Spring Fling Event
Susan Kostelecky

We are excited to announce the latest sponsors and table hosts for the Spring Fling event!

Sponsors:
$500 – Silver Sponsors: Peter & Kathy Chang, SCM Construction Services, SK Designs
$250 – Bronze Sponsors: Abundance Retreat, Garden Oaks Veterinary Clinic, Jeff & Melissa Gibb, Heights A/C & Heating, La Fresca Pizza, Schwartz Interests

Some of our Table Hosts include:

Confirmed contributing families to the garden tours and/or fairy house displays: the Gurrolas, Drivers, Kosteleckys, Changs, Schmidts, Harmons, Carol Terrett, and the Zamoras.

Numerous activities include face painting, a bounce house, garden and yard vendors selling yard art (EcoFab Arts) and container gardens (GO Garden Club). Additionally, Lauren Simpson, a noted area speaker regarding planting for pollinators, will be available for gardening questions and will lead an activity and presentation for adults and children about creating gardens to attract bees which will include a Bee Hotel door prize. Kim Ellis, Garden Oaks resident and owner of Habitats (and a frequent Gazette contributor), will also be available to answer questions and provide input to attendees.

Details: A Sip & Stroll Garden event fundraiser will be held on the 1300 block of Sue Barnett Drive in Garden Oaks on Saturday, April 29 from 4:00-6:30 p.m. (rain date is May 6). Tickets are $40 for adults and include all food and drink from table hosts, and $5 for children aged 3 and older. Tickets are available via Eventbrite at http://tinyurl.com/2017springflingtickets.

This family and adult-friendly event will feature front yard garden tours, fairy and gnome house displays, and curated vendors with creative yard art and container gardens for sale. Numerous residents on the 1300 block of Sue Barnett are sharing their gardens, yards, and driveways to make this a fun and easily accessible event.

This event was created to raise funds for the Beautification Committee for non-maintenance-funding use to help further beautify our great neighborhood.

(Continued on page 4)
On Being a …

Joe Muscara, Gazette Editor

It seems that my goal in life is to be a nice guy. To a fault, I want to get along with everyone. That makes it hard for me to say no to people. I have always struggled with that. I knew that would make my new goal of being strict with the deadline tough. But when I think about it, I have no other choice. When I was editor in the early 2000s (before most of you were born) I often drove myself crazy* letting people turn in things late. I am older now, and don’t have much sanity left (why else would I do this again?) so I have to preserve what I have left.

* No one else drives me crazy. It is all because of how I react to others, not because of what they do.

Speaking of insane, I have started running. After years of walking almost daily, that became an every day thing. Then after a while of that I was at my maximum with walking, so I started to add some running. Now, I am just running every day. I don’t think that is the right way to do it, but I don’t want to stop. A lot of this happened because of the encouragement of the Activity app on my Apple Watch. As of this writing, I am on a 365 day streak of completing all three activity rings—Stand, Exercise, and Move (calories). How is that for obsessive-compulsive behavior?

In other Gazette business, there are two things article contributors should be aware of. First, all submissions for upcoming issues should be sent to gazette@gardenoaks.org and not to anyone’s personal email addresses. This assures that the current Gazette staff gets the materials. Second, all references to the Garden Oaks web site should simply be GardenOaks.org with or without the www but with nothing after the .org. For those who are going to the site from the print edition, we cannot expect them to type in a long URL. Hopefully the new site makes it easy to find what you want them to. Along those lines, if you know how to use a URL shortening service such as tinyurl.com or bit.ly, you may want to do that for URLs outside of GardenOaks.org. If you need help, ask the editor. That’s me.

Until next month, I’m…

Still the editor
President’s Message
Matt Gannon, Civic Club President

April is typically a month we associate with getting our yards in bloom and looking beautiful for the summer. To that end, we had a great presentation at our March Civic Club meeting, featuring the short film, The Gnomist. The timing was perfect to get us into the spirit of this month’s fundraising event, Spring Fling on Sue Barnett Drive. This promises to be a fun and enjoyable "sip and stroll" experience. The Spring Fling is scheduled for April 29, with details available on the GOCG website and elsewhere in this month’s Gazette.

Speaking of events, another important topic that I would like to bring to everyone's attention is the 2018 Garden Oaks Home and Garden Tour. Although 2018 may seem like a long way off, the planning for this Garden Oaks showcase event starts now.

The Home and Garden Tour is the main fundraiser for the Garden Oaks Civic Club and will most likely be held in April of 2018. We are actively looking for volunteers to step up and help us organize and manage the event. This is a great opportunity to be involved in and give back to the community, meet other neighbors, and show off our wonderful neighborhood to the rest of Houston. Interestingly enough, it was the home tour that gave my wife and me the idea of moving to Garden Oaks when we attended it for the first time in 2014.

Following posts on social media, several people have stepped up to be involved, but we still need more. Here is a breakdown of the roles and positions:

Home & Garden Tour Committee Chair(s): <OPEN>
Finance Chair: Jennifer Troiani
Marketing and Publicity Chair: <OPEN>
Graphics/Printing Chair: <OPEN>
Volunteer Chair: Allison Virgadamo
Transportation Chair: <OPEN>
Sponsorship Chair: <OPEN>
Selection Committee: Erica Gannon, <OPEN>, <OPEN>
Preview Party Committee: Tina Rowe, Gretchen Dreher, <OPEN>
Plus many others...

No experience is needed and everyone is welcome. If you have friends outside the neighborhood who want to be involved, they are welcome too. Make this a fun event that our whole community can enjoy!

