



## *Crime and Patrol Situation Under Review*

While Old Braeswood has a low rate of crime as compared to much of the city, its location at the nexus of thoroughfares leading the country's largest Medical Center, leaves the neighborhood vulnerable to crimes of opportunity. There was a mild spike in crime this spring, but the past month has gone by without incident. The need for a patrol was recognized many years ago, and the formation of RACS was a good solution for the past couple of decades. But recently, RACS participation has declined, and as a result coverage has suffered. It is essential that we remain vigilant and communicate when we see suspicious activity, keep our porch lights on at night, set our alarms every time we leave the house, report street light outages to Centerpoint, look out for neighbor's homes when they are out of town, and refuse to open doors to solicitors and scam artists. Cell phones with cameras are a great tool for reporting crime and taking photographs of suspicious vehicles. Please use yours often! The Old Braeswood Board is in the process of evaluating security issues overall and is researching options. We look forward to sending you a report on this effort in August.

## *Membership Drive in Progress*

Thanks to all neighbors who have paid their 2012 dues! We are continuing our membership drive and will be mailing membership reminder notices in the next two weeks. If you haven't paid your dues since last year, please send them in as soon as possible. Your participation is essential to the health and welfare of the neighborhood. Dues levels are \$100, \$150 and \$250. Please pay at the level that you can afford. Special recognition of our members will be printed in the next edition of this newsletter. You can find a membership form online at [www.OldBraeswood.com](http://www.OldBraeswood.com). Or, simply mail your check to OBPOA, PO Box 541346, Houston, TX 77254.

## *Old Braeswood Street Reconstruction On Hold For Now* by Evalyn L. Krudy

Over the past few years many of you participated in Old Braeswood's petition drive to collect signatures to qualify our aging streets for reconstruction under the city's Neighborhood Street Reconstruction Program (NSRP). The bad news is that the blocks that had submitted petitions for full reconstruction and infrastructure replacement, including drainage, have lost their place in line due to a recent decision by city leaders.

As you may know, voters passed the Rebuild Houston initiative as a way to fund drainage and infrastructure improvements without having to issue debt. Rebuild Houston is a needs based system. According to Dale Rudick, Director of Rebuild Houston, roads in the inner city have been assessed to determine quality and drainage problems. The City now knows where the worst problems are and plans to address these areas first as funds are available. This system is (pardon the pun) groundbreaking, and Mr. Rudick expects other cities will adopt this equitable and fair process for replacing aging infrastructure.

The good news for Old Braeswood is that blocks that submitted petitions through last year will be given priority over other areas. For instance, roads in the Southgate and Morningside Place neighborhoods north of Holcombe were built about the same time and are in similar condition to roads in Old Braeswood. But because they did not submit NSR petitions, Old Braeswood's roads should be rebuilt first. At least, this is how the program is expected to work at this juncture. Just when the City will get around to rebuilding our streets is anyone's guess, but we can definitely expect to be waiting 10 or more years -- which is exactly where we were in line under the NSR program. The recent overlay should last 7-10 years or more, so most of the neighborhood is in better shape than many other parts of Houston.

### **In this issue:**

Your House has a History	2
Mid Century Houses ...	3
Tai Chi in Old Braeswood	3
Garden Club News	4
Welcome New Neighbors	4
Trash reminders	4
OB POA's Park Party	5
Garden Club Membership	6

A house can be many different things besides a home. Sometimes it's an art gallery. Artist Dee Murray lives with her husband, Bill, at 2402 Maroneal, where they host many Old Braeswood gatherings. Dee is a past President of the OB Property Owner's Association. They hosted both the POA meeting in April and the OB Garden Club meeting in May. Every event in their home is a de facto art show, because Dee's work is everywhere.

Dee's story is that of a woman who is familiar with change. After marriage and four children, she went to graduate school in social work. Then, after a long career focusing on the treatment of substance abuse, she retired as vice-president

of the Houston Council on Alcohol and Drugs. (She still sits on the National Board of Cenikor, a substance abuse program.) She retired to study art. Up to that point, she had made her own Christmas cards and "fiddled with art," but never taken a class.

Training at the Glassell School, and with various local artists, prepared Dee to produce work in a variety of mediums.

She paints in a studio that was once a spare bedroom. Currently, her art sells at Loop, a Houston boutique, and at The Tyler County Art League, in Woodville. She also sells privately upon request, and her handmade greeting cards are very popular.

Bill, an international business consultant and owner of W.J. Murray & Associates, came to Houston with Dee from New York and settled in Southgate. They liked the neighborhood, but moved to OB in 1999 specifically to change from a two-story house to a one-story. The mid-century house on Maroneal was just right.

The Maroneal house served several other families before the Murrays. It first appears in the Houston City Directory in 1956, when it was purchased by Helen and Henry B. Desenberg. Henry was a founder and part owner of Beard & Stone Electric Company, a Houston-based auto

parts distributor. The house from which the Desenbergs moved was also in OB, the one at 7319 Greenbriar (*Old Braeswood News* July/August 2011). Within two years of the Desenbergs' move, Henry's company merged with Michigan Plating to become Gulf & Western Corporation. As a romantic aside, although the Desenbergs were both Texas born, they met and married as students at the University of Michigan.

