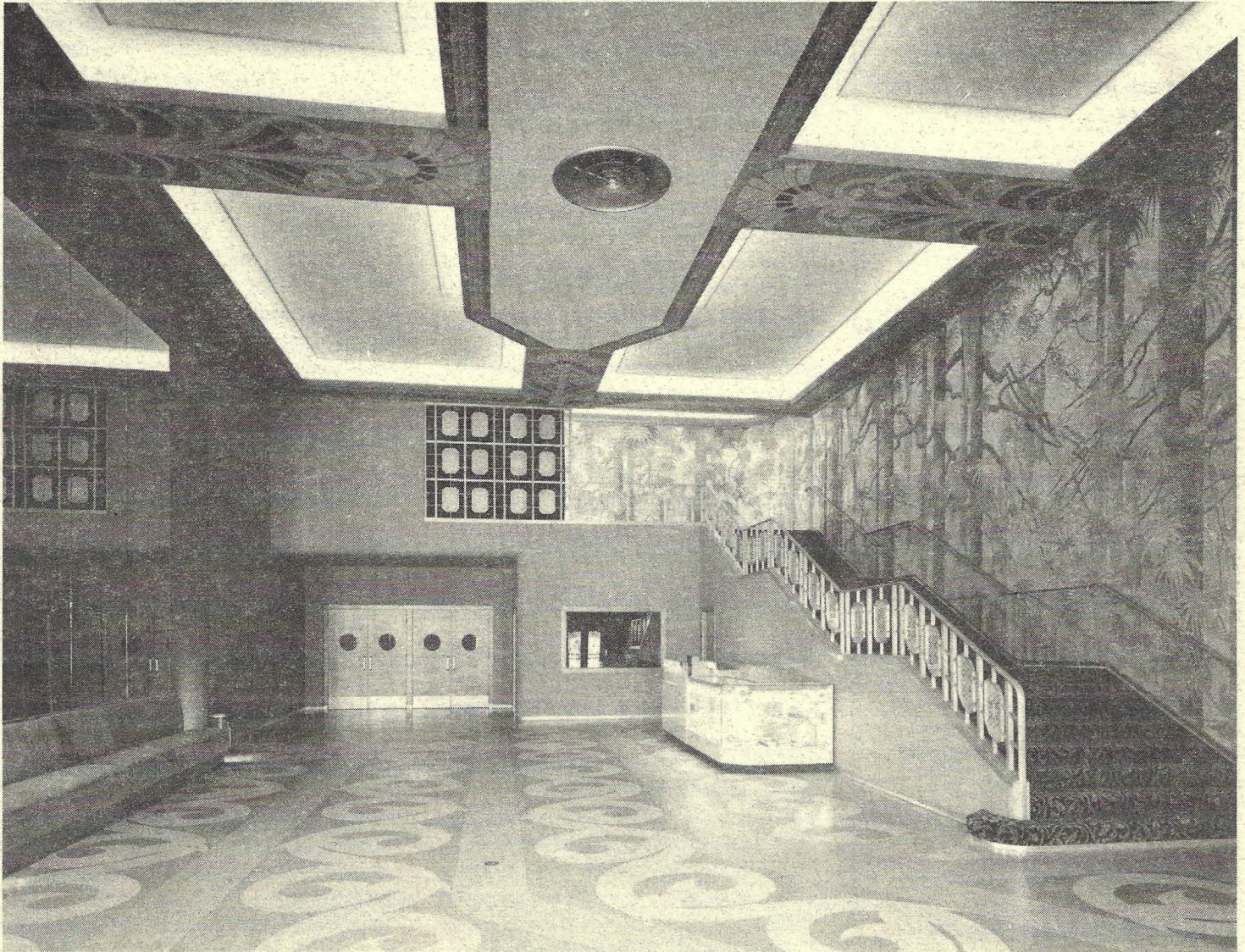


GARDEN OAKS GAZETTE

Volume 15, No. 8

Circulation 1550

August 1992



A Theater of Our Own

Mr. Z and the G.O.T.

