

Briar Beat

MAY 2013

The Official Publication of The Briarhills POA

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

Letter from the *President*

Welcome to our new "BriarBeat" monthly! I am sure you notice the new look and feel of this newsletter. We have heard from many residents that they wanted to continue with a published newsletter from the association. This newsletter is produced by a professional publishing company, Peel Inc. that specializes in community newsletters representing hundreds of homeowners associations in Texas. Peel Inc. will provide all services, prepress, ad, sale and mailing at NO COST TO THE MEMBERS. Yes, that means free!

The original BriarBeat newsletter was written and designed by volunteer(s). Each issue required amounts of time in specialized skills in graphic design and publishing software. Peel Inc. services free up a tremendous amount of time of our volunteer (s). allowing us to focus on providing more news you can use. With the increase in cost of paper and postage, makes it more difficult for the association to provide the BriarBeat.

Our partnership with Peel, Inc. will allow us to save more money and time but we are retaining the control about the events in the neighborhood or other articles so we know in what direction we are going. Our contract with Peel, Inc. is for one year.

Our vision for Briarhills POA is to bring more exposure to our association that will allow us to improve our market value and join the best communities names in Houston as a great location to live in. We hope you are as excited as we are for this new age of the BriarBeat Publication.

We want to hear from you, both positive and negative as well as articles you might want to publish. Please feel free to email us at Email: briarhills@sbcglobal.net. If you have a local business and would like to advertise in future issues, please contact Peel Inc, directly at 888.687.6444 or email advertising@peelinc.com.

Y. Cecilia Brown, President Briarhills POA



Beautification of the *West Field*

February 23rd Tree Plantings was a big success and everybody is starting to visibly see the beautification of the West Field and around the Playground area as Spring turns on. Thirty-five volunteers stepped forward and help make this project a fun day to remember. West Side High School students under the direction of teacher Carolyn Klein were the spark that ignited us to completing the plantings by 2pm. Live Oaks, American Elms, and Leyland Cypress were donated by Trees for Houston. A drip irrigation system will be installed to assist these young trees for several years to come. Drip irrigation donations of approximately \$1300.00 have been taken in so far with another \$700.00 still needed as private contributions continue to come in with the Can Do attitude from within the Briarhills Community. A special thanks as we continue to take pride in our Community.

Swimming Pool News

The Briarhills swimming pool is about to undergo improvements! Re-plastering of the Waders pool and working to improve safety issues will be taking place in April. These planned improvements have been in the making for over five months including having the City of Houston Pool Supervisor visit us twice. The Pool Management Group - Aquatics Management of Houston was awarded the new pool contract and is working with Luis Cartagenova and Lawton Park to be ready for a fun recreational swim season. We are making improvements that are needed to meet Federal and State code requirements and will continue to do so on a priority basis.



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Briarhills Online Communications Hub

Briarhills.org is the official web site for the Briarhills Property Owners Association (POA) and the Briarhills Home Owners Association (HOA). The POA page provides loads of information specific to our Association. The Local Info page provides information for everyone in the Briarhills community, including our common Facilities on four acres of land. Some of that, plus more changeable information, is highlighted on the Home page. If something is missing or incorrect, use the Contact Us page to tell us. To see which businesses support your community, visit our Sponsors page or the rotating ads at the bottom of the Home page.

Everyone in the Briarhills community should visit Briarhills.org and Register. When you Login you have access to various elements on the web site that are not public, such as surveys, questionnaires, commenting on articles, posting on the Photos page, and important official information. The Site Policies page shows our strict privacy protections.

We welcome ads from our neighbors, our contractors, and local businesses. Our web site serves 860 homes in the POA and HOA areas of Briarhills, including Oaks of Parkway and Meadowbriar. In the first quarter of 2013 we averaged 465 unique visitors each month. The list of registered users is growing, and we communicate with them by email.

To inquire about advertising on Briarhills.org, you can use the Contact Us page on Briarhills.org, or phone the POA Office 281-558-7422. Revenue from these ads helps defray our cost of communicating with Association members and the neighborhood.



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The goal is to fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9. Each digit may appear only once in each row, each column, and each 3x3 box.

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Curbside Recycling Program

Those green plastic bins that you see at the curb on Friday mornings are for our recycling program with TrashPorters. Curbside recycling began March 1st for POA residents who paid the optional annual fee of \$24. We now have 144 participating homes, and more join each month. Payments received by May 14th will get curbside collection in June. For information about joining the program, visit the Recycling Corner near the bottom of our web site Briarhills.org, or phone the POA Office at 281-558-7422.



SEND US YOUR Event Pictures!!

Do you have a picture of an event that you would like to run in this newsletter? Send it to us and we will publish it in the next issue. Email the picture to briarhills@sbcglobal.net. Be sure to include the text that you would like to have as the caption. Pictures will appear in color online at www.PEELinc.com.



