

February 1, 2005

Dear Old Braeswood Neighbors:

Together we have accomplished much in 2004 under the leadership of Agelia Pérez McGowan. We have benefited from an energetic community of volunteers chaired by Bob Thompson. He was ably assisted by Becky Pivec. They capped a six year effort to gain approval for a new civic structure – a Property Owners’ Association, or POA. Also our thanks to Kathy Lord for her tireless efforts through Trees for Houston to beautify Old Braeswood and for republishing our unique story, *Braeswood: An Architectural History* by Dr. Stephen Fox of Rice University. Copies available by calling 713-807-1787.

Our goals for 2005 are:

- To maintain our deed restrictions;
- To maintain and beautify our park and common areas;
- To conduct lobbying efforts to influence government agencies when our community is affected;
- To inform residents of changes in our area that influence property values and security;
- To work to insure a safe environment for our families;
- To maintain a financial base to accomplish these goals.

These ongoing goals will be easier to achieve with our new legal status as a POA under Texas state law. We intend to build on our successes for 2005.

We lobbied the city for parking restrictions surrounding the park on Maroneal, and on several other streets. We intend to keep our neighborhood from becoming a parking lot for the Texas Medical Center and the HCC campus.

Since our annual meeting, we have already been successful in lobbying against a 60 bed drug and alcohol rehabilitation center just a half mile from our doorsteps (see pages 4 and 6). We intend to make our community aware of the pending year long disruption due to the Kirby construction and will work to mitigate its effects on us.

All of this takes numerous meetings and efforts on the part of our board. The actions needed to inform and build on our past accomplishments will be achieved by this organization. We are blessed with a talented board and the public spirited nature of our residents. Please continue your support of our joint efforts and give of your time and financial support when asked. As your president, I look forward to this upcoming year.

