



President's Message for August 2011

Hope all of our neighbors have survived our twenty days in a row of one hundred degree weather. I know it has been a hot summer and large utility bills for all of us.

We had our second board meeting on the 5th of July we had a total of ten members present of our 16 member board. I am hoping for a larger turn out for our meeting on AUGUST 2.

There was a lot of discussion about the accident at laurel oaks and beltline during our meeting. I noticed that the brick work for the entrance and the Oakridge sign have been repaired.

Cecile has really done a great job on our membership. As of July 17, we have 313 signed up and dues paid. We discussed sending thank you cards out to new members of ONA and including the contact information of the District Representative and the President. this will give our new

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ONA OFFICERS

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Vice President	Larry Grisham
Secretary	Ken Fentress
Treasurer	Orville Weiss

ONA DIRECTORS

District 1	Deb Pandak
District 2	Ed Hester
District 3	Lori Oswald
District 4	Dan Nichols
District 5	Ernie Gharis
District 6	Mark Edwards
District 7	Sharon Parrish

ONA COMMITTEES (proposed)

Membership	Cecile LaBossiere
Communications	Dana Hopkins
Environmental	Joe Fagan
Crime Prevention & Safety	Brenda Olive

City Council by Rick Williams

On July 11, the City Council had an all-day, team-building, budget-discussing meeting. It gave us a chance to get to know our two new council members better, and Assistance City Manager Bryan Bradford gave us a budget presentation focusing on FY12 (i.e., Oct 2011 – Sept 2012). It now appears we will not need a tax increase to balance the budget for FY12, and the primary reason is due to a change in State law which changes the city's obligation to fund the Texas Municipal Retirement System for Garland employees. This reduction in the TMRS saves the City about \$3 million in FY 12 and \$3.8 million each year thereafter. Employees in Garland will not be getting a pay raise, but no one is being laid off. It was also pointed out that single family homes in Garland have dropped in value by an average of 17.2% since pre-recession

times in 2007--smaller homes have experienced a bigger drop, and larger ones a smaller drop.

I've mentioned before that being on the Council is a learning experience, and occasionally I learn something that just astounds me. During a work session briefing on animal services and the Animal Services Advisory Committee, I learned the animal shelter now receives each month about 200 relinquishments. In other words, that's 200 dogs or cats brought to the shelter by their owners who simply are giving them to the shelter, typically for financial reasons. I suppose that's a sign on the economic times, but in my family, our dog and 2 cats are basically family members, and it's hard to imagine 200 individuals each month giving up their family pets. Speaking of

(Continued on page 4)

Douglas Athas, City Council District 1 5/19/11

The budget adopted by the Council last year dealt with a revenue decline from the previous year, as that year dealt with a decline from two years ago. Preliminary figures from the Dallas Central Appraisal District indicate we will have another decline this year. Currently it looks to be about 3.5%, after a 3.5% decline in 2010 and a 3.7% decline in 2009.

There was no tax increase last year. The shortfall was covered by cutting expenses, no raises to city employees, increased user fees in some areas, and restructuring long-range debt because of lower interest rates. The transfer from GP&L to the general fund was the same amount as the previous year but the amount was a higher percentage of power sales.

In the past, many years when we didn't collect higher *ad valorem* taxes, we had a nice offset with new construction, such as the Firewheel Town Center one year. Records for new construction stretch back to 1988 but this year looks to be lowest year on record for new construction: \$51 million.

We won't have the final figures from the appraisal district until late July, after which we will start again to approve a new budget sometime in September. The figures could change, depending on how

many appeals are granted by DCAD. Rumors of higher appraisals for commercial property, if true, would probably mean quite a few appeals.

While there doesn't sound like much room for good news, there is. These figures are disappointing but they are not unexpected. In fact, they are relatively close to what was projected a year ago by the Budget and Research Dept. This news is what we have been preparing to deal with and on track with our five-year plan. That means we didn't spend money last year or the year before on the hope that we would have new revenues to cover those expenses. We have been managing the city very conservatively, both at the council level and the staff level. And it is fortunate that has been true.

It will be *déjà vu* in August when cities suddenly discover they have huge budget gaps to cover, as we have seen each of the last several years. That hasn't happened in Garland and the credit goes completely to the staff. The Council's accomplishment has been to not push staff to spend money for some pet project or other wasteful venture.