Our next GOCG meeting will be held at 7:00pm on April 4th, at Garden Oaks Montessori Magnet School. Our speaker will someone from the Buffalo Bayou Partnership.

Warmest regards and best wishes,
Matt Gannon
Citizens’ Patrol Program Update

Carl Waters Jr., Program Chair

As noted below we had two crimes reported for the neighborhood in February. Not included in these numbers were reports on Facebook of several cars being egged during the month along with reports of several white cars being sprayed with black paint. Please remain alert when you are out in the community and report any suspicious activity to the authorities.

Crime Statistics (2)

Burglary (1)
4200 block of Apollo Street, on Sunday, February 19 at 7:24 p.m.

Burglary of a Motor Vehicle (1)
900 block of 43rd Street, on Friday, February 24 at 3:33 p.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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crimes in progress, fire, or ambulance</td>
<td>911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPD (Non-Emergency)</td>
<td>713-884-3131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precinct One Constable Dispatch</td>
<td>713-755-7628</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Other City Services</td>
<td>311</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Spring Fling, continued from page 1)

Any area residents and businesses or groups (Girl Scout troops, block neighbors, etc.) are invited to create a transportable fairy house or miniature garden to be featured and displayed at the event. Architects, builders, artists, creative adults and children, individually or in groups, are welcome to participate in this display of magic, dreams and inspiration! Entry details and forms will be available soon.

How can you help? Buy tickets, be a sponsor, volunteer at the event, be a fairy house creator, and/or "like" and share our Facebook event page: Spring Fling on Sue Barnett Drive (Garden Oaks): https://www.facebook.com/events/225046327902372/. Event and sponsor information are also available at www.gardenoaks.org under the Events tab.

We hope to see you at this fun new neighborhood event!
Say bye-bye to food cravings, excess weight, mood swings, aches and pains, fatigue, hormonal imbalances, poor sleep, bad skin and digestive issues!

Erin Thole, CNHP works with each client’s unique biochemistry to determine what dietary, supplementation and lifestyle changes will work best for them as an individual. There is NO one-size-fits-all program!

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- Personal training

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Monday - Friday
7:00 am - 6:00 pm
By Appointment Only

Saturday
7:30 am - 11:30 am
Walk-Ins Welcome

Closed Sunday

713.682.6351  OakForestVet.com
2120 West 34th Street, Between T.C. Jester and Ella

NEW CLIENTS RECEIVE 10% OFF FIRST VISIT
Reboot and Recharge
Lindsey Pollock, Ed.D., Principal, Garden Oaks Montessori

Technology has changed our everyday lives. When I was in high school, computers were enormous machines that were contained in well-ventilated rooms, and we walked to the computers with trays of cards to feed into them. A mishap on the way would result in tears and expletives as cards were gathered together for resorting! Personal computers and the internet have made life one of instant and easy access to information and to one another. In fact, you are able to stay connected with the news, information and people 24 hours a day. But with all things, moderation is the key. Overindulgence and unrestricted use can not only be unproductive, it can be downright dangerous.

The obvious example is texting and driving when we think of safety. There are also the accounts of people glued to their smartphones walking off cliffs or into traffic or even being hit while riding their bicycles. But what about the emotional safety of our children who are glued to technology from the age of a few months old? Babies in strollers often watch digital devices. I recently saw a child no more than 6 months old in a stroller with earbuds listening to cartoons completely engrossed in the images on the screen as she held her bottle. What is this doing to our children and our society?

In the book, The Power of Off, Nancy Colier writes, “We are spending far too much of our time doing things that don’t really matter to us. We have become disconnected from what really matters, from what makes us feel nourished and grounded as human beings.” Now don’t get me wrong—I spend a great deal of my life replying to emails, text messages, and phone calls. I am writing this article from my computer and it is a tool for my creative energies. But is this all there is and how is it impacting my relationships with others?

The creator of the hit musical “Hamilton”, Lin-Manuel Miranda, was recently interviewed for Delta Sky magazine. In it he said, “The good idea comes in the moment of rest. It comes in the shower. It comes when you’re doodling or playing trains with your son. ‘Hamilton’ forced me to double down on being awake to the inspirations of just living my life.” When we are constantly bombarded with alerts from our phones and electronic device and distracted from the present moment, we lose the connections and first-hand experiences in our lives. According to Colier, “Most people check their smartphones 150 times a day or every six minutes. Even young adults are sending 110 texts a day. Nearly half of smartphone users say they couldn’t live without their devices.” Colier goes on to explain that our bodies are never recharging when they are constantly in a flight or fight mode. Some people even keep their phones next to their beds to check throughout the night, leaving them sleep-deprived and less productive during the day. In fact, Colier points out that online addiction is now recognized by the American Academy of Pediatrics as “internet gaming disorder” in children; however, many parents condone or even encourage this addiction as a way to entertain children because parents are too busy with their own devices.

Colier, who is a licensed clinical social worker, suggests a 30 day detox plan during which you make small changes to wean yourself away from technology. Start by analyzing your online activity and engage in only what is really necessary. Put people first and put the phone down. Ask yourself what’s important to you and what feeds your creativity and focus on those things make you human!

Plan ahead to participate in the national Screen-free week. During the week of May 1 – 7, 2017, families across the US are challenged to go screen-free: http://www.screenfree.org/. Start planning now and take those first few steps to start moving away from dependence on technology. Screen-free week is also Children’s Book Week. Take time to walk the dogs with your cell phone turned off, to listen intently to the conversation of a friend who is sitting across the table or just enjoy life. It is time to reboot and re-charge!
Why settle when you can experience the best?

