



Oakridge News



Vol. 18, No. 06

June 2010

<http://oakridgeNA.org>

Membership Drive in Full Swing– let’s make it 500

By Cecile Labossiere, ONA Membership Director

We started our membership drive in May with a decision to include our invoice in the May Newsletter. I hope that you can appreciate our efforts to focus on opportunities to reduce costs and spend your dues money wisely. Just this small change can reduce our postage costs by almost \$1000 dollars. I wanted to begin my membership article with an impact statement and I hope that it caught your attention.

That kind of thoughtfulness on the part of your Oakridge Neighborhood Association and its board members resonates every day as we strive to make the most of the funds that are entrusted to us by our members. We have spent many hours discussing costs and where we need to apply your dollars to enhance the Oakridge community and we have made some noticeable improvements in the last several years with sign, street light and landscape updates.

As you know, our organization is voluntary and we work hard on getting the word out to everyone in Oakridge that the ONA is and

will continue to be an important part of maintaining the neighborhood you call home. We do this by continuing to advance our mission of enhancing the beauty of the neighborhood, creating opportunities for people to meet their neighbors and developing a sense of community through ONA sponsored activities.

We have gotten off to a good start with over 100 Oakridge residents joining or renewing their membership prior to the Spring Fling on May 20th. Those members were included in our Spring Fling Drawing and we had 4 winners of a \$25 gift card to Desperados. Congratulations to Manolo & Susan Lizato, Phil & Vickie Hanas, Ron & Pam Harbach and Lee & Vickie Litton.

Lets keep the drive going!!!! Can't find your May Newsletter – just log into the oakridgena.org and click on the JOIN US tab on the left hand side of the home page and print out an invoice.

Thanks again for contributing and recognizing the importance of the ONA .

District 7 Council Report

By Rick Williams, District 7 City Councilman

In these monthly articles, you have heard me on several occasions give kudos to Neighborhood Police Officer John Capers. Well, I attended the annual Garland Police Department awards dinner on April 24, and I'm pleased to report that NPO Capers received two Merit Bars for "exemplary conduct and excellence in police performance" for the work he has done this past year. Three other NPOs received such recognition, but they received one merit bar each. We are fortunate to have NPO Capers in District 7. By the way, it was email tips from District 7 residents which were instrumental in resolving a couple of the crimes. As I've said before, if you see something that "just doesn't look right," email NPO Capers at capersj@ci.garland.tx.us. All emails are 100% confidential.

I had an inquiry last month about whether we can limit the number of Section 8 rent houses in a particular neighborhood. The short answer is no. The number of houses that may be in a neighborhood is all based on whether the owner of the property is willing to accept families that have Section 8 vouchers. The choice is left up to the owner. Basically, the Section 8 program is a low income rental assistance program where the Federal government pays some or all of the rent to the landlord each

month. Garland, Plano, Mesquite, Dallas Housing Authority (HA), Lancaster HA and Dallas County HA have overlapping jurisdictions, so families can live in any of the cities in Dallas County. I know I have dealt with a couple of problem Section 8 rental properties where the placement was made by Dallas HA. Theoretically, if the renters are not being law abiding citizens, the subsidized rental payments will stop, but as with many Federal programs, that process is cumbersome to say the least.

I've dealt with a couple of building permit issues in the last month, including one in Oakridge. Just in case you've ever had a question about what does and does not require a building permit, go to the City's web site www.ci.garland.tx.us and search on these words "permit requirements residential." I think you'll find a couple of surprises. I know I did.

I know most of you have seen that the construction of the new QuikTrip at Arapaho and Jupiter has started, and the old, empty Minyards building has been razed. I have also reported in previous articles that the Appleseed Corporation was going to build a work club and neighborhood friendly, upscale car wash basically where the Minyards was located. However, I have learned re-

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Treasurer's Corner – June 2010 ©

By Dave Morgan – Treasurer – Oakridge Neighborhood Association

For those of you who did not get to attend the Spring Fling gathering on May 20th, you missed some great food and drinks, great music, great activities for the kids, great vendor and public service presentations, and the great chance to make new friends. We have some really wonderful people who live in our neighborhood. Hats off to Rebecca Chanez, Cecile Labossiere, and all the volunteers who made all this happen in the face of what was looking to be a rain out!