The cover of this month's *Gazette* is a photo taken in 1946 of the original foyer of the Garden Oaks Theater. Take notice of the beautiful murals on the walls and ceiling. Unfortunately these were damaged by water in the seventies and were painted over, otherwise the foyer is much the same.

The theater's big project, now that the construction is finished on

Shepard is repairing all the neon. The owner told me he caught some kids from our favorite apartment project, smashing the neon tubes with a baseball bat. But hopefully, sometime soon, all the neon will glow again.

On July 10th, twenty-five Garden Oaks residents rendezvoused at the Garden Oaks Theater and watched a movie. Many had not been inside the grand old theater before and were

impressed by what a great place this historic old movie house is/was and could be again. The evening began with the owner, Al Zarzana, (Mr. Z) telling us about the early history of the movie house and some of the troubles he has been through in the past with gangs, road construction, etc. He also told us about the precarious financial position he is in.

Continued on Page 2

Cassie Sly

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Garden Oaks Resident**

But before he turned on the projector, Al revealed that July 10th was the 45th anniversary of the theater and that it was a special thing that we were there that particular evening. On July 10, 1947, another crowd watched a movie (*Sea of Grass*), and experienced the birth of a neighborhood landmark.

This night another crowd, smaller, but enthusiastic just the same, watched a movie and participated in what hopefully is a re-birth of the Garden Oaks Theater. Watching a movie in that mammoth (783 person capacity) theater in 45 year old seats surrounded by the old murals covering walls illuminated by art deco lighting is a special and fun thing to do. It turns out that the Garden Oaks Theater is the last neon deco style theater in private hands still operating as a movie theater. The River Oaks is owned by a California investment company. The Bellaire is owned by a group of Houston investors. The Alabama is a bookstore. The Tower is a sometimes club. The Garden Oaks is owned by one person, Al Zarzana, who started out working there as an usher in the fifties. Al hung around so often, the owner finally gave him a job!

Your editor is going to do everything possible to save this theater, change the programming into one that the neighborhood will support. I could use all the interest possible. Every reader can influence the future direction of this theater by going to the movies there, and by spreading the word to your friends that this is a fun and safe (Zarzana has a security guard on weekends) place to go.

Let's think about what makes Garden Oaks a "Great Place to Live". Trees? Yes. Close to the City? Yes. More trees? Yes. Cool neighbors, big yards, neat houses? Yes! Yes! Yes! But other neighborhoods have all that as well. There is one thing we do have (besides the best little neighborhood newspaper in the cosmos!) that no other neighborhood has, and that's a vintage movie theater about a minute from anywhere in the neighborhood. This place is a unique asset that is irreplaceable, and a sleeping beauty that certainly needs substantial repairs and renovation, but then so do a lot of homes in the area, mine included.

A successful thoughtfully restored Garden Oaks Theater that features an attractive venue would enhance our property values by once again providing a visually exciting architectural beacon to the community. Our neighborhood name has been displayed in neon for 45 years on the marquee.

You know, if we put as much energy into helping the Garden Oaks Theater survive and prosper as we are putting into keeping Whataburger (oops) out, that theater would be doing fine.

Don't you think that it is as important not to lose a great asset we already have as it is to keep out what we do not want?

We have some real power in this community to do things when we want to. We can put up monumental statues, mount successful fundraisers, create beautiful gardening projects, start Houston's first and maybe only volunteer curbside recycling effort. The list goes on and on. We have a lot of media people and many other talents living here that could do things that would draw attention to the theater and attract people from throughout the City in the quantities that are needed to keep the Garden Oaks Theater healthy.

Are you interested? Want to help save this historic theater and influence its direction? Call my recorder (697-0069) and express your interest in our new Save the Garden Oaks Theater Cinema Committee. And if you are the least bit curious about this project, visit the theater and look around. Ask to check out the screening rooms. Think about the great events and parties that could happen there. Mr. Z would welcome your interest (691-7777). He wants to run a well-kept vintage theater that is a safe, clean and a fun place to go. He also does not want to go broke doing it.

Al supports this community by allowing us to use his parking lot for recycling. The Theater is available to be utilized for charity fundraisers and community events. For example, July 19th, he gave a tour for some disadvantaged children participating in the "I have a Dream" program. So turn off the VCR, get out of the house and check out this sleeper place that could be a lot better.... with you.

