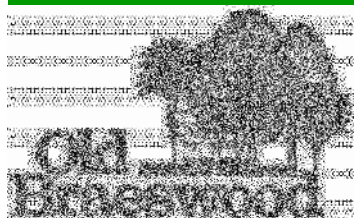


VOL 12, ISSUE 4

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OLD BRAESWOOD
PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION

Old Braeswood News

A Letter from the President by Susan Froehly Teich

The visibility of Old Braeswood as an historic and gracious neighborhood is intact and growing. About ten houses were selected by the National Trust for Historic Preservation for its tour in November and the homeowners have consented. The addresses will be announced in the next newsletter along with details as to how residents of OB can purchase tickets to join the tour. In the meantime, mark your calendars for Friday, November 18th.

In another bow to OB, the University of Houston has expressed an interest in serving as the archival repository for articles appearing in *Old Braeswood News* under the headline *Your House Has a History*. The articles would rest in U of H's Houston History Archives preserving our past as a neighborhood. Details are being worked out to allow OB to retain copyright and continued use of the articles.

Another project that impacts the image of our neighborhood is a revision-in-progress of the Wikipedia article on Old Braeswood. If you take a look at the current article, you will not recognize the neighborhood described as being the one you live in. We hope to have a revised article in place by the end of the year. Wikipedia articles on River Oaks and other notable Houston neighborhoods are possible models. Suggestions are welcome.

Finally, the Old Braeswood website is now functioning properly. For some time the website, operating under an older version of our content management system, periodically malfunctioned. Information disappeared from the website so that if you clicked on a heading nothing came up. In May the website was converted to a newer version, so if you tried using the website in the past without success and stopped using it, try again. And please email complaints about any continued problems! As a corollary to having a better functioning website, new information will be added to give it broader utility. Again, the goal is to complete these improvements by the end of the year. Please email me personally (steich1@comcast.net) with your ideas about what you would like included on the website. Best wishes for a relaxing summer!

Save the date ...

Old Braeswood

Night Out

6-8 p.m. Tues. October 4

Old Braeswood Park

Mark your calendars for this fun family event that promotes neighborhood safety. Volunteers are needed to help with the event.
Contact gghsieh@gmail.com.

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Like many older houses, the 1940 house at 2430 Glen Haven was in need of extensive updating – rewiring, replumbing, new siding, an added room in back. When homeowners compare the cost of remodeling with the cost of building from scratch, often they can go either way for the same price. Those who love the irreplaceable character of an older house, a house that wears a patina of history, will remodel. Those who prefer what is new, go with rebuilding. Andrea and Robert Lapsley did both. They took down the old house and rebuilt the same house anew. And they did such a good job that some who regularly drive past that address assume the old house has been remodeled. The empty lot and months of construction must have been on another block.



At the outset, renovation was the goal. They loved the house and didn't want to lose it, just enhance it. They chose nationally recognized architect Leslie Barry Davidson, who drew up renovation plans and took bids. Then, looking at the extent of work to be done, they began comparing cost of renovation against cost of rebuilding. They decided to rebuild, but to use the same floor plans to recreate what they already loved. Again, their architect gave them what they wanted. Entering the house, nothing seems different, although the entry hall is a foot wider than before, giving the house a slightly larger footprint. The old sunroom is now used as a library and the desired family room is added in back. On the second floor, the floor plan is varied only by the addition of another bathroom and an elevator. The house always had a third floor and that remains, but with dormers. Same furniture in its accustomed places. Same chandelier and sconces, doorknobs and cabinet pulls. Same grey shingle roof. Same landscaping in front with the same Indian hawthorne. Same color front door, red, a tradition of Andrea's family.

Besides giving the Lapsleys back the house they had loved, Leslie Davidson gave them something else. The Lapsleys, and especially Andrea, are collectors: drawings, hats, African art, antique toys, Dalmatians, horses, bunnies, musical instruments. Their architect saw the need to utilize these collections in the décor of the house. Throughout the house, she lined the walls with lighted display cases to group the collections, creating a museum aesthetic.

