



# Oakridge News

ONA GENERAL  
MEMBERSHIP MEETING  
Oakridge Country Club  
Thursday, March 1 @ 6:30 p.m.

Vol. 15, No. 9

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www.oakridgena.com

February 2007

## ONA has full agenda for next month's general membership meeting

By Mike Dollar  
ONA President

I want to thank those of you who provided feedback on our priorities for the City Vitality Program. This puts us another step closer to new entrances and perimeter landscaping and a consistent streetlight design, which we have been saving and planning for these past two years. The creation of a work plan is the next milestone in this program. The work plan document will designate responsibilities and timelines. I hope to give an update at our next general membership meeting in March.

Our March meeting will have a full agenda. We will also be voting on a

nominating committee at that time. This team will nominate volunteers for open positions on the 2007-08 ONA Board. Those nominated will then be voted onto the board at our General Membership meeting in June. If you have a desire to help the neighborhood, then please think about serving in some capacity on the ONA Board of Directors.

Finally, we plan to invite Garland city council and mayoral candidates to speak and answer audience questions. The ONA does not endorse any political candidate, but we encourage all Oakridge residents to attend and be informed. Please invite your neighbors to hear the candidates discuss issues important to the future of our homes,

neighborhood, and city. Look for signage at the entrances that will announce this meeting on the first Thursday in March.

The ONA has already begun looking toward spring and summer. Before long it will be time for our annual picnic, and we should have a plan in place to begin beautifying the neighborhood. I'd also like to mention that Tony Battaglia is organizing a fantastic golf outing at the Oakridge Country Club for our soldiers who've served in Iraq. Give him a call if you'd like to participate.

I will see you and your guests at the ONA general membership meeting next month. 2007 should be a great year for Oakridge!

### I·N·S·I·D·E *this issue*

The end-of-year crime reports are in for 2006, and they bring good news. Also, learn how to keep your mail safe from identity thieves. **Page 2**

The Daytimers have several activities in planning, including a baby photo contest and a talent contest. Also, will there be a Christmas Cookie Exchange in 2007? **Page 3**

Looking for a good form of exercise, one that will work out your mind and body and still be relaxing? The AARP thinks gardening is one of the best options out there. **Page 4**

Big changes are ahead for downtown Garland. A college campus, residential units, redevelopment, and a new library are all in the works. **Page 5**

Whatever you do in your garden, don't rush in planting the warm-season annuals. A late frost would ruin all your hard work. Also, have you considered planting roses this year? **Page 6**

Bugs really can be anywhere, even inside your books. And the cold, wet weather can bring in pesky springtails. Keep your house bug-free. **Page 7**

Mark your calendars! The next ONA General Membership Meeting will be on March 1 at 6:30 p.m. at the Oakridge Country Club.

## Golf classic planned to support injured troops

By Tony Battaglia  
ONA District 5 Director

Oakridge Country Club members are answering the question "How can we support our troops?" by hosting a golf tournament for our military personnel and civilians. The Saturday, May 5 event at the Oakridge Country Club is being sponsored by Garland Power & Light (GP&L) and has a goal of raising \$30,000 to provide phone cards for wounded military personnel and to support the Fisher House Foundation.

The Fisher House is a home away from home for the families of seriously ill or injured military personnel. Currently, 34 homes have been built, with four more in the planning and design phase, including the one to be located at the North Texas VA Health Care System in Dallas. In 2005, Fisher House served 8,000 families for an average cost of \$10 per day, saving families over \$7 million in lodging cost. The homes average 90 percent occupancy. Aren't these numbers worthy of our support?

Even if you aren't a golfer, there are numerous opportunities to participate at many different levels. Club members need individuals and businesses that would like to play, sponsor a service



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**Oakridge Country Club will host the classic on Saturday, May 5.**

person to play in the tournament, or become a sponsor at the Gold, Silver, or Bronze Ring level. Advertising for each sponsor will be either on the course or in the club to promote and honor our sponsors.

The tournament needs 100 players in order to reach our fundraising goals. At this time, we just need a letter of commitment from potential sponsors. Please contact Tony Battaglia at 972-496-9637 or e-mail him at [tonybattaglia@tx.rr.com](mailto:tonybattaglia@tx.rr.com) with any questions. Better yet, sign up as a sponsor of this event.

