

ONA holds drawing for two Garland Civic Theatre tickets

**By Keith Engler
ONA President**

The Garland Civic Theatre (GCT) generously donated a pair of tickets to the Oakridge Neighborhood Association (ONA). The ONA Board held a drawing for the tickets on November 17, and the lucky winners were Mark and Betty Edwards of Stoneridge Drive. The drawing consisted of all the members of the ONA. When I called Betty, she said, "I am so excited; I never win anything!"

That made me think that there is

hope for me after all, because I never win anything, either.

Mark and Betty have their choice of three upcoming plays:

- *The Lion In Winter* by James Goldman, Nov. 17 to Dec. 10
- *The Philadelphia Story* by Phillip Barry, Jan. 26 to Feb. 18
- *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller, March 9 to April 1

Karen and I delivered the certificates for the tickets to Mark and Betty on Nov. 19, which turned into a very nice

afternoon visit — which means I did win something after all!

Mark and Betty will most likely attend *The Philadelphia Story*.

Thank you GCT and congratulations to Mark and Betty Edwards!

On behalf of the ONA board, we wish you all a very joyous holiday and a happy new year.

If you are not familiar with the Garland Civic Theatre, you are missing out on some great local entertainment. The Theatre is located just off of the square in downtown Garland.

City council has big plans for Garland's downtown district

Courtesy of The Garland City Press

Garland's downtown district is on the brink of one of the most active and exciting periods in its rich history. At the end of September, the Mayor hosted his second downtown visioning conference. The Northside Downtown Garland II Conference gave downtown area property owners and business operators an overview of redevelopment projects already in the works as well as an opportunity to share ideas about future growth and revitalization projects.

The City of Garland is working with a prominent urban planning and design consulting firm to prepare a development strategy for downtown. The RTKL team, led by Paris Rutherford, is helping the city identify several catalyst projects which will jumpstart the down-

town redevelopment engine.

Two such catalysts are already on the boards. The first is the Dallas County Community College's new campus, to be located on Glenbrook Drive at Walnut Street. Construction is expected to begin in the next few months, with a targeted opening for fall 2007.

That project is expected to inspire other, spin-off developments.

The second catalyst project involves the city's purchase of two parcels from Dallas County: the current county sub-courthouse on Fifth and Austin streets, and the county tax office on Walnut Street near Glenbrook Drive. Those locations will be utilized for transit-oriented development projects, incorporating a mixture of residential, retail, and



An artist's rendering of the RTKL concept.

service uses developed according to a more urban, pedestrian-friendly design.

Meanwhile, Dallas County has purchased the retail building and parking lot on Garland Avenue between Main and State streets. The County plans to renovate the structure and consolidate their satellite service operations at that location.

See Renovation on page 2

I·N·S·I·D·E *this issue*

Ever heard of two-spotted spider mites? Didn't think so. That's all the more reason to read Kimberly Engler's latest article. **Page 2**

The Daytimers have gotten the word about arts in Garland, thanks to a visit from a local storyteller. Find out what they heard. **Page 3**

Nothing says Texas like feel-good home cooking, even if it does raise your cholesterol. If you agree, there's a place right across the street that wants your business. Everybody's going. (Cholesterol medicine not included.) **Page 4**

Looking for a new recipe for the holiday season? How about a dessert? You and your loved ones might enjoy a pumpkin cake with cream cheese frosting. Try it out. **Page 4**

Did you know the holiday season is full of hazards for household pets? You might be surprised. Now at least you'll be prepared. **Page 6**

With all your holiday to-dos this month, don't forget about the garden and the plants. Bruce Miller has a list of gardening don't-dos for you. **Page 7**

For these and past *Oakridge News* articles, please visit the ONA Web site at www.oakridgena.com.