Of course, the history of the house began long before the Lapsleys. Andrea has an undated newspaper clipping announcing construction with Otto Woestmeyer as architect and W.F. Botter as contractor. The work was being done for Mr. and Mrs. H. L. Friedrich [Herbert L. and Frankie M.]. Mr. Friedrich is identified as a

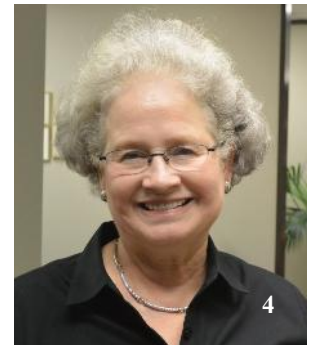
salesman for Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company and the article specifically states that the kitchen is to include an electric dishwasher, apparently rare enough to be noteworthy. (And could it have been anything but a Westinghouse?) The article anticipates that construction will be completed in 90 days. The Friedrichs first appear in Houston's City Directory in 1942.

The Friedrichs were succeeded in 1956 by Ruth and Wilfred J. Keller. Mr. Keller was a vice president of the Pritchard Rice Milling Company of Houston, organized in 1907 as one of the first mills in Texas. The house's connection to the rice industry continued in 1963 when it became home to Virginia and Alton P. Jones. Mr. Jones was an assistant sales manager for the Stauffer Chemical Company, which manufactured herbicides for rice and corn.

The house was purchased in 1967 by Harvey A. Feehan, a supervisor for Brown and Root, and his wife, Betty. Then, in 1980 it welcomed Karen and Michael T. Johnson. Mr. Johnson was a professor and associate dean of the University of Houston School of Law. She was a counselor for HISD. The Lapsleys

bought from them in 1991. Robert is a freelance illustrator and Andrea has served as Assistant Director of the Houston Public Library and Director of the Colorado State University library. Their rebuild was completed this year. In general, a remodeled house better preserves the character of the neighborhood than a newly built house, but this is one new house that fits comfortably into place without any jarring contrast with the surrounding architecture. If prior owners returned, they would feel right at home.

Continued on Page 3



Pictured (1) 2430 Glen Haven completed in 2016. (2) 2430 Glen Haven originally built 1940.
(3) Homeowners Andrea and Robert Lapsley. (4) Leslie B. Davidson, Leslie Barry Davidson Architects

[This is the 42nd article in a continuing series on houses and people in Old Braeswood. Suggestions for future columns are welcome.]

Brays Bayou Widening Project

by Len Teich, Brays Bayou Rep

Details on the current Brays Bayou construction was given at the July meeting of Brays Bayou Association. Reporting was Gary Zika, manager of the \$480 million project for the Harris County Flood Control District, which is doing the work on behalf of the Army Corps of Engineers. The total project calls for 4 gigantic retention ponds, 21 miles of channel widening and deepening, and 32 bridge replacements or extensions and should be completed in 2021.

Old Braeswood's connection to this project is underway right now, with the banks of the Bayou between Bertner and Buffalo Bayou being taken back starting in July, and finishing next summer. HCFC will be making extensive use of steep concrete retaining walls and will rebuild both the Greenbriar and Kirby bridges.

The steep walls and the loss of many trees is necessary because Braeswood North and South are very near the banks of the Bayou in our neighborhood. There just isn't room to widen the Bayou using the sloping grass banks we would prefer.

When the work is finished the capacity of the system should be increased by 30%, and the Bayou should be able to handle a 13.5 inch rain in 24 hours, where the rain covers the whole water shed. Let's hope!



Block Captains

Christine Manca (christine.manca@att.net) is recruiting block captains for Old Braeswood. Many who served previously have generously agreed to continue in that role. With the addition of only 11 more, the neighborhood will be covered. Please consider volunteering.

What is involved? Block captains are a link between residents of a given block and the POA Board. They disseminate information as needed, convey requests to the Board, promote block parties, and interact with other block captains to find solutions to mutual concerns within the neighborhood.

