



THE PLAZA PULSE

SHEPHERD PARK PLAZA CIVIC CLUB

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May 2015

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Share Your News!

Please pass along any news of note about SPP residents so we can spotlight them in future issues of the Pulse.

If you have news to share, please let us know by emailing pulse@shepherdparkplaza.com or by contacting your section rep (see names on p.2)



Rebuild Houston Improves Brinkman Bridge

The City of Houston has improved the bridge located in the 4900 block of Brinkman. A concrete culvert bridge, with a life expectancy of more than 50 years, has replaced the original timber bridge. With an estimated cost of \$168,000, the project was funded by the ReBuild Houston Initiative, the voter-approved "pay as you go" plan to rebuild drainage and street infrastructure. The bridge was completed in early April. Visit www.rebuildhouston.org for more information.

Please note the change in garbage collection on the calendar due to the Memorial Day Holiday.

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Men's Group Rep. Chuck Blesener

Pulse Editor: Romi Sandel
713-316-9688

pulse@shepherdparkplaza.com

around the neighborhood

Condolences to Sheri Beasley, whose husband, Dennis passed away in early April. Sheri and Dennis were married for 39 years and lived in SPP for most of that time. Their son Beau has also been a presence in the neighborhood for many years.

Happy Birthday to Melba Bruce who is celebrating a milestone birthday this month!



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Cook's Corner



EASY PINEAPPLE NUT CAKE

Cake

2 cups all purpose flour
2 cups sugar
1 tsp baking soda
1 tsp baking powder
½ cup chopped nuts
2 eggs
20-oz can crushed pineapple with juice

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Mix all ingredients and pour into greased and floured 13 x 9 cake pan or bundt cake pan. Bake 35-40 minutes in 350 degree oven until cake pulls away slightly from edges of pan. Cool on cake rack.

Icing

1 package of cream cheese, softened
1 tsp vanilla
½ cup butter, softened
2 cups powdered sugar

Mix all with hand or stand mixer and spread over cooled cake.

All recipes are submitted without being tested. Cook at your own risk! Want to submit a recipe? Go to our website and email the Pulse Editor.

Citizens Patrol Stats

Patrol Hours *Prepared by Chuck Blesener*

WEEK	March
1	20
2	32
3	31
4	59
TOTAL	142

New Patrollers are Needed!!

Contact Chuck Blesener at 713-683-9945 or ccbles77@gmail.com for information.

Training for Citizen Patrol certification is the second Tuesday of each month at 9455 West Montgomery at 7 pm. Anyone in the neighborhood is invited to join the COP group. More eyes on our neighborhood means more watching for suspicious activity.

The winner of the random \$10 bonus for March is Bill McReynolds. Patrollers who turn in at least 4 hours by the 5th of the month are eligible for a random drawing for a \$10 card. Gift cards for accumulated driving hours will be distributed at the monthly meeting. Please turn in your hours on time!

CITY OF HOUSTON CONNECT

Have you ever wondered how to find out how to contact particular Departments at the City of Houston? This new section of the Pulse should give you some direction. Check back frequently, as new items may be added. The main number is 713-837-0311.

Website—<http://www.houstontx.gov/>

City Ordinances—<http://www.houstontx.gov/codes/>

Non-emergency concerns (street issues, traffic signal problems, fire hydrant issues).

<http://hfdapp.houstontx.gov/311/index.php> or Dial 3-1-1. There is also a mobile phone app for this.

Permit questions—<http://www.houstonpermittingcenter.org/>

Interactive map (to determine information about your city council district, police department, solid waste schedule)—<http://mycity.houstontx.gov/public>

Download the Houston 311 App to help the community report information back to the City of Houston!

Lights out, potholes, low mulch in the park... you name it! Report it, and the City will fix it!



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mike@clarkkotzurteam.com
713.906.4148 Cell
SPP Resident

Debbie Kotzur, REALTOR®
debbie@debbiekotzur.com
713.822.4951 Cell

Water Smart to Stay Green & Save!

With rising water costs and stressed water resources, making small changes to your lawn maintenance can make a big difference. In the Dallas and Houston regions, about 52 billion gallons of water annually could be saved by reducing lawn watering to twice a week. Water policy experts at Texas A&M University say the common reasons for over-watering are running sprinklers too long and damaged sprinkler equipment. If you're not ready to give up your grass, keep these money- and cost-saving tips in mind while keeping your lawn green:

- Water morning or evening when temperatures are cooler.
- Don't scalp your lawn. A taller lawn holds moisture better.
- Adjust sprinklers to water grass and plants—not structures or sidewalks.
- Nourish your lawn with fertilizer so it's stronger and less water-stressed.
- Keep weeds out of grassy areas—they are water hogs.
- Aerate your lawn annually so water can reach the root system.
- Check faucets, sprinklers and hoses for leaks.
- Use a broom instead of a hose to clean sidewalks and driveways.
- Change watering schedule as weather and seasons change.