Prescription Drug Savings with city's New Prescription Discount Card

A new program offers savings on prescription drugs to Garland residents who are without health insurance, a traditional benefits plan, or have prescriptions not covered by insurance.

The Prescription Discount Card is made available to residents by the City of Garland in collaboration with the [National League of Cities](#) (NLC) and is made possible through Garland's membership in NLC. The card is FREE to all Garland residents, regardless of age, income, or existing health insurance. By using this card, residents may save an average of 20% off the regular retail price of prescription drugs at participating pharmacies.

To discover the savings and learn more about the program, [go to the City of Garland web site](#) to access the program online and print a card, check drugs prices and locate participating pharmacies.

President's Message (continued)

(Continued from page 1)

members a contact for any questions or concerns about our association or our neighborhood.

Brenda Olive reported a city-wide EMT program to allow access to personal medical information. This will be a voluntary program. The information will allow the EMT's to better serve our neighbors in a medical emergency situation. Oakridge has been selected to be a trial neighborhood for the city.

During our meeting Brenda reminded us that the golf course property is private property. Any one using the property without permission is liable for trespassing, and can be given a citation by authorized personal.

I attended a meeting with the City Manager this week with Bill and Brenda Olive. Our city manager, Mr. Dollar, informed us that the city had completed their budget and we would not be seeing any tax increases this year. The city is having its challenges and they realize that their citizens are being very careful and conservative with their finances as well.

Please be careful out doors in the heat!



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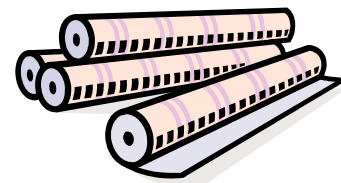
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OAKRIDGE RESIDENT SINCE 1996
ONA MEMBER/FORMER BOARD MEMBER
QUALITY WORK DONE BY THE OWNER
INSURED



City Council by Rick Williams (continued)

(Continued from page 1)

the shelter, as part of that same briefing, it was mentioned that they are running low on dog food, so if you would like to contribute, go to Garland's home page www.ci.garland.tx.us and under the "Departments" tab, find "Animal Services" which will have the info on how to help.

The 3' high guard rails just west of Jupiter on Arapaho continues to be a work in progress. The primary problem is that Verizon failed to properly mark the location of their underground telephone lines, and the City contractor cut them when digging holes for the railing. Now Verizon is moving the lines which is a pretty big project based on the number of men and equipment I see. The other problem reported to me was that on the south side, the guard rails blocked DART bus stops so that riders had to step over the rail to get on/off the bus. DART, which had failed to communicate/coordinate with the City when we told them about the proposed guard rail, has magically fixed this problem—they removed the bus stop signs, and thus, the bus stops no longer exists.

A lot of homes come with a deed restriction document. Typically, the homeowner might have this document tucked away with other house papers, and may not know that it exists. It may limit the type of fence that can be built, restrict taking water from a pond, provide for an easement in a neighbor's yard, etc. In the last year, I have had some district 7 residents contact me regarding a neighbor who is violating a provision of a deed restriction. As a general rule, a deed restriction is a document created by the developer when the housing development was being built, but the City Attorney has told me that basically, "we don't have a dog in this fight" when it comes to a violations unless the deed restriction violation also happens to be inconsistent with a Garland ordinance. If a City ordinance is being violated, then the City can be involved. Most deed restrictions provide for rules in case of dispute, and those are the procedures to follow.

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



The picture above was taken by Rick Poole at the bridge on Diamond Oaks

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An energy audit can be the first step to reducing your utility costs! Our specially trained professional auditor will conduct a walk-through inspection of your home or business to identify specific energy and cost-saving measures. The audit includes evaluation of the following items:

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ONA Membership Drive is in Full Swing! by Cecile Labossiere

We are currently in our Sixth Week of the membership drive and I wanted to say thank you to the many Oakridge residents who have joined the association this year. Our summer campaign will continue through August and 2nd invoices will be mailed to Oakridge Residents that haven't joined yet during the month of September.

We have some highlights to share with you. We have had a lot of new members sign up this year with a total of 43 so far. This is significantly higher than last year which totaled only 28. We also had over 50% of last year's new members renew their membership for this year. That is exciting news as retention of ONA members is vital to our success.

