

# River Oaks LIFE

A PUBLICATION COMPOSED BY AND EXCLUSIVELY FOR  
RIVER OAKS PROPERTY OWNERS

OCTOBER 2020



**Don't miss the  
RSVP on pg 23**

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**Issue No. 12**





above it all

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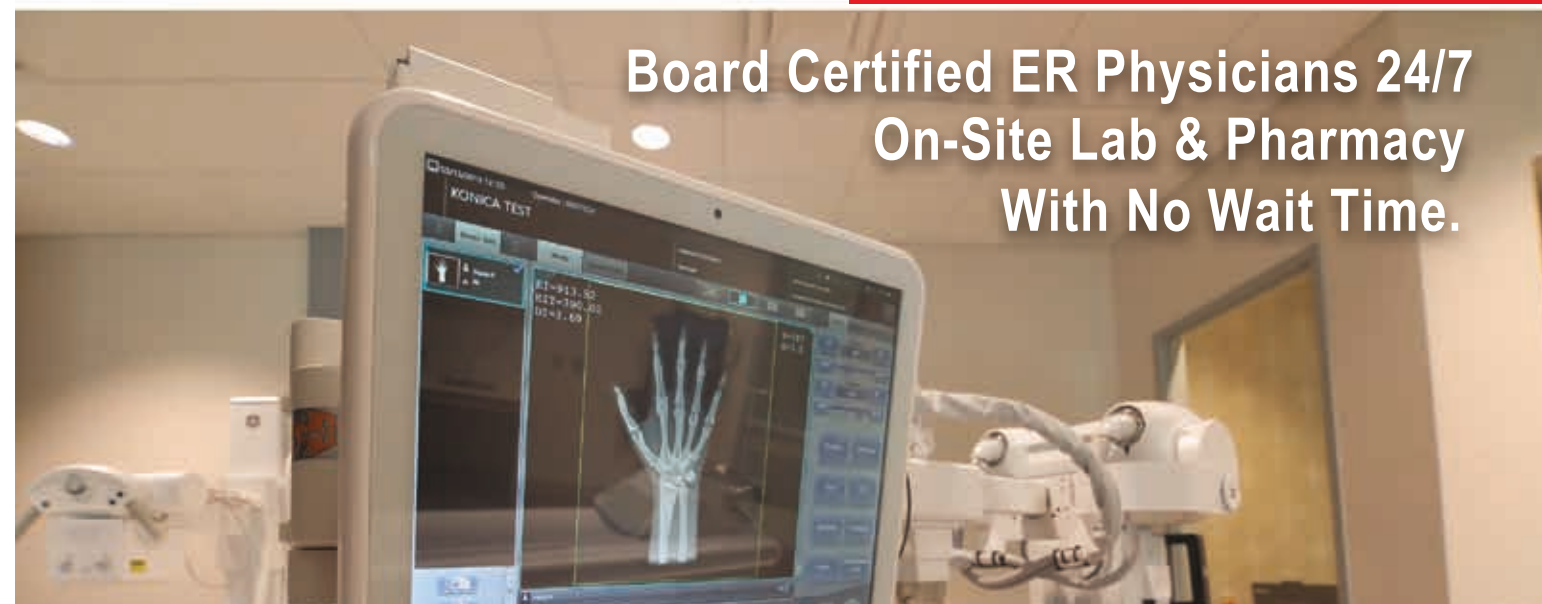
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## Tiffany LaRose, Luxury Real Estate Agent

Tiffany LaRose, Houstonian and third generation Realtor, knows Houston and specifically River Oaks and all of the amazing things it has to offer its residents. Her strong market knowledge, unwavering expertise, and fierce negotiating skills make her the go-to Realtor that clients return to time and time again and refer out to their family and friends. She represents both buyers and sellers and customizes her services to fit the needs of her clients within any real estate purpose and budget -- whether buying, selling, or investing. She strives to ensure a seamless, successful real estate transaction and a concierge customer service experience for all of the clients she has the privilege to work with. Being heavily involved in the River Oaks community, not only professionally, but personally living in the area and with philanthropic efforts outside of work, Tiffany knows how special the River Oaks community is and strives to give back whenever she has the opportunity.



**281-460-6081**  
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# NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

## & a note from your Captain

Submitted by Captain **Mark McMahon**  
of the River Oaks Patrol



Fall has arrived and the children are looking forward to one of their favorite events of the year, Halloween. Our fingers are crossed that Trick-or-Treating will go off without a hitch. If there are still health concerns please listen to the recommended public health and safety advice. Either way, if you are a homeowner and you wish to skip all activities this year, simply turn off your front porch lights and do not answer the door.

Parents, if you chose to take your children out, please remember to be their eyes and ears. The over-exuberant kids do not always look both ways before crossing the street and sometimes the masks restrict their views of the street altogether. Remember that lights off at any house means they have chosen to skip the festivities this year and kindly go to the next home.

After gathering the sugary treats, wash them down and never allow a treat that has been opened to be consumed. Safety first!

Finally, check with your church or club as they may have a planned safe event for your children.

### Captain Mark McMahon

**River Oaks Patrol, 3923 San Felipe Rd.,**

**Houston, Texas 77027**

**Office Phone: 713-622-0001**

**Email: mark.mcmahon@ropo.org**

**Website: www.ropo.org**

To maintain the beauty of the neighborhood, back door trash pick-up is provided. Please make sure your gates are unlocked so that trash personnel can remove your waste. If, for some reason, trash personnel cannot access your back door area, please leave your trash outside the locked gate area in a visible but not obvious spot.

Complaints should be directed to Republic Services at **713-726-7300**

On Tuesdays and Fridays, homes **East** of River Oaks Blvd. are scheduled for pick-up. Recycling on Tuesday & heavy trash on Friday

On Mondays and Thursdays, homes **West** of River Oaks Blvd. are scheduled for pick-up.

**Monday is recycling and Thursday heavy pickup day.**

### Communication in the neighborhood:

Residents of River Oaks should log in to our web site at [www.ROPO.org](http://www.ROPO.org) **Please contact Lezlee Bartholomy for assistance.** Once in the site we suggest you setup your House Check preferences and review all of the other services we provide. Please setup your Email preferences and the CodeRed link to enter how you wish to be contacted.

**We have two forms of mass communications.** Through the Web Site you can setup your email preferences and recipient list. We will send out neighborhood notices through Association Voice for topics such as trash scheduling due to holidays, Patrol notices and other group notices we feel are topics of interest to the community in general.

### NEW TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD? WE ARE HERE TO HELP!

#### Where is my trash picked up?

Each household in River Oaks has trash picked up twice a week. Specific questions can be found on our web site [www.ROPO.org](http://www.ROPO.org).

