



Old Braeswood News

Greenbriar Drive Reconstruction now on CIP for 2017

The City of Houston has just announced funding has been set aside for the reconstruction of Greenbriar Drive from Rice Blvd. to Holcombe Blvd. The project provides for design including paving and drainage in 2015, acquisition of right-of-way (from Rice Blvd. to University Blvd.) in 2016, and construction in 2017. Details of the project are posted online <http://www.houstontx.gov/cip/14cipproposed/street.pdf>. The project is titled "Greenbriar Street Paving & Drainage". Per the city's CIP listing, "the project will replace a street that has been deteriorated beyond economical repair and normal maintenance. It will improve traffic circulation, mobility and drainage in service area. These improvements will upgrade existing roadway to MTFP standards."

The project ends at Holcombe and does not pass through Old Braeswood. Hopefully, the plans will include safety improvements at the Holcombe intersection. The pavement condition south of Holcombe in Old Braeswood is showing signs of wear and may be a candidate for an overlay when funds permit. For now, the city tells us that the traffic counts through Old Braeswood do not warrant full reconstruction in the foreseeable future.

Lecture on Shamrock Hilton's Grand Opening, July 29 at Ideson Library

Many articles in the Old Braeswood newsletter have made mention of the Shamrock Hotel, built by Old Braeswood resident Glenn McCarthy. From its dramatic opening on St. Patrick's Day 1949, to its demolition on June 1, 1987, it stood as a neighborhood landmark. Relive the details of its Opening Day by attending a lecture, open to the public, given by Friends of the Texas Room on July 29th at the Julia Ideson Library, 500 McKinney Street. The free lecture, *Opening Night at the Shamrock*, will begin at 7:00 pm, but arrive at 6:30 pm for wine and snacks. Speaker is Professor Jeff Lindemann, Houston Community College. Special guest will be Leah McCarthy, daughter of Glenn McCarthy, and a collection of Shamrock Hilton memorabilia will be on display. Parking is available under the Central Library (next door to the Julia Ideson Library) and parking vouchers will be available at the lecture.



OLD BRAESWOOD NIGHT OUT

6 p.m. Tuesday

October 1, 2013

@ Old Braeswood Park

(Maroneal @ Morningside)

Block parties after the gathering in the park are strongly encouraged.

Volunteers are needed to help with this fun event.

Please contact Molly Khalil at mollymoorekhalil@gmail.com.

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Remodeling has kept our early Old Braeswood houses young, but the Steves family at 2320 Blue Bonnet have out remodeled everyone. From 1978 to the present, they have remodeled four times, down to the studs three times. It was worth the effort.

The house first appeared in the Houston City Directory in 1935, occupied by owners L. W. Tomlinson and wife Irene. Mr. Tomlinson was a representative for Gray and Wilmerding, members of the New York Stock Exchange with offices at 403 Gulf Building.

There were maids living over the garage and they changed almost yearly – Julia Chatman (1935), Eula Chatman (1936), Willie H. Sells (1937-8). Then, in 1940, Irene Tomlinson is listed alone.

The next owner, John C. Crain, appears in 1941, a manager for the Dixie Pipe and Equipment Company, an operator of pipe yards. Again, there was a parade of hired help living in the rear – Willis Crosby (1941), Georgia M. Crosby (1942-44), Milton Haskins (1945), Ann Nelson (1946-7), and Margaret L. (1948). In 1942, a nurse, Lottie Lubes, also lived with the Tomlinsons, presumably for Mrs. Tomlinson.

Charles S. Atchison, a manager for South Texas Development, and wife Gertrude, were next, arriving in 1949. After only a year, they left and Harry J. Kennedy moved in, with wife Ruth. He was Vice President of Marketing for Continental Oil Company (now ConocoPhillips). Again, they



moved after only a year, to Southgate. By then, Mr. Kennedy was Continental Oil Company's Administrative Vice President.

The house sat vacant for a couple of years, a neglect that the Steves would more than remedy after one more

owner, Leo C. and Zella M. Short, who bought the house in 1955. He was a supervising engineer for the Austin Company, which designed and constructed commercial sites. They nursed the house along until the purchase by Myron (Buddy) Steves Jr.

Buddy works with his father, Myron Steves Sr., running a wholesale insurance company (Myron Steves and Company) founded in 1955 by the senior Steves. They are joined in the company by Buddy's sister and by his brother, Old Braeswood resident Fred Steves.



