



Garden Oaks Gazette

Volume 18, No. 11 Circulation 1550 November 1995

CIVIC CLUB MEETING

Thanks goes to **Linda Landry of Swiley-Hudson Realty** for providing the food and drinks at our October Civic Club meeting.

The next Garden Oaks Civic Club meeting will be held at **7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 7, at the Garden Oaks Baptist Church at 3206 North Shepherd**. We are planning to have a panel of Garden Oaks Board of Trustee members present for a question-answer session. This is a great time for all those of you that have questions about deed restrictions to attend. It should be an informative meeting.

We are also in the process of presenting a slate and taking nominations from the floor for 1996 Civic Club officers. A nominating committee has been assembled and includes **Sheila Briones, Kermit Foster, and Terry Jeanes**. So far, the nomination slate includes Ed de Alba for President, Craig Lee for V.P. Membership, Lynn Sievers for Secretary, Ray Housley for Treasurer, and the nominating committee is still looking for someone to serve as Editor of the *Gazette*.

For those of you who like to plan ahead, especially during the hectic holiday season, we want to remind residents that at our December end-of-the-year Civic Club Meeting we plan to celebrate by having our traditional Annual Covered Dish Dinner and Social Event Night. The rule-of-thumb is to ask everyone who plans to attend to bring the item that corresponds with the first letter of your last name as follows:

A - G: BREAD, APPETIZER OR DRINKS

H - K: VEGETABLE OR SALAD

L - S: DESSERT OR FRUIT

T - Z: MEAT OR MAIN DISH

Of course, these are just guidelines. Feel free to bring whatever you want. We all love those dishes that are considered "favorite" recipes.

We look forward to a great turnout at the November meeting. Hope to see you there.

TRAFFIC PROJECT UPDATE

by Marc Roberts

The Garden Oaks neighborhood traffic project has been on hold for the past several months while the City of Houston has been making changes in the procedure associated with the neighborhood traffic project ordinance. The ordinance is intended to be a tool to reduce the volume of cut-through traffic in residential neighborhoods.

We have been informed that the City has now approved revisions to the neighborhood traffic project ordinance and we should soon be notified on where Garden Oaks stands in the process and how we can proceed with plans to reduce the volume of cut-through traffic in our neighborhood.

In the meantime, speed humps have recently been made available by the City as a tool to control speeding traffic. Any resident can initiate a request that speed humps be installed on their street. Those who would like to request more information on speed humps or initiate a request for the installation of speed humps on your street are asked to write to the City at the following address:

Speed Hump Program -- Traffic Management and Maintenance Division
Public Works & Engineering Dept.
City of Houston, P.O. Box 1562, Houston, TX 77251-1562

When writing to the City you should include your name, address, daytime telephone number, and the specific street segment location if speed humps are being requested (i.e. Smith St. from 3rd to 5th Ave.). The City is evaluating requests for speed humps on a biannual schedule and the next deadline for the submission of requests is December 31, 1995.

LOVING ARMS TO BENEFIT FROM 2nd ANNUAL G.O. CAROLING FESTIVAL

by Robert De Veau

When G.O. resident **Audrey Vallance** decided two years ago to have her vocal students carol through the streets of Garden Oaks, little did she know that it would culminate into an annual event **benefitting the Loving Arms Foundation**. That first year, with little fanfare or publicity, a few scattered donations were collected. The following year, with the help of dedicated volunteers consisting of neighbors and friends of Garden Oaks, **participation grew to include members of The Houston Grand Opera Chorus, St. Matthew's Methodist Church, Garden Properties, Greater Houston Chorus, and Heartsong**. Donations included cash contributions and enough supplies to fill two cargo vans! G.O. Caroling was quickly becoming a successful and worthy community project.

