



February 2017

Volume 39 Issue 2

Garden Oaks Gazette

A publication of the Garden Oaks Civic Club

President's Message

Matt Gannon, Civic Club President

February is an interesting month for many of us, and for me, it's a month that I associate with birthdays. My father, my sister-in-law, and I all have birthdays in the month of February. It is typically the month when we begin to wind down from the holidays and get into the swing of the new year. More specifically, it is the month when many of us finally start to remember to date checks and other documents with the correct year. For others, it's a month associated with taxes, having paid our property taxes to the county and having received all our financial statements for filing our income tax returns.

Last month, we focused on our new year's resolutions, particularly for those of us concerned with our physical health. Erin Thole was our speaker and provided an interesting and unique approach to whole health wellness and nutrition. This month, we are going to focus on finance and economics, and our guest speaker for February's GOCC meeting will be Jim Noteware. Jim is a Houston-based real estate developer and was a director of Houston's Department of Housing and Community Development between 2010 and 2012. He has also published several articles in the Houston Business Journal. The meeting will be held at 7:00pm on Tuesday, February 7th, at Garden Oaks Montessori Magnet.

In closing, as we all come to grips with 2017, I would like to hear from you, the readers of the *Garden Oaks Gazette*. What would you like to see in our neighborhood in 2017? What would you like to see the Civic Club accomplish? What would you like to be part of? What topics would you like to discuss? Which speakers would you be interested in hearing? What can we do to get you engaged, involved and attending our monthly meetings? Please email me with your suggestions at president@gardenoaks.org.

I hope to meet more of you at our next meeting.

Warmest regards and best wishes,

Matt Gannon

Garden Oaks Montessori Pancake Breakfast

Saturday, February 4
8 - 10:30 AM

Garden Oaks Montessori
901 Sue Barnett

Garden Oaks Civic Club Meeting

Guest Speaker: Jim
Noteware

Topic: Finance and
Economics

Tuesday, February 7
7 PM

Garden Oaks Montessori
901 Sue Barnett

Save the Date:

Smoke 'n' Spirits

Constable Fundraiser

Saturday, April 8
4 - 7 PM

Home of Vidal and Debbie
Martinez

1345 Sue Barnett

Wine Walk Constable Fundraiser

Saturday, October 21
4 - 6:30 PM

744 W 43rd

Wonders Never Cease

Joe Muscara, Gazette Editor

(What's this? A Letter from the Editor? We haven't had one of these in years! Some nerve...)

Yes, I'm back. First of all, I would like to thank all the other editors who filled in during my sabbatical from January 2003 until now. They are too numerous to name but you can go online and find them in the back issues. Thanks for filling in, all! A special thanks goes to Jenny Espeseth for doing the January 2017 issue at the last minute while I got back up to speed.

I know many of you dear readers are newer to the neighborhood and have never heard of me, or only know me by my reputation that precedes me. Since I am not one to argue with people (anymore; my old columns will show I previously acted otherwise. A lot), I will let you-all continue to believe those wonderful things about me that you've heard from everyone else.

One thing you should know about me is that I absolutely love Garden Oaks, and feel very lucky to have found it. See the April 2000 issue for how that happened. Seventeen years since I wrote that column and I still haven't found another neighborhood anywhere else that strikes me like Garden Oaks does. I really think the best part of Garden Oaks is the community we have here. I really doubt I'd live somewhere else where I know so many neighbors and get along with them so well.

One thing about me that has changed since I was last editor that everyone should know is that I will be very strict about the deadline for this silly thing. Submissions for the next issue must arrive by the end of the day on the 10th of each month. Anything that arrives after that will only be published at the discretion of the editor (that's me). If you ask for an extension, it might be granted, but since I've had times people asked for an extension and then didn't submit anything (that really happened), I'm reluctant to do so. Get it in by the deadline and we won't have any problems, okay?

Until next month, I'm...

Still the editor

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

Heard Under the Oak Tree

Terry Jeanes

Welcome, New Neighbors!

Congratulations on joining our community. We look forward to seeing you at a civic club meeting soon.

1059 Gardenia	1003 Lamonte	3302 Lawrence
729 Sue Barnett	524 West 32nd	

Happy Birthday

Georgia Lister – 2/5	Tonya Knauth - 2/9	Alisha Cunningham - 2/12
Lela C. – 2/12	Brenda de Alba - 2/17	Terry Williams - 2/17
M'lissa Dilley - 2/22	Grady S. - 2/22	Maya Rahman - 2/23
Elan Britt - 2/28		

Happy Anniversary

Will and Deanna Zugheri – 2/23

Out and About

The **Kubeckas** enjoyed skiing in Park City Utah.

