

Garden Oaks

A publication of the Garden Oaks Civic Club

Gazette

January 1997

Volume 20, No. 1

Exploratorium Promotes Hands-on Approach

Through a grassroots effort, children at Garden Oaks Elementary school now have a special science room, an exploratorium, in which to study grass roots. And spiders. And atoms. And bones.

An exploratorium is an age specific science classroom encouraging an exploring and hands-on approach to studying science.

Michael Abrams, a resident of Section 1, led this effort and was greatly supported by Eugenia Daniels, principal of the school, and Trish Hauck, the school's science teacher.

Officers have been named to continuing development of the exploratorium both in programs and in financial support. Tax free contributions can be made to this non-profit organization that will be used to ensure the students at Garden Oaks a first-rate science lab.

A ribbon cutting ceremony and open house was held on December 2. Teachers from other schools, HISD administrators, business supporters, and State Representative Sheila Jackson Lee attended the festivities.

Home Tour Committees Underway

by Laura Morgan, 1997 Home Tour Chairman

Committees were named for the 1997 Garden Oaks Home Tour at a meeting held on Wednesday, December 11 at the home of Laura Morgan, general chair. Committees and their responsibilities are:

Art & Printing

Works with artist to meet selection deadlines of posters, brochures and other print material. Prepares sketches of homes. Members are Judy Morowski and Shana Tatum.

Finance

Monitors expenses and reimbursements in-line with Home Tour budget. Collects money generated from ticket sales, raffle sales and consignment sales. Formulates procedures for handling inventory control of concession items. Members are Judy Morowski and Ann Ness.

Realtor Liaison

Acts as a liaison between realtors and Home Tour committee. Judy Morowski serves on this committee.

Solicitations

Writes to prospective home tour houses. Calls prospective homes for interested participation and arranges inspection dates. Coordinates all requests for donations for home underwriters, florists, tee-shirt underwriters, beverage concessions, and raffle items. Members are Susan Kostelecky, Tina Nieto, Lynn Sievers, and Janice Walden.

Silent Auction

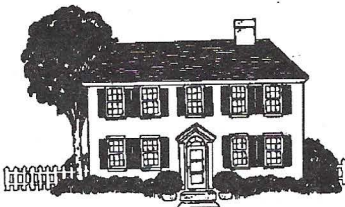
Coordinates all aspects of the Silent Auction. Tina Rowe serves on this committee.

Staffing

Obtains all volunteer (e.g., docents, door persons and concessionaires). Coordinates training workshops for docents and door persons. Prepares short narratives of homes. Communicates with homeowners as to scheduling. Coordinates a baby-sitting center for all volunteers. Members are Brenda de Alba, Susan Kostelecky, and Susan Spooner.

1997

Garden Oaks Home Tour Sunday, April 27, 1997



Volunteers Needed!
Call 694-1919

Solicitation letters to home owners requesting placing their home on the Home Tour are scheduled to go out January 3. Responses will be due January 17 with final selections being made by February 14. Six houses and six gardens will be featured.

Plans are underway to use Spark Park for various groups to spotlight Garden Oaks programs such as the Montessori Program, GO COP, Garden Club, etc. Also, under consideration are arts/crafts booths for fundraising. Tickets will be \$10/person the day of the tour and \$8/person in advance.

Next Home Tour meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 8, 6:30 p.m. at 907 W. 42nd, the home of Judy Morowski. Volunteers are still needed and meetings are open to everyone.

Carol Meyer



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President's Message

by Bennett Bartlett, 1997 Civic Club President

As incoming president of the civic club, I was asked to submit a brief sketch of my background and history in this neighborhood and to outline my plans for the future of Garden Oaks.

The first task is easy. I moved to Garden Oaks in 1989 attracted by the older homes and neighborhood feel. I worked at a large downtown law firm the first several years I lived here, and the demands on my time left me little opportunity to get involved in the community. I read the *Gazette* and applauded all of you for your efforts from afar, but, frankly, I wasn't any help. Several years ago, I moved to a smaller firm so that I would have time for things other than work including community projects.

I got to know Section 1 residents when I helped canvass for the neighborhood traffic plan. From that experience I became interested in our civic club and have been impressed that the volunteers who dedicate their time to helping this neighborhood really do see results. My wife, Chandra, has involved us in the Garden Oaks Baby-sitting Co-op, through which I have met neighbors from other sections, and she is active in the Montessori program at Garden Oaks Elementary where our daughter, Caitlin, attends school.

