

Hurricane Harvey and the Great Flood of 2017



OLD BRAESWOOD PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION

Old Braeswood News



Old Braeswood Park from the intersection of Morningside and Maroneal



Annette Brown kayaks on Maroneal

Brays Bayou 8/24-8/26/17



Friday



Saturday



Sunday

The weekend of August 26-27 produced the worst flooding Houston has ever seen. For the first time ever, several Old Braeswood homes flooded. Water covered our lawns, curbs and streets for two days. Some homes lost power. Some residents surveyed the flooded neighborhood by canoe and kayak. When it was all over, we helped our neighbors where needed, emptying their homes of possessions, giving them shelter, clean clothes, meals, and friendship. This newsletter celebrates our neighborhood's perseverance.

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Brays Bayou Assoc. Discusses Harvey & Area Flooding *by Len Teich*

Len Teich represented Old Braeswood at a post-Harvey meeting on Sept 15, at which president Charles Goforth reported initial findings by insurance adjusters, FEMA, City officials and others currently assessing damage from Harvey:

93% of all structures in Greater Houston (commercial, retail, residential, etc.) were not flooded. But the remaining 7% of structures that flooded included some in the Brays Bayou watershed: Meyerland was 83% flooded; Bellaire was 25% flooded; Willow Meadows was 40% flooded. [Editor's note: Braes Heights, Braeswood Place were similarly affected.]

After Allison, the 100 year and 500 year flood plain maps were redrawn. The accuracy of the new maps was born out by Harvey. Almost all the area in the 100 year flood plain was flooded. Almost none of the area outside it was. That suggests that Harvey was a 100 year flood, not a 500 year flood much less an 800 year or 1000 year flood as has been suggested.

Braes Bayou has never flooded the Texas Medical Center as was thought after Allison. Instead it was flooded by a drainage ditch, the Harris Gulley, that runs through the Med Center.

The Ike Dike that has been proposed for Galveston would stop storm surge in the Gulf, but wouldn't help with a storm flood like Harvey, where water came from widespread rain. (Continued on page 6)



Kayaker on Gramercy

Water, water everywhere!.



Bellefontaine rescue team



2300 Gramercy neighbors unite: Joe Garnett, Gary Wagner, Bill Wheeler, Laura Pang, Ann Garnett, Gene & Jean Boisubin

Harvey Visits Old Braeswood



Lake Blue Bonnet (left and center), and rescue of Annette Bracey (far right)



Gramercy at Greenbriar



Laura Pang wading on Gramercy



Brays Bayou on Sunday



Braeswood Court

The house at 7315 Greenbriar Drive is home to David and Laurie Eckman, who bought it in 1977 from the original owners.

George and Anastasia Caridas built the house in 1940 shortly after marrying. George was from Patmos, Greece, and his 1938 wedding to Anastasia took place in Houston's Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral, as pictured in the book *Greeks in Houston* (p. 57, Arcadia Publishing 2013). Most of the guests were also from Patmos.

At that time George already owned and operated the restaurant Ship Ahoy at 1007 Main St., between McKinney and Lamar. In the early 1960s, while still living in Old Braeswood, he relocated Ship Ahoy to 6638 Main St., now a Medical Center block occupied by Baylor Clinic. In the 1960s, Ship Ahoy shared the block with Tidlands Motor Inn and Mading's Drug Store. Laurie Eckman recalls that growing up in Houston "there were not many restaurants and Ship Ahoy was one of the best." Also that "its interior was decorated like a ship, with portholes and a curved staircase leading to an upper deck."

George Caridas was not the only restaurateur in his family. Anastasia's father, John Markou, lived with them and owned the downtown restaurant Markou's Cafe, at 120 Main St. Together he and George kept Houston well fed.

At that time children played freely throughout the neighborhood with no danger from traffic, riding their bicycles everywhere. Greenbriar Blvd. was then "Green Briar" and it ended at Brays Bayou. A small pool and fountain graced the Triangle Park on Greenbriar, across from the Caridas house.

Current Old Braeswood resident Elayne Kouzounis remembers playing at the Caridas house as a child. Their families were members of Annunciation and very close, "as were all Greek families in Houston then." The Greek women invited one another to coffees. The men held monthly poker games at their homes. Evening and weekend occasions always included the entire family. The chil-

dren played outside and the women visited and dinner was always served.

A highlight of the year was the dinner that Anastasia cooked to celebrate her husband's Name Day, the Feast Day of St. George. It was the custom in the Greek community to celebrate the Name Days of the men (but not the women). Elayne remembers the

many dishes and the many guests. "You didn't even need an invitation." Those who knew the Caridas family "just came." She also recalls that Anastasia was a famously good cook and that the house was filled with antiques, many brought from Greece.

Of the four Caridas children (Irene, Nick, JoAnn and Mary), Elayne remains close friends with Joann (in Kemah) and Irene (in the Katy area).

