



## Presidents Message for July 2012

We had our July board meeting the evening of June 26th to get away from the July 4th holiday.

We approved a proposal to get our sprinkler system repaired on Ridge Oak. We are having to bring that system at Ridge Oak back to code standards to get our leak at that entrance repaired.

Cecile has started our membership drive and it seems to have started with a bang. I hope everyone received our newsletter. We have had a good start for the first month, but we still hope to top our 2011-2012 membership. If you need to know who your district representative is or need to get in touch with your district representative go to our ONA web site. My email address is on the ONA web site. Our web site is [www.oakridgena.org](http://www.oakridgena.org).

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### ONA OFFICERS

President	Larry Walters
Vice President	Larry Grisham
Secretary	Sharon Parrish
Treasurer	Jim Conrath

### ONA DIRECTORS

District 1	Deb Pandak
District 2	Fern Cook
District 3	Sandra Steven
District 4	Mary Pattie
District 5	Ernie Gharis
District 6	Mark Edwards
District 7	David Parrish

### ONA COMMITTEES

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

## City Council by Rick Williams

On occasions, I hear complaints along the lines of "Garland doesn't do a good job of telling its citizens what's going on in the City." This is info about which I have previously written, but go to Garland's web site [www.ci.garland.tx.us](http://www.ci.garland.tx.us), click the "City Services" tab and select "eNews Registration." There you can sign up to receive emails about what's going on in the City AND you can select from a menu of the type of information you want to receive.

I know Oakridge has not yet received the large blue containers for recyclable materials, but my neighborhood did. The City did a great job of sending printed material prior to delivery of the blue containers, and the top of each container has a large color sticker clearly explaining what can and cannot be recycled. I know Oakridge residents look forward to the day they receive such containers, but there is no firm schedule as

it will take about 5 years for the entire city to transition from red bins to large blue containers.

If you have read my articles in the past, you have heard me sing the praises of many talented Garland employees. Unfortunately, we will soon be losing two of our finest. Ray Schwertner, Director of GP&L, will be moving to the Austin area due to family reasons, but fortunately, we signed a contract with Ray so that his unique skills will still be available to us to deal with many critical issues. Ray was GP&L Director for a little over 5 years, and he brought 10s of millions of dollars to this City that we would have likely not received had any other individual been in his position.

Also leaving is Robert Wunderlich, Managing Director of Transportation, Streets, Engineering and Stormwater. Robert is a really smart and personable individual, and he is leaving to join

*(Continued on page 3)*

## **A Bit of Advice**

**By Brenda Olive**

Many Oakridge residents are remodeling, doing repairs, new roofing, new gutters, cabinetry, etc. and this prompts us to issue a **word of warning**. We highly recommend that you use only **local contractors**--not out-of-town or out-of-state---remember, you may need corrections or repairs later--and a non-local contractor can be "long gone". Finding someone new to rework or correct a problem created by someone else won't be easy and may be very costly. **Never pay cash or check before any work is done.** Before you sign a contract for any type of work in your home or yard, ask for references (at least 6) and take the time to contact all of them, not just the first or second name on the list. Ask, was the work done right? On time? Per the contract? Were there "hidden costs" after the work was started? Ask if they know of anyone else who had work done by this contractor, if they do, get the name and phone number for that person too. Call them....**do your due diligence**. If you can't reach all of the people on the list, ask the contractor for additional names---don't be shy--this is your money and your home, that you're dealing with. Don't get stuck with a larger bill than you anticipated. Don't get burned by unscrupulous contractors.