Kerry and Mike Taylor and their family celebrated their 14th anniversary in Crested Butte.

The **Bowman-Lister** clan hosted another successful vegan Christmas caroling event.

The **McKeowns** toured Johnson Space Center.

The **Acosta** family enjoyed a trip to New York City which included seeing "Hamilton", the Central Park Zoo, and the Metropolitan Art Museum.

Caroline Stender enjoyed the Florida coast.

Sheree' and Ron Peoples enjoyed London and seeing daughter D'yon.

Rebecca Stark traveled on business to Las Vegas.

Congratulations

Leslie Ryan and Carl Waters' four legged child, Baxter, was dog of the week at Dogtopia.

Megan Noser made the cast of "Footloose" at Miller Outdoor Theatre scheduled for this spring.

Jones B. made his debut in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" at Classical Theatre.

Terry Jeanes finally got to "ring the bell".

To highlight an event, celebration or other tidbit, please submit information no later than the 8th of the month to Terry Jeanes at terry@terryjeanes.com



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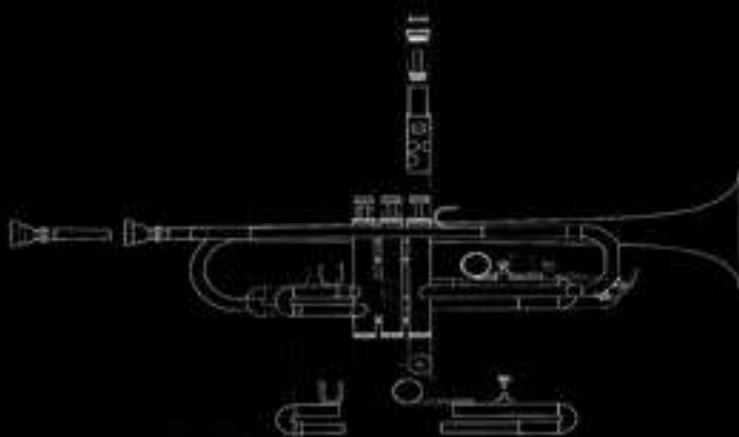
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A New Garden Oaks Constable Program Fundraiser - Smoke 'N Spirits Fine Cigars And Even Finer Spirits

Sheree' Peoples, Committee Chair

When: Saturday April 8, 2017

Where: The home of Vidal and Debbie Martinez, 1345 Sue Barnett, from 4 to 7 pm.

What: Participants will enjoy tastings of high end whiskeys and scotches, along with fine cigars, including Cuban cigars. In addition, there will be food from neighborhood eateries, as well as both a live and a silent auction.

A limited number of tickets will be sold, starting in mid-February. The ticket price will be \$100, with all proceeds going to the Garden Oaks Constable Program. Sponsorship opportunities are available.

We are also seeking donations of spirits, cigars, and foods. Let's show community support for our constables. Volunteers are needed for set up, serving, and take down. It would be nice to have at least two volunteers from each section. For more information, please contact Sheree' Peoples at sheree79@aol.com.

Stay tuned to Garden Oaks social media pages for further updates.

If you love fine spirits and cigars, this is the event for you!

Committee members: Sheree' Peoples (chair), John Beddow, Vidal Martinez, Joe Muscara, Sheila Briones and Terry Jeanes.



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Size	Single	Six Months	Twelve Months
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Full Page 7 1/2 W x 9 1/2 H	\$180.00	\$900.00	\$1745.00
Half Page Back Cover	\$150.00	\$750.00	
Full Page Back Cover	\$225.00	\$1125.00	
Full-page insert, single-sided	\$280.00		
Full-page insert, double-sided	\$325.00		

Please note:

1. Placement of ads is subject to the discretion of the editor.
2. Artwork must be e-mailed to gazetteads@gardenoaks.org by the 10th of each month for publication the following month.
3. Artwork may be submitted in one of the following formats: JPEG (.jpg), PDF (.pdf), GIF (.gif) or TIF (.tif).

Constable Program Update

Terry Jeanes, Committee Chair

Thanks to those of you who are current constable program supporters. If you are not, please consider contributing. We need you! Since we no longer have GOMO surplus funds paying for two of our constable contracts, the Garden Oaks Civic Club has signed new contracts for two deputies to patrol our streets starting in March 2017, but we need increased contributions and additional participants to keep those contracts in effect, as they are paid monthly. **We do not currently have enough funds to pay for both of these contracts for the entire year.**

Increased participation is crucial. Unfortunately, we will lose one of our current three deputies March 1st, and need your financial support to keep at least two deputies patrolling. It is up to the residents of Garden Oaks to pay for the constables. Each contract costs about \$77,000 per year.

