garden oaks Gazette

The newsletter of the Garden Oaks Civic Club

Nov 2026 Volume 48 Issue 11

Garden Oaks "Pocket" Parks

Pam Parks- Beautification Chair

This is the eighth and final article in a series about the public green spaces in Garden Oaks that our Civic Club has a hand in maintaining. Beautification consumes a big piece of the GOCC annual budget and involves several dozen volunteers. Unlike most comparable neighborhoods, GO has no annual maintenance fees and there is no management company charged with taking care of things.

While each park is unique in its history and features there are common themes. Most of the parks encourage visitors to stay a while by providing shady places to sit a spell. All are walkable and welcoming. The diversity of plantings within each park and between the parks is intentional and with an emphasis on native species.

A few philosophies guide planning for future projects. We are conservative in the sense that previous investments are maintained and augmented. Non-native roses, azaleas, crepe myrtles and camelias are featured in several of the parks. But where we find a "blank slate" plant selection leans heavily to low maintenance, low water demand native plantings. A few parks feature both types of plantings. Tree canopy losses which have been considerable over the past few years raised the priority of planting dozens of hardy live oaks, burr oaks, sweet gum, loblolly pine and sycamore. We studiously avoid fast growing invasive species and will on occasion seek city permission to remove Chinese Tallow and bartlett pear.

Another theme which runs through each of the parks is the degree to which these properties have needed to be protected from motor vehicles. Cost to repair graffiti and vandalism run at about 1% of the damage caused by auto accidents and misguided (though not illegal) parking. Garden Oaks Blvd has benefitted from installation of bollards. In other parks, a few strategically placed boulders have ended the practice shortcutting through intersections and use of the parks as conveniently shaded parking lots. Each year has required additional measures and maintenance to keep vehicles out of these green spaces.

There are a few green spaces we have not written about which deserve some attention. These are "spaces" that currently receive minimal support from our Civic Club.

Spark Park- GOMM property which is managed by HISD.

Community Garden (4300 block of Alba)- CoH Property which is currently in the process of being adopted by a newly formed non-profit.

Graham Park (W 34th @ Lawrence)- City of Houston Parks Department manages this property. Over the years considerable resources have been invested in upgrading the tennis court. More recently, GOCC obtained permission to plant over 40 trees in 2022. Most of these have survived.

(Continued on page 3)

Upcoming Events

Spirit Night Fajita Pete's
Monday, Nov 2
11am to 8:30 pm

GOCC Meeting
Tuesday, Nov 3, 7pm
Great Heights Brewing
2027 Budget and Officer Slate

GOMO Meeting
Monday, Nov 9, 6:30 pm
1911 W. 34th
Trees for Houston Mtg Room

Garden Club Meeting
Thursday, Nov 12, 7pm
Kroger on 43rd – 2nd floor

Pay Civic Club and/or Constable Dues Here

2026 Garden Oaks Civic Club CommUnity Partners

Thank you to the following neighbors and neighborhood businesses who are supporting our new CommUnity Partnership Program for 2026.
If you/your business is interested in joining our annual program, please email membership@gardenoaks.org.

Terry Jeanes, Led Well Realty
https://www.ledwellrealty.com/terry-jeanes

Third Coast Home & Commercial Services
https://thirdcoasthomeandcommercialservices.com/

Kat Abshire, Boulevard Realty
https://wwwyourblvd.com/agent/kat-abshire/

Geordie Hrdlicka, Verde Wealth Group
www.verdewealth.com

Nationwide Tools & Supplies
NationwideDist.com

Deanna Zugheri, Keller Williams Metropolitan
Gardenoakshomes.com

Great Heights Brewing Company
Ghbrewing.com

Frost Bank, 4406 N. Shepherd Dr.
https://locations/Frostbank.com/Houston/4606-n-shepherd-dr

Lazy Lane Restaurant
www.lazylanehouston.com

Class 101: College Planning Made Simple
https://www.class101.com/houstonheights

Article Submission Guidelines

1. MS Word or text document as an attachment (not the body of the email), left justified, no headers or footers. Keep formatting to a minimum.

