

Volume 1, Issue 1

Newsletter Date



NEWSLETTER

OLD BRAESWOOD

## A Letter From Our President

Dear Old Braeswood Neighbors:

Thank you again for electing me President of the Old Braeswood POA at the beginning of this new era. To highlight this change, we have redesigned our newsletter and are increasing our circulation to include former residents who have shown continuing interest and might be encouraged to support our activities. We pledge to continue our efforts to keep Old Braeswood the unique residential setting in Houston. We current residents respect the legacy of these past residents.

Our goals mentioned in past newsletters are being met. We intend to vigorously maintain our deed restrictions, to beautify and refurbish our park (more on that later) and to keep our community the special place it is. The weekly noise you may be hearing is because we have begun our mosquito spraying program to help keep residents comfortable this

summer.

Sincerely,

Bob Birenbaum

President  
Old Braeswood Property Owners Association



## A New Look To The Newsletter!

We hope you are enjoying the new look to the Old Braeswood Newsletter! We are excited to announce that **Gramercy's** Melissa (Rubenstein) Levin is our new volunteer newsletter chair. She welcomes all newsy items you may be able to provide, whether it's something happening in the neighborhood or good news happening in your own home that you wish to share.

Send to:

2435 Gramercy 77030/fax (713) 840-1319  
Or TexasCatCatcher@yahoo.com

Other new volunteers include **Glen Haven's** Susan Teich as the flood control and environmental issues representative for 2005 and **Bluebonnet's** Christine Robins as park chair.

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### MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13th AT 7 PM**

Old Braeswood POA April Member's  
Meeting at the Filak house,

2307 Bluebonnet

**SATURDAY, APRIL 30th 8 AM—2 PM**

"Trinkets To Treasures" Fundraiser In  
Old Braeswood Park

## Traffic & Flooding Issues....

### *Kirby Construction Update*

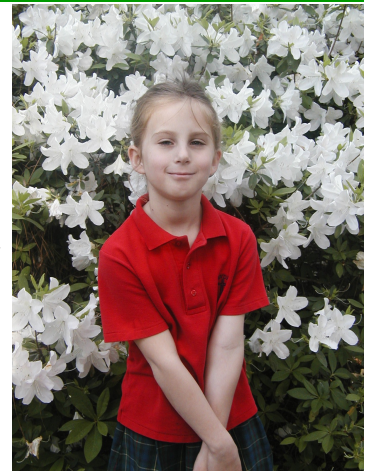
Prepare for large equipment invasion! Utility relocations have been completed and crews will begin digging the 30 ft. wide and 25 ft deep trench during the week of 3/21/05, which will be home to a new mammoth underground water detention facility. Crews have already completed the "fallout" area that connects the system to the bayou, and trees in the path of the trench have been removed. Old Braeswood POA will serve as the liaison between the construction crews and the neighborhood – please call (713-807-1787) if you experience any construction related problems. Phase I of this project, from Brays to Dor-rington, is expected to last for 12 to 15 months.

### *Gramercy parking problem likely to increase*

The Gramercy Court Condos project has brought a crew of 100 and their cars to the neighborhood, most of which began parking in the 2400-2500 blocks of Gramercy. Thanks to the responsiveness of Phil Stringer at GT Leach Construction Co., workers have found alternative parking arrangements in more appropriate locations nearby. However, Leach warns that the crew size is expected to double in the coming months and parking problem will likely return. To discuss concerns, contact Daniel Levin at DanielM-Levin@yahoo.com.

### *Flood Plain Maps*

New preliminary flood plain maps have been posted at [www.tsarp.org](http://www.tsarp.org), with a feature which allows you to input your address and access the corresponding floodplain map facet. Several blocks of OB have been drawn into the 10-year flood plain, although these areas have never flooded. Check the map to see whether your home is affected. The Harris County Flood Control District web site ([www.hcfdc.org](http://www.hcfdc.org)) also contains useful information on this subject.



