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# Oakridge News

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Vol. 12 No. 09

A Publication of the Oakridge Neighborhood Association March/April 2004

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## Observations by Mike Rose

Many positive things are happening in the City as well as our Oakridge community.

In the City we have a very aggressive 2004 Bond package and a necessary City Charter amendment election. This election is set for May 15. If you attended our March General Membership meeting you saw Mayor Day make a formal presentation covering these topics. Due to voter apathy both the Bond package and the Charter amendments are expected to pass. As part of Proposition 6 of the Bond package, there is a \$5 million Neighborhood Vitality program. These dollars will be allocated equally over the life of the 2004 Bond program – usually seven years. There are several homeowners or neighborhood associations poised to take advantage of these dollars. The challenge for the incoming ONA Board will be to think grandly what is needed for our community and complete the necessary forms to get in line to receive some of these local taxpayer funds. Many of our fellow citizens of Garland will not have the opportunity to do what we are able to do here in Oakridge. This is due in part to those who had the vision to form the ONA in 1992. We all owe these folks a great big thank you. Regardless of what some may think, outside of our brick walls the ONA is highly thought of and emulated. Not only for our organization but the many woman's groups that have formed and continue to be very active. We are a very informed and involved group. We all need to take pride in this fact.

As you read this newsletter, you will find a report from the ONA nominating committee. These folks worked hard and have completed their task on your behalf. This slate of 2004 – 2005 officers will be presented at our May 27, 2004, General Membership meeting. There may be nominations from the floor provided the people to be nominated have been contacted and have agreed to serve. The current board is completing the informative program to be presented at our May meeting. In addition there will be several door prizes awarded for those who attend.

Have you noticed the new homes that have been built on Oak Point? Oakridge is now built out, that is there are no empty lots on which a new house may be

constructed. While driving around our community, have you noticed all the Spring color in many home plant beds? It really looks fantastic as well as beautiful! The board will be working on up grading the "common areas" so as one enters the four main entrances one will take pride in living in Oakridge. It will take all of our efforts to maintain the beauty of these entrances.

During the month of April an invoice for ONA membership will go out to all 1,200 (approximately) homes in Oakridge. Please complete and return mail (with check) this form. It would be great if we exceed our current membership of 530 homes. It would be nice to give the new ONA Board an opportunity to concentrate on what it may do for us as opposed to how to get more homeowners to join ONA. Again it will take all of us to cause the membership to grow.

See you all at the May 27, 2004 meeting.

The ONA nominating committee submits this slate of officer nominees for 2004-2005. This list will be voted on at the May 27<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### Officers:

President: Nelson Prater  
Vice President: Keith Engler  
Secretary: Gwen Garrett Bledsoe  
Treasurer: Sherri Rutherford Franks

### Directors:

District 1: Sue Cole  
District 3: Mary Reed  
District 5: Don Eagle  
District 7: Scott Youzva

Respectfully submitted,  
Dianne Winter, Chairman  
Sherri Rutherford Franks  
Chuck Teske

## MEMBERSHIP

Jackie Griffin

May is membership month and your dues are due in by May 31<sup>st</sup>. We will be mailing out an invoice to every one in the middle of April. Please write you check for \$48 and make any corrections to the invoice (for the directory), then mail it in the enclosed envelope as soon as possible! This way you won't miss a newsletter and you will be in the directory – if you want to be listed!

It has been a great year and we want to make 2004-2005 year even better. Thanks so much for your participation.

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I'm Robert Taylor, and April is the month for garden enhancements. I've listed a few ideas for you to consider regarding your landscape.

- Fertilize all lawns and plantings now, and transform a weak lawn into something beautiful.
- Amend all gardens and flower beds with organics, and turn them into the soil at least 4-6 inches deep. You will reap a big harvest!
- Observe sprinkler system while in operation for deficiencies i.e., leaks, broken components, or poor coverage.
- Fruit trees are available; try a Granny Smith tree
- Trim groundcover to remove old growth and promote a uniform look for the new season - really works well for Asian Jasmine or Monkey grass.
- Design a new space - a rose garden or a courtyard for entertaining.
- Notice wet soggy areas; install a seep drain to dry out the soil. Your plants and your foundation will be better for it.