CodeRed is for more pressing matters such as Suspects active in the community, gas leaks and other issues you need to know as soon as possible. CodeRed allows us to use a recorded message, text, email and for the hearing impaired. The link is found in the web site. Contact Captain McMahon for assistance.

## UPDATES ON HOLIDAYS IN RIVER OAKS:



Holidays are looking a little different this year...but that doesn't need to stop us from celebrating! Here are some updates from ROPO to help you plan accordingly for the upcoming holiday season! We will continue to update residents as more information is provided and if there are any changes.

- Santa, at Del Monte and Mockingbird, will not be there this year due to public health concerns.

- ROPO has learned that many neighbors are cutting back on lights this year to help with the congestion.
- ROPO may ask homeowners to shut down lights at 10 pm to help with late-night congestion. **TBD.**
- No Parking signs on one side of the street in the heavily congested areas as in previous years.
- Extra personnel will be added to assist with traffic flow in the hot spots as they occur.
- ROPO will coordinate with the horse-drawn carriages again this year to mitigate congestion. **Please contact ROPO for additional details on this.**





# Neighborhood Sponsor I N D E X

This section has been created to give you easier access when searching for a trusted neighborhood vendor to use. Take a minute to familiarize yourself with the businesses sponsoring the publication. These local businesses are proud to partner with you and make this magazine possible. Please support these businesses and thank them for supporting the publication!

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# Publisher's note

*River Oaks Life* is all about you, your families, and your neighbors... and we're excited about the continued involvement from residents!

Each private publication you will see is unique to and exclusively for River Oaks property owners, and the publication will reflect who you are as a community. What we most often hear from residents as to why they love our publication is that it's truly unique...the READERS of this publication are the WRITERS of this publication.

Make sure to keep sending in your nominations so neighbors can get to know each other better. Nominations may be emailed to [emily.gibbons@n2pub.com](mailto:emily.gibbons@n2pub.com).

We are always looking to feature: neighborhood news, such as block parties, barbecues, and fundraisers; families to profile in “Meet Your Neighbors”; fun info about the furry and feathered members of your family in “Precious Pets”; young rock stars telling their stories in “Kids 2 Kids”; your culinary and cocktail favorites for “Resident Recipe”; peeks at your outdoor gardens and landscapes in “Yard of the Month”; performers young and senior for “Athlete of the Month”; and our newest topic, “Historic Home of the Month.”

This publication is being provided free of charge to you as a homeowner, as the cost of producing, printing, and mailing each newsletter



Our sweet Amelia & William with their cousins, Max & Mason

is covered by the **advertising partners** that you see in each issue. We personally screen each of our advertisers to ensure that they can provide the highest quality of services that you may need or want as a homeowner. **Therefore, we consider them all trusted partners of the community, and it is more important than ever to support local businesses!** Our **Sponsor Index** is a great place to check out the businesses that partner with and sponsor *River Oaks Life*.

**MAKE SURE AND CHECK OUT OUR UPCOMING RESIDENT SOCIAL EVENT RSVP** for an EXCLUSIVE VIP cooking demonstration with James Beard Award-nominated chef and culinary pioneer Monica Pope **on page 23 !**

Sincerely,  
**Emily and Stephen Gibbons**  
Owners, *River Oaks Life*

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# NEW TO RIVER OAKS?

ARE YOU AND YOUR  
FAMILY/SPOUSE/CHILDREN  
NEW TO RIVER OAKS?



If so, welcome! Please send your contact information to [stephen.gibbons@n2pub.com](mailto:stephen.gibbons@n2pub.com) to be added to our email and event invitation list.

## NOMINATE YOUR NEIGHBORS!



*River Oaks Life* is all about you, your families, and your neighbors...and we're excited about your involvement!

We are always looking to feature: neighborhood news, such as block parties, barbecues, and fundraisers; families to profile in “**Meet Your Neighbors**”; fun info about the furry and feathered members of your family in “**Precious Pets**”; young rock stars telling their stories in “**Kids 2 Kids**”; your culinary and cocktail favorites for “**Resident Recipe**”; peeks at your indoor and outdoor “**Living Spaces**”; and performers young and senior for “**Athlete of the Month**.”

Do any of your neighbors come to mind when you see these topics? Shoot us a quick email to [emily.gibbons@n2pub.com](mailto:emily.gibbons@n2pub.com) with your nomination and help spread the love throughout this community! Or send photos and stories of the events going on in your lives. We would love to share!



If you have a neighbor you'd like to nominate or an idea of your own for one of our articles, please submit it to [emily.gibbons@n2pub.com](mailto:emily.gibbons@n2pub.com).

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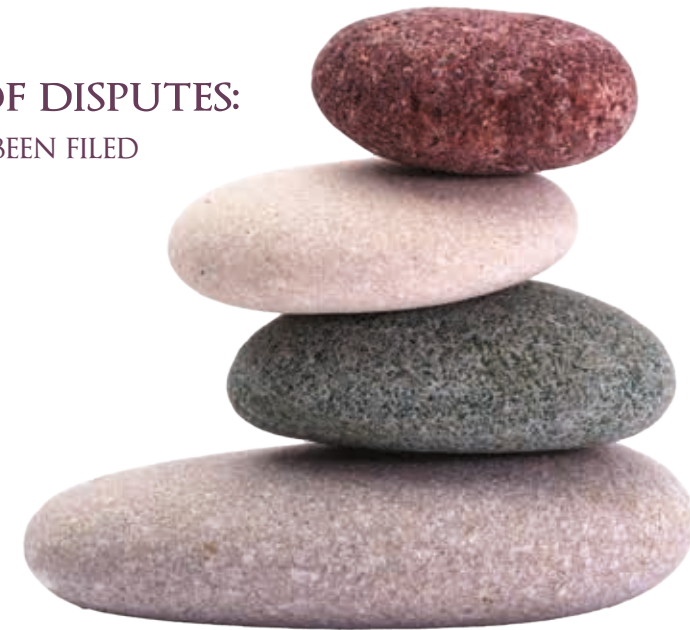


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## precious pets

Submitted by River Oaks residents **Bridey & Callan Flood**  
Submitted by **Fur & Feather Veterinary Hospital**

# Meet Princess & Lana Flood

### Family member names:

Maren, Bridey, McGuire, Callan, Rene and Chris Flood

### Type of animal/breeds:

**Bridey's** cat is **Princess** and she is a Silver Persian.

**Callan's** cat is **Lana** and she is a Bengal Cat.

### Male or female:

Both are females

### Pets' ages:

**Princess** is 6 and **Lana** is 2.

### Where/why did you get your pets?

**Bridey:** Princess was adopted from a wonderful Persian cat breeder who lives near Klein, Texas. Princess was a surprise gift to me for my 16th birthday! I went upstairs to my room after getting back from a trip and she was there sitting in the kennel! It was the most amazing surprise ever!