Girl Scout Cookie Queen Allison Wagner  
(See news item on facing page)

## Welcome New Residents!

### **BELLEFONTAINE**

Karen & Sam Bernstein

### **BLUEBONNET**

Griff T. Murphy & Anne Raymond  
Mr. & Mrs. Tinkham  
Paul & Susan Danziger

### **BRAESWOOD COURT**

Ann Stark & Stuart Kadetsky

### **GLEN HAVEN**

Aliza Fan  
Leonard & Susan Tiech  
Kim & Paul Hlavinka  
Gisette & David Leathers  
Anna Stool  
Jordan F. Worth  
Cynthia & Mark Wood  
Elizabeth & Brian Smith  
Tari & Boyd Hoekel

### **GRAMERCY**

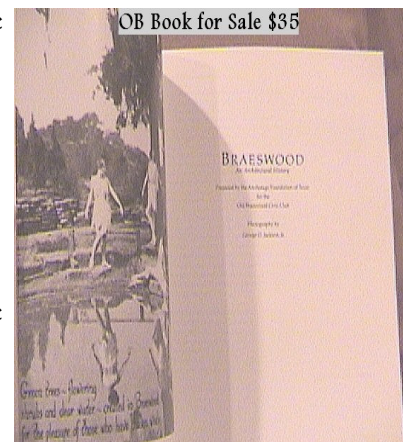
Margo & Peter Elgohary  
Jennifer & Michael Helrathy  
Xiaochun Wang & Xiaodong Zhang

## Old Braeswood.... Read The History, Be The History

There is still time to purchase "*Braeswood... An Architectural History*". This 60-page book by Rice Architecture Professor Stephen Fox describes past history and current design of individual Old Braeswood homes, and is filled with black & white photos of the past and present. To order a book for \$35 please contact Kathy Lord at (713) 666-4326 or email [kathy@treesforhouston.org](mailto:kathy@treesforhouston.org).

Engraved paver stones for the entry of Old Braeswood Park are also available for \$300, making an excellent gift for anniversaries, monumental birthdays, bar mitzvahs and graduations.

Please contact Christine Robins (713) 669-0442 or [ChristineRobins@Hotmail.com](mailto:ChristineRobins@Hotmail.com) for an application.



## Neighborhood Newsbits

**Bluebonnet's** Kathy Lord welcomed her second grandchild this past fall and planted a tree on her street in her honor....

**Glen Haven's** Kathryn McGowan, daughter of Agelia Pérez McGowan and Gary McGowan, will graduate from USC in May and has been accepted to Harvard and Stanford law (among others) for this fall... The McGowans also recently hosted a day get-a-way at their home in Round Top for the members key in helping the Civic Club become a POA. Invitees got the chance to socialize with neighbors, eat a wonderful lunch, and take in the beautiful scenery. Attendees included Bob and Vicki Birrenbaum, Lisa and David Cohen, Kathy Lord, Mike Ryan, Becky and Wayne Pivec, Rita Saylors and Thorpe Butler, and Evalyn Krudy.

**Gramercy's** Kelly Rushing has been appointed to the Texas Historical Commission...

**Maroneal's** Dave Kaminsky and **Underwood's** Rick & Jan Kaminsky have welcomed their great-grandson and grandson respectively, Mr. Ethan Phinn Games, born 1/7/05, weighing 7 lbs and 1.4 oz and 19 3/4 inches.

The residents of the 2400 & 2500 blocks of **Glen Haven** had a great time at their annual Easter Egg hunt.

Congratulations to **Gramercy's** Allison Wagner, daughter of Gary & Terese. Her Girl Scout Cookie selling expertise enabled Brownie Troop 25003 meet their quota, enough to win them a trip to Build-A-Bear. There are still cookies available, please call (713) 663-7669 if you are craving a Thin Mint or a Samoa!



