



Oakridge News

<http://www.oakridgena.com>



Vol. 17, No. 08
August 2009

Observations

By Mike Rose, ONA President

Can you believe it – it is mid August and school is just around the corner! It is time for all of us to be mindful of our driving habits – watch your speed and your surroundings. As an alert driver you should notice youngsters darting out from in front of parked cars, kids riding their bikes while deciding to make a turn without looking and generally we would see things out of the ordinary in the street that may cause you a problem while driving through our community. An alert driver does not use their cell phone while driving; does not change the cd player while

driving; does not consume food while driving to name a few distractions – but I am sure you have heard and/or read this information before. We just need to be aware that school buses will soon be out and about and that means kids will be loading and unloading from those school buses. Be a patient and courteous driver.

Plans are underway for our Oakridge community to participate in

Continued on Page 2

District 7 Council Report

By Rick Williams, District 7 City Councilman

Annually, the City Council and top City management staff have a retreat following the May elections for purposes of team building, goal setting, budget discussions, etc. Historically, this has been out of town, but this year to save money it was held July 20/21 at the new Garland Hyatt Place near Highway 190 and Garland Road. These meetings are very useful to staff and council, but I shall not try to rehash the entire meeting in this limited space. However, here are a few items of interest I learned at the meeting. Between October 2008 and June 2009, there was a 14.5% increase in rent houses in Garland, so that rent houses now represent about 10% of all single family dwellings. As you can easily guess, this is largely a

consequence of foreclosed properties being bought at a low price, and then they become rental property. During most of 2008, Garland sales tax revenue was up in each month compared to the same month a year earlier. However, beginning in November 2008 and continuing through May 2009, monthly sales tax revenue has been down anywhere from 5.2% to 11.3% compared to the same month a year earlier. So my best advice is to spend your money in Garland. The property tax base has also declined by 5.5% in 2009. Of course, if you watch the news, this reduction in revenue is not unique to Garland. In fact, Garland is in relatively “good” shape since city staff saw and reacted to this recession long before

other cities; however, we still have a \$7 million dollar deficit. To balance the budget, multiple things will be done including an anticipated 1.2% reduction in city employee salaries and the elimination of 9 currently vacant positions. However, there will be no lay-offs of current staff.

Since my last article, the QuickTrip at Shiloh and Beltline has opened, and I attended the ribbon cutting of the Winters Park Assisted Living and Memory Care facility at Garland Road and Wagon Wheel. I really appreciate the quality of this development including some very nice stone work and landscaping which make it very attractive addition to Garland. I noticed when I was there

Continued on Page 7

Check out these Oakridge Services!

- All In One Construction, Inc., p. 6
- Billy Jack Sprinkler Co., p.7
- Handi Gals, p.3
- Let Sue Do It, p.2
- Lone Star Remodeling, p. 5
- MR. FIX-IT-ALL, p.2
- My Storage Space, p.4
- Oakridge Country Club, p.3
- Oakridge Paint & Paper, p.4
- Steve Brandt, p.3
- Apex Genealogical Services p. 4

June 2 Fire on Diamond Oaks *by Bill Olive*

On June 2 many of us got to see our fire department in action as they quickly put out a house fire on Diamond Oaks. Some particulars we obtained from the fire report: Response time for Engine 3 and Ambulance 3 = 2minutes 49 seconds.

A total of over 20 firefighters responded between 7:30 and 10:30 pm. These firefighters rarely get recognition for the dangerous job they do so next time you see them out and about smile and wave hello. Another misconception regarding firefighters is that all they do is sit around the station waiting for a fire or other emergency.

In 2007 The Garland Fire Department answered 19,417 calls placing emergency vehicles into response over 33,000 times. Each day involves a specific task for firefighters from resupply to yard work, to drill, to station cleanup, to inspections, and answering emergency calls. A fire station is quite a busy place and always extremely clean.

**Remember to attend the
ONA General Membership Meeting
September 24, 2009
Oakridge County Club
6:30 p.m.**

Observations *Continued from page 1*

this years National Night Out to be held on Tuesday, October 6th. If you missed last years "party" you should plan to make it this year. The committee will have some surprises for this year's event. Stay tuned.

As you may remember from reading the June Oakridge news, we are in the middle of the ONA membership drive. The ONA needs **ALL** of your help in achieving its goal of, again, topping the 500 membership level. Please talk with your neighbors and explain to them that without the ONA's work (among other things) in upgrading and maintaining the "common" areas our community would suffer. This maintenance work consumes approximately 50% of the annual ONA budget while the upgrading adds another 25%. The Oakridge community would be a less desirable place to live and play without your participation. Thank you!