Gardeners: beware of two-spotted spider mites

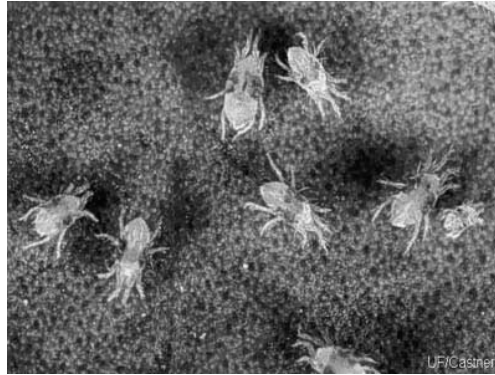
**By Kimberly Engler
Program Specialist, Urban IPM
Texas A&M University**

The two-spotted spider mite is a common pest of many landscapes and potted plants. Adult two-spotted spider mites are small, arachnids with dark spots on each side of their bodies. They feed on the phloem on the underside of foliage, causing a speckled appearance. The foliage will turn yellow and their feeding may cause the leaves to drop. Heavy infestations can even cause dehydration and death to the plant.

When drought conditions exist, spider mites tend to attack stressed plants. The plant nutrients allow these mites to multiply rapidly. New generations will continue to develop until cool weather occurs, leading to a reduction of activity.

Some control options:

Biological control: There are many predators of the two-spotted spider mite that can be introduced or There are many predators of the two-spotted spider mite that can be introduced or conserved, such as the minute pirate bug, big-eyed bug, green lacewing, and



Two-Spotted Spider Mites
Photo courtesy of University of Florida

a variety of predatory mites such as *Galendromus occidentalis*, *Phytoseiulus persimilis*, and *Neoseiulus californicus*. Some predatory mites require lots of humidity, so are more effective indoors.

Chemical Control: Some options include insecticidal soaps for use in the summer, dormant oils for use in the fall to spring to kill eggs and dormant adults. Some other options include bifenthrin, cypermethrin, or a combination of imidacloprid and bifenthrin. A thorough, repeat application of insecticides to the underside of the foliage is needed to gain control.

Renovation of downtown Garland coming

continued from page 1

The Downtown Redevelopment Implementation Plan proposed by the RTKL team focuses on strengthening the linkages between the downtown core and individual elements that make up downtown's strongest assets.

The plan's recommendations for strengthening the core include:

- renovating the square to strengthen it as downtown's focal point
- strengthening the historic buildings
- creating an active, urban streetscape
- renovating and re-positioning municipal buildings to create a stronger and more active street presence
- creating a mixed-use cultural arts district
- adding residential infill development
- establishing pocket parks and landscape features to provide amenity and interim destinations throughout downtown.



City leaders and officials from the Dallas County Community College District unveil plans for a Garland-based satellite campus to Eastfield College.

Both photos are courtesy of the Garland City Press. The article comes from the October edition of the Press, which can be read online via the City's Web site: www.ci.garland.tx.us.



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The ONA board meets the third Thursday of each month to conduct the business of the ONA.

It also sets the dates for the general membership meetings, which take place at least three times each term, which runs from June until the following May.

The next general meeting is scheduled for March 2006.

Daytimers get word of arts activity in Garland

by Dianne Winter
 Oakridge Daytimers

The Daytimers gathered at the home of Sally Weiss to enjoy the fellowship of friends.

After President Suzanne Snow called the group together, Sally entertained the group with a humorous poem, "When I'm an Old Lady and Live With My Kids," and thanked hostesses Robbie Lang, Julie Spears, Dana Hopkins, Sarah Traylor, and Dianne Winter.

Announcements included:

The December meeting will be a special one at the Oakridge Country Club for lunch on Tuesday, December 13. The cost is \$10, with the room fee being paid by the Daytimers.

JoAnn Williams, treasurer, efficiently collected the payment.

The beautiful, creative, crocheted snowflakes that Norene Murphy makes to share with us every year will decorate the tables at the Christmas celebration.

The cookie exchange will take place at the Valentine Tea in February.

Cecile De Bossier, vice president, announced the need for one more location for a spring meeting, and June Parks graciously offered to entertain the Daytimers in her home.

The Late Bloomers and ETC trip to the Farmers Market had to be cancelled due to bad weather. This group has the spirit of adventure, for they will venture out again as they travel to Old City Park

to view the festive holiday decorations and demonstrations. They will have lunch together there also.

The Book Club met on November 28 at the home of Sharon Carlton and vigorously discussed the Mary Higgins Clark book *Nighttime Is My Time*. During the discussion, led by JoAnn Williams, all the members agreed that they enjoyed the mystery of this book. The next meeting will be held at the home of Audrey King on December 16.

Audrey King recognized those who had birthdays in November and told of concerns for members who are ill.