**Callan:** I became obsessed with Bengals after I saw two of them through my friend's window staring at me and fell in love. I got Lana from a breeder in Dallas!

### Is there a story behind their names?

**Bridey:** I was stuck for days on a name for her and could not

figure it out. My best friend walked into the door for the first time to meet her and said, "Well, she is just a princess isn't she" and there it was!

**Callan:** When we picked her up from Dallas, she would only fall asleep if we were listening to Lana del Ray...so I named her Lana.

### Anything special or unusual about them (talents/quirks)?

**Bridey:** As most Persian cats do, Princess likes to show off in a regal manner. She will stretch out in the middle of the floor wanting all eyes in the room on her. She is quite a diva. Unfortunately, long-haired Persian cats do not do well outside, so Princess loves to stare out the window and paw at lizards from the other side of the glass. She is a great hunter when she is comfortable in an air-conditioned house!

**Callan:** Lana has always had heavy feet. So sometimes when I am downstairs I can hear her sprinting up and down the hallway upstairs. Another special quirk Lana has is the way she greets people. She crawls up on your lap and climbs her way to your face and touches her nose with hers. It's her way of saying hello!

### What do you like best about your pets?

**Bridey:** The best thing about Princess is that she is relaxed and

easy-going no matter what setting she is in. I have gone on long road trips with her and even would fly with her when I lived in Colorado! She is definitely a Persian in the fact that she is loyal to her owner.

**Callan:** Lana is one of the sweetest cats I have ever met, and would never hurt any human. Also, with Lana, she is either sprinting around the house or in deep sleep.

### Any funny stories?

**Bridey:** I took Princess to my friend Mia's house so that she could meet Mia's other two cats. The two cats were on high alert when meeting Princess and hissed and ran away. Meanwhile, Princess made herself comfortable and got up on the couch in a home unfamiliar to her and just stretched out! She definitely is comfortable wherever she is!

**Callan:** I went out of town for spring break one year and came back home to Lana limping! I took her to the vet and it turns out she broke her leg! To this day I still have no idea how she broke it.

### How spoiled are your pets?

**Bridey:** Given her name, it is obvious that Princess is spoiled. She lets everyone know that she is a regal Persian cat. She loves her sister Lana of course, but wants all of the attention to herself! Princess gets almost everything she wants whether it is treats or a more comfortable cat carrier.

**Callan:** Having Princess automatically makes Lana spoiled because Princess has "behavioral problems."

### What else should we know about your pets and/or how your pets have enriched your home/family?

**Bridey:** Princess brings so much joy and laughter to the Flood



family! When she is not asleep, which sleeping is a large portion of her day, she struts her stuff around the house and if it is the perfect moment will snuggle with one of us. She is the best cat I could have ever asked for!

**Callan:** When we just had Princess and Klaus, there was just sleeping all over the house! Now, with Lana in the family she likes to wake them up and chase them around the house. She loves to bring the energy.



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health & wellness



# Are You Safely Cleaning and Sanitizing?

Written by River Oaks neighbor **Tracy Southwick**, Traditional Naturopath, HHP, CNHP  
Sponsored by **Heights of Health**

With the fear of Coronavirus spreading among us, many have been using antimicrobial/antibacterial agents liberally in their homes and work environments. Just like antibiotics, antimicrobial cleansers kill indiscriminately. Remember when we used to take antibiotics frequently, often without a second thought? The devastating effects of the overuse of antibiotics have taken us years to fully recognize and will take many more years to rectify – if that is even possible. Fortunately, there has been a great deal of awareness around this issue; we are all more cautious about the use of antibiotics and people are now working to repair and rebuild their microbiomes (the ecosystem of beneficial bacteria that lives in our intestines) in order to create strong and resilient immune systems.



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But, what about our **MACROBIOME**, the ecosystem of beneficial bacteria in our environment? It seems that almost no one is discussing the essential microbiome of our planet. If things don't change, we will be paying a hefty price for the imbalance in nature that we are directly causing with all of the antimicrobial cleaning agents being liberally sprayed, poured, wiped and scrubbed inside and outside of our homes and on our bodies.

As with oral antibiotics, there is a time and a place for antimicrobial cleaning, but I fear that we have gone overboard in this arena and the ramifications will lead to **antimicrobial-resistant bacteria and viruses**, much like MRSA and other bacteria that have caused so much unnecessary pain and suffering.

Just as inside our bodies, good and bad bacteria live (or should live) in balance with each other, this is also true outside of our bodies, in our homes and offices. This healthy balance is generally considered to be a 10 to 1 ratio, beneficial bacteria to harmful bacteria. When we focus on killing ALL bacteria, we also destroy the good guys and imbalance will ensue.

Unfortunately, bad bacteria have an amazing defense mechanism called **BIOFILM**. This is a substance that harmful bacteria create to surround, protect and feed themselves and other microbes like viruses. Plaque in your teeth is a perfect example of a biofilm. When there are too little beneficial bacteria left in an environment, the bad bacteria thrive inside the biofilm. And, here's the catch, **you CANNOT reach the bad bacteria hiding in the biofilm with the use of antimicrobial/antibacterial agents**. That is why dangerous MRSA lives on hospital room surfaces despite their best efforts to scrub and kill these bad guys. They are protected inside their biofilm. It's no accident that they thrive in the most thoroughly sanitized conditions: hospitals.

Are we creating an environment where we will be surrounded by harmful bacteria and viruses protected by biofilm? I think we might be...But, here's the good news. The best way to get rid of biofilm is to **REBALANCE** the ratio of bad to good bacteria with spore probiotics (good bacteria that occurs naturally in our environment). These probiotics can literally eat away the biofilm and keep the bad guys in check. End of story.

**Probiotic cleaning agents** are what we use and sell at Heights of Health. They are great not only for thoroughly cleaning around the house but can also be used topically to help rebalance the microbiome of the skin, mouth and nasal passages. Strengthen your MACRO-BIOME along with your MICRO-BIOME if you want a strong and balanced immune system – for the planet and for our generation, and generations to come.

