

The Census

Reprinted with permission from the Garland Homeowners Coalition Newsletter

In less than two months we will be receiving our 2000 Census forms. It is time for all of us to stand up and be counted! Why is responding to the Census so very important? Why is obtaining a complete count so difficult?

Redistricting is the major constitutional purpose for conducting a Census. This involves not only deciding how many congressional representatives each state will have but also where state senate and house districts will be located and where county commissioner, city council, school district and many other jurisdictional lines will be drawn. States also receive their share of federal funds based on the Census count.

The Census Bureau estimates Texas' undercount in 1990 was more than 482,000 persons. According to the GAO, Texas lost roughly \$1 billion in federal funding during the 1990s as a result of the under count. The undercount in Texas was the second highest in the nation. In the greater Dallas area an estimated 40 percent of us did not respond to the Census in 1990!

Why is obtaining an accurate count so difficult? The answer lies in the complexity involved in completing a Census and the size and diversity of the population. In Texas, 32 local Census offices will operate with an estimated 45,000 employees during the most intense part of the work. An estimated 7.4 million Census questionnaires will be mailed in Texas alone, during the first part of March 2000 with follow-up and other efforts continuing through fall 2000.

We all know that there is growing cynicism relating to telephone inquiries and questionnaires. PLEASE take the time to respond to the Census 2000 questionnaire. The specific information about you and your family is held in the strictest confidentiality, and by law can not be released for approximately 70 years. Let us all ensure that we are part of the statistics and are counted. For once, we can all be part of the solution.

LET SUE DO IT

The refrigerator repairman is coming today but you have an important meeting

LET SUE DO IT

You need a week away, but Kitty and Rover don't want to go to the Kennel

LET SUE DO IT

The possibilities are endless (and the prices are reasonable)

- Pet/House Sitting
- Errands
- Taking kids to soccer, ortho, Etc.
- Shopping
- Grocery Shopping (Especially for Home Bound Seniors)
- Etc., Etc.

LET SUE DO IT

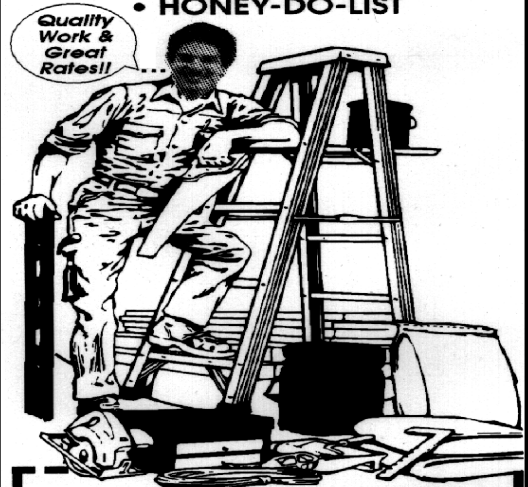
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Property Tax Exemption

By Bill Johnson

Recently, the Garland City Council approved a \$5,000 increase in the homestead exemption available to senior citizens and disabled homeowners. The increase will put this exemption value at \$51,000, as was discussed in a recent Garland News article.

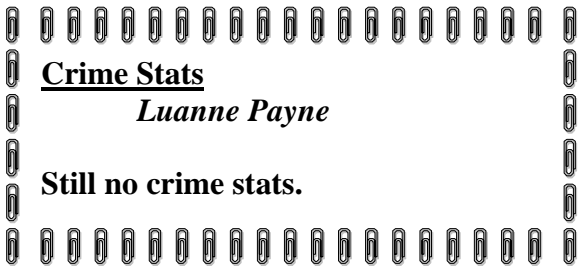
Intrigued, I dug out my last city tax statement to verify that I was receiving this exemption from my city taxes. Lo and behold, I was not! A phone call or two revealed that this is an additional exemption to the standard homestead that most of us have. But, one must apply for it when one turns 65 years old (or when one qualifies as disabled). Having a standard homestead exemption does NOT automatically sign one up for this exemption.