*Old Braeswood chairs relax at the McGowan's Round Top ranch.*

*Do you have some news to share?  
Send items to Melissa Levin:*

*TexasCatCatcher@yahoo.com  
2435 Gramercy 77030  
Fax (713) 840-1319*

## Security Issues & RACS

According to RACS (Rice Area Constable Service), the voluntary safety and security program for the neighborhoods of Morningside Place, Southgate and Old Braeswood (OB), an OB resident was attacked at the Main St. Kroger in March. Allegedly, there were two female assailants, and residents are urged to use caution when in public places where you may be vulnerable to an attack.

There have been several incidents of auto burglary in the immediate area (Maroneal and Greenbriar) in the past few months. Most of the cars targeted have been parked overnight on the street, and in some instances, have been left

unlocked. Residents are encouraged to lock their cars, remove all valuables, and park in well-lit areas.

Due to a decline in resident participation, RACS has been forced to cut their patrols of covered areas. Instead of 3 patrols covering 24 hours/day, now there are only 2 eight hours shifts per day, or 16 hours of coverage. Currently, RACS shows OB has 148 residences that are dues-paying RACS members. That number represents roughly half of the homes in Old Braeswood, and has declined by 9% in the past six months due to lack of renewals. RACS encourages residents to sign up for this service so they can continue to provide our neighborhood with an effective patrolling system. To enroll in this service, please call Marla Nicksch at (713) 218-0676.

***"Old Braeswood membership  
has declined 9% in the past 6  
months."***

## "TRINKETS TO TREASURES" FUNDRAISER

Announcing  
"TRINKETS TO TREASURES"  
A Garage Sale Fundraiser For Old Braeswood Park

SATURDAY, APRIL 30, 2005  
8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. in Old Braeswood Park  
(\*Raindate: Saturday, May 7)



**More fun than Ebay!**

### WE NEED DONATED ITEMS!

To donate items via **pick-up**, please call Christine Robins (713) 669-0442 to schedule a time. You can also **drop off** items at 2317 Blue Bonnet.

### WE NEED VOLUNTEERS!!

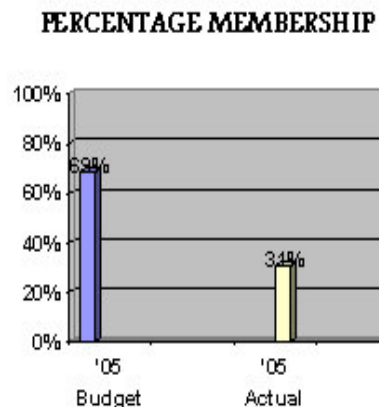
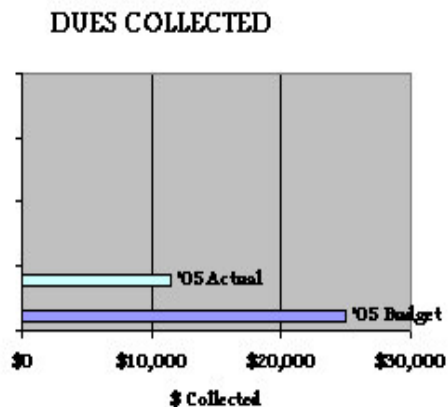
Also, call Christine Robins (713) 669-0442 to help with pricing, set-up, or to work a shift at the event.

Please submit only working/saleable items (No clothing except baby items). Please note: DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE (501c(3) exemption)!

**\*\*\*All funds raised will be dedicated towards park improvements such as new play equipment, new benches, or adding landscaping. We respectfully request that neighborhood residents refrain from competing garage sales on the same weekend.**

## Treasurer's Report

The budget for the calendar year 2005 forecasts revenues in the form of dues collections from residents to be \$25,000. From January to March 2005, OBPOA has received \$11,450 in dues from 95 Old Braeswood residents – 31% of the total neighborhood residents. We encourage all residents to pay their dues promptly to keep our organization running smoothly. If you are not sure if you have paid your dues for 2005, please call Becky Pivec at (713) 592.6192 for verification.