Buddy moved to Old Braeswood from Southampton in 1978 to get a bigger house with a bigger yard. His house on Blue Bonnet needed extensive repairs after so many prior owners, and he took it to the studs for a total remodeling. Then, in 1983, a small remodeling changed the roof line and added dormers in back. In 1991, married to attorney Rowena and expecting the first of their two sons, another total remodeling provided the additional space

they needed and moved the house into a more contemporary look. The final remodeling began in 2002, with the house again taken to the studs, and the work lasted three years. To survive, the Steves bought another house on the same block (2311 Blue Bonnet), moved in, and waited. When 2320 Blue Bonnet was ready for their return, its transition to a wholly contemporary look was complete.

Rowena says that the 2002 remodeling was "the most painful thing we've ever done," but that "we couldn't have got here any other way."



Plan Approval Required For All Types of Altera- tions in All Sections of Old Braeswood

Old Braeswood's deed restrictions require that all alterations to homes be approved in writing prior to construction or implementation. Not only must plans for new construction of homes, garages, fences and other outdoor structures be reviewed, but changes such as window replacement, new siding, addition of solar panels, garage door replacements and new fences, must also be approved. In a nutshell, anything that impacts the exterior of your home in any way must be reviewed and approved prior to construction. To request a plan review application, please call the office at 713-807-1787 or send a message to info@OldBraeswood.com. Construction projects that begin without approval will be assessed a fee of \$500.

Brays Bayou News

Brays Bayou is the southern boundary of Old Braeswood and a wonderful amenity for our community. The trail is 13.75 miles in length (17.9 miles if you count paved sections on both sides of the bayou. The bayou and trail are best explored by bike (due to lack of shade and Houston's summer heat). The trail runs past Old Braeswood from MacGregor Park near 45 and Almeda to Bissonnet and Gessner, just past BraeBurn Country Club.



This summer, pathways on the lower trail (south side) are being resurfaced between Holcombe and Buffalo Speedway from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. daily. So stay on the north side or be prepared for detours. You can check the status of the trail and repairs at <http://hcp1.net/Trails.aspx>.



The Steves' home features hand-crafted architectural elements and inspiring art. The Spider Cow is a favorite of neighbors of all ages.

The goal had been a contemporary house that was a good fit with the historic character of the neighborhood. Building from scratch would not achieve that. Buddy had always liked the original house, even as his taste, influenced by Rowena, changed from antique to modern. The rectangular bones of the old house remain, but are re-imagined. One architect touring the house commented that "every space in the house is designed." Rowena describes the look of the finished house as "eye candy." Buddy calls it "new skin on old bones."

Besides providing the space they needed to raise sons Michael and Joshua, the house provides space for their collection of art, some of which is pictured with this article. Importantly, the house also accommodates their love of entertaining. In particular, it includes a "dance room" for swing dancing.

Buddy and Rowena founded the Houston Swing Dance Society in 1997 [<http://www.hsds.org>]. They were already folk dancers, but learned to love Lindy Hop, the original form of swing dancing. They had trouble finding others to dance with them, and HSDS was born.

Swing dancing and architecture came together in the June 2007 issue of House and Home Online with a feature article that included lavish illustrations of the house. [<http://www.houseandhomeonline.com/home/documents/Feature1hou0607.pdf>]. The title sums it all up: "One Swinging House."

[This is the 27th article in a continuing series on houses and people in Old Braeswood. Suggestions for future columns are welcome.]

Willow Water Hole Park Nearing Completion *by Bob Schwartz, Brays Bayou Assn.*

A great destination along the Brays Bayou trail (see page 3) is the Willow Waterhole Greenway (WWG) just outside Loop 610 at Post Oak. The park is still under development, but is open now to visitors. This is a great and nearby destination for many forms of recreation and birding.

The WWG is a combination stormwater detention facility with a park implanted on it, a joint project of both the Harris County Flood Control District and the City of Houston Parks and Recreation Department. When finished, it will be comprised of six interconnected wet-bottom detention basins. At the present time three of the six are completed. The fourth one under way but is worthy of a little additional discussion in that only the portion south of the Shell pipeline will be excavated. The portion north of the pipeline will be restored to native habitat and is a special effort on the part of the Harris County Flood Control Environmental Services Division.

Interestingly, the park is a destination for many species of birds. The Houston Audubon Society does a monthly bird count on the site and typically identify about 35 species. Since their start in May 2007, they have identified over 150 species. The area is fortunate to have an almost continuous breeze and even in the hottest weather, the area in the shade under the huge oak tree at the Rafferty Memorial adjoining Ricecrest is very pleasant. If driving from Old Braeswood, go west to South Post Oak, and turn south past Willowbend to the traffic light at South Willow Drive and turn right. Then one to three blocks and you can't miss it. Old Braeswood and the Texas Medical Center benefit from this major stormwater detention facility as it reduces fast water entering Brays and thus helps lower the water surface elevation of Brays as it flows east to the bay. If you haven't visited it yet, you are missing something. Go! For more information visit <http://wwgc.org/>.