2. Photos need to be sent separately. You may embed photos to show where they go with the article but separate full size and resolution photos must also be provided outside of the document.

3. Articles should be titled. These can be as simple as the name of the committee or the event, but a concise title should be provided for all other articles.

Civic Club Officers

President – Mike Stephens 303.886.1870
president@gardenoaks.org

Vice President – Dillon Baker
vicepresident@gardenoaks.org

Treasurer – Brian Rabe
treasurer@gardenoaks.org

Secretary – Bill Shaughnessy 713-504-8336
secretary@gardenoaks.org

Committee Chairs

Beautification – Pam Parks 713 686 7728
beautification@gardenoaks.org

Constable Program - Terry Jeanes
281 236 8033
constable@gardenoaks.org

Membership – Dian Austin 713 691 6505
membership@gardenoaks.org

Webmaster – Pam Parks 713 686 7728
webmaster@gardenoaks.org

Social Events -
goSocial@gardenoaks.org

Gazette Contacts

Editor – Christi Hartley 806-319-0853
gazette@gardenoaks.org

Advertising Director – Brenda de Alba
713-705-0886
gazetteads@gardenoaks.org

Delivery Coordinator – Angela Winston
832-656-8648
gazettedelivery@gardenoaks.org

Other Contacts

Garden Club gardenclub@gardenoaks.org

GO Kids gokids@gardenoaks.org

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Publication of any article or letter does not imply endorsement by the Garden Oaks Civic Club and is solely the opinion of the author.

(Continued from page 1)

It would be wrong to end on a call to action for these as yet adopted properties without making it clear that the commitments already made are the priority. Triangle Park, Rose Garden, Gazebo Park, Friendship Park, GO Esplanade, Berm/Wedge, and Art Park are firmly at the top of our to do list. Could we do more? We currently are at break even or slightly deficit spending and we have volunteer coverage for most of the work to care for these properties. Could our $1.3 Billion neighborhood (HCAD 2026 valuations) do more? Some things to think about:

About 1 in 5 owner-residents pay a membership that funds maintenance of these parks.

About 1 in 10 actually volunteers.

These are numbers that have remained at these levels for over 10 years. Our purpose in writing these articles has been to widen knowledge, heighten awareness and ultimately build owner-resident connections to these green treasures. If you love them and are not already pitching in, we will welcome your involvement. We welcome new volunteers of all ages, skills, and experience levels. Join us in keeping Garden Oaks green, beautiful, and thriving for generations to come.

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2026 DUES STATEMENT (January – December)

Civic Club membership is open to all residents. While membership is voluntary, you must be a paid member to be eligible to vote on civic club matters. Constable Dues are also voluntary and help pay for our Precinct One Constable Deputy on patrol.

Civic Club:

$_____ **Individual Membership $50** ($25 for seniors 65+)

$_____ **Community Household Membership $125**

Constable Program:

$_____ **Annual Constable Supporter $300 (w/yard signage)**

Other:

$_____ **Contribution to Beautification (maintain area green spaces)**

$_____ **Contribution to Garden Club (Friendship Garden Section 1)**

$_____ **Membership GO Kids $85**

$_____ **TOTAL**

Please mail this completed form along with your check payable to:
Garden Oaks Civic Club, P.O. Box 10273, Houston, TX 77206

-OR- **Pay online at gardenoaks.org**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

☐ opt-in for monthly emails re: neighborhood news and meeting notices

Garden Oaks Theater Update as of 10/15/2026

Carly Markesich, Garden Oaks resident

Here's the scoop! The plan was to close on the purchase by now, but we are waiting for the attorneys to finalize the deed and lending agreement. We are hoping to close by November 5th, maybe earlier. We will keep you posted!