In 1967 George died and his widow sold the house in 1977 to the Eckmans, newly arrived in Houston. David was an attorney for Exxon. The Eckmans were newly arrived but very familiar with the city. Laurie grew up here and David, the son of a native Houstonian, had lived briefly in Houston with his parents before going off to UT-Austin (where he met Laurie).

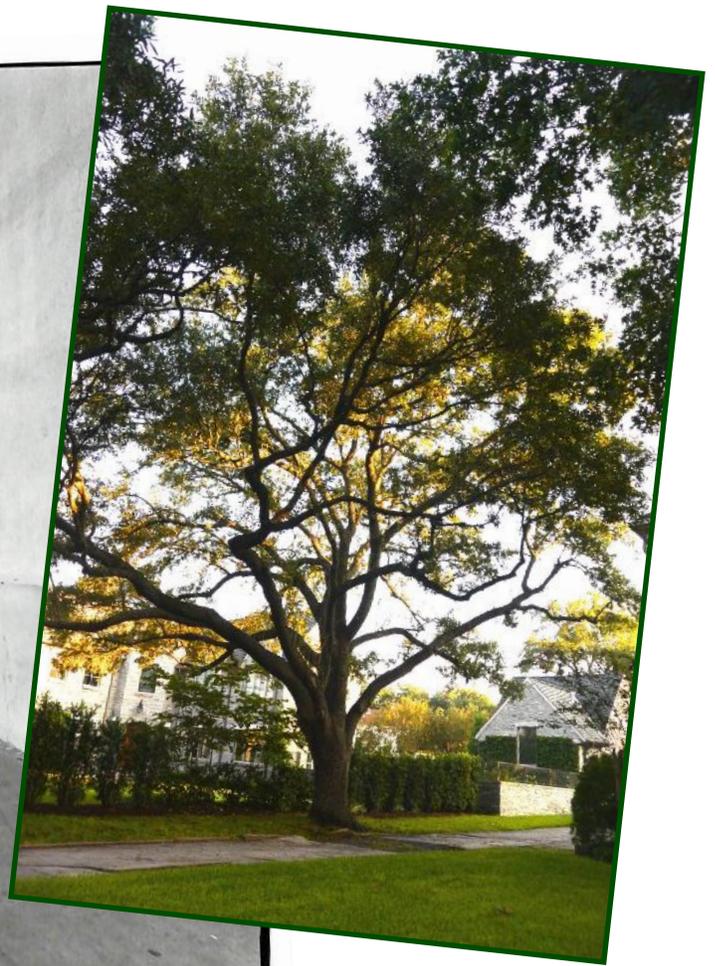
David and Laurie were drawn to Old Braeswood because of its location and because of the Caridas house, with its many bedrooms. Their own family included two growing children, Catherine (age 7) and Christian (age 10).

David and Laurie still enjoy trees planted on their property by the Caridas family, three pecan trees and a pine tree, all in back, and a towering oak in front. David recalls that the oak "was no more than a decorative bush" when they moved in.

[This is the 48th article in a continuing series on houses and people in Old Braeswood. Suggestions for future columns are welcome.]



Laurie & David Eckman, current owners of 7315 Greenbriar



1) Top left: The Markou's Cafe at 120 Main St., c. 1960s. © Paul Hester (2) Top right: Tree planted by original owners (3) Bottom: Ship Ahoy restaurant, 6638 Main, c. 1960s. © Arch-ive.org



“Brays Bayou” Continued from page 2

Increased development in recent years is not the cause of Harvey flooding in the Brays Bayou Watershed. Since 1980 developed land area in the Brays Bayou watershed has increased only from 85% to 87%. Similarly, there has been little or no land subsidence due to ground water extraction during that period because ground water is not being extracted except for monthly tests at emergency wells.

FEMA may make some grants to elevate homes, as opposed to buying them out, but it will be costly. The current quotes from local private contractors to elevate homes 4 feet are about \$100 per sq foot of house floor space. So on a typical Old Braeswood home of 3000 sq feet the cost to elevate would be \$300,000.

The railroad track that runs north-south to the west of Old Braeswood (on Bellaire Blvd it is between Stella Link and Newcastle) acts as a 5 foot high dike holding water back. At the Westwood neighborhood it resulted in 90% flooding on the west side of the tracks and practically no flooding on the east side. *[Editor’s note: the same phenomenon occurred in over 35% of Bellaire, and 50% of Braes Heights, and large sections of Braeswood Place.]*

Harvey Photo Appreciation

Many thanks to the following residents who contributed photographs (and apologies to anyone we missed!): *Debra Balthazar, Annette Brown, Michelina Cairo, Julie Cohn, Lara Dolnik, Laurie Eckman, Nancy Eisenmenger, Rhonda Freedman, Joe Garnett, Krista Heidersbach, Christine Infante, Dawn Gervais, Janice Gregory, G.G. Hsieh, Lynne King, Karen Lawson, Sabina Lee, Laura Pang, Christine Robins, Dorry Shaddock, Nicole Singer, and Sherri Walsh.* Visit OldBraeswood.com for more.