Three “myths” that have been encountered in my journey as Treasurer were dispelled in last month's edition. Here is another one to toss aside now.

MYTH #4 – The Oakridge Neighborhood Association is required by its Charter to receive any and all City of Garland Code complaints, report them to the City, and to make sure the City promptly resolves the violation. FACT – The Oakridge Neighborhood Association, in no way, has or wants that responsibility. Being a non-mandatory neighborhood association, we only have volunteers doing the work for ONA. We do not have the funds to

even hire a part-time person just to field and handle any such calls that may (or may not) be received to any great extent. We, thus, strongly feel that it is our responsibility to empower our members with terrific resources for them to address their individual issues by providing appropriate City contacts by means of the newsletter (which is archived) and by having various City representatives at our general meetings. For example, our District 7 City Councilman, Rick Williams, successfully makes an effort to be at all our general meetings in addition to meeting with us at our ONA Board meetings when there are ONA specific issues we need to know and share.

Since articles have to go to be submitted by the 20th of the month before the month of publication, financials through our fiscal year-end of May 31st cannot be prepared since a last third of May's transactions have not occurred as of this writing. Summary financials will be published next month and again in the second of two newsletters that annually go to every home in Oakridge.

Communication Update

By Keith Engler – Communications Director – Oakridge Neighborhood Association

According to the ONA By-laws, Communications is appointed by the President and elected by the officers. I have decided not to do Communications this year but felt it was important to do this newsletter since we have not found a President yet.

I really do not think us not finding a President yet is a cause of alarm or a problem with the ONA. Actually, I think this is an indication that the ONA is running a such a high level now that there is some trepidation in taking over the leadership of it.

ONA Website

Some of you may have noticed that the website domain name has been changed from OakridgeNA.com to OakridgeNA.org. The reason for this is that the Dayhoff family

first reserved OakridgeNA.com in 2000 but they are now trying to transfer ownership to the ONA. They are having trouble with this so I purchased OakridgeNA.org and OakridgeNA.net and added them to my host site. My goal is to transfer ownership of these two domain names to the ONA over the next couple of months and then turn the website over to somebody else then. I just can't relinquish it now because of this recent mess. I am also trying to get the original oakridgeNA.com transferred over to me; then I will redirect all three domain names to the same location.

I have enjoyed doing the newsletter this past year because there have been some fun things going on; especially with Mike Rose getting the Garland officials to write articles. Also, Mike has done a good job at emailing cop-

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District 7 Council Report

Continued from Page 1

cently that Appleseed has pulled out of that deal with QT. So, both the Garland Chamber of Commerce and QT are looking for a new business for that area. QT is very interesting in finding a business, since they have no need for the back half of the property they bought from Minyards, and the property was expensive. However, even without an immediate business, the area is going to look much better without an empty Minyards.

I had mentioned in my article a couple of months ago that the Jain Society, which owns property at the S.E. corner of Arapaho and Shiloh, now appears to be building their temple on Webbs Chapel Road in Dallas. That information was based on information at their web site <http://dfwjains.org/>. However, I recently received an email from Anant Jain himself who said that even

though they are building on Webbs Chapel, they still plan on building their “dream facility” at Arapaho and Shiloh when they have enough money which is still at least 2 or 3 years away.

Sales tax collections in Garland for March 2010 were up 4.1% from the same month last year. While a little more than one-half of the 4.1% increase came from one-time adjustments, these are the first positive numbers we have seen in 16 months. Year-to-date sales tax revenues are 6.5% below last year and approximately 10.5% below their 2007-08 peak levels.

