

## REBECQUE & NANCY'S BEAT

FEBRUARY 2017

As I sit here contemplating what to write, my hands are so cold and the temperature outside a cool 31 degrees. It is difficult to type! You are reading this a month later so the weather may be warmer or we may have snow like we did years ago on my daughter's birthday on Valentine's Day.

Now is the time of year to verify with the Harris County Appraisal District that you have all of the exemptions for which you are qualified. If you have had a Homestead Exemption in the past year, you should have received a card from HCAD confirming that it is still in place. If you purchased a house in the past year, you need to file for the exemption which can be done on line at [hcad.org](http://hcad.org). The deadline to file is April 30. For those of you who suffered the loss of your spouse in the past year and had an over 65 exemption in the spouse's name, you need to file as the surviving spouse. This is the exemption that we encounter most often that has not been addressed. While we are grieving and resolving all of the issues we tend to overlook filing as the surviving spouse. I know because, even though I remind homeowners of this, I failed to file the first year after my husband died. This can be costly. I will say that HCAD

is understanding and usually will go back a year or two to correct this, which they did in my case.

Houston has been designated as a Tree City USA by the National Arbor Day Foundation in recognition of the City's and its citizen's commitment to the stewardship of trees. On January 21, 2017 volunteers planted 1,000 trees at Hermann Brown Park. Years ago, I was able to have the city donate trees which were planted on Wilcrest. I love to drive by and admire them.

The best time to plant trees in Houston is from October to the end of February so that they can establish their root system before the hot weather arrives. Plant a tree where it has ample space to grow and so that the root system will not cause damage to driveways or structures. Provide good drainage and cover the base with 3 to 4 inches of mulch composed of bark, woodchips, compost, or pine needles, but no fresh grass clippings and water regularly.

Over the years I have watched the trees that were planted in our area grow and become more beautiful. One day they will be as magnificent as those on the older boulevards in Houston.



## IMPORTANT NUMBERS

### GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Emergency .....	911
Constable ( <i>Closest Law Enforcement</i> ).....	281-463-6666
Poison Help .....	1-800-222-1222
Library and Community Center.....	832-393-1880
City Services.....	Call 311
Citizens' Assistance.....	713-247-1888
Public Works.....	713-837-0600
Neighborhood Protection.....	713-525-2525
Animal Control.....	713-229-7300
Wild animal problem .....	713-861-9453
Hazardous waste.....	713-551-7355

### OTHER UTILITY SERVICES

Street light problem.....	713-207-2222
.....	(then 1 then 4)
Power out/emergency .....	713-207-2222
Gas leak suspected.....	713-659-2111
Before you dig.....	Call 811

### BRIARHILLS SERVICES

Trash collection .....	281-368-8397
Amenity tags .....	281-558-7422
Tennis courts.....	281-558-7422
Pool parties.....	281-558-7422
Clubhouse rental .....	281-558-7422

### ADVERTISING INFORMATION

Please support the businesses that advertise in the Briar Hills Beat. Their advertising dollars make it possible for all Briar Hills residents to receive the monthly newsletter at no charge. If you would like to support the newsletter by advertising, please contact our sales office at 888-687-6444 or [advertising@PEELinc.com](mailto:advertising@PEELinc.com). The advertising deadline is the 8th of each month for the following month's newsletter.

### NEWSLETTER INFORMATION

Article Submission.....	<a href="mailto:briarhills@sbcglobal.net">briarhills@sbcglobal.net</a>
Advertising.....	<a href="mailto:advertising@PEELinc.com">advertising@PEELinc.com</a>

## POA OFFICE INFO

### OFFICE HOURS 2016

Monday – 1:00pm – 4:00pm

Saturday – 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

And by appointment

*\*Beginning September 12, the BPOA physical office will not be open. It will re-open when the construction of the new clubhouse is completed sometime in early May 2017. However, the BPOA Office Manager will continue to maintain the above regular office hours during this time period, except on these days: November 24, December 24, and December 26.*

### OFFICE CONTACT

Street Address.....

..... 14300 Briarhills Parkway, Houston, TX 77077

Mailing Address .....

..... P.O. Box 940548, Houston, TX 77094-7548

Telephone.....281-558-7422

Email .....

[briarhills@sbcglobal.net](mailto:briarhills@sbcglobal.net)

Website .....

[www.briarhillspoa.org](http://www.briarhillspoa.org)

Every resident is encouraged to register in the Briarhills POA website. This allows you to have access to various up-to-date information about the BPOA that is not available to the public. You will also be able to immediately receive, by email, important announcements. Your information will only be used for official BPOA communication and will not be shared.

### SWIMMING POOL

Closed for construction.

### TENNIS

A key is required to access the tennis court amenities. To obtain a tennis key, please check the Briarhills POA website.