Real Estate Report *By Dawn Gervais, Old Braeswood resident and Realtor with Greenwood King Realty*

The classic tale of supply and demand is in play here in Houston. Dwindling supply of homes sends prices to record highs; dollar volume jumps 46 percent!

According to the latest monthly report prepared by the Houston Association of REALTORS® (HAR), home sales surged 27.2 percent compared to last April. Housing inventory, which reached a 13-year low of 3.6 months during the first two months of the year and dipped to 3.5 months in March, dwindled even further in April to 3.4 months.

My reference to Months of Inventory relates to the state of the real estate market today. Months of Inventory are a reasonably good way of judging current demand for housing.

It's widely agreed that when inventory levels fall between 5 and 7 months the market will be considered balanced. Housing prices should be stable, perhaps rising slightly, influenced more by inflation than by demand. When inventory levels exceed 7 months, then the demand for housing is low, and prices are likely to fall. The high number of homes for sale will create a buyer's market, allowing buyer's to dictate price and terms to the majority of sellers if a seller wants to make a deal. When inventory levels fall below 5 months, sellers have more control over price and terms, often resulting in a more significant rise in housing prices, aka a "seller's market."

We are clearly in a seller's market with 3.6 months of inventory for homes meaning that nearly every home that goes up for sale is surely attracting significant attention.

According to HAR Chairman Danny Frank "The Houston housing market shows absolutely no sign of letting up.....More homes listed for sale and a pick-up in new home construction are necessary to meet the growing demand of buyers. If anyone is considering selling their home, this is the time to consult a REALTOR® and start the process."

The record pace of home sales is the direct result of robust economic conditions led by further growth in hiring, with the Texas Workforce Commission reporting more than 111,000 jobs created in Houston over the past year, as well as continued low interest rates. Home prices reached historic highs during the month of April. The single-family median price rose 14.5 percent from last year to \$184,900 and the average price climbed 14.0 percent year-over-year to \$253,907.

With sales of homes priced over \$500,000 up over 68%, now is a great time to sell your home. You will need your running shoes on when looking to purchase as will your Realtor®. Having a knowledgeable agent to guide you through the process and ensure your offer is the one accepted is a must in this market.

Old Braeswood Real Estate Statistics: July 2013

Total Number of Homes for Sale	5
Minimum List Price	\$695,000
Maximum List Price	\$2,999,000
Homes currently under contract	6
Total Number of Lots for Sale	3
Minimum List Price	\$890,000
Maximum List Price	\$1,549,000
Properties currently under contract	2
Total number of Homes sold since Jan.1, 2013	7
Minimum Sales Price	\$360,000
Maximum List Price	\$1,700,000
Average sales price per sq.ft	\$247.21
Average Days on Market	36

Old Braeswood Park Party on May 5th Celebrated by Children of All Ages

Newest Neighbors



Lightly Seasoned Neighbors



Pizza servers GG Hsieh & Liz Alhand



Event Chair Molly Khalil with Barbie Schaffer



Bob Birenbaum, Dawn Gervais, Buddy Steves



Beadie Lewis & June Waldman



Rose Pu & Carolyn Taub

New WELCOME

Neighbors

**Kimberly & Mudo
de la Fuente**
2529 Bellefontaine

Nancy & Ken Eisenmenger
2522 Blue Bonnet

Milvia & Paul W. Gidley
2515 Glen Haven

**Ann Schutt-Aine &
Rubin S. Bashir**
2534 Glen Haven

Sylvan Homes Inc.
7310 Main St.

Erez S. Lieberman
2205 Maroneal

Christie & John Lincoln
2306 Underwood

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 Patrol track down thieves. Please note that the Yahoo group is not related to the eNews and crime alert service. You will need to sign up for those by sending a message to info@oldbraeswood.com.

Visit this link to get started:

[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/
OldBraeswoodNeighbors/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/OldBraeswoodNeighbors/).

Garden Club News

The Old Braeswood Garden Club is in its annual membership drive period. All neighbors are invited to join this group that meets once in most months. Please use the enclosed form to sign up.

At its May meeting, the Old Braeswood Garden Club gave special recognition to Mary Beyer for her 5th Club.

Mary served twice as president of the Garden Club and was a founding member. She and her husband Alvin lived for 30 years at 2234 Glen Haven until 1981. Alvin served as the President of Old Braeswood Civic Club during the 1950s.

Mary and Alvin are Old Braeswood gems that over the years helped to build strong relationships between neighbors and worked to protect the neighborhood from commercial encroachment.