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

Oakridge Daytimers May meeting

By Dianne Winters

The last meeting of the 2009-2010 year for the Daytimers was held at the Oakridge Country Club on May 11th. Three dozen members gathered in bright spring colors to enjoy the friendships and food. Everyone exchanged news and happenings and greetings with several newcomers and guests.

A few members were present that had been away for health or other reasons so it was encouraging to see Janice Schadegg, Julie Spears, Mary Reed and Nancy Murray. The guests were Dorothy Moseley, Sandra Stevens with Betty Taylor, Linda Moore, Martha McClarnon, Elsie Spears, mother of Julie, and Randy Waterman. Welcome!

In addition to the officers and leaders others who were enjoying the luncheon were long time members Clara Mae Muerer, Jane Buchanan, Doris Autrey, Jo Dietz, Nell Burt, Beverly Pierce, Pat Tharp, Dot Mohrle, Sally Weiss, Betty Thomas and Sally Lang and newer member, Mary Powell.

A masterful tribute to beloved Audrey Golden was read by Audrey King, author.

Announcements by president, Ruby Nell Orman, included the Book Club meeting and sign up sheets that were distributed by vice president, Beth Fagan, for new groups including games and water aerobics.

The next meeting for the Daytimers will be held at the home of Betty Prickett on the second Tuesday of the month, September 14th, at 10 am to begin an interesting new year.

New officers and leaders were announced by Ruby Nell Orman, president.

A beautiful gift of a rose bowl was presented to Ruby Nell for her service to the club.

2010 – 2011 Officers and Leaders:

- President – Suzanne Snow
- Vice president – Peggy Crenshaw
- Treasurer – Mary Pattie
- Calendar – Brenda Olive

Sunshine:

- Birthdays – Audrey King
- Concerns – Becky Thomas
- Email and Name Tags – JoAnn Williams
- Hospitality – Mary Jensen
- Program – Ann Conrath and Betty Cosgray
- Special Events with Fun on the Run – Sharon Carlton & Shirley Mohler
- Phone messaging – Lillian Dalton
- Newsletter – Dianne Winter

Daytimers is a social organization that requires residence in Oakridge and \$15.00 annual dues. Daytimers promotes the Oakridge community and the Oakridge Neighborhood Association. Any questions should be directed to president, Suzanne Snow, 972-414-3747.

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Communication Update

Continued from page 2

ies of the newsletter to various people in the city which has given us some good notoriety with the city.

ONA Communications Position Description

- Capture the articles that people send you and create a newsletter. The ads are managed by the accountant so the communications person just has to integrate them into the newsletter along with the article. I have been using MS Publisher.
- Email the finished newsletter and the list of names to the printer. The list of names are managed by the Membership Director.
- Update the Website periodically. You can modify the website using MS FrontPage and FTP it to a particular location. You do not have to worry about managing the domain, just edit the website and FTP it. Therefore, other than the FTP, the website editing is no different than the newsletter. FrontPage is a What-You-See-Is-What-You-Get type editor so it is very similar to using Publisher.
- Send out periodic emails to the neighborhood.

Proposed structure for the ONA Website

The plan is for Keith Engler to create a hosting account listed under the ONA and then transfer the ownership of www.OakridgeNA.org, www.OakridgeNA.net, and hopefully www.OakridgeNA.com domains to the ONA.

Here are the guidelines for which the website will be structured:

- This website will be solely owned by the Oakridge Neighborhood Association.

- The domain fees will be paid with a check from the ONA bank account signed by the current ONA Treasurer.
- This account will have two levels of control: Administrator and User.
 - The Administrator will manage the overall Password of the account and will assign a separate User Account Password.
 - The User Account will only be allowed FTP access to change/modify/upload data to the website. The User Account will NOT have access to all the privileges of administrator such as: changing the User Account Password, Adding domains to this account, etc. This way, the ONA can, for example, turn the website over to somebody and they do not have to worry about them basically running amuck. This is very similar to the way oakridgeNA.com has been structured where Larry Dayhoff was the administrator and the ONA was the User.
- Two people, to be determined, in separate households will be registered as the administrators. They each will maintain the Administrator Password and perform any needed correspondence to the hosting service. The administrator password should be changed each year for security reasons.