The efforts of so many of you have made Garden Oaks a really great neighborhood for our family. As an officer of the civic club, I am merely following in the footsteps of so many others, and I am pleased to be able to offer my time and energy to continuing that tradition.

As for the second question—my plans for the future of Garden Oaks—that is not so easy.

On election night in November (the national election, not mine, I was approved rather than elected), a cynical friend of mine jokingly asked me what I planned for my administration. In the spirit of the question, I responded, "I shall build a bridge to the past, and to the future." Not fooled, he replied, "So you're really just going to hang out in the middle and bide your time, huh?" He had me there.

I harbor hopes for this neighborhood, of course—hopes that will certainly take more than a year to realize—but I have no specific agenda. I see our club serving two

purposes. *First*, the civic club is a means for us to get to know each other and to share information of mutual interest. A worthy function in and of itself. But *second*, this civic club is the political body for our neighborhood, our voice

"This civic club is the political body for our neighborhood, our voice in the larger community."

in the larger community. Political progress to me is like opening a closed door that others do not want opened. Once the door is opened, it will close again if people do not work to keep it open. There are people who open doors and there are people who keep them open, and both are needed. Ed de Alba, our outgoing president (and others too numerous to mention here) have managed to open many doors. Our neighborhood is known at City Hall; now that's progress. My task is to help keep those doors open, and to knock on a few doors myself over the coming year.

I look forward to meeting all of you, and I hope you will feel free to bring your ideas to me. I have no doubt you'll feel free to bring your complaints. In closing, I want to say thank you, Ed, for doing such a good job. You've set the bar high, I hope I can reach it.

Garden Oaks Elementary Receives Top Honors

by Eugenia J. Daniels, Principal

Happy New Year from Garden Oaks Elementary! The November issue of *Texas Monthly* magazine listed your elementary school as one of the "Best of Texas" schools. Also, we were awarded a top ranking of "Exemplary" by the HISD Accountability System. In addition, we received a Four Star ranking in the *Houston Chronicle* last month. We could not have accomplished all this without the support of our parents and our Garden Oaks community! Thank you!

Garden Oaks Elementary has a multitude of programs to fit the needs of almost every child. The enrollment breakdown is as follows:

12%	Gifted/Talented
22%	Bilingual/ESL
17.5%	Special Education
16%	Montessori
32.5%	Regular Education

The children from all programs participate together in fine arts, PE, cultural and seasonal programs, lunch, tutorials, library, and after-school activities such as scouting, the YMCA care program, art and science classes.

The Houston Community College System also sponsors an ESL for Adults program on campus three nights a week. Families

Count, a family support organization funded through a grant administered by the DePelchin Children's Center, provides numerous classes and health-related activities for parents and their children.



We also have a very supportive and active PTA and volunteer group. Parent and community support truly make a difference in how our students perform academically. Our business partnerships include McCoy, Inc., Northwest Memorial Hospital, the Garden Oaks Civic Club, and numerous smaller businesses and sponsors. We include the civic club as a business partner because of the tremendous support we have received from your organization these past few years. Two non-profit organizations also raise money and provide academic support: Friends of Montessori and the Garden Oaks Elementary Exploratorium Group.

As you can see, we are rich indeed. We are very fortunate to have such support and assistance. If you would like to become involved in our school, please feel free to visit with us. We welcome you! Again, thank you so much!

Exxon Submits Plans

by Rich Stark

Exxon submitted architectural plans for approval to the Garden Oaks Board of Trustees, Architectural Review Committee headed by Herb Kellner.

If approved, then a meeting is planned between Exxon representatives and the Garden Oaks negotiating committee, headed by Rich Stark, Section 2 resident.

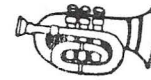
An update on negotiations will be presented at the January civic club meeting.

Garden Club

The next Garden Club meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 9, 6:30 p.m. The place had not been determined as of this writing. Call Lynn Sievers at 691-4789 for additional information.

January Civic Club Meeting

Tuesday, January 7, 7 p.m.
Garden Oaks Baptist Church
3206 N. Shepherd



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- 729 W. 39th St.
- 705 W. 39th St.
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Civic Club Meeting Minutes

by Lynn Sievers, Secretary

The December 3, 1996 meeting was opened by President Ed de Alba. He welcomed the guests, the GO Caroling organization, the Loving Arms Foundation. Ed mentioned that Santa will be at the Gazebo park at 42nd and Sue Barnett on December 17 and 18 from 7 to 9 p.m.