#### Sources for scientific references in article:

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/02/100205115946.htm>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/21458997/>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5561291/>

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**kids 2 kids**

**Say Hello to  
Simran Soni**

Submitted by River Oaks resident **Simran Soni**

**Age:** 8

**Grade:** Second Grade

**School:** St. John's School

**Brothers or Sisters:** Sevak (8) and Saraiya (5)

**Sports I play:** Field Hockey, Soccer

**Musical instrument I play:** Piano

**Musical instrument I want to learn:** Violin

**Something unique about me:** My hair is super long!

**When I grow up I'm going to be:** Doctor

**Favorites**

**Activities/Hobbies:** Sewing, Art, and Crafting

**Animal:** Dogs

**Color:** Blue

**Food:** Pizza

**Movie:** *The Sound of Music*

**Music:** *Trolls* Soundtrack

**Place to play:** River Oaks Park

**Sports teams:** Astros

**Subject in school:** Reading

**TV show:** *Magic School Bus*

**Vacation:** Santa Fe, New Mexico



If you'd like to see your kiddos featured in our Kids 2 Kids article, please email [emily.gibbons@n2pub.com](mailto:emily.gibbons@n2pub.com).





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### Itinerary Overview:

- Dates: February 1 – 14, 2021
- U.S.A. Departure/Return Airport: Sarasota-Bradenton International Airport, Florida
- Southern Africa Arrival/Departure --Airport: Victoria Falls Airport, Zimbabwe
- Safari Camps: Mombo Camp, DumaTau Camp, Vumbura Plains – all Premier Camps operated by Wilderness Safaris and each guest will experience 3 nights in each camp
- Maximum number of 66 guests (minimum 50 guests to travel)

### 13 nights/14 days at a glance:

- 2 nights Sarasota, Florida for predeparture Covid-19 testing
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- 9 uninterrupted nights on safari through 3 Wilderness Safaris Premier camps
- 1 night in the air aboard Crystal Skye returning to Sarasota, Florida

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James Lloyd, Mary Lloyd, Russell Lloyd, Jonathan Greene, Leslie Lloyd Greene, Ben Greene and Charlotte Greene

# MEET THE LLOYDS

Submitted by **The Lloyd Family** | Sponsored by **Zodega TIS**

It sounds like the start of a joke: four lawyers walk into a bar. But for the Lloyd family, it's just a family dinner.

Russell and Mary took different paths to the law. Russell joined the military after college, serving in Vietnam. He used his GI benefits to enroll in the University of Texas School of Law. Russell served in the active and reserve components of our military for 20 years as a paratrooper and as an officer in the Judge Advocate General Corps.

Mary had practiced hospital pharmacy for three years when her interests turned to law. After completing law school, both Mary and Russell served as prosecutors in Houston, Mary as an Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Texas and Russell as an Assistant District Attorney for Harris County.

An event hosted by the Houston Young Lawyers Association brought the two attorneys together. "The stars aligned—well, we met at the buffet," Mary quips. The two began a lifetime of travel

together when they were married in a historic church in Vienna and honeymooned in Paris.

Russell would run for judge in 1988, winning a seat as a District Judge in Harris County. Through all of his judicial campaigns, Mary was a driving force. "She's the secret weapon—the best campaign manager in Texas," said Russell.

After serving for 10 years, Russell left the bench to practice law with John O'Quinn. Mary practiced law as a corporate counsel at major international oil and gas and engineering companies while raising two children.

Russell returned to the campaign trail in a successful bid for the Texas First Court of Appeals in 2014. The Court hears appeals from 10 counties surrounding Houston. "Drawing on my experience across many areas of law, the appeals court is a great place to bring it all together," Lloyd said.



Charlotte and Ben join Russell to vote



Charlotte takes a call in Russell's chambers after Trick-or-Treating at the First Court of Appeals.

meet your neighbors



The Lloyd family visits the Pyramids of Giza in Egypt



Russell and Mary Lloyd, Leslie Lloyd Greene and James Lloyd

The Lloyds raised their children, James and Leslie, in River Oaks. Both attended Episcopal High School. The Lloyds are life-long members of St. John the Divine Episcopal Church where both children were baptized, Leslie was married, and her children were baptized. Russell, an enthusiastic musician, played in church services and continues to play bassoon in community orchestras.

Because of her family's overseas service, Mary went to high school in Beirut and spent her first two years of college at the American University of Beirut. Travel has remained important to the family. Mary and Russell took any opportunity to introduce their children to unique cultures and places around the world. In particular, the family would ring in every New Year from Cairo to London and many places in between.

Both James and Leslie found their way into the law. Leslie chose a unique path, practicing probate law and estate planning. Her office is a few blocks away from the family home at the law firm of Oaks, Hartline, & Daly. James clerked for the Texas Supreme Court, then chose the path of a corporate lawyer and continues the family tradition of military service as an intelligence officer in the U.S. Navy Reserve.

The Lloyds welcomed a new generation with Leslie and her husband, Jonathan Greene, as parents of Charlotte and Ben. The two grandchildren have already made their way to court. Fall festivities include Halloween trick-or-treating in the 1910 Court-house where Grandpa is a Justice on the First Court of Appeals. "We will see if their visits to the Court spark another round of lawyers," Russell laughed.



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# Christmas Season IS COMING!

Submitted by River Oaks neighbor **Ben Johnson**  
Sponsored by **ABC Home & Commercial Services**

After too long of a rough season, it is time to celebrate! We are beyond excited to bring joy and light into our homes. It is never too early to start decorating this year...especially in 2020. We are going to begin as early as we can with decorating your home and property so that it looks beautiful and festive for the season. Stringing your lights takes some forethought, as hanging Christmas lights incorrectly can cause damage to your home and the lights. This is why it's important to learn how to hang Christmas lights correctly.

The first step to decorating with Christmas lights the right way is to gather your tools and to get prepared before you get started. Every homeowner can decide among different types and brands of lights and fasteners. By getting everything ready before you start, you're less likely to have to run to the store halfway through the project which wastes valuable time at what can be the most hectic (if not the most joyful) time of year.



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## TIPS FROM THE EXPERTS

1. Design your display.
2. Once you've decided on the sections of your eaves that you want to decorate, you need to measure how long they are.
3. Once you've assembled your lights, test them while they are still on the ground.
4. Once you've decided where your lights are going to go, you can gather your supplies. You'll need:
  - Matching outdoor Christmas lights
  - Weather-safe extension cords
  - A ladder tall enough to reach the peak of your roof
  - Gutter light clips
  - Yard stakes
  - An assistant

## STAY SAFE WHILE HANGING LIGHTS

Follow this advice for a safe light-hanging experience:

- Only decorate in dry, calm weather.
- When in doubt, move your ladder.
- Always have an assistant.
- Follow safety instructions on your lights.