Sincerely,

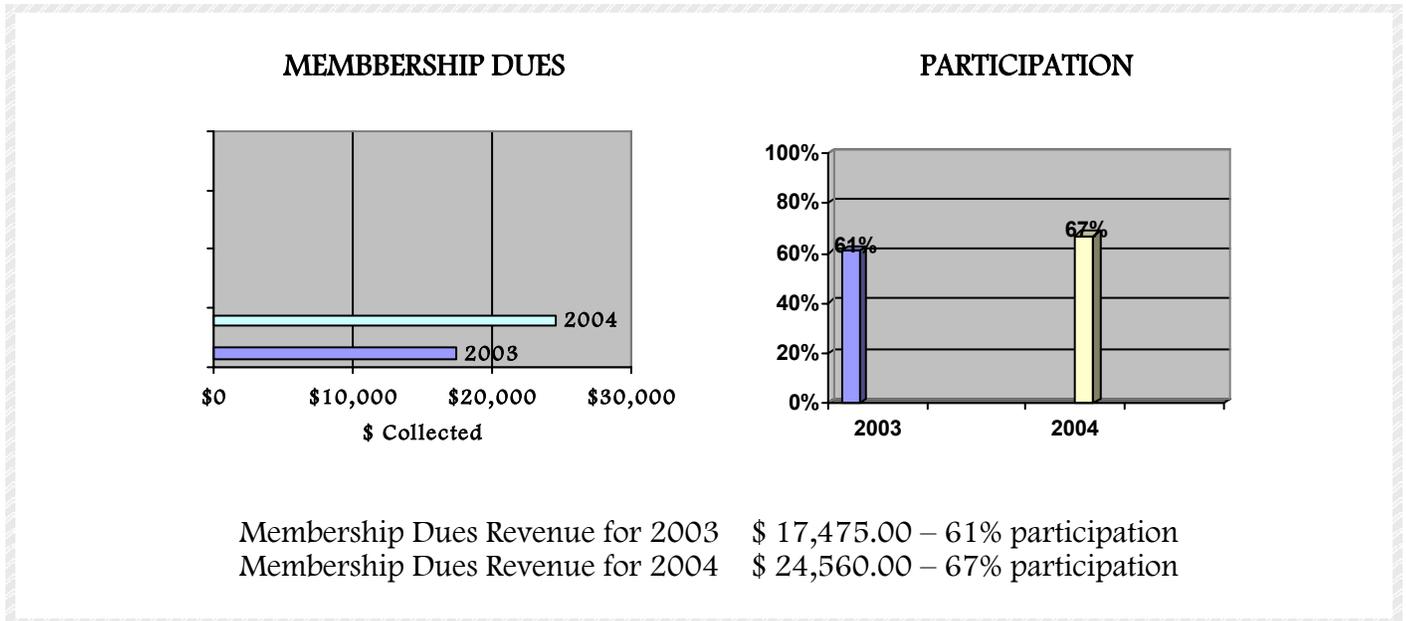
*Bob Birenbaum*

President  
Old Braeswood Property Owners Association

## OLD BRAESWOOD PROPERTY OWNER'S ASSOCIATION FINANCIAL UPDATE – January 2005

By Becky Pivec

Thanks to increased membership – both in the amount of dues paid and the number of people who paid dues, our neighborhood deficit on a calendar year basis decreased by \$3,400. Balances in our accounts are dangerously low – totaling only \$2,400. The POA budget for calendar year 2005 is projected to have income of \$25,175 and expenses of \$21,175, resulting in a net profit of \$4,000. We encourage all residents to pay their dues promptly to keep our organization running smoothly. A 2005 membership form and a reply envelope are included in this newsletter.



### **Armed robbery and attempted rape in Cambridge Green.**

At approximately 7:30 p.m. on February 1, 2005, a large black man broke into a home in Cambridge Green, the subdivision of 100 townhomes just across Kirby at Glen Haven. The man was confronted by the female homeowner, whom he attempted to rape at gunpoint. The woman put up quite a struggle and managed to free herself and run for help. She escaped with broken ribs and a concussion. The robber made off with the woman's purse and fled over the back fence toward the Brompton Apartments.

According to Mary Hoekel, past president of Cambridge Green HOA, "This is the first violent incident in the subdivision in 30 years."

The man is described as a large black man about 6 ft. tall and well over 225 lbs. He was wearing a ski mask. This man is still at large as of February 2, 2005.

Please be very cautious when entering and leaving your home. Also, you may want to have an alarm system installed. The victim did not have an alarm system, but has had one installed since the incident. HPD recommends that residents who have alarm systems keep them armed, even when they are at home. HPD also recommends leaving exterior lights on at night and keeping blinds and curtains closed, as criminals will often case a home and study the layout to enable them to make a quick getaway.

## RACS Patrol corner

Recently a couple, from a fellow University Place neighborhood north of Rice, came home to find their home had been burglarized over the weekend. According to police, the burglary was linked to construction at a home nearby. "Residents should be more alert when construction is going on next door or behind them, but particularly next door. We have caught construction workers breaking into homes next door which they have all day and weeks to case. They are suspected in many more neighborhood burglaries. It would be advisable to have residents make their presence known to construction crews and become aware of what type of crews are working at the homes (ie. framing, drywall, foundation, finish carpentry, etc.). Residents may also want to proactively meet the supervisors of the crews," said Sgt. Johnnie Vollert. Don't forget to alert the RACS Patrol if you must go out of town. Vacation watch is provided to all RACS members. To verify your membership contact Marla Niksch at [mniksch@aol.com](mailto:mniksch@aol.com).

## Gramercy west of Kirby to close for a year

The city of Houston recently approved G.T. Leach Company's request to close the west side of Gramercy at Kirby for the next 12 months. Old Braeswood, the Mann Eye Clinic, and Kelsey Seybold Medical Clinic were all consulted for input. Originally the developer was going to keep materials on the east side of Kirby in the empty lot on the south side of Dorrington, requiring crews to travel back and forth across Kirby. However, this project, which will be happening concurrently with the Kirby project, will require many deliveries of construction materials through out the day. Large cranes and other construction equipment will need to be situated in the street, and the constraints of the lot leave no other room for staging. All agreed that granting the street closure was in the public's best interest.

Though this closure has eliminated one of our favorite cut-throughs, rest assured it will be back in service by summer 2006.

## Tree Program Plans for 2005

Thank you to donors to the tree planting program. This year our tree fund increased by over \$3500. This money will be used to plant approximately 25 new street trees throughout the neighborhood this month. Many thanks to **Camille & Glenn Cunningham, Fran & Mike Feltoich, Kathy Lord, Elizabeth Stewart, Susan & Paul Danziger** for their generous contributions to this project.

