

Garden Oaks

A publication of the Garden Oaks Civic Club

Gazette

May 1997

Volume 20, No. 5

City to Start Curbside Recycling

Garden Oaks will be added to the City of Houston Curbside Recycling Program in May 1997.

During the week of May 5, Garden Oak residents will receive an 18-gallon green recycling bin at the curb. The first curbside recycling collection day for our neighborhood is Thursday, May 15. This collection is biweekly, so the bins will be emptied every other Thursday. Recycling bins must be at the curb by 7:00 a.m. on each collection day.

A brochure will be inside of each bin describing acceptable materials and how they should be prepared. A biweekly collection calendar will also be distributed. In June 1997 Garden Oaks residents will receive, *Reuseette*, the City of Houston's Recycling newsletter. This newsletter contains current news and updates about the recycling program and future collection schedules.

These items will be accepted in the curbside recycling program:

Newspapers, magazines, shopping catalogs and color ad inserts. These items should be loose and free of binding materials such as string and rubber bands.

Telephone books.

Plastic bottles and jars marked only #1 and #2.

Cans: Tin, aluminum and empty aerosol cans.

Glass food and beverage bottles and jars.

Used motor oil drained into clean detergent-free, non-chemical containers.

The city is modifying its

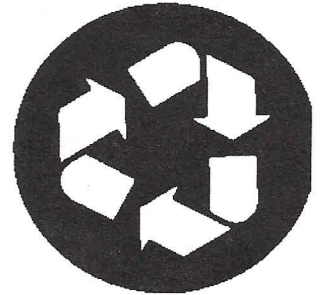
collection fleet to two material sort split-body collection vehicles.

These vehicles allow newspaper, magazines, shopping catalogs and ad inserts to be collected on one side of the truck while all other acceptable materials are collected on the other side.

Office, computer paper and cardboard are not included in this program. These materials may be recycled at Garden Oaks Element-

ary School or any other school that recycles cardboard.

For more information about this neighborhood service, please contact the Recycling Hotline at 713-865-4201.



Home Tour Underwriters Make the Grade

The 1997 Home Tour Committee wants to extend their thanks to the following businesses and individuals who helped make our home tour such a success through their financial contributions.

A full report of this great event will appear in the June *Gazette*.

Underwriters (\$250)

Tom Wilson, Optima Mortgage
Warren Walden, Houston Residential Serv.
San Jacinto Stone
Suzanne Debien, Henry S. Miller
Rean Bowden, Swilley Hudson
Harry James, Builder
Leslie Lammer, Houston Structural
David Ballard
Judi Morawski, ERA Stephens Property
Judy Camp, Prudential Properties
Terry Jeanes, Re/Max Metro
AJ's Landscaping
de Alba Properties, Ed & Brenda de Alba
Campos Roofing, Gus Campos
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President's Message

by Bennett Bartlett, 1997 Civic Club President

I'm not sure what difference my message last month made, but at April's meeting I met several people I had never seen before. To them and to others I saw but did not get a chance to meet: Thanks for coming; it was good to see new faces amongst us. Come again soon.

If you missed the April meeting, Marilyn Leday from the city's recycling program spoke to us about the city's intent to bring curbside recycling to Garden Oaks. To learn more about the planned curbside recycling, read the minutes of the April meeting and the story on page one of this issue of the *Gazette*.

Personally I am sorry to see our own recycling program go. Even though the program is not making any money for us anymore, the camaraderie of neighbors working together for a common goal was always nice to see on a Saturday morning. Our recycling volunteers provided a worthy service. A hearty thank you to Gilbert King and his crew in green is in order. Thanks y'all.

Now that our recycling program is practically a thing of the past, where shall we funnel all of that civic-minded energy? May I suggest the Beautification Committee. Ed and Brenda de Alba, our beautification co-chairs have several projects in the works; the most impressive right now is the crushed gravel pathway through the center of the esplanade so that children walking to and from school do not need to walk in the street.

In my last discussion with Ed, he was concerned about simply having enough people with shovels to spread that quantity of gravel.