I have taken bids from two separate hosting companies and have chosen JustHost.com. I have been using this service for my business and I currently host OakridgeNA.org there. I plan to setup a long term contract at 4 years at \$165.60 which equates to \$3.45 per month.



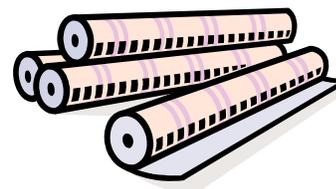
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Gear up for Safe Summer Grilling

By .Don Eberhardt—Garland Store Manager—Groom and Sons' Hardware

If you're like most self-titled grill-masters, you've already fired up your pride and joy this season: the backyard BBQ. But take special precautions to ensure a season of summer entertaining: practice safe grilling.

Thoroughly inspect burner and gas supply tubes for blockages like spider webs, grease build-up and rust. Check gas hoses for worn or frayed rubber, and replace if necessary.

Make a soap solution by mixing one part water with one part liquid detergent to check if there are any gas leakages. Turn on the gas supply and apply the mixture to gas pipe connections. If soap bubbles appear, you have a leak - repair it before using the grill.

Inspect rock grids and cooking grids for rust and signs of heavy wear. Replace lava rocks once every season or more frequently if grease build-up is an issue.

If you didn't thoroughly clean the grill at the end of last summer, spend some scouring time soon. Soak the main grills, racks, and burner cover in warm, soapy water for about an hour, then use a spatula or sturdy brush to scrape off food particles and grease. Use a wet/dry shop vac to remove additional debris.

Looking for a brand new grill?

Charcoal, gas or electric: it comes down to preference. Typically, charcoal grills require the most preparation and clean up; electric and gas have easy-start features and do much of the work for you.

More and more mid-range grills are equipped with features once only found in high-end models: food warming racks and bins, storage-maximizing cabinets, built-in lights for twilight grilling, more consistent heat indicators and thermometers, and side burners with higher BTUs.

Shoppers looking to make their outdoor space a true living area might consider a complete outdoor cooking center, featuring built-in grilling stations, stainless steel appliances and other perks. The trend now is to create a 'second kitchen' outside your home.

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Things Financial and Personal – June 2010 ©

By Dave Morgan, CPA - ONA Treasurer, Mortgage Broker, Real Estate Broker, Investor

Disclaimer – You should consult with your professional advisor before acting on any of the recommendations or ideas that follow. The author is not an attorney and does not profess to be providing legal, tax, financial, or personal advice. Dave will be happy to meet with you to see if your personal facts and circumstances would warrant any action on your part.

Someone has run a red light and has hit your car broadside. Great that everyone is just dazed a little and not hurt at all. Great that everyone has terrific insurance and that all repairs have made things return to good working order and appearance. Now, where am I going with this? When you get ready to sell your car, it has lost value compared to an otherwise identical car that has not been involved in an accident that was not even your fault. You can and should seek a payment for the diminished value of your car in many cases – not all. You can attempt to do this yourself, but there are professionals who, for about \$350, will do this for you.

So you have a tax-deferred account such as an IRA, Roth IRA, and so on. And, you say that your broker and/or financial planner have done pretty well in your opinion with all things considered. But, you listen to the radio and television commercial talking about investing in gold and other things, and your broker and/or financial planner cannot provide. Oh, and you hear that stocks and bonds and all their variations that your stock broker/financial planner can provide could be in the crosshairs for another decline of some degree of significance in the near future. Rather than park all your money in US Treasury's,

money market accounts, or CD's, know that you have another option.