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Ladies Night Out:
May 7 —Cottonwood
8:00 pm

May Meeting: Monday, May 18, 7:00 pm,
home of Carlecia Wright, 1042 Bethlehem



MEN'S GROUP

The Shepherd Park Plaza Men's Group will gather for their monthly luncheon and meeting on Thursday, May 14 at 11:30 a.m., at Live Oak Grill, 10444 Hempstead. August Galiano will provide a short video presentation for their entertainment.

All men of the neighborhood are welcome to join the group, bring a friend or neighbor, a good appetite, and an inquiring mind. Discussions and questions are open on any subject, with an emphasis on neighborhood events. There are no dues, no officers, and no rules. For more information contact Chuck Blesener at ccbles77@gmail.com.



SPP TRAVELERS

Our merry band traveled by bus to see bluebonnets and alpacas in Navasota on April 16 and a Shakespearian play and meal in Burroughs Park on April 18. The group has planned another bus trip on Tuesday, June 16 with details to be announced soon.

SPP Travelers is open to all SPP residents and their friends on a first come basis. Anyone riding on a Harris County bus must be at least 50 years young. Contact Chuck Blesener at ccbles77@gmail.com for more information or to be included on the email list for upcoming trips.



Taking Care of Area Signage



Residents have reported that some of the signs around the neighborhood are faded, missing, or unreadable. We have some replacement signs in storage, but have waited to install because vandals were taking signs for the aluminum.

- Street signs, stop signs, yield signs, and other parking or traffic control signs that are missing, damaged, or unreadable should be reported to 311.
- 'We Love Our Children - Please Drive Carefully' signs were installed by SPPCC and Plaza Moms and can be replaced as needed.
- Neighborhood Watch and HPD signs were installed at different times. The City strictly limits the number we can have and the price for these has quadrupled.
- Constable Patrol signs are newer and in better shape.
- CrimeStoppers signs have been posted for many years. We do have some newer ones that we can replace where needed.

If there is a sign near your home that needs attention, contact Ted Dwigans at parkcity@shepherdparkplaza.com.



Proper Parking Pays Off

Remember to obey parking rule and regulations right here in SPP. The City of Houston Parking Management division does patrol residential areas from time to time, and will issue citations if rules are being violated. Here are a few tips to avoid a ticket:

- Large vehicles (more than 22 feet long or 8 feet high) are prohibited from parking in residential neighborhoods - day or night.
- Parking legally on the street requires both passenger-side wheels to be parallel with the curb and within 18 inches of it. This applies to cul-de-sacs as well - no head-in parking is allowed.
- The sidewalk is a public right-of-way. It is illegal to block it with your vehicle even in your own driveway.
- It is a violation to leave a vehicle on the street for more than 24 hours, a trailer on the street for more than 2 hours, to park closer than 15 feet from a fire hydrant, closer than 20 feet from a crosswalk, and closer than 30 feet from a stop sign or traffic light.



Safe Sidewalk Update

Houston City Council recently passed an amendment to Chapter 40 concerning the repair of residential sidewalks. In Houston, homeowners are required to repair and maintain sidewalks along their property. This new process provides homeowners a way to reduce costs and expedite homeowner funded repair or replacement. The amended ordinance will waive the permit fees and bond requirements for homeowners to remove and replace existing sidewalks abutting their single family residential properties. Homeowners will submit their request to the Public Works & Engineering Department (PWE) website. PWE will then assess the site to see if construction is feasible and provide the cost estimate. The homeowner then submits payment to PWE upon approval of work order contract. PWE will monitor and approve the installation. More information can be found in the Department of Neighborhoods on the City of Houston's website.



