



# Garden District News

Roseland Terrace, Kleinert Terrace and Drehr Place Historic Neighborhoods

February 2010

## Local lawyer answers questions about Security District

By: MICHELE FOURNET

**Question:** *What law governs the creation of a security district and how does it work?*

**Answer:** R.S. 18:1300.31 and 33:9100.21 set forth the following steps:

1. Civic association votes on resolution authorizing a petition to place the security district on the ballot; the secretary of state provides the form for the petition.

2. If the resolution passes, the city council votes on a similar resolution.

3. If that passes and 30% of the

qualified electors in the proposed district sign the petition, the matter goes on the ballot at the same time as a congressional general election or gubernatorial election.

4. If the ballot issue passes, the

See **SECURITY**, page 5

## Neighbors Form Animal Welfare Organization

By: BEATRICE WINKLER

Mark and Joel Mese, Suzanne Schexnayder, and Judy Atkinson have formed the Baton Rouge Chapter of the Rescue Bank<sup>SM</sup>, a non-profit, all-volunteer organization supporting animal rescue groups in our area with much-needed supplies.

Operating on the "food bank" model and with its own local warehouse, the Rescue Bank serves as a collection and redistribution point for pet supplies including food, kennels, cleaning supplies, toys, and beds, as well as in-kind and monetary donations.

Mark, Joel, and Judy often talked about doing something to help animals while walking their dogs. Time constraints precluded starting a rescue organization, "but we wanted to help those who are on the front lines, rescuing, fostering and rehabilitating animals," Judy recalls. When they learned of the original Rescue Bank in Houston, Joel said they jumped on the idea of forming a local chapter. Suzanne and her husband Michael, Judy's neighbors of 16 years, quickly got on board too.

For each of these neighbors, their work helping animals today has been influenced by an "animal story."

Suzanne, sensitive to the plight of



*These emaciated dogs were rescued by Northside Humane Society from this rural dump site. They have since been treated and are now healthy and ready to adopt. The Baton Rouge Rescue Bank makes it possible for groups like NHS to continue helping abandoned dogs and cats like these.*

homeless animals for as long as she can remember, often brought home new pets, much to the chagrin of her mother.

Judy remembers going to the animal shelter with her family and adopting a special dog named Wisty, saving her from being euthanized.

The Meses share their Garden District home with three dogs: one rescued

from the pound, another adopted from CAAWS, and a third they had found wandering in the neighborhood.

Judy calls her work with the Rescue Bank "one of the most worthwhile and rewarding things I have ever done," noting the tremendous need for this kind of service in our area.

See **ANIMAL WELFARE**, page 5

# Volunteer Spotlight

## MARY FONTENOT

*Mary and her husband Willie have lived in the Garden District almost 25 years. During that time, Mary has worked tirelessly to help make our neighborhood the wonderful place it is.*

*For six years Mary created the Garden District newsletter, researching and writing articles, selling ads to help cover costs, and working with our delivery man to get the newsletter into your hands. (Current editor's note: It takes 3 of us to do all that!)*

*Mary served as GDCA Secretary, responsible for writing accurate Board minutes and promptly sending them to the members. If you've ever had to take meeting minutes, you know what a tedious job that is!*

*Each year before Christmas, Mary and Willie open their home to all neighbors for the Christmas caroling social. Mary prepares all the food herself and makes everyone feel so welcome, including all the children who come.*

*She has done many other things for the neighborhood—placing signs in the medians before the St. Patrick's Day Parade to keep cars off the roots of the live oaks, researching public works questions, going door-to-door with neighborhood information. If something needed doing, Mary was the first to volunteer her time.*

*Thank you, Mary for all the wonderful contributions you have made over the years!*



*To help thank those Garden District neighbors who volunteer their time and energy to our neighborhood, we're presenting this new regular feature to highlight their contributions. If you would like to submit a name or story about someone deserving please contact Beatrice Winkler at [winkler\\_beatrice@hotmail.com](mailto:winkler_beatrice@hotmail.com).*

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## NEWS BRIEFS

### GDCA Fall Picnic

Garden District neighbors got together November 8 at City Park for the annual fall picnic. Our metro council representative Tara Wicker attended, along with about 30 – 40 neighbors. The GDCA supplied fried chicken, and Sean Cangelosi, owner Roly Poly and Smoothie King on Government St., donated smoothies and several sandwich trays. Thanks, Sean!

### GDCA Annual Meeting Date Set for Feb. 28

The annual meeting of the Garden District Civic Association will take place at 3:15 pm on Sunday, February 28 at Bistro Byronz with many thanks to owners Emelie Alton and Mike Kantrow.