If I may be of service to you with any landscape needs, please call me at 972-907-8315. Email: gardendesigner@earthlink.net



### “LET SUE DO IT”

SO THE REFRIGERATOR REPAIRMAN IS  
COMING TODAY  
BUT YOU HAVE AN IMPORTANT  
MEETING?

### “LET SUE DO IT”

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### “LET SUE DO IT”

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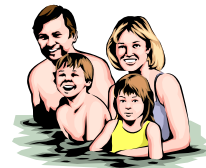
- PET SITTING OR HOUSE SITTING
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## March C.O.P. / Crime Watch Report

By Bill & Brenda Olive

During the month of March, we had eight criminal incidents within the Oakridge area.

- 3000 block of Big Oaks,  
Burglary-Habitation on 3/31
- 2800 block of Stoneridge,  
Burglary-Habitation on 3/30
- 2200 block of Fulton,  
Criminal Mischief on 3/21
- 2500 block of Richoak,  
Unauthorized Use of Motor Vehicle on 3/13
- 2714 block of Stoneridge,  
Burglary- Vehicle on 3/25
- 2800 block of Stoneridge,  
Burglary- Vehicle on 3/16
- 2500 block of Pepperidge,  
Burglary- Habitation (attempt) on 3/16
- 2700 block of Winding Oak, Burglary-Vehicle

We do not have an update on the Red Honda seen last month on Stoneridge because the investigation is still ongoing. Please continue to keep an eye out for this vehicle and call the G.P.D. if you spot it in Oakridge- Tag (C06LMP)

Open Garage Doors: There appears to be some misconceptions regarding the actions taken by the C.O.P. in regards to open garage doors. The following information is for everyone's clarification. We do not call the Garland Police Department just because a garage door is open. During the past 3 years, we have contacted the GPD less than 5 times to report suspicious open garage doors. Here are a few reasons why an open door might be deemed "suspicious" (all of these have occurred in Oakridge). 1. It is late at night and no one within the residence can be contacted (usually we attempt a phone contact at night). 2. The homeowner has asked the C.O.P. to watch out for the home while they are out of town. 3. The door has been open for several days and a neighbor is concerned. 4. There appears there may be suspicious activity in the garage. In all of the above, the police respond because they make the decision to do so based on the situation. Patrollers have been given specific directions by the police department as to when they should or should not contact residents and the method of contact.

In the May newsletter we will devote our col-

umn to methods for "hardening the target" (your property) against crime. The Garland Police Department is emphasizing this and is providing all Crime Watch and C.O.P groups with information to help our areas prevent crime.

Recently there were two incidents involving a gray or silver station wagon near the bridge on Diamond Oaks. Both incidents involved someone in the vehicle throwing articles at golf carts. Fortunately, neither incident resulted in physical injury. Anyone with any information regarding of these incidents should either notify the club or call the C.O.P. as we work with the country club in any way we can to prevent criminal activity on their property. We all know that Oakridge Country Club is an asset to our neighborhood. Obviously, it helps enhance our property values and all residents should be keenly aware of this fact. Anything that affects the Country Club indirectly affects all of us.

Anyone interested in participating in the C.O.P. should contact Bill Olive at 972-495-3402. G.P.D. has promised a training class as soon as there are enough participants. We would like to have several new patrollers in the next class. Class will be held on a Saturday at the new Police Station, maybe the class will take a tour of the new building-it's quite an experience!

---As a friendly reminder-STOP signs mean you have to come to a complete stop---don't just tap your brakes and roll through the intersection or you could wind up paying a traffic fine or worse, injuring someone else or yourself.

A speeder's excuse: A highway patrol officer chased a speeding vehicle for several miles with speeds exceeding 80 m.p.h. Finally, he succeeded in getting the driver to pull over. When he approached the car he asked the driver, "why didn't you pull over sooner? Didn't you see my lights and hear the siren?" The driver responded, "last year my wife ran off with a police officer, I was afraid it was him trying to bring her back!"