I also wanted to provide an update by district so that you can take a look at your district's membership rankings. As you know, we do as much as we can to get the word out about the Oakridge Neighborhood Association and the many reasons why residents should join but ultimately we need you, our members to talk with your friends and neighbors and encourage them to join. For the last five years we have averaged between 37% and 42% for participation in the association. For this year we are tracking slightly ahead of last year in terms of number of members that have joined/renewed by the middle of July.

The Membership summary is listed below – Let's get fired up and see which district will come out on top for Membership this year!

Dis-trict	Total Houses	Total Members	% Membership
1	185	68	37%
2	152	75	49%
3	142	29	20%
4	152	61	40%
5	189	43	23%
6	122	17	14%
7	224	67	30%
Total	1166	360	31%

Remind your neighbors and friends that they can either mail the invoice along with a check in the return envelope provided or log into the Oakridge Neighborhood Association website www.oakridgena.org and click on the "Join US" link and use the paypal feature.

Thanks and I hope this encourages you to speak with others about joining the ONA this year.

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An Update on the Country Club

By Brenda Olive

As most of you will have noticed, the bushes along Beltline have been trimmed and we can drive in the right lane without concern about scratching our vehicles. Unfortunately, we can't report that the club is sold and the new owner is ready to begin renovations. The reason for this is called "Water Rights" and these are controlled by the state's TCEQ board. Former owner Silverstein failed to renew the water rights permit way back in 2008 and allowed the permit to expire. The recent offer the bank received was contingent upon the bank being able to secure a new permit and because of the current drought situation across the entire state of Texas no permits are being issued so the only way the club could obtain a permit right now is to buy one from someone else or lease one from someone. That is apparently not an option because no one is either selling or leasing their permits. New permit take approximately 300 days from time of application receipt until they're issued, so even if a permit could be issued, it wouldn't be done for some time. Obviously the club can't get the water from the City of Garland because our water supply comes from the North Texas Water Alliance and the city must budget the amount of usage each year. If the city goes over their budgeted amount there is a financial cost that then gets defrayed to the citizens of Garland. Most of you will recall when that occurred a few years ago, our water bills suddenly went up. During a meeting with the City Manager this past week he assured us that the city will do everything it can to help get the club sold. It is important to the city because obviously tax revenues go down when property values go down and they want to ensure that Oakridge's property values remain as high as possible during the current economic downturn. We will continue to keep you apprised of any changes that occur regarding the sale of the club. Let's all pray in the meantime for some

good soaking rains, not only here in Garland, but also across the entire state to relieve this drought!

Wasps Used to Control Silverleaf Whiteflies

A research team led by Dr. Lance Osborne from the University of Florida has found that papaya plants can be used to host a wasp that attacks silverleaf whiteflies. Whiteflies are a pest of tomatoes, since they feed on tomato leaves and transmit diseases, including tomato yellow leaf curl virus. By introducing papaya plants with parasitic wasps into the greenhouse, the wasps can lay eggs in the immature whiteflies. The wasps kill the whitefly when the wasp offspring hatches inside of it and feeds on the whitefly as it develops into an adult wasp. The researchers found the wasp significantly controlled silverleaf whiteflies on tomatoes while at the same time attacking papaya whiteflies. This could result in less insecticides being used to control whiteflies.

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September 2nd through 5th

Gear Up for Labor Day Grilling

If you're like most self-titled grill-masters, you've already fired up your pride and joy many times this season. But take special precautions to ensure a holiday of food and fun: 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.

Looking for a brand new grill?

Charcoal, gas or electric? 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. Create a 'second kitchen' outside your home.

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Joe Wrinkle

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Crime and Safety Report by Brenda Olive

So far, July has been a quiet month, with only a couple of incidents being reported. We did have an apparent hit and run in the duplex area however, when someone apparently struck a brick mailbox with their vehicle, destroying it and leaving the unfortunate homeowner with the headache of cleaning up the mess and financial burden of hiring someone to replace the box. While everyone understands that accidents happen, it would have been nice if the person(s) involved would have at least owned up to it and offered to pay for the replacement. Obviously someone did some serious damage to the front of their vehicle so it isn't as though they didn't know they had hit the brick mailbox!

Incidents from June 20 --- July 20
On July 14 -- criminal mischief (between \$50 & \$500 dollars)-- at--2006 Overview
On July 19 -- theft of property---at 2410 Loan Oak

This month we have a few tips for personal safety and security for everyone. Next month we will make suggestions for security in your home. Some of these suggestions you have heard in the past; but, we thought we should just jog everyone's memory a little. Sometimes we all forget and become complacent after awhile; it's just human nature.