Currently, the following blocks are in need of captains:

2300 Bellefontaine	2100-2200 Maroneal
2400-2500 Bellefontaine	N. Braeswood / BW Ct.
2400-2500 Bluebonnet	7300-7500 S. Main
2300-2400 Dorrington	2300 (W) Underwood
7300 Greenbriar	2400-2500 Underwood
2300 Gramercy	

Garden Club BBQ & You

Do you like Bar-B-Q? Are you tired of opening the newsletter to see Garden Club parties with everyone having fun and you aren't there? You can be there too. The annual Bar-B-Q to kick off the new club year will be on Sunday, September 25 at 6 pm. Annual dues are \$35. For location details contact Nancy Eisenmenger at info.obgc@gmail.com.

Do a Tree A Favor and Water It

Your donations paid for trees planted by Trees for Houston/ Old Braeswood. Those trees stand in your right-of-way rather than in your yard, but they are very much a part of your landscaping and that of your entire street. The extreme summer heat means that these trees need watering between our periodic rains, especially while they are just getting established, the first 2-3 years after planting. Keep an eye on these young trees and give them the water they need.

If you are unable to water daily, you can water every other day or at least 3 times per week if there has been no rain or if your tree is not in an area with regular irrigation.

DAILY WATERING SCHEDULE

Size	Type	Water Needed
15 gal.	Live Oak	1 gallon
30 gal.	Live Oak	2 gallons
15 gal.	Water Oak	2 gallons
30 gal.	Water Oak	3 gallons



Report Illegal Signs



The founder's of Old Braeswood envisioned it as a genteel neighborhood, without the clutter of advertising signs. They wrote a prohibition against such signs into the deed restrictions. Signs erected in OB yards by contractors and service/repair vendors are in violation. You can help by reporting violations to at 713-807-1787 or info@oldbraeswood.com.

The deed restrictions, which are posted on our website at www.OldBraeswood.com, state:

"No signs are permitted on property except those advertising sale or rental of the property. Such sign dimensions must not exceed 5 feet square. Contractor signs, political signs, etc. are prohibited."

Toys Cleared at the Park

Children and toys go together, but the "donated" toys left at Old Braeswood Park collect rain and become breeding areas for mosquitoes. Sometimes dogs mistake them for fire hydrants and the result is not so clean for children later using them. In June, volunteers Bob Birenbaum and McKinney family members Rhian, Lane and Morgann cleared the park of old and broken toys. (Morgann has taken on toy safety at the park as an annual service project.) Barbie and Don Schaffer kindly allowed them to be stacked in front of their house for the Household Trash Day pickup. Many thanks for making the park cleaner and safer.

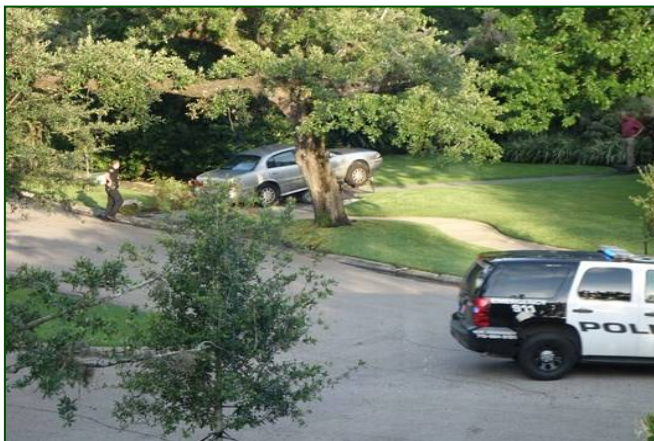
Tile Street Signs

Many of the lovely old tile street signs embedded in the curb remain in our neighborhood. Over the years, most of them have suffered at least some damage from repaving crews, careless drivers and construction equipment. The Preservation Committee once explored the possibility of repairing them and found that it was cost prohibitive if not impossible. An alternative way of preserving these links to Houston's past is displayed at the intersection of Glen Haven and Morningside. There, the tile sign was set onto the right-of-way when a new curb was poured.