In the meantime, we are moving forward on several fronts. First on our list is site cleanup and everything needed to operate a Drive-In Movie Theater! Yes, while the architectural firm develops restoration plans for construction to begin, we will be using our ample parking lot for outdoor activities, including an actual drive-in theater! Keep an eye out for our first film – just in time for cooler temperatures. With any luck, we'll be operating outdoors before the holidays! Films will be posted on the theater marquee and on our website: www.arthousehtx.org

Having hit our initial goal of $3.1mn (whew!) to purchase the theater, we've officially moved into Phase 2 of our fundraising efforts. We're currently interviewing capital campaign consultants to continue attracting grants and naming rights level donations of $100k - $5mn. We're also beginning our community outreach with opportunities for everyone to contribute from volunteering to Cinephile Memberships, and our name-a-seat and "restoration buy the foot" campaigns, as presented on last month's Gazette insert. If you'd like to donate, become a member, or volunteer for the Drive-In, visit our website for more information.

Other forward momentum includes working with a sound engineer for sound isolation within the building to include a sound stage and 2 screening rooms. Historic Preservation efforts should ultimately protect the theater from ever being demolished, and those efforts come with a tax credit of up to 45% for everything spent on historic restoration. We were able to save the 54' neon tower (though in pieces) and we're putting Humpty Dumpty back together again! Lastly, we're intending to be as "green" as possible on the project and are assembling a team of experts to include all our green options.

What an amazing site this restored theater will be at the entrance to our neighborhood! And, what an amazing cultural third space this will be for all our neighbors to enjoy. We're so excited about taking on this project for our community and our city and hope you will join us in this effort!

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RIVAI STUDIO - MEET THE FOUNDER

Hi, I'm Hashilla! My husband and I recently moved to Garden Oaks, and we're so happy to call this neighborhood home. I'm the founder of Rivai Studio, a small business inspired by my love for beautiful textiles, floral prints, and pieces that make everyday life feel a little more special.

I've called Houston home for the past four years, though life has taken me to a few different places along the way—from Purdue, where I played collegiate golf, to Columbia for graduate school, and eventually into a career in corporate banking. Rivai Studio has become a way for me to explore a more creative side of myself and share something I genuinely love.

It all started with a block-print jacket gifted to me by a friend. I fell in love with the artistry, patterns, and character of Indian block print, and that simple gift eventually became the inspiration behind Rivai Studio.



Art Park (West 43rd Street & Sue Barnett)

Pam Parks – Beautification Chair

The Art Park is an official City of Houston park that was established in 1950 when Garden Oaks was annexed into the city. At approximately 0.8 acres, it is small by city park standards but more than twice the size of the neighborhood's five other pocket parks. Because of its relatively large size, the Garden Oaks Civic Club (GOCC) has not formally adopted the park, as the ongoing maintenance costs are significant. However, because Art Park serves as a focal point of the neighborhood and continues to benefit from dedicated volunteer support, the question of adoption is revisited periodically.

Today, the park features a brick-paved picnic area shaded by mature trees and surrounded by raised planting beds on the north side. At its center is a large wildflower meadow that has become one of the park's most distinctive features.

The park takes its name from "Mayday," a 10-foot by 4-foot pigmented cement sculpture created by noted sculptor Chaim Goldberg. Installed in 1990, the abstract artwork depicts four dancers around a maypole, celebrating the arrival of spring.

Art Park is also the setting for community events such as Pollinators in the Park, a family-oriented program organized by the Garden Club. Held every other year, the event highlights the importance of native wildflowers and pollinators through activities such as scavenger hunts, collector trading cards, native seed and plant giveaways, and demonstrations featuring beneficial insects.