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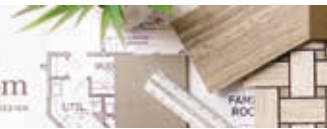
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yard of the month

# 3661 Wickersham Lane

Submitted by River Oaks resident **Sarah Hastings** | Sponsored by **Don's Tree Service**



## Family Members:

My husband, John and I have two sons: Harry and Andrew. They are both grown. Andrew will be married to his bride Sara on 9/19 with a small family ceremony. Harry and his wife Kellie are expecting their second son this year. We are proud grandparents to 2-year-old Wells. This is quite a year for many reasons!

## How long have you lived in this house?

It is hard to believe, but we have been here for over four years. We lived in another house on this lot and took it down to build this one. We “deconstructed” the original house bit by bit to donate every possible piece of it.

## What is your favorite part of the yard and why?

This is hard to answer. Curtis and Wyndham Architects designed our house to have multiple pleasing “destinations.” Their landscape design team did a beautiful job making the most of our outdoor spaces. I think we would say that the front terrace is our favorite. It faces the street but is tucked behind a wall that has a perforated design. There we are surrounded by lovely plants, but still have a glimpse of the neighborhood and people strolling by.



## Did you design or decorate it yourself?

No. We had very specific wishes and the Curtis and Wyndham team listened and succeeded beyond our dreams in filling them. Gibson landscape keeps it in beautiful condition.

## What was your inspiration?

We wanted our house to feel as if it had been part of the River Oaks neighborhood for many decades. We love traditional, classic design, cozy spaces, and architecture that speaks to history. This house and garden were inspired by traditional “English country” houses.

## Do you have a favorite landscaping store?

I love Buchanan's, Cornelius and Thompson + Hanson. Hard to pick a favorite.

## If you could do it all over again, would you change anything?

Can't think of one thing.

## What advice would you give to someone looking to spruce up their yard?

Choose plants that like living in our climate. Plan for and allow plants to flow, overlap and blend together a bit, as they do in nature. It is more pleasing to the eye than separated patches of single types of plants in a controlled pattern.

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local eats

# Alice Blue

## Restaurant and Catering

RIVER OAKS NEIGHBOR & OWNER CLAIRE SMITH

Nominated by River Oaks resident **Julia Hellums**

*Claire Smith is a seasoned pro at creating wonderful places to gather and enjoy delicious food and drink in Houston. Alice Blue doesn't disappoint and delivers everything we all love about going to a favorite local hang-out – a beautifully appointed and welcoming space, and a menu that offers everyone's favorites all day long from the best breakfast pastries and coffees to classic and innovative comfort foods for lunch and dinner.*

**River Oaks resident, Julia Hellums**

### Tell us a little about your business:

Alice Blue is a New American Bistro & Bar located in the Houston Heights that features fresh, seasonal menus, approachable wines selected to pair with our food and tempting craft cocktails from our full bar. We focus on making everything by hand, with the best ingredients and with a lot of heart, to provide our guests,

friends, and families the best quality food that we can. The name is derived from the iconic color “Alice Blue” which is a pale tint of azure that we have brought to life in our space, creating a warm and welcoming neighborhood dining destination. We also cater events in private homes and at offsite locations.

### What educational background do you have for your profession?

I headed straight to the California Culinary Academy in San Francisco after graduating from Rice University. I took on multiple internship opportunities during and after my culinary program and had incredible experiences working at Bay Area Restaurants; Greens (San Francisco), Oliveto (Oakland) and Manka's Inverness Lodge (Inverness).



### What made you select this profession?

My mom has always been a naturally talented cook and she inspired me (along with The Galloping Gourmet and Julia Child) to experiment with cooking techniques. I started working at the deli counter of our neighborhood grocery store (Butera's on Bissonnet) in my early teens and was hooked.

### What is the hardest part of your job?

Do you mean during a pandemic or during regular times? Owning a restaurant requires a multitude of job skills, from menu planning and production to management, bookkeeping, marketing and more. The dedicated crew at Alice Blue has made adjustments in this current global pandemic to ensure that we keep the business solvent and are ready for what will be once we return to the “new normal” of restaurant operations/business. We so greatly appreciate the Houston dining community and thank everyone for their continued support of our take out and dine in programs!

### What is your more memorable experience on the job?

So many great memories! I opened my first restaurant the Daily Review Café in 1994, then Shade in 2003, Canopy in 2009, the woodbar (adjacent to Canopy in 2014) and then re-imagined Shade into Alice Blue in 2017...I love a construction project as many know. Mostly, I have loved getting to work with so many fabulous people (guests, staff, and others in the local restaurant community) over the years.

### What do you do to de-stress?

I love to play tennis! I also love to cook at home with my husband and son and host small gatherings of friends and family.

### Is there anything you would change about your job?

No. I feel like things are just getting better and better every day. The pandemic has made me very grateful to have a job that I enjoy.

### If someone is interested in pursuing a career like yours, what top three tips would you give to them?

Get a job or line up an internship at a restaurant that you respect. Don't be afraid to fail, trust your instinct and go for it! Be prepared to work hard and expect the unexpected.

### What is the most interesting thing you have had to do on the job?

Restaurants are always evolving. The most interesting thing I do on the job is working with the team on creative ways to stay fresh and inviting to our guests and continuously improve their experience at Alice Blue.

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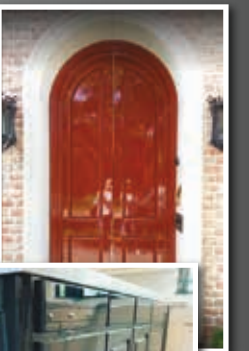
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# CORNBREAD and ANDOUILLE SAUSAGE DRESSING

Most families have more than one dressing on their table at Thanksgiving to please everyone attending. This one is Sophia's, Hugo's and my very favorite. It can be a plain cornbread dressing with just vegetables, or with sausage or shrimp added. As long as it is seasoned well and very moist, we are happy. It is our family tradition to always have this dressing on our holiday table!

**Serves 8**

## CORNBREAD:

- 1 cup yellow cornmeal
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tbsp granulated sugar

- 4 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp coarse kosher salt
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 whole egg
- ¼ cup vegetable oil

## resident recipe

Submitted by River Oaks resident  
**Tracy Vaught**  
Sponsored by **Scout & Cellar,**  
**The Varietal Group**

## DRESSING:

- 1 tsp coarse kosher salt
- ¾ tsp ground white pepper
- Pinch cayenne pepper
- ½ tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 1 bay leaf
- 4 tbsp unsalted butter
- ½ lb Andouille sausage, cut into ¼-inch cubes
- ½ small white onion, finely chopped
- 1 small green bell pepper, finely chopped
- 1 celery rib, finely chopped
- 1 ½ tsp finely chopped garlic
- 2 ½ cups chicken stock (see page 50)
- 1 ½ tsp chopped fresh oregano
- 1 tbsp each chopped fresh thyme and parsley
- ½ cup heavy cream
- 2 whole eggs

## To prepare the cornbread (make ahead up to 1 day):

Preheat oven to 425 ° F. Lightly coat an 11 ½-inch cast-iron skillet with cooking spray and set aside.