Business having been completed, Suzanne introduced the guest speaker, Jean Holmes. Jean is a member of Talespinners, a Garland organization of storytellers. She is on the Garland Civic Theatre Board and has performed in several of their plays. Jean also has many traveling experiences bird watching in exotic locations. She invited the Daytimers to join the Garland Book Club and encouraged the members to support the Garland Arts activities.

The entertaining story that she related was an excerpt from "Going to God's Country" by Mary Miller. The tale described prairie life in the late 1800s, and Jean performed it admirably. The members thanked Jean for not only the entertainment but also for her dedication to the arts of Garland.

For more information, call Suzanne Snow at 972-414-3747.

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Comments: Down-home comfort food, guaranteed to raise your cholesterol level but make you feel good. Chicken-fried steak is a specialty and offered breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Breakfast at the Goldmine is my personal favorite and draws a large crowd on the weekends. They have the best pancakes (short stack for \$2.95) in town; I have no idea what makes them better. If you order the ham steak breakfast, you had better be hungry; it could feed two. Unfortunately, biscuits and gravy, as elsewhere in Texas, leave something to be desired for those raised in the Midwest. Carry-out is available and can be picked up at a drive through window. I am sure you will find your dining experience both pleasurable and inexpensive. What's for dinner, Grandpa?!

From the ONA Recipe Box

1. Pumpkin Cake with Cream-Cheese Frosting

For the cake:

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 2 tsp. cinnamon
- ½ tsp. salt
- 4 eggs
- 2 cups, granulated sugar
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 16-ounce can of Libby's pumpkin

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

In a medium bowl, combine flour, baking powder, soda, cinnamon, and salt. Set aside.

In a larger mixing bowl, beat eggs.

Add sugar, oil, and pumpkin; mix thoroughly. Combine with dry ingredients.

Spread batter into a greased sheet cake pan which has been floured. Bake 30 to 40 minutes. Test with toothpick for doneness.

Cool, frost, and sprinkle with nuts.

For the frosting:

In a small bowl, beat ½ cup butter and one 8-ounce package of cream cheese (set out to soften) until smooth.

Beat in: 1 pound powdered sugar and 2 tsp. of vanilla.

Spread on cake after it cools. Sprinkle with chopped nuts.

2. Dainty Little Tea Cookies (good for holidays)

About three hours before serving, or up to one week ahead:

- 1 cup of all-purpose flour
- ½ cup margarine or butter (1 stick), soft
- ¼ cup sugar
- ¼ teaspoon vanilla extract
- ⅛ teaspoon salt

1. In large bowl, with mixer at low speed, beat flour, margarine, sugar, vanilla, and salt until well blended.

2. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. On

lightly floured surface with floured hands, shape dough into 1½" by ½" pieces, each using about 1 tsp. of dough. Place cookies on ungreased large cookie sheets. With side of fork, mark each cookies crosswise several times.

3. Bake cookies 10 to 15 minutes until lightly golden.

4. Cool cookies five minutes on cookie sheet; then, with metal spatula, gently remove cookies to wire racks to cool. Makes about 4 dozen cookies.

Recipe courtesy of Good Housekeeping



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NO JOB IS TOO SMALL

City of Garland hopes to encourage development by simplifying process

Courtesy of *The Garland City Press*

Municipalities and counties across Texas work to achieve a successful balancing act between regulating development and simplifying the development process. The success or failure of that balancing act can shape a city's future.

The City of Garland recognizes the importance of encouraging economic development projects and reducing approval time developers often expect along the way. In 2004, the City partnered with the Thomas Group to help build the bridge between regulation and facilitation.

"The City of Garland wants to better serve both our citizens and the development community," said Garland Deputy City Manager Martin Glenn at the beginning of the project. "The Thomas Group will help us evaluate our processes related to development. We will be able to develop more efficient methods for benefit of the City and our business partners."

During the evaluation process, developers asked for a shorter time cycle for approvals, a single point of contact to help walk them through the various permits needed and departments involved in the development process, and other methods of reducing the roadblocks that often arise. The City of Garland has answered those needs and

more.

"We've created a Development Guide that gives an overview of the development process," says Mr. Glenn. "We've also laid out a procedure which establishes expectations and a process path up front and provides a case manager to each project."