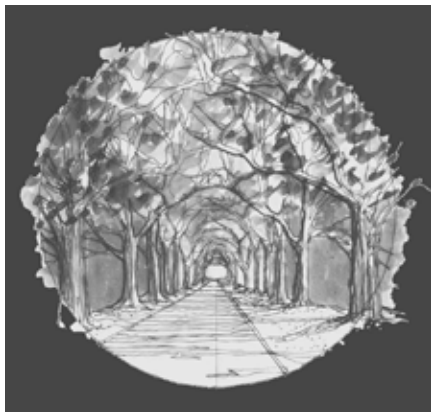
Metro Councilwoman Tara Wicker will speak; Sgt. Don Stone, BRPD and head of the GD Security Patrol, has been invited to speak as well. Garden District neighbor Dorothy Prowell will talk about conservation and her experience installing solar panels. A presentation from Baton Rouge Green on preserving mature trees and new planting choices, is tentatively scheduled. Finally, the slate of new board member nominees will be introduced and voted on.

Come visit with your neighbors, enjoy some refreshments, and get some great information. We hope to see you there!

## GARDEN DISTRICT REALTOR AND NEIGHBOR

**Pat Penton, GRI**

Randall Davis Real Estate, LLC  
225.907.6156 | [pat@patpenton.com](mailto:pat@patpenton.com)



### Order your Garden District T-shirt today at [gdcabr.org](http://gdcabr.org)!

Green T-shirts with GDCA crest on the front, and a drawing of Park Boulevard by neighbor Jon Emerson (pictured above) on the back.

Order online at [http://www.gdcabr.org/board\\_tshirts.php](http://www.gdcabr.org/board_tshirts.php) or call Alex at 267-5408; \$12 each.

# Apartments Renovation Proposed for Government Street House

Brian Brousseau, owner of Brousseau Properties, is interested in purchasing the property at 2202 Government Street, restoring it, and returning it to its previous use as an apartment building. Located at the corner of South 22nd St., the building has been neglected for some time and is in need of significant repair.

The property is currently zoned commercial/ residential. Mr. Brousseau has expressed his preference to recreate the original layout of eight one-bedroom apartments, although the final configuration will be determined by the availability of adequate parking space. He is working with the East Baton Rouge Parish Historic Preservation Commission, which has stated the building's exterior

must be kept the same.

GDCA President Alex Tucker is facilitating communication between Mr. Brousseau and the neighborhood.

If you have questions or concerns you would like him to convey, please feel free to contact Alex by phone at 267-5408 or by email at [c.alex.tucker@gmail.com](mailto:c.alex.tucker@gmail.com).



## Garden District News

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

**Beatrice Winkler  
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](mailto:winkler_beatrice@hotmail.com)

## Let's Keep the Garden District Pet 'Friendly' with some Dog Etiquette

The Garden District is a very pet-friendly neighborhood. Here are some "canine etiquette" tips to help us all keep it that way:

- It's not courteous to let your dog walk on people's front lawns, or urinate on their landscaping. Instead, walk your dog on the sidewalk and allow access only to "rough" areas to eliminate.

- Don't leave your house without a plastic bag for picking up after your dog! Or try one of those handy refillable bag dispensers that attach right to the leash.

- And don't forget to use it, even if your dog eliminates in the space between the sidewalk and the street. Remember, people DO walk in those areas to get to their cars. You wouldn't like a "surprise" stuck to your shoe when you're hurrying off to work; why would anyone else?

- When approaching another person walking their dog, tighten up on your leash to make your dog walk by your side, especially if the other person is already tightening up as a courtesy to you and your dog. This is usually a sign that their dog likes to pull toward

oncoming dogs. If you allow your dog to remain on a long leash and run into the path of a dog that is restrained, you are risking a confrontation.

- Most people out walking their dog are interested in allowing their pet to socialize with other dogs, but be sure to gauge their interest before approaching.