Checks should be made payable to "VFW-Our Heroes/Golf" and sent to:

Tony Battaglia  
2830 Laurel Oaks Drive  
Garland, TX 75044

# 2006 crime reports indicate positive trends

**By Eric Morris and Carol Garrison  
ONA Crime Prevention & Safety**

Although the new year has begun, CPS has the end-of-year report on crime in Garland for 2006. Oakridge ended the year on a great note — only three criminal incidents for the month of December. One incident was a vehicular burglary, and the other two were theft or fraud of mail. Mail tampering and identity theft should be of great concern to all of us, so please report any suspicious activity around our mail boxes to the police *and* to the postal inspector's office at 817-359-2700.

The Citizens on Patrol are placing warning letters in the mailboxes of neighbors who routinely have outgoing mail in their mailboxes. Outgoing mail (particularly payments by check or credit card) from your mailbox is the most vulnerable to theft. Devious people will either use the actual checks and wash off the names of intended

recipients, or, even worse, order more checks since they now have the routing number, account number, and your signature.

Avoid using your mailbox to mail payments, and make sure to not have new checks sent to your mailbox. Make sure you pick up your mail as soon as you can, and remind your neighbor to pick up mail for you when you are on vacation. If anyone would like to have a copy of the letter being distributed by the COP, please call 972-495-3402.

Back to good news: Overall, crime was down in Garland for 2006 by 4.5 percent compared to 2005. Property crime was down 3.9 percent, and violent crime was reduced by 12 percent. Despite the fact that many Garland residents are still leaving belongings in cars, motor vehicle theft was down 4.4 percent. Let's make a dedicated effort to make 2007 even safer for all of us to enjoy.

# Daytimers plan baby photo, talent contests

**By Christine Beyers  
Oakridge Daytimers**

The Oakridge Daytimers gathered for the first monthly Coffee of 2007 on Tuesday, Jan. 9 at the lovely home of Betty Prickett. Upon entering Betty's home, we encountered the wonderful aroma of the food prepared by our January food hostesses, Doris Autrey, Nell Burt, JoAnn Dietz, Frances Morgan, and Lucy Brock. As always, our gathering was filled with lively conversation, laughter, and delicious refreshments, but then it was time to get to the business portion of our meeting.

Once again, President Sally Weiss gave a listing of some of the important (okay, perhaps just interesting) days in January, such as Jan. 14, which is National Dress Up Your Pet Day and National Hugging Day on Jan. 21. We briefly discussed the Christmas Cookie Exchange, which was held this past December, and I say briefly because it took just moments and a quick show of hands to decide that next year we would go out to lunch instead of having a Christmas Cookie Exchange.

Vice President Cecile LaBossiere gave a brief update on the recent

Neighborhood Revitalization meeting with the City of Garland Officials and residents of Oakridge, providing hand-outs listing the strengths and challenges identified at the meeting. Increasing general membership in the ONA is an ongoing effort, and Cecile solicited the help of the Daytimers to encourage participation of neighbors who perhaps are not yet members.

Mary Jensen explained the new, abbreviated, three-month Secret Pal program. Forms were passed out and names drawn by those who will participate. The January door prize, an assortment of bath and body products, was won by Gladys McGhee, who celebrated her 99<sup>th</sup> birthday in December.

At the February meeting, we will have a baby photo contest. Toothless smiles and bald, little heads of years ago are now our beautiful Daytimers. Whoever matches the most baby pictures with the current person will win a prize. On the agenda for a future meeting, a talent contest! Come on. Don't be shy. You have plenty of time to brush up on your special talent so you can share and entertain us.

For more information on the Daytimers, please visit [oakridgena.com](http://oakridgena.com).

## About the ONA

*Oakridge News* is a publication of the Oakridge Neighborhood Association.

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# Dig into gardening for rewarding, relaxing, mind-and-body workout

## Working Out From www.aarp.org

Looking for a new mind-body exercise? It's right in your own backyard.