As we go to press, only 245 households out of the 1430 homes in Garden Oaks are contributing at least the \$225 suggested minimum annual donation in 2017. That is only about 17% of all households in Garden Oaks. We still need more participation and funding in order to keep the Constable Program viable. The constable program benefits every single resident in the neighborhood, so please support the program.

Donating to the Constable Program can be done via the form in this month's *Gazette*, or online at gardenoaks.org. You can pay in one lump sum or monthly. There are many options online if you want to pay beyond the suggested \$225 annual minimum. **We really do need your support!**

Two constable program fundraisers are currently in the works in hopes of raising additional monies for the constable program:

1. **Smoke 'n Spirits will be an opportunity to drink upscale liquors and smoke fine cigars** and will be held April 8, 2017 at the home of Vidal and Debbie Martinez. There is a separate article in this month's *Gazette* with more information. If you are interested in participating, sponsoring, donating, or helping with the event, please contact committee chair Sheree' Peoples at sheree79@aol.com.
2. The 9th Annual **Wine Walk** is scheduled for Saturday October 21, 2017 from 4 to 6:30 pm. The event will be a **neighborhood/community wine and food tasting**. Following the same format as in previous years, there will be 11-13 tables of wines and/or foods to taste, and we hope to include more neighborhood restaurants this year. More details will be available later this year. If you are interested in sponsoring, please email GOConstable@gmail.com. The 2016 Wine Walk netted some \$30,000 for the constable program.

If you have other ideas for constable program fundraisers, how to increase participation in the constable program, or are interested in volunteering, please email constable@gardenoaks.org.



Chris Schmidt
Garden Oaks Resident
Home Tour and GO Kids Sponsor
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Garden Oaks Civic Club Meeting Minutes

Joe Casarez, Secretary

January 3, 2017

Location: Garden Oaks Montessori Magnet School (GOMM), 901 Sue Barnett

Welcome and Introduction:

President Matt Gannon welcomed those in attendance and called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. Mr. Gannon asked for a motion regarding the minutes for the December 2016 meeting. Brenda de Alba moved to accept the minutes. Teresa Coleman seconded the motion and the vote passed to accept the December 2016 minutes as published in the January 2017 *Gazette*. Mr. Gannon then introduced the new Civic Club officers for 2017: Jim DiCola (Vice President), Teresa Coleman (Treasurer) and Joe Casarez (Secretary). The 2016 Civic Club officers were recognized and thanked for their service to the community and presented with gift cards to local restaurants. 2016 GOCC President Sheila Briones accepted the gift cards on behalf of the officers who were not in attendance (Chris Lindsay VP, Jerry Butler, Treasurer, Luke Sustr, Secretary and Mark Klein, Government Affairs).

Prior to the guest speaker, Chris Markos from My House Fitness (18th/TC Jester) provided the two door prize drawings: one for four individual training sessions (won by Joe Muscara) and the other for four semi-private small group training sessions (won by Brenda de Alba).

The guest speaker was Erin Thole (formerly Palmer) CNHP (Certified Natural Healthcare Practitioner), who gave an informative and timely presentation regarding the benefits of a healthy eating regimen. Ms. Thole focuses on the root cause of health issues via food sensitivity, hormonal, and toxicity panels to figure out what works best for each individual client. She talked about the importance of regulating hormones, especially leptin. It was a very detailed, informative presentation with quite a bit of interaction answering the questions from those in attendance.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Teresa Coleman had hard copies of the organization's current profit and loss statement and balance sheet available to attendees. Ms. Coleman reported that 2016 was a good year as a result of the Garden Oaks Home Tour and an increase in the number of households joining the Constable Program. The GOCC net income for 2016 was \$66,863.50.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Constable Program: Program Chair Terry Jeanes indicated that the GOCC has signed two constable patrol contracts for 2017. She also asked for additional volunteers to assist in contacting GO households who previously participated and to sign up new contributors in the Constable Program. 2016 ended with a record level of about 370 households

participating in the program. A level of 400 to 450 households would be preferable so as not to have to rely on fundraisers as much. Since GOCC is committed to providing two constables, it is important to get as many households participating in this very beneficial program for the neighborhood.

Officer Eric Oliver said that over the holiday season, there were two household burglaries and the suspects were apprehended both times. Charges against a package thief have also been filed.

The constables also thanked the generosity of the GO residents who contributed to the Christmas Toy Drive.

Membership: Committee Chair Dian Austin reported that 2016 ended with 292 civic club members. To date in 2017, there are 178 paid civic club members. Starting 2017 there are 245 households supporting the Constable Program, down from a high of 370 contributing households in 2016. Brenda de Alba suggested a couple of billboard-type thermometers in each section to show current constable participation levels. Social media was also suggested to bring awareness of the need to increase Constable Program support.

