



Oakridge News

<http://www.oakridgena.com>



Vol. 17, No. 06

June 2009

Observations

By Mike Rose, ONA President

Change is a wonderful word - look it up in you "Funk & Wangle". The ONA undergoes its annual Board transition this time of year and as usual it is a smooth transition. Thanks to the "old" members for making it so. The new Board will have its first monthly meeting shortly. It will begin to map out its direction and emphasis for the coming year.

Many fantastic things have taken place in our Oakridge community these past few years with these improvements positively affecting our neighborhood. Thanks to all who made these improvements possible. It is up to the ONA to continually search for other additions that may be made to

our community to continue the positive attitude of Oakridge. You know, folks, our Oakridge community is very much like your home. There are constant maintenance items, upgrades (when affordable) to keep the neighborhood fresh looking and to maintain our strong presence within the grater Garland community just to name a few things the ONA Board will be tackling this year.

It is good to see folks walking around our neighborhood. There are many homes with beautiful flowers

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Check out these Oakridge Services!

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District 7 Council Report

By Rick Williams, District 7 City Councilman

Before becoming a councilman, I thought bond ratings was pretty boring stuff, but now I find it interesting—sort of. Anyhow, Garland just got through with their annual financial presentations to the bond ratings companies (e.g., Standard and Poor, Fitch), and GP&L received an A+ rating, the water/sewer department AA, and our General Obligations bonds (which we sell for taxpayer approved capital improvements) received an AA+. What these excellent bond ratings mean is that we can sell bonds (to raise money) for a low interest rate (between 4.2% and 4.5%). This saves the City (i.e., taxpayers) lots of money. In this down economy, there are a lot of cities with ratings so low that they are simply unable to sell bonds to raise money for needed projects. Garland is fortunate to be in a strong financial condition.

In past articles, I have written about the

many honors received by outstanding city employees, and here's another. Rick French, Benefits Manager for the City of Garland, was elected National President for the State and Local Government Benefits Association (SALGBA) for 2009-2010. In 2007, SALGBA recognized the City of Garland with its first ever "Exemplary Benefits Program" for the proprietary wellness initiative Mr. French developed collaborating with the City HR and Risk Management Departments as well outside vendors and the Garland Chamber of Commerce. Garland continues to gain national recognition for leadership.

As many of you know, we allow citizens to come down and speak at the podium for 3 minutes at the end of each council meeting. Because of the State Open meetings law, council members cannot respond to anything said during this presentation. In the past, some speak-

ers have said untrue things about hard working city employees and have called the President of Richland College a liar. Others have complained about issues not related to the City of Garland. Consequently, we voted on May 18 to no longer televise the "open mike" portion of council meetings. The purpose of the "open mike" is to allow citizens to speak directly to the City Council and the can still do that-- it simply will not be televised.

One of the interesting things about being on Council is that you learn little interesting tidbits of information. For example, did you know that 40% of all crime in Garland is committed by individuals who do not live in Garland? Neither did I. Here's a interesting breakdown of housing stock in Garland: 5% was built in year 2000 or later; 5% in the

Continued on Page 2

District 7 Update Continued from page 1

90s, 27% in the 80s; 30% in the 70s; 16% in the 60s; 8% in the 50s; 10% in the 40s, and 2% pre-1940. All this reinforces what we have realized for some time—Garland neighborhoods are getting old, and that’s why we continue to work on neighborhood revitalization initiatives.

I enjoyed speaking to the 5th graders during “career day” at Big Spring Elementary School on May 29, and explaining what a City Councilman does. Both my sons are Big Spring “graduates,” and amazingly, one teacher who taught my oldest son 25 years ago was still teaching at Big Spring.

The State legislative session has just ended, but they almost passed a State law banning red light cameras. Contracts in place before June 1 would have been allowed to continue, so we met in a special council meeting on May 29 and authorized the City Manager to extend our current contract with the red light camera vendor until 2034. At the last minute, that provision was stripped from the transportation bill, so State law continues to not preclude red light cameras. As I have mentioned in previous articles, the red light cameras in Garland do not cost tax payers a penny, and they reduce accidents.

Since my wife was out of town, my mother swore me in for a second term on May 19. I look forward to my second 2-year term.

As always, if you have questions or concerns, feel free to call me (214 535-2648) or E-mail me at rickenwilli@gmail.com.