The **Loving Arms Foundation** is a non-profit organization designed to fill the gaps for the pediatric population infected with and affected by HIV/AIDS. Their mission is to meet the needs of these children and their families which other agencies cannot. All of their services are provided free of charge to the clients. The heart of **Loving Arms** is the day-care center located at 4917 Jackson Street. **Audrey Gassama, Director of Loving Arms**, has provided us with their 1995 "Wish List" containing items for use in the classrooms, infant and baby needs, housekeeping products, office/administrative supplies, dietary and kitchen staples as well as capital improvements and services for the facility. **An abbreviated list with the most needed items will be attached to a shopping bag that all G.O. residents will receive on Saturday, December 2. In the true spirit of Garden Oaks generosity, we ask that each of you donate a filled bag during the G.O. Caroling Festival on Friday evening, December 8.**

For more information or if you wish to join the caroling party, please call either Jay Slemmer at 956-0465 or Audrey Vallance at 686-0707.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR'S HUSBAND...

Preface. I thought I'd throw a little twist in this month, thanks to my husband, who decided to put his wit and humor down on paper. He has been promising me that he would contribute some articles to me all year long. Finally a second one has come forth. I decided to use it in place of my normal letter. I hope that you enjoy it. *Note: He tends to exaggerate just a little!*

THE CURSE OF THE GARDEN OAKS YARD OF THE MONTH SIGN!

by Chris Meyer

IT came to me from the east on a warm September morning, last lurking at the corner of Sue Barnett and 42nd Street. I jogged past **IT** three times a week during the month of August, recognizing the simplistic beauty of **ITs** rectangular symmetry and the proud message **IT** bore. Little was I aware that one day **IT** would follow me home. Nor was I even remotely aware of **ITs** deep, hypnotic power.

The last four weeks are mostly a blur now, but I distinctly know it was Saturday when **IT** arrived because Saturday is the day that I (re)repair those household items that I repaired the previous Sunday. **ITs** arrival was announced with a lower-spine-piercing shriek of "Oh my GOD!...I don't believe it," from my wife. Before I could react, much less contemplate the significance of the situation, the sign lady emphatically impinged my lawn with **IT**...the coveted Garden Oaks Yard of the Month sign.

In retrospect, I can only blame myself. The signs were there. First, my wife had me trim the trees to allow more sunlight. "More sunlight will kill the mildew on the house," she said, "therefore, you won't spend your weekends scrubbing the house." It made sense. Logic is good. I did it.

Second, she had me build a compost pile to recycle the tree trimmings and lawn clippings. "You know honey, our city dumps are filling up geometrically while the number of dump sites are increasing arithmetically," she continued. I don't know what she meant, but to avoid looking stupid, I did it.

Third, she had me build additional flower beds to hold the decomposed compost, to make room for more lawn clippings, to keep our city dumps from filling up. (See prior explanation from wife.)

Finally, she purchased a soaker hose, confidently stating, "I understand that we already have three lawn sprinklers honey, but with a soaker hose, we will reduce water consumption by 25%. Hmmm, more logic. Logic is really good when backed by statistics. The soaker hose stayed. Yes indeed, the signs were there.

WEEK ONE: In my new-found joy, I purchased overalls, a floppy hat, a new pair of work gloves and a gardening book entitled *Fertilizing Fun For Everyone*. I even bought fresh vegetables at the grocery store. Ah!...Life is good!

My initial feelings of pride were spent lounging in my front yard, drinking tea based liquids with an occasional sprig of mint. Of course, there was the usual banter between neighbors. "Well, even a blind pig finds an acorn every now and then," and "your yard is browner than your gotchski's," they commented.

WEEK TWO: **IT** awakened. Not with a bang, but more a soft metallic click, like when two magnets are drawn together. **ITs** magnetism drew *Yard of the Month* "wannabe's." Our neighbors were now spending more time working on their yards and people I had never met before now dropped by to ask for "cuttings." "That plant is so pretty. Can I please cut a small piece to transplant?" I learned quickly that in *garden talk*, "cuttings" means something just short of strip mining!

IT also attracted dogs. BIG DOGS. I am convinced that **IT** carries a subliminal message calling all of our four-legged friends to defecate in my yard. I'll call this phenomenon the *poop factor*. The poop factor does exist. I read that sharks are attracted by electronic impulses. Well, dogs are attracted to **IT**. Even my dogs, who I laboriously trained to "go" in my neighbors yard, now opted for the yard with **IT**.