If the time comes, I propose a neighborhood work party. Now, I am the first to admit that it is like pulling teeth to get me to go to such an event, but when I go, I am always glad that I did. Imagine a group of us working and talking together, meeting new people and building something lasting in which we can take pride. At the risk of sounding like a civic cheerleader, I think it would be fun. Ed and Brenda, my shovel's ready; say the word.

One last quandary for this month. The owner of the vacant lot in Section 1 behind Conn's has asked me what sort of business we might allow to occupy that space. For obvious reasons, he cannot find a buyer to put a residence there, and the lot is restricted to residential use in our deed restrictions.

It has been suggested to me that once we allow a variance to nonresidential use, we can never go back. It seems to me, how-

ever, that the deed restrictions are ours, and we can write them any way we want, but I may be wrong. I'll look into that.

In the meantime, is there anything we might find acceptable? Maybe a florist or some sort of business like a dentist that does not require deliveries by large trucks. The proposal a year or two ago to put in an I-HOP restaurant met with stiff resistance, so it may be that a majority of us simply do not want business there at all.

Let's explore this at the next civic club meeting on May 6th.

"Imagine a group of us working and talking together, meeting new people and building something lasting in which we can take pride."

**May Civic Club Meeting
Tuesday May 6, 1997
7:00 p.m.
Garden Oaks Baptist Church**

Civic Club Meeting Minutes

President Bennett Bartlett opened the meeting at 7:07 p.m. on April 1, 1997. Officers present were Bennett Bartlett, Craig Lee, Ray Housley and Sheila Briones. Rob Stanchi took the minutes for Andrea Spiering. Residents: 45. Visitors: Barbara Milner and Robyn Heck from Central Bank and Maggie and Ryan Sullivan from Tulsa. Copies of the meeting agenda and April *Gazette* were available. A motion to accept the minutes of the March meeting as published in the *Gazette* was made and passed by acclamation.

President's Report

Recycling: Marilyn Leday, City of Houston Recycling Manager, announced that curb side service will begin May 15 and be every other Thursday. The following items will be accepted: newspapers, magazines, catalogs, color ad inserts, telephone books, plastic bottles, cans (aluminum, tin, steel), and used motor oil. **No cardboard or computer paper.** Take these to Garden Oaks Elementary. The city will provide green plastic bins and a brochure explaining the program. Put the bins on the curb by 7 a.m. If green bins supplied cannot hold all your recyclables, use paper bags. No plastic bags!

Gazette Advertising : Susan Kostelecky has accepted this position.

Differential Response Unit: Membership agreed to donate a flyer insert in May *Gazette* for the unit.

Vice-President's Report: Craig Lee reported that the last two Garden Oaks signs were painted by John Goodman, Craig and Christopher Lee. New resident packages will be assembled by the Welcoming Committee.

Treasurer's Report: Ray reported that we currently have \$23,174 in the Garden Oaks accounts. The constable program needs \$750 to complete its obligations by May 30 when that contract expires.

Beautification: Brenda de Alba announced that the next meeting is Tuesday, April 8, at 858 Lamonte. Park captains have come forward for Sections 2, 3, 4, and 5. Thanks to: Kermit Foster for sign repair; Craig and Christopher Lee and John Goodman for sign painting; Earl Dragics for the flower bed added to Gazebo Park; and Gary Harmon for help with irrigation issues. Park captain for Art Park is David Bombach and for 30th and Randall are Craig and Peggy Kramer. Keiji Asakura has prepared preliminary plans for the esplanade which were reviewed with Garden Oaks Boulevard residents on March 15. Beautification committee is still going forward with grant work with the city. The Gazebo needs to be re-stained and Art Park brick repair is needed.

Continued on page 7.



Clip here and mail to: Craig Lee @ 212 W. 34th Street, Houston, Texas 77018

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 five of these

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

GO COP (Patrol) \$6 _____

* Gifts to the Montessori program are tax deductible.

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SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:15 a.m.