Observations Continued from page 2

and manicured yards throughout Oakridge. It is indeed a great place to take a walk. It is, also, good to know that these walkers are concerned citizens and help out when others are in need. We all need to be an “extra” set of eyes and ears for our community. You’ll find in this issue a list of important phone numbers. Please make the call to the appropriate individual when you observe something that is detrimental to Oakridge. Your name should not have to be given. I can attest to that point as I have made some of these calls.

We have approximately 1,200 homes in our community with slightly less than 50% of those homes being members of the ONA. We must **ALL** be active in encouraging our friends and neighbors to become an active member of the ONA. Every home in our community has received an invoice for the annual dues. Please return the completed form with your check as soon as possible. We need the information contained on the form so that you will be included in the Membership Directory (unless you instruct otherwise) to be published this fall. The Board and its Membership Committee needs your assistance more than ever to push the membership level above 50% and beyond. Let’s **ALL** work together to achieve this goal.

Your Membership Dues are spent in the following categories:

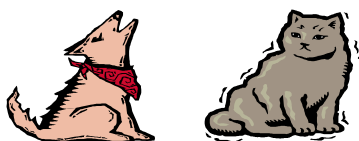
- Landscaping Maintenance 50%
- Landscaping Improvements 25%
- ONA Newsletter 14%
- ONA Directory 7%
- Miscellaneous 7%

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[e-mail: cmleks@verizon.net](mailto:cmleks@verizon.net)

NO JOB IS TOO SMALL

Memories of Gladys

By Dianne Winter w/Dot Mohrle, Brenda Olive, Shirley Mohler



Our dear 101 year old neighbor, Gladys McGhee, passed away on Friday, June 12, after a brief illness. Gladys had strength of character and a fiercely independent Texas spirit, along with the sweetest smile, almost like she knew something no one else did, truth is, she probably knew a lot of things that no one else did, but she willingly shared her wisdom and knowledge with others.

Recently she lamented that she was never a good cook and used a frying pan for as many things as she could. She shared a story of her great skill of frying food and told us about an incident to prove her prowess. It seems when her son was young, she attempted to cook a hot dog for his lunch, using her favorite frying pan. Unfortunately, she didn't keep an eye on it and it quickly became totally seared. Unexpected guests arrived and she pushed the pan to a back burner, without preparing a "proper lunch" (her words) for her son. Sitting in the living room with her guests, Gladys was shocked when her son walked in, carrying the now black, shriveled hot dog and calmly announced that his mother really knew how to burn food, real good. She laughingly told us that she didn't have to worry about those guests staying for dinner that night!

Gladys Lela Phillips was born in 1909 in Corsicana. She moved to Oakridge with her husband over 20 years ago. She seldom complained and her story telling and wit brought laughter and joy to many. Gladys often remarked that she

was so thankful for her Oakridge friends – that she never thought she would have that many friends and such an active life after her husband died. She played golf in her earlier years and played bridge and remained very active – not only physically but her mental acuity amazed many. Gladys often told many friends that she would "go to bed when I want and get up when I want, if I want to stay up late and watch movies or whatever, I do....I don't have to follow the rules anymore"--one of the benefits of being 101 years old! She found humor in every situation and many people will miss her and her stories.

How blessed she was to have an active life, and reasonably good health, until just a few days before she died. And all of us thank God for the time we shared with her. Not only did we admire her for her stamina and character, she could always make us laugh. So we will share many Gladys stories in the days to come. When we get together, we can be happy for the good times, and celebrate the friend she was to all of us. As we tell each other our memories, we can discover inner strength growing with us. God's grace is at work in this sharing that gives us strength.

The family has requested that donations be sent to:

VNA - Meals on Wheels
1440 W. Mockingbird Lane
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Daytimers' Spring Luncheon

By Dianne Winters



On May 12th the Daytimes gathered at The Taste of Home Restaurant in Wylie to celebrate the year they had spent with friends at Canasta, Bridge, Book Club, Mah Jongg, Fun on the Run, Special Events and Projects and Monthly Coffees.

In the absence of president, Sharon Carlton, vice president, Jo Dietz, led the meeting. Jo read a letter from Sharon expressing her regret in missing the meeting and her appreciation of the year she had served with friends.