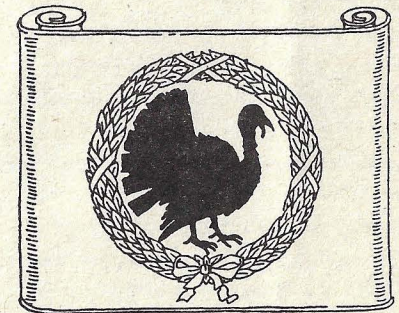
WEEK THREE: By now I recognize the magnitude of my dilemma. I no longer have a life of my own. **IT** cries to me and I willingly answer, day and night. I must mow,...I must rake,...I must water,...I must de-thatch the lawn, whatever that means. I look for bugs under the foliage at night with my flashlight. I listen to the garden radio talk shows on Saturday. I even called one to ask if they knew of **IT**. They didn't, but they kindly gave me the number for the Crisis Center.

WEEK FOUR: I am exhausted. The daily rigors of tending my yard are broken only by an occasional visit from prior winners of **IT**. They tell me that I am now part of the ranks

of a select few, but I am of the lowest order — a "one-timer." I learned that there are "two-timers," and so on. Strangely, I am told, the two-timers are usually men. As usual, I don't get it, but my wife sees the correlation. There is even a hushed mention of a "five-timer," but no one could confirm this seemingly impossible feat. The common denominator amongst the erstwhile winners was a seemingly unfulfillable longing, a longing for **IT**.

WEEK FIVE: **IT** is gone! Out of sight, but unfortunately not out of mind. I miss **IT**. I want **IT**. All I have now is a hole in my front yard where **IT** once sat. I have been reduced to placing my big toe in the hole where **IT** once resided, maintaining the hole, waiting for the day for **IT** to return. Maybe someday, ...maybe someday.

HAPPY THANKSGIVING



WHAT A JOKE!

Four high-school boys, afflicted with spring fever, skipped morning classes. After lunch, they reported to the teacher that their car had had a flat tire. Much to their relief, she smiled and said, "Well, you missed a test this morning, so take your seats apart from one another and get your notebooks out." Still smiling, she waited for them to settle down. Then she said, "First question: Which tire was flat?"

- Author Unknown

GARDEN OAKS YARD OF THE MONTH

Yard of the month for October belongs to **Don Wray** and is located at **4130 Apollo**. It's the pretty two-story brick house on a corner lot.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Ed de Alba

This is an exciting time to be in Garden Oaks. Houses are selling, prices are rising, and homeowners and builders are building.

With so much building in progress and so much being planned we thought it appropriate to ask several members of the Garden Oaks Board of Trustees to join us at our next meeting and describe their role in maintaining the tenor of the neighborhood. The Board is charged with maintaining the Deed Restrictions which among other things stipulate the building boundaries, land use, and commercial activities in the 5 sections. We're sure they'll have a lot to say about this and about deed restriction violations. We'll also host a representative of Justice Of the Peace Dale Gorzinski's Court. New legislation gives neighborhood groups such as the Board of Trustees significant legal leverage to combat deed restriction violators. All of this is important to anyone planning improvements to their existing home or planning to build new.

Our Gazebo is taking shape! Be sure to visit this pretty structure in the little park at the intersection of Sue Barnett and 42nd street. It is a most welcome and lovely addition to our neighborhood. The neighborhood truly appreciates the generosity of **Earl Dragics** and his son. Thanks go out to the other contributors and to **Harry James Builders** for assembling the structure. And a very big thank you to **Bill Chastain** for putting all the pieces together and making this happen!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR CITY SPEED HUMP PROGRAM

by Ed de Alba

Do you think there is too much traffic zooming down your street? Do motorists use your street as a cut through to avoid an intersection or avoid a heavily travelled street?

Well you can do something about it. You can ask the city to install speed humps on your street. But you have to do it soon!

About 6 months ago, in an effort to reduce cut through traffic and speeding in residential neighborhoods, the City of Houston announced the widespread availability of and funding for speed humps. These are gentle rises, 3 to 4 inches in height, about 11 feet long, and 2 lanes wide (to extend across both lanes of a two lane street). They are friendly to pedestrians, rollerbladers, baby carriages, and cars travelling less than 20 miles per hour. Above 20 miles per hour,

cars bottom out on the gentle incline of the speed hump.