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Now-June 18: Discount Schlitterbahn Tickets for sale. <http://www.tinych.org/tickets>

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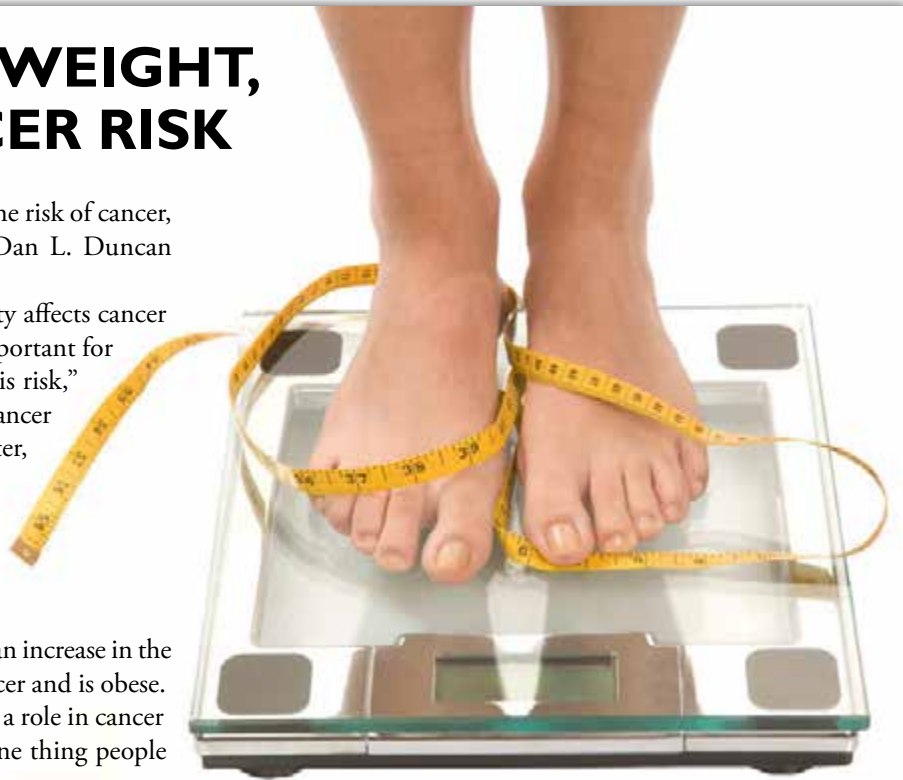
Controlling weight can help a person reduce the risk of cancer, said an oncologist from the NCI-designated Dan L. Duncan Cancer Center at Baylor College of Medicine.

"We do not know exactly how and why obesity affects cancer risk, but we know there is an increase, so it is important for everyone to control their weight to minimize this risk," said Dr. Kent Osborne, director of the Duncan Cancer Center and the Lester and Sue Smith Breast Center, both at BCM.

Research has linked obesity to a greater risk of developing esophageal, pancreatic, colorectal, breast, endometrial, kidney, thyroid and gallbladder cancer, Osborne said.

In some cancers like breast cancer, there is also an increase in the risk of recurrence if a patient already has the cancer and is obese.

Many other factors, such as genetics, may play a role in cancer development, but keeping a normal weight is one thing people can change and it may help, he said.



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Snake Bites A Concern As Weather Warms Up

Warmer weather coaxes snakes out of hiding, and it's important to know what to do after a snake bite, according to a medical toxicologist at Baylor College of Medicine (www.bcm.edu).

"Many people don't realize how much of an issue snake bites are in this area of the country," said Dr. Spencer Greene, director of medical toxicology and assistant professor of medicine – emergency medicine at BCM. "In fact, our regional poison center reported 235 snake bites – including 148 from known venomous snakes - in the Houston area in 2012, and I am sure many more are going unreported".

According to Greene, the first step is avoidance.

"Never reach into a hole or a bush blindly, a snake may be resting there," he said. "It is also important to maintain an appropriate distance from a snake. Most pit vipers, which include rattlesnakes, copperheads and water moccasins, can strike at a target up to two-thirds of their body length when provoked."

If you are bitten by a snake, Greene suggests the following important steps:

- Stay calm.
- Call 911 immediately to be evaluated.
- Take off anything that is constricting the affected area, such as a ring or watch.
- Position the affected area at or above heart level. This means that if you are bitten on the hand, bring it to heart level, and if you're bitten on the leg or foot, elevate it if possible. This minimizes the amount of local tissue damage and swelling, which is the most common finding in pit viper bites.

Go to the emergency room – the sooner the better.

Greene also dispels several myths about treating snake bites and suggests heeding the following advice:

- Do not apply a tourniquet or a constriction band.
- Do not apply ice; it can cause local tissue damage.
- Do not apply heat.
- Don't cut the affected area and attempt to suck the venom out – this increases the amount of local tissue damage.
- Don't use a commercially-available extraction device. These have also shown to be ineffective in removing venom and actually increase the amount of tissue damage.
- Don't use electrical therapy.
- Don't apply any type of lotions or ointments.

The management of snake bites has changed over the years and the newer type of anti-venom has proven to be very effective in reducing pain, bleeding complications, swelling and tissue damage, Greene says. Although anti-venom has been shown to have the maximum effectiveness within the first 12 hours of the bite, it can still be effective a few days after the bite.

At the hospital, physicians will determine if anti-venom and hospital admission is necessary.

"Ideally, patients should be evaluated by a medical toxicologist with experience in managing snake bites," Greene says.

If a patient requires anti-venom, he or she usually spends one or two days in the hospital. After hospital discharge, patients will need to follow up twice a week for two weeks to watch for any signs of recurrent toxicity.

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