Because Sharon would not be at the meeting, a group of Daytimers went to her home earlier to present her with a gift to express gratitude for her service this year. Members signed a card for Sharon to accompany the lovely thoughts that Audrey King had written.

Peggy Crenshaw distributed calendars to those who did not receive them by email. Peggy also announced book club location and date – home of Jo Dietz on Friday, 15th.

Jo asked for members to send recipes to Sharon via email for a miscellaneous section of the cookbook.

Ruby Nell Ormon distributed a sign up sheet for members who want to attend a water aerobics class at her home and for hostesses for the September meeting.

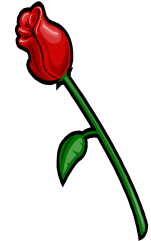
Shirley Mohler announced that the Daytimers are responsible for some contribution to the ONA Block Parties. Volunteers will bake the cookies and get them to the person responsible for their district.

Lucy Warner, new member, won the door prize and everyone received the special gift of a lovely rose.

Thanks all those who arranged the luncheon venue and menu and to Mary Pattie for collection of the reservations and payments for the luncheon.

Jo thanked all the volunteers who had served this year and announced the following officers and group leaders for the coming year.

- President – Ruby Nell Ormon
- Vice president – Beth Fagan
- Treasurer – Mary Pattie
- Program Directors – Suzanne Snow and Ann Conrath
- Hospitality – Kim Gingerich
- Calendar - Peggy Crenshaw
- Greeters – Janice Schadegg
- Sunshine – Audrey King and Becky Thomas
- Special Events – Shirley Mohler and Sharon Carlton
- Messaging – Charlotte Vaughter and Sally Weiss
- Nametags - Jo Ann Williams
- Book Club - Peggy Crenshaw
- Fun on the Run – Mary Jensen
- Mah Jongg – Becky Thomas
- Canasta – Chris Beyers
- Bridge – Dot Mohrle
- Newsletter – Dianne Winter and Chris Beyers



The next meeting will be held at the home of Chris Beyers - **Tuesday -September 8th**- 10 am- to begin another great year.

Daytimers is a social organization that requires residence in Oakridge and \$15 dues. Daytimers promotes the Oakridge Community and the ONA. Questions should be directed to President, Ruby Nell Ormon -9972 414 4775



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Crime & Safety Report

By Bill Olive

Crime Reports for Oakridge from May 23 - June 6:

- ◆ Criminal Mischief < \$50 at 2810 Laurel Oaks Dr. on 5/24/09
- ◆ Criminal Mischief > \$50 < \$500 at 2405 Fulton on 6/1/09
- ◆ Criminal Mischief > \$500 < \$1500 at 2510 Pepperidge on 6/1/09
- ◆ Criminal Mischief > \$500 < \$1500 at 3022 Big Oaks on 6/1/09
- ◆ Criminal Mischief > \$500 < \$1500 at 3022 Big Oaks on 6/1/09 (second incident)
- ◆ Burglary Vehicle at 2714 Stoneridge on 6/1/09

Garland Police Dept. New Releases:

When the police department sends out news releases the citizen's Patrol receives a copy. When the police asks for the public's help and gives a picture of the suspect we may now make a few copies and distribute them to local places like 7/11's, Exxon, QuickStop, Stop & Go, or even Tom Thumb. This info is time sensitive and we will get it

out as quickly as possible. We have also been asked to collect this information when it becomes stale.

Oakridge Siren:

Each month we try to put out information regarding crime reports and other items which we feel residents might find informative. We also put out "alerts" when something is occurring that needs immediate attention like magazine or security solicitors working our area (scam artists). We also have a great working program with other C.O.P. groups in Garland and we share information. However, nothing is more important than neighbors watching out for neighbors and calling when something suspicious arises. Don't hesitate to call 911 - remember "when in doubt call them out". If you have questions on concerns please call us at 972-495-3402, if we can't answer your questions we'll find someone who can. If you wish to get the "SIREN" please email us at indexva@verizon.net or call us at the about number.

Should you need to contact our Neighborhood Police Officer John Capers, his phone number is 972-205-2740 and email address is capersj@ci.garland.tx.us.