### CLUBHOUSE

Closed for construction.

### POA MAINTENANCE FEES

Invoices for BPOA dues are mailed in early December. Please contact the POA office if you do not receive your invoice by December 15. Non-receipt of the invoice does not preclude payment of the dues.

# SOLID WASTE COLLECTION - GENERAL INFORMATION

**Trash and recycling collection service is provided by  
Waste Corporation of America (WCA) - [www.wcawaste.com](http://www.wcawaste.com)**

**Type of Collection:** Refuse will be collected two (2) times per week on Monday and Thursday. Containers and bags shall be placed at their collection points by 6:30 am on the designated collection day. Refuse is defined as waste generated inside the house. Items must be either in light weight metal or plastic containers, or sturdy plastic trash bags (not "kitchen" bags). Containers and bags should not exceed fifty (50) pounds. All permanent trash containers, after being emptied, will be returned to their point of origin in the same condition in which they were taken, normal wear and tear expected.

**Yard and Tree Waste:** Placed at the curb on your designated collection days. Trees, shrubs, brush trimmings and fencing must be bundled in lengths no greater than four (4) feet with no branch diameter exceeding three (3) inches. The bundling is required to allow quick pickup and size limitations are required to avoid damaging the equipment in the crushing process.

**Heavy Trash and Waste Collection:** Bulky Waste Items: Furniture and appliances (stoves, refrigerators, washer, and dryers) will be picked up on Thursday. Exclusions: hazardous waste, carpet, and construction debris resulting from remodeling or demolition operations. By Federal Law, refrigerators and freezers, or any other items containing Freon must be drained of Freon and have an accompanying bill to validate such service was performed.

**Unacceptable Items:** For reasons of government restrictions, personnel and community safety, and protection of equipment, the following items cannot be collected: gasoline, motor oil and used oil filters, paint and other similar liquids, vehicle tires and batteries, and large pieces of metal such as car fenders or engines. Debris from construction and remodeling such as carpet, rocks, bricks, concrete, dirt, sand, gravel, roofing, lumber, fence boards, and large pieces of glass also cannot be collected. Potentially dangerous materials such as sharp objects, glass, metal, and the like should be properly identified and separated from other trash and/or double wrapped to avoid potential injury to the loader.

## RECYCLING

**Type of Collection:** Recyclables will be collected once per week on Friday. Designated recycling containers are provided by WCA. These containers may be obtained by contacting WCA or the Briarhills POA office. Recyclables shall be placed at their collection points by 6:30 am on the designated collection day.

### Acceptable Items:

- Paper: newspaper, magazines, catalogs, junk mail, envelopes, office paper, construction paper, colored paper, folders, paper bags, phone books, holiday cards and greeting cards
- Cardboard: corrugated cardboard boxes, paperboard boxes (cereal, soda/beer, egg, shoe boxes)
- Containers: aluminum cans, tin cans, steel cans, empty aerosol cans, aluminum foil, plastics #1-#5 & #7 (milk, soda, water, juice, shampoo, detergent, pool supplies, pet food), metal pots and pans, copper, scrap metal (nails, screws, gutters)

**Commonly Mistaken Unacceptable Material:** plastic bags, styrofoam, wrapping paper, used pizza boxes, coat hangers, paint and solvent containers, light bulbs, mirrors, windows, dishes and cups, pyrex pans, wet or soiled paper, paper towels, facial and toilet tissue, disposable plates and cups, milk and juice cartons (wax-board containers)

**HOURS OF OPERATION:** Collection of refuse shall not start before 6:30 am or continue after 7:00 pm on the same day.

**HOLIDAYS:** WCA may decide to observe any or all of the following holidays by suspension of collection service on the holiday. In the event the holiday falls on the pick-up day, refuse will be made on the next scheduled pick-up day.

New Year's Day  
Labor Day  
Independence Day  
Thanksgiving Day  
Memorial Day  
Christmas Day



## The Briar Beat is Looking for Submissions!

The Briar Beat would like to build community between neighbors by sharing in each other's celebrations and losses. Thus, please submit news of any birth, wedding, or death of a Briarhills resident, or a family member of a resident, to:  
briarhills.briarbeat@gmail.com

## SUDOKU

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View answers online at [www.peelinc.com](http://www.peelinc.com)

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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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## Winter Alert!

### Protect Your Plants and Irrigation Systems

#### PROTECT YOUR PLANTS:

Water your plants thoroughly ahead of time. You need to be sure the roots are wet, not just the leaves. Much of freeze damage is from dehydration. Watering before a freeze could make a big difference in your tropicals and tender perennials.