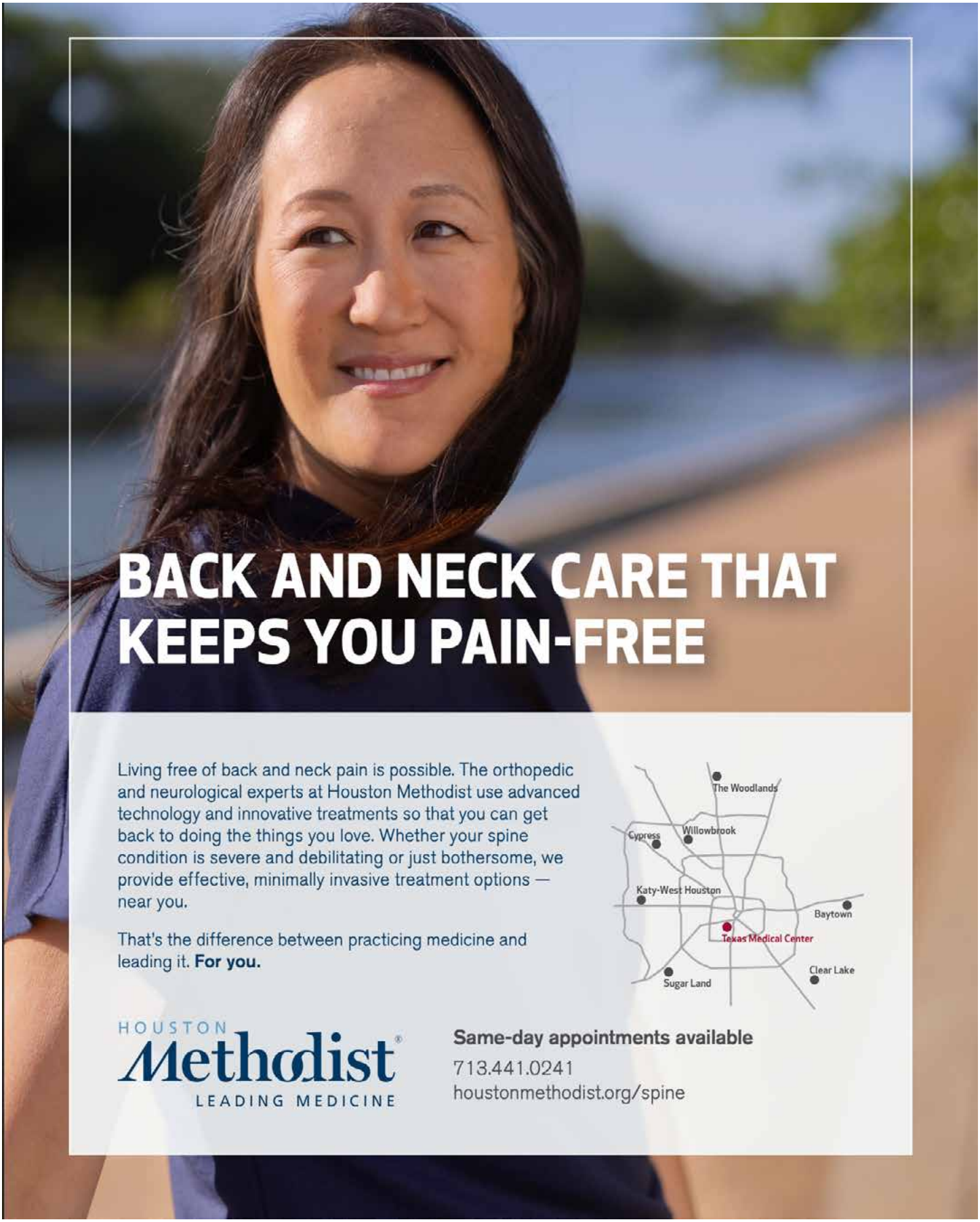
In recent years, park captains Shawn and Bill Spear have transformed portions of the park through the development of extensive wildflower plantings. Their work has sparked renewed interest in pursuing formal adoption of the park. Under the City of Houston's park adoption program, the city would provide water service at no cost in exchange for GOCC restoring or installing irrigation and assuming responsibility for mowing and routine maintenance. If GOCC's role could be limited primarily to watering and maintaining designated planting areas, adoption could become a more practical and sustainable option.