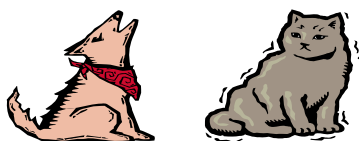
During the month of August your city council will be hard at work trying to control city spending and still maintain quality city services. This will be extremely difficult given the economic times we are presently experiencing. Our councilman, Rick Williams, would certainly appreciate concerned citizen's input. Here are his phone number 214.535.2648 and e-mail rickwilli@gmail.com contact information. How can we expect the council to keep a lid on taxes if we do not communicate with them our thoughts and ideas?

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NO JOB IS TOO SMALL

Oakridge Country Club

Family Brunch
Sunday, August 23, 2009
11:00am - 2:00pm

Oakridge Country Club is now offering Sunday Brunch once a month. This is the perfect time to bring your family and friends to the club to enjoy all that our Sunday Brunch has to offer. Brunch will include an omelet and waffle station, a variety of salads, and three hot entrees, carved Pork Loin, vegetable dishes and a delicious dessert display including Homemade Apple Dumplings.

Menu:

Cold Dishes:

Mixed Green Salad
Fresh Fruit
Tuna Salad, Pasta Salad, and Three Bean Salad

Carving Station:

Pork Loin

Station:

Omelet
Waffles

Hot Dishes:

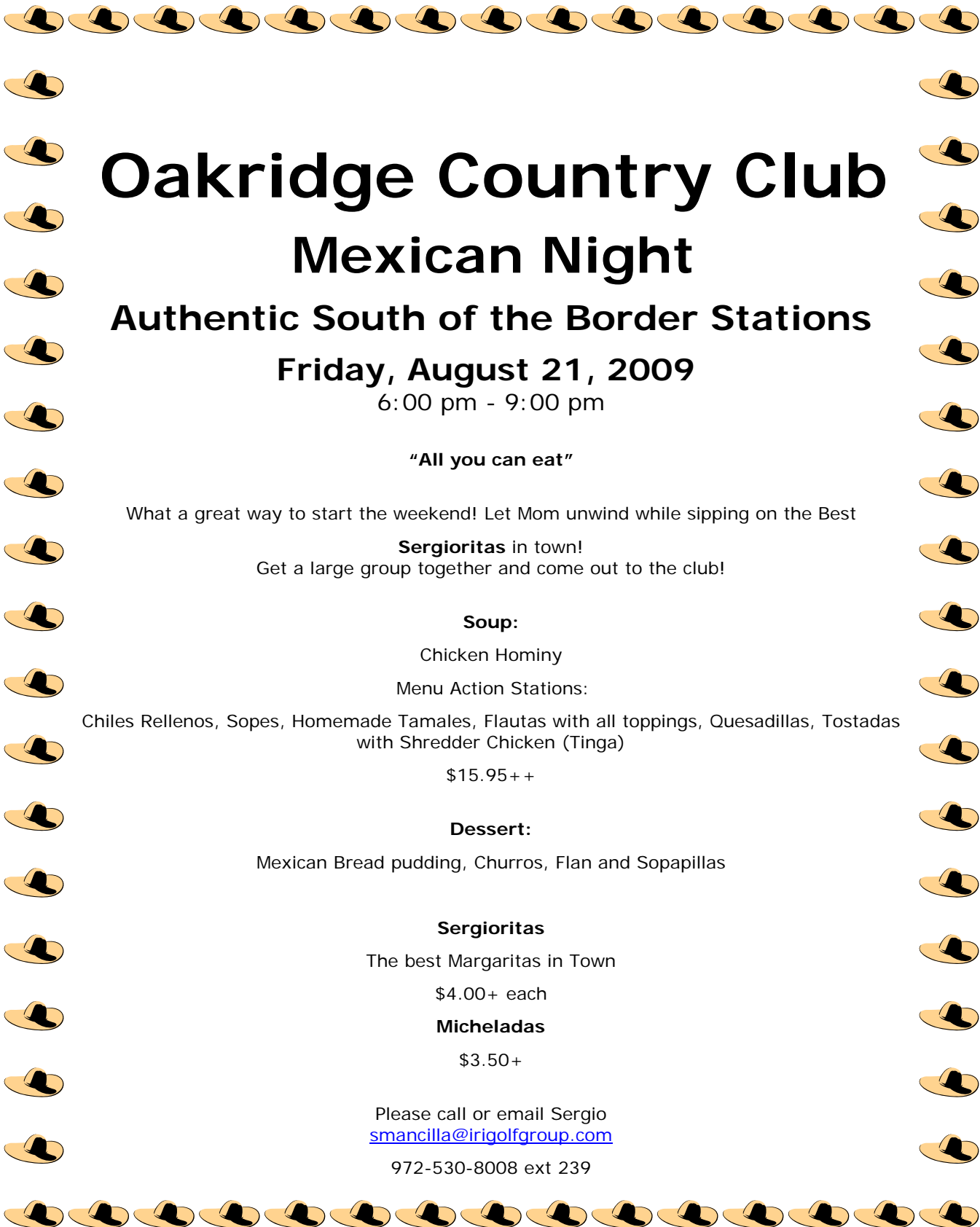
Homemade Meat-Loaf
Served with Mushroom Sauce
Fried Chicken
Served with Country Gravy
Green Bean and Carrots – Roasted New Potatoes