Scott MacClymonds



Who is Sue Barnett?

I would like to introduce everyone to Sue Barnett. No, not the street. The following article comes from the very interesting, knowledgeable and gracious lady the long winding road was named after. I humbly asked and she kindly agreed to write a little something for the Gazette. I thought our gentle readers would find this an interesting a bit of history. So here she is to set the record straight, in her own words....(drumroll please) the one, the only, SUE BARNETT!!!

Fifty-two years ago, the area now known as Garden Oaks was a country area of tall pines and hardwoods and a few truck farms (hence the name Garden Oaks). Then a Houston developer named Lillo Crain bought up the acreage and platted it as a subdivision and brought it for approval to the Houston Planning Commission. As secretary to the Commission, I was present at the meeting where it was discovered that two of the numbered streets intersected, which was not allowed by the City's rules.

Hugh Potter, chairman of the Commission, suggested to Mr. Crain that he name one of the two streets for me, which he graciously did. At that time in my career, I was not only secretary to that commission but also secretary to the City Park Board and City Zoning Commission, a position I was appointed to after seven years on the old *Houston Press*, a Scripps-Howard newspaper that closed down in 1964.

The thirties and forties were wonderful dynamic years for the city of Houston which was expanding like crazy. Every citizen it seemed, like the newspapers and the elected officials, were as one in believing we had the best town in the world and the future could only keep getting better. The mayor at that time was R.H. Fonville,

a leader that wanted not only growth, but an orderly environmentally sound city. It is interesting to look back and remember how hard we worked in an effort to convince the people that zoning would be good for the city. Unfortunately the real estate "lobby" was stronger than our group and defeated the zoning plan. Now the city fathers are recognizing the need for this forward-looking and protective program and are playing catch-up. I am glad that Garden Oaks has a good strong set of legal property restrictions and is still an attractive place to live. I used to think it would be fun to live on Sue Barnett Drive but never did.

Public relations activities of one kind or another seemed to be an inherent part of my life from the time I got my first job as a newspaper reporter. After retiring in the mid-40's, I was asked to take on public relations for the inception of the Texas Medical Center and shortly became Assistant to the President of the Centers Board of Trustees, Dr. E.W. Bertner. It was supposed to be a temporary thing, but I stayed on for seven years before retiring again.

My husband, Clayton Barnett and I moved up to a Montgomery County area that became Panorama Village a cluster development built around a beautiful golf course. I belong to the Panorama Country Club and play golf regularly if no longer well! And I write a weekly column for the *Conroe Courier*.

Not long ago, Don Branham, mayor of Panorama Village in Montgomery County where I live now, drove down to Garden Oaks to attend a wedding and became lost trying to find the church. As all wives know, men absolutely hate to ask directions so Don wandered around looking for the street he wanted and was quite started to discover Sue Barnett Drive. Like Scott MacClymonds, he called me to ask how the street happened to be named for me.....so now you know. Of course I am proud to have that attractive street named for me.

Sue Barnett

If anyone would like to correspond with Sue Barnett, she is a cornucopia of knowledge. Call the editor.



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We're havin a heat wave!

As you can see, global warming has gotten really bad. How hot is it? So hot the *Gazette* caught fire. It's fine weather if you're a cactus or the electric company or a solar panel or an A/C repair service or a swimming pool.

President's Message

At the last regular meeting of the Garden Oaks Civic Club, it was voted to oppose the lifting of the deed restrictions on the residential lots located on the East side of Shepherd between W. 30th and W. 34th Streets. A special meeting was called to discuss proposed plans by Wulfe & Co. to build a 24-hour Whataburger at that site.

Residents of Section 1 overwhelmingly turned out at the special meeting to show the developers that we still have some control of our neighborhood and we DON'T want a Whataburger at this location. Please be aware that the ONLY way to defeat the LIFTING of the residential use only, building lines and advertising deed restrictions is to NOT sign the petition being circulated in Section 1. Section 1 property owners who have already signed the petition and upon receiving further information wish to have their

name removed, please contact Gayle Slaughter at 868-4868 for an affidavit requesting the removal of their name from the petition. This affidavit must be signed in the presence of a notary.