Main at Greenbriar During and After the Storm

New, Annual Old Braeswood Preservation Tour set for Nov. 12

Following the success of the Candlelight Tour of Old Braeswood in November 2016 sponsored by The National Trust for Historic Preservation and Houston Mod, Old Braeswood's Preservation Committee is organizing an annual tour of homes in our historic neighborhood. Every year there will be a different selection of homes. On November 12th, members of the Preservation Committee will open their doors for visits by Old Braeswood neighbors and their guests who might accompany them. The tours will be free of charge, and will not be advertised outside the neighborhood. The purpose of the tours will be for Old Braeswood residents to get to know each other and to visit different homes in our neighborhood. A list of the homes and their addresses will be sent out by email to all neighborhood residents by early November and posted on the Old Braeswood website. For now, SAVE THE DATE! Sunday, November 12, 2017, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Nominations for 2017-2018

The OBPOA Nominating Committee will be meeting soon to determine a slate of officers for the 2017-2018 term. The committee will present a slate of officers to stand for election at the Annual Meeting in November (date TBA). If you are interested in serving or know of a good candidate, please send nominations to nominations@OldBraeswood.com by October 10. Committee members are Julie Cohn, John Eldridge, Joe Manca, Dee Murray and Susan Teich. The Executive Committee positions to be filled are: President, Vice President positions 1, 2 and 3, Secretary, Treasurer, and At-Large positions #1 and #2. Volunteers are also needed to serve as block captains and to help with social events throughout the year.

Harvey Doesn't Stop the Garden Club

The Garden Club began its program year as planned with its annual Barbecue Kick-Off on September 10. Many thanks to Ann and Joe Garnett for opening their home for the occasion after recently braving Harvey. They did not let a little thing like major flooding outside their house deter them from their usual hospitality. With the flood waters gone from Old Braeswood, it was time to celebrate and the evening was even more festive than usual! Join this fun group by contacting G.G. Hsieh, gghsieh@gmail.com, (713) 660-9520.



Recycling & Yard Waste Collection Suspended Indefinitely

Please remember that due to the disaster debris collection efforts, the only regularly scheduled solid waste service is garbage collection. **All other scheduled services – curbside recycling, weekly yard waste collection and junk/tree waste – are suspended until further notice.**



Please do not put your green cart with recycling or yard waste bags out, they will not be collected. We appreciate your cooperation and patience as we all recover together. You may still bring your recycling to a Neighborhood Depository or to the Westpark Recycling Center which is open 7 days a week from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. for your convenience.





PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION

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October 2017 Edition

Come to Old Braeswood's **Night Out Party**

@ Old Braeswood Park

6:00—8:00 p.m.

Tues., October 3, 2017

For more information, please contact
info@OldBraeswood.com.

All neighbors welcome!

Join us for fun and refreshments. This annual event is for everyone. There will be activities for children too. Volunteers needed.

Thanks to Dawn Gervais for sponsoring!

WELCOME

New Neighbors

**Joe Fischer &
Larry Johnson**
2423 Glen Haven

**Anthanette & Chad
Wilson**
2506 Gramercy

Jim & Erin McDade
2508 Gramercy

Sandra & Stephen Barnett
2334 Maroneal

**Elsa Tapia &
Carlos Torres-Cabala**
2406 Dorrington, Unit A

2017 Officers & Chairpersons

President	Andrea Lapsley
Vice Pres.	Joe Manca
Vice Pres.	Buddy Steves
Vice Pres.	Courtney Steves
At-Large	John Eldridge
At-Large	David Leathers
Treasurer	Bill Marchbank
Secretary	Julie Cohn
Past Pres.	Susan Teich
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Advisory Bd	Dee Murray
Block Cpts	Christine Manca
Directory	Sally Miller
Enforcement	John Eldridge
Flood Control	Kathy Lord & Len Teich
Garden Club	GG Hsieh
Newsletter	S. Teich / E. Krudy
Park	Annette Eldridge
Plan Review	Marilyn Archer
Preservation	Joe Manca
Patrol	Dee Murray
Rice U Liaison	Andrea Lapsley
Social Events	Krista Heidersbach
Trees	Carroll Shaddock Paul Sanders
University Plc Welcome Manager	Andrea Lapsley Dawn Gervais Evalyn Krudy

Old Braeswood Bears Celebrate After Harvey!



*Our beloved Bears have a new look for Fall!
Special thanks to Christie and David Bowden for helping lift our spirits after the storm.*