IT'S RAINING CATS AND DOGS



City Responds to Nuisance Dogs

By Chuck Blesener

Lets talk about man's best friend. Everyone loves their dog, yet they are the cause of many neighborhood complaints. Dog ownership does come with responsibilities. We receive complaints from neighbors about dogs **that bark at all hours, repeatedly escape their yards and run loose, or defecate on neighbors' property.**

The City has stringent rules governing dangerous and aggressive dogs in the Houston Municipal Code of Ordinances. In March 2014, Chapter 6, Article 6 was amended to include nuisance dogs in that category to address many citizen complaints. Section 6-151 defines a Public Nuisance Dog as a dog that:

- ◆ Substantially interferes with the right to enjoyment of life or property by persons other than the owner by acts including, but not limited to, frequent, long, or continued barking or howling, repeated defecation on property other than that of the owner, or damaging property other than that of the owner;
- ◆ Attacks domestic animals;
- ◆ Is documented by the Bureau of Animal Regulation and Care (BARC), a police officer, a neighborhood protection official or a member of the public to be running at large 3 or more times in a 12 month period; or
- ◆ Is one of a number of dogs or other animals maintained on the property owned or controlled by its owner so as to be dangerous to the public health, safety, or welfare.

If a neighbor's dog is posing a problem, the first remedy is to talk with the dog's owner about the problem. If that does not resolve the issue, you now have other means to pursue a resolution and can call 311 to report your problem. BARC has primary responsibility for enforcement and does keep a log of reports and complaints as you might have to call repeatedly to get results. If the problem is severe enough and repeated often, you can also call HPD, the Constable Dispatch, or Neighborhood Protection (also 311). Your report may be referred back to BARC, but if your situation is jeopardizing personal safety and involves an aggressive or dangerous dog, immediate help is available.

Feral Cats

By Catherine Powell

Hello neighbors. My name is Catherine Powell, and I am a 4 year resident of SPP. I have taken it upon myself to try and get the feral cat population under control in our neighborhood. With the support of many of you, I am currently trapping, neutering, and releasing ("TNR") many feral cats. I have already trapped 17 cats, including 5 pregnant females. I am working with the Oak Forest Feral Cat Program, as well as a local veterinary clinic for low cost spay/neuters. I have tested many of these cats for feline leukemia and FIV, and all have been negative. After they are altered, each cat has their left ear 'notched', vaccinated for rabies, and given a treatment for fleas. If you see a cat with the tip of their right ear gone, it is healthy and altered. If you have a problem with *feral* cats in your yard, feel free to contact me, however, I must limit my TNR services to Shepherd Park Plaza. If you have a *pet* cat that roams around outside without a collar, please contact me with a description of your location and your cat so that I can keep an eye out. Please be aware that I might be setting traps all over the neighborhood early in the mornings. Our constable, James, is aware of my presence and both of my cars have a green SPP sticker on them. If you would like to make a donation to help out with the TNR program, please safely do so at: www.gofundme/16usms or email me at: felinedoctor@gmail.com

Constable Program and Citizens on Patrol

It may be news to many residents of SPP, but at one time our neighborhood did not enjoy the safety and tranquility to which we have become accustomed. In the late '80's our neighborhood experienced a dramatic increase in crime. Bold burglaries of homes and vehicles were occurring at a rate of about one per *day*. In an effort to impact this trend, a group of SPP residents worked with HPD to organize the SPP Citizens Patrol in 1991. As a result, burglaries declined by over 70% in the first year. To this day, the SPP Citizens Patrol is considered a "model" program whose leaders are regularly sought out by other neighborhoods seeking to start their own programs. Its impact is still being felt with an average of one burglary per *month*.

In 2000, SPP decided to further build on the crime prevention activities of the SPP Citizens Patrol by participating in the Contract Deputy Constable Program. This program exists because of the voluntary financial support of just over 60% of the residents of SPP. In 2014 SPP partnered with Candlelight Plaza to add a second Deputy Constable.

The Constable program offers SPP several benefits in addition to the obvious crime deterrent effect of having marked patrol cars with licensed law enforcement officers patrolling our neighborhood. These include:

- ◆ You can choose to have your household alarm responder be the Constable's office. The Constable can respond much more quickly to home alarms.
- ◆ You can notify Constable Dispatch of your vacation plans and have our deputies pay extra attention to your home while you are away.
- ◆ Women can participate in a multi-part safety program for up to 13 residents (more details to come on this in June).
- ◆ You can have the Constable's office perform a safety check of your home (as it relates to preventing burglary of your property).

To support the Deputy Constable Program the Civic Club requests voluntary donations of **\$200** per household per year, so for less than the cost of a cup of coffee per day you get all the benefits listed above. If \$200 is more than you can afford, any financial support is gladly accepted. Many residents are able to donate more to help supplement the financial support of those who cannot donate as much, so please consider sponsoring one of your neighbors that is a long-time resident that might be on a fixed income – even a \$25 sponsorship for a neighbor's portion helps. The main benefit is **visibility**.