I was glad to see that so many Section 1 residents, as well as others concerned about the direction of our neighborhood (total attendance approximately 200), came to this specially called meeting. It just proved that we do have some say in how we want our neighborhood to look and what we want Garden Oaks to be.

The Garden Oaks
Gazette is
printed on
recycled paper using
soybean ink.



Did You Know?

Percentage change since 1980 in federal dollars spent on American cities: -59

Percentage change in the number of women running for Congress since the Thomas/Hill hearings: +101

U.S. arms sales to the Middle East since Bush proposed cutting such sales last year: \$8,500,000,000

In 1989, in the United Nations, there were two Resolutions calling for all nations to observe international law. Only two countries voted against these resolutions: The U.S.A. and Israel.

George Bush in 1989 was condemned by the World Court for his unlawful use of force against Panama.

Number of peanuts per capita the U.S. government allows to be imported each year: 2

Percentage increase, during 1991, in the number of people seeking emergency food aid during 1991: 26

Number of countries worldwide since 1945 that have been invaded: 23

Number of these invasions the U.S. sent troops to help repel: 3

Average number of months an American teenage girl is sexually active before using birth control: 12

Average medical deduction claimed by Americans earning more than \$1,000,000: \$44,000

Percentage of American men who say they clean their navel every day: 42

Seafood is the number one source of toxic and cancer causing chemicals in the U.S. food supply today.

Smog and airborne toxins cause 120,000 deaths a year.

Percentage of Fortune 500 CEO's who say they will vote for Bush: 78

Ratio of the average CEO's salary to that of a blue collar worker in 1980: 25 to 1. Ratio today: 91 to 1

George Bush has received \$900,000 in campaign contributions from people he later appointed to ambassadorships.

Sources: *Common Cause, Harpers, Forbes, Mother Jones, Houston Post, Fortune, U.S. Department of Commerce, Standard & Poors, The Fair Trade Fraud* by James Bovard, *Utne Reader*, William Eckhardt, Lentz Peace Research, Arms Control Association, Center for American Women and Politics, American Lung Association, EPA

Garden Oaks Civic Club Celebrates

"NATIONAL NIGHT OUT"

The next meeting of the Garden Oaks Civic Club will be August 4th at 7:00pm in Graham Park (located in the 500 block of West 34th Street, off Shepherd and behind Binswanger Glass). Following a short business meeting, the Citizens on Patrol, known as "GO COP" will present the program which will consist of recognition of COP Volunteers and speaker, Don Williams of Crime Prevention Center. William's topic will be "CRUSH CRIME" and will include a display of devices suitable for improved home and auto security. Williams works closely with the Houston Police Department and is often a speaker at the PIPS meetings. His presentation will last 15-20 minutes followed by questions from the audience. A large sheet cake featuring the GO COP emblem, designed and prepared by GO COP Volunteer Bill Chastain will be part of the refreshments served at the meeting. The meeting will be adjourned early so that participants may attend their own block parties as part of National Night Out". If your block has not planned a block party, this would be an excellent chance to visit with your neighbors OUTSIDE in your own front yards!

Mark your calendar now for National Night Out and the Garden Oaks Civic Club Meeting. Do bring lawn chairs and insect repellent.

GO COP Volunteers will be patrolling all streets in the neighborhood during the meeting and the block parties.

Membership News

If you missed the July Civic Club meeting you missed a great time. The turn out was good with 10 families joining the Civic Club and alot of ice cream was consumed. This brings our total to date to 336 households as members. I am not giving up on our 1992 goal of 500. If you are reading the *Gazette* and have not paid your dues please take a minute to fill out the application and send it in. The dues go to making this a better neighborhood by keeping you informed as to what is happening in Garden Oaks, beautifying the neighborhood, protecting the neighborhood and just making it a better place to live.

Become part of the excitement taking place in Garden Oaks and join the Civic Club today.

Blanche Leonard
Vice President of Membership

Beautification and Plant Co-op:

TOO HOT!!!!!!

President's Message:

What, me Worry?