The Desenbergs sold the house to Doris and Tom S. Loomis, Jr. in 1970. Tom was owner of Loomis Telephone Answering Service. He was an officer in many state and national professional associations related to his business, and

in 1992, was selected for the National Telephone Telecommunications Hall of Fame.

The last owner before Dee and Bill was Garry Leon Plotkin, who bought the house in 1991, and lived there alone. Garry was a Director on the Board of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, and part of various winning consortiums that bid on livestock. [\$64,000 for a goat in 2006; \$80,000 for a lamb and \$55,000 for a turkey in 2004; \$375,000 for a steer and \$62,000 for a turkey in 2003; \$130,000

for a pen of broilers in 2001; \$85,000 for a pencil drawing of a cowboy in 1999; \$101,000 for a color drawing in 1998; \$30,000 for a pen of broilers in 1997; and \$35,000 for a turkey in 1996.]

Garry had a phone line at his bedside that gave direct access to Rodeo offices, and often it was used by Rodeo staff to provide airport arrival times of dignitaries that Garry was to meet and greet. He also was known for his work as a Director of the 100 Club, benefitting Houston police officers.

At the last POA gathering, this house, complete with its history and with Dee's art, was a setting that accentuated the topic of the guest speaker – the current popularity and marketability of mid-century housing.

[This is the 22nd article in a continuing series on houses and people in Old Braeswood. Suggestions for future columns are welcome.]



*Dee and Bill Murray's home at 2402 Maroneal is an excellent example of an updated mid century modern home.*

## Mid-Century Houses as Topic of April Old Braeswood POA Meeting *by Susan Teich*



*Dee Murray stands before two of her recent paintings. Her beautifully updated mid-century home is a show case for art.*



### ***Tai Chi Class for Old Braeswood residents are on break for Summer***

Neighborhood Tai Chi classes started this spring and have been a great boon to the health of many neighbors. Newcomers are welcome. Classes are on break for the hot summer months, and will resume in late August or September.

Classes meet at 8:30 am Thursday or Saturday in the carport at 2322 Maroneal Blvd. with instruction by Old Braeswood resident Rose Pu.

Wear long, comfortable pants (no shorts), and comfortable shoes. Tai chi is best done on an empty stomach or at least an hour after eating. Classes are free and last from 45–60 minutes. All Old Braeswood residents are welcome.

Questions:

713 660-9520

or



Mid-century architecture was the topic of the semi-annual meeting of the Old Braeswood Property Owners Association on April 17th. Dee and Bill Murray hosted the event at their own mid-century house at 2402 Maroneal Blvd. Addressing OB residents was guest speaker Robert Searcy, a Board Member of HoustonMod, an organization dedicated to the preservation of good mid-century architecture in Houston. [Its website is at: <http://houstonmod.org>] He emphasized the importance of selling mid-century houses to their growing niche market instead of presenting them as “fixer uppers.” The pink tile bathroom, the doorknob placed in the middle of the front door, the atrium, the formica counter, the terrazzo floor, the “dated” light fixtures – all are cherished by those in the mid-century market. More information about what constitutes a good mid-century house is available on the following websites:

<http://www.memorialbendarchitecture.com>;

<http://www.glenbrookvalley.org>

<http://www.lortondale.com>; <http://www.northcrestmodern.com>

<http://www.arapahoeacres.org>; <http://www.eichlersocal.com>;

<http://www.eichlernetwork.com>

<http://www.balboahighlands.com>;

<http://savethepinkbathrooms.com/about>.

A magazine devoted to the mid-century house is Atomic Ranch, <http://www.atomic-ranch.com>, available at Issues Magazine Store, 3425 S. Shepherd Dr.

## Garden Club Hosted in Tanglewood

New  
**WELCOME**

**Neighbors**

**Christopher Scott Ring &  
Russell K. Ring**

2318 Glen Haven

**Nicole & David Singer**

2300 Maroneal

**Peyton Yates**

2356 Underwood



### Sign up for Old Braeswood eBlasts & Crime Alerts

Would you like to receive up to the minute news and crime alerts electronically? To subscribe, call the Old Braeswood office at 713-807-1787 or send your email address to [info@OldBraeswood.com](mailto:info@OldBraeswood.com).

### Join Old Braeswood's Yahoo Group

This is a real time group where you can send messages to other members without delay. The Yahoo group has been very helpful for tracking down lost pets and has even been used to help the RACS Constables Patrol track down thieves. Please note that the Yahoo group is not related to the eNews and crime alert service. Visit this link to get started:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/OldBraeswoodNeighbors/>.