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Mother's Day Out - Wed-Fri 9-2

(ages 3 mos. - 5 years)

Parent's Night Out - Fri 6:30-11:00

Senior Adult Exercise

Mon, Tues, Thur - 4:15 - 5:00

4300 N. Shepherd @ Crosstimbers

697-0671

Pastor: Tom Crowe

GO Elementary Readies for Next Year

by Jeannie Daniels, Garden Oaks Elementary School Principal

Garden Oaks Elementary is currently preparing our School Improvement Plan (SIP) for the 1997-98 school year. One of our major initiatives will be to support HISD's Project Reconnect. This project is a major effort to improve school-community relationships through increased communication and direct involvement between the school and its community.

The teachers and staff at Garden Oaks Elementary are very fortunate that we have a positive working relationship with our civic club and a number of businesses and churches. You have supported our school initiatives and programs. You have also assisted us with everything from public works concerns to the beautification of our campus and neighborhood. We have a number of people who have raised their children to adulthood and no longer have children attending public schools. We have some parents who choose to send their children to private, parochial or magnet schools or who home school their children. We need to build a working relationship with all our publics.

One early strategy we propose is a grandparent/senior citizen Welcoming Committee for our Pre-K and Kindergarten students on the first day of school. Think how wonderful it would be for a three-, four- or five- year old child to be greeted on his or her very first day of school by someone offering friendship and a hug! From a child's perspective, school would become a magical and wonderful place to be. You will be hearing more about this in June and August. Be watching and listening for it. We need everybody's help.

And that's really the point. We do need everyone's help in the community. That is what makes our school what it is. We want to continue to improve and to provide the best education possible for our students. HISD already does a better job educating low-income students than the suburban districts (see *Houston Chronicle*, April 5, 1997). Garden Oaks can truly excel because we are fortunate enough to be part of this neighborhood and community.

Neighborhood Church News

Garden Oaks Baptist Church at 3206 N. Shepherd is undergoing remodeling on their sanctuary. The present sanctuary was built in 1954. The church members are extensively renovating their sanctuary to provide attenders with a beautiful and comfortable place of worship.

Pastor Jeff Rees reports, "Our first service back in the sanctuary will be Mother's Day, May 11, 1997. We will observe a special dedication on Sunday, June 1, 1997. I hope many members of the community will visit us on these special days."

St. Rose of Lima Church and School, 3600 Brinkman, offers classes from Pre-K through 5th grade. A full educational curriculum including art, music, computer and physical education is presented within a Catholic environment. A limited number of openings for the 1997-1998 school year are available. School tours may be scheduled. Call Irene Skorpunski at the school office at 692-9123.

St. Matthew's United Methodist Church is offering Kids' Day Out for the seventh year this summer for elementary students ages 6-11. Art projects, crafts, field trips and indoor and outdoor activities are some of the fun events planned. Kids' Day Out sessions are on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Extended care is available until 5:30 p.m. Call 692-6055 to enroll your children. St. Matthew's is located at 4300 N. Shepherd at Crosstimbers.

Beautification Update

by Brenda de Alba, Beautification Committee Chair

I'm happy to report that we now have designated captains for all neighborhood green spaces except one, the Circle Park in Section 1 at the entrance to Garden Oaks on 34th St. Our newest captains are David & Joanna Bohmbach, *Art Park* and Craig & Peggy Kramer, *Triangle Park* in Section 1A.

Keiji Asakura completed preliminary drawings for the Garden Oaks Blvd. Esplanade project and a meeting was held March 15th to review the plans with the boulevard residents. The project is being enthusiastically received as evidenced by the attendance of 70 percent of the Esplanade homeowners at the meeting. We have finalized and submitted our matching grant paperwork to the City of Houston and now we're in a wait-and-see mode. Even if we aren't awarded a matching fund, we are definitely proceeding with this project! We intend to plant approximately 44 understory trees (15 gallon) and 54 flowering shrubs (5 gallon) as part of the plan. We will create a crushed granite path through the center of the Esplanade as well as install devices to discourage and prevent illegal parking.

Thanks to the following people for their recent help:

Kermit Foster, Craig Lee, Christopher Lee and John Goodman for repairing and painting the two signs on 43rd St.

Gary Harmon for offering his assistance with irrigation and sprinkler system issues for both the Alba/Azalea Triangle Park and for the Esplanade project and for offering to help us obtain plants.