You have the ability to rollover a little, a moderate amount, a lot, or all of some tax-deferred accounts into a Self Directed IRA Plan account. NOTE: Rollover rules must be properly followed so as not to create a potentially taxable distribution that could also include the 10% premature distribution penalty as well. A Self Directed IRA Plan account can invest EXACTLY as you have with your broker/financial planner. But, it would not make sense to do that entirely because you lose out on where a Self Directed IRA Plan account differs. The Self Directed IRA Plan account also allows you to invest in other investments – owning residential and commercial real estate, making/buying discounted loans on real estate/autos/business/other, property tax liens, owning precious metals/coins/currency, owning certain small business stocks, purchasing insurance life settlement contracts, and many more income producing items. The word here is diversity – there are some with virtually no risk and even with high returns near 18% – there are some with risks and the possibility of losing 100% of your principal.

There are companies that specialize in these Self Directed Plans. NOTE: Self direction must have 100% self control on your part. Further, there is no self dealing allowed between your Self Directed IRA Plan and yourself, any entities you own, family members, and the like. If interested, I can provide resources and more information.



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Environmental Update

By Joe Fagan

It was decided that the Laurel Oaks entrance was in need of an upgrade, the paver blocks were sinking and cracked, and some of the plants were at the end of their lifespan. We contacted Texas Proof Landscapes on the recommendation of Bruce Miller nursery. Texas Proof submitted their recommendations to the board and they were approved.

The following plants were selected and tiered front to back with different blooming times throughout the year:

- 5 Hydrangea
- 5 Turkscap
- 10 Holly Fern
- 13 Hosta
- 40 Asian Jasmine
- 10 flats of seasonal color (Star Zinnia)
- 13 knock out roses



I believe that the upgrade looks very good, and definitely catches the eye when entering. The Asian Jasmine will spread and fill in the coming year, and give a fuller look to the landscape.

We considered doing something with the median on Ridge Oak, however in speaking with landscaper and Bruce Miller Nursery we could not come up with a plan that was considered workable. We will keep trying.



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ONA Member

Pest Check

By Kimberly Schofield, Program Specialist-Urban IPM , Texas AgriLife Extension

Possible New Scale Found on Crape Myrtles in North Texas

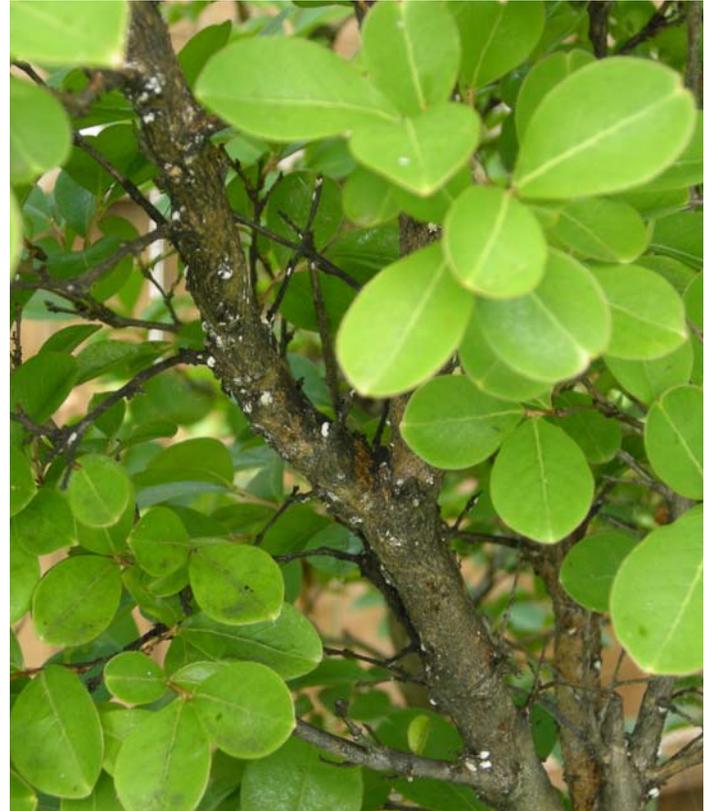
This bark scale in the genus *Eriococcus*, is thought to be an exotic insect pest that has infested North Texas crape myrtles. These bark scales appear as white, waxy encrustations near pruning wounds or in branch crotches. Larger female scales “bleed” a pink liquid when crushed. Since this scale excretes honeydew, the limbs and leaves become sticky. In heavy infestations, black sooty mold will begin to grow on the trunk and branches of the crape myrtle.

