



Garden District News

Roseland Terrace, Kleinert Terrace and Drehr Place Historic Neighborhoods

October 2009

GD Residents Plan Community Garden at Dufrocq School

By: **DAVID FRANZ**

When Dufrocq principal Mary Robvais invited Garden District residents to get involved with her newly-reopened school, some neighbors saw the perfect opportu-

nity to implement their vision for a community garden: a place for gardeners to share their passion and learn new lessons alongside fellow gardeners and eager-to-learn students.

Designed by Garden District

residents Jon Emerson and David Franz, the garden is planned for a sunny spot between the old and new school buildings. Teachers and their students get first pick of the

See *GARDEN*, page 5

Neighbors save trees in adoption program

By: **SUZANNE SCHEXNAYDER**

The magnificent live oaks lining our medians in the Garden District are vulnerable to stress from lack of water or mulch, and to root damage from vehicles.

So in 2006, a group of neighbors started a program to encourage residents to "adopt" these public trees. Adopters would water their trees when necessary, watch for vehicles parking on the medians, and occasionally spread mulch provided by the city.

The larger adopted trees were named and registered with the Live Oak Society, a national organization dedicated to recognizing and preserving our nation's live oaks. A list of these trees and their adopters can be found on the Garden District website at gd-cabr.org, under "Neighborhood Information"/"Adopt an Oak Tree".

The adoption program's initial target area included the Kleinert, Park, and Cherokee medians, but organizers now seek to extend it to the Terrace Avenue Oaks as well.



Adopted oaks on Park Blvd.; (L-R) The Eugene Franklin Fleming Oak, The Bayou Goula Oak, and The Istrouma Oak. All are registered with the Live Oak Society. Photo by: Suzanne Schexnayder.

About 70 trees have been adopted so far, but many adoptable trees remain.

A beautiful certificate is presented to each adopter. With the holidays coming, consider adopting a tree and naming it after someone as a gift.

Privately-owned oaks can also be

registered with the Live Oak Society. If you have oaks on your property with an 8-foot or larger trunk circumference, please consider registering the trees.

To adopt or register an oak, call or e-mail Suzanne Schexnayder at (225) 344-4431 or send her an e-mail at accentbr@cox.net.



School officials and community members officially open The Dufrocq School on August 27, 2009. Photo courtesy of Chris Trahan for the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board.

Dufrocq School Officially Opens

By HONEY EAST

A full house of 650 students, including many from the Garden District, arrived August 7 for their first day at our newly renovated and expanded neighborhood school.

In addition to the expanded Montessori Magnet and a new Academic Magnet program, the school boasts an exciting array of ancillary programs to stimulate and enhance students' development. There are two physical education teachers, as well as music, art, and Spanish teachers, all full-time. Additionally, Latin will be offered in the Academic Magnet program beginning at the third grade level. The state-of-the-art technology lab and classrooms are fully operational as teachers and students take advantage of the many software programs designed to assist and stimulate students' learning in math, literacy, and other disci-

plines.

The Dufrocq School will have an Academic and Montessori Programs Open House for interested parents and future students from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. on October 20.

Parents interested in the Academic Magnet or the Montessori programs may apply starting October 19, 2009 until January 8, 2010.

Principal Mary Robvais is eager to include our neighbors and welcomes volunteers, so if you have a desire to participate in any way, please contact her at the school.

Garden District neighbor Honey East was an administrator in the EBRP public schools for 10 years, including tenure as principal of the Blue Ribbon Award of Excellence-winning Glasgow Middle School. Feeling called out of retirement by our new neighborhood school, she is now Dufrocq's Curriculum Integration Specialist.

Events Calendar

Fall Tree-For-All

Saturday, October 17 from 8am to 3pm at Entergy Office, 5564 Es-sen Lane. Preview the great selection of trees at www.batonrougegreen.com. Tree experts will be available to answer questions

GDCA Fall Picnic

Sunday, November 8 from 2:30 to 5:00 at City park on the hill. The new Garden District T-shirts will be available! More info on our website at www.gdcabr.org

White Light Night

Friday, November 20 from 6 to 10 p.m. at the Mid City Art and Design District.

GDCA Holiday Lighting Contest

December date to be announced. First held in the Garden District in the 1960's and brought back as an annual event in 2003. Prizes donated by area merchants will be awarded for: Best Lighting, Most Original, Best Children's, Most Religious, Best Door, and Judges' Choice.

Local businesses wishing to donate a prize for this event, please contact Cindy Elliott at 343-6900 or celliott@selu.edu.



Garden District News

The Garden District News is published quarterly by the Garden District Civic Association and is edited by

**Beatrice Winkler and
Honey East**

If you have comments or story ideas that you would like to submit to the publication please contact Beatrice Winkler at:

winkler_beatrice@hotmail.com

Who's Responsible for Sidewalks?