Future improvements under an adoption agreement could include enhanced landscaping around the neighborhood sign, restoration of the raised-bed brickwork, additional native plantings, removal of invasive Chinese tallow trees, and the introduction of more desirable shade trees.

With support from the Garden Club, Shawn and Bill Spear are currently taking preliminary steps toward a possible adoption by:

*Developing plans for irrigation and future plantings
*Drafting the city's adoption application materials
*Exploring fundraising opportunities to support improvements and ongoing maintenance




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Heard Under the Oak Tree

Terry Jeanes

Welcome, New Neighbors!

Congratulations on joining our community. We look forward to seeing you at a civic club meeting soon.

219 West 30th #1A
930 West 42nd
4227 Apollo
842 West 42nd
331 West 30th
312 West 31st
419 West 30th
1067 West 43rd
1070 West 43rd
902 West 42nd
802 West 30th
822 West 31st



National Neighbors Night Out



Happy Birthday

Gina Pecoraro 4th
Deborah Seghers 4th
Mike Maltbie 5th
Frank C 7th
Angela Winston 7th
Holly Pruitt 8th
Anthony Neiser 10th
Caroline Padon 12th
Julia Kramp 13
Emma M 14th
Dianne Murata 18th
Susan Saranie 19th
Hannah M 20th
Lucy Mc 25th

Happy Anniversary

Bob and Debbie Driver 4th

Congratulations to

Marshall Perry on his Texas Driver's License

Constable Statistics September 2026

Data are provided monthly for the contract with the Harris County Precinct One Constable deputy who patrols Garden Oaks. The number of responses is shown for each category.

Accident, Major - 1
Alarm Local – 1
Animal, aggressive - 1
Burglary Motor Vehicle - 5
Check Business - 2
Contract Check – 79
Criminal Mischief - 1
Disturbance Loud Noise – 3
Follow Up – 5
Fraudulent Use ID – 1
Illegally Parked Vehicle - 1
Information Call - 1
Meet the Citizen – 4
Open Door/Window - 1
Suspicious Person/Vehicle -- 7
Traffic Stop – 3
Vacation Watch - 3

Out and About

It was a Seattle Trip for **Mike & Emily Stephens. Jaime Zamora** has been busy with his 45th High school reunion in Corpus. **Julie Sherber** was on the "hostess" track, hosting NNO and her first mahjong brunch. **Caroline McLean** had a loverly visit to Scotland celebrating her mom's 85th birthday. It was a fun girl's trip to New York City for **Katy Kyle. The Salches** enjoyed a Fall break trip to Galveston including boating, bubbly, and more.

Terry Jeanes & Patrick Kelley toured Italy, enjoying Tuscany and a few nights in Rome before cruising to Croatia, Montenegro, Greece, Naples & Pompeii. **Deb Seghers** had a great weekend with her Le Ferrariste friends! Fun times for **Heather McKeown** at Texas Chi O Parents' Weekend. **Carl Waters & Leslie Ryan** enjoyed time in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. **Sara Mathias and daughter** had a great time at Camp Olympia Mother Daughter weekend, capping off year number 4. It was a birthday celebratory trip to NYC for **Tina Sabuco & Shellye Arnold.**

Special Thoughts for

Joe Casarez on the recent loss of his mom. And to **Kat Stinson** as she recovers from recent surgery.

To highlight an event, celebration or other tidbit, please submit information no later than the 13th of the month to Terry Jeanes at terry@terryjeanes.com

GOMO Welcomes New Directors

James Elmore, GOMO President

At the annual meeting on October 12, the Garden Oaks Maintenance Organization (GOMO) elected new directors to fill vacant and/or expiring positions. Thank you to everyone who voted and to the neighbors who stepped forward to serve.