Our partnership with Candlelight Plaza helps, but ***we also need your help*** to maintain the extra protection provided by having a second Deputy Constable. **Please donate.** You can pay by check, but if you're worried you'll forget, pay **now** by going to our website www.shepherdparkplaza.com to pay online. Also please consider becoming a Citizens Patroller. You can walk, ride or drive, but please consider becoming a part of this great team by contacting Chuck Blesener through our website. SPP is a great place to live. Please help us keep it that way!



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Spring

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*Figures are for entire contract incl uding SPP and Candl el ight Pl aza



march 2015

Arrests.....0		Meet the Citizen 338
Alarm Responses..... 5	Vacation Watch.....76	Vehicle Stolen..... 0
Disturbances..... 2	Open Door..... 3	Solicitors..... 2
Information Calls..... 4	Burglary of Motor Vehicle . 0	Home Burglary 2
School Check 0	Traffic Initiative 18	Suspicious Persons2
Park Checks 3	Welfare Check 1	Suspicious Vehicle 9
Traffic Stop 70	Vehicle Speeding.....1	Animal (Humane) 6
		Traffic Hazard1

Update: Requesting a Traffic Initiative

In recent issues, we discussed how to request a traffic initiative to address traffic problems near your home. The command staff at the Precinct One Constable's office has clarified how to request this procedure. To avoid tying up dispatch operations, they have asked that all such requests be channeled through our Patrol Coordinator who will forward them to the Constable's office.

Please keep in mind that our two Constable deputies already patrol the whole neighborhood, are familiar with trouble spots where people speed and run stop signs, and do issue tickets when warranted. The deputies report that many cars that appear to be speeding are usually traveling slower than the 30 MPH speed limit, our traffic court judges will throw out any ticket for speed not exceeding 35 MPH in a 30 MPH zone, and most violators are neighborhood. If you feel that a special traffic initiative is needed, please contact Chuck Blesener at constableliaison@shepherdparkplaza.com with your request.



Texas Bluebonnets! The confirmation that Spring has sprung! Texas highways have been lined with these beautiful bluish/purple flower. Did you know it was selected as the state flower of Texas in 1901? As historian **Jack Maguire said**, "The bluebonnet is to Texas what the shamrock is to Ireland, the lily to France, the rose to England and the tulip to Holland."

Math Tutor – Marius Kempe



I live in the neighborhood
and am a graduate of
Oxford & Cambridge, England.

832 997 1460

marius.kempe@me.com



$$x^2 - y^2 + z^2 = 1$$

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Support Special Olympics Texas

Please join a great fundraiser that is being hosted by Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) and CARisma WASH to support Special Olympics Texas (SOTX). All during the month of May, CARisma will be accepting donations at these locations:

* 4510 Telephone Rd. * 505 North Loop W. * 5203 Kirby Dr.

A special event will be held on May 2nd, where you can get your car washed for a donation and visit with Law Enforcement Officers. LETR will be selling Law Enforcement Torch Run T-Shirts, and collecting donations (your choice of \$1, \$2, or \$3) at the May 2nd event.

May 2nd from 10 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Law Enforcement officers will be at these locations:

505 North Loop West
(between Shepherd & Yale-Next to Starbucks)

5203 Kirby Drive
(between Westpark & Bissonett)

Precinct 1 Constable's Office will have officers at the North Loop location.




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**It's not just my business,
It's my neighborhood.**

Where do you want to live?

Principal's Corner from Principal Angie Sugarek—Durham Elementary



Buddy Field Day is Friday, May 1st from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m. This is a morning full of activity and fun and students work with a buddy to complete many physical activities.

The final Durham PTA meeting of the school year is scheduled for Tuesday, May 12th at 6:00 p.m. in the Durham cafeteria. The election of next year's officers as well as the approval of a preliminary budget for the next school year will be discussed.

The Spring Book Fair will be held at the school from May 12th through May 14th. It's held as a BOGO (Buy One Get One) fair to encourage students to purchase books for summer reading!

The culmination project of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Program is the 5th Grade Exhibition that will be hosted on Saturday, May 23rd. What an exciting time to see the students shine!