I walk, run, and drive through several sections of the neighborhood everyday. It is obvious that some of our streets have problems with speeding and cut through traffic. In Section One, the East-West streets are heavily travelled, with 34th and 33rd bearing the brunt of the cut through traffic. In Sections Two through Five, most of the offending traffic is North-South, along Sue Barnett, Alba, Golf, and Apollo. Streets I know of with cut through problems include Randall between 34th and Durham and 42nd, 41st, and 38th between Sheppard and Sue Barnett.

The Process:

The first nomination phase of the program began last June. Streets were nominated by residents whose property either faces or abuts the street. The city transportation department then measured the number of cars using the street and the percentage of vehicles exceeding the speed limit. Based on those findings and several other factors, the street was either approved or rejected for the installation of speed humps. Once approved, the city contacted the resident who initiated the speed hump review and requested a signature from the owners or residents of as many of the properties directly abutting the street in question. With one house one vote, this vote is one of the factors which determines whether the city will fund the approved speed humps. Thus far in Garden Oaks three street sections have been approved by the city for speed humps. They are: 34th street between Yale and Sheppard, Alba between 43rd and Brinkman, and Alba between 42nd and 43rd. As of this writing I do not know if any or all of the approved speed humps have received city funding. After funding, the humps will be contracted, scheduled, and eventually built.

The next phase of the speed hump approval cycle is beginning now. Requests for speed humps need to be into the city before December 31. All you need to do is write a short letter. **Please contact me, Ed de Alba, during the day at 366-2583, and I will provide you with the latest materials on the city speed hump program.** I hope to hear from many of you shortly so that we can solve one of the more annoying problems in the neighborhood.

NEIGHBOR NEWSLINE...

Happy Birthday **Frances Shecter** of Section Four. **Frances'** birthday was October 13.

COME HOME TO JESUS



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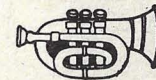
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- 855 Azalea
- 862 W. 41st St.
- 839 Lamonte
- 738 Sue Barnett
- 802 Arlington
- 1315 Cortlandt
- 530 Byrne
- 527 W. 34th

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Our President Speaks

Dear Members:

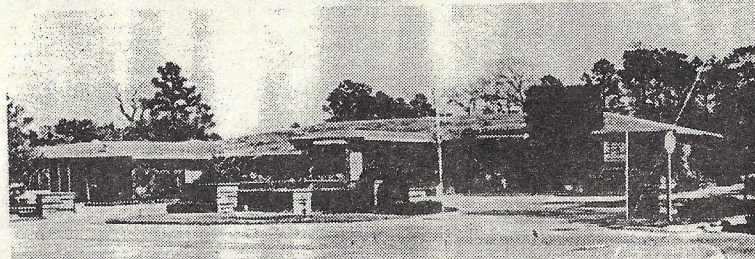
I would like to call your attention to two articles appearing elsewhere in this issue of the Pine Needle. One is in regards to the new Public Relations Committee created at our first board meeting. Board Member I. W. Phillips agreed to be chairman of this committee, with its primary function to be the sale of the memberships now owned by Pine Forest Country Club. This is a tremendous undertaking, but if they are successful in creating a fall membership, most of our problems will be small ones. Anyone desiring to work on this project should contact I. W. Phillips, as he will be very happy to add your name to his team.

Also, I would like to say that we are very fortunate to have our former chef back with us. Jack Pelczar served as chef at this club for approximately five years, when Ralph Holmes was our club manager. At that time we had a reputation for having the finest food of any club in this area. We intend to have that reputation once more.

Sincerely yours,
BILLY G. STROUD



MEET YOUR PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE
Pictured above, left to right: Chairman I. W. Phillips, Roy Hurst, Dick Laughlin, H. M. "Curly" Kellogg, Wally Nobles and Roger Jeffrey. Not pictured are Ed Brucher, John Blocher and Cecil Smith.



Pine Forest Country Club Golf Course

PATROLLER FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER - GO-COPS

For the month of October, we have first time recipients for the **Patroller of the Month Award**. The honor goes to **Tim and Luetta Allen**. We thank you sincerely for your devotion to help protect our neighborhood.

Thought for the Month

Give what you have. To someone, it may be better than you dare to think.

- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

HOUSE QUIZ UPDATE

The address of the house in picture #4 in the October edition of the *Gazette* is 220 West 34th Street in Section One. It is the house of none other than **Warren and Janice Walden**. We are still searching for the answer to #7 from last month. Any ideas?

F.Y.I.

TEN TIPS FOR ATM SAFETY

When using automatic teller machines please keep the following tips in mind with regard to your safety:

- Stay alert to your surroundings;
- Report any suspicious people. If you are uneasy, withdraw your ATM card immediately and leave. Call the police;
- Be prepared. Have deposits already filled out and count your change later;
- Keep your doors locked and engine running at drive-up ATMs;
- Treat your ATM card like cash — with care;
- Keep your PIN secret — don't write it down;
- Be courteous while waiting — don't crowd someone else;
- Protect your privacy. Position yourself to block view of the ATM keyboard;
- Save your receipts, they may contain personal information; and
- Report lost or stolen cards immediately.

- NationsBank Customer Service

GARDEN OAKS "MEMORIAL" GAZEBO

After months of planning, Garden Oaks has a gazebo located at the pocket park on Sue Barnett and 42nd Street. Thanks to the determination of resident **Earl Dragics** and a few G.O. neighbors who assisted him. The gazebo has been erected in memory of **Dragics' deceased wife, son, and grandson**. Of course, those of you who donated money months ago will finally see your dollars being used to memorialize your loved ones with granite markers, which are to be placed on the ground near the gazebo, while plaques memorializing **Dragics' loved ones** will be placed around the outside of the gazebo itself.

For those wishing to attend, a **Dedication Ceremony** for the gazebo has been set for **Saturday, November 25, at 11 a.m.**

This gift to the community is something that many think will enhance our neighborhood by beautifying it and making our park more functional. Lots of ideas regarding the usage of the gazebo have been brought up including using it for weddings, birthday parties, and as a place for Santa Claus to sit and visit with G.O. children during his annual appearance near Christmas.

Project planners say that while we did receive some donation money earlier in the year for the gazebo, we still need help to fully fund this project. This is a memorial gazebo, however, some of the donation money raised has gone toward the cost of the structure itself, while the rest will go toward the granite markers listing names requested by donors. Due to the cost of these granite markers being taken out of the project budget, we will need more money to actually "complete" the gazebo, its grounds, and build a reserve to use for a grounds maintenance fund.

I'd personally like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to Earl Dragics for sharing this gift with the community.

Mr. Dragics and his living son have generously contributed almost \$7,000 to this effort in an attempt to memorialize their family and at the same time beautify their community. Other people that played a big part in making this gazebo project a reality are **Bill Chastain and Builder, Harry James**. Harry James' company constructed the gazebo at cost. It is hoped that neighbors will show their gratitude to the **Dragics** and those who have worked on this project by donating money toward the upkeep of the property. For a \$50 donation you may have a granite marker laid on the grounds with the name of

whoever you wish to memorialize. (Maximum number of characters for the plaque is two rows, with ten characters on each row.) **As always, contributions of any type are appreciated and gladly accepted.**

In hopes that there will be other contributors, project coordinators are holding off on ordering the granite markers for a little while so that all of them can be finished at the same time. Even small donations from concerned citizens who are impressed by the improvement this project will bring the neighborhood will be graciously accepted.

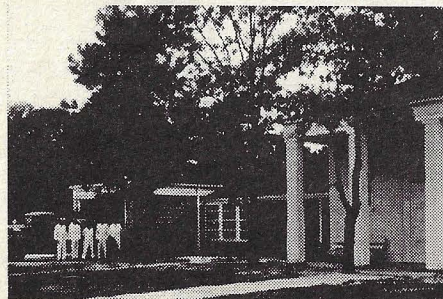
All donations for this effort should be sent to "The Gazebo Project," in care of Bill Chastain, 1011 Althea, Houston, TX 77018.