Website: Information on the Garden Oaks Maintenance Organization (GOMO) and the

Garden Oaks Civic Club (GOCC) can be found at www.gardenoaks.org.

Gazette: The December issue of the *Gazette* was delayed in getting to the printer due to the holidays but will be available after the first week of January and online beginning January 4th at www.gardenoaks.org. The firm deadline for submission of all articles is the 10th of the month.

Garden Oaks Citizens' Patrol: Program Chair Carl Waters, Jr. reported five crimes from the HPD website for the month of December. Of the five crimes, four occurred during Christmas week. Mr. Waters also requested volunteers to help patrol the neighborhood and if interested, to please contact him via the GOCC website. Patrollers must be 18 years in age or older and pass a background check with the Houston Police Department.

There were no reports from the following committees:

- Beautification Committee
- Ad Hoc In-Line Storm Water Retention Project Committee
- Government Affairs Standing Committee

NEW BUSINESS

Terry Jeanes provided more information on a recent planning meeting for a new Constable Program fundraiser: Smoke 'N Spirits. The cigars and adult beverages fundraiser will be on April 8th 2017, to be hosted at the Vidal and Debbie Martinez home. Approximately 125 tickets will be sold. Sheree' Peoples has volunteered to chair the

committee. Terry Jeanes motioned to form a task force for hosting the GOCC-sanctioned event to raise money for the Constable Program. Sheila Briones seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

Dian Austin stated that the 9th Annual Wine Walk, also a Constable Program fundraiser, is scheduled for Saturday October 21, 2017. It will be an open event to all who purchase a ticket and who are at least 21 years of age. The 2016 Wine Walk raised \$30,000 for the Constable Program.

OTHER BUSINESS

GOMM Principal Dr. Lindsey Pollock gave an update on the school's construction project with regard to the Spark Park, where a rock base is being created for the trucks to drive on so that heavy equipment can be brought in. Land clearing is taking place followed by work on the two temporary buildings and some abatement. February 4th is the date for the annual GOMM Pancake Breakfast and Auction.

Coley Groth asked about the status of repairing the Garden Oaks signs at neighborhood entrances. Sheila Briones stated that the company contracted to do this would have the signs repaired by the end of the month, weather permitting.

Frances Schwartz asked if the GOCC had interest in donating to the Friends of Oak Forest Park. November meeting speaker Elyssa Horvath, with the Friends of Oak Forest Park, had discussed the building of an all-accessible park for inclusive use by the kids and

parents with disabilities. Lori Kennedy made a motion to request the GOCC donate \$2,500 to purchase twenty-five 6x6 clay tiles that would be painted by the students of GOMM and placed at the park. Brenda de Alba seconded the motion. Before the vote, there was additional discussion regarding how this would be funded, and Ms. Kennedy withdrew her motion. Terry Jeanes moved to table the vote until the next civic club meeting so that more research could be done to get clarity on the funding of the motion and to reach out to the Friends of Oak Forest Park group for more information.

President Gannon indicated that he was in the process of confirming a speaker for the February meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

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Coley Groth (2019)
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Each director's term expires in
October of year in parentheses.

Garden Oaks Maintenance Organization (GOMO) Monthly Update/Annual Review For 2016

Pam Parks, GOMO Office Manager

In 2016 the Garden Oaks Maintenance Organization:

Reviewed a total of 48 Plan Proposals for 32 Projects

- 21 were approved at first review
- 7 were approved on review after revision
- 4 were denied and not resubmitted

Reviewed a total of 27 Member Reported Deed Restriction Violations

- 7 were determined not to be violations
- 16 were removed by homeowners at GOMO's request
- 1 is pending removal; owners have agreed to correct
- 1 is receiving further review
- 2 are awaiting attorney opinion

Involved in litigation

- A case on the subdivision of a Section 1 lot. This case ended after an appeal to the Texas Supreme Court was denied. The lot will remain as is but may not be erected upon.
- A second case involving the other half of the subdivided lot is expected to be resolved soon.
- Garages in Section 3. This case is on appeal with an expected decision in 2018.

Fiscal Year (11/1/2015-10/30/2016) Financials:

Gross Income	\$273,564.05
Expenses	\$370,469.17

GOMO Review Meetings

take place at **6:30 p.m.** on the **first Tuesday** prior to Civic Club meetings
and at **7:00 p.m.** on the **third Wednesday** of each month.

Meetings are open to anyone interested in attending.

Additional information about the **Garden Oaks Maintenance
Organization (GOMO)** is available online at GardenOaks.org.

Property owners in Sections 1, 2, 3, and 5 are all members of GOMO.