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House Fire in Oakridge

By Bill Olive

Fire at 2302 Diamond Oaks:

On June 2nd Garland firefighters responded to a call of a house fire in Oakridge. Station 3 arrived within minutes and with the aid of Stations 11, 6, & 1 the fire was extinguished. Fortunately, Mark Monroe was driving by, saw the smoke, called 911 and alerted the residents. We spoke with the owners the next day, they assured us they are fine, have a place to stay until repairs are completed and are extremely thankful for the outpouring of concern by the Oakridge neighborhood. A fire department contact advises the investigation is ongoing but a preliminary report indicates this fire may have been electrical in nature, originating in the garage.

Tidbits of Information

Did you know it is a State of Texas law that one must not park ones car any closer than 20ft. of an intersection?

Did you know that one must not park ones car any closer than 30ft. from a stop sign?

And finally, one must park ones car at least 15ft. away from any fire hydrant?

The Oakridge News is a publication of the Oakridge Neighborhood Association

OFFICERS

President	Mike Rose
Vice President	Dr. James Chanez
Secretary	Ken Fentress
Treasurer	Dave Morgan

DIRECTORS

District 1	Debra Smith
District 2	Becky Thomas
District 3	Sharon Stevens & Barb Harvison
District 4	Dan Nicholas
District 5	
District 6	Mark Edwards
District 7	David & Sharon Parrish

COMMITTEES

Membership	Cecile Labossiere
Communications	David Parish & Dana Hopkins
Environmental	Joe Fagan
Crime Prevention & Safety	Bill & Brenda Olive
Special Events	Rebecca Chanez



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Membership – Just The Facts – and of course – A Thoughtful Ending!

By Cecile LaBossiere

Another year has come and gone for the Oakridge Neighborhood Association and so the MEMBERSHIP DRIVE BEGINS

The Facts:

Did you know that the Oakridge Neighborhood Association was chosen by the City of Garland Neighborhood Vitality Program as a role model for other neighborhood associations?

- ◆ Did you know that we have 1166 homes in the Oakridge Neighborhood?
- ◆ Did you know that of the 1166 homes, 48 are rental properties?
- ◆ Did you know that 28% of the rental properties are owned by Oakridge residents?
- ◆ Did you know that on average we have 24 properties for sale/rent during any given month? That's 2% of the homes in Oakridge being for sale/rent at any given time.
- ◆ Did you know that we have 42% participation in the Oakridge Neighborhood Association?
- ◆ Did you know that we have a retention rate of 90% for our members?

I want to say first of all that we couldn't accomplish our Oakridge Neighborhood Association Goals of Enhancing the beauty of Oakridge, Promoting Community and Welcoming New Neighbors without you! Your financial commitment through the annual dues contribution makes everything possible – so I would like to say THANK YOU...

A Word about the Facts:

We have a large neighborhood and it is easy to see how people can feel that their participation isn't necessary. On the contrary, we need everyone to support and help us keep Oakridge, the wonderful, beautiful neighborhood that we call home. As with each of you, expenses for maintenance, landscaping etc... are increasing and with such a large neighborhood with nine entrances to take care of... every member can make a difference for us.

You can see from the home ownership statistics that people that live in Oakridge appreciate and see the value of the neighborhood. That is why we have only 4% of our homes as rental properties and what a bonus to have quite a few of those properties owned by Oakridge residents. That is not a coincidence! It speaks to the kind of neighborhood we live in and want to be a part of.

Let's take a look at the Sales/Rental statistics. Drive around in other neighborhoods and all you see are for sale signs – but not here in Oakridge. Why not? People want to live here and we have a very stable community. We really do not have a lot of the move in and move out activity that you see in some other communities. Don't get me wrong – I love it when new people move in and we can welcome them into Oakridge but it is nice to know that people that come into Oakridge usually end up staying a while..

For membership we have achieved tremendous success in retaining over 90% of our members. I take pride in the fact that our residents continue to participate in the Oakridge Neighborhood Association knowing that they are receiving a valuable service for their annual financial contribution of \$60.00.

For our efforts, you have rewarded us with a 42% participation rate. As membership director, I am always looking at the numbers and I would love to see us hit the 50% participation rate. There is power in numbers... just look at the information provided to you in this article and ask yourself –

- ◆ Would Oakridge be the same if we didn't have the Neighborhood Association?
- ◆ Maybe I should become a member this year so I can make a difference in my neighborhood?
- ◆ Maybe my participation will bring us to the 50% participation goal.
- ◆ There is power in numbers – why not join us today... by sending in your application and check for \$60.00 annual dues. Come on it will make you feel good!