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- Brand New Pet Park
- Furnished Units Upon Request
- Short Term Leases Available

Located in the Historic Garden Oaks Neighborhood

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Constable Program Update

Terry Jeanes, Committee Chair

Our new contracts with Harris County Precinct One for two constable patrols started March 1.

We still need your financial support to keep these two deputies patrolling. It is entirely up to the residents of Garden Oaks to pay for the constables. Each contract costs about $77,000 per year.

There was a recent rash of car break-ins in Sections 4 and 5, and a subsequent car theft as well. Our alert on-the-scene deputies managed to catch the perpetrator after a chase and a subsequent crash of the stolen vehicle. These deputies really add to the safety and security of everyone in Garden Oaks and provide a much faster response time than HPD.

While we continue to gain new Constable Program contributors daily, as we go to press, we still have only some 309 household supporters who are contributing at least the $225 suggested minimum annual donation in 2017. That is only about 22% of all households in Garden Oaks.

An updated supporter roster can be found at gardenoaks.org. Thanks to those who are currently supporting 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 on the calendar, in hopes of raising additional monies for the constable program:

1. The Smoke ‘n Spirits event has been cancelled and changed to a pure fundraiser. Previously it was scheduled for April 8, 2017 at the home of Vidal and Debbie Martinez, but the planners decided to convert the event into simple fundraiser without spending monies on the event and hoping to net out a profit. More details can be found in a separate article in this Gazette. $6200 of a $10000 goal has already been raised to date.

2. The 9th Annual Wine Walk is still scheduled for Saturday October 21, 2017 from 4 to 6:30 pm. The event will be a neighborhood/community wine and food tasting, with more details coming in the next several months. If you are interesting in sponsoring, please email GOConstable@gmail.com.

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.
Smoke ‘N Spirits Event Has Changed to a Fundraiser Only, No Event

Vidal Martinez

The Smoke ‘N Spirits event originally scheduled for April 8, 2017 at the home of Vidal and Debbie Martinez has been converted by the planners to a pure fundraiser in order to better reach the $10,000 goal. The actual whiskey and cigar event per se has been cancelled. This was done to maximize the net funds available for the Constable Program instead of spending a lot of money on the event itself and hoping to net out $10,000.

Vidal Martinez offered to convert his anticipated event donations to a cash contribution and then Dr. Cesar Maldonado, Chancellor of the Houston Community College, along with HCC Trustee Zeph Capo, and many other of our neighbors, agreed to donate as well.

To date, the following funds, totaling $6200, have been received, all of which will go to maintaining the Garden Oaks Constable Patrol:

- Vidal & Debbie Martinez $2000
- Cesar & Liz Maldonado $1000
- Jeff and Melissa Gibb $250
- Zeph Capo $250
- Peter & Kathy Chang $250
- Fred & Gina Clarke $250
- Bob & Debbie Driver $250
- Jaime & Celeste Zamora $250
- Ronnie & Sheree’ Peoples $500

And a group of other neighbors contributed some $1200 in the name of GO Constable. These included:

- Brenda and Ed de Alba
- Sandy Altman and Dian Austin

Sheila Briones
Tina Rowe and Jim DiCola
Shelley Rogers and Pat Buron

The event committee consisted of Ronnie and Sheree’ Peoples, Terry Jeanes, Sheila Briones, Joe Muscara, Vidal Martinez, and John Beddow. They will be soliciting another 15 donors at $250 apiece for the remainder of the fund balance via the gardenoaks.org website and direct emails. We hope to announce the completion of this fundraising effort shortly on behalf of our beloved neighborhood and the security provided by the Constables for all our families.

One thing to note: any contribution in excess of at least $225 to this fundraiser by those members not currently in the Constable Program will count as their 2017 suggested dues of $225 per calendar year.

Please help us raise the remaining amount and solicit new members to the Constable Program. In prior years, many homeowners viewed supporting the Constable Program as optional and that GOMO would fund the majority of this expense. This is no longer the case. Funding for the Constable Patrol rests only with the residents of the neighborhood, and in the meantime, the security and well-being of our neighborhood is at stake.

Contributions can be made at gardenoaks.org.
Garden Oaks Civic Club Meeting Minutes

Joe Casarez, Secretary

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 7:04 p.m. A motion was made and passed to accept the February 2017 minutes as published in the Gazette.

Treasurer’s Report: Treasurer Teresa Coleman had hard copies of the Treasurer’s report but it did not include payments made just before the March GOCC meeting date. A modification to the Treasurer’s report was made to include a column for the annual budget so that the report is easier to read and see how monies are allocated.

Guest Speaker: Garden Oaks resident Susan Kostelecky showed a 17-minute documentary called “The Gnomist” which was the inspiration for the upcoming Spring Fling on Sue Barnett Drive. The event will be held Saturday, April 29th from 4 pm to 6:30 pm., with a rain date of May 6th. Ms. Kostelecky indicated that the event will include a guest speaker, Lauren Simpson, who will put on a presentation on bees and pollinators and will answer questions at one of the gardens. It will be kid friendly with activities and a bee hotel giveaway. GO resident Kim Ellis will also participate. There will also be a fairy house contest and the Garden Club will be putting together container gardens for sale as well. A Pinterest page has also been setup for gardening and fairy house ideas. Tickets can be purchased on the Garden Oaks web site, with adult tickets priced at $40 and children’s tickets at $5. Food and drinks are included in the price. Purchases of garden-related products and services are separate. Additionally, updates can also be found on the Spring Fling Facebook page, Spring Fling on Sue Barnett Drive (Garden Oaks). Ms. Kostelecky provided a door prize, and Terry Jeanes was the lucky winner.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Constable Program: March 1st is the beginning of a new schedule for the two deputies. Several neighborhood cars have been broken into and one had been stolen and a patrolling deputy apprehended the suspect. As the value of having an active constable program can be seen, and 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. One can join the Constable Program at www.gar denoaks.org.