GO-COP REPORT

by Bill Chastain

There were no crimes reported for the month of August. This, of course, is great news! A side note is that if you were a victim of crime, but did not report it to the police, the police would have no way of knowing about the crime, and therefore, would not factor it in as part of their monthly crime statistic. When an area is crime-free, the police will dispatch some (not all) officers to areas where crime is more prevalent. This is a natural response by law enforcement officials to place officers where needed most. And if the criminal element observes less presence of law enforcement officers, they might take advantage of the situation. This means that you and our patrollers, as always, need to keep a watchful eye out. This recommendation is not to scare anyone, but simply to try to get you to be more aware of what is going on around you and keep watch for things that just don't seem right. The police are still around and only a phone call away, but having residents on the lookout seems to be the best protection there is until the police arrive.

The COP volunteers patrolled 99 and 1/4 hours in August 1995. National Night Out contributed to extra hours patrolled.



Garden Oaks Firehouse

St. Matthew's

United Methodist Church
SUNDAY WORSHIP 8:15 & 10:30 am
SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:15 am

Preschool - Mon - Fri 9-2
Mother's Day Out - Wed - Fri 9-2
ages 3 mos. - 5 yrs.
Parent's Nite Out - Fri 6:30-11:30

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WHAT?

Paper/Cardboard
 Newspaper, White paper, Computer paper, Catalogs, Magazines and Cardboard/box (corrugated box, cereal boxes, cracker boxes, cardboard, etc.).
 No Telephone Books.
 Metal
 Aluminum, Cooper, Brass, Tin, Stainless steel, Lead, Radiators, Iron, Carbide.
 Plastic (look for the triangular recycling symbol with the number 1 or 2)
 Clear soda bottles and Milk jugs.
 Glass
 Clear and Color separated.
 Please separate your materials because we are paid different prices for each item and it makes the drop off quicker for everyone.

WHERE?

Garden Oak Theater parking lot
 If you have a problem transporting your materials to the site, have a neighbor take it for you or call Martha Gebhardt to get on the pickup list.
 Volunteers please come to the site to help.

WHEN?

Second Saturday of every month from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. In case of bad weather, it will be postponed to the third Saturday and signs will be posted at the site.



Volunteers, including Civic Club President Ed de Alba (r), turned out for Recycling Saturday in October at the parking lot of Garden Oaks Theater. In August the Garden Oaks Recycling Program handled 10 tons of combined matter. Proceeds from recycling go to the Civic Club general fund.

MONTESSORI MATTERS

by Trish Mebrkam

This column is to further educate and reinforce Montessori methods and concepts in teaching. Friends of Montessori is a 100% volunteer, non-profit organization working with HISD at the Garden Oaks Elementary campus implementing 4 Montessori classrooms this year. **Feel free to contact Trish Mehrkam (688-4008)** with any comments, contributions, or for further information regarding the program.

VALUES ARE A HUGE PRIORITY!

The values encouraged in the Montessori classroom develop the whole child and provide a healthy learning environment. The Montessori approach models and encourages basic universal values: kindness, honesty, respect for each person's uniqueness, cooperation with others, tolerance of others, good sportsmanship, and nonviolence.

The process of Montessori education continuously focuses on these values. Modeling appropriate, kind, and considerate ways to behave encourages the child to make decisions towards self-discipline. The child learns to be responsible for his own behavior, his attitude, his expectations, his experiences, and ultimately, his life.

For example, under the guidance of the teacher the students are encouraged to participate in the day-to-day classroom management in order to work together as a community. Much of the decision making is a group effort. All the children are welcomed to voice what rules they want, vote on the appropriate rules, and are responsible to uphold the integrity of the class. The choice to mold their community at school empowers them with freedom to create the type of person they want to be, the environment they want to live in, and to choose and create the life they want to live.

The values upheld in the Montessori classroom contribute to how decisions are made and the approach the children take towards life. The children are encouraged to be tolerant of differences in ability, thought, and the way things are done. They are encouraged to be tolerant of the way each child dresses; how big, small, tall, or short they are; to respect each others' varying abilities and differences. A secure self-esteem is cultivated when differences are treated as if they are a normal part of what makes each person unique and respect for individuals is learned.

Values are a huge priority in forming the foundation of the Montessori process. Values and Montessori really do matter!



Steve Smith
Instructor

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**GARDEN OAKS
GARDEN CLUB NEWS...**

For anyone interested in becoming part of the Garden Oaks Garden Club, meetings are held the second Thursday of every month from 6:30 to 8 p.m. The Garden Club's meeting schedule for the rest of the year is as follows:

November 9:
Bromeliads

Guest: Bromeliad Society
Representative
December 14
Christmas Party

For further information regarding the Garden Oaks Garden Club, you may contact **Evelyn Anderson at 864-3485** or **Janice Walden at 869-6534**.