However, developers must be accountable for meeting design and construction standards and following proper procedure. Part of that procedure includes Pre-Construction Meetings to review the project status before site or building construction gets underway.

The city and developers are already seeing the benefits of the improved process. City staff and the development community have both reported that the changes have had a positive impact, particularly the Pre-Submittal Meetings. One developer told city officials that his company has projects underway in several different cities, and has found Garland's new process the easiest to navigate.

New Developments in Town

Fuddruckers and Sleep Experts are coming to the old Luby's restaurant on SH 190 in front of Home Depot and Kohl's. The 9,000 sq. ft. property was purchased from Luby's and is currently under renovation for the two stores.

Currently under construction, Harbor



Just one example of development happening in Garland.

Photograph courtesy of Garland City Press

Point is a 28-acre retail and entertainment development on the western shore of Lake Ray Hubbard in Garland, featuring a 120,000-sq. ft. BassPro Shop Outdoor World with 27 courtesy docks, six on-the-water restaurants, hotel, 16,000 sq. ft. of small shop retail and four retail pad sites.

Quick Trip is under construction on its first Garland store. The 10,000-sq. ft. convenience store and fueling station will be on Centerville and Glenbrook.

Bajio Grill has purchased the old Luby's restaurant on Broadway and Centerville. Bajio is a franchise Mexican fast-casual restaurant from Utah. They currently have a new location open in Rowlett in the Tom Thumb Shopping Center on Hwy. 66 and Dalrock. The Web site is www.bajio grill.com.

For more information on development, please visit www.ci.garland.tx.us.

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Holidays can be hazardous time for pets with unaware owners

From the British Columbia Veterinary Medical Association

The B.C. Veterinary Medical Association offers these helpful tips to ensure pet safety during the holidays.

Treats and food: Holiday treats are meant for people, not pets. Fatty foods and sugary confections can rapidly become toxic to an animal unaccustomed to them. Of course, they also carry empty calories that can cause unhealthy weight gain.

Chocolate is probably the human food that is the most dangerous for animals; even one chocolate truffle could have serious consequences for a small pet. The theobromine in chocolate can cause vomiting, diarrhoea, hyperactivity, irregular heartbeat, seizures, and, in some cases, death. Never leave gifts of chocolate under the tree, in stockings or on tables easily accessible to pets.

Live trees and plants: Tree needles can choke pets if ingested. Live plants — in particular, mistletoe and holly — are poisonous and can cause serious illness to pets (also to small children). Keep plants out of their reach at all times.

Decorations and lights: Decorations, tinsel, candles and electrical wires can all become serious hazards if

eaten, stepped on or chewed. Hang all decorations high up and secure them tightly using twine — not wire hooks that can fall off and become a hazard themselves. Shake the decorated tree vigorously to ensure it is pet-proof.

Tape all electrical wires to the floor or wall to avoid chewing or tripping. Like small children, pets can be attracted to flickering candles and fireplaces. Do not leave pets alone with live flames.

Frantic holiday, frantic pet: The hustle and bustle of the holidays, unusual feeding and sleeping patterns, visitors, new noises, strong smells and other distractions can stress pets. Animals trying to cope may behave strangely and bite or growl without apparent provocation. This is their way of saying, "I'm tired or frightened."

Maintain the pets' standard routine of exercise, quiet time, playtime and regular food. If pets are shy or stressed, don't force them to be part of festivities that will only add to their discomfort.

Leaving pets alone for longer-than-normal time, or in an unfamiliar place, can also cause undue stress. If you are going to be away for some time, arrange for a pet sitter.

If your holiday plans will take you away for several days, consider placing your pet in a reputable boarding kennel that you have inspected earlier.

Cold weather and poisons: Winter weather can be a hazard for pets. Make sure pets are dry, protected and in a safe environment. Just as temperature is an important consideration of pet health in summer, cold winters can prove equally dangerous. A fur coat is not enough to protect house pets from frostbite and hypothermia.

Other cold-weather hazards include anti-freeze and road salt. Salt and chemicals can burn a pet's paws. Halite, the chemical salt that melts ice, is also poisonous. Be sure to wipe paws and noses with a damp cloth when returning indoors from a winter walk on salted streets.