### Garden District Civic Association Board Members | 2009-2010

MEMBER	OFFICE	PHONE	E MAIL
Alex Tucker	President	267-5408	<a href="mailto:c.a.tucker@cox.net">c.a.tucker@cox.net</a>
Ellen Steirman Alderman	Vice-President	389-9334	<a href="mailto:e_steirman@hotmail.com">e_steirman@hotmail.com</a>
Pat Penton	Secretary	907-6156	<a href="mailto:pat@patpenton.com">pat@patpenton.com</a>
Sonya Pickens	Treasurer	383-1966	<a href="mailto:Sonya.Pickens@cox.net">Sonya.Pickens@cox.net</a>
Greta Corona		379-7866	<a href="mailto:gretacorona@cox.net">gretacorona@cox.net</a>
Anna Hanks		334-0795	<a href="mailto:annahanks@yahoo.com">annahanks@yahoo.com</a>
Ray Mack		382-0609	<a href="mailto:rayberyl.mack@yahoo.com">rayberyl.mack@yahoo.com</a>
Paul Miller		336-5444	<a href="mailto:paul@thedesignsmith.com">paul@thedesignsmith.com</a>
Rosary Beck		387-3967	<a href="mailto:robeck@cox.net">robeck@cox.net</a>
Sarah Butler		unlisted	<a href="mailto:sbutler@agcenter.lsu.edu">sbutler@agcenter.lsu.edu</a>
Gail Cooper		336-0720	<a href="mailto:sjhealy1@cox.net">sjhealy1@cox.net</a>
Jon Emerson		344-4929	<a href="mailto:jonemerson1@bellsouth.net">jonemerson1@bellsouth.net</a>
Frank Farmer		978-9540	<a href="mailto:frank@legacychemical.com">frank@legacychemical.com</a>
William A. Fontenot		383-5673	<a href="mailto:wafont@cox.net">wafont@cox.net</a>
Steve Ketcham		293-1366	<a href="mailto:steveketcham@gmail.com">steveketcham@gmail.com</a>



*Garden District resident Sissy Albertine photographed these migratory birds on City Park Lake early one morning on her way to work as a photographer at LSU Hill Memorial Library. Peaceful, tranquil scenes like this one help make the Garden District a special place to live.*

## SECURITY TIP: Car Key Alarm

Put your car keys beside your bed at night!

If you hear a noise outside your home or someone trying to get into your house, just press the panic button on your keychain remote. It will set off your car alarm, and the horn will continue to sound until you either turn it off, or the car battery dies.

Your car keys are a security alarm system that you probably already have, and it's one that requires no installation.

Test it! You can set off your car alarm from almost everywhere inside your house. It works if you park in your driveway or garage. If your car alarm goes off while someone is trying to break into your house, odds are the intruder won't stick around.

And remember to carry your keys while walking to your car in a parking lot. The alarm can work the same way there.

This can also be useful in an emergency; if you can't reach a phone, you can activate your car alarm to attract attention.

If you have any great security ideas, tricks or other useful information please send it to us at [www.gdcabr.org](http://www.gdcabr.org)!

## Winners of the 2009 Holiday Lighting Contest Announced

Congratulations to the winners of the 2009 Annual Holiday Lighting Contest!

- Best Lighting - 909 Park
- Judges' Choice - 2327 Terrace
- Most Original - 633 Camelia
- Best Children's - 2346 Kleinert
- Most Religious - 1111 Drehr
- Best Door - 2623 Kleinert

We hope you took the opportunity to drive through our neighborhood to see these and all the other wonderful lighting displays. Thanks to all who helped light up the holidays by participating in this annual neighborhood event.

We appreciate the generous donations of area merchants who provided the prizes: Bloom Florist, Chef Don Bergeron Enterprises, Rue Cou Cou, and the Garden District Nursery. Please join us in thanking the merchants for their generosity the next time you visit their places of business.

The GDCA Holiday Lighting Committee would also like to thank those who served as the judges for this year's contest: Gordon Mese of the Garden District Nursery, Mary Ann Caffery of Caffery Gallery, and Liz Walker of Elizabethan Gallery.

We also thank former GDCA Board

member Mary Fontenot for assisting the committee with delivering the prizes on a very wet and rainy evening!

GDCA Holiday Lighting Committee:  
Judy Atkinson, Heather Westra, and Cindy Elliott

## UPDATED PHONE NUMBERS FOR GARDEN DISTRICT SECURITY

**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.

**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.

If you would like to inform the GD Security Patrol that you'll be out of town, you can submit a house vacancy notice at the Garden District website: [http://www.gdcabr.org/form\\_outOfTown.php](http://www.gdcabr.org/form_outOfTown.php)

# SECURITY

Continued from Page 1

sheriff will collect a "parcel fee" for each "parcel" within the district. Maximum \$350 per parcel.

**Q:** Do we need to hire a lawyer?

No. The process is relatively simple and we have neighborhood lawyers willing to do it for free.

**Q:** Will we need to pay for the ballot?

No. The city-parish pays for this out of the general fund.

**Q:** If my home covers more than one lot, will I be assessed more than one parcel fee?

No. Assessor Brian Wilson stated property tax is assessed per residence, and considers an "improved lot" one residence; parcel fees are treated the same way.

**Q:** Could a person lose his home if he did not pay the parcel fee?

Technically this could happen, which is what makes the parcel fee "mandatory."

However, it's unlikely that someone who pays property tax would fail to pay the much smaller parcel fee on the same tax bill.