### CLASSIFIED ADS

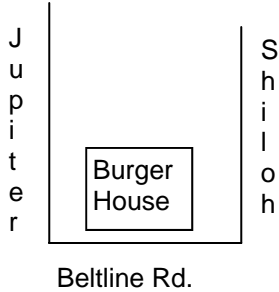
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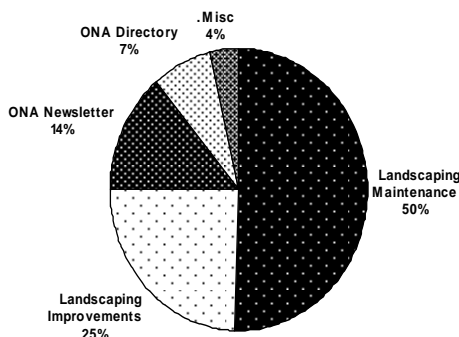
Coupons may not be combined with any other offer. This offer not valid on children's meals.

### Your ONA Dues at Work

The chart to below is a breakdown of your ONA dues at work. Over 75% of your dues goes to landscape improvements and maintenance of the common areas, then another 21% of the dues goes to communicate with the members. That seems like a pretty good use of your money.

There are many other benefits the ONA provides. We have one of the best COP groups in our city. They put in many hours to protect our neighborhood. We have volunteers that see that flowers, shrubs and sprinklers systems are maintained.

We get all this and more for the small amount of dues we pay. WHAT A DEAL!!



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## OAKRIDGE DAYTIMERS

Mary Musseman

Our March Coffee was enjoyed by 36 ladies and a Labrador retriever named Tempo. Our group had the pleasure of hearing Mary Jane Rummel speak about her experiences raising two dogs for Southeastern Guide Dogs, Inc. with her husband Rob. Many thanks to Chris Beyers for the use of her spacious home, and Kay Abrams, Gail Durbin and Mary Medina for the refreshments.

Our last **COFFEE** will actually be a lunch on **Tuesday, May 11<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m.** at the **Oakridge Country Club**. Lunch will be served at noon. We will be entertained by the **“The Survivors”**.

**E.T.C.** will gather on **Monday, April 19<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m.** at the home of **Barbe Brunette**, 2806 Big Oaks Drive, 972-530-4288 and **Monday, May 17<sup>th</sup>** for a McKinney outing.

**STITCH & CHAT** is on **Tuesday, April 20<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.** at the home of **Norene Murphy**, 2830 Stoneridge, 972-530-6669 and also on **Tuesday, May 18<sup>th</sup>**.

Our **BOOK CLUB** will meet at the home of **Betty Thomas**, 2706 Laurel Oaks Drive, on **April 16<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.** We will be discussing the book *The Secret Lives of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd. On **May 21<sup>st</sup>**, we'll meet at Jo Ann Williams, located at 2725 Hickory Bend. Our May meeting will be **Readers' Choice**.

Here are a few names and numbers in case you're interested:

**BRIDGE - Mary Pattie** 972-496-6486

**CANASTA - DAY - Barbe Brunette**  
972-530-4288

**CANASTA - NIGHT - Margaret Fowler**  
972-530-8585

Any questions regarding Daytimers should be directed to **Chris Beyers** 972-530-8292 or **Mary Musseman**, 972-414-1098. Daytimers is a social organization that requires residence in Oakridge, and \$12.00 annual dues. Daytimers promotes the Oakridge community and the Oakridge Neighborhood Association.

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Solid Waste & Recycling	972-205-3500
Code Compliance	972-485-6400
Tim George	972-485-6418
Animal Services	972-205-3570
Poison Center	1-800-764-7661
Street Light Repair	972-205-3483
Electricity Emergency	972-205-3000
Water & Sewer	972-205-3210
Councilman, Mark Monroe	972-495-8028
Off. Tony Blasengame, NPO	

Dear Friends and Neighbors of Oakridge:

This article is a continuation of last month's article about the upcoming May election. Last time, I gave you a brief description of the bond proposal. This will give some insight on the charter election.