In Section 1, James Elmore was re-elected, and Holly Hernandez and Madison Schauer were elected to the board. In Section 3, Tony Padon and Sherry Chavez were elected to fill open positions. Brandon Madison in Section 2 and Lizette Kozar-King in Section 5 ran unopposed and joined the board as well.

They will serve alongside continuing directors Stuart Arouty (Section 3), Brenda de Alba and Paul Vincent (Section 2), and Nick Hosn and Pam Parks (Section 5).

GOMO also thanks outgoing directors Matt Friemel, Bob Foglesong and Sarah Miller for their service to the neighborhood.

The new board will meet Monday, November 9, at 6:30 p.m. at Trees for Houston on 34th Street, across from Waltrip High School. At that meeting the board will elect officers, set terms of office and set the meeting schedule for the coming year. Residents are welcome to attend. Watch the next Gazette and gardenoaks.org for new information.



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Constable Program

Terry Jeanes, Program Chair

Thank you to the Neighbors who hosted Neighbors Night Out gatherings in October.

Reminder: Our New 2026 Contract October 1st 2026 to September 20th 2027 is in effect. The rate per Deputy with Garden Oaks falling under the 80% setup with 20% subsidized by the county is $108,320. Without a fall Constable Fundraiser this year, your support is definitely needed, highly encouraged, and any reminders to your neighbors welcome.

Pay your dues via the form in the Gazette (snail mail) or pay online at gardenoaks.org or via the QR code on the front page of the newsletter. Payment of at least $300 per household will get you a GO Constable Supporter sign. That's a mere 82 cents per day!

If you need a new sign, please email constable@gardenoaks.org. A roster of current supporters is available at gardenoaks.org and is featured on our monthly eblasts. Signage and stickers will be placed for all supporters of $300 & higher. We do appreciate your patience in allowing time to have these installed by our volunteers.

Constable Supporter Signs and Stickers are generally available at the Civic Club meetings.

Reminder: The Constable Program is paid only by residents' contributions. **There is no mandatory fee collected**.

Pay your dues today. Why wait until you become a crime victim before contributing?

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Constable Dispatch: 713-755-7628

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Bylaws Bind the Board, Not Your Backyard

James Elmore, GOMO President

First in a series on GOMO, its bylaws and the Garden Oaks deed restrictions

Garden Oaks lives under two sets of rules that are mentioned in the same breath and confused just as often. The short version: bylaws run the board; deed restrictions run the block.

Who is GOMO? The Garden Oaks Maintenance Organization (GOMO) is a Texas nonprofit corporation formed in 2002 to serve Sections 1, 2, 3 and 5. Section 4 is not part of GOMO. Following a lawsuit and a 2017 decision by the Fourteenth Court of Appeals in Houston, GOMO is no longer legally an HOA, and it cannot collect mandatory assessments. Losing HOA status also raises the bar for changing deed restrictions: with a mandatory HOA, a vote of the owners of 67% of a section's lots can amend them; without one, as now, the bar is generally 75%. It remains a working nonprofit: it provides deed restriction information to title companies, buyers and owners, and the board is considering offering optional plan review on a voluntary basis. GOMO is separate from the Garden Oaks Civic Club (GOCC).

Deed restrictions run with the land. Recorded section by section between 1937 and 1945, they attach to every lot and bind every owner in that section. Their force does not come from GOMO, and GOMO's change in legal status did not change them. Any owner or group of owners in a section may enforce them. Depending on the section, they address residential use, building lines and setbacks, and garages and outbuildings. Changing one takes a vote of that section's owners at thresholds set by Texas law, measured against all owners, so an owner who does not vote counts the same as a no. Neither the GOMO board nor a GOMO membership meeting can change a deed restriction.

Bylaws bind the board. GOMO's bylaws are the operating rules of a nonprofit corporation: how many directors serve and from which sections, how they are elected, how meetings are noticed and run, what records members may see and how members vote. Think of them as the referee's rulebook, not the rules of the game. They say nothing about your fence, your garage or your setback.