The tree committee needs volunteers to oversee the street tree planting program, which seeks to systematically replant each street in Old Braeswood with a variety of tree species. The program is in conjunction with Trees for Houston, a non-profit 501c3 organization. Contributions to the tree program are tax-deductible. To request a specific planting or to volunteer contact David Cohen at 713-667-6015.



## Block Captain call

Co-Chairs Anita O'Shaugnessy, Anne Huete, and Sally Miller invite you to become a block captain. This is a one year commitment. Block Captains provide an important function by welcoming new neighbors to Old Braeswood and providing them with helpful information about the neighborhood and OBPOA. For more information call Anita at 713-660-8747.



## 2005 Officers & Chairpersons

President	Bob Birenbaum
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Pres	Paul Mansfield
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice Pres.	Janna Taylor
3 <sup>rd</sup> Vice Pres.	Mike Ryan
At-Large #1	Daniel Levin
At-Large #2	Glenn Cunningham
Treasurer	Becky Pivec
Secretary	Joyce Mehaffey
Past President	Agelia Pérez McGowan
Arch. Review	Howard Merrill
Enforcement	Bob Thompson
Block Captains	Anita O'Shaughnessy Anne Huete Sally Miller
Flood Control	Janna Taylor
Newsletter	Evalyn Krudy Becky Pivec Melissa Rubenstein
Park	Becky Pivec
Security	Bill Wheeler
Traffic and Parking	Marjorie Perlmutter
Trees	David Cohen
Webmaster	Fritz Weiss
University Place	Kathy Lord
Office Manager	Evalyn Krudy

### ***Kirby preparations underway***

*(Right) Kirby Project Engineer Steve Fenney standing inside a segment of the box culvert that will be installed 25 ft. below Kirby. Steve is 6'7" in his boots. The exterior dimensions of the culvert measure 14' by 14'.*

## Ex-offender/Parolee Drug Treatment Facility Funding Denied

by Evalyn Krudy

Recently, Old Braeswood and other nearby stakeholders (ie. University Place, the Texas Medical Center, the Rodeo Association, the South Main Center Association, M.D. Anderson Cancer Institute and Reliant Stadium) joined together in successfully opposing Riverside General Hospital's application to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice to locate a parolee residential and outpatient drug treatment facility for some 200 criminals including 60 on a full-time residential basis, and more than 100 on an outpatient basis at 1803 Old Spanish Trail at Fannin, only a half mile from Old Braeswood. See letter on page 6 from State Senator Rodney Ellis.

Old Braeswood residents sent over 50 letters opposing the facility, and incoming president Bob Birenbaum spoke at the public meeting on behalf of the neighborhood, and eloquently summarized concerns about the proposed site. Though all agreed that such facilities are important and necessary, too many in one area create problems that affect the community negatively. This particular facility raised many questions, which were never answered sufficiently. Riverside General provided conflicting information about the client population to be served, on the one hand identifying them as parolees under court-ordered supervision, and on the other, as persons receiving treatment in lieu of incarceration. We also never learned whether violent offenders and sex offenders would be eligible for the program.

At press time we haven't heard if Riverside has any ideas for alternate locations or funding sources. But for now, the case is closed.

Thanks to Susan Young, President of the South Main Center Association for bringing this matter to our attention. Thanks also to University Place Super Neighborhood, which was instrumental in coordinating opposition from area neighborhoods.



## Kirby construction update by Evalyn Krudy

As you know, your homeowners association has been involved in the planning of the Kirby storm Relief and reconstruction project for more than two years. We continue to work in coordination with University Place Association and Super Neighborhood to facilitate as smooth a project as possible and to secure amenities for Kirby Drive beyond the minimal amenities included in this four-year-long, highly disruptive project. The utility companies will soon be through relocating buried fiber optic cables, gas, water, and telecommunication lines. Once this work is completed, construction will begin in earnest in late March 2005, after the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo ends.

Old Braeswood Representatives attended the second preconstruction meeting for Segment 1 (N. Braeswood to Dorrington) with city officials and the Kirby contractor on January 20, 2005. At that meeting the project team announced construction delays and the schedule for tree relocation, removal, and replanting, which will begin during the first week of February.