Since I am now a senior (old gomer, old coot, etc) and eligible for this exemption, I called the Dallas Central Appraisal District (214-631-0910), asking for a Residential Homestead Exemption Application form. This form allowed me to request the senior/disability exemption, and to apply it retroactively up to one year. I wonder if there are others in our community who, like me, are eligible for this tax reduction but are failing to claim it. If so, you now have the number to call. Go for it!

Open Garages

By Bill Johnson, C.O.P. Coordinator

We've mentioned this before, but in the Police beat section of the Garland News on Sunday, March 5, the GPD Neighborhood Police Officer Unit reports they are encouraging homeowners to keep their garage doors closed, after a rash of burglaries. In 1999, more than 200 of the 1292 habitation burglaries occurred when the homeowner left the garage door open. Officers are leaving fliers at homes where they find open garage doors, reminding people to properly secure their homes. The most stolen items are bicycles, golf clubs, and lawn equipment.

<p>  <u>Crime Stats</u> <i>Luanne Payne</i> Still no crime stats. </p>

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MEMBERSHIP

Mary Musseman

As of March 10, 2000 our membership is at 417 members. We keep inching closer to 400, but I'm hopeful we won't go below that line. There seems to be a lot of real estate activity in our neighborhood. I hate to see our old friends leave but I'm happy to meet our new neighbors. Since we've been having such beautiful weather lately, this is a perfect opportunity to meet your new neighbors while you're out doing yard work or taking a walk and let them know about the O.N.A.. Slow down your pace a little and enjoy SPRING!

Welcome Wagon

Luanne Payne

There is no welcome wagon this issue.

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The GHC has discussed what they consider the three or four most important issues we would like brought before the State Legislature when they convene in 2001. These issues will be prioritized by TNT (Texas Neighborhoods Together) and used as they form a Legislative agenda to be introduced in 2001. The following are GHC suggested list to be provided to TNT:

Municipal Authority. The State continues to whittle away at established Municipal authority. The cities should have the right to regulate such things as alcohol sales in restaurants, amortize undesirable uses and zoning authority without State intervention.

Code Enforcement. Improve the cities ability to enforce its health, safety, and nuisance ordinances.

Traffic Control. Grant municipalities the authority to implement a photographic traffic control system.

Car Insurance Control. Develop a common data base with DMV and all automobile insurance companies that would raise a red flag if car owners do not insure their car or cancel their insurance. This could lead to automatic removal of their drivers license and car registration.

OAKRIDGE DAYTIMERS

by Dianne Winte

Join our Daytimers for a "Blooming" good time through March and April. We are pleased to announce a record enrollment of members—Don't be left out-join us now! Call Roberta Jones, president, at 972-414-7277 for more information.



The Daytimers will sponsor the Oakridge Neighborhood Garage Sale! **ALL OAKRIDGE RESIDENTS** are encouraged to participate in this event.

Date: Saturday, (only) April 8

Time: 8am -?

Call Barbara Brunette (972-530-4288) for registration, information and to be included on the map. Tell your Neighbors! Call Barb by Wed., April 5 and pick up maps on Thurs., April 6th.

All spring activities are a "go". The Walkers are walking, the Book Club is reading, the Bridge Clubs are dealing, the Craft groups are creating, and the Secret Pals are still secret.

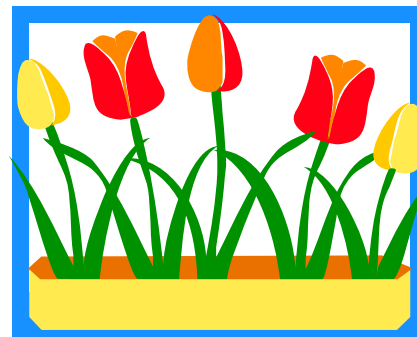
The Out to Lunch Bunch will eat at **The Cheesecake Factory on March 28th at 11:15am.** RSVP to Gail Durbin at 972-495-6045.