Dessert Table

Homemade Apple Dumplings

\$14.95++ per adult \$8.95++ children 4-10 \$3.95++ children 3 & under

Seating is limited – Call or Email Sergio today!
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Oakridge Country Club

Mexican Night

Authentic South of the Border Stations

Friday, August 21, 2009

6:00 pm - 9:00 pm

"All you can eat"

What a great way to start the weekend! Let Mom unwind while sipping on the Best

Sergioritas in town!

Get a large group together and come out to the club!

Soup:

Chicken Hominy

Menu Action Stations:

Chiles Rellenos, Sopas, Homemade Tamales, Flautas with all toppings, Quesadillas, Tostadas with Shredder Chicken (Tinga)

\$15.95++

Dessert:

Mexican Bread pudding, Churros, Flan and Sopapillas

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Crime & Safety Report

By Bill Olive

Incidents from June 25 through July 12:

- Burglary-Vehicle 2217 Shady Oaks on June 25
- Burglary-Vehicle 2401 Diamond Oaks on June 30
- Burglary-Vehicle 2102 Diamond Oaks on July 3
- Burglary-Vehicle 2126 Diamond Oaks on July 8

One of the above victims told me that they lived in Oakridge for over 13 years and didn't think anything about leaving a "laptop" in the car overnight because Oakridge was a **safe place**. Crime can happen almost anywhere at anytime. If we make it "attractive" by leaving valuables in our vehicles, open garages unattended, and house doors unlocked the word Oakridge is "prime pickens" will spread throughout the criminal groups. At September's general membership we will have some materials for you to go over which might help you deter crime. Recently reported has been a dark Cadillac cruising some alleys in our area. Also, our NPO has asked for us to watch out for a green Dodge van slowly driving areas. This van may be connected to tire/wheel thefts in north Garland. If you notice a vehicle matching these cruising slowly down your street or alley, or parked with people just sitting in it (primarily in the evening or late night, discretely watch it and see what it does. If you feel something isn't right, call 011. Get as much information as possible and give it to the dispatcher.

Speed Survey Trailer:

By the time you get this newsletter you may have seen

a **radar trailer** on Diamond Oaks. We requested the City's transportation department to survey vehicle speed along Diamond Oaks so we could see if there is a speeding problem.

Previous surveys suggest only a few "minor" speeding problems on other Oakridge streets. After the survey is complete we will discuss with our NPO what action, if any is needed.

We Can Use Your Help

The Oakridge Citizen's Patrol is always looking for extra patrollers. If you would like to join our 10 active members please give us a call. Also listed below are other ways you can learn about Garland's Fire and Police Dept. If you would like an application we will deliver one to you. Remember, all applicants must go through a complete background check.

Citizen's on Patrol: A 4 hour course held at the police station taught by the NPO unit and various other units. Learn what to look for in your community and get a basic knowledge of how patrol and the NPO work together.

Other Courses Available to Residents

Garland Citizen's Police Academy: A 12 week course held on Thursdays from 6pm to 10pm, 1 full Saturday for firearms shooting and driving vehicles, 4 hours with jail and dispatch observation, and a complete 8 hour drive out with patrol unit.

Philip Hanas
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District 7 Council Report

Continued from page 1

that a concrete base has been poured for the forthcoming signal light at Wagon Wheel and Garland Road.

Following each election, recently elected council members make appointments to boards and commissions. For me, I will mostly be reappointing the same individuals who have been doing an outstanding job; however, I did have an unexpected resignation from the Citizens Environmental and Neighborhood Advisory Committee (CENAC). At about the same time I became aware of that resignation, Oakridge resident Scott Trepinski emailed me indicating his interest in serving on a board, and then he went to the effort of coming down to a council meeting just to introduce himself in person. Anyone with that much interest and that degree of effort gets my attention, so I'll be appointing Scott to CENAC.

During July, there were a surprising number of emails sent by Garland residents on a variety of subjects related to the animals (e.g., Why does owning a ferret require a permit? Let's create a new Garland Citizens Committee to advise and monitor the animal shelter. Let's create a volunteer program to help at the shelter. Why does Garland use inhumane gassing to euthanize animals? etc.) Lengthy responses were sent to each citizen, but let me highlight a few key points of information.