Gardening not only relaxes your mind, it gives your body a pretty good workout, too. Hauling and spreading mulch and soil, moving plants and shrubs, and raking and digging will make you break a sweat and strengthen your muscles and bones at the same time. Reaching or bending to weed or plant is great for increasing your flexibility.

And who needs a treadmill when you've got a lawn mower (that's a push mower, of course)? Not only can you burn some serious calories, you'll get some fresh air and have a great-looking yard when you're done. And you won't have to go to the gym!

Each spring, novice and seasoned gardeners alike are lured outdoors by the promise of colorful blooms, carpets of lush green grass, sunshine, and fresh air. Studies show that being in nature – even looking at nature pictures – has a soothing effect on the mind and body, relieving stress and lowering blood pressure, according to Karin Fleming, a registered horticultural therapist.

**Reaping what you sow.** Gardening has other advantages, too. Growing your own produce yields fresh fruit and vegetables for your summer meals. Planting a cutting garden supplies you with fresh-cut flowers to adorn your

table. A little bit of sunshine brightens your spirits and helps you soak up healthy Vitamin D the natural way.

For people who have been dependent on others, gardening allows them to become nurturers, says Fleming, who helps people recovering from strokes, brain injuries, and orthopedic injuries return to gardening: "It gives them a sense of purpose."

Gardening also provides a social outlet. You can share gardening tips with neighbors when your planting is done. Or join a community gardening club. Perhaps you'd like to take a class in horticulture or master gardening at a local nursery, community college, or university. You also could volunteer to mow grass or trim trees for someone who needs help.

If you live in an apartment or don't have space for a home garden, help friends tend their gardens or find a community garden. Some community gardens have individual plots while others involve everyone in planting and harvesting the entire garden. Rooftop gardens also are a popular hangout for nature-starved urban dwellers.

So why not do your mind and body some good? Grab the gardening gloves and head for the great outdoors!

**Safety Tips:** While gardening isn't considered a high-risk activity, there are safety issues. Since gardening involves physical activity, you want to be careful not to hurt yourself or make yourself too sore to do it again.

**Respect the weather.** While a little bit of sun can be healthy, wear sunscreen and protective clothing if you're going to spend more than just a few minutes outdoors. Choose a good sunscreen (at least SPF 15) that protects against both UVA and UVB rays. Wear a light-colored and light-weight, long-sleeved shirt and a wide-brimmed hat that will keep sun off your face, ears, and neck.

Remember that you can even get sunburned on a cloudy day. Also have a cold bottle of water or lemonade handy to keep you hydrated. Head in-doors if you see lightning.

**Dress to protect.** Besides protecting yourself from the sun, also guard against potential backyard hazards. For instance, gardening gloves and long pants protect your hands and legs from bug bites, thorns, scratches, and poison ivy. Skid-free shoes keep you from slipping in mud or water. And goggles protect your eyes from lawn chemicals or twigs, rocks, and other flying debris when you're using gardening equipment.

**Prepare your body for physical activity.** Warm up your body the same way you would before any other exercise. March in place for a few minutes or take a couple of turns around the yard. Then stretch your back, arms, legs and neck before you dig in. Stretch out your muscles when you're done gardening, too, especially your back, legs, and shoulders.

Philip Hanas  
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# Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program offered again in Garland

From *The Garland City Press*

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program will again be available at the City of Garland Carver Center, 232 Carver Drive. The volunteer income tax preparation program is a joint partnership between the City of Garland, The Dallas Urban League and the Internal Revenue Service. Tax volunteers from the Garland area will provide this free service every Saturday from Feb. 3 to April 14, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

“The VITA program reaches out to people whose incomes are \$38,000 or less,” said Nora Campos, senior tax specialist with the Internal Revenue Service. “Our volunteers are at the heart of this program.”

Volunteers prepare basic Form 1040 tax returns, including Schedule A for itemized deductions and claims for the Earned Income Tax Credit as well as other tax credits. Volunteers do not prepare business or complex returns.

People must have photo identification and Social Security cards (or Individual Taxpayer Identification Numbers) for themselves, spouses, and dependents. They should also bring this year’s tax package (if available), wage and earnings statements (Forms W-2), any

interest and dividend statements (Forms 1099), a copy of last year’s return, and any other information concerning their income and expenses for 2006.