Alex Martinez for pruning the crape myrtles in Friendship Garden.

Earl Dragics for an additional bed with plantings by the Gazebo.

Donald Mullen of D.J.'s Lawn Service for mowing and maintenance service for the Esplanade in return for free *Gazette* advertising.

I know I'm beginning to sound like a broken record, but we still need additional volunteers. We have very few names to call on to help us maintain the green spaces. The number to call is 694-5934.

Donate a Tree or Shrub

Help make the Garden Oaks Esplanade Project a reality! Show your neighborhood support by donating a tree or shrub to the esplanade. \$50 will buy a 15 gallon tree and \$10 will buy a 5 gallon shrub. What better way to memorialize a friend or loved one than with a beautiful flowering tree or shrub? Donations will be recognized in subsequent *Gazette* issues. The following trees and shrubs have been carefully chosen for their beauty and color as well as their attractiveness to birds.

- Trees: Crape Myrtle, Red Bud, Mountain Laurel, Savanna Holly, Saucer Magnolia, Dogwood, Mexican Plum and Texas Sage

- Shrubs: Azalea, Sweet Olive, Mahonia, American Beauty Berry, Hydrangea and Chinese Witch Hazel



Donate a tree or shrub for the Esplanade Project!

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Amount Enclosed: _____

Check one: Tree () Number = _____ Shrub () Number = _____

Memorial to: _____

Make checks payable to: **Garden Oaks Civic Club**

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Bible Study - 9:45 am

Worship Services - 11:00 am & 5:00 pm

AWANA - 6:00 pm

Home Fellowship Groups - 6:00 pm

Wednesday Devotional - 6:30 pm

Mother's Day Out & Preschool

9:00 am to 2 pm, Tues. & Thurs.

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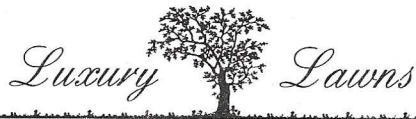
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All writers who are contributing articles to the *Gazette*, please provide a hard copy and a 3 1/2" disk. Use Microsoft Word (Mac or IBM format) or text only.

Deadline for the *Gazette* is the sixth of each month for the following month.

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\$200 for six months
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Letter to the Editor

After reading the President's message in the April *Gazette*, I felt the need to write this letter. Mr. Bartlett's sentiments echoed many of mine, especially how intimidating the civic club meetings can be and how a newcomer might feel uncomfortable. I commend Mr. Bartlett in his acknowledgment of the problem and his willingness to hear suggestions from others.

My husband, Carl Waters, and I moved to Garden Oaks three years ago and decided to become active in our community. We began almost immediately attending the civic club meetings, participating in recycling and we joined the Constable Program. My husband also became involved in Citizens on Patrol, and he is now the coordinator.

At the civic club meetings I listen while committee members stand up and plead for volunteers to help with their latest projects. I have never received a telephone call back to work on a project in which I have showed an interest. In speaking with friends and neighbors I am not the only one whose desire to volunteer and telephone calls have been unanswered. I would like to suggest that if a resident offers to volunteer for a project or committee, we should telephone them back within 48 hours.

I believe it is important to call a willing person back immediately, sincerely thank them for their interest in the project, etc., and clearly explain the work and commitment that will be needed by them to complete the project. If we don't make volunteers feel needed, they will seek other organizations that will.

If you want to volunteer for the Citizens on Patrol program, we will return your call immediately. To the residents in the neighborhood, Carl and I welcome your comments or suggestions regarding the program. And to the dozen or so volunteers that are patrolling and working the base stations to keep our neighborhood safer, thank you.

Leslie Waters
Resident, Section 1A

Poisonous Plant Alert

Did you know that the beautiful, blooming azalea in your yard could cause vomiting, muscle weakness, and could be fatal if ingested? That amazing blue hyacinth that just bloomed the other day could cause nausea and diarrhea. And the caladiums you are planning for that shady bed near the back door could cause irritation, swelling and may block breathing or swallowing.

Many common household plants, garden bulbs, ivies, and shrubs that we tenderly care for are toxic and could cause a wide variety of negative symptoms. Children are especially in danger as they explore and put things in their mouths.