The top 5 expenditures were the following:

Legal	153,570.87	41.5%
Constable	153,484.00	41.4%
Professional	16014.93	4.3%
Beautification	20000.00	5.4%
Rent	11400.00	3.1%
Total	354,469.80	95.7%

Adopted Policies on:

- Deed Restriction Violation Enforcement (Recorded Harris Co.)
- Calculation of Transfer Fees (Recorded Harris Co.)
- Refund of Transfer Fee Overpayments
- Submission of Building Plans (Plan submission form)

Drafted Policies (under review) on:

- Posting of Signs
- Code of Ethics

Garden Oaks is a deed-restricted community of 1430 homes. The Garden Oaks Maintenance Organization is entrusted by homeowners and property owners

(members) of Sections 1, 2, 3 and 5 with ensuring compliance to deed restrictions. The directors of GOMO are member elected volunteers.

GOMO news, director and office contact information, and the meeting schedule are published monthly in the Garden Oaks *Gazette*, delivered by volunteers to all homes in Garden Oaks.

At the newly updated website, www.gardenoaks.org, homeowners can find deed restrictions, plan approval information, by-laws, policies, financials, minutes of meetings, the most recent audit, transfer fee information, meeting schedule, information about the election of directors and officers, and contact information for all officers and section directors.

The Garden Oaks Maintenance Organization
4001 N Shepherd Dr, Suite 216
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Contact:
713-561-3936
gardenoaks.org
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Citizens' Patrol Update

Carl Waters, Jr., Program Chair

At the January Civic Club meeting, our evening constable reported that as a neighborhood we did well over the holidays, as his department had only two burglaries reported to them in December. He stated both reports resulted in arrests and criminal charges. He also encouraged everyone to call the Constable's Office or HPD to report suspicious activity, including door to door solicitors, as many of them have been found to have warrants and/or criminal charges pending against them.

December Crime Statistics (5)

Auto Theft (1)

3800 block of N. Shepherd Drive on Thursday, December 22 at 1:10 p.m.

Burglary (1)

900 block of Althea Drive on Monday, December 19 at 3:59 p.m.

Burglary of a Motor Vehicle (1)

3400 block of N. Shepherd Drive on Thursday, December 22 at 1:36 p.m.

Theft (2)

1000 block of Lamonte Lane on Friday, December 9 at 11:47 a.m.

700 block of W. 42nd Street on Wednesday, December 21 at 8:06 a.m.

Inquiries about joining the Citizens' Patrol Program or other community safety issues may be directed to me via the neighborhood website (GardenOaks.org), the Citizens' Patrol email account (gocop77018@aol.com) or by phone at 713-864-1992.

Emergency Numbers

Crimes in progress, fire, or ambulance	911
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Precinct One Constable Dispatch	713-755-7628
All Other City Services	311



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A Letter To GOMM Parents

Lindsey Pollock, Ed.D., Principal, Garden Oaks Montessori

Dear Parents,

Recently, you may have heard about a new system for rating schools in Texas. House Bill 2804, passed by the Texas Legislature in 2015, will change the Texas school accountability system so that every campus and district will be rated with letter grades. The new system will go into effect in the 2017-18 school year.

Much like students receiving individual subject grades that are combined for a grade point average, the law requires schools and districts to be issued grades based on five different areas of performance, and those five grades are combined into a single overall rating. Using data from the upcoming 2017-2018 school year, schools and districts will be given an overall rating of A, B, C, D, or F, along with A-F ratings in five separate domains.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) recently released a provisional report showing ratings HISD schools would receive in Domains I, II, III and IV if the A-F rating system had been in place during the 2015-16 school year.

The provisional grades for GOMM were released as follows:

Domain I: Student Performance	C	STAAR Scores
Domain II: Student Progress	D	STAAR and ELL Progress between Racial/Ethnic Groups
Domain III: Closing Performance Gaps	F	STAAR Scores for Economically Disadvantaged
Domain IV: Postsecondary Readiness	A	Chronic Absenteeism Rate & 7th/8th gr Drop-out

The A-F provisional ratings are available at TEA.Texas.gov, but keep in mind the current accountability system rates schools and districts as "met standard" or "improvement required." The first official A-F ratings are scheduled to be released in August 2018. Please see the accompanying FAQ and overview provided by the TEA. If you have further questions, please feel free to reach out to me at lpollock@houstonisd.org or visit the TEA website at TEA.Texas.gov.

Best regards,

Dr. Pollock, Principal

New 2017-2018 School Accountability System FAQ

Starting with the 2017-18 school year, the Texas Education Agency will give each public school and district a rating in the form of an A-F letter grade to comply with House Bill 2804 passed by the 84th Texas Legislature in 2015. HISD has compiled these FAQs to answer some of the questions you may have about this upcoming change.