Always stay alert and be aware of personal security. Look self-assured by keeping your head up when walking and make eye contact with people approaching you. This makes you look less like a target.

Always have your keys out and ready when approaching your car or building. Put a whistle on your key chain and don't be afraid to use it if you are accosted or threatened.

If you are in danger or are being attacked, yell "CALL 911" or give other specific directions to any onlookers—screaming "RAPE" "GET THE PO-

(Continued on page 9)



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Are Lizards Creeping You Out?



The green lizard that is often observed in yards is called the green anole lizard and it should not be feared. Instead, they should be thanked for eat-

ing many garden and landscape insect pests, such as crickets, cockroaches, moths and flies. Anoles can change color from green to brown, and tend to remain green when temperatures are more than 70°F while remain brown in cooler weather.

Crime and Safety Report (continued)

(Continued from page 8)

LICE", or, "**STOP-THIEF**", will certainly draw attention.

- Don't overload your hands and arms with packages. If you have no choice, then visualize how you would respond if attacked, how you would get your hands free, what you could use in defense, etc.

- If you think someone is following you, either by foot or in a car, don't go home. Go to a trusted neighbor or a public place to call police or go directly to a police or fire station.

- Be particularly careful using outside ATM's at night or in unfamiliar surroundings. Check out the area before you exit your vehicle and if you are uncomfortable or see anything that doesn't appear right, drive away immediately.

- If you carry a purse with a shoulder strap, keep it securely tucked under your arm when walking. Be prepared to let it go if someone grabs it. Don't become a double victim by holding on to the purse, getting knocked down and dragged, possibly suffering a broken arm, shoulder, hip or leg, because more than likely the thief will take the purse anyway. Shoulder straps are made to be secure; they don't break or tear away from the purse easily. A thief will just drag you along until he/she gets what he/she wants. Women walking alone, or pushing a baby stroller or shopping cart are perfect targets for purse snatchers, those carrying purses are even more likely to become victims, and those with shoulder strap purses are far more likely to become a victim.

- If someone approaches you in a parking lot or isolated area—stay alert, keep walking and be prepared to run if necessary. Look for others who can help. Never walk to your car while talking on your cell phone, remember, have your keys in your hand, they can be used as a weapon if needed.

- If you're a jogger or runner, or, simply drive back and forth daily to work, vary your route; don't take the exact same route every day. You're less likely to become a target when the criminal can't be sure exactly where you're going to go or do every day.

- If you're mugged, don't fight to protect property or money---if someone grabs you, go limp, your sudden body weight will throw him/her off stride, and the culprit may assume you've fainted or had a heart attack. Another suggestion, if you're male and carry a wallet, toss the wallet away from you and the attacker, your money is the object, more than likely he/she will turn you lose and go for the wallet. Women, this will work for you too, if you toss your purse away from the attacker and yourself.

- If you stop for gas, don't leave your purse lying on the front seat in clear view. Don't leave your car keys in the car, and never ever leave your child alone in the car while you run into the store.

- Always lock your car when you park—and look into the back seat before you enter your vehicle, especially at night, make sure you don't have someone hiding in the car.

- Keep your car doors locked while driving, especially in unfamiliar areas. It is very easy for someone to open the door and jump into the car while you're stopped at a red light.

At the September ONA General Meeting we plan to have a police officer come in and talk to all of us about safety and security—and we might even have a little "surprise" at the same time.

Finally, school will be starting again soon, now is the time to teach your children and grandchildren about personal safety, particularly about "stranger danger" and to prepare them for actions they should take if approached by a stranger.

The ARTS in Garland

Granville Arts Center Facilities

300 N. Fifth Street, Garland 972-205-2790

Plaza Theatre

521 W. State Street, Garland 972-205-2782

The Garland Opry “Rock & Roll Extravaganza” Plaza Theatre August 27 7:30 p.m.

Songs of the 50’s and 60’s will be the focus of this “Rock & Roll Extravaganza” featuring CB Luce and The Garland Opry Band with guest artists from Garland and the DFW area as well as one surprise artist of the R&R fame. Come hear songs made famous by Elvis, Jerry Lee, Roy Orbison, The Everly Brothers, Brenda Lee, The Beatles, Buddy Holly, Fats Domino, The Coasters, Johnny Cash (yes...he did some R&R), and too many more to list!