Combine the dry ingredients in a medium bowl. Add the butter-milk, egg and vegetable oil and combine until smooth. Transfer to the skillet and bake until a toothpick inserted in the middle comes out clean, about 15 to 18 minutes. Remove bread from skillet and tear into small chunks and place on a sheet pan. Reduce oven to 350 ° F. Toast cornbread for 15 to 20 minutes. Remove from oven and set aside. If making ahead, store in an air-tight container.

**To prepare dressing (make ahead up to 1 day):** Combine the salt, white pepper, cayenne, black pepper and bay leaf in a small bowl and set aside. Preheat oven to 350°F.

Preheat the same cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat with butter. Once butter is completely melted add the sausage, onion, bell pepper, celery, garlic and cook 2 minutes, stirring. Add the spice mix and continue cooking until the vegetables have softened. Remove from heat and transfer cooked mixture to a large bowl. Add the cornbread, stock and herbs and combine well. Whisk together the heavy cream and eggs in a separate bowl and stir into the cornbread mixture. Return mixture to the cast-iron skillet and place in oven.

Bake until dressing sets, about 40 minutes. Remove from heat. If making ahead, cool completely and refrigerate. To reheat; remove from refrigerator 30 minutes before placing in a 350° F oven, covered, until heated through, about 25 to 30 minutes. Serve warm.

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## Recipe

### of the Month,

**Cornbread and Andouille Sausage Dressing**, pairs nicely with Biodynamic and vegan 2018 The Resident Pinot Gris, Willamette Valley, Oregon. Lively with nectarine, pineapple and underripe mango followed by a hint of citrus and sweet tarragon with a minerality and refreshing finish.

**Alysia Goodnight**, Founding Independent Wine Consultant

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Photo credit: Julie Soefer

## doctor's note

# Genomics-Based PRIMARY CARE

Submitted by **Dr. Terry Rice**, MD of Sydenham Clinic  
Nominated by River Oaks resident **Dr. Mary Talley Bowden**, MD

Genomics evaluates your genes to ascertain your strengths or disease predisposition including how your genes interact with each other and environment. This is particularly useful in complex diseases such as cognitive decline that are influenced by an interplay of genes and environment.

### The Benefits

The utilization of genomics in primary care is new but is revealing important information that people can utilize to optimize their health. For example, an MTHFR gene variant, can be mitigated by the appropriate type of folate supplementation, reducing risk for depression and heart disease.

### What's the right age to get my genome mapped?

Unfortunately, people often wait until they start to feel their vitality decline before they start focusing on their health. Usually, by the time patients are symptomatic, the damage has already been done. The group of people who would benefit the most from genomics are young because the most effective prevention begins early. That said, knowing your genetic composition will always hold significant value.

Currently, our healthcare approach tends to be reactive, in both the medical community and individuals. This technology provides us with tools to act preventatively in a completely personalized manner. Without this knowledge, people's health focus may not encompass their true risks.

### The Genomic Journey

An in-depth personal and family history is the first step followed by the collection of saliva. The DNA specimen is processed in the lab for six to eight weeks. Afterward, I review the report, containing over 700 variations in 33 different categories including cognition, cardiac, osteoporosis risk and toxin metabolism to name a few. I then have an in-depth discussion with the patient. Our approach is unusual because we spend so much time with the patient to help them understand the results and give them guidance in terms of and nutrition, lifestyle, and supplements/medications. Then we follow up with nutritional counseling and additional testing as needed.

### How I have benefited personally:

I feel better than I have in years. My genome revealed weaknesses that can lead to nutritional deficiencies in choline and vitamin D and most importantly I have an unusual variant in folate metabolism related to the famous MTHFR gene. Correction of those deficiencies made a significant difference in my mood and mentation. I also found that exercise was critical to my brain health so I now play tennis several times a week guilt-free!

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history in river oaks

# River Oaks Boulevard

## Restoration Project by The River Oaks Foundation

Submitted by River Oaks resident **Susanne Pritchard**

The River Oaks Foundation is a nonprofit corporation that was established in October 1999 by **River Oaks residents Bolivar Andrews, Gwyn Smith, Caroline Gregory and Paul Hobby** for the purpose of raising funds for the beautification



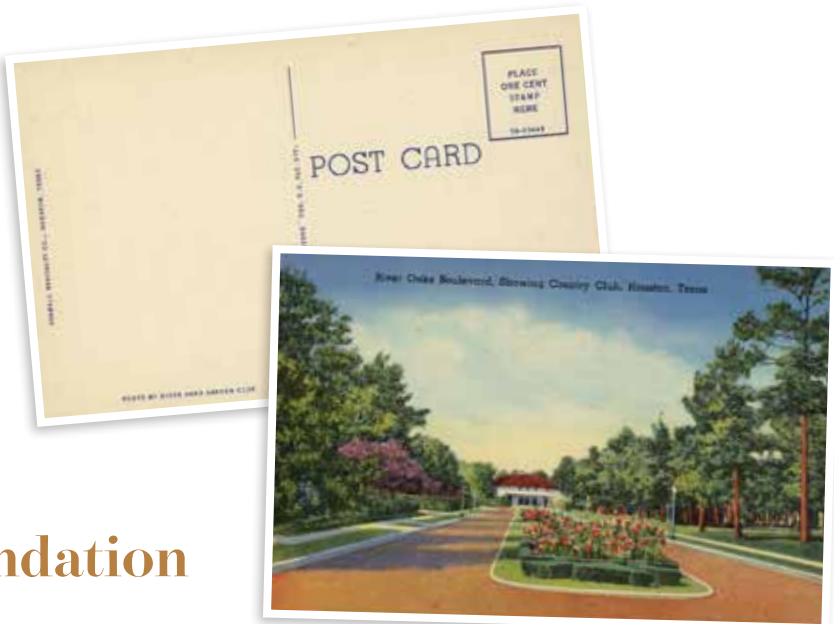
and preservation of the hallmark green spaces and common areas of River Oaks. Today, the seven-member board is made up of **River Oaks resident volunteers Susanne Pritchard, Dick Wynne, Melanie Savitz, Chris O'Sullivan, Risher Randall Jr., Kelley Trammell and Carrie Pepi.**

Over the years, the foundation has completed many improvement projects such as planting new trees in parks, building gardens in green spaces and repainting the River Oaks monuments in their original pale pink color. Most recently, the foundation took on the task of refreshing the somber appearance of the most iconic green space in River Oaks: the boulevard. The project came about when lifelong **residents Chris O'Sullivan and Risher Randall, Jr.** approached the foundation with a plan to improve the appearance of the grassy but otherwise bare esplanades.