Beautification: Committee Chair Joan Harmon reported a continuing focus on spring preparations including fertilizing and fire ant control. This month’s focus will be on cleaning up the park areas and preparing them for spring. Tree trimming and irrigation systems updates were also performed.

Website: Pam Parks announced web site updates had been implemented. Information for Garden Oaks Maintenance Organization (GOMO) and the Garden Oaks Civic Club (GOCC) can be found at www.gardenoaks.org.

Garden Oaks Citizens’ Patrol: Program Chair Carl Waters, Jr. announced that there were only 2 incidents reported for February 2017 on the website used by HPD to report information to the public (CrimeReports.com). More details will appear in the monthly article in the April Gazette. Mr. Waters also reminded GO residents not to leave items in vehicles where they can easily be seen. Volunteers to help patrol the neighborhood are needed and if interested, please contact him via the GOCC website. One must be at least 18 years of age and able to pass a background check with the Houston Police Department.

Membership: Chairperson Dian Austin provided the following membership update: as of March 1st, there are 230 paid civic club members; an increase of 18 members since last month. Contributors to the Constable Program currently stand at 304; an increase of 27 members since last month.

Gazette: Editor Joe Muscara thanked everyone for getting their submissions in on time for the March Gazette and reminded everyone that March 10th is the deadline to submit for the April Gazette.

Garden Oaks Montessori Magnet: GOMM Principal Dr. Lindsey Pollock gave an update on the school’s construction project, which is continuing smoothly. If you have an application in the Magnet lottery,
you will have been notified by March 23rd as to the status of your application. If you know anyone who has moved into the neighborhood and has a child of kindergarten age or older, please have them contact the GOMM office as soon as possible if they plan to enroll this fall.

NEW BUSINESS:
GOCC President Matt Gannon is seeking volunteers for the 2018 Garden Oaks Home and Garden Tour. Look for posts on the GO Facebook page and in the April Gazette or email president@gardenoaks.org if interested in finding out more information.

Luis Garcia from the METRO Public Affairs department stopped by to let GO residents know that he can serve as a point of contact to collaborate on METRO issues.

His office phone number is (713) 739-4059.

OLD BUSINESS:
Terry Jeanes reported that the Smoke ’n Spirits event presently scheduled for April 8th, 2017 at the home of Vidal and Debbie Martinez has been converted by the planners to a pure fundraising event to reach the $10,000 goal for the Constable Program. Vidal and Debbie Martinez, HCC Chancellor Dr. Cesar Maldonado, HCC Trustee Zeph Capo along with many GO residents including Peter and Kathy Chang, Jeff and Melissa Gibb, Fred and Gina Clarke, Bob and Debbie Driver, Jaime and Celeste Zamora, Ronnie and Sheree’ Peoples, and GO Constable have all given donations to maximize funds available for the Constable Program. At this time, $6,200 has been raised towards the $10,000 goal. More information can be found on the GO website under the Smoke ’n Spirits event.

Chris Lindsay passed along another option regarding the recycling of glass, which is no longer being accepted by the City of Houston. GO resident Shana Tatum’s son, Read, as part of a high school senior project, is offering to come by your house once a week on Saturdays to pick up your glass recyclables and drop them off at an approved recycling center. He is asking for $5 per pickup. You can contact him via email at read.tatum@gmail.com.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 4th. The guest speaker will be from the Buffalo Bayou Partnership.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.
Garden Oaks Maintenance Organization (GOMO) Monthly Update for February 2017

Pam Parks, GOMO Office Manager

Plans were approved for:
- 519 W 34th St
- 1062 W 42nd St
- 859 Lamonte Ln
- 1007 W 43rd St

Revised plans were approved for:
- 721 W 42nd St
- 207 W 32nd St
- 729 Sue Barnett Dr
- 3217 Lawrence St

Pending resubmission:
- None

Deed Restriction Enforcement Activity
A single reported violation might progress through several stages before being resolved. This table summarizes last month’s activity and the totals for the year.

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<th>Feb</th>
<th>YTD (as of 2/28/2017)</th>
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<td>Litigation Concluded</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
April 2017

GOMO funded two shifts of the Constable Program for the month at a cost of $12,790. This ends GOMO funding of the Constable for 2017.

Content additions to the website since last month are the following:

- Meeting minutes for Jan 2017
- Addition to Member Q & A:
  - Section 3 Garage Case
  - TX Legislation and GOMO
  - Deed Restriction Waivers and Building Plans

Garden Oaks is a deed-restricted community of 1400 homes. The Garden Oaks Maintenance Organization is entrusted by homeowners and property owners (members) of Sections 1, 2, 3, and 5 with ensuring compliance with deed restrictions. The directors of GOMO are member-elected volunteers.

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

At gardenoaks.org, homeowners can find deed restrictions, plan approval information, bylaws, policies, financial reports, transfer fee information, meeting schedule, information about election of directors and officers, and contact information for all officers and section directors. The minutes of GOMO business meetings are posted. Home owners are invited to attend our meetings.