The Texas State Poison Center has a list of poisonous plants and household products which should be available from

your child's pediatrician or by contacting the Poison Center.

The Poison Center recommends two precautions: 1) Keep plants out of your toddler's reach. 2) Become an informed plant owner. Know the botanical and common names of your plants and write the names on the plants' containers.

If you do suspect that your child has ingested a poisonous plant, call the Texas State Poison Center 1-800-764-7661. They offer professional advice 24 hours a day.



Continued from page 3.

Civic Club Minutes

Donald Mullen of D.J.'s Lawn Service has adopted the esplanade. **1997 Home Tour:** Judi Morawski announced that all homes and gardens have been underwritten. Shuttle depot is available at Garden Oaks Plaza Shopping Center to take people around tour. Tickets will be sold at tour sites and at plaza. Tickets are \$8 in advance and \$10 on tour day. Raffle tickets are also available.

GO-COP: Carl Waters, Jr. reported that 12 patrollers help protect 1,500 homes. Five reported crimes in February. Patrollers of Month: Bill and Mary Hines. Residents be on the lookout for a large man in blue Mustang following female joggers. More patrollers are needed. Call Carl to volunteer.

Constable Program: Charlie Dickson announced that contract went up 15 percent for 1997-98. Two committee spots are still open.

Education Liaison: Jane Ann Roberts reminded everyone that school is out May 8. Watch for children. Other dates: April 8, Math Night; April 10, Reading Night; April 25, Talent Show; and April 29 and 30, TAAS Test for 3, 4, 5 grades. The Montessori Pancake Breakfast brought in \$1,300. The Heights Chamber of Commerce donated \$5,000 to Friends of Montessori. Adopt a classroom and come to read to a class. Contact Ms. Daniels.

Garden Club: Janice Walden brought Shumard oak trees for sale: \$10 for a 5 gallon tree, \$7 for a 3 gallon, and \$3 for a 1 gallon. Pick it up now and plant in December.

Old Business: None

New Business: Laura Morgan made a motion that 40 percent of the home tour net proceeds go to the Beautification Committee. Seconded and passed by acclamation.

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

Suspicious Vehicle Follows Joggers in Recent Incident

by Carl Waters, Jr., GO-COP

I would like to thank Melinda Garza, Section 4, who alerted the Citizens on Patrol (COP) to a potential problem in our neighborhood. Ms. Garza reported a suspicious vehicle following female joggers in Section 4. HPD was notified of this possibly hazardous situation.

This individual, a large Asian or Hispanic male, was following slowly behind female joggers who were running with their dogs. He appears in the neighborhood on Saturday or Sunday around 9:00 a.m. driving a dark blue 1989 Ford Mustang with a black car bra on the hood, Texas license plates VGX 72D. If you see this person, call the police immediately at 222-3131 or 911 if an emergency exists.

For February five crimes were reported in Garden Oaks. Burglaries were in the 1000 block of W. 43 St. on Feb. 6 at 12:15 p.m.; the 1500 block of Sue Barnett on Feb. 21 at 8:00 p.m.; and the 700 block of W. 38 St. on Feb. 24 at 8:30 a.m. A burglary of a motor vehicle occurred in the 900 block of W. 42 St. on Feb. 24 at 10:00 a.m.; the narcotics arrest was in the 500 block of W. 33 St. on Feb. 17 at 9:15 p.m.

In February, COP patrollers and bases were in operation for 78 1/4 hours. Thanks again to all our hard working volunteers.

Doug and Megan Barlow were selected patrollers of the month for May. Megan and Doug began patrolling in October 1995. They have chosen a gift certificate from Home Depot as their reward.

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MASSES

Saturday: 5:45 p.m. (Vigil)
Sunday:
7:30 a.m., 9 a.m.*, 10:45 a.m.*, 6 p.m.
Monday-Friday:
6:15 and 8:15 a.m.
1st Saturday of ea. mon.: 8:15 a.m.
* Babysitting available



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
(713) 861-8091

Feel free to post on refrigerator or in a conspicuous place!