High Speed Chase Ends on Greenbriar at Blue Bonnet Blvd.

The intersection of Greenbriar and Blue Bonnet saw some excitement on July 27 when a woman driving a stolen vehicle at 90 mph and pursued by Houston police lost control, careening across Frog Pond Park (the median rose garden) and crashing in front of a residence.



She fled on foot but was apprehended and arrested, leaving behind extensive damage. Three rose bushes were uprooted and the irrigation system was destroyed. No one was injured. Thanks go to resident Mike Kelly for quickly turning off the flowing water. Thanks also to Annette Eldridge, President of the Old Braeswood Park Corporation, for overseeing repairs to the landscaping and irrigation system.



Old Braeswood Real Estate Report — Aug. 1, 2016

by Dawn Gervais, Realtor ® Consultant * Greenwood King Properties

As summer heats up, we hope that home sales will too! Last month Houston home sales in the \$500,000 and above price range decreased 8.7% compared to June 2015. Old Braeswood seems to be holding its own although the average days on market are up from last year.

From 3/1/15 to 8/1/2015, homes in OB were selling at 97% of list price and that number has dropped to 91% this year. Mortgage rates are still low and inventory levels continue to increase in greater Houston but not Old Braeswood. It's no surprise that homes are taking longer to sell than in prior years. In the last few years, homes were selling in 1 to 20 days and now we are looking at 60 to 90 days.

July and August are historically some of the busiest months, and we will see if this holds true this year.

2016 Old Braeswood Real Estate Statistics

	<u>Active</u>	<u>Sold</u>
Home Inventory	4	6
Minimum List/Sales Price	\$1,180,000	\$492,500
Maximum List/Sales Price	\$2,599,000	\$2,000,000
Avg. sales price /sq ft		\$264.75
Lot Inventory	2	
Lot Avg. sales price /sq ft	\$37.49	

All statistics are based on properties listed on MLS and Houston Association of Realtors.

2016 OBPOA Officers & Chairpersons

President	Susan Teich
Vice Pres.	Andrea Lapsley
Vice Pres.	Joe Manca
Vice Pres.	Buddy Steves
At-Large	G.G. Hsieh
At-Large	Courtney Steves
Treasurer	David Leathers
Secretary	Dawn Gervais
Past President	John Eldridge
.....	
Block Captains	Christine Manca
Directory	Sally Miller
Enforcement	John Eldridge
Flood Control	Kathy Lord & Len Teich
Garden Club	Annette Duplechain
Newsletter	Zack Liu / E. Krudy
Park	Annette Eldridge
Plan Review	Marilyn Archer
Preservation	Joe Manca
Patrol	Dee Murray
Rice U Liaison	Susan Teich
Social Events	GG Hsieh
Trees	Carroll Shaddock
University Place	Susan Teich
Welcome	Dawn Gervais

WELCOME

New Neighbors

Breana & Ryan Moffett
2532 Blue Bonnet

Sri Neela
2340 N. Braeswood

Vasilia & John Wilkes
2249 Maroneal

Qi Wu
2320 Gramercy



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

Support Needed for the Patrol

We cannot continue the current level of Patrol coverage through the end of the year without contributions and subscription renewals from those who have not yet paid. If you haven't renewed this year, please send in your annual payment of \$300 as soon as possible!

We currently have 1.3 patrol shifts or 56 hours a week of coverage (and 112 hours per week without coverage!). Most residents would like more coverage than we have now, but we cannot sustain even our current coverage without wider support. You can renew your subscription to the Patrol at www.OldBraeswood.com and pay by check, credit card, or with your PayPal account.

Officer James Brackin



There is a survey going out to Old Braeswood residents that is designed to get your input about the neighborhood. Those of you who have registered your email address with Old Braeswood POA will receive it by email. Those without email addresses on file will receive hard copies.

Please take a few minutes to let us hear from you via your responses. Requests to answer surveys abound, but this one is actually relevant. Responses to the survey are not votes for specific action but rather constitute a guide for what you want your neighborhood to be.