweet white vermouth
- 1 clove Garlic optional

Cut the beans into uniform lengths of around 3 inches. You don't have to be very precise, as it is just to make them easier to toss in the pan. Over a medium heat, melt the butter, and add the garlic and vermouth. When the mixture begins to steam and bubble, throw in the beans and sesame seeds and toss a few times to coat them with the butter. Continue to heat and toss for two more minutes. At this time check for doneness by biting into one; it should be warm all the way through but still crisp and bright green. At this point you can turn the heat off and cover while you do other things, but toss the pan every couple of minutes or the beans will start to turn grey where they are in contact with the pan.

Serve as a side dish, or toss while still hot in a field green salad.

Please help support our local farmers market every Saturday morning (rain or shine) from 9am to 1 pm on Wakefield near The CrowBar (between Alba and Golf).

You can find more of Jeremy's recipes at www.facebook.com/singlemanskitchen.

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4	5	6 Civic Club Meeting-GOES Elementary 7 PM 	7	8 Garden Club 7 PM	9	10 Farmers Market, 948 Wakefield 9 AM-1 PM
11	12	13	14	15 Heavy Trash-Junk Waste	16	17 Farmers Market, 948 Wakefield 9 AM-1 PM
18	19	20 	21 GOMO Monthly Meeting -GO Prof. Bldg. ; 4001 N. Shepherd Ste 216, 7 PM	22	23	24 Farmers Market, 948 Wakefield 9 AM -1 PM
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