May 1997

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4 Women's Soccer 1:30 p.m. YMCA 34th St.	5 Recycling Bins delivered to homes sometime this week	6 Civic Club Mtg. 7 p.m. Garden Oaks Baptist Church Gazette Deadline	7 Home Tour Follow-up Meeting 7 p.m. 722 Garden Oaks	8 Garden Club Meeting 6:30 p.m. 970 Althea	9 HISD (no school) Teacher Preparation Day	10
11 Mother's Day Women's Soccer 1:30 p.m. YMCA 34th St.	12	13	14	15 Curbside Recycling PIP Meeting	16	17
18 Women's Soccer 1:30 p.m. YMCA 34th St.	19	20 Heavy Trash Pick-up	21	22	23	24
25 Women's Soccer 1:30 p.m. YMCA 34th St.	26 Memorial Day School today for HISD. Makeup day for ice storm.	27	28	29 Curbside Recycling HISD Last day of school	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:
Andrea Spiering, 319 W. 34th, 862-6138

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 Hand Delivery: Brenda de Alba, 694-5934

Hospitality & Refreshments: Terry Jeanes, 680-8550

Neighborhood Traffic Program: Marc Roberts, 861-8512

Programs: Terry Jeanes, 680-8550

Board of Trustees


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Section 2: James Doyle, 694-4134; Tim Pagel, 692-7431;
President: Susan McMillian, 695-8245

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Section 4: Richard Broad, 957-8075

Section 5: Kirk Dice, 694-2247



Hello, I'd like to introduce myself. My name is Bobbie Jones and I am with Re/Max-Metro Realtors. I have lived in this area for over 30 years, and love it as much as you do.

I have high expectations for the entire area, whether it is Garden Oaks, the Plazas, Oak Forest or Candlelight subdivisions. I am pleased to say that I have placed many quality families in our area.

When you put the sale of your home in my care, you can expect 100% diligence and professionalism from me. I believe in educating my sellers on ways to get the best price for their home, and we work together to achieve that goal.

When you buy a home through me, you can rest assured that I will work hard to find the best area and home to fit your requirements and your budget. My buyers know what they can afford before we begin the search.

Whether you are selling or buying a home🏠, I would love the opportunity to help you make it easier.😊

Bobbie Jones

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Purchasing or Selling a Home?

To The Buyer:

If you are in the market for a new home there are many things you need to consider. First and foremost, is how much money you can spend. You should have your realtor pre-qualify you, so that you know approximately what a mortgage company will consider lending based upon your income and debts.

Your second consideration should be the size of your new home. Always separate your wants and needs. For example, you may need two full bathrooms and want a fireplace, too. If you have narrowed your search down to two potential houses, one with a full bath, powder room and fireplace and the other with two full baths and no fireplace, and both in the same price range, it may seem like a tough decision. However, your decision should be based on your actual needs. If you need two full baths, the fireplace would be a luxury that you can probably live without. On the other hand, if you need only two toilets you may opt to purchase the home with the fireplace. Another consideration in a situation like this would be the usefulness of a fireplace in your geographic region.

It is likely that items like fireplaces and swimming pools will increase the cost of a home, but these amenities do not necessarily increase the property's value by enough to make the purchase worth giving up something such as square footage in living space. You may be able to spend \$150,000 for a home and find a 3 bedroom, 2 bath house with a fireplace and a pool for \$150,000. You may also find a home in the same area for the same price with 5 bedrooms and 2.5 baths, but without a pool, or yet another home in the same area for the same price with 4 bedrooms, 2 baths and a study in addition to the family room. If you need three bedrooms and are fairly certain that your family will not expand, the first home may be the right purchase for you, but if you need a guest room, plan on more children or have a relative who may be coming to live with you, serious consideration should probably be given to one of the homes with more living space. You can always add a pool later.

Other factors you should consider are the size of the home's lot, location, condition of the surrounding homes and area, deed restrictions and area schools. The size of the lot (amount of land surrounding the home) will almost always increase the property's value.

A home is a large purchase and likely the most important investment one makes in his or her lifetime. You always need to consider the property's potential resale value.