**Budgeted Dues Calendar Year 2005 \$ 25,000.00 – 69% membership**  
**Dues Collected Calendar Year 2005 \$ 11,450.00 – 31% membership**

## SAVE THE DATE!

### Property Owner's Association Meeting

The Old Braeswood Property Owner's Association  
April meeting will be held on

Wednesday, April 13th, 2005 at 7 PM



at the home of Diane and Blanten Filak  
2307 Bluebonnet

## Real Estate Round-Up By GK's Marilyn Milor

There continues to be a high demand for homes in the Old Braeswood area. Values have been steadily appreciating. There are many people who would buy into this area immediately, if only there were more homes available. The current number of homes available for sale is 6 with an average asking price of \$665,286. There is a 4.2 months of inventory supply, considered a seller's market. List prices range from \$ 375,000 - \$1,100,000. There have been two recent lot sales with a price range of \$25 to \$34 per square foot.

Since it is a seller's market, NOW is a great time to think about selling your house! I can help you stage your home to sell for top dollar. If you or your neighbors are thinking about moving, please

call me today for help with any of your real estate needs.

Your Old Braeswood neighbor,  
Marilynn Milor

*Note: Information is based in whole or part on data supplied by Houston MLS on 3/24/05. MLS data may not reflect all real estate activity in the market, nor is in any way responsible for its accuracy.*

**GK**  
**GREENWOOD KING**  
PROPERTIES



## SPOTLIGHT RESTAURANT: benjy's Restaurant for lunch

Located in the Village, about 3/4 of a mile from Old Braeswood, benjy's has won numerous awards including "Best Restaurant in the Village" and "Best Sunday Brunch". Although benjy's remains a popular dinner spot, with its lounge upstairs as an ideal place to unwind and enjoy a drink or light snack on comfortable lounge chairs and outdoor seating, their lunches are easily just as popular.

Social and business lunchers alike are finding Houston's benjy's a pleasurable place for midday dining. Responding to their lunch popularity, benjy's continues to add to their menu, with an abundance of variations of entrée salads, wraps, sandwiches, and pizzas.

The best part of benjy's is the unique flavors; some favorites include Wasabi

Tempura Shrimp Caesar Salad, Wood Fired Pizzas, Steak Wraps with Frizzled Onions, Pepper Crusted Sushi Grade Tuna Nicoise Salad, Pistachio Crusted Salmon Salad, Grilled Angus Burger, and Tiger Shrimp Tacos. Some popular lunchtime beverages to wash it all down with include the Ginger Peach Decaf Iced Tea, Raspberry Lemonade or Raspberry Quince Iced Tea.

So the next time you feel like getting out of the house and experiencing some flavor, take a walk down Morningside until you get to Dunstan. Enjoy benjy's in the Village and treat yourself to a neighborhood gem and one of the best restaurants in the city.

# benjy's

MODERN AMERICAN CUISINE

## in the village

*Not just for dinner any more!*

benjy's  
2424 Dunstan (at Kelvin in the Village)  
Houston, TX  
(713) 592-7602  
[www.benjys.com](http://www.benjys.com)

## In Memoriam

Old Braeswood lost a beloved neighbor, Maroneal's Richard Baeck Dreyfus, on 3/12/05. Richard most recently served as chairman of the neighborhood's legal committee until becoming ill. With the support of his wife Helen, two sons, and extended family and friends, he fought a valiant battle with cancer, never giving up his positive outlook or sense of humor.

Richard attended both Wesleyan University and University of Pittsburgh and most recently served as International Council at Apache Corporation. In addition to being highly respected for his work in the oil & gas industry, Richard continued his passion for athleticism into adulthood, participating in the Marathon, Texas Hotter Than Hell 100 (bike) several times, and the Cycle Across Oregon twice.

Richard was a loved and admired member of this community and he will be missed dearly. We extend our sincerest sympathies to his family and friends.