For joint electronically filed returns, both spouses must be present to sign the required forms. Electronic filing provides the highest degree of speed, accuracy, and security in filing tax returns.

## Getting the Credit You’ve Earned

If you work hard but don’t earn a high income, you may qualify for an important tax break, the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). It could you would pay less tax, no tax, or even get a refund! Yet some people who are eligible for the EITC fail to claim it because they may not have to file a tax return or are just unsure of the qualifications. The credit ranges from a few dollars to as much as \$4,536, depending on individual circumstances.

EITC is based on the amount of income earned and the number of qualifying children you may have. A qualifying child can be a son or daughter, adopted child, grandchild, or stepchild who lives with you in the United States for more than half the year and who meets certain age requirements. To qualify, you must’ve earned income



**Incomes taxes can be very confusing, but VITA volunteers want to help.**

from wages or self-employment. The income limits are:

- \$12,120 (\$14,120 if married filing jointly), with no qualifying child, and you were at least age 25, but under 65 at the end of 2006
- \$32,001 (\$34,001) if married filing jointly) with one qualifying child
- \$36,348 (\$38,348 if married filing jointly) with more than one qualifying child

For more specific guidelines, check IRS Publication 596, Earned Income Credit, which includes all the requirements and instructions on how to claim the EITC. To receive a copy in English or Spanish, call 1-800-829-3676 or visit [www.irs.gov/eitc](http://www.irs.gov/eitc) and click on the EITC Assistant.

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**NO JOB IS TOO SMALL**

## Downtown area of Garland nearing beginning of redevelopment

### From *The Garland City Press*

Garland's historic downtown district is on the brink of one of the most active and exciting periods in its rich history. In November 2006, the Garland City Council passed a resolution establishing a vision and philosophy for ongoing development of the downtown district. The Garland City Council's vision for Downtown Garland includes a vital, urban community that includes urban residential opportunities, arts and entertainment, thriving retail businesses, and an environment that will attract people to live, work, and play here.

### Catalyst Projects

Several catalyst projects are in the works to jumpstart the Downtown redevelopment engine. In January, the City approved a Memorandum of Understanding with the Trammel Crow Company/High Street Residential to construct a mixed-use project on the 3.38-acre lot at the southeast corner of Fifth Street and the Dart Line.

The new building will be 175,000 square feet of residential and ground retail space, which will translate into about 206 residential units. The facility will also include a parking garage to accommodate both residential and public parking. The \$22 million project

is expected to begin taking shape in late 2007, with a targeted completion in 2008.

The City is also in the planning and design stage for renovating the Downtown Square. The Square is at the historic heart of the City and has hosted a wide range of community events over the years.

A new Dallas County Community College (DCCCD) campus affiliated with Richland College will be constructed at the northeast corner of Glenbrook and Walnut. The initial phase is scheduled to open in 2008.

Garland's Central Library is scheduled to undergo renovation in 2007 to make the facility more user-friendly and functional, particularly in the children's and computer areas. A major expansion will be completed by 2012 that will approximately double the library's size to 129,000 square feet.

In addition, the library will be physically reoriented to Sixth Street, the DCCCD campus and adjacent transit-oriented development.

### Creating the Links

The strategy would also create linkages between the downtown core and surrounding community. Such linkages would create a commercial district focused on the Main Street corridor and

strengthen the Fifth Street link from the Downtown DART Station.

The plan also calls for the improvement of the residential neighborhoods, mixed-use development of vacant properties, redevelopment of areas adjacent to the Downtown DART Station, and the establishment of various gateways into downtown.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments has awarded \$1,850,000 to the City of Garland for its Transit-Oriented Connectivity Project, through the NCTCOG's Sustainable Development Program. This project includes extension of Sixth Street across the rail line and Walnut Street to create the primary entrance to the DCCCD campus; creation of Katy Street between Fifth and Sixth streets, parallel to the rail line on the south, creating a new northern edge for the Downtown core; improvements to Walnut Street in between Glenbrook and Fifth Street, and creation of an enhanced linear pedestrian corridor between the DCCCD campus and DART rail station, north of the rail line and south of Walnut Street. Design and construction is scheduled to begin in 2007.