Constable Report:

All's quiet on the Eastern Front

Recycling:

Same old trash!

Gazette Oaks Gazette:

You spell potatoe, I spell potato!

Homeless Tour:

October Surprise!

The Unknown Committee:

Hey, That's not funny.



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Garden Oaks Needs You in 1992!

Help support the Garden Oaks Civic Club in its efforts to create and maintain a great neighborhood.

Please fill in the form on the back and mail to:

Garden Oaks Civic Club
Blanche Leonard
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August Birthdays

- 1 Sarah Neill, 8 yrs.
- 4 James Mabry, 339 yrs
- 6 Sarah Powers, 5 yrs.
- 14 Alan Dingus, 3 yrs.
- 16 Amy Marek, 7 yrs.
- 17 Laura Rhea, 8 yrs.
- 17 Brooke Alexander, 5 yrs.
- 17 James Mitchell, 8 yrs.
- 24 Steven Roberts, 1 year!
- 28 James Mabry, IV, 6 yrs.



New Babies

Congratulations to Rick and Michele Martini, Section 3 they are the proud parents of **Andrew Paul Martini** (7 lbs 4 oz and 21 inches). He is true Yankee Doodle Dandy born on the 4th of July.

Garrett William Luck (7 lbs 11 oz) was born on June 30th to Cheryl and Rick Luck. Big sister Richelle helped to welcome him home. Congratulations to the Luck Family!

Sue's August Picks

A League of Their Own (PG):
Terrific movie (4 popcorns)
Prelude to a Kiss (PG13):
Delightful, magic movie (4 popcorns)
Unlawful Entry (R):
Predictable but pushes the right buttons (2.5 popcorns)
Batman Returns (PG-13):
Disappointing, not for young kids but Michelle Pfeiffer was having fun as Catwoman.

Water Lily Display

Everyone with an interest in water lilies should make plans to visit Mercer Arboretum and Botanic Gardens on **August 1st**, to view and photograph the collection of Water Lilies. Both tried-and-true and newly introduced water lilies will be on display. Mercer Arboretum and Botanic Gardens is located 1 mile north of FM 1960 at 22306 Aldine-Westfield Rd. For information call 443-8731.

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is August 10th



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Phone: _____

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1015 W. 41st, Houston, TX 77018**

Neighborhood Views

The opinions and ideas expressed in this column are not necessarily endorsed by the Civic Club or the Gazette.

As Campaign "92" goes forward, we can all watch in amusement as George Bush sends Dan Quayle yelping about "family values". Now there's a campaign issue for all concerned voters. My family has values, yours probably does as well. One could wonder who's families' values will carry the day. The point is who sets the standard for "good" values? Even if we acknowledge the need for family values, then what? Is there some legislation that we would want the President to push for that would ensure that "good" family values would come to all families? Probably not. No, the best thing that could happen for family values is a healthy domestic economy with plenty of good paying jobs.

We must select a President that lays out a bold domestic economic plan and can carry it out. For further understanding of the economic battle we face, read *Head to Head* by Lester Thurow.

David Ballard, Section 2

Having had a Real Estate license for many years, we thought to perform a community service by calling attention to and suggesting protest against the INTERIM and INCONSISTENT re-appraisals of Garden Oaks. Indeed, some have called and have asked for suggestions. By using the "yuppie" word, we did not solicit division in the community. We thought to help those less equipped or knowledgeable to deal with this situation. (*Please see last month's letters column, ed.*)

We have lived in Houston since 1958. The population was 700,000. The Gulf Freeway to Hobby Airport was the only freeway and River Oaks was the Western end of town. We had old and young (yuppie) friends in West University and have followed it's events, some were tragic. We have seen and have welcomed the renewal of Garden Oaks.

As ordinary people have to live

within their budgets, we feel government must do the same. And indeed, the appeal provisions sent out by the appraisal district suggest that you are exercising good citizenship by participating in the process. We have done this several times.

Researching the re-appraisal of all properties on our street showed arbitrary and inequitable results: Land prices were doubled on some lots, increased 50% on others. Improvements (the houses) showed increases by 40% for some, decreases of 20% on others, on homes of the same quality and improvement. Acre lots were priced at \$71,000 per acre. One third acre lots were priced at \$156,000 when converted to an acre.