The Art Park December 7 workday was announced. Volunteers are needed to spread eight yards of mulch.

Committee Reports

Gazette Sheila Briones mentioned that the deadline for the January Gazette is December 6.

Traffic Plan Marc Roberts updated the speed hump information. In October, the city was out of funds for speed humps. The City Council recently authorized more funds, and the following list of streets will get speed humps on or before June 30, 1997. Lawrence between 30th and 34th. 33rd between Yale and Lawrence. Sue Barnett between 38th and 43rd and between 43rd and Alba. 41st between Shepherd and Sue Barnett and between Sue Barnett and Alba.

The Section 1A traffic plan (closure at Randall and Durham and an exit only at 30th) has come out of the city legal department. The city is performing further traffic studies now.

Graham Park Anne Spiering said that the playground equipment started going in on December 2, trees have been planted, and the current projected completion date is Christmas.

GO COP Carl Waters reported that patroller Lucille Mehrkam had a heart attack recently and is a patient in Spring Branch hospital. He met with the Garden Oaks Plaza Civic Association. They had zero crimes last month while Garden Oaks had nine. He reminded everyone to lock their doors, lock their cars, and to call the police if they see anything suspicious.

Craig Lee, Lynn Sievers, and Rick Englert presented outgoing president, Ed de Alba and outgoing Gazette editor, Alex Martinez with good-bye remarks, gift certificates, and posters from the Neighborhood Night Out.

Rick Englert led the group devotional before the feast.

Audrey Vallance introduced Audrey Gossama, founder and executive director, Loving Arms Foundation. She thanked the neighborhood for participating in the project for the third year. Donations of paper towels, bleach, etc. are needed and appreciated.

Audrey sang *White Christmas*, the carolers sang Christmas music, and then led several sing-alongs to end the December meeting.



Clip here and mail to: Craig Lee @ 212 W. 34th Street

Garden Oaks Civic Club Membership Renewal Form

Name(s): _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Children/birthdates: _____

Year moved to Garden Oaks: _____ Section# _____ Paying Dues for: 19 _____

Annual Dues (January 1-December 31):

Household \$10 _____ Senior Citizen \$5 _____ Business \$25 _____

Additional Support Needs:

GO Elem. Montessori* \$6 _____ Garden Club \$6 _____ All six of these

Gazette (Newsletter) \$6 _____ Beautification \$6 _____ \$30 _____

GO COP (Patrol) \$6 _____ Plant Co-op \$6 _____

* Gifts to the Montessori program are tax deductible.

Make Checks Payable to: Garden Oaks Civic Club

To Pump or not to Pump?

by John & Rosa Goodman, Section 3 Residents

Just a little more than two years ago my wife, Rosa, and our two children, Alexander and Desiree', became residents of this great neighborhood of Garden Oaks. It took us almost two years and at least four contracts to sell our old house at 615 Reid which is on the north side of 610 at Irvington Boulevard. It is surprisingly similar to 30th Street in Section 1.

Why is this important? It is important to us and our neighbors in Section 1 because we understand firsthand what it is like to live five houses away from a 24-hour gas station with a carwash.

The noise that a gas station itself creates is minimal. The maintenance, however, was a nuisance. Every gas station pressure cleans its concrete. The gas station on Irvington cleaned theirs on Mondays at 1:00 a.m. The noise and vibration from the compressor would wake us up every time. This nuisance was finally corrected after some very irate phone calls to the store manager at 1:00 a.m. and promising Chevron that we would gladly cut up their credit card. Another problem was the 18-wheeler tank trucks driving down Reid Street to deliver gas to the station. I'm sure we have all felt and heard on oversized truck streak down our street.

The biggest problem was with the patrons of the gas station. Cars would regularly drive down Reid Street with their flat tire flopping on the rim. Some would even park their cars under the trees in my front yard to dry them after coming out of the carwash. We would discourage this on weekends, and our block captain would chase them away during the week. Loud music with lots of bass would send tremors into the house at all hours but most often on Friday and Saturday nights.

Trash was also a big problem. Patrons of the gas station would toss bottles and chip bags out and the wind would blow them into

the yards of the neighbors. This station only has a small cooler and snack stand.

The last problem was the lights from the station and from the patron's cars. The Chevron station upgraded its lighting "for the safety of its patrons" and beamed unwanted light into houses and yards at night. To block out the headlights shining into our bedrooms, we erected an 8' high fence.