We thank Monica Evans and those who provided food for their hospitality for the March Meeting. Don't forget to begin creating your hat for the MAY COFFEE!

**Celebrate Spring with us at the next
COFFEE**

April 11 10am

**Home of Sarah Traylor
3222 Bending Oaks**



Oakridge Women's Club

Libby Morse

Last Month: In March We met at the Oakridge Country Club and had a nice dinner. We made a few plans for upcoming events. **EGGSTRAVAGANZA...**It is time for our annual Easter Hunt and Picnic! The picnic is Sunday April 16th from 2-4pm. The children will hunt for Easter eggs, do a craft, and take a swing at a pinata! There will be a special prize in one egg! If you are interested in joining us, bring a picnic lunch for your family, one dozen plastic (filled) eggs for each child that will be attending, a blanket or lawn chairs and meet us at Foxboro Park in Richardson. The park is located on the southeast corner of Plano road and Braeburn lane (Mapsco 8K) just north of Owens farm. If you have any questions about this event please call Trisha Klimko at 972-414-9141

Next Month: Please join us at our April meeting. It is Tuesday April 4th at 7:00pm. We are having our annual wine and cheese party. Grab your favorite bottle and bring along an appetizer. It is at Maryann Cul-lum's house at 2012 Overview. Do a little research on the wine to share with the group if you are interested.

Sharron Smith is planning the next couple's activities. She will bring some ideas to the next meeting.

Also... plan ahead- mark your calendar for the children's Christmas party. It is scheduled for December 10,2000 at 3:00pm. It will be at the Pace house in downtown Garland.

Member News: We had a new member! Welcome Kim Zinser to the OWC!



If you are interested in joining the Oakridge Women's Club please call Kay Steelman at 972-495-4879

Neighborhood Traffic Control Program
Reprinted with permission from the Garland Homeowners Coalition Newsletter

The City of Garland instituted a Neighborhood Traffic Control Program in 1995. This program provides the necessary ground rules for citizens to request all-way stops or speed bumps to slow traffic or to discourage cut-through traffic on residential streets. The policy is designed to provide reasonable opportunities for the installation of all-way stops on specified types of residential streets based upon the degree of support from the surrounding residents and street conditions.

The degree of residential support is a major factor in the consideration of all-way stops or speed bumps. A survey of the homes within a specified survey area must be submitted to the city demonstrating the required degree of resident support. All homes within a specified distance whose front or side yard adjoins the street on which the new sign is being requested shall be included. At least 80% of the homes in the survey area must indicate support of the installation. A uniform fee for installation will be based on the actual cost for the installation. The neighborhood requesting the installation will be responsible for collecting and submitting the required payment to the city.

Contact, Transportation Department, at 972-205-2439 for additional information.

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The following February 9, 2000, letter was written to the city manager of Garland by James M. Parks, Executive Director of the North Texas Municipal Water District. (Garland obtains all of its water from that district. The letter pertains to a recent Sixty Minutes story on the possibility of a certain gasoline additive contaminating water supplies and is a response to the many calls from local citizens the District has had concerning the story.

NORTH TEXAS MUNICIPAL
WATER DISTRICT

On Sunday, January 23, 2000, Sixty Minutes presented a story on methyl tertiary butyl ether (MtBE), a gasoline additive. If you recall, a similar story was aired in September on Channel 8 News, because of which we sent you a fact letter. We have had many calls from concerned citizens about this report, and we would remind you of the following facts on M113E:

Additional tests on NTMWD raw and finished water continue to show no detectable concentrations of MtBE. We will continue this testing on a quarterly basis.

MtBE is a gasoline additive that has been used since 1995 in air quality non-attainment areas. It promotes clean burning of gasoline and thus reduces ozone levels in the atmosphere.