Q: How will schools and districts be rated under the new system?

A: Much like students receive grades in individual subjects and those are combined for a grade point average, the law requires schools and districts to be issued grades based on five different areas of performance, and those five grades are combined into a single overall rating. The five areas or domains are: Student Achievement, Student Progress, Closing the Gaps, Postsecondary Readiness, and Community and Student Engagement. Based on the 2017-2018 school year, schools and districts will be given an overall rating of A, B, C, D, or F, along with A-F ratings in the five separate domains.

Q: How are schools rated currently?

A: Under the current school accountability system, which went into effect with the introduction of STAAR testing in the 2011-2012 school year, Texas schools are rated either Met Standard or Improvement Required. Prior to that, schools were rated Exemplary, Recognized, Academically Acceptable, or Academically Unacceptable, depending on their TAKS scores.

A color version of the Gazette is published each month at the Garden Oaks web site, gardenoaks.org. You can download past issues as well as find contact information and pay for ads.

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

Q: What factors will be used to rate a school or district under the A-F system?

A: The new rating system will focus on how well schools are doing in three main areas: preparing students for success after graduation, reducing achievement gaps, and informing parents and the community about district and campus performance. More specifically, STAAR test results are projected to be roughly 55 percent of a school's grade. Other factors may include: high school graduation rate and diploma plans; credits for Career and Technical Education (CTE); completion rate of AP or IB courses; and postsecondary credits achieved through the HISD dual-credit program. Factors new to the system include the number of students who enlist in the U.S. Armed Forces; school attendance rates; middle school dropout rates; and the percentage of students receiving instruction in college and career preparation. An additional 10 percent may be based on community and student engagement, another new indicator.

Q: What do the "provisional" ratings that were released in January 2017 mean?

A: The Texas Education Agency recently released a "provisional" report showing the ratings HISD schools would have received in Domains I-IV for the 2015-2016 year **if the A-F rating system was currently in place**. These ratings are available at TEA.Texas.gov, but keep in mind the current system rates campuses as either *Met Standard* or *Improvement Required*. The provisional ratings will be used to guide discussion for further development of the new system. In addition, HISD will analyze this data to continue our work improving all schools.

Air Conditioning Tips For The Winter

Mitch Weigand

Preventative Maintenance Agreements: A Little Preventative Maintenance Goes a Long Way

It's the ounce of prevention in the form of a Preventative Maintenance Agreement (PMA) that's worth every penny. PMAs are the best way to ensure that your home's A/C system and furnace operate smoothly and efficiently and they will help prevent costly breakdowns when you need them the most.

Most homeowners don't have the expertise to identify small mechanical issues before they become large, expensive problems. Would you know if the voltage or amperage draw is too low or too high on one of the A/C motors? Or if your A/C system is low on freon? How about identifying cracks in your furnace that could potentially leak deadly carbon monoxide into your home? This is where a PMA proves its worth.

While it won't prevent breakdowns, the inspections can help identify minor problems and correct them before they become major, expensive catastrophes. No one wants to endure a broken-down A/C on the Fourth of July holiday weekend with a house full of sweaty, irritable in-laws!

PMAs Explained

When you sign up for a Preventative Maintenance Agreement, you save time and money. A PMA is less expensive than a full-service call and provides the homeowner with a contract that focuses on quality preventive maintenance. With a PMA, two inspections are done each year by your service technician. The cooling system check-up is performed in the Spring while the heating system check-up is done in the Fall. Additionally, there's a discount on air conditioning and furnace parts. Also, you do not have to pay extra for emergency repairs or Saturday service calls.

Another benefit a PMA provides comes when you sell your home. Most PMAs are fully transferable to the new homeowner, and that can be a big plus in your home's favor.

What About Warranties?

I've had customers ask why a PMA is necessary since his or her home's A/C system and furnace are covered under the manufacturer's warranty. In this case, a PMA is still recommended because it helps keep the warranty valid.

Most manufacturing companies of HVAC equipment require that you keep a maintenance history on the A/C system and furnace. If you don't, the manufacturer's warranty can be voided for failure to properly maintain the equipment. The inspections conducted during the Spring and Fall create that maintenance history and make sure your home's A/C system and furnace run at peak performance. A little preventative maintenance goes a long way!

Mitch Weigand is the owner of Air Wise™.

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Air Wise owner Mitch Weigand

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Have you filed your Homestead Exemption?

