



## A Message from the President

by Dee Murray

Dear Old Braeswood Neighbors,

I am amazed as I look back and realize that two years have come and gone. So many things have happened in Old Braeswood and so many of you have participated to make this community a warm, friendly, beautiful neighborhood that we are proud to live in.

I have enjoyed working with such a great Board who has enthusiastically brought energy and joy to the tasks that we took on for the past two years. We established five goals in the beginning of *(Continued on Page 2)*

## Your House Has a History

by Susan Teich, OBPOA Historian

The houses at 2337 and 2329 Gramercy sit side-by-side and share a common history.

The first occupants of #2337, built in 1952, were E.L. Sheets, a developer, and his wife, Thelma. The first occupants of #2329 were Meyer Morris Gordon, founder of Gordon's Jewelers, and his wife, Ida.

Sheets built both houses. His own house was built to be his retirement home, although he continued to manage Bissonnet Plaza Apartments, which he had developed in 1946 on 10 acres south of I-59 between Edloe and Buffalo Speedway. The blueprints for those apartments are still in the attic of #2337.

No sooner had Sheets settled into Old Braeswood than Gordon asked Sheets to build a house for him. Sheets agreed on one condition, that the house be sited on the lot next door, so that *(Continued on Page 4)*

## Old Braeswood Annual Meeting

Please mark your calendars to attend the Old Braeswood Annual Meeting that is in conjunction with the Old Braeswood Garden Club. The meeting, including the election of new OBPOA officers for 2010, will be held at 2250 Glen Haven. Social time begins at 6:30 p.m.; the meeting starts at 7 p.m. The evening will include a special presentation on Brays Bayou by Kevin Shanley and Raouf Farid. Everyone is welcome.

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## SAVE THE DATE

**10 November, 6:30 p.m.**  
**6:30 p.m. - social; 7 p.m. - meeting**  
**Old Braeswood Annual Meeting\***

**2250 Glen Haven**  
**(Whiteley & O'Neill home)**

**14 November, 9 - 11 a.m.**  
**Neighborhood Coffee\***  
**2322 Maroneal Street**  
**(G.G. & Mark Hausknecht home)**

\*See articles in this newsletter for details.

2008 and continued to work on them in 2009. We accomplished all of the goals, and even exceeded what we had expected on some of them. There are a couple of the tasks under those goals that could still be worked on in the upcoming years. I am including a report card of the goals below.

I want to end by thanking all of the Board members. Each of them contributed in special ways to the achievement of these goals. I feel fortunate to have worked with such a great group of people.

Warmly, *Dee Murray*, President, Old Braeswood Property Owners Association

## **OBPOA 2008-2009 GOALS**

<b>Goals</b>	<b>Task(s)</b>	<b>Time table</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>	<b>Results</b>
<b>1. Park Enhancement</b>	*Funds for replacement of park equipment	May 08	Chris Robins & Park Committee	Completed
	*Actual replacement of park equipment	August 08	Chris Robins & Park Committee	Completed
<b>2. Development, increase revenue</b>	*Increase title transfer fee	On-going	Marilyn Archer, Liz Alhand & Dawn Gervais	Fee increase under consideration
	*Increase ARC plan review fee	Now & ongoing		Fee increase under consideration
	*Adhere to budget		Liz Alhand	Budget adherence completed
<b>3. Communication</b>	*Assure frequency of news-letter & feature neighbors	On-going	Sharon O'Neil & others	Completed; 10 news-letters over 2 years
	*Develop alternate methods of communication	On-going	Group	Completed; on-going e-blasts increased
	*Continue the frequency of activities through the Neighbors Committee	Now & on-going	GG Hsieh & Dawn Gervais	Frequency increase; held 5 coffee's for newcomers
	*Increase number of neighbors paying dues for OBPOA, Park, & RACS			Increased
<b>4. Tighten &amp; maintain deed restrictions</b>	*ARC & neighbors who report seeing infractions of the deeds	Now & on-going	ARC & neighbors	This is happening
<b>5. Beautification</b>	*Develop a yard of the season program	By May	Select committee & format & campaign	Completed; 6 yards recognized
	*Present petitions to City for replacement of streets, storm sewers, sidewalks, curbs & gutters	By June	Evalyn Krudy	70% complete; on-going
	*Complete street tree pattern on W. Holcombe, Greenbriar, and N. Braeswood	On-going	Carroll Shaddock	On-going

## Old Braeswood Eagle Scout Spruces Up Braeswood Park

Marshall Gregory, a Senior at Lamar High School, did his Eagle Scout Project here in Old Braeswood where he grew up. On September 26, 2009, Marshall, 11 scouts, and 3 adult scout leaders from Troop 11 at First Presbyterian Church carried out his project, "Park Renovation", in Braeswood Park. The Scouts spread 180 bags of Kiddie Cushion and 120 bags of Houston Mulch. The Kiddie Cushion re-surfaced all three playground areas and the mulch was put down around all the trees. Marshall also painted the three entry gates to the Park and painted the two park signs. He was able to get the materials for his project donated from Living Earth Technology and Sherwin-Williams.