Contact:
The Garden Oaks Maintenance Organization
4001 N Shepherd Dr, Suite 216
Houston, TX 77018
713-561-3936
gardenoaks.org
manager@gardenoaksmaintenance.org

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.
Heard Under the Oak Tree

Terry Jeanes

Happy Birthday

Kylie S. 4/7  Leyton C. 4/21
Keith Kostelecky 4/9  Heather McKeown 4/21
Reid S. 4/9  Leslie Waters 4/21
Melissa Neiser 4/10  Diane Morish 4/22
Mansi Patel 4/12  Nicolas J. Marruffo 4/26
Daniel Sanborn 4/12  Jim Tucker 4/28
Anna M. 4/15  Wade M. 4/30
Lily Bowman 4/18

Happy Anniversary

Tina Sabuco & Shellye Arnold – 4/6
Desiree Guillory & Carmen Busceme – 4/14

Out and About

Tina Rowe, Jim DiCola, and Brenda and Ed de Alba spent several relaxing days at Crider’s Cabins Resort on the Frio in the hill country near Leakey, Texas.

Congratulations

Susan Kostelecky’s SK Designs won first place for her window treatment created for a sorority house at Texas State University. The drapery treatment featured hand-sewn Swarovski pearls and laser cut fabrics to create the sorority’s crest, and will be featured in an upcoming issue of Vision magazine.

Ed de Alba was awarded the March Master Gardener of the Month by the Harris County Master Gardeners Association.

Molly, the rescued terrier, has found her fur-ever home with Dea Larson and Al Thomas.

Special Thoughts

Editor’s note: Best wishes to Terry Jeanes for a speedy recovery after cancer surgery.

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.
A/C: Repair or Replace?

Mitch Weigand

If you’re like most homeowners, you probably don’t think about your A/C system until there is a problem with it. It’s virtually impossible to ignore when the temperature is 90 degrees inside your home. What do you do?

You get your A/C service technician to inspect it and he has both good news and bad news. The good news is your home can be back to 75 degrees by this evening; the bad news is that the repair will be very expensive, around $3,000. Should you repair or replace? How do you make the right decision?

Let’s look at the 50% rule

The 50% rule is when the cost of repairs nears or is greater than 50% of the replacement value of your A/C system, it’s time to replace it. Here in Houston, the average life expectancy of an air conditioner or heat pump is 10–12 years. If your unit is nearing its end of life, you’ll need to weigh the repair cost against the real possibility that additional repairs or even a complete replacement will be needed soon.

Fixing a decade-old furnace or air conditioner is like putting a new $3,000 transmission into a 10-year-old pick-up truck that has over 400,000 miles on it. Yes, you now have a truck that works but it is still 10 years old and has over 400,000 miles on it. False economy never pays.

New equipment also means better efficiency

Equipment that is approaching the end of its life expectancy will typically be much less energy efficient than today’s new equipment. Typically, a 10-year-old A/C will have a 6–10 SEER*. Compare that to a new system whose SEER can be 20 or higher.

Also, keep in mind the potential savings on your monthly energy bills. Energy costs (gas, oil and electricity) have risen significantly in the last decade and will continue to do so. Consider the energy consumption of your old unit versus a new one and the potential savings over its lifetime. If your old system has a 10 SEER rating, you will see a 47% drop in your electric bill with a new 15 SEER system. Cool!

*SEER – Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio, a rating that measures the cooling efficiency of an air conditioner or heat pump. The higher the number, the more efficient the unit.

Mitch Weigand is the owner of Air Wise™

Here’s what our customers are saying about us:

“Mitch, your guys did you proud!”  Rick R., River Oaks

Your Air Wise crew did a spectacular install under really difficult conditions. Remember how tiny the two access openings are leading up to my attic?

I appreciate how thorough they were, not to mention the quick response. Thanks Mitch!
Plumbco

713-725-5025
For all your plumbing installations and repairs.

$15 OFF SERVICE CALL
or
$50 OFF WATER HEATER INSTALLATION.

When you choose Plumbco Houston for your plumbing repairs, you are assured of top quality work performed by fully qualified, insured, bonded and licensed plumbers. We pride our company on providing fast friendly service, offering competitive prices, quality plumbing products that are environmentally safe, all while solving your plumbing needs.

Gary Bloch
www.PlumbcoHouston.com
Your Neighborhood Plumber!
Must present coupon at time of service. MPL17021

Call the best, we’ll do the rest!
Save the Date - Girl Scout Troop 21 Bake Sale Sunday, May 21st

Tina Sabuco

Thank you for supporting the annual bake sale held by our special needs Girl Scout Troop 21. We will once again be at Triangle Park on Azalea and Alba on Sunday, May 21 from noon until 4 pm, marking our 4th year here in Garden Oaks. My wife, Shellye and I lead this troop, along with 4 other leaders. This is the only fundraiser we have for the year and, thanks to the generosity of so many, the money that we raised carried our troop throughout the year. We hope that you can come out and support and meet our very special scouts.

Troop 21 is the only special needs Girl Scout troop in the United States comprised entirely of adults. The troop formed in 1976, and many of the then-young women are still members today. Members range in age from their 20s to 60s. Like most Girl Scout troops, we meet monthly and have activities that help them learn, grow, contribute and most of all—have fun!!! Funding from this bake sale fuels an entire year of activities.

For the 3rd year in a row, we will be joined by Troop 122017, a group of 7 and 8-year-old Brownies who attend St. Rose and GOMM. They will be providing some of the goodies and a rockin’ lemonade stand. They generously donate 100% of the proceeds to our Troop 21. We love our Brownie Buddies!

How can you help?