With our trees and their large root systems, keeping our sidewalks in good repair can be a challenge. However, according to City-Parish code, this is primarily our responsibility as property owners.

The Department of Public Works is required, on application, to furnish the uniform grade or level upon which sidewalks are constructed or repaired.

Property owners are responsible for paving and repairing the sidewalks in front of their lots by removing all uneven and broken sections and replacing them with such materials as will level the surface and make it uniform.

They are also responsible for providing sufficient drainage to prevent the

accumulation of standing water on or near the sidewalk, and for preventing the growth or accumulation of weeds, grass, dirt or other nuisance on the sidewalk or the neutral grounds adjacent to it.


The code also sets forth penalties for violations, and the process by which property owners are to be notified of violations and required repairs.

The above information was summarized from City Code 1951, Title 2, § 170-173; Parish Code 1962, Title 2, § 170-173.

To read the code itself, see Code of Ordinances, City of Baton Rouge and East Baton Rouge Parish at: <http://www.municode.com>; find the resourc-

es gateway and go to Title 2: Streets, Alleys, Sidewalks, Battures, and Sewers/ Chapter 3: Sidewalks/Part II: Repairing, Maintaining, and Constructing Sidewalks.

GARDEN DISTRICT REALTOR AND NEIGHBOR



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Get a New Neighbor Welcoming Packet!

If you are new to the Garden District (or know someone who is), we would like to make sure you get a proper "Welcome!" You can request a "New Neighbor Packet" on the Garden District website (gdcabr.org) - click on "Neighborhood Infor-

mation" on the left), or by contacting a GDCA board member.

News Briefs

Our Newest Neighbors!

Congratulations to Greg and Katie Bodin of Terrace Avenue on the birth of their twins Joseph and Eliza on Friday, October 2! Sister Andy, 15, and brother Ryan, 12, were waiting to greet them when they arrived at home the following Monday. Mother and babies are doing well.

Garden District Centennial Celebration

The Garden District will be 100 years old in 2011, so we are forming a committee to make sure we celebrate this milestone in style! If you would like to help plan and coordinate events for the Garden District Centennial Celebration, please contact Heather Westra (344-5634 hjwestra@cox.net) or Cindy Elliott (343-6900 celliott@selu.edu). The Centennial Celebration Committee will begin meeting soon.

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Ellen Steirman Alderman	Vice-President	389-9334	e_steirman@hotmail.com
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Tips for Helping our Feline Friends

By KATHLEEN CALLAGHAN

When my neighbor told me about a mama cat with tiny kittens watching her bird feeder, I knew that if nothing was done we would soon have more feral cats in our neighborhood. I contacted Cat Haven; they loaned me a humane trap, taught me how to catch the cats, and helped me set up a series of spay/neuter appointments with their veterinarians.

I began putting tuna in the open trap to get the kitties used to going in; then the night before the first appointment I baited the trap again and nervously waited. A rattling sound about 20 minutes later told me I'd caught something. The mama cat!

To calm her down, I covered the trap with a towel and put it in a quiet, enclosed space to keep her safe until our trip to the vet the next morning. We picked her up later that afternoon and kept her in the trap overnight to recover. The next morning I opened the trap door where she could see familiar trees and shrubs, and she dashed off to join her kittens.

After repeating this process for all



Callaghan's spayed feral cats enjoy their breakfast in the carport. They wait for Kathleen in the morning because they know the feeding schedule, but as ferals, won't let her touch them and will bolt at sudden movements.

of the kittens and the daddy cat, we now have a non-breeding colony of cats who take care of themselves outside, and who greet me each morning in our carport as I fill little bowls with dry cat food and water.

Cat Haven's website at www.cathaven.org describes the benefits of their feral Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR) program, or you can call them at 225-636-2680. The suggested donation of \$35 per cat is

a small price to pay for preventing more homeless animals.

Join the Neighborhood E-Mail List

Get all the news about Garden District events, security, issues the civic association board is working on, and much more--delivered right to your inbox!

You can notify the neighborhood about a lost pet with one email or put everyone on the alert about prowlers! Just some of the benefits of the Garden District email list.

Moderated and open only to Garden District residents and property owners--so no spam, only GD-related messages.

To subscribe, email your full

name and address to the list administrator, Carolyn Schwarzhoff, at gdca_br@hotmail.com.

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Garden District Security News and Finance Update

By **ALEX TUCKER, GDCA President**

The GDCA voted in July to approve the printing of security packets, as well as signs and stickers to identify GDCA dues-paying members. Once these materials are ready, be on the lookout for block captains going door-to-door to collect 2010 security dues. This new approach came out of many meetings by the security committee mentioned in the last newsletter.

Over the past few months, the hours that officers spend in the neighborhood on Garden District Security Patrol, have been increased from 90 to 120 hours per month.