Report Moving Vans & Help Us Welcome New Neighbors

Please let us know when neighbors move in or out on your block. Our goal is to welcome new neighbors the same week that they move in, but often we don't learn that they have arrived until months later. If you see a moving van on your block, please notify us at info@oldbraeswood.com or call 713-807-1787. Welcome Chairman Annette Eldridge will ensure they receive a welcome packet.

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.

Pet Reminders

Thanks to all of you who consistently pick up after your pet! Your efforts are greatly appreciated by your neighbors. Please also remember that per city ordinance, pets must be leashed when at the park. It is difficult if not impossible to pick up after pets running free after dark. And it's unfair to children and parents who step in droppings the next morning. [Special thanks to the Old Braeswood Garden Club and Old Braeswood POA for supplying doggie bags at the park.]

Recycling & Trash Schedule

Recycling Dates

Every other Tuesday
July 2, 16, 30 Aug. 10, 24
Sept. 10 & 24 Oct. 8, 22



Household Trash Yard Waste

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

Tree Limbs & Debris Junk Waste

3rd Monday (in **Odd** months)
3rd Monday (in **Even** months)

Place your household garbage in the city provided automated bin or recycling containers on the curb no earlier than 6 p.m. the evening preceding pick up and no later than 7 a.m. the day of pick up, and remove it no later than 10 p.m. on collection day. Bins left on the street beyond these times are subject to city fines. Bins must be accessible to the automated collection truck (not blocked by vehicles, trees, etc).

Yard waste must be bagged in city approved biodegradable bags, weighing no more than 50 pounds, and placed at the curb at least 3' away from automated bins. Yard waste mixed with paper, plastic or any other type of waste will not be collected. Small branches may be put in bundles (no more than 4' in length and no more than 18" in diameter).

Tree Debris /Junk Waste Collected in Alternate Months

Please remember that the city now collects heavy trash and tree & limb debris in alternate months on the third Monday. Trees debris is collected in odd numbered months and junk waste is collected in even numbered months. [Note: you may leave tree debris and large limbs out for collection every month.] If you have trouble remembering the schedule, January (an odd month) is the first month that Christmas trees can be collected. If you are still uncertain, call 311.

Be sure to place your heavy trash items at the curb by 7 a.m. on the collection day. Call 311 immediately in case of missed pick up. Delaying your call may result in waste being left at your curb until the next collection date.

2013 OBPOA

Officers & Chairpersons

President	John Eldridge
1 st Vice Pres.	Susan Teich
2 nd Vice Pres.	Buddy Steves
3 rd 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>Susan Teich (Interim)</u>
Park	Annette Eldridge
Enforcement	Sam Bernstein John Eldridge Bill Marchbank
Patrol Rep	Ryan Maierson
Rice U Liaison	Bob Birenbaum
Social Events	<u>Volunteer Needed</u>
Trees	Carroll Shaddock & Molly Khalil
University Place	Kathy Lord
Welcome	Annette Eldridge
Manager	Evalyn Krudy

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Exclusions Apply

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PROPERTIES



LESLIE LERNER
LeslieLernerProperties.com
713.489.9900

311 Reports Faster With New App

The city has a new 311 app for smart-phones and iphones that makes reporting problems like potholes, water line breaks and graffiti a breeze. The app pinpoints a user's location via GPS. Users can also submit photos of the problem they are reporting. This method of reporting problems is faster and more accurate than any other option. If you don't have a smart phone, you can still make a report by dialing 311 from a land line or 713-837-0311 from a cell phone.



PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Yellow Crested Night Herons Nesting In Old Braeswood



New Old Braeswood neighbors include nesting Yellow Crested Night Herons on Glen Haven. The birds nest in Houston in heavily treed areas near bodies of water every spring. Their numbers have been increasing in recent years and their nests can be found all over the University Place Super Neighborhood area. *[Photo courtesy of Susan Teich.]*

Volunteers needed for . . .

Park Toy Reduction

Volunteers are needed to give one hour four times per year for the quarterly park toy reduction weekend. The job requires no special skills and the schedule is flexible. For more information please contact info@oldbraeswood.com.

Social Events Committee

The *Social Events Committee* is looking for new leadership to help with future events in any capacity. Volunteering is an excellent way to get to know your neighbors while having a great time. Please contact G.G. Hsieh at gghsieh@gmail.com or call 713 -660-9520 for more information.

Newsletter Layout

The *Newsletter* committees needs a volunteer familiar with Publisher or Adobe Suite software to handle layout of the newsletter that is published 5-6 times per year. Commitment is at least 3 newsletters per year. For more information please contact Susan Teich at steich1@comcast.net.

Bayou Watershed Rep

This position involves tracking information and construction projects along Brays Bayou, occasional attendance at Brays Bayou Association meetings, and providing periodic reports to the Old Braeswood board and membership. Contact oldbraeswood.com to sign up.