- **Bake some goodies for us to sell.** Drop off any baked goods the day before the sale, or anytime up to the time of the sale. We will provide a cooler on our front porch for drop off at 859 Azalea Street. Please label your goodies to let everyone know what they are and what they contain (for example: brownies with walnuts and pecans).

  We welcome individual bags of goodies and/or whole cakes or pies!

- **Stop by and purchase items.** 859 Azalea Street, at the corner of Alba, between noon and 2 pm on Sunday, May 21st.

- **Bring your pups.** We will also have a table filled with Bark Bites dog treats homemade by Donna Barkley of Wimberley, so bring your pups—or pick up some to take home to them.

- **Make a monetary donation.** We will happily accept checks (made out to Tina Sabuco and write Troop 21 in the memo section). Please mail them to 859 Azalea Street, Houston, TX 77018 or better yet, come to the sale in person if you can.

If you can help or have any questions, please contact me at tina@artsaliveinc.com or 713-819-9339.

See you in May!!!!
GOMO Transfer Fee Letters

Pam Parks, GOMO Office Manager

Recently, GOMO has been following up with over a dozen owners who bought homes since 2015 regarding the underpayment of the Transfer Assessment fee paid when they purchased their property. The impacted group of buyers is about 10% of fee-able transfers for that period. Getting the word out on why GOMO is seeking payment of the full fee from these folks will hopefully ease part of the sting for them and give confidence to the other 1100+ owners that the rules are being applied fairly and in accordance with our Deed Restrictions and Bylaws.

First let’s get clear on how the Transfer Assessment fee is calculated. The following is the language in our declaratory documents that sets the fee.

b. Transfer Assessments. When a Parcel is conveyed by one person to another (except in connection with the division of community property after a divorce or as the result of the death of an Owner), the new Owner is obligated to pay a one-time special assessment ("Transfer Assessment") equal to 0.75% of the greater of (a) the gross purchase price of theParcel as shown on the closing statement, or (b) the appraisal of the Parcel as shown on the then-current records of the Harris County Appraisal District.

This language is worth a careful read, especially the part in bold. Two different misunderstandings contribute to the problem of the fees being incorrectly calculated: first, assumption that the fee is always calculated on the purchase price and second, confusion over which HCAD value is to be used in the calculation. These issues are dealt with separately below:

1. In several prior years, the sales prices were higher than the HCAD market valuations. In those cases, the Transfer Assessment fees would have been calculated on the sales price of the property. But around 2015, the situation changed, with a significant number of purchase prices falling below the HCAD market valuation. In these cases the Transfer Assessment fee must be calculated based on the HCAD market appraisal. GOMO’s declaratory
documents and Bylaws require using the higher value for the fee and there is no option to use a different value. For the first time, the fee was not always calculated on the purchase price.

2. **The purpose of using HCAD values is to ensure that the fee is calculated on the value the property would sell for in a free market.** By law, HCAD publishes two values: a *market value* and an *appraised value*. The definitions of these terms are published on the HCAD website. The *market value* definition is the same as the general definition of the term, which is what the property would sell for between a willing seller and a willing buyer and what would generally be considered by most people to be the appraisal value of the house. The *appraised value* has a definition that applies only within the context of Texas property taxes. It is a value created by artificially adjusting the market value down to protect owners from sharp increases to their property taxes, and is usually also adjusted via exemptions that are allowed. Each property’s tax exemptions are dependent upon the owner’s status and it would not be equitable to charge the fee based on the tax appraisal amount when such amounts are valued individually. Additionally, the tax appraisal value is based on the previous owner’s exemptions and the new owner actually has no exemptions until the next year when the house is homesteaded and the new values are calculated. It is pretty clear that HCAD’s market value is the value that would have meaning as a backstop to “low ball” sales prices and is the value to be used to calculate the GOMO Assessment. Basing the collected fee on the higher of the sales or market value amount ensures that the fees collected are based on arms-length transactions and do not provide favoritism to someone who gamed the system to obtain a lower Transfer Assessment fee.

Unfortunately, a number of active realtors and title companies remain confused on one or both of these points. The result creates a less than ideal welcome to the neighborhood for the impacted buyers. Considerable effort has been expended to correct these misunderstandings and we continue to look for ways to get the information to everyone involved.

GOMO has taken steps to lessen the negative impact for buyers whose Transfer Assessment fee has been miscalculated and paid incorrectly. GOMO has delayed
collection of such underpayments and notified owners of the error that was made in calculating their fees. The notification makes owners aware that they have an excellent chance of getting their HCAD market value (and thus their taxable appraised value) lowered, which will then erase the GOMO underpayment if they appeal to HCAD using their purchase documentation and are successful. The delay GOMO has introduced in collecting these underpayments gives owners time needed to file and complete an appeal to HCAD. Usually, if a property owner takes their closing documents to HCAD and shows that the actual purchase price of the property was below the HCAD market value, HCAD will adjust the market value downward to the sales price. However, this is not automatic; a property owner must appeal to HCAD and HCAD must agree.

The dozen owners who have been and will be getting letters from GOMO fall into two groups: buyers whose closing dates fall in the 2017 HCAD appeals window and those whose closing dates fell within the 2016 appeals window. Owners whose appeals would be in 2017 are urged to appeal their market values to HCAD in the upcoming cycle. Owners who purchased homes in 2015 through mid-2016 and who were either unsuccessful in their appeal or who failed to file an appeal, are now being notified that their underpayment is at long last due. Many in this second group were notified over a year ago of the underpayment issue.