Boy Scout Troop 11 is the oldest Boy Scout Troop in Houston. It was first organized in 1914, and produced Houston's first Eagle Scout in 1916. First Presbyterian Church of Houston has been sponsoring Troop 11 since 1920. Over 140 Scouts have earned Eagle rank in Troop 11, including 50 in the last decade. Currently the top membership roster includes 83 Scouts and 55 trained adults. Only two percent of boy scouts ever go on to earn the rank of Eagle Scout. Certainly, Old Braeswood is proud to have another Eagle Scout, Marshall Gregory, in the neighborhood.

Old Braeswood Park Corporation wishes to extend a warm and heartfelt thanks to Marshall Gregory for his hard work and dedication to his own neighborhood in completing his Eagle Scout Project at Braeswood Park. The entry gates and signs look wonderful thanks to the fresh coat of paint, and the trees look better than ever thanks to the mulch placed around every tree in the Park. Thank you, Marshall, for your commitment to our neighborhood park!



Eagle Scout, Marshall Gregory

## Neighborhood Garage Sale

by Christine Robins

Old Braeswood Property Owners Association wishes to thank the following families for participating in the First Old Braeswood Neighborhood Garage Sale: Eva Allison; Randa Banks; Charles Bornstein; Joanne Brodsky; John & Nancy Curry; LaVerl Daily; Suzanne Edwards; Lara Frazier & Tim Evered; Flores Family; J.B. & Ann Glass; Beverly Guadagnolo & Jean Raphael; Megan McDonald & Kim Hlavinka; G.G. Hsieh; Rebecca Kelly; Lori Machiorlette; Meredith & Ryan Maierson; Ampara & Bruce Nelson; Chris & David Robins; Carrie & Austin Stanton; Chris & Erin Stimming; Sherrie Walsh; Brent Whitley; and Joann & Andrew Doyle.

We hope you enjoyed yourselves and made money "recycling" your trinkets and treasures. If you have not already done so, please send your participation fee to Old Braeswood Property Owners Association (OBPOA), P.O. Box 541346, Houston, TX 77254.

## National Night Out

Our Old Braeswood version of National Night Out (NNO) was held on Tuesday, October 6. It started with a variety of fun, animated neighbor-meet-neighbor "block parties," and other celebrations around our neighborhood.

At 6:30 p.m., many neighbors headed for the Park; and, in spite of a bit of a drizzle for a few minutes, we had a good turnout of Old Braeswood neighbors who enjoyed friendly conversation and yummy ice cream sundaes. Making sundaes appeared to be as fun for adults as it was for the neighborhood children.



This year's NNO coordinators were Christine Robins and G. G. Hsieh. To them we extend our special thanks for taking care of all the details to make our own NNO a very successful event.

In addition to the OBPOA sponsorship of NNO, we also extend a special thanks to G. G. Hsieh for her support and to the co-sponsorship of Kathy Wetmore, John Daugherty Realtors.

Sheets could manage the work from home.

Born in Lithuania, Gordon had immigrated to Galveston, then moved to Houston after the hurricane of 1900. In 1905 he opened a store that sold groceries, shoes and hardware - with \$400 in capital. His first jewelry store opened in 1916. (In the 1920s, he introduced the innovative option of buying jewelry on credit. In 1968, Gordon's Jewelers was the first jewelry store listed on the New York Stock Exchange. Gordon's became the second largest retail jewelry chain in the world and was bought out by its chief competitor, Zales. Today, Gordon's is a Zales brand. Gordon's sister Annie married Sam Finger, founder of Finger's Furniture.)



**Ann Garnett and Terese Wagner stand in front of the Garnett home at 2337 Gramercy. Next door, at 2329 Gramercy, is the Wagner home (photo below). It has a unique history for Terese.**

They bought it from Mr. Sheets' widow in 1992. Ann is our Republican Precinct Judge, and the portecochere at #2337 is frequently the polling place for Old Braeswood.

The Gordon House went through multiple owners. The current owners are Terese and Gary Wagner. They bought the house from art conservationist Carol Mancusi-Ungaro. Carol left Houston to become the founding director of the Center for Technical Study of Modern Art at the Harvard University Museums. Carol also is the director of conservation at the Whitney Museum of American Art in Manhattan.