Cover your delicate plants. Remember, you want to be sure the roots are protected, covered, or mulched well. Even if you lose the top growth of these tender plants, if the roots are alive the plants will come back in the spring. Do not cover them with plastic touching the leaves of your plants. If possible, use woven frost protection sheets such as N-Sulate (which can be folded, stored, and reused for many years) or sheets and blankets. In a mild freeze or frost, one blanket will probably do for most plants. In a hard freeze (below 30 degrees for any period of time), use a heavy blanket or several layers of sheets. You can even add a plastic over that if you want, since it won't be touching the foliage. Also, don't forget to put rocks or something heavy on the edges of your N-Sulate or blanket to be sure the wind doesn't blow it away, exposing the roots of your plants.

Don't do any heavy pruning on freeze-damaged plants until late

winter, when you think all chance of frost is over.

Remove all protective covering if the sun comes out and the temperature goes up, because it can be 32 degrees today and 70 degrees tomorrow.

Along with protecting your tender plants during the winter, remember it's not a good idea to fertilize tender tropicals that are exposed to outside temperatures during these cold months. Fertilizing encourages new growth, and that new growth is more vulnerable to freezing and near-freezing conditions than old growth is. It's OK to fertilize and encourage growth with indoor or green-housed tropicals, although shorter days usually slow down growth no matter how much you fertilize.

#### PROTECT YOUR IRRIGATION SYSTEM:

Your backflow-prevention device is the most important part of your irrigation system. It's also the most vulnerable part of your system if there is a freeze. It may be located somewhere right outside the garage and next to the foundation. Cover the top by wrapping the part that is above ground with a towel. It is also best to turn off your valve.



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## Smart Talk About Home Remodeling

The temperatures feel like Spring already and the time of year that you start looking at your home and thinking about remodeling is almost here. You may have noticed that the outside of your home needs a little work or you may be looking at putting your home on the market. When it comes to remodeling, where do you start?

Every year, "Remodeling" magazine looks at the average costs of home remodeling projects with the value of those projects retain at resale in over 100 U.S. cities. The smartest investment that you can make when remodeling may surprise you. Many homeowners go to the time honored update of the kitchen and bathrooms to garner the best price per square foot at resale.

However, "Remodeling" magazine ranks "re-siding with fiber cement as the #1 return on investment when compared to other mid-size remodeling projects" for the fourth year in a row. Compared to adding a bathroom, re-siding your house with fiber cement nets a 25 percent higher return on investment. Re-siding with fiber cement will also increase your return by 11 percent over vinyl windows and a whopping 24 percent greater than a major kitchen remodel or roof replacement.

The next question in remodeling is who to trust with your home remodeling project. Choose a company with a good reputation that offers solutions for your remodeling needs. Ask trusted friends for recommendations, check out the company's BBB rating and know that the cheapest estimate may not always be the best. Michael Berry, KTRH 740AM personality and host of the Michael Berry Show, endorses Houston Siding. Berry states, "I have spoken for Houston Siding Company for 10 years and have never had a complaint."

Texas has its own set of challenges with temperatures in the highs and lows as well as high humidity and storm potential. With a familiar slogan in Texas being "if you don't like the temperature just wait a few minutes," you should look for products that are durable as well as suited for the climate.

An innovative product from James Hardie brings new technology to siding. James Hardie Insulated Lap Siding offers siding backed with foam insulation. It is engineered to keep your home cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter. Because foam insulation helps maintain a more consistent temperature in your home, it can help reduce your energy bills and conserve resources for long-term energy efficiency. James Hardie insulated siding is available at Houston Siding, a James Hardie Elite Preferred Contractor.

As Spring time approaches and remodeling projects start, you want to ensure that you're using the best possible products and company for your next remodeling project.

### ABOUT HOUSTON SIDING

Houston Siding Company is a Houston based company that provides replacement siding, installation and repairs along with windows and roofing. They were established in 1991. They are a James Hardie Elite Preferred Contractor. For more information, please see [www.houstonsiding.com](http://www.houstonsiding.com).

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We will select the top few and post their artwork on our Facebook Page - Facebook.com/PeelInc.

DUE: Feb 28th

Be sure to include the following so we can let you know!

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(first name, last initial)

Age: \_\_\_\_\_



**WILL YOU  
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VALENTINE?**



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## 2016 MARKET REPORT

For Briar Hills from Jan 1<sup>st</sup> 2016 to Dec 31<sup>st</sup> 2016

Number of Homes Available	9
Pending Sales	2
Highest Sales Price	\$570,000
Lowest Sales Price	\$205,000
Average Sales Price	\$337,147
Average Sales Price per Square Foot	\$137.39
Average Days on Market	36

We live, work and play in the neighborhood and make it a priority to know the local market. Give us a call or send us an email if you have a real estate related question or when you are ready to sell. We always use a professional photographer to take exceptional photos of your property and give superior staging tips that will make your home stand out.

*Because You Deserve Better.*