**Contributions may be made to the:**  
**Richard B. Dreyfus '80 Memorial Fund,**  
**Wesleyan University**  
**118 Mt. Vernon Street,**  
**Middletown, Connecticut 06459**

## Our Generous Neighbors.... THANKS FOR THE TREES!

*Thanks to the generous neighbors who have contributed to the TREES for Old Braeswood street tree planting program. This year, funds will be used to plant trees on Bluebonnet and Underwood.*

Camille & Glenn Cunningham

Fran & Mike Feltovich

Elizabeth Stewart

Susan & Paul Danziger

## WE APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT!!

*If you would like to donate to Trees For Old Braeswood, contact Kathy Lord at (713) 666-4326.*

## LEGAL ISSUES: Set Backs

Homeowners in Old Braeswood should have a minimal acquaintance with the restrictions on development that apply in our neighborhood. Some of the most important of these restrictions are the "set-backs", or the distance improvements are required to be situated away from the street and residential lot lines.

### Front Set-backs

Front set-backs, sometimes called "building lines", are established in Old Braeswood by the recorded plat. The exact amount of the set-back varies from block to block, being as much as 70' in blocks that front on North Braeswood and as little as 40' in some of the other blocks in Section One.

With few exceptions, improvements may not be located closer to the street than the front set-back line. Fences, and in some cases hedges or walls, are prohibited nearer to the street than the building line. Exceptions include porches, stairs and other architectural ornaments. Refer to "Old Braeswood, The Restrictions" or the Old Braeswood website at <http://www.oldbraeswood.com>, for a listing of the exceptions and the limits on their intrusion.

Section One has a second requirement for front set-backs. "Outbuildings", or enclosed, covered structures not directly attached to the residence, must be situated behind the "outbuilding limit line". This line is found on the plat well to the rear of the lot. Again there are some limited exceptions for certain architectural ornaments. There are no outbuilding restrictions in Braeswood Addition or Braeswood Extension.

*Continued to next page.....*

Good luck to Lisa Cohen in the MS150! Shown with husband David.



## More Generosity... THANKS FOR HELPING OUR PARK!

The contributions in response to Old Braeswood Park Corporation's solicitation of donations in December 2004 continue to come in. The purpose of the solicitation was to raise money to paint the park fence. To that end, we have solicited bids for the painting, and will be taking action very soon. Our sincere thanks to the donors from February 2 - March 4, 2005:

**Marian & Gary Beauchamp**  
**Linda Joekel**  
**Bob & Vicki Birenbaum**  
**Joann Matthiesen**  
**The Nuchtern Family**  
**John Neese**  
**Tom & Fran Callahan**  
**Arthur & Annette Bracey**  
**Patrick & Carmen Dessauer**  
**Shawna & Mark VanNess**  
**Mr. & Mrs. John Strasburger**  
**Mike and Fran Feltoovich**

We appreciate your support!!

If you would like to donate to Old Braeswood Park Corporation, please contact Christine Robins at (713) 669-0442. Park donations are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

## "Share your OB Stories" w/ the Garden Club & OB Baby Tees

The Braeswood Garden Club of Houston, TX will host a special evening presentation on May 24th (tentative date) at the home of Sally Russ (2330 Bluebonnet). President Ann Garnett has announced that Rice Professor Stephen Fox, author of "*Braeswood... An Architectural History*" will lead this event. More details will be sent out closer to the date. Please call Sally Russ at (713) 592-9454 if you have questions about this event or are interested in learning more about the Braeswood Garden Club.

Also... Old Braeswood has begun giving "baby" T-shirts to our new moms, but sometimes we don't hear about new babies until they're toddlers. If you know about a new OB baby, please contact Becky at (713) 592-6192.

New Baby? Call for Baby Tee!



## LEGAL ISSUES: Set Backs (continued...)

*Continued from facing page*

Outbuilding set-backs have become an issue in recent years with the advent of outdoor kitchens. If you live in Section One and contemplate building a structure detached from your residence, check with the Property Owners Association early in the planning stages to avoid conflict with the outbuilding set-back rule.