*(Continued on Page 6)*

The two houses have a number of distinctive features not visible from the outside. The paneling is custom milled, and the woods change from room to room. The Sheets house had corkwood flooring, later removed because of the scarring from stiletto heels so popular in the 1950s. Cork remains in some of the closets. Mr. Sheets was a lover of gadgets and he used them throughout both houses. A movie screen that pulls down from the ceiling. A bar that is flush with the wall when not in use. A tea cart built into a cabinet for easy access. Clocks built into the walls. A third faucet at each sink to provide ice water cooled by the air conditioning system.

The current residents of the Sheets House are Ann and Joe Garnett.



## Garden Club Invitation



The Old Braeswood Garden Club, organized in 1939, welcomes all women in Old Braeswood to join the Garden Club. Our motto is "Friendship." Actual gardening is not required. To join, please call

President Christine Infante at 713-667-3675.

## HPD "Be Alert" Suggestions

Here's a set of shopping safety tips for the upcoming holiday season (courtesy of HPD):

- Stay alert to your surroundings and the people around you.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash.
- If you must carry a purse, do not wrap the straps around your arms or shoulders. You could risk injury from a would-be purse snatcher. Carry a clutch purse tightly under your arm or wear a fanny pack.
- Do not carry wallets in a back pocket. It should be placed in a front pocket for safety.
- Be alert, criminals look for the "high dollar store" shopping bags with your purchases.
- Watch purchases while eating in mall food courts; bags as well as purses can easily be switched or taken.
- Educate your children about what to do if they are lost as well as what to do if a "stranger" should try and take them.
- Have your car keys ready in hand before leaving the store.
- Park in a high visibility area and check for lighting in case you leave during the hours of darkness.
- Before shopping, lock all your valuables in the trunk prior to parking in the parking lot.
- Walk briskly, confidently, and directly through the parking lot. Be cautious of people handing out fliers or asking questions in the parking area.
- Watch for people who may be following you. This can occur inside as well as outside the store. If you suspect that you are being followed, report it to the store or mall security. Report it immediately.
- Ask the mall security officer to escort you to your vehicle if you are uncomfortable.

## "Get Connected" — Join the OBPOA Yahoo Group by Zoe Thompson

The Old Braeswood POA invites you to join our new Yahoo Group! Just click this link to get started: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/OldBraeswoodNeighbors/>. In case you're not already familiar with Yahoo groups, they are basically an electronic bulletin board (via email) that enables discussion among a group of people with similar interests -- in this case, our neighbors.

As a Group member, you'll be able to post to the bulletin board. We hope that this will be a helpful resource for our community. Here are some of the ways you may wish to use the Old Braeswood Yahoo Group:

1. Quickly reunite lost pets with their owners
2. Start a play group
3. Offer theater or sports tickets to someone who can use them
4. Find a good electrician, plumber, or painter
5. Notify neighbors about crime in the neighborhood as it occurs
6. Organize an impromptu get-together
7. Share resources during a power outage (Blackberry & i-Phone users)
8. Broadcast and discuss topics that are of interest to the group as a whole

The Group is open to anyone living within Old Braeswood. Because you must opt in to receive Group email messages, there is little risk of spam. You can adjust your personal settings to receive messages in real time, or in a daily or weekly "digest." If you find the Group is not for you, you can leave at any time.

As a group member, set your preferences to a) receive individual emails, b) receive special notices (as defined by the moderator), or c) not receive any emails at all (for this option, view the messages from the yahoo group home page at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/OldBraeswoodNeighbors/>. Old Braeswood POA will continue to send electronic news and crime alerts. However, if you'd like the ability to have more interaction with your neighbors, the new Yahoo Group may be for you.



# WELCOME

## New Neighbors

The Demetrios family  
2330 Maroneal

Erin & Chris Stimming  
2309 Bluebonnet Blvd.

Sherrie Clark  
2321 Maroneal

Deborah McFarlane &  
Michael Curry  
2415 Glen Haven



**Bill and Dee Murray perform in a Woodville melodrama.**

## OBPOA Membership Continues to Grow!

Thank you Old Braeswood Members for 2009! Here is a list of Old Braeswood residents who have joined OBPOA in September. The last newsletter listed members as of August 31. Those who join after September 30 will be published in the next newsletter.

Old Braeswood relies on your support to preserve and beautify the neighborhood. Thank you again to the dedicated neighbors who give of their time and money to improve the quality of life for all residents.