Gay Estes, President of the Garden Club of America, hosted the Old Braeswood Garden Club at her home in Tanglewood for its monthly meeting in April. The weather, appropriately, favored the plants – mild and drizzly. Ms. Estes and OB Garden Club President, Margo Elgohary, pose under an umbrella in Mrs. Estes' extensive garden of specimen plants. Every Garden Club visitor went home with cuttings and new ideas for their own gardens.



## Recycling & Trash Schedule

### Recycling Dates

Every other Tuesday  
June 5 & 19      July 3, 17 & 31  
Aug. 14 & 28      Sept. 11 & 25

### Household Trash Yard Waste

Tuesdays (in city provided bins)  
Tuesdays (in biodegradable bags)

### Tree & Limb Debris Junk Waste

1st Monday (odd months)  
1st Monday (even months)

# Annual Old Braeswood POA Park Party – fun for all!

A great time was had by all who came out to enjoy a beautiful spring afternoon at the park from 4:30—6:30 p.m. on Sunday, May the 6th. The weather was perfect and over 60 neighbors were in attendance for Old Braeswood’s 31st Park Party. This year neighbors feasted on delicious pizza, refreshing treats and ice cold drinks.

Special thanks to our Park Party sponsor, Dawn Gervais, Realtor, Keller Williams Properties!

GG Hsieh and her team of volunteers planned another perfect event. Volunteers included Liz Alhand & Ross VanWassenhove, Annette & John Eldridge, Dee & Bill Murray, Bob & Vicki Birenbaum, Mark Hausknecht, Molly Khalil and Dawn Gervais.

We really can’t thank these hard working neighbors enough for their time and effort to bring us some of the best neighborhood events ever.

The events committee is looking for new leadership, please contact G.G. Hsieh at 713 -660-9520 or [gghsieh@gmail.com](mailto:gghsieh@gmail.com) for more, or to volunteer to help with future events in any capacity. This is a good way to get to know your neighbors while having a great time. (The welcome committee also needs assistance, please send a message to Dawn Gervais ([dawn@dawngervais.com](mailto:dawn@dawngervais.com)) for more information.



From left:  
 (1) Scott Campbell with Annette Eldridge and GG Hsieh.  
 (2) John Eldridge discusses concerns with neighbor.  
 (3) The Danziger Family  
 (4) Bottom left: Dee Murray serves pizza to some of our youngest and cutest members.

## Park Toys to be Thinned Out Aug. 1st

The Park Toy Committee plans to thin out park toys at the beginning of August. Toys that are deemed to be dangerous or in disrepair will be removed.

The committee asks that for the safety of our children, please do not leave toys that are not in good condition at the park. While having a few toys on hand is fun for the park’s young visitors, the ever expanding volume of toys is a bit overwhelming. Your help is needed. If you see a toy that looks dangerous, please take it home with you and put it in your trash bin for regular collection. If you have brought toys to the park and want to ensure they are not removed, please take them home with you on your next visit.

2012 OBPOA Officers & Chairpersons	
President	John Eldridge
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Pres.	Susan Teich
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice Pres.	Buddy Steves
3 <sup>rd</sup> Vice Pres.	Ryan Maierson
At-Large	Molly Khalil
At-Large	G.G. Hsieh
Treasurer	David Leathers
Secretary	Dawn Gervais
Past President	Dee Murray
Architectural Review	Marilyn Archer Matthew Kelley Prince Ambooken
Block Captains	Sally Miller
Historic	Susan Teich
Newsletter	<u>Volunteer Needed</u>
Park Enforcement	Annette Eldridge Sam Bernstein John Eldridge Bill Marchbank
RACS Rep	Ryan Maierson
Rice U Liaison	Bob Birenbaum
Social	G.G. Hsieh
Trees	Carroll Shaddock & Molly Khalil
University Place	Kathy Lord
Welcome	Dawn Gervais
Manager	Evalyn Krudy



**PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION**

P.O. Box 541346  
Houston, TX 77254-1346  
Phone: 713-807-1787  
Email: info@oldbraeswood.com  
www.oldbraeswood.com

**To: Our Old Braeswood Neighbor  
Houston, Texas 77030**

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

## *Garden Club Membership Renewal*

Dear Old Braeswood Neighbors,

I hope that you all are enjoying the beautiful weather! My name is Margo Elgohary and I will be serving as President of our Garden Club for the 2012-2013 year. I'm excited about the year ahead. We have a lot of great speakers lined up for the coming 2012-2013 year. In addition to speakers, we have three evening socials. Also, the Garden Club funds and maintains the poop station at the park. Lastly, you are not required to like gardening! If you are interested in joining the Garden Club, please fill out the form below and mail, along with the \$15.00 dues, by **August 1, 2012**, to Ruth Kosieracki (4141 South Braeswood #515, Houston TX 77025).

I am looking forward to fantastic year and I hope you will be a part of it.

Sincerely,

Margo Elgohary  
Old Braeswood Garden Club President

**Please fill out, detach and return with your dues by August 1st to be included in the yearbook.**

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### **Old Braeswood Garden Club 2012 Membership Renewal**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

email: \_\_\_\_\_