Are there any good things about having a gas station five houses away? It was convenient to get gas on the way home. We could walk down to get gas for the lawn mower or fill up the tires on our bicycles. This station did not have a pay phone which cut down on traffic and persons hanging around waiting for phone calls.

The gas station was not the main reason we moved out of 615 Reid. Other reasons included the freeway noise, the absent landlord across the street who turned three houses into one large junk yard, and the City of Houston for not enforcing its own building codes.

The main reason we moved to Garden Oaks are our children, Alexander and Desiree'.

Neighborhood News

by Carol Smith

If you are growing flowers or children or both, you have Garden Oaks experts who have shared their experience in print.

The Texas Flowerscaper: A Seasonal Guide to Bloom, Height, Color, and Texture is written by Kathy Huber. Kathy resides in Section 1 among hundreds and hundreds of plants and is the garden editor of the *Houston Chronicle*.

Why Children Misbehave and What to Do About It is by Christine Adams and Ernest Fruge' who also live in Section 1 and are both practicing psychologists.

Both books are available in local bookstores.

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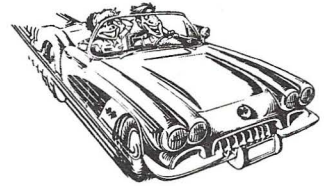
Tickets Target Speeders

by Angela Dickson, Constable Program

Residents, please slow down and obey stop and yield signs! We are having as much speeding and failure to obey traffic signs from residents as we do from cut-through traffic.

Take heed; we are working to have radar restored to our deputy's car and plan to have tickets issued to all violators, residents and nonresidents alike. The days of not being stopped or getting off with a

warning will be ending. This decision was not made lightly and is supported not only by myself but also by many of our block captains and civic club officers. This policy will apply to everyone including me!



Steps to Keep Home and Area Safe

by Angela Dickson, Constable Program

- ◆ Do not hire wandering lawn workers. According to our deputy, they are known to commit robberies. Seek a reputable lawn service.
- ◆ If you see suspicious behavior, call dispatch immediately. Don't wait until something has already happened. Be a good neighbor and call if you see anything suspicious. If, for example, you hear breaking glass at a neighbor's house, call dispatch immediately. Do not wait!
- ◆ Now that it is dark early, be especially careful going from your car to your house. Your path should be visible from the road and well lit. If you pull into your driveway and notice anything suspicious, don't get out of the car! Go to a neighbor and call dispatch immediately.
- ◆ To reduce risk to your home and self, consider an alarm system. Display alarm signs and stickers.



Garden Oaks Constable Program Enrollment Form

Yes, I would like to enroll in the Garden Oaks Constable Program serving Sections 1 & 1A only. (New enrollee's dues can be pro-rated).

Name(s): _____ **\$200 annual dues**

Address: _____ Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Phone: Home _____ Work _____

Make checks payable to:

Garden Oaks Civic Club

Mail to:

Angela Dickson

3114 Lawrence, Houston, Texas 77018

Call 802-0817 with any questions.

Welcome to the Neighborhood!

The following residents have recently joined the civic club:

Bob & Jo Bewley; Colleen Blakey; Dana & Tim Brewer; Edgar & Mary Theresa Chucle; Greta Dorsey; Roslyn Dupre & Norman Allegar; Bob & Mary Groneman; Jack & Bernice Havens; Jeannie Hughes; Lisa Peters & Jim Capfer; Brian & Gwen Syzdek; Jim & Lou Ann Taylor; and Robert & Theresa Wittenberg.

Patrollers Log Many Hours

by Carl Waters, Jr., Citizens-on-Patrol

Editing of last month's patrol article left out the names of Mildred Warhol and Edith Rider, two charter members who are retiring as patrolers. Thanks again for your years of support to this program.

On December 1, 1996, Lucille Mehrkam, wife of Woody Mehrkam, suffered a heart attack. At the time I prepared this article she was expected to make a full recovery and return home soon. Best wishes for a full and speedy recovery.

HPD crime statistics for October reported nine crimes in the Garden Oaks area. Garden Oaks Plaza residents will be pleased to hear none of the crimes were reported in their area. Citizen patrollers and bases logged 74.5 hours of service in November. Bill and Mary Hines led the way with 36 hours patrolled between them. Way to go!

I'd like to thank outgoing association president Ed de Alba for his support and cooperation during my first year as coordinator for the Citizen's Patrol. I'm looking forward to working with the new president and board members in the coming year. Hey, Ed, if you don't know what to do with all your free time, we sure could use another patroller!