A committee was formed to investigate options to update the design concept, while keeping the look of the original esplanade layout. In a moment of serendipity, **board president Susanne Pritchard** found a linen, one-cent postcard on eBay depicting a 1930s view of the boulevard with a colorized photo credited to the River Oaks Garden Club. The image in the 1930s postcard, as well as additional photos from the Metropolitan Research Center at the Houston Public Library, showed a design that closely resembled the modern-day esplanade at the north end of the boulevard closest to River Oaks Country Club. This particular esplanade had been privately built by the Flores and Holmes families with the help of **Gary Moss of Moss Landscaping.**

As a result of their impressive work, which closely resembled the historic images collected by the foundation, **Moss Landscaping** was chosen to lead the important task of bringing the rest of the boulevard esplanades back to their former beauty.

**The Robert and Janice McNair Foundation** generously presented the foundation with a lead gift of \$250,000 and more gifts from Boulevard and neighborhood residents soon followed.



"After" esplanades with brick end caps, zoysia grass and rose gardens



"Before" photo of the boulevard esplanades



This past spring, with COVID-19 affecting everyone's lives, more neighbors than ever were seen outside walking, biking and enjoying picnics on the green spaces of River Oaks. With that in mind, construction was started and completed as quickly as possible on the esplanades north of San Felipe with beautiful results. The campaign is now halfway there, having raised \$1.5 million toward the \$3 million goal. The remaining esplanades will be finished in phases as participation increases and fundraising goals are met.

It is our hope that River Oaks residents will share our enthusiasm for the importance of this project. We feel strongly that

these historic esplanades deserve to shine as beautiful, welcoming beacons of our neighborhood. If all 1,600 homeowners participate at some level, the rose gardens on the boulevard can be quickly completed and maintained in perpetuity fulfilling the founders Aim and Ideal of "Having created a beauty spot, to keep it just that, by a most rigid and thoroughgoing maintenance.

For more information or to support this project, please check the website <https://riveroaksfoundation.org>.

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River Oaks resident  
Tony Gresinger



George R. Brown Rescue



Founder Barbara Bronstein



Trader Joe's Food Rescue

housing. We work with food donors in the River Oaks area, such as St. John's School, River Oaks Baptist School, AIG, Trader Joe's, and Snap Kitchen. A few nearby charities we deliver to include Center for Pursuit, Covenant House, and The Women's Home.

Each year, our food helps nourish over 175,000 of Houston's most vulnerable: abused women and children, adults in recovery, developmentally challenged adults, disabled seniors, the homeless, veterans and many more. They rely on our partnerships for much of their healthy food.

As a volunteer with Second Servings, I see, first-hand, much of the good work being done at these charitable sites in Houston and how donated food makes a very real difference in the health of people in need. When I greet the staff of the charity sites, they often ask me, "Who donated all this good food?" They are so appreciative and ask me to thank the donors. One of the unexpected gifts of volunteering is meeting so many good and kind people and seeing the joy in the faces of the staff and clients when we make our deliveries. I think that we often deliver more than food. We also spread goodwill and hope.

#### Organization Information:

**Website:** <https://secondservingshouston.org/>

**Phone number:** 713.824.6602

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## making a difference SECOND SERVINGS OF HOUSTON FIGHTING HUNGER. ENDING WASTE.

Submitted by River Oaks resident, volunteer & advocate **Tony Greisinger**

I started volunteering at Second Servings in Houston in 2018, because I find meaning and purpose by serving people in need. I was surprised to learn that nearly 20% of adults and 25% of children in Houston have limited access to adequate food and experience hunger every day (over 600,000 people). At the same time, we waste nearly 40% of Houston's abundant food supply, which goes to landfills and eventually harms the environment. Second Servings was founded to address these problems: to alleviate hunger and reduce food waste.

My fellow volunteers and I help achieve that mission by rescuing prepared and perishable food from over 300 local businesses – retailers, distributors, manufacturers, schools, hospitals, sports arenas, and others – that donate their unserved and unsold, high quality, surplus food. Then, we pick up this food in refrigerated vans and deliver it the same day for free to nearly 100 local charitable meal sites, such as shelters, soup kitchens, and low-income

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# JACLYN & DONNIE BOUTWELL OF MEDIA SYSTEMS

## Where did you grow up? How long have you lived in the area? Tell us about your family.

Donnie grew up in Spring, Texas, and I (Jaclyn) grew up in PA. We both then lived in Nashville, which is where we got married and had our first two daughters. As the economy was crashing in 2008, we decided to move back to Houston to be near family and work for Donnie's uncle with his company, Media Systems. We had a third daughter shortly after moving back. Living near family has been a huge blessing. Our girls are now 14, 11, and 10. They are all so musical and theatrical. They are constantly putting on home performances, but are also heavily involved in school and church performances.

## Tell us about the events that led up to where you are now (i.e. education, career path).

This could be a book, but I'll keep it short! I went to school for photography and design and Donnie went to U of H to study music and TV production. He was producing records in Nashville

while I was doing photoshoots. We moved to Houston to help with the family business. Donnie has worn every hat; helper, technician, programmer, service manager, sales, system designer, project manager, etc. For as long as we've been together, we've found a reason to work side by side. We make a great team because of our different experiences and interests. It was an easy transition for Donnie to go from pro audio to custom audio. My background in photography and design gives me insight into the quality of TVs and projectors, while also keeping the design of the home in mind.

## What is your business and how/why did you start your business?

We believe that the technology in your home should be easy to use, beautifully designed, and unbelievably reliable. Sometimes people come to us frustrated with the tech in their homes. "It's confusing...it never works." We take the time to interview people and see how they live in their home now and find out what they

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wish they could do differently. It's important to know what your lifestyle is so that we can design a system that works especially for you. This includes all technology and automation throughout the entire home. Motorized blackout shades and drapes in the bedroom, a commercial-grade WiFi system to handle virtual school and work from home, lighting control so you can press the "goodnight" button and know that every light in the house is exactly how you want it, music throughout the home, TVs with multiple services and you only need one easy remote! Our projects have a vast range of prices and features. There's no limitation on what we can provide. If you can dream it up, we can make it happen.