Important Numbers

Police/Fire: 911

City Helpline: 311

Citizens Patrol
713-683-9945

Deed Restrictions
713-316-5255

Plaza Moms
713-775-0307

New Neighbor/Greeter
713-688-5016

Garden Club
713-681-1552

Architectural Guidelines
713-316-5255

Plaza Pulse News
713-628-4210

SPP Historian
713-681-1552

Traffic & Safety
713-683-9945

Constable Dispatch
713-755-7628

SPP Membership
713-683-6502

City Liaison
713-688-7979

Pulse Advertising
713-688-0574 or 713-681-3600

Men's Group
713-683-9945

HPD
713-884-3131



SPP CALENDAR

May 2015



= Trash and Yard Waste

= Curbside Recycling

SUNDAY

MONDAY













TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

Reminder about Heavy Trash: Our heavy trash pickup is the <u>3rd Thursday</u> of each month. Tree waste is picked up in ODD months, and Junk waste in the EVEN months.					May 1	2
3	4	5 	6 	7  Plaza Moms Ladies' Night Out	8	9 7th Annual Crawfish Boil
10 	11  Garden Club Meeting	12 	13	14  Men's Group Meeting	15	16
17  Plaza Moms Monthly meeting	18	19 	20	21 Heavy trash TREE waste	22	23
24	25 Memorial Day	26	27 	28	29	30
31	June 1	2 	3 	4	5	6



Memorial Day is a Federal Holiday set in 1971 by an act of Congress. It is celebrated on the last Monday of each May. It was established to honor those who died while serving in the Military.

A special thanks to Laurie Hardwick for all of her help in getting this issue of the Pulse off the ground!

Garden Club News April

The Shepherd Park Plaza Garden Club met on Monday, April 13, 2015 at the home of Barbara Raines, 1191 Chamboard. Barbara's co hostesses, who produced a wonderful Salad Sampler, were: Vicki Brandt, Carolyn Long, Corrine Oppermann and Romi Sandel.

This was the SPPGC's annual Plant Swap event. The assortment and beauty of the plants brought for exchange were a sight to see.

During the business meeting the Nominating Committee presented a slate of 2015 – 2016 Officers for the SPPGC. They are as follows: President - Vicki Brandt, First Vice President – Colette Robichau, Second Vice President – Carolyn Long, Treasurer – Ruth Rock and Secretary – Susan Fitzpatrick. They were voted in by acclamation. Thank you to all!!

There was an abundance of Door Prizes. Winners were: Linda Altimore, Vicki Brandt, Debbie Elliott, Susan Fitzpatrick, Beth Galiano, Geraldine Gurley, Anne Marie McReynolds, Linda Morgan, Lou Rice, Colette Robichau and Romi Sandel.

Next month's meeting will be held on Monday, May 11, 2015 at 7:00 p.m., in the home of Lori Kubin, 1107 Cheshire. This will be our annual Installation of Officers and end of the year Party. Meetings will resume in September of 2015.



The Garden Club's April
Yard of the Month Award goes to:
Sarrrah Moseley

Eileen Gamel Hartman
REALTOR®

713.305.5036
eileenhartman@kw.com

kw METROPOLITAN
KELLER WILLIAMS, REALTY



Garden Club News March

The Shepherd Park Plaza Garden Club met on Monday, March 9, 2015 at the home of Ruth Rock, 1143 Chamboard. Ruth's co hostesses Linda Morgan, Colleen Roberts, Colette Robichau, Addie Smith and Dennis Woodward put on a wonderful "Rodeo" spread.

This was the SPPGC's annual Brown Bag event. A nice time was had by all and most members went home with a new treasure.

A Plant Swap is planned for next month's meeting, which will be held on Monday, April 13, 2015 at 7:00 p.m., in the home of Barbara Raines, 1191 Chamboard.

Anyone interested in the Garden Club? Please contact **Carol Jean Hebert** at (713) 681-1552 or CarolJeanHebert@yahoo.com for further details. Garden Club meetings are held on the Second Monday of the month, September through May at 7:00 p.m.



The Garden Club's March
Yard of the Month Award goes to:
Addie Smith

Luxury Lawns
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April Yards of the Month

Section 1:

1003 Chamboard
George & Mary Parnham

Section 3:

1102 Martin
Kenneth & Christine
Michels

Section 2:

1123 Chantilly
Chris & JoAnn Scardino

Section 4:

1044 Candlelight
Norma Aguilar

SPP
Wants to Welcome You

New to the neighborhood?

Even if you are not-so-new, but haven't
gotten around to introducing yourself yet,
contact **Lynn Myers**
at 713-682-5711
or myers.lynn@yahoo.com
so we can welcome you officially.