Currently, the crape myrtle bark scale has only been observed infesting crape myrtles in north Texas area (from South Dallas to Sherman). If you live outside this area and believe you have an infestation of this scale, please submit your sample or a picture of the infested crape myrtle to your local county Extension office or to Dr. Mike Merchant (m-merchant@tamu.edu) or myself (k-schofield@tamu.edu) at the Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Center, 17360 Coit Road, Dallas, TX 75252.

Some Control Options:

For heavily infested crape myrtles, it is recommended to wash the trunk and limbs with a soft brush and dishwashing soap solution to remove female scales and egg masses. Also, washing with the soapy water will remove some of the black mold.

Systemic insecticides such as those containing imidacloprid or dinotefuran as a drench applied to the root zone have shown good control when applied between the months of May and July. Also winter applications of dormant oil to the bark and crotches of the plants where scales shelter is an effective control option.



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Pest Check

Stinging Insects Are Active

As the temperature warms and summer approaches, we will begin to see larger populations of wasps, including paper wasps, mud daubers and yellow jackets. There are two species of paper wasps, *Polistes exclamans* which is brown with yellow markings on the head, thorax and bands on the abdomen and *Polistes carolina* which is reddish-brown in color. Both have smoky colored wings and are ¾ to 1 inch in length. In the spring, the fertile queens find a nesting site and begin to build a nest. Paper wasp nests are composed of wood fibers that are chewed and formed into open hexagonal cells arranged in a comb-like shape. Their nests are oriented downward and are suspended by a single filament. Their nests can be found in such areas as underneath eaves, in structures, or around plants. Adult paper wasps prey on insects such as caterpillars, flies and beetle larvae, which they feed to developing larvae. This makes them a beneficial insect.

Some Control Options:

Since paper wasps feed on caterpillars and other insects, they are considered beneficial insects so no control is needed. However, some people may be highly allergic to their venom, so removal of the wasps nest is necessary. Nests can be knocked down from eaves using a high pressure water spray.

Also pressurized sprays of insecticidal soaps and oils can be used. Residual insecticides can also be used, such as those containing the active ingredients deltamethrin or cyfluthrin. Be sure to take precautions when treating, so the wasps will not attack nearby people or pets.

Yellowjacket populations can also increase in the summer. Yellowjacket workers are ½ inches in length, with black with yellow markings on the head, thorax and abdomen. The yellowjackets use their chewing mouthparts to construct carton nests. Nests are usually underground, but occasionally they

can be found in wall voids and indoors. Their nests are usually spherical and consist of a number of round combs that are attached to each other and then surrounded by a layered outer covering.

Yellowjackets are considered beneficial since they feed developing larvae arthropod prey. However when their nests are disturbed, defending worker wasps can sting multiple times. Also, foraging worker wasps may be a nuisance at picnics and other outdoor events.



Southern yellowjackets, *Vespula squamosa* (Drury) (Hymenoptera: Vespidae), developmental stages; larval stages (instars), pupae, adult. Photo by Bart Drees, Professor and Extension Entomologist, Texas A&M University.

Mention of commercial products is for educational purposes only and does not represent endorsement by Texas AgriLife Extension or The Texas A&M University System. Insecticide label registrations are subject to change, and changes may have occurred since this publication was printed. The pesticide user is always responsible for applying products in accordance with label directions. Always read and carefully follow the instructions on the container label.



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Building Your Dreams – June 2010 ©

By Dave Morgan – President, RCD Luxury Homes, Inc.