## What is unique about your business (what sets you apart from the rest)?

There are thousands of people who do what we do. However, there are really only a handful of companies in Houston who can handle projects and services on the scale that we can. We specialize in building long term relationships. We have some clients who have been with us since 1980! Service is so important to us because we want everyone to be taken care of. We only recommend the products that we know are the most reliable and ev-

everything we do goes through a series of quality checks. We make sure everything is 100% before even bringing the product onsite. However, there will always be service calls. We like to provide preventative maintenance and also give the homeowner ways to reboot some things from a customized app.

## Given your business expertise and the nature of what you do, what advice (whether general or specific) can you offer to the residents?

Talk to a pro. You could do your own lawn, you could even do your own dentistry. But if you're installing a pool, you're probably going to talk to someone who builds pools all day every day. It's the same world now with the technology in your home. If you want a beautiful installation with rock-solid reliability and no mess, call someone who does this all the time. The worst part about DIY is that you have to do it yourself!

## What else should we know about you, your family, or your business?

We weren't planning on getting into parental controls, but since we're parents (and we're in the tech world), we've been learning more and more lately about protecting our kids from the internet. It seems like there's a new story every day about the horrible things that they might accidentally click on. We've figured out creative ways to safely monitor their activity online without them feeling like we're hovering. We also spend a good amount of time now consulting other parents and grandparents on how to keep kids safe online.

## Business contact information (phone, address, website, email, etc.):

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# Talents to Lean On



**Gallup's Clifton Strengths Assessment** is a powerful tool that allows people to get to know themselves and appreciate the unique gifts that they bring to the table. I became a Strengths Coach because I wanted to dive deeper into its use on a professional basis, but it has so many applications beyond the professional realm. **Here are a few:**

**Bragging Rights**

First and foremost, Clifton Strengths gives people a validated language to express some of the very best things about themselves without feeling uncomfortable or immodest. How do we articulate and celebrate our own gifts without getting distracted by

how the message lands? Enter Clifton Strengths. My first Talent is Strategic. I am great at making connections between seemingly unrelated pieces of information or circumstances. It's a fact, Jack.

**Inventory**

If you have to script a resume, bio or introduction, consider having your Clifton Strengths results on hand for a quick review. Not only will it give you gloriously descriptive words to use (see above) but it will also jog your memory about what makes you so unique. Here is an exercise: Look at each of your top five themes and think of four to five specific examples of successes associated with the use of each theme. This can be done as a list or in a mind map/brainstorming format. Your end result will be a great starting point for any sort of autobiographical document or storytelling exercise.

**Goal Setting**

Gallup recommends setting goals to upgrade your Strengths from Talents. A variation from this includes creating two (or any number) of measurable goals that leverage each of your five talents. Make sure they are specific and with a time frame in mind. Even small improvements can leverage your top five talents and have a relevant impact. Clifton Strengths provides a framework that banks on what you naturally are most likely to succeed at, so use it.

**If you don't have your top five talents, reach out to us for a complimentary code and coaching session to show you how to leverage one of the most proven self-improvement tools on the planet. It would be our pleasure to share this powerful assessment with you (that's my Woo Talent talking). You really should. (That's Command.) Email [rachel@gallantculture.com](mailto:rachel@gallantculture.com) with CS CODE in the subject line and we will hook you up.**

*Brandy Brazell Obvintseva is the Principal of Gallant Culture, a fully integrated brand, communications and culture design firm located in the River Oaks Bank building. She lives on Pelham Drive with her husband Alex, Stella (8), Tex (6); their two black cats, Ariel and Pimm; and Hank, the White German Shepherd.*



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## BRANDING, MARKETING, ADVERTISING

### Gallant Culture

Brandy Obvintseva  
(281) 222-7277  
[brandy@gallantculture.com](mailto:brandy@gallantculture.com)  
[gallantculture.com](http://gallantculture.com)

## CATERING & EVENT PLANNING

### A Fare Extraordinaire

Rachael Volz  
(713) 527-8288  
[eventinfo@afehouston.com](mailto:eventinfo@afehouston.com)  
[afehouston.com](http://afehouston.com)

## Silver Stone Events and Food Shop

Elizabeth Stone, President & Owner  
(713) 521-3500  
[Elizabeth@silverstone-events.com](mailto:Elizabeth@silverstone-events.com)  
[www.silverstone-events.com](http://www.silverstone-events.com), [www.silverstone-foodshop.com](http://www.silverstone-foodshop.com)

## EVENT VENUE

### The Revaire

Rachael Volz  
(713) 962-2248  
[party@therevaire.com](mailto:party@therevaire.com)  
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## HEALTHCARE

### Texas Retina Center

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#### CONSULTANT

### Kady Valer Closet

#### Consultant

Kady Valer  
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[kadyvaler@gmail.com](mailto:kadyvaler@gmail.com)

## RESTAURANTS/DINING

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Tracy Vaught, Hugo Ortega & Morgan Mansur, General Manager  
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# Real Estate RESOURCE

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Address	Neighborhood	List Price	Sale Price	Sold Date	DOM	Beds	Baths	SqFt	Parking	Status
3315 Del Monte	River Oaks	\$5,275,000			77	5	8	7,223	3	Active
2203 Looscan	River Oaks	\$5,495,000			47	5	8	9,263	3	Active
3640 Inwood	River Oaks	\$5,495,000			81	6	7.5	9,270	3	Active
2164 Chilton	River Oaks	\$5,595,000			117	5	7	7,130	3	Active
3736 Del Monte	River Oaks	\$5,700,000			107	5	8	7,505	3	Active
3330 Chevy Chase	River Oaks	\$5,895,000			211	6	11	10,121	2	Active
3627 Inwood	River Oaks	\$6,250,000			113	5	8	6,900	3	Active
2158 Brentwood	River Oaks	\$6,495,000			28	5	7	7,185	3	Active
3257 Huntingdon	River Oaks	\$6,495,000			19	5	9	8,371	2	Active
3409 Ella Lee	River Oaks	\$6,495,000			126	5	7	7,338	2	Active
1059 Kirby	River Oaks	\$6,995,000			20	4	7	8,950	4	Active
3257 Inwood	River Oaks	\$6,995,000			334	5	8	9,426	3	Active
3702 Knollwood	River Oaks	\$7,200,000			365	5	4.5	5,137	2	Active
9 West	River Oaks	\$7,999,999			267	5	7	7,551	9	Active
3229 Groveland	River Oaks	\$8,500,000			57	4	7	7,098	4	Active
3024 Del Monte	River Oaks	\$9,500,000			88	5	9	10,340	3	Active
2122 Del Monte	River Oaks	\$2,650,000	\$2,275,000	08/28/20	25	4	4.5	3,998	0	Sold
3649 Chevy Chase	River Oaks	\$6,995,000	\$6,000,000	09/01/20	0	6	6.5	10,757	0	Sold



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