(Continued on page 13)



(Continued from page 12)

	Deed Restrictions	Bylaws
Govern	Your lot and what you may build	How GOMO and its board operate
Bind	Every owner	GOMO, its directors and officers
Where to find them	Harris County real property records; copies at gardenoaks.org/gomo-home/deed-restrictions	Harris County real property records; copies at gardenoaks.org/gomo-home/deed-restrictions
Changed by	Votes of the sections owners; not voting counts as no	Vote of the GOMO members at a meeting of the members
Depend on GOMO	No	Yes

Why does this matter now? GOMO has posted proposed amended and restated bylaws for member review on its homepage. These new bylaws update how GOMO governs itself. Texas law holds HOA boards to stricter standards than nonprofit boards, including open meetings, advance notice and owner access to records. As a nonprofit that is no longer legally an HOA, GOMO does not have to meet them. GOMO is adopting many of them voluntarily, because the board believes they show a commitment to greater transparency and member engagement. The new bylaws do not change a single deed restriction. They cannot. Members will vote on them at a future meeting of the members.

Bylaws bind the board, not your backyard.

Read them yourself: current deed restrictions, bylaws and policies at gardenoaks.org/gomo-home/deed-restrictions; the proposed amended and restated bylaws at gardenoaks.org/gomo-home. Questions: DRs@gardenoaks.org



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Houston Humidity and Its Effect on Your Indoor Comfort

Auggie Reyes, owner of AirWise

Houston's over-the-top humidity can make you feel pretty steamy, especially during the summer. But did you know it can affect your comfort throughout the year?

Too much or too little equals discomfort. During the cooler months, ever notice when it's both cold and humid outside? High humidity makes it feel like the heat is being sucked right out of you. Low humidity causes its own problems too. It can make your home feel chillier than it is plus cause annoying problems like static electricity.

Your home's thermostat should be set between 71 and 77 degrees. This is ideal when it comes to comfort and cost. However, this range won't feel comfortable if humidity levels fall below 50 percent. No matter how warm you keep your home, it will feel too cool to you and your family.

The best way to correct low indoor humidity is with a humidifier. This appliance can be installed as part of your HVAC system, and it adds needed moisture in the air which is distributed throughout your home via the ducts. This keeps the relative humidity above 50 percent which makes the apparent temperature feel a lot more comfortable. We usually don't have this problem in Houston.

How excess humidity affects air conditioning: During the summer, your A/C system cools by removing excess heat and moisture from the air. When the humidity level is high and the equipment doesn't have sufficient cooling capacity, your home may never feel truly comfortable.

Here are some common signs of excessive indoor humidity:

• Your skin feels clammy to the touch.

• Your home's windows fog and collect moisture on the inside.

• A musty odor becomes present caused by dampness which can eventually lead to mold, an even worse problem.

Too much is too much. People often assume that the larger and more powerful their home's A/C system is, the more effective it will be. Not true. Since it won't need to run very long to lower the temperature, the system won't get a chance to remove sufficient moisture from the air. The result is cold, clammy air. This is why it's essential to buy a system that's the correct size your home, approximately one ton per 400 square feet.

Here's what our customers are saying about us:

"Thanks Air Wise!"

Stephen H., Garden Oaks



Auggie Reyes, owner of Air Wise

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November

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
1	2 Spirit Night Fajita Pete's 11 am to 8:30 pm	3 GOCC Meeting 7pm Garbage & Recycling	4	5	6	7 FarmStand 9am to 1pm 948 Wakefield
8	9 GOMO Meeting 6:30	10 Garbage	11	12 Garden Club Meeting 7 PM	13	14 FarmStand 9am to 1pm 948 Wakefield
15	16	17 Garbage & Recycling	18	19	20	21 FarmStand 9am to 1pm 948 Wakefield
22	23	24 Garbage	25	26 Thanksgiving	27	28
29	30					

