

The annual meeting of the UOCC will be held on Wednesday, March 8 at 7:30 PM at the KUHF studios on the University of Houston campus

President's Letter

The March meeting of the UOCC is designated as the annual meeting. This is an important meeting since we will be taking nominations from the floor for positions on next year's board of directors. At this time, 5 people have agreed to run. There are 7 positions on the board. I have had an opportunity to get to know many U Oaks people over the past few years who I think would make excellent directors. This is an opportunity to give back something to U Oaks and provide leadership in the affairs of the neighborhood. There should be more than 7 people running. There should be choices.

The board has a big agenda with the main focus on enforcement of the deed restrictions. With a large number of rental units and absentee landlords, there is big and complex job insuring that they conform to our occupancy restrictions. Board members meet with UH officials and representatives of city government to discuss problems, potentials and future plans. We oversee security programs, mosquito control and landscaping of common spaces. The board also sponsors social events throughout the year both for adults and children. Finally, the neighborhood deed restrictions are antiquated, and this year the board prepared a new set of covenants that would more adequately protect the neighborhood. We continue to seek the required signatures to adopt these new restrictions.

There are always more things we could be doing, more initiatives, and more programs. In times past, the neighborhood sponsored vegetable, cheese and wine co-ops and educational programs about gardening and tree care. The board needs people with ideas and a commitment to getting things done. Consider becoming a member of the board.

Rather than voting for the directors at Breakfast on the Bayou, this year we will be sending ballots out to each homeowner to insure that everyone has a chance to vote. The schedule leading up to the new board taking office is as follows:

- March 8 meeting: nominations from the floor
- End of March: ballots will be delivered to each house
- April 12 meeting: introduction of candidates
- April 30: all ballots will be due and the voting will be closed
- May 10 meeting: the new board will be introduced

Please make an effort to attend all of these meetings and also consider taking an active role in the running of University Oaks.

See you on March 8.
Robyn Webb, president

Deed Restriction Enforcement

At the general meeting of the UOCC in February, owners voted in favor of a six month trial of the Historic Neighborhoods of Houston management company (HNN). HNN will do two visits through the neighborhood per month. All violations will be noted by photograph and letters will be sent to violators. The board will receive a monthly report on letters written. In September, at the general meeting, we will revisit the decision to continue the services of HNN.

The list of violations that HNN will check for include:

1. Trees and shrubs that are not neatly trimmed.
2. Grass that is not neatly cut.
3. Yards that are not completely sodded.
4. Accumulation of trash or debris.
5. Paint that is peeling off.
6. Gutters that are hanging off.
7. Fungal accumulations visible from the street.
8. Foil in windows visible from the street.
9. Trash containers in front of setback except the night before collection through the night of the day that garbage is collected.
10. Vehicles on the lawn.
11. Boats, trailers or mobile homes that are parked in front of the prevailing setback.
12. Clotheslines in the front yards.
13. Shrubbery that is between two and six feet from the ground at intersections.
14. Signs advertising a business in a home.
15. Obvious disrepair of a home.

UOCC Board of Directors Election (edited reprint from January 2006 edition)

The University Oaks Civic Club is more than a voluntary association of neighbors. Neighborhood associations such as our Civic Club are the primary level of self-government in the state of Texas. In other parts of the country residential rules and restrictions and services are determined by city government zoning commissions. Houston does not have a zoning commission for residential areas. Such decisions are decided by defined and incorporated neighborhood associations. It's a wonderful system that empowers homeowners to significantly control the infrastructure, appearance, and code of conduct for their neighborhood. With that power comes the responsibility, of course, of self-regulation. The key to success is wide voluntary participation by the residents.

The primary responsibility of the Civic Club is to administer and enforce the Deed Restrictions. This work is done by the Board of Directors and the Deed Restrictions Committee. The work goes on all the time, but is not publicized for reasons of confidentiality. Letters are sent to non-compliant owners. Usually that works, but, if not, then the matter is turned over to our contracted law firm that pursues legal action. In addition, the Architectural Review Committee reviews all new construction and major renovation projects to ensure compliance with the Deed Restrictions.

As one drives around the city it's clear that some neighborhoods are better than others. Ours is an old neighborhood, but one of Houston's really good neighborhoods. Active, consistent and persistent enforcement of deed restrictions by our Civic Club has been a vital factor in maintaining University Oaks as a neighborhood where people want to settle.

Our Civic Club is also the voice of the neighborhood to the City and the University of Houston. It was persistent cajoling by the Civic Club that got the City to resurface our streets in 2004, and to put speed bumps on Rockwood and University Oaks to discourage drive-through speeders. And our Civic Club has succeeded time and time again in getting the University of Houston to modify plans for its Wheeler Avenue properties to maintain the ambience of the neighborhood.

In addition to administering and enforcing deed restrictions, the UOCC is also chartered to “promote community pride ... seek harmony among its residents, and preserve and protect its character and quality of life. ...” Indeed, University Oaks would be not be much of a neighborhood if all we did was send non-compliance letters, sue, and hector the City and University. So the Civic Club does other things that improve quality of life, and give residents opportunities to bond, and to share common interests and community events.

Our Civic Club contracts off-duty Houston City Policemen to patrol University Oaks intermittently to deter crime and apprehend lawbreakers. Our Civic Club contracts for mosquito control spraying during the active mosquito months. The Civic Club publishes and distributes this monthly newsletter. Every fifth year our Civic Club also compiles and publishes the UOCC Directory. Our neighborhood has a Book Club that reads, then meets and discusses good books. When new people move into the neighborhood, they are greeted by the UOCC Welcoming Committee. The Civic Club hosts Breakfast on the Bayou in May every year, and the annual children’s Halloween party every year. Last but not least, our Civic Club provides and emplaces the luminaria that grace our streets every Christmas Eve. It’s University Oaks’ oldest and most treasured tradition, and something that makes our neighborhood unique (we think).

That’s quite a full plate for a small neighborhood with 180 or so resident owners. Most activities are done by volunteers, but there are some expenses for professional services (lawyers, security patrols, mosquito control, island landscaping), and other expenses (office supplies, reimbursements for social events, postage, etc). So, empowered by our charter, we charge dues to the property owners of \$125 a year. It’s one of the lowest annual neighborhood association fees in the Houston area, and a good bargain for the services provided

We encourage everyone to get involved in our Civic Club. Attend the meetings! Volunteer! If you want to make University Oaks better, or have a project you would like to see happen, or a pet peeve that you want fixed, there’s every opportunity to make it happen. Indeed, you’ll probably be asked to be involved in making it happen.

If you want to get involved in orchestrating it all, then submit your name as a candidate for the board. If you’re not willing to do that, but you know someone who you think would be good at it, then encourage him or her to submit their name.

More on Deed Restriction Compliance

It is wonderful to walk through the neighborhood and see so many houses being repaired, painted and remodeled. It shows a commitment to the neighborhood.

Just a reminder that if you will be doing any remodeling to the exterior of your house or garage, your plans must be approved by the Architecture Review Committee (ARC) before you break ground. Also, if any this work involves construction, extensive new wiring or plumbing, city permits must be obtained. The members of the ARC are Bruce Webb, Doug Erwing, and Wilbert Taylor. You may contact them using the UO address ArchitecturalReview@UniversityOaks.org

Garden Club

Garden Club will be meeting on **Saturday, March 25th at 10:00 AM**. The meeting will be at 4364 Fiesta's garden. Please RSVP to Gina on 713-741-8877 or legge_blakemore@sbcglobal.net.

UOCC Book Club Schedule

March 2*, A Million Little Pieces by
Host: Cindy Yepez

April 5, Disobedience by Jane Hamilton
Host: Rosemary Gray

May 3, The Mermaids Chair by Sue Monk Kidd
Host: Robyn Webb

*March 2 meeting was cancelled. New date TBD.

If you are interested in discussing really good books, sometimes fiction, sometimes nonfiction, if you like to go to concerts, go out to dinner, or go to a movie with good friends, you would love the UO book club. Consider coming to one of our meetings. Everyone is welcome.

UO Garden Islands

If you would be interested in adopting one of the five entrance garden islands to our neighborhood or the garden in the center of Graduate Circle, please let me know. This would involve planting supplied annuals twice a year that would be delivered to your home. Please contact me at legge_blakemore@sbcglobal.net or call me on 713-741-8877 if you would like to be involved. Thanks,
Gina

Garden Maintenance Schedule - March

1. After finished blooming, prune, fertilize and spray azaleas and camellias. Use azalea and camellia fertilizer.
2. Fertilize color plants.
3. Fertilize lawn areas.
4. Maintain mulch on planted areas.
5. Remove yellowed or unsightly foliage from plants.
6. Prune broken and dead branches from plants.
7. Stake overly tall plants.

Citizens On Patrol Volunteers Needed

The security committee still needs more volunteers to patrol 1 or more hours each month.

Recipes to Share

Chicken-and-Rice

MAKES 4 SERVINGS – PREP TIME 10 MIN. – COOK TIME 22 MIN.

- 1 ½ pounds skined and boned chicken breasts
- 2 (8.8 oz) pouches ready-to-serve Uncle Ben's Original Long Grain Ready Rice
- 4 bacon slices, diced
- ½ cup chopped onion
- ½ cup frozen green peas, thawed
- 1 (4 oz) can sliced mushrooms, drained
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- Garnish: fresh parsley sprigs

CUT chicken into ¼ inch slices and set aside.

HEAT rice according to package directions and set aside.

SAUTE bacon in large skillet over med-high heat 8 minutes or until crisp; remove bacon, reserving 1 tablespoon drippings in skillet.

SAUTE onion in hot drippings in skillet 3 min. or until tender. Stir in chicken and sauté 8 min. or until chicken is done. Stir in rice, bacon, peas, and next 3 ingredients; cook, stirring occasionally 3 min. or until thoroughly heated. Garnish if desired.

Mark Your Calendar

Bayou City Art Festival Memorial Park

March 24-26, 10 AM-6 PM all three days

Admission \$8 for adults, free for 12 and under

Juried art show with 300 artists working in 19 artistry media. Wine cafes, interactive Creative Zone for kids, restaurants, performing arts stage with entertainment.

Houston Children's Festival

April 1-2, 10:30 AM-6:30 PM, Sam Houston Park, Tranquility Park and City Hall

Sponsored by Child Advocates and benefiting abused and neglected children, it is the largest celebration for children in North American. Sixteen big family adventure zones including a kid's rodeo, a circus, inflatable forest, a petting zoo, and five stages jammed with entertainment. Parents can find something for all ages.

Global Shoes

(Especially for children)

March 1-May 7, Houston's Children Museum

Tue-Sat 9 AM-5PM; Sun noon-5 PM, Mon 9 AM-5 PM

\$5 per person, \$4 for seniors 65 and older

Hands-on, feet-on, multi-cultural exhibition featuring shoes from more than 40 countries sparks curiosity about other cultures. Kids will slip on reindeer boots from Finland, rice straw sandals from Korea and embroidered mules from Morocco.

St. Patrick's Day Fun with Your Preschooler

Whether or not St. Patrick's Day is a big deal in your family, this holiday can help break up the monotony of the last days of cool weather. Dress in green and invite a few friends over for a small celebration. Make Green Hats.

GREEN HATS

Green paint

16-20 inch sheets of newspaper

1 by 2 inch piece of sponge

Plastic lids (for paint)

Fold sheets of newspaper in half, short end to short end. Fold top corners (folded end) over so they meet in the center. Fold up the bottom edges so they meet the folded edges. Pour a small amount of paint in a plastic lid, dip the spoon in the paint and let your child decorate the hat.

Play a few simple games. Serve green jello and cupcakes or sugar cookies with green icing. Color white grape juice green with a drop or two of food coloring. Wind up the celebration with a St. Patrick's Day parade, wearing homemade hats and marching to the beat of drums (coffee cans or other large cans with lids) or other homemade rhythm instruments.

Piano for Sale

Wurlitzer Spinnet piano for sale, good condition, 20+ years, needs tuning, 500\$. Call Chantal Pease at 713-747-4344 (h), 713-569-8283 (cell) or email at clau@bcm.edu

UOCC Board of Directors (Board@ UniversityOaks.org)

President	Robyn Webb	H: 713-748-0470	President@UniversityOaks.org
Vice President	Doug Erwing	H: 713-440-9205	Vp2@UniversityOaks.org
Vice President	Vacant		
Secretary	Wilbert Taylor	H: 713-747-3347	secretary@universityoaks.org
Treasurer	Jim Marcely	H: 713-440-7995	treasurer@universityoaks.org
Director at Large	Pat Wycliff	H: 713-741-2155	Director1@universityoaks.org
Director at Large	Clyde Leuchtag	H: 713-398-0855	Director2@universityoaks.org

Other Contacts

Architectural Review Committee	ArchitecturalReview@UniversityOaks.org
Deed Restriction Enforcement	deedrestrictions@universityoaks.org
Security	security@universityoaks.org
Welcome Committee	welcome@universityoaks.org
Directory Changes/Updates	directory@universityoaks.org
Newsletter Entries (submit in MS Word attachment)	newsletter@universityoaks.org
Webmaster	webmaster@universityoaks.org

Heavy Trash Pick-Up: 3/14; Recycling: 3/13, 3/27