Garland has an Animal Services Advisory Committee. Advisory committees are required by State law and ours is set forth in Section 22.23 of the Code of Ordinances. The members are: Dr. Bill Dunn, licensed veterinarian; Ms. Renee Ramey, GPL Customer Service Manager; Mr. Dennis Wooten, Richardson's Manager of Animal Services; and Yvette Diaz, who works for the rescue group, Operation Kindness. This advisory committee meets quarterly with the manager of Garland's Animal Services staff and senior management.

The Shelter does release animals to legitimate rescue organizations. Through May, 282 animals have been adopted by rescue groups. All animals (entire inventory) are placed on www.petharbor.com. The software at the shelter is compatible with this site; the images and information are then linked to eight other sites automatically (www.petfinder.com is one of those sites). Adoptions are on a pace to increase about 35% over last year even in a very tough economy. Euthanasia is down about 5% when compared to last year at this same time. Animals are euthanized by gas, but death is extremely quick when done correctly as it is in Garland. Stories and videos depicting agonizing slow deaths from gas are not true. Garland does not have a volunteer program at the shelter. We have tried to set up volunteer programs in the past and all were not successful. To manage the people was difficult, and we had injuries to the volunteers each time we tried. Finally, if you are concerned about ferret certifications (grin), believe it or not, we will likely change the ordinance as a result of that one email.

One of life's little irritants is the illegal signs placed in public right-of-ways typically on Friday evening in anticipation that Code Compliance won't yank them until Monday. I pick them up all the time (about 25 on the weekend of July 18/19), but I don't throw them away. I turn them in to the City of Garland to help raise money for my neighborhood association, as the City will pay 50 cents each for them under the ISIGN (Illegal Signs In Garland-No!) program). If any organization is interested in this program which not only raises money but helps make Garland look better, call Vickie Jenkins with the City of Garland at 972 485-6414.

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

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Just what does the City Secretary's Office Do?

By Mary J. Kayser

To begin to answer that question we should probably determine "What is a City Secretary? The City Secretary is the oldest public servant role in local government. The role (which has had many titles) existed before Biblical times as "Keeper of the Archives" and before writing came into use as "Remembrancer" because their memory served as the public record. During the Middle Ages, only municipal clerks and the clergy could read. In Ancient Greece, each meeting of the governing body began with the City Secretary (or recorder as it was called then) reading aloud the documents to be considered, and pronouncing a curse on any who would seek to deceive the people.

Although we no longer read documents aloud and pronounce curses at Council meetings, we remain the "Keepers of the Archives" as we record, maintain and safeguard our local government history.

The Garland City Charter establishes the position of City Secretary to be appointed by the City Council and to be charged with carrying out the duties established by the charter and local ordinances, as well as State and Federal laws that relate to the office.

The position, by ordinance, also includes holding the office of Records Management Officer for the City.

So for the big question – What Does the City Secretary's Office do?

- Attend all meetings of the City Council, take minutes and produce an audio recording of the proceedings
- Post and publish legal notices.
- Process, file, certify and provide copies of ordinances, resolutions, contracts and all other documents authorized by the city council as well as other official records of the city.
- We scan ordinances, resolutions, minutes and various other documents into the City's imaging system where they can be searched, printed or emailed. This serves to protect our original documents while providing the information for use in a timely manner.
- We administer the City of Garland elections in cooperation with Dallas County Elections and process filings from candidates for Mayor and Councilmembers.
- Process and maintain applications of people seek-

Continued on Page 9



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Just what does the City Secretary's Office Do? *Continued from page 8*

ing Council appointment to City Boards and Commissions and ad hoc committees.

- Accept and refer claims and suits against the city.
- Draft and prepare ceremonial items for the Mayor and City Council, including proclamations and special recognitions.

As the Records Management Officer, maintain the City records center and work with all departments on their needs related to records.

The City switchboard is located in and staffed by my office. The City Secretary's Office is your one stop shop for information. We may not always know the answer but we have many resources available to help you find the information you need. We also have contact information for our neighboring cities as well as, several county offices. Garland is fortunate to have a Dallas County Government Center in downtown Garland (140 N. Garland) where citizens can go to get birth certificates, pay county taxes, get car titles and license plates among other services.

The City Secretary's Office is located on the first floor of City Hall, 200 N. Fifth. We can be reached by phone at 972-205-2403, 2404 or 2406 or by email at mkay-ser@ci.garland.tx.us

The Oakridge News is a publication of the Oakridge Neighborhood Association

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| Secretary | Ken Fentress |
| Treasurer | Dave Morgan |

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| District 7 | David & Sharon Parrish |



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Inside this Issue

Observations by Mike Rose	Page 1 & 2
District 7 Council Report	Page 1 & 7
Oakridge Country Club Family Brunch	Page 4
Oakridge Country Club Mexican Night	Page 5
Crime & Safety Report	Page 6
City Secretary's Office Duties	Page 8 & 9
September General Meeting	Page 2
Fire Department Information	Page 2

The ONA Board meets the Third Wednesday 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