“Garland Eyes” Photo Exhibit by Doug Athas - Granville Arts Center Gallery Sept 7 - Oct 31, 2011



Garland Eyes will celebrate its first anniversary with a photo exhibit of images from GarlandEyes.com at the Granville Arts Center Gallery. Garlandites have many views of the city the world and have captured those views from many perspectives. The stories told by the photographs can be powerful while muted, personal while public. They may be edgy or square. Whatever they are, they are our stories. Contributors are encouraged to let the image do the talking. The Internet is a wonderful median for sharing these stories, but the

subtleties are often lost in the pixelized monitors we use for our windows to Garland Eyes. The exhibit will feature images from Garland Eyes but presented in detail that only a larger, fine-printed image can reveal. Viewing hours are Monday through Friday, 9am - 5pm, and during all performances.

Sept 10th 7:30 p.m. Plaza Theatre DD and the Studebakers



DD and the Studebakers take us back on a musical journey to the 50’s! Come and enjoy a night of rock and roll music at the Plaza Theatre on the square in downtown Garland. Wear your bobby socks and pony tails as you toe tap to songs by Chuck Berry, Elvis, Jerry Lee Lewis, Roy Orbison, Brenda Lee, Fats Domino, Bill Haley and the Comets and many more. It promises to be a night you won’t forget!

Tickets are \$12.00 each. No reserved seating is available. To purchase tickets go online at ddstudebakers.com.

Sept. 24 7:30 p.m. Plaza Theatre

The Levee Singers presented by the GSM Guild



The Garland Summer Musicals Guild presents Dallas’ most famous entertainment group...The Levee Singers...in concert at the Plaza Theatre. The Levee singers are celebrating their 50th anniversary this year after becom-

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The ARTS in Garland

ing one of Dallas’s best-known and most in-demand entertainment groups in the early 1960’s. Come join the GSM Guild as they present this spectacular fun filled evening with the Levee Singers...”Busier and Better than Ever!” All tickets are \$24. For reservations call 972-205-2790.



Sept. 25 6:30 pm

Granville Arts Center - Brownlee Auditorium

Mexico 2000 Ballet Folklorico “Mexican Influences”

Mexico 2000 Ballet Folklorico presents its new and spectacular artistic production entitled “Mexican Influences.” Directors Alex & Mary Palencia invite you to learn during this educational performance about Mexico’s most important traditional influences from other countries, which since the 1600’s started to forge today’s-Mexican Traditions. This bilingual musical will include actors, dancers and singers; history, music and dances from Tabasco, Tamaulipas, Calabaceado, Durango, Chiapas, Veracruz, Fiesta in Jalisco dances and the premier presentation of “El Zapateado” (The Footwork). Tickets are \$15 general admission and \$12 seniors and children under 7 years old. For more information or to purchase tickets, please contact Alex Palencia at 972-429-1082.

Sept. 25

3:00 p.m.

Plaza Theatre “Settling for Mr. or Ms. Right



Now” WJW Productions

WJWiley Productions presents an encore production of “Settling for Mr. or Ms. Right Now.” Jackson Alexander prays for a virtuous woman whose price is far above rubies (Proverbs 31:10). He vows that he will wait on God to send him a wife--but does he wait or does he settle? London Carrington is waiting on God to send her a husband--does she wait or does she settle? Maxi Jones will do just about anything to get the man of her dreams, is she too good to be true? Order your tickets online at www.wjwileyproductions.com for \$20 ea.

Presale tickets are \$17 ea. and \$25 ea. at the door. Please purchase your tickets early. Seats are limited. Doors open at 2:30 pm. For more info contact WJ Wiley Productions at (972) 741-6524 or wjwileyproductions@yahoo.com.

Sept. 30 Garland Host Lions Club Children’s Magic Show

7:00 pm Granville Arts Center - Brownlee Auditorium



The Garland Host Lions Club presents a children’s magic show featuring C.J. Johnson. All seats are \$10. Doors open at 6:45 pm. Show is 7pm – 8:30 pm. Call 972-432-8982 for tickets.

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August 2011, Vol.19, No. 8

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

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Non-Emergencies	972-485-4840
Water & Sever	972-205-3210
Atmos Gas	1-800-460-3030
Rick Williams	214-535-2648
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