New homes generally do not realize an increase in value until the subdivision is fully developed and sold. The size of the kitchen and the number of bathrooms in ratio to bedrooms are value points. A two-story home generally offers more living space and cost less per square foot. Floor plans are, of course, important but beauty is only skin deep. **DO NOT pass a house by, because you do not like its exterior. The outside of a home can be changed dramatically with**

landscaping alone. However, changing the interior can be much more costly and nerve-racking.

REMEMBER: You will do most of your living on the inside and not the outside of the home.

Buyers, keep your mind open and your imagination flowing when looking at potential homes. You are not purchasing the current owner's sofa, wall hangings, or personal preferences. The home will be your's upon closing and with your own special personal touches will have a brand-new and totally different appearance and personality.

To the Seller:

Unfortunately a seller's house is not their home while it's on the market. It is inevitable that potential buyers will make negative comments about your home, and those comments may be insulting to you. ***PLEASE, don't kill the messenger!*** It is your realtor's job to report all comments, good or bad, to you. It does not necessarily reflect your realtor's personal opinion. If you receive the same comment(s) repeatedly, you may want to consider making a change, when feasible.

As silly as it may be, some buyers will take your personal effects to heart, so you may want to consider pre-packing some of your belongings (storing the boxes in your garage or attic). Items, to be considered for pre-packing include, but are not limited to, sports, movie and music memorabilia; trophies; guns; family photos; religious items, and bric-a-brac.

REMEMBER: You are trying to sell the house and your personal items are going with you, they are not being thrown away or destroyed.

To the Buyer and Seller:

There are improvements to a home upon which a seller will most likely not receive a dollar-for-dollar return and a buyer can do themselves, saving interest payments and lowering their monthly note. Such improvements include pools and landscaping.

A pool that is already installed may appear less expensive to the buyer and make the home more appealing. However, the cost is very likely not any less and could be more when interest is calculated over the long-term of your mortgage.

A pool's installation cost is approximately \$20,000 to \$30,000, to which a seller will probably receive 1/4 to 1/3 upon re-sale of the home. Although this means that the buyer is purchasing a house with a pool and the cost of the pool to the buyer appears to be \$5,000 to \$10,000, over the term of the mortgage, depending upon the interest rate and other factors, it may be that the pool actually cost the buyer 3 times the amount considered (\$15,000 to \$30,000), and increases the buyer's necessary monthly housing note. Whereas, a buyer could purchase a home without a pool for

less and add a pool later using a more cost-effective financing plan.

With no intention of minimizing the importance of landscaping, a lawn with \$2,000 in landscaping will cost the seller and the buyer. Again, the seller is not likely to realize a dollar-for-dollar return, thereby losing \$500 to \$1,000 of the original investment and the buyer may triple their expense (not even considering the fact that the purchased landscaping will probably be replaced many many times over the next 15 to 30 years) by paying more for the home that is fully landscaped. Although, there is no doubt that landscaping makes a home more aesthetically pleasing, providing curb appeal and marketability, other landscaping considerations are: Potential allergies and personal taste. Just a well-kept lawn, may be more profitable and appealing to everyone.

Buying or selling real estate is a very emotionally-taxing experience. A realtor can help take some of the burdens off of your shoulders during your real estate quest.

If you are in the market for real estate, I would welcome the opportunity to be your agent.

☎ Call me soon, before \$ interest \$ rates rise again.

Featured For Sale in Garden Oaks is:

726 Garden Oaks Boulevard

"The Brady Bunch" house constructed circa 1960 by the Garden Oaks Baptist Church offers 3,126 sq. ft. per owner. The owners will consider offers from \$220,000 to \$259,900.

The house has been completely remodeled and updated to the "nines," including euro-style custom cabinets, Brazilian Andes 1-1/4" granite counter-tops, new or remodeled baths, roof, walls—the works!

The home features 4 bedrooms (all up), 3-full baths (2 up, 1 down), HUGE living/dining areas, and a study or quarters down. It is light and bright with large windows across the back. And is situated on a 1/2+ acre beautiful large corner lot.

The owners are also offering a very attractive finance incentive.



Call me today for an appointment or tell someone you'd love to have as your neighbor!

Bobbie Jones
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