### Side-Set backs

Side set-backs are established by the restrictions and do not appear on the plats. The side set-backs for Section One are 10 feet for lots 90 feet or more in width, and 6 feet for lots less than 90 feet in width. In Braeswood Addition and Braeswood Extension, the side setback is 5 feet. There is a provision for limited variances from the side setbacks in Section One.

There are some exceptions to the side set-

backs. They do not apply to detached garages in Braeswood Addition or in Braeswood Extension, and in Section One, certain ornamental features may intrude into the set-back a limited amount.

### Corner Lots

Special rules apply to corner lots. In Section One, there are building lines along both the front of the lot and the side. Outbuilding limit lines are particularly stringent on corner lots. There are no special rules for side setbacks on corner lots in the other sections.

This article is intended to remind property owners in Old Braeswood of the setbacks that apply here. It is not comprehensive. Only a thorough review of both the re-



corded plat and the restrictions that apply can reliably determine the set-backs for a particular lot. The Property Owners Association will be happy to assist anyone with a question on set-backs. Contact Howard Merrill, (713) 432-0525.

## Old Braeswood Notices

### Are you an Accountant?

The Property Owners Association needs a volunteer with some expertise in state franchise and/or federal income tax returns for non-profits.

A few minutes of your time could save us several hundred dollars in tax preparation fees. Please call the office at (713) 807-1787 to volunteer your time.

### Found Cat

*Glen Haven's* Janna Taylor has found a Siamese/grey tabby- mix cat. She's very friendly (not feral!) and was pregnant until the last weekend in March. Please call Janna if you know anything about her (713) 432-1777.

## AN OLD BRAESWOOD HISTORICAL MOMENT

Park Party 1982 - Shamrock Hotel in background







#### NEWSLETTER

Old Braeswood  
Property Owners Association  
PO Box 541346  
Houston, Texas 77254-1346

(713) 807-1787  
[www.OldBraeswood.com](http://www.OldBraeswood.com)

APRIL MEETING NOTICE INSIDE!

## OLD BRAESWOOD 50 YEAR REUNION PARTY

The 50-year Old Braeswood reunion party concept came from former Bellefontaine resident Don Aron. He then enlisted the help of other OB "alumni" with similar infectious nostalgia of growing up here during the 1940's – 1960's, including Lynn (Glazer) Wagner, Phillip Ladin, Nancy (Landa) Frimel, Gail (Goldstein) Tapic, Kathy (Knott) Cohn and Connie (Pollon) Cohn.

Logistically, they had their hands full. The group spent untold hours writing letters, making phone calls, and collecting photos from personal and library archives for poster & video presentations. They set the party to take place on the grounds of their former popular hangout, the Old Shamrock Hotel, (now known as Homerberger Hall) and served nostalgic snacks from the old neighborhood eateries including Valian's (pizza), Bill William's (fried chicken), Lee's Den (Chinese food) and Kaphan's/Pier 21 (seafood).

Over 450 OB alumni attended (80+ flew in from out of town) including editor Melissa Levin's parents, Mansel and Brenda (Brown) Rubenstein, as well as many Braeswood families that still live in the neighborhood, including N. Braeswood's Harry Pepper, Glen Haven's Billy Perlmutter and Maroneal's

Katie Grossman Plotkin and Bluebonnet's Connie Cohn Pollon. The DJ played songs from their yesteryears and the event was featured in the *Houston Chronicle* and many other media outlets. Rewarding comments from party-goers of the night included "Please do this again!" and "Thanks for taking

us down memory lane and letting us remember a time of innocence!"

*\*\* If you no longer live in Old Braeswood but wish to subscribe to this newsletter, for \$25 a year, please contact Becky Pivec at (713) 592-6192.*



Gail (Tapick) Goldstein, Lynn (Wagner) Glazer, Nancy (Frimel) Landa Back seat row: Kathy (Cohn) Knott, Sue Sue (Pye) Aron, Connie (Cohn) Pollon Front seat row: Phillip Ladin & Don Aron