*To view pictures of the design plan on read more about the renovation of downtown Garland, read the City Press online at [www.ci.garland.tx.us](http://www.ci.garland.tx.us).*

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## Don't rush planting of warm-weather annuals

By Bruce Miller  
www.brucemillernursery.com

Continue planting trees and shrubs as well as cool season vegetables, such as radish, lettuce, spinach, chard, and carrots. Annuals, geraniums, alyssum, and petunia will also flourish.

Start checking our herb and perennial houses for those irresistible items you have seen all winter in gardening magazines. Just remember that those national magazines show plants that may or may not be happy in our climate. If you do not see that plant in local nurseries, then you can bet it is not for North Texas. Look for alternatives.

Do not rush the warm season annuals. Our last killing frost can happen in April. That is commonly referred to by old folks as "the Easter spell." Don't even think about periwinkle, zinnia, moss rose, or caladium until May.

If you did not fertilize or apply emergent weed control in February, do so now. Pre-emergent agents are ineffective against post-emergent weeds. If you have existing weeds in your yard, we have post-emergent weed killers available. It would be helpful if you could bring in a sample of your weed so

we can make a proper choice of herbicides.

Fertilize pecan trees with a high-nitrogen formula, such as 16-4-8. Spray fruit trees beginning with three swelling buds, bloom petal drop, and shuck drop. We have sprays especially designed for fruit trees.

The most popular perennial plant in the world is the rose. More prose and poetry has been written and sung about the rose than any other flower. The rose is not only our national flower, but it is the flower of love. Roses require some maintenance, but the rewards are well worth the effort. We have the roses and all the methods and materials to take care of them. Ask our staff for help.

Get a head start on snails, slugs and pill bugs. Apply baits in your garden, under pots, around edges of walks and foundations. You may not get rid of all of them, but you can reduce their population. These pests can devour a sizable plant overnight.

Most snails are fat now, having feasted on pansies and kale all winter. You will find them in moist, shady places in summer, when they feed at night and anywhere, any time brazenly in broad daylight in winter.

### Honey Mustard and Red Onion Barbequed Chicken

By Bruce Miller (www.brucemillernursery.com)

2 tablespoons vegetable oil  
 ½ red onion, chopped  
 ¼ cup apple cider vinegar  
 ¼ cup brown sugar, a couple of handfuls  
 1 cup chicken stock  
 ½ cup prepared honey mustard  
 ½ teaspoon allspice  
 ½ teaspoon curry powder  
 4 pieces boneless, skinless chicken breast  
 4 boneless, skinless chicken thighs  
 vegetable oil, for drizzling  
 salt and freshly ground black pepper



1. Preheat grill pan or griddle over medium high heat.
2. Pour 2 tablespoons vegetable oil into a small saucepan over moderate heat. Add red onions and sauté 3 to 5 minutes. Add vinegar and reduce by half, 1 to 2 minutes. Add brown sugar and cook 1 minute to incorporate. Whisk in broth, honey mustard, allspice, and curry. Bring sauce to a bubble and reduce heat to lowest setting.
3. Coat chicken with a drizzle of oil and salt and pepper to your taste. Place chicken on hot grill and cook 4 or 5 minutes, then turn. Baste chicken liberally with sauce and cook another 5 minutes. Turn once again and baste. Cook 2 or 3 minutes more to cook through and transfer chicken to a platter and serve.

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# Wintry weather sometimes brings inside new crop of household pests

By Kimberly Schofield  
Program Specialist, Urban-IPM  
k-schofield@tamu.edu

## Wet Weather Could Mean Springtail Outbreaks

With all the rain and snow, we might see an outbreak of springtails in all areas. Large numbers of springtails usually occur together on water surfaces such as in puddles, ponds, and even swimming pools, especially the "water springtail," *Podura aquatica* (Linnaeus). When these springtails occur in large numbers and search for a new location, they can enter homes and invade kitchens and bathrooms.

They tend to crawl up the sides of houses and enter them through gaps between bricks or around doors and windows. They usually die quickly after entering a home, due to low humidity and lack of food. However, the springtails can live a longer time in indoor potted plants or in buildings with a high level of humidity.