You should file your regular residential homestead exemption application between **January 1 and April 30**. If your application is postmarked by April 30, this will allow the district time to process it before your tax statement comes out in the fall. If you miss the April 30th deadline, you can still apply. For details and forms, visit

<http://www.hcad.org/resources/exemptions/homeowners.asp>

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Mickey's Minute

Mickey Morales

Yea us! This month marks the beginning of our fifth year of operation at The Farmstand. It has been a great four years of serving the neighborhood. A few vendors have come and gone; however, the farmers and I have endured along with a few other stalwart vendors. We're happy to say that the future looks bright. As stated in my last article, we have everything a grocery store has in season, except milk. And perhaps with the recent overreach of the state and local health agencies, we can persuade the legislature to pass a common sense bill that would allow off-the-farm milk sales at farmers' markets.

The guys at The Greater Heights Brewing Company should be able to start their build out sometime soon. At that point we may have to flip over to the other side of the parking lot for a bit, which should be a boon for us both. I may even stay a little longer and convert the breakfast taco stand into a beer garden with different pub grub items, at least until it gets too hot to be outside all day. Imagine being able to walk inside and grab a craft beer while you shop for your week's groceries and enjoy some delicious food.

All in all, it has been a pleasure to serve y'all these past four years. And on behalf of the vendors both old and new and myself, we look forward to many more years to come.

As always, "Come soon, come often, and help celebrate the local food movement."

Local Farm Stand

9:00 am - 1:00 pm

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Mathnasium of Oak Forest is under NEW OWNERSHIP!

The best way to see if we are a good fit for your child's needs is to visit our center, meet the instructors and try out our new program. For the month of February, we are offering our Initial Assessment and a 2-week Trial (6 sessions) for **FREE**.

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1214 W. 43rd Street #650
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(713) 965-4747

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MATHNASIUM[®]
The Math Learning Center

We Make Math Make Sense

Mathnasium Makes Math Meaningful

Carli Weatherhead

Are your school nights ending with children in tears over math homework? Do you feel frustrated as a parent when it comes to assisting with the math that your child brings home? Is this frustration leading your child to say, "I hate math! I just don't get it!"



Carli Weatherhead's experience as a middle school math teacher—and her own child's building frustration with the piles of math homework he brought home each night—led her to a career as the new owner and director of Mathnasium of Oak Forest. "I am so excited to get to be a part of this community and serve the kids of Garden Oaks and their families. I know that we can really make a difference in the lives of the people around us."

Mathnasium Learning Center is an environment in which students can do math workouts up to 12 times a month. Sessions are 60 minutes long and students focus on filling in the gaps in their math education and improving their overall math abilities. In addition to a specialized curriculum, students are offered 20 to 45 minutes of homework help. No scheduling is

needed, making Mathnasium an easy and efficient solution to the nightly homework struggles. At Mathnasium, kids work out their minds to understand math concepts. The results make a world of difference to students, parents, and teachers alike.



Teaching Math with Number Sense

How do they do it? Mathnasium teaches number sense, a 30-year-old method of encounter and interaction with a specific set of concepts and skills, presented in a way that makes sense to the learner. For example, students begin to solve problems like $99 + 99 + 99$ by using mental math ($300 - 3 = 297$) instead of relying on pen

and paper. This common-sense approach allows learners to build quick confidence and teaches them to trust themselves with learning new ideas.

"So often, kids miss a basic math concept and then the curriculum zooms ahead. The child doesn't even know what they're missing. They only know that they're frustrated and lost. Once we fill in those learning gaps, students are able to leap ahead in their learning."

"We want them to understand math so that they can use it throughout their lives, not just so they can get better grades. We make math make sense to kids so that they have a better understanding of the world around them," says Carli.

Mathnasium of Oak Forest is located at 1214 W 43rd Street, Suite #650 (next to Sweet Frog and behind Kroger). You can contact Carli Weatherhead at (713) 965-4747 to learn more about how Mathnasium can help your child achieve not only get better grades in math but achieve better understanding of how math works in the real world.

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Noodle On This

Shana Tatum

You may have seen, heard about, or even tried the new spiral vegetable noodle craze. I have been following this concept for a while, thinking I would experiment. Always looking for new and tasty ways to get our boys to enjoy and ingest more vegetables and fiber in their diets, these noodles seemed to be a good idea. Some would agree that I am not usually an early adopter, but I did eventually try it, using my old fashioned grater to make long noodles. I usually don't like a lot of fancy gadgets taking up extra space in my kitchen as I am a pretty simple cook. However, I found myself reading Amazon reviews and kitchen bloggers hoping to find just the right tool.

At an investment of \$15.00, I talked myself into it. I finally bought a hand held spiralizer and admit I do like it so far. At this point though, I believe I would enjoy the counter top crank model better now that I have used it many times. The hand held takes a fair amount of strength, especially with carrots or sweet potatoes. We have eaten a few more servings of vegetables with this new gadget, and that was my goal; stronger forearms are a nice benefit though!