### Patron (\$250 & up)

Paul Johnson  
Robert C. & Rachel A. Thompson

### Sustaining (\$150)

Scott & Ana Campbell  
Lisa & Raymond DuBois  
Teryle & Lyle Morrow  
Adrian & Lisa O'Malley  
Dorry & Carroll Shaddock  
Marcella & Dan Watkins

### Regular (\$100)

Lillian Blum  
Robin S. Fredrickson  
Arthur S. Keats  
Laurie & Todd Lonergan  
Amparo & Bruce Nelson  
Joanne Swartz & Randall Newman  
Jim & Anita O'Shaughnessy  
Harry Pepper  
Christi & Bill Reynolds  
Saba & Ali Siddiki  
Dianne Myers Stool

## Your House Has a History

*(Continued from Page 4)*

The story of how the Wagners bought the house is the story of two five-year-olds on the playground at the St. Vincent de Paul School. Sons of Ann and Terese, they started demanding play dates. Terese was surprised to see that Ann lived next door to the Gordon House, which had been Terese's childhood home.

After several years of play dates (including all 4 Garnett children and all 3 Wagner children), the Gordon House came onto the market in 2001. It was just as the Wagners were contemplating a move. Terese went inside for the first time in many years and was stunned by the quality of workmanship and the beauty of the materials used. Something she hadn't noticed as a child. None of the newer homes the Wagners had seen were built so well. It helped that the current owner was an art conservationist who had retrofitted the house, undoing every modernization imposed by prior residents, including Terese's parents. The Wagners bought it.

Today, the pantry still has pencil marks where Terese's parents measured her height as she grew up. Those marks are joined by pencil marks made by Carol Mancusi-Ungaro for her own children. And even more pencil marks record the growth progress of the Wagner children and of frequently visiting Garnett children.

[This is the eleventh article in a continuing series on houses and people in Old Braeswood. Suggestions for future columns are welcome.]



## New Neighbors Coffee

Saturday, November 14, 9— 11 a.m.

2322 Maroneal Street

G.G. and Mark Hausknecht's home

Co-hostess: Dawn Gervais

### Old and New Neighbors Welcome

*Food dishes from any of our established neighbors  
are most welcome.*

## Old Braeswood Real Estate Report *by Dawn Gervais*



The luxury home market reports the national inventory of luxury homes is increasing even as prices in the top tier are beginning to weaken. The inventory of luxury homes is up 20 percent and the average days-on-market have increased 14 percent. The current credit crunch, stringent loan requirements, job losses, and shrinking investment portfolios have contributed to a softer luxury home market.

### October, 2009

#### HOMES CURRENTLY FOR SALE IN OLD BRAESWOOD

* Total # of homes available:	10
* Minimum list price:	\$399,900
* Maximum list price:	\$1,449,900
* Average list price:	\$943,880
* Average days on market:	167

\*Information obtained from the Houston Association of Realtors.  
Real Estate Report by Dawn Gervais ALHS, ABR, Realtor ® Consultant

## Yard of the Season — Fall *by Dee Murray*

Sally and Bill Russ's yard is so beautifully landscaped. It is with great pleasure that we present the Silver Flamingo award for Fall Yard of the Season to them. You must go by to experience the levels and shades of greenery, the beautiful pots of fern, the inviting tree bench, and the "take a break" tree swing.



2330 Bluebonnet Boulevard

### 2009

#### Officers & Chairpersons

President	Dee Murray
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Pres.	Buddy Steves
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice Pres.	Bob Birenbaum
3 <sup>rd</sup> Vice Pres.	Susan Teich
At-Large	G.G. Hsieh
At-Large	Sam Bernstein
Treasurer	Liz Alhand
Secretary	Dawn Gervais
Past President	Agelia Pérez Márquez
Architectural Review	Marilyn Archer Colleen Elliot Matthew Kelley
Directory & Block Captains	Sally Miller
Historic	Susan Teich
Flood Control	Carroll Shaddock
Newsletter	Sharon Lund O'Neil
Park Enforcement	Christine Robins Sam Bernstein John Eldridge David Robins
RACS rep	Ryan Maierson
Social	G.G. Hsieh
Trees	Carroll Shaddock
University Place	Kathy Lord
Welcome	Dawn Gervais
Manager	Evalyn Krudy

Volunteers are needed to collect signatures to petition city reconstruction under the Neighborhood Street Reconstruction Program (NSRP). The blocks (and number of signatures needed) are:

- 2400-2500 Bellefontaine (2)
- 2400-2500 Bluebonnet (2)
- Braeswood Court (3)
- 2100-2200 Glen Haven (1)
- 2300 Glen Haven (4-5)
- 2300 Underwood, between Main and Morningside (4)
- 2400-2500 Underwood (4)

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**OLD BRAESWOOD  
PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION**

P.O. Box 541346  
Houston, TX 77254-1346

Phone: 713-807-1787

Email: [info@oldbraeswood.com](mailto:info@oldbraeswood.com)

[www.oldbraeswood.com](http://www.oldbraeswood.com)

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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