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FLYERS ARE \$75.00**

**DEADLINE FOR THE
DECEMBER GAZETTE IS
NOVEMBER 10TH**

THE GREEN SPOTS OF GARDEN OAKS

by Janice Walden
(Second in a series of three)

When a crane lowered a huge steel sculpture onto the green spot at Sue Barnett and 43rd, Art Park began. Plans were for this park to be a neighborhood project to grow both in art and garden. But big ideas, big plans, and a mighty big space don't always ensure an enthusiastic future. Just as several roads in Garden Oaks converge at this park, so too have many plans and ideas. The end result has been conflict, little community support, and a space too big for one volunteer to take care of. Chom Goldberg's huge steel sculpture is still Art Park's controversial centerpiece, and only piece of art. Beds and berms on the north side that were planned by a committee of residents led by then-Beautification Chairperson Jan Koenig, and professionally planted in 1991 with funding from the Civic Club have become overgrown. The brick paving rest area for joggers and pedestrians on the west side needs completion, some funding, and constant maintenance.

Through it all, Anne Kilgore has seen ideas come and go, and volunteers too. As one of the pioneers of Art Park, Anne can be credited for maintaining the fortitude to not only take care of the park on a regular basis, but commit to its plans and fulfill them. She and husband Scott MacClymonds along with Rusty Day arranged for the Goldberg sculpture in 1989. Anne initiated and has personally supervised the brick paving rest area. And, she rakes, weeds, prunes and plants the area. Her best helper is young Bobby Jeffries who lives across the street. Bobby's dad, Andy Jeffries, likes the park and supports the changes made there. He admits they bought their house on the corner of Sue Barnett and 43rd because of Art Park. From their breakfast room, "it looks like we have a bigger yard," he says.



Anne Kilgore oversees Art Park's maintenance and development

Art Park could be more well-manicured with volunteer help from the neighborhood. But, because Anne is usually the sole caretaker of the park, and because there is no sprinkler system for the grass, Anne has adopted a natural growth approach. Whatever grows under the present conditions, stays. There's lantana, turkscap, plumpago, daylilies, holly fern, mexican heather and crepe myrtles among the pine and oak trees. Once the brick work is completed, Anne would like to see more art in the park, and benches under the trees surrounding the brick work. A turn-of-the-century refurbished drinking fountain from the public parks system in Madison, Wisconsin will soon be installed for the many joggers who pass by.

At the very heart of Garden Oaks is the grande promenade, the green spot that, more than any other, makes a statement about Garden Oaks to the first-time visitor: the esplanade on Garden Oaks Boulevard. Since the early 1980s, Larry Nordenstrom has single-handedly maintained this esplanade in front of his house. With his time and money, Nordenstrom has cared for the esplanade as if it were his own. But the 72-year-old resident has given it up. "Nobody wants it," he protests. So, he's given it back to the city. "Let people see how the city takes care of it."

When Nordenstrom, a 35-year resident of Garden Oaks, first took on maintenance of the esplanade, the City of Houston Parks Department told him they would only assign maintenance to an individual, not a civic organization. So, Nordenstrom took personal responsibility, and had the esplanade's maintenance placed in his name.

To the casual observer, its caretaking appears relatively easy. Nordenstrom recalls when some young, new residents appeared on the scene full of enthusiasm and big ideas. They planted a little tree one weekend. Never returned. The tree died later.

On close inspection, this wooded strip of grass about twice the length of a football field is quite a chore for one man. There are trees to circumvent with the mower, stumps to weed-eat around, grass to water, sprinkler heads to fix, and trash to pick up. That's just maintenance, not to mention improvements. On average, Nordenstrom spent 15 to 20 hours a week maintaining the esplanade. In the summer, it was around 40 hours a week. Kids on their way to the elementary school would drop trash along the esplanade, and kick off sprinkler heads. Visitors to the professional building at the corner of Shepherd would empty trash from their cars in the parking lot, which blew into Nordenstrom's yard (until he built a fence), and still blows onto the esplanade. As we walked and talked, Nordenstrom pointed to the litter that had accumulated that day.