Perhaps the most nagging concern you have as a home owner is your home's foundation. When it comes to your home here in Garland, you either have had foundation problems or you will most likely have foundation problems. So, don't worry about what you cannot change. We all have clay soils below our slab (or pier and beam) foundations, and the clay will expand when it's wet and contract when it's dry.

So, what can we do to coax along our foundations to be "healthy" for as long as possible. In one word, it's "drainage". The soil around your foundation should generally gently slope away down from the foundation. Where that is not possible, the use of a French Drain" should be considered if appropriate. Don't pile dirt above the foundation line, though, because that will create a whole new set of problems. When it is dry outside, make sure that the soil around the foundation has moisture. A soaker hose placed 18 to 24 inches away from the foundation works great as does a consistent automatic sprinkler system watering. DO NOT water directly where the soil and foundation meet.

Realize that almost 100% of the foundations poured by home builders are not perfectly level. Most builders strive to get there – a small few could care less, and it's up to the professionalism of their workers to attempt to reach that goal. With that in mind, anyone repairing your foundation should be aiming to get the foundation back as close to its former state – not to being perfectly level. In striving for that goal, the foundation repair folks should be looking to level the home ONLY to the point where they DO NOT BREAK something else.

You should ALWAYS have a licensed plumber inspect both your pressure lines AND your gravity lines after the foundation repair work is completed. The pressure lines will be easy enough for all of us to spot a leak. The gravity lines, however, are the exact opposite as they can leak almost undetected since these sewer lines are used relatively infrequently and with a relatively small amount of water. Left unfixed, these leaks will get larger, may not smell well over time, and could cause more foundation problems (remember our clay soils expand and contract).

Always use a professional foundation repair firm. Especially ask to see proof of all his insurance, read his contracts for warranty information, and also understand HOW AND WHEN a lifetime warranty (if one exists) has to be transferred. Make sure that measurements are taken – if you have a "lifetime warranty", how can you force a warranty claim repair when there are no baseline measurements defined in the contract. Do you just trust the repair guy? Also, question how they will back up their work by seeking their financial condition. Note that there is NO State of Texas fund for foundation repair claims if the repair guy goes out of business.

If you are buying a home that has had the foundation repaired, that's actually great if it was done properly. You won't have to repair it in the upcoming years. Do two things before you buy, though. First, check out the reputation of the foundation repair company to make sure they are "top shelf" and still in business, of course. Second, make sure that the transferrable warranty is (a) current (in other words, make sure that an intermediate buyer (or more) did not forget to both register in time and also pay the transfer fee, and (b) make sure the contract has baseline measurement data (in other words, the contract means something) so that it is not otherwise worthless.

If you are selling a home that obviously needs foundation repairs, repair the foundation to where (and only where) it needs to be repaired. DO NOT allow a purchaser to do his own foundation assessment, or DO NOT provide a sales price allowance for the foundation repair. Why? As a buyer, I'm going to ask for way more than what is really needed. If a ten pier repair is more than adequate, why allow a buyer the opportunity to demand a twenty pier repair "just to be safe"? Worse, if the sale falls through, the required Seller's Disclosure form MUST disclose that twenty pier repair assessment; otherwise, be prepared to head to the court house if you do not make that disclosure. Give me a call if you need assistance especially when it comes to reading a proposed contract, reading the transfer provisions, or understanding foundation concerns in general.

RCD LUXURY HOMES, INC.

2229 Moss Trail
Garland, Texas 75044-7837

RCD Luxury Homes does residential and commercial construction, remodeling, rehabbing, and repairs to your specifications. We utilize our employees and trusted local contractors to work on your home or business, and those individuals (including any skilled laborers employed) are all verified checked as being United States citizens and background checked for your peace of mind.

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For a free consultation & quote, call Cannon Gentry, Project Manager, at 214-478-6322.

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SIR SPEEDY CONTACT INFO

620 N. Glenville
Richardson, TX 75081 [MAP](#)

P 972-238-7664
F 972-238-1510
E sspeedy@swbell.net
W RichardsonTX230.sirspeedy.com

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