OBPOPA has received a number of calls from residents concerned about the tags on trees all along Kirby. These tags tell the contractor which trees are to be removed and relocated and which are to be pruned and protected. The trees were tagged under the supervision of the city forester and Kathy Lord of Trees for Houston, an Old Braeswood resident and chair of the Old Braeswood Kirby Taskforce. Kathy and project engineers Marty Cristafaro and Steve Finney met with homeowners along Kirby on January 31, 2005 to explain the tags: a blue ribbon indicates trees to be protected; a red/yellow striped ribbon indicates a tree that is to be removed; and an orange or a red ribbon indicates that the tree will be transplanted to the Alameda Rd. median. The engineers explained what residents should expect during the construction. Silence overtook the room when photos of the construction equipment that is set to roll into our neighborhood this spring were circulated.

Not a job for Mike Mulligan, a super-sized Hitachi brand back hoe, with 10 ft. tall tires, will be used to dig the 32 ft. wide by 25 ft. deep trench capable of accommodating the two side-by-side, 14' by 14', box culverts. If you're having trouble envisioning the trench, hundred of two-story homes could fit inside it. And that's not all. There's also a giant crane capable of lifting the 96,000 lb. sections of culvert. These sections will be held together by a flexible connector. Then, a special fabric-like skin will be wrapped around the joints to prevent silt from entering the culverts.

To top that off, the city is now proposing to make Kirby one-way southbound during the construction. Proponents of the proposal say the equipment staging and spatial problems that go along with a project of this magnitude could be mitigated by making Kirby one-way southbound. This would allow equipment to be delivered and dump trucks to come and go without blocking oncoming traffic. If two-way traffic is maintained, conditions will be very stop-and-go, and cut-through traffic in the neighborhood will increase. This proposal is only being discussed, and has not been decided upon.

Residents adjacent to the project expressed concern about soil shifting and subsidence of their homes during the construction. The project team will regularly monitor the level of grade beams of homes along Kirby. However, the contractor needs the homeowner's permission to perform the monitoring. If you live along Kirby and did not attend the meeting on January 31, call the office and we'll put you in touch with the contractor.

The Project team has reiterated their pledge to maintain daily communications as needed. Subscribers to the OBPOA electronic newsletter will receive advance news of street closures, etc. To subscribe, send an email with "subscribe" in the subject line, to [info@oldbraeswood.com](mailto:info@oldbraeswood.com). Please include your name and address. For even more information visit [www.kirbycoalition.org](http://www.kirbycoalition.org).



# The Senate of The State of Texas

SENATOR RODNEY ELLIS  
District 13

PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE  
1999 - 2000

COMMITTEES:

*Chair*, Government Organization  
Criminal Justice  
Infrastructure Development & Security  
State Affairs

January 26, 2004

Bob Birenbaum, President  
Old Braeswood Civic Club  
P.O. Box 541346  
Houston, TX 77254

Dear Mr. Birenbaum:

Thank you for contacting my office regarding Riverside General Hospital's proposal to establish a drug treatment program for parolees at its facility located at 1803 Old Spanish Trail. I want to inform you that the Texas Department of Criminal Justice has rejected Riverside's bid to provide these services.

I am sensitive to the many concerns you raised, including the potential for increased crime in the area due to the presence of ex-offenders. I am hopeful that, in the future, neighborhood residents and Riverside will work collaboratively to balance the need to offer treatment services to these needy populations with the equally important need to maintain the peace and security of surrounding residential communities. My office would be glad to facilitate these types of dialogues.

Again, thank you for contacting my office about this important issue. If you would like legislative updates on similar issues, please be sure to register your e-mail addresses at [www.rodnyellis.com](http://www.rodnyellis.com)

Sincerely,

Rodney Ellis

RE:ah

Lyric Centre  
440 Louisiana, Suite 575  
Houston, Texas 77002  
(713) 236-0306  
FAX: (713) 236-0604

P.O. Box 12068  
Austin, Texas 78711  
(512) 463-0113  
FAX: (512) 463-0006  
Dial 711 For Relay Calls

2440 Texas Parkway, Suite 110  
Missouri City, Texas 77489  
(281) 261-2360  
FAX: (281) 261-4726

E-Mail: [rodney.ellis@senate.state.tx.us](mailto:rodney.ellis@senate.state.tx.us)

# Wonderful Response to Old Braeswood Park Corporation Funds Solicitation !!!

by Becky Pivec

In December 2004, Old Braeswood Park Corporation sent out a solicitation for donations to the residents of Old Braeswood. The purpose of the solicitation was to raise money to paint the park fence. To date, we have collected over \$3,900.00. Our sincere thanks to the following donors:

Joel & Sheryl Androphy  
Marian & Gary Beauchamp  
Dr. Zidella Brener  
Janet & Chuck Bruner  
Ian & Patricia Butler  
Nell Calaway  
Tom & Fran Callahan  
Joe & Margaret Clegg  
Julie Cohn & John A. Connor  
David Corry  
Catherine & Ted Donnelly  
Skye & Allison Durant  
Eby Family  
Bruce Ehni, MD  
Colleen & Doug Elliot  
Greg & Mary Erwin  
Mr. & Mrs. Blanten Filak  
Marty & Peggy Fischer  
Scott & Anne Flamm  
Seth Freedman  
The Frusco Family  
G.G. Hsieh & Mark Hausknecht  
Tom & Dorelee Henderson  
Tari & Boyd Hoekel  
Ernesto Infante  
Dave Kaminsky, M.D.

Drs. Samia & Kamal Khalil  
Melissa & Daniel Levin  
Martha & Brian Long  
Gary & Agelia Pérez McGowan  
Kathryn Murray  
Bill & Dee Murray  
Nuchtern Family  
S.J. Orlando  
Nancy Parten  
Esther & Harry Pepper  
Wayne & Becky Pivec  
Richard & Cheryl Rosenberg  
Mary Lynn & Kelly Rushing  
Dr. & Mrs. Don Schaffer  
Mark J. Schnee, M.D.  
Don Scisco  
Carol & Robert Shimp  
Alicia Bye & George Soltes  
Tara Sondock  
Mr. and Mrs. John Strasburger  
Elizabeth Stewart & Bonnie Foxworth  
Joanne & Randy Swartz  
Leonard & Susan Teich  
Bob & Rachel Thompson  
Shawna & Mark H. Van Ness  
Stuart Zidell

We appreciate your support!!

If you would like to donate to Old Braeswood Park Corporation, please contact Becky Pivec at (713) 592.6192. Park donations are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

Old Braeswood Park Corporation serves as a tax-exempt, fund-raising entity to help cover the cost of maintaining Braeswood Park. Contributions to OBPC are tax deductible. However, OBPC is a non-member corporation. Therefore, we will continue to have a "Park Committee" as a part of OBCC and ask for volunteer time and effort to assist with park functions such as the Fall and Spring Parties and the "Trinkets to Treasures" fund raising event.

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## Save the date!

*Old Braeswood POA invites you to the annual April member's meeting to be held  
April 13, 2005 at 7 p.m. Location TBA.*

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## **It's Been a Great Year at Old Braeswood Park Come See the Improvements!!**

By Becky Pivec

During the past year, we have seen our neighborhood park as such a peaceful spot during these chaotic times in our world. It's such a simple joy to drive or walk by this beautiful green space and see all the children playing, laughing, and running. Through the work of our Park Committee, Lisa Cusack and Becky Pivec, along with the City of Houston, our park has seen some improvements. We were so excited to get the three wooden benches in the interior of the park refurbished! The slats had rotted, and were extremely unsightly and well as uncomfortable. They now look beautiful and blend into the landscape nicely. The park received a load of mulch last February, and has been replenished as needed by Wayne Pivec. Finally, all the trees in the park were trimmed in January 2005 by the City of Houston – our thanks to Kathy Lord for arranging this. We feel so fortunate to live in such a fabulous neighborhood among such wonderful people willing to give of their time and energy! If you would like to be involved with the park, please call Becky Pivec at (713) 592-6192.

### **Volunteers Needed For The Park!**

We are in desperate need of volunteers to help with the park. These jobs include responsibility for fundraising, execution of the neighborhood wide tag sale, and planning the annual park party in addition to general maintenance. Please phone Becky Pivec at (713) 592-6192 if you are interested.

### **Save Your Stuff!!**

It's time once again for the neighborhood-wide tag sale. This is a fundraising event benefiting the park and is scheduled to happen in April 2005. Neighbors throughout Old Braeswood donate items they no longer need or want, and they are sold at a tag sale held at the park. Volunteers will pick up goods from your home – all for a good cause. Donations are tax-deductible. Keep our Park in mind when you start your spring cleaning!! Questions or want to volunteer? Call Becky Pivec at (713) 592-6192.

### ***Old Braeswood Property Owners Association***

***P.O. Box 541346***

***Houston, Texas 77254***

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

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

***Tel 713.807.1787***

Return Service requested