First of all, the city charter is the guiding document for the council. Basically, it sets all of the rules. Every two years, a charter review committee decides what, if any, amendments need to be considered, to keep in compliance with state law. This year, there are 13 amendments. There are as follows:

- Add language to provide for the "sovereign and governmental immunity" of the city
- Two-year terms for the mayor and city council with a limitation of 3 years, beginning in 2004
- Special election in the event of a vacancy on the council occurring more than 120 days prior to a general city election
- Automatic resignation from office upon filing candidacy for another office
- Council may remove appointed officers upon an affirmative vote of five members without notice our cause
- Council may enter into an employment agreement with

- the City Manager not to exceed one year in length
- Require each bond proposition to state the purpose and the amount by project or category
- Provide that members of the Plan Commission shall serve a term of office ending when the Council member who appoints that person leave office
- Provide a regular city election each year on the first Saturday of may (unless state law requires otherwise)
- Provide a time period for filing nominating petitions, in agreement with state law
- Provide that the date for run-off elections shall be as authorized by state law
- Provide a time for the canvassing of election results in agreement with state law
- Provide that the provisions governing the electric rate mitigation fund shall include accrued interest

If you have any questions or concerns, or want my opinions on any of these, please let me know.

Mark Monroe  
Councilman, District 7  
972-495-8028  
council7@ci.garland.tx.us



*Reprinted from the Garland Homeowners Coalition Newsletter by City Manager Bill Dollar*

Over the past three months, we have all seen the initiation of several significant events in the life of the Garland community including the groundbreaking for the Firewheel Town Center, the proposed Harbor Point Project, and development of the 2004 Proposed Bond Program. These initial successes could not have been possible without a close and positive working relationship between our City Council and City staff. I am very proud of the professionalism exhibited by the City's staff as we have worked through each of these exciting projects as well as other important City issues, and sincerely hope that you share in my sentiment.

In December 2003, I presented to the City Council my Management Agenda, which outlines my goals and objectives for bringing positive change and improvement in the performance and responsiveness of the City organization. As I stated at that time, I believe that for us to continue making meaningful progress towards Council's vision for 2020, we must refocus on fundamentals within the organization, while simultaneously embracing innovation and technology. The Management Agenda was shaped by my strong beliefs that:

- (1) we must invest in, and make the most of, the knowledge, skills, and abilities of our people;
- (2) management at all levels of the organization must be held accountable for achieving results and for financial outcomes; and
- (3) we must do more to keep pace with rising citizen expectations

The Management Agenda is in no way designed to replace or de-emphasize the goals established by the Council, but rather it is designed to ensure that the City is a professional organization that is capable of successfully achieving those goals.

My Management Agenda is based on five primary areas of focus including the following:

- A. Maximize Employee Resources (Human Capital)
- B. Enhance Financial Accountability
- C. Ensure Responsiveness to Council and Citizens
- D. Strengthen Management Focus on Results
- E. Utilize Technology to Keep Pace with Rising Citizen Expectations

Since rolling out the Management Agenda to the organization in January 2004, substantial efforts have been made to begin addressing each of the focus areas. Since January 2004, I have had 54 one-on-one meetings with City department

(continued on page 7 - See Garland Homeowners)



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(continued from page 6 - Garland Homeowners)

heads specifically designed to gain a greater understanding of the issues they are facing and to emphasize my priorities and expectations. Each meeting had a prepared agenda that included, among others, the following items:

- (1) Review of Year-End Budget/Actual Results
- (2) Internal Audit Findings
- (3) Performance Measures - Past Three Years
- (4) Departmental Strategic Plans - Current or Future
- (5) Response to Council / Citizen Requests - Turn-around Times
- (6) Project Management - Status (Including IT Projects)

These meetings have been highly productive, and I believe them to be absolutely essential in setting the direction and priorities for the organization.

There are numerous efforts underway within the organization that I believe will ultimately result in a more productive, financially efficient, and responsive City government. For this initial phase of the Manage-

ment Agenda, I have placed a high priority on the Human Resources, Budget and Research, and MIS Departments. Because they have significant impact throughout the entire organization, I believe that enhancements in these three areas will have exponential benefits.

The Human Resources studies, the Budget process review and the MIS Strategic Plan, along with other efforts, will provide specific objectives to help focus the organization towards the achievement of the five focus areas outlined in the Management Agenda. Once developed, we will also incorporate performance indicators and measures that will allow us to judge and monitor our progress. In addition, I believe that the Development Services study will have similar results both internally for the organization and externally for our customers.

I am very optimistic about the many positive things happening both in the Garland community and within the City organization and feel very privileged to be the City Manager during this exciting time in Garland's history.



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