MtBE has been shown to be carcinogenic to mice when inhaled in large concentrations. Further studies are underway, Therefore, EPA has "tentatively classified MtBE as a possible human carcinogen.

There is not currently a maximum contaminant level (MCL) established for MtBE in drinking water,

but the EPA recommends that concentrations not exceed 2040 ppb.

MtBE can reach high concentrations in groundwater because it can easily enter an aquifer through leaking underground fuel storage tanks at filling stations and does not volatilize (evaporate) underground,

MtBE can be introduced into a lake through storm water runoff from urban areas and gasoline spills from motor-watercraft; however, since it is volatile, it does not remain in surface water for more than a few days depending on temperature and wind effects, and therefore, is unlikely to reach measurable concentrations at the water plant intake.

Mr. Parks said that if the city manager or any of his citizens have further questions on the subject gasoline additive, they should contact Denise Hickey, Dolan McKnight or him Their address is North Texas Municipal Water District, 505 E. Brown St., P.O. Box 2408, Wylie, Texas 75098-2408 Their telephone number is 972-442-5405.

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NOTABLE NEIGHBORS

By Dianne Winter

As MARCH winds blow we see more sunshine, spring vacations, sports practices, and Oakridge neighbors. Neighbors are out and about working in the lawns and gardens and on the golf course. Many have been vacationing and others are planning vacations. **The Patties** will be off to San Francisco. The **Brunettes** have been to Belize. Ask the Brunettes about the Rainforest Jungle Lodge.

Several neighbors have been skiing on the slopes of various resorts. The **Jensens** have been to the Purgatory Resort. The entire **Dietz** family will be skiing in Colorado and we are happy to report that **Justin Byers** has recuperated from his motorcycle accident enough to ski with his brother, **Kent**, mother **Sue**, and father **Denis** in Park Cities, Utah.

Our bridge-playing friend, **Audrey Golden**, has been visiting friends back in Kansas City. We are sure that her humor made the visits fun for all.

Roberta Jones has been traveling to visit friends and family in New Jersey, Washington, D.C., and Long Island, New York. Ask her about the various homes she visited-from the oldest to the newest. She and **Dan** are also enjoying an Austin weekend get away.

Several of our teen drivers have demonstrated their

responsibility with their first solo distance trip. **Jonathan Traylor** and **Bobby Musseman** are two that we know of.

Ask **Betty Thomas** about her trip to Ireland with the Crochet Guild when she returns. Her plans are very interesting. **Brenda and Larry Britton** have enjoyed a visit from their daughter who lives in Paris, France. Ask **JoAnn and Ray Williams** about **Harry** and Obedience School.

Trudy Schmidt was honored with a surprise birthday dinner that was arranged by her daughter. About 20 friends including Trudy's mother and sister attended the party at Steak and Ale.

Special wishes:

Sweet Sixteen Birthday for **Miranda Musseman**

Best of Health to **Cheryl Lanning**

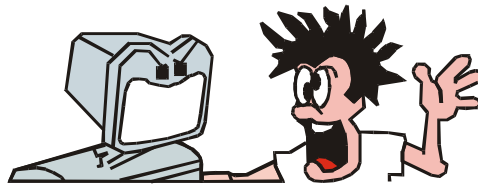
Best Thoughts for **Luanne Payne** as she travels to San Angelo during her mother's illness.

Thinking of You for **Katherine Payne** in her new home situation.

Congratulations to **Eric Foster** as he accepts a new job in Houston

Knowing what is going on in the neighborhood makes us all safer. Call me at 972-530-6210 or email me at ddwinter@home.com to report a notable neighbor activity

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Dear Oakridge Neighbors;

As you have probably heard, we are offering a \$1,000 reward towards the arrest and conviction for vandalism done in February to the greens on #7 and the chipping green by the clubhouse. Thank you for any information you may supply to us.

Call Joe Don Davis at 972-520-8008.



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