**Q:** What about our older residents who own their homes and pay no prop-

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*The revenues go into an account managed by city finance. The sheriff's funds and the assessor and city fees are taken out.*

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*erty taxes because the home is below the homestead exemption amount?*

Mr. Strahan advised me that few, if any, homes in our neighborhood would fall into this category because of the value of the homes here. Regardless, these folks still must pay various municipal fees; the parcel fee would simply be added to that bill. The law requires at least one notice to the homeowner before any action is taken for failure to pay.

**Q:** What could the funds be used for?

Cindy Bohrer of the Parish Attorney's Office has expressed the opinion that under the statute, the funds can only be used for security. I agree. Thus none of the money could be spent on trips for board members, etc. We also do not need an office or staff.

**Q:** What fees would be deducted from the total revenues collected?

The assessor's office deducts \$1 per

unit, up to \$5000, and then 50 cents per unit thereafter.

The city takes about 5% and the sheriff takes 4.5 %.

We need a yearly audit for which we can hire our own accountant. If there is one in the neighborhood willing to do it for free, Ms. Bohrer said that is completely acceptable.

**Q:** How would the revenues be managed?

The revenues go into an account managed by city finance. The sheriff's funds and the assessor and city fees are taken out.

The GDCA board submits security patrol invoices to city finance, which then writes a check to the board account, from which security is then paid. The paper trail produced is public record.

**Q:** What are the proposed boundaries of the district?

Presently, Roseland Terrace, Kleinert Terrace, and Drehr Place which together comprise ~850 residences.

**Q:** What is the proposed parcel fee amount?

We discussed \$250 per parcel but are open to suggestions.

We can hire private security or off-duty police officers. Discussion to date has heavily favored off-duty police, who have training and arrest authority. Their current rate of pay, set by the BRPD, is \$25 per hour.

Our goal is to have far more hours of visible police or security presence in the neighborhood than what we are currently able to pay for using GDCA dues. I would welcome any further questions, comments, or suggestions at [mfournet@bellsouth.net](mailto:mfournet@bellsouth.net). I am hoping to draft the resolution for the civic association soon.

*This FAQ has been edited to fit space limitations of the newsletter. To receive the full-length version of this document, please email Michele Fournet. Michele is a Garden District neighbor and attorney in private practice.*

# ANIMAL WELFARE

Continued from Page 1

Volunteers are especially needed to help promote the organization to attract donations and conduct food drives.

To volunteer, contribute, or get in-

formation, please contact Mark Mese at 225-387-0999; [mark.mese@keanmiller.com](mailto:mark.mese@keanmiller.com) or Judy Atkinson at 225-929-7033; [jatkinson@roedelparsons.com](mailto:jatkinson@roedelparsons.com).

Information about the Houston Rescue Bank is available at <http://www.rescuebank.org>.



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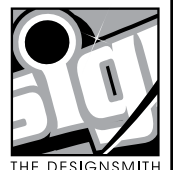
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# Call for GDCA Board Member Nominations

Would you like to be actively involved with your neighborhood civic association? Can you attend 6 – 7 meetings per year to help plan activities and make decisions? Would you like to work alongside your neighbors for the betterment of the neighborhood? Are you ready to help represent your neighborhood?

The GDCA Board consists of 15 members, and each board member is elected for a two-year term.

This year the Garden District Civic Association Nominating Committee is requesting nominations for at least 6 new board members. The committee will present a slate of nominees to be voted on by the GDCA membership at the annual meeting on February 28 (see meeting announcement on p. 2).

If the nominating committee has more nominations than openings, we will base decisions on a number of factors including: (1) an expressed willingness to attend 6 or 7 board meetings per year (usually held on the 3rd

Wednesday of the month) and the annual meeting (2) any volunteer work done for the neighborhood (alley clean-up, holiday sign decoration, tree mulching, Tour of Homes, etc.) (3) special talents that would be helpful to the work of the Board (4) an interest in organizing or serving on one of the GDCA committees (social events, security, beautification, etc.) (5) an expressed willingness and ability to work cohesively with the rest of the board to further the interests of the neighborhood as a whole.

If you are interested in being nominated for the GDCA Board, please sub-

mit the following information to Alex Tucker [c.alex.tucker@gmail.com](mailto:c.alex.tucker@gmail.com) by February 15:

1) Name, Address, e-mail address, phone number

2) A statement of why you are interested in working with the GDCA Board, with special emphasis on the five factors listed above.

Not sure yet if you want to run, or want to find out more about it first from a current board member? Please see the GDCA Board contact information on p. 3. The Board welcomes your interest and looks forward to seeing more neighbors get involved!

## Garbage Cart Reminder

As a courtesy to your neighbors, and for safety reasons, please remember to promptly bring in your garbage and recycling carts after they are serviced.

Aside from being an eyesore when left out in the streets, carts can block

traffic, take up parking space, and block a driver's view of small children and pets.

And if your cart is not emptied when it should have been, please call 3-1-1 to report the missed pick up.

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