Anti-freeze is highly toxic. Its sweet taste appeals to dogs and cats but doses as small as a teaspoon can kill an animal. Spilled anti-freeze should be cleaned from driveways to avoid even the smallest puddles that pets could lick.

Think twice before giving a pet as a present: While children often beg for a puppy or kitten at Christmas, the decision to bring a pet into the family should be made after serious consideration. A pet is a living creature that will look to you for its total health and welfare. If you are not able to make that complete commitment, wait.

For the full article and other information, please visit www.bcvma.org.



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Gardeners: While tackling your list of to-dos, don't forget your don't-dos

By Bruce Miller
www.brucemillernursery.com

The month of December has most people scurrying about with a long list of got-to-dos. Probably the last thing on anyone's mind is working in the garden. Fortunately, the list of gardening to-dos for this month is more like a list of don't-dos.

If you have been keeping up with your gardening tasks for the last few months, you should be able to take it pretty easy this month. (At least in the garden.) There are a few things to keep an eye on, and a few optional things you can do in the garden. Your biggest concern will probably be tending to your house plants.

House plants

- If you potted some bulbs, such as hyacinths, daffodils, or tulips, last September for winter forcing, keep an eye on them. Make sure they remain moist and in the dark until they have established their root systems. It is possible that they have already filled their containers with roots and that the new top growth has begun. If so, bring them into the house and set them in a cool room with indirect light. After a week or so, move them into bright light, and watch them go to town!
- Check on any corms and tubers which you dug up and stored this fall. Remove and discard any which show signs of disease or rot.

Shrubs and trees

- Winter rains tend to make you forget about watering your garden. However, plants and shrubs which are growing

beneath large evergreens or under the eaves of the house may be bone dry by this time. Lack of water in the cold winter months can be fatal to many of these plants. A quick check will let you know if you need to do a little winter watering.

- If there is a sudden drop in the temperature, provide extra protection for your more tender flowering plants like rhododendrons, camellias, azaleas, and daphne. You can provide temporary, emergency protection by driving in three or four stakes around the plant, and then simply covering the plant with some type of cloth, like bur-lap, a sheet, or an old blanket. Don't let this material come into direct contact with the leaves of the plant. Remove the cover completely as soon as the weather moderates.
- December is a good month to take cuttings of rhododendrons, azaleas, and other evergreen shrubs. The cutting should be taken from new tip growth and kept in bright light at about 70 degrees.

House plants, continued

- Glossy-leaved house plants such as philodendrons, rubber plants, and palms should be sponged off periodically to allow them to breathe. Plants which have fuzzy, textured, or other non-glossy leaves should be set in the sink and sprayed gently with room temperature water until the dust is cleaned away. Be sure that the foliage is allowed to dry completely.
- Provide your house plants with extra humidity by grouping plants together, or by setting the pots on leak-proof trays filled with moistened pebbles.
- If you successfully kept last year's

plants alive, and have been keeping them in 14 hours of darkness since September, your Christmas cactus should be okay to bring back into the living room by December 1.

With the proper care, these Christmas plants will remain beautiful for many weeks.

- They prefer to be kept on the cool side, 65 to 70 degrees during the day and 55 to 60 at night.
- Keep them in bright, natural light whenever possible.
- Keep them away from heat sources.
- Keep them out of drafts.
- Be sure to water them when they become dry.
- Never allow them to stand in water for more than an hour.

Odds and ends

Take care of our feathered friends! Keep your bird feeder filled, especially when there is snow on the ground. Don't let your hose freeze and burst. Stretch it out with both ends open to allow the water to drain completely. Coil it up and put it away.

Make sure your outdoor faucets are covered to protect them from freezing.

As you go through your gift lists, think gardening. Almost any gardener would be happy to get a new garden book, magazine, or some small garden trinket or tool! Perhaps they'd enjoy a new bird house or feeder?

Bruce Miller writes a monthly column full of gardening tips for his Web site, www.brucemillernursery.com.

For more information, please visit that site or call 972-238-0204.



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UPCOMING EVENTS

- December 20. Daytimers Stitch and Chat
- December 21. Daytimers Morning Bridge Club
- January 5 Oakridge Women's Club
- January 6 Deadline for *Oakridge News* Articles
- January 7 Downtown Garland First Saturday Trade Days

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