Additionally, there are a few owners each year who pay a fee based on the HCAD market appraisal and who file a successful appeal in the year of their purchase or the next appeal’s window. GOMO will provide these owners with a refund of their fee overpayment. Owners in this situation need only send in a request to GOMO with the appropriate documentation showing the market value of the home was reduced to get the process started.

**GOMO Review Meetings**

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.
GO Kids Update
Samantha Croker, GO Kids Communications Coordinator

GO Kids hosted its second annual Mardi Gras parade at Graham Park in Section 1 on February 25th. GO Families came out to celebrate wearing their purple, green and gold. The kids decorated their bikes and wagons, donned their beads, and had a great time. There was king cake for everyone and, of course, great Mardi Gras music to add to the festivities.

There are more fun things to come for the families of Garden Oaks this Spring. We are planning our Spring movie night so stay tuned for details on this popular event.

Leadership Team
The Leadership Team met on January 19 to continue planning for 2017, and we are looking to add more parents. If you are interested in a specific position or just helping out in general, please contact Lindsey Gabriel, GO Kids Coordinator, at lindsey.gabriel5@gmail.com

GO Kids Dinner Drops
Have you or someone you know welcomed home a new baby recently? GO Kids will coordinate and provide several meals to families. Please contact our Dinner Drop coordinator, Nancy Perez-Vargas, at nancyperez@mamc.com to participate. We are always in need of volunteers for this program.

GO Kids Membership
Are you interested in becoming a member? We welcome families to join our kid-focused group with annual events, new parent dinner drops, regular Moms’ Night Out, as well as other activities throughout the year. Please contact Diana Latta, Membership Coordinator at latta_diana@sbcglobal.net.

Check out our calendar of events and obtain additional event details at www.bigtent.com or request to join our GO Kids group on Facebook.

GO Kids was started by a group of parents who wanted to build a family friendly neighborhood where children and parents know each other and grow together. All Garden Oaks families are welcome to join and attend GO Kids events. If you have questions or would like more information about GO Kids, please contact Lindsey Gabriel at lindsey.gabriel5@gmail.com.

Our organization is moderated entirely by parent volunteers. We hope to answer your questions and process the membership request as soon as possible; we cannot guarantee an immediate response. We really appreciate your patience and understanding and look forward to seeing you around the neighborhood!

Heavy Trash Info

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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Junk Waste</td>
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<td>December</td>
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</table>

For more information about what is accepted during Tree Waste vs. Junk Waste months, curbside recycling pickup, schedules, and more, see houstonsolidwaste.org

Please support our advertisers who support our neighborhood. Tell them you saw their ad in the Gazette!
Reuse Warehouse

Construction material accounts for 38% of the waste stream in the Houston area. The Building Materials Reuse Warehouse, a component of the City of Houston Solid Waste Management Department, benefits the community by providing space for excess building materials that would otherwise be dumped in local landfills. We accept material from individuals, supply companies, and builders, and make it freely available for reuse by any non-profit organization. The Reuse Warehouse is funded in part by a grant from the Houston Galveston Area Council, a region-wide voluntary association of local governments in the 13-county Gulf Coast Planning region of Texas.

Why Does Houston Need a Reuse Warehouse?

More than one-third of the waste stream in the Houston area is made up of construction and demolition material, much of which could be diverted and re-used. By storing the materials until they can be used by community groups, the Warehouse will keep these valuable resources out of our local landfills.

The City of Houston Building Materials Reuse Warehouse is just one of the local organizations working to keep reusable building materials out of the landfills and to put them into the hands of those that can use them.

While at this time the Reuse Warehouse is only able to pass on building materials to non-profit organizations, many of these local organizations make materials available to individuals.

How Does it Work?

The Reuse Warehouse is free for making donations and for non-profits taking material.

Location
9003 N. Main / Houston, TX 77022

Heading east on Crosstimbers, turn North on N. Main, and the Warehouse will be on the left just before E. Whitney St. The entrance to the Warehouse is on the Harvard Street side of the property.

Hours of Operation
Tuesday - Friday:
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Every 2nd and 4th Saturday of the month
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Closed: Sunday - Monday

Contact Information:
281-814-3324
reuse.warehouse@houstontx.gov

Making a Donation

The Reuse Warehouse only accepts building material that is in suitable condition for reuse. The Reuse Warehouse reserves the right to decline the acceptance of any material. If possible, please call 281-814-3324 in advance to describe what you will be bringing.

Examples Include

Cabinets, copper, doors, electrical fixtures and equipment, fans, flooring material, glass, gutters, hardware, lighting, lumber, metal, mirrors, pipe, plumbing, plywood, roofing material, screens, sheetrock, sinks, showers, trim, tubs, wall coverings, or windows (No paint!)

Accessing Material From the Warehouse to Use for Your Organization

All the material in our inventory is available for free, on a first come – first serve basis. Just bring your proof of non-profit status. Come by often and shop!!!

Frequently Asked Questions

Pickup:
Do you offer a residential or builders (commercial construction) pickup program?

We do not offer pick up of materials at this time. Since we have limited staff, the Reuse Warehouse also asks that you assist with the unloading of your donated materials

Donations:
Do you have a forklift to assist with unloading donated materials?

Yes.

Will I receive a donation receipt?

Yes.
Hess Homes

Building on Trust
Affordable Solutions for Any Building Project

- Custom Homes
- Complete Remodeling
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832.309.6810 • FREE ESTIMATES
Family Owned for 25 Years / Garden Oaks Resident

Mosquito-Free yard is just a phone call away, so don’t delay.

$59.00 First Treatment

Barrier sprays eliminate and repel mosquitoes, fleas and ticks for up to 21 days.