Speed Humps Receive Additional Funding

by Marc Roberts, Neighborhood Traffic Program

Recently the Houston City Council made additional funds available for speed humps, and the city has now indicated that the following neighborhood streets have received funding, and speed humps will be constructed by the end of June, 1997:

Lawrence Street between 30th and 34th
33rd between Yale and Lawrence
41st between Shepherd and Sue Barnett
41st Street between Sue Barnett and Alba
42nd street between Shepherd and Sue Barnett
Sue Barnett between 38th and 43rd
Sue Barnett between 43rd and Alba

Presently in Garden Oaks, speed humps have been installed on portions of Alba, 34th, and 38th streets. To obtain more information or to report problems with speed humps, contact the city at 658-4300.

The city's legal department has completed the review of the Neighborhood Traffic Project (NTP) application for Garden Oaks Section 1A which is Section 1 west of Shepherd. The NTP application for Section 1A calls for the closure of Randall Street at Durham and that an exit-only device be placed on 30th street at Durham. If you have any questions, contact Garden Oaks Section 1A resident Rod Walker at 868-2469.

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Rule No. 2:
It's all the small stuff.

Baby-Sitting Co-op

by Andrea Spiering

Would you like to get to know other Garden Oaks families? The Garden Oaks Baby-sitting Co-op can help. This is a club organized and run by Garden Oaks parents who wish to exchange baby-sitting hours for free time during the day, in the evening, or on weekends. Quarterly meetings as well as family parties allow members and children to become better acquainted and encourage the exchange of baby-sitting between member families.

Recently, the Co-op added Parents' Night Out to our activities. This gives parents two Saturday nights' baby-sitting each month hosted by a different member family each time. It's been a great success for the kids and the parents! Other new activities are our Mother's Night Out and Father's Night Out. These are held periodically at area restaurants, giving us a chance to get out with other parents in a social setting.

Though membership is limited to 30 families, we have several openings. If you are interested in joining, call Chandra Bartlett (861-2155) or Andrea Spiering (862-6138).




The *Gazette* is the official publication of the Garden Oaks Civic Club and is published on a monthly basis.

**Submission
deadline is the sixth of each
month for the following
month.**

Submit articles to:
Sheila Briones, Editor
Garden Oaks *Gazette*
3202 1/2 Lawrence
Houston, Texas 77018
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Feel free to post on refrigerator or in a conspicuous place!

January 1997

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 New Year's Day! HISD Holiday	2 HISD Holiday	3 HISD Holiday	4
5	6 HISD Teacher In-Service Gazette Deadline	7 Civic Club Meeting 7 p.m. Garden Oaks Baptist Church	8 Home Tour Meeting 6:30 p.m. 907 W. 42nd	9 Garden Club Meeting 6:30 p.m.	10	11 Recycling 8-11 a.m.
12	13	14	15	16 PIP Meeting	17	18
19	20 Martin Luther King Day HISD Holiday	21 Heavy Trash Pick-up	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

1997 Garden Oaks Civic Club
P.O. Box 92155, Houston, Tx., 77206

President:
Bennett Bartlett, 511 W. 33rd, 861-2155

Vice President, Membership:
Craig Lee, 212 W. 34th, 802-0079

Second Vice President, Gazette Editor:
Sheila Briones, 3202 1/2 Lawrence, 861-8091
Gazette Co-Editor:
Carol Smith, 335 W. 32nd, 869-1282

Treasurer:
Ray Housley, 407 W. 34th, 863-7316

Secretary:
Lynn Sievers, 851 LaMonte, 691-4789

Committee Chairs

Beautification: Ed & Brenda de Alba, 694-5934

Citizens-on-Patrol: Carl Waters, Jr., 864-1992

Constable Program: Angela Dickson, 802-0817

Education Liaison: Jane Ann Roberts, 861-8512

Garden Club: Janice Walden, 869-6534

Gazette Advertising Director: Oscar Ochoa, 896-0052

Gazette Hand Delivery: Brenda de Alba, 694-5934

1997 Home Tour: Laura Morgan, 694-1919

Hospitality & Refreshments: Terry Jeanes, 680-8550

Neighborhoods-to-Standard: Rich Stark, 691-1067

Neighborhood Traffic Program: Marc Roberts, 861-8512

Programs: Terry Jeanes, 680-8550

Recycling: Gilbert King, 523-5874

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