Springtails are small, about 0.04 to 0.2 inches in length and without wings. They vary in color ranging from black to gray to white, yellow, lavender, red, green or gold, depending on species. Some springtails are even patterned and some are iridescent or metallic.

Springtails get their common name from a forked structure called a furcula on the end of their abdomen, which allows them to catapult forward when they are disturbed. This allows them to be able to jump 3 to 4 inches in some cases.

Springtails develop through an incomplete metamorphosis, having an egg, nymph, and adult stages. This means there is little difference in the appearance of the nymph and adult forms, except in size. They are able to have multiple generations a year.

Sometimes springtails are misidentified as fleas, since they can occur in homes and jump. However springtails are round and soft bodied, instead of dark brown and flattened like fleas. Springtails also have normal sized hind legs, whereas fleas have enlarged hind legs to allow them to jump.

Springtails feed on bacteria, fungi, lichens, algae and decaying vegetation. Some species feed on carrion, and a few carnivorous species eat other

spring-tails and small invertebrates. In addition, some species feed on plant roots or on tender young plants, occasionally damaging potted or greenhouse plants. However, they are harmless to man and animals.

Populations of springtails tend to rise and fall depending on temperature, moisture and food availability. They tend to flourish in shady areas, that are rich in decaying leaves and humus, but they can be found in urban lawns.

## Some Control Options

To reduce the population of springtails outdoors, reduce watering turf-grass or irrigate no more than once a week. Be sure to water the soil deeply each time, about 1 inch penetration.

To reduce springtail invasions indoors, seal all cracks and crevices with caulk or expanding foam. Also check weather stripping around doors and windows and replace when needed. Also rake leaves and mulches 1 foot away from foundations, so springtail populations do not increase around the structures.

Insecticides can be applied around the perimeter of the foundation, including areas around windows or doors, under siding and in openings in brick or wood walls. Insecticides containing such chemicals as permethrin, bifenthrin, or cyfluthrin can be used.

If springtail infestations continue to occur indoors, it may be due to populations living in potted plants or moist areas in walls or storage areas. They will tend to infest areas that are moist and have fungal growth.

This includes areas such as toilet bowl tanks, wet insulation, drains, moist basements and damp walls. To control indoor infestations, the damp, organic matter must be removed. Then the springtails can be vacuumed and insecticides can be applied as a spot treatment.

## Beware of Booklice Lurking in Structures

As more homeowners are indoors during the cold weather, they might come across a small crawling insect called a booklouse (*Liposcelis* spp.). Despite being called lice, booklice are not harmful to people or pets. They get their common name from their assoc-



**Adult booklouse.** By Dr. Bart Drees, Professor and Extension Entomologist, Texas A&M.

iation with books or paper.

Adult booklice are 1/32 to 1/4 inches in length, wingless and creamy-white in color. They have soft bodies, chewing mouthparts, and long thread-like antennae. Nymphs look like adults, only smaller in size. Their life-cycle from egg to adult occurs in about 3 to 4 weeks.

Most booklice require a relative humidity of at least 50 to 60 percent, due to loss of moisture through their exoskeletons. High humidity is also necessary for the growth of their primary food source, mold.

They invade by means of stored goods, groceries, cartons, or on paper. Booklice feed most commonly on molds as well as fungi, grains, and other starchy material, including glue from book bindings.

When found indoors, they are found in such places as moldy books and paper, damp places, sweating pipes, new plaster and sheetrock, damp spillage, or wooden pallets. They can live and reproduce in wall voids, storage trunks, groceries, rugs, paper, cartons, rope fibers, closets and cabinets.

They do considerable damage in museum collections, libraries, stored products and food processing plants, when they are found in large numbers. The presence of psocid bodies in house dust is also believed to contribute to asthma attacks. Large populations of psocids does warrant control for these insects.

To read the full article, please visit [www.oakridgena.com](http://www.oakridgena.com).



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**upcoming events**

- March 1 Oakridge Women's Club  
Monthly Meeting
- March 1 **ONA General  
Membership Meeting**
- March 2 Deadline for *Oakridge  
News* Articles
- March 6 Oakridge Daytimers  
Monthly Meeting



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