Mr. Koenig's letter seems to suggest that you re-mortgage the roof over your head to pay taxes. My suggestion is to demand from taxing entities that they live within their means as we all must do.

The American Revolution started when taxes went beyond 10% of income. Moreover, when we sell our house today, we will receive no more than we put into it, adjusted for inflation. We recommend that those that still have the opportunity to protest, do so, after researching what has happened to their streets.

T.T. DeBoer, Section 5

When you hear about "family values", and other campaign slogans, don't you think that a politician campaigning for office claiming to be for families should be for clean water, air and healthy food? How can we have a good family life if our environment is killing us with cancer and disease caused by policies that promote selling out our environment and our future for a higher quarterly profit?

Actually Mr. Bush does have a tenuous sort of claim to be the self-styled "Environmental President". His policies are helping the U.S. environment because so many factories are shutting down and

moving to other countries. Also, the newly unemployed workers are no longer driving to work. On second thought, lets annoint Bush the "Unemployed President" instead. George could then become a model for family values by ceasing to be a tax evader. (Bush claims Texas residency although he owns no property here, thereby evading the state income tax he would owe in Kennebunkport, Maine or Washington, D.C. George accomplishes this by claiming his legal residence to be a hotel room in the Houstonian Hotel on Post Oak Lane. Our President's Texas residence is accessible to anyone with \$2400 a night to spend.) To close I will leave you with the headline and first paragraph of an article in the May 18, 1992 Houston Post:

BUSH TO RELAX REGULATION ON AIR POLLUTION

Handing industry its second victory over the EPA in a week, President Bush decided to allow companies to increase emmisions of pollution without notifying the public.

Scott MacClymonds, Section 2

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Garden Oaks Civic Club

P.O. Box 92155,

Houston, 77206

Anita Scherer, President

4223 Apollo • 956-7809

Blanche Leonard, Vice President,
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1015 W. 41st • 680-1027

Jan Koenig, Treasurer/
Community Garden

407 W. 34th • 869-8997

The Donald Howie, Secretary
680-3420

Scott MacClymonds, The Editor

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FAX: 448-5165

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Trish Mehrkam } 683-8461

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August Action						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
						1 Skulls 1-4 Armand Bayou Nature Center 474-2551
2 Spider Webs 1-4 Armand Bayou Nature Center 474-2551	3 Civic Holiday (Canada)	4 Civic Club 7:00 pm National Night Out Graham Park	5	6 C.O.P. Training Session 10:00 am	7	8 Recycle Pick-up 8:00 am Owls 1-4 Armand Bayou Nature Center 474-2551
9	10 Gazette Deadline 7:00 pm	11	12	13 P.I.P. Meeting 7:30 pm	14	15
16	17	18 Heavy Trash Pick-up	19	20 C.O.P. Training Session 7 pm	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29 Fall Vegetable Gardening 10 am Mercer Arboretum 443-8731
30	31	1 Civic Club 7:00 pm	2	3	4	5

Clip and Save Recycling Reminders:

WHEN: Second Saturday of the month at 8 a.m.

WHERE: Drop-off at The Garden Oaks Theater parking lot
(8 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.) or Curbside (by 8 a.m.)

WHAT AND HOW:

ALUMINUM CANS: Non-magnetic, RINSED.

NON-FERROUS (Not Steel) METALS: Items such as copper, brass, and aluminum. No refrigerators, dishwashers or other appliances.

GLASS: Separated into clear and colored glass; RINSED and CLEANED; NO LIDS; Labels can be left on; NO PLATE GLASS!; No plastic bags, please.

NEWSPAPERS: Bundled or placed in paper grocery bags; No plastic bags please.

COMPUTER PAPER: Bundled, boxed or placed in paper bags; No carbon inserts, no binding, no staples.

WHITE LEDGER: Bond paper bundled, boxed or placed in paper bags; NO glossy junk mail, NCR (No Carbon Required) paper, or telephone books, no binding.

BROWN PAPER GROCERY BAGS are also recyclable so use them whenever you can.

NO PLASTICS