Can't find the application – go to our website www.oakridgena.com and download a copy that you can fill out and mail in with you \$60.00 annual dues contribution.

Thanks for taking the time to read the article and I sincerely hope to log you in as a renewing or new member soon!

Excitement in the neighborhood!

By Brenda Olive

If you live on Laurel Oaks Drive or drove down that street recently, you may have noticed a large cluster of people along with several vehicles, including a garbage truck and some Verizon vans, all stopped and watching an interesting event in the front yard of one of the residences.

A swarm of honey bees was causing quite a stir. The cute little brown fuzz balls with 5 eyes, 6 legs and 2 pairs of wings were gathered in a large watermelon shape, hanging from a limb. Because of their close proximity to the sidewalk, the home owner anxiously called Garland Animal Control only to learn they don't handle bees, but neighbors quickly scanned the internet and found ACE BEES in Princeton, (972-734- 7614) a husband/wife team, to come to the rescue.

Shirley, the wife part of the duo provided useful info to relieve the neighbor's concern and agreed to remove the bees at a minimal fee the following day, if they were still there. She warned that the bees might leave early the following morning and take up residence in a nearby home, therefore everyone should check for cracks or crevices where the bees could enter and set up their new hive. Bees apparently like to create hives in the walls of houses, between the studs or in the attic. The resulting build up of honey can become a huge problem.

The next morning the bees were still there, so Shirley came to get them. She arrived in a regular mini-van and brought out her beekeeping attire and bee moving equipment--not any big stuff, just an old white bedspread, a cardboard box and some pruning shears. Her white jumpsuit and headgear with screened face panel made her look like she was ready for a space walk. After donning her suit, she climbed a ladder, clipped off the limb and gently carried the bees, still determinedly clinging to the branch, down the ladder and placed them in the box, putting the lid on. Unbelievably, bees immediately began arriving and going directly to the box and crawling inside.

Most of the gawkers applauded her fearlessness and left after that, but some remained to watch. Soon more bees began gathering on a branch of the tree, and after a clump formed, Shirley climbed the ladder again, armed with a soft bristled brush and brushed the bees off the limb. They fell onto the box and cloth on

the ground then crawled to the box, either clinging to the side and top, or crawling into the box.

Impressive to say the least. After taping the door and top closed, she wrapped the ends of the bedspread around the box, covering the bees that remained outside and carried the box to her car. We asked if the bees could escape the cloth and sting her on the trip home, but she explained that since they didn't have honey or baby bees to protect they were actually very docile and would only sting if they were truly threatened. Instead, if they crawled out of the wrap they would just fly to a window and sit there until they arrived at their new home. Shirley explained she had already prepared a new hive for them and she would take the limb from the box, hold it over the open hive and either shake or brush the bees off into the hive. After putting on the top, she would open the doors and windows of the car and the remaining bees would fly to the new hive, attracted by the pheromones, (a chemical bees use to communicate). It is sort of like smelling your way home for them. Amazing isn't it?

We also learned that one single honey bee only forages enough nectar to make about 1/12 of a teaspoon of honey in her lifetime. Just think how many honey bees it takes to make that jar of Honey Bear honey we buy in our local grocery store, and remember, honey bees that we see flying around our yards are working to gather pollen to eventually make honey, but at the same time they are doing us a favor by pollinating our plants to increase their yield, whether it's for food or just our enjoyment of the flowers.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Police & Fire Emergencies	911
Police Non-Emergencies	972-485-4840
Atmos Gas	1-800-460-3030
Solid Waste & Recycling	972-205-3500
Code Compliance	972-485-6400
Electricity Emergency	972-205-3000
Poison Center	1-800-764-7661
Water & Sever	972-205-3210
Councilman Rick Williams	214-535-2648
Street Light Repair	972-205-3483
Animal Services	972-205-3570
Neighborhood Police Officer	
John Capers	972-205-2740

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Oakridge News

Published by the Oakridge Neighborhood Association.

July 2009, Vol.17, No. 07

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The ONA Board meets the Third Thursday of each month to conduct the business of the ONA.

The ONA Board set the dates for the General Membership meetings.

Mark your calendars:

September 24, 2009

March 4, 2010

May 27, 2010

Check the ONA web site for current information

www.oakridgena.com