While at the store wavering over this item, I spied a cookbook: *Inspiralized: Turn Vegetables into Healthy, Creative, Satisfying Meals*. Imagine a whole cookbook devoted to vegetables cut in this unique way. Thankfully, we can

find books on just about anything that sparks our curiosity. I am sharing this recipe with you from Ali Mafucci's book and website. I found it surprisingly easy and delicious. As usual, I changed it up a bit. I left out the turkey pepperoni and used fresh mozzarella that lightly browned on the convection setting in my oven. I think the iron skillet is key to giving the sweet potatoes a crispy bottom. I also don't use olive oil with heat so I substituted with butter.

Spiralized Sweet Potato Pizza Bake

Prep time	Cook time	Total time
15 min	30 min	45 min

Serves: 4

Ingredients

For the sweet potatoes:

- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 2 medium sweet potatoes, peeled, Blade C
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder

For the casserole:

- 1.5 cups marinara sauce (I like Rao's)
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano
- 1.25 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- 12 turkey pepperoni slices
- 2 tablespoons chopped basil, to garnish
- 1 tablespoon grated parmesan cheese, to garnish

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 425 degrees and grease a 10" cast-

iron skillet or square casserole dish.

2. Place a large skillet over medium-high heat and add in the olive oil. Once oil heats, add in the sweet potato noodles and season with salt, pepper and garlic powder. Let cook for about 5 minutes or until noodles begin to soften.
3. Transfer the cooked noodles to the casserole dish and pour over the tomato sauce. Sprinkle the dried oregano over the tomato sauce evenly and then layer over with the mozzarella cheese. Place the pepperoni slices on top in rows.
4. Bake in the oven for 20-25 minutes or until cheese melts through and is slightly golden brown.
5. Remove from the oven, garnish with basil and parmesan cheese.

For those of you keeping up with the details, this dish has all your RDA for vitamin A, half of what is recommended for calcium, and is high in protein. Granted, it is higher in carbohydrates at 25g a serving, but delicious nonetheless. If you want another way to use sweet potatoes after all your traditional holiday meals, maybe this one will be a good try. Enjoy!

Source: <http://inspiralized.com/spiralized-sweet-potato-pizza-bake-with-turkey-bacon/comment-page-1/#comment-332193>

FEBRUARY 2017

sun	mon	tue	wed	thu	fri	sat	
29	30	31	1	Groundhog Day ²	3	Montessori Pancake ⁴ Breakfast 8 - 10:30 AM GO Montessori Farm Stand 9 AM - 1 PM	
5	6	GOMO Plan Review ⁷ 6:30 PM Civic Club Meeting 7 PM GO Montessori	8	Garden Club Meeting ⁹ 7 PM Kroger Upstairs Meeting Room 1352 W 43rd	Gazette Article Deadline ¹⁰	Farm Stand ¹¹ 9 AM - 1 PM 948 Wakefield	
12	13	Valentines Day ¹⁴	GOMO Meeting ¹⁵ 7 PM GO Professional Building Suite 216	Heavy Trash (Junk Waste) ¹⁶	17	Farm Stand ¹⁸ 9 AM - 1 PM 948 Wakefield	
19	20	21	22	23	24	Farm Stand ²⁵ 9 AM - 1 PM 948 Wakefield	
26	27	28	Technology does exactly what it's always done, which is make it easier to be mediocre. It's always taken tons of work to be really good at whatever you do. - Bruce Robison				4



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ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES STATEMENT

January – December 2017

Membership is open to all residents whether you own or rent. **While all memberships are voluntary, you must contribute at least at the Basic Level to be eligible to vote on civic club matters.** Membership dues are to be paid on or before **January 1st** for the calendar year.

Fill in Amount:

\$ _____	Crepe Myrtle (Basic Level) Household Membership	\$25 (\$5 for Seniors)
\$ _____	Red Oak (Patron Level) Household Membership	\$75 (\$15 for Seniors)
\$ _____	Community Household Membership	\$100
\$ _____	Business Membership (Non-Voting Membership)	\$50
\$ _____	Contribution to Beautification (all neighborhood green spaces)	
\$ _____	Contribution to Garden Club (maintain Friendship Park, Section 1)	
\$ _____	TOTAL	

Please mail this completed form along with your check payable to:
Garden Oaks Civic Club, P.O. Box 10273, Houston, TX 77206

-OR-

Pay online at www.gardenoaks.org/membership;
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- [] I/We cannot contribute \$225 now; however, enclosed please find my/our check for \$ _____.
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Many of our neighbors live on limited, fixed incomes. Are you willing to sponsor a neighbor?

- [] Yes! Please accept my additional gift of \$ _____ for the year (enclosed).

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