Although the city sunk pilings down the esplanade's center years ago to deter cars from driving across, fresh tire ruts show they still do it where no pilings exist. Recently, street workers dumped a monument of concrete at one end of the grass.

Despite these hassles, Nordenstrom remained faithful. With broad working hands, this now-retired general contractor sodded the esplanade with grass left over from his building sites, arranged and paid for the water meters and the sprinkler system. He persisted in getting "No Parking" signs put up along the boulevard to stop people from parking on the grass only to find out that people don't pay attention to signs. At his own expense, he placed treated timber on the esplanade's edge to prevent erosion, lowered the city's pilings with a saw, and planted azaleas to camouflage them. He bought a riding mower just for maintaining the grass.

Fifteen years and thousands of dollars later, after countless hours of mowing, planting and maintenance, Nordenstrom wants to do some traveling. He just returned from Louisiana. And, "my own yard needs work," he points out. "If everybody along this boulevard (eight residences) would mow and water the portion in front of their house, the esplanade would be taken care of." *Next month: Green spots with no name, not all forgotten.*

TYPO CORRECTION FROM ERROR MADE IN OCTOBER GAZETTE

In Janice Walden's article entitled *Green Spots of Garden Oaks (Part One)*, I (in my infinite editorial wisdom) mistakenly changed the grammar regarding the upkeep of Friendship Park/Garden to read, "Now, under an arrangement with the Garden Club, firemen, and Garden Oaks resident, Donald Mullins, keep the garden mowed on a regular basis." This was supposed to read, "Now, under an arrangement with the Garden Club, Fireman and Garden Oaks resident Donald Mullins mows the garden on a regular basis."

Sorry for the error Don. It was my fault, not Janice's. I wanted to correct this error to assure you that your efforts are very much appreciated.

GARDEN OAKS CIVIC CLUB

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NOVEMBER CALENDAR

November 7	Civic Club Meeting	7 p.m.
November 9	Garden Club Meeting	6:30 p.m.
November 10	Gazette Deadline	
November 11	Recycle Drop-Off	8 a.m. to 11 a.m.
November 16	Positive Interaction Prog.	7 p.m.
November 21	Heavy Trash Pick-up	

CIVIC CLUB MEMBERSHIP "DUES ARE DUE"

Civic Club dues are for each calendar year (Jan. 1 through Dec. 31). For your convenience, we have enclosed return-addressed envelopes in this issue of the Gazette to facilitate your effort to join by returning a check for annual dues inside this envelope.

PLEASE PAY 1996 DUES NOW.

Civic Club membership is voluntary, but a very much needed part of Garden Oaks' Civic funding. It is also important for you, our neighbors, to be involved in your community and the Civic Club is our best avenue for doing so.

Please fill out the coupon below and send to **Craig Lee, V.P. of Membership, 212 W. 34th St.**, and resolve to attend at least one Civic Club meeting every six months (first Tuesday of each month from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at Garden Oaks Baptist Church on Shepherd.)

GARDEN OAKS CIVIC CLUB ENROLLMENT & RENEWAL

Name: _____ Spouse: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Children/Birthdates: _____

Year moved to Garden Oaks: _____ Section#: _____

Paying Dues for calendar year: _____

ANNUAL FEE: Jan. 1-Dec. 31

Family: \$10 _____ Business: \$25 _____ Senior Citizen (G.O. Roots): \$5 _____

ADDITIONAL FUNDINGS:

Beautification: \$6 _____ GO Elementary Montessori Program*: \$6 _____

Plant Co-op: \$6 _____ GO COP (Citizen's Patrol): \$6 _____

Gazette (Newsletter): \$6 _____ **All of these: \$25 _____**

*Garden Oaks Civic Club dues have not changed in nearly 50 years, we rely on your generous additional support to help finance these community programs. These are suggested minimum amounts. *Gifts to the Montessori program are tax deductible.*

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: GARDEN OAKS CIVIC CLUB

Mail to: Craig Lee, Membership 212 W. 34th St. Houston, TX 77018

or call Craig at 802-0079 if you have any questions.

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