- Added defense against Zika virus.
- Added defense against mosquito-borne illness.
- Effective Flea and Tick control.
- No contracts required.
- All-Natural options available
- Pet Friendly.

713-864-8888
New Customers Only
Harris County Master Gardeners’ Spring Perennial & Herb Sale & Symposia
April 22, 2017 (8:00AM – 1:00PM)

8:00 AM – Plant Symposia
9:00 AM – Sale begins

Bear Creek Park
3033 Bear Creek Dr.
Houston, TX 77084

Master Gardener volunteers organize this sale annually as an educational and a fund-raising event. Landscape, perennial, and herb plants suited to our yearly growing season will be offered for sale.

Homemade Weed-Be-Gone
Without using nasty chemicals you can have no more weeds in your yard. Here is a recipe for a DIY Weed Killer that is natural and toxin free.

1 Gallon Vinegar
2 Cups Epsom Salt
1/4 Cup Dawn Dish Soap (blue original)

This will kill anything that you spray it on. Just mix and spray in the morning after the dew has evaporated. After dinner the weeds will be gone!

Local Farm Stand
9:00 am - 1:00 pm
Every Saturday
Rain or Shine
938 Wakefield
Sustainably-grown produce, eggs, goat cheese, free-range meat, prepared Indian dishes, jams, and jellies
Mickey’s Minute

Mickey Morales

April will soon be upon us and with it comes showers, as the old rhyme goes, but often too many of them or not enough. An inch of rain every other week is best for our farmers. Too much rain means they can’t work the ground and sow their crops. Too little rain means they have to drag water hoses and the like around to keep everything alive. It’s a very precarious bit of business that brings food to your farmers’ market. I deem it more of a calling than a profession, not that it doesn’t require a great deal of study and diligence. It’s just that our farmers toiling under sometimes harsh circumstances without the benefit of government handouts or non-profit status are never going to become wealthy. However due to your continued support by showing up week after week, they will be able to sustain themselves, and we really can’t ask for much more than that.

April also brings the Easter season which means feasting and celebrations. I’m thinking eggs for dyeing, unless of course you have chickens that lay colored eggs already, as does Farmer Cathy. Or perhaps we could get Shana to give a demonstration on dyeing eggs naturally. You’re also going to possibly want a ham to cook, which from reports around Christmas, Emma of Ranch to Kitchen had some pretty tasty ones available. I’d order early if I were you. Of course by now, Stacy, Mike, and the girls of 144 should be back in full swing with their wonderful sour dough breads and such. And Karen and Kristy should be able to round out the menu with jams, spreads, and baked goodies.

I, on the other hand, will be moving into new digs in the neighborhood, where I may be able to pull off some urban farming of my own, like rabbits, quail, and quite possibly squabs. Don’t get too excited right away; it will take some time to build proper infrastructure and brooder stock, maybe even into late summer or early fall. I’m quite excited about the prospects though, and it could be the next chapter in my life. But fear not, I’ll still be there every Saturday morning cooking breakfast for the foreseeable future.

As always, “Come soon, come often, and bring a friend or two.”

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

Your Garden Oaks neighbor
selling our Garden Oaks neighborhood

KATY HALL WYLY
713.907.7652
katyw@johndaugherty.com
johndaugherty.com

AT HOME WITH JOHN DAUGHERTY, REALTORS IN HOUSTON
Did You Know?

Garden Oaks is unique in that it has a civic club and a homeowner’s association. For most neighborhoods they are a single entity. In Garden Oaks, the homeowner’s association (Garden Oaks Maintenance Organization or GOMO) is solely responsible for enforcing deed restrictions. The Garden Oaks Civic Club (GOCC or simply CC) exists for “the purpose of promoting the civic and social welfare of the residents of Garden Oaks, fostering neighborhood unity, and assisting in activities that benefit and promote the residential character of the neighborhood.”

Gazette Advertising Rates/Sizes/Submission Guidelines

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<th>Single</th>
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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).
Catch Up, Keep Up and Get Ahead!

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.

Give us a call to set up your FREE Trial today! We look forward to making math make sense for your child!

Mathnasium of Oak Forest
1214 W. 43rd Street #650
Houston, TX 77018
(by Sweet Frog & Starbucks)
(713) 965-4747
Oakforest@mathnasium.com
Only kings, presidents, editors, and people with tapeworms have the right to use the editorial 'we.' - Mark Twain
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.

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<td>Red Oak (Patron Level) Household Membership</td>
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<td>$_________</td>
<td>Contribution to Beautification (all neighborhood green spaces)</td>
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<td>Contribution to Garden Club (maintain Friendship Park, Section 1)</td>
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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 upon completion, you will receive e-mail confirmation of your dues payment.

Name: ____________________________________________

Address: __________________________________________

Phone: ____________________________________________

E-Mail: ____________________________________________

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF OUR GREAT NEIGHBORHOOD!
2017 Constable Patrol Contributor Application & Contact Information

[ ] New Member or [ ] Renewal

| Property Address : ____________________________________________ |
| Phone at this address: ________________________________ |

Please provide contact information for program member(s) at this address:

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You may provide information for person(s) to contact in an emergency:

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<td>Cell Phone: __________________</td>
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Payment Options

[ ] Enclosed find my payment for 2017 of $225. (Make checks payable to Garden Oaks Civic Club.)

[ ] I/We cannot contribute $225 now; however, enclosed please find my/our check for $ __________.

[ ] I/We will pay online (see below).

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).

Mail this form to

Garden Oaks Constable Program
PO Box 10273
Houston TX 77206

or pay online at

www.gardenoaks.org