Unfortunately, we are going to have to lower patrol hours back down to 90. If we continued at the 120-hour rate, we would end the year with a \$6,000 deficit, which is not acceptable.

We have collected \$26,300 in 2009 dues through August and of that, \$18,975 was spent on security for the same time period. At \$25.00 per hour, the rate set by the Chief of Police, this has given us 759 hours of 2009 security coverage through August. Another \$2,600 has been spent on other administrative expenses such as dues billing letters, newsletters, flyers, stamps, dues signs, etc.

Browse the Garden District Website

Beautifully redesigned and easy-to-navigate, this is your one-stop resource for "all things Garden District." Get the latest on neighborhood beautification projects, calendar of events, civic association meeting minutes, recommendations for repair people, Garden District history... and much more.

You can also pay your security dues online here via PayPal, or enjoy the virtual Parade of Homes (and add your home too!).

It's all at www.gdcabr.org – bookmark it!

Just a few examples of the great

information you'll find:

Neighborhood Information

The neighborhood information link on left side of home page takes you to:

- Get a "New Neighbor Welcome Packet"
- "Join the E-mail list" and complete list guidelines

The Civic Association

- GDCA Board Members and contact information
- PayPal link to pay GDCA dues online.

Garden

Continued from Page 1

18 beds laid out in the design, then Dufrocq families, and finally neighborhood families. The garden will try to employ as many green principles as possible: plastic composite lumber to form the beds, compost bins, rain barrels, etc.

Ideas for how this garden will be used include:

- For teachers to explore classroom lessons in life sciences, art, math, and creative writing, in an outdoor setting.
- To have some classes act as food producers in Dufrocq's MicroSociety program.
- Space to grow fresh produce for local shelters, churches, or food banks.
- For parents, a chance to meet fellow parents and teachers outside the classroom.
- For Garden District neighbors, a way to participate in our new neighborhood school.
- For everyone, a chance to take part in the growing movement of green living and healthy lifestyle choices.

What will be asked of Community Garden participants?

Each gardener pays for the materials to establish their own bed, about \$80-\$110 depending on donations received. Shared elements such as the storage shed, fencing, irrigation system, and gravel paths will hopefully be paid for by the school system, grants, or donations. Workdays for general garden maintenance will be scheduled periodically.

If you are interested in committing to help build and garden a bed, please contact David Franz at dsbfranz@cox.net.

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Tips for selecting the best arborist!

GDCA Board member Rosary Beck recently met with a representative from the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF), who provided the following tips for selecting an arborist:

1. Beware of door-knockers/solicitors, especially common after storms when non-professionals see a chance to earn some quick money. Also, some companies will ask for money before work is finished. DO NOT pay any money until work is COMPLETED.

2. Never let yourself be rushed by bargains such as "If you sign an agreement today, I can take 10% off the price..."

3. Ask to see his/her arborist's license. All practicing arborists must be licensed by the State of Louisiana through LDAF. The blue license certificate should be in the following format: Year-License number (e.g. 09-1234).

4. Ask for certificate of insurance including proof of liability for personal and property damage, and workman's compensation. Then call the insurance company to verify the policy is in force.

5. Request references from other jobs the company has done locally, then go take a look.

6. Have more than one arborist write an estimate for your job. Don't expect one to lower a bid to match another's, and be willing to pay for the estimate

if necessary.

7. A good arborist will not use climbing spikes if the tree is to remain in the landscape.

8. Beware of an arborist who is too eager to remove a living tree.

For current information about Louisiana's licensed arborists, please call LDAF at (225) 952-8100, or visit www.ldaf.state.la.us/. Scroll down to "Find a Licensed Horticulture Professional" and click on "Arborists."

GARDEN DISTRICT SECURITY CONTACT NUMBERS

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY, or if you see a crime in progress, call BR Police Dispatch at 389-2000, or call 911.

If a GD security patrol officer happens to already be in the area, Dispatch will call them.

FOR NON-URGENT SECURITY CONCERNS, call GD Security Patrol Cell Phone at 315-7012.

If officers are patrolling when you call, they will answer if possible; otherwise, you can leave a message. These messages are logged and viewable by all GD security patrol officers. Please begin all messages with your name, address, and phone number.

Please do not use this number to report crimes in progress, or to make complaints about parking and traffic violations or other matters not related to security.

To discuss ongoing security concerns regarding criminal activity, Sgt. Don Stone, BRPD and head of the GD security patrol, is available at 389-5247 (office) or 571-7244 (cell). Please begin all messages with your name, address, and phone number.

Sgt. Stone is happy to talk about security concerns, but he should not be called for emergencies, traffic or parking violations, or other non-threatening matters. For those concerns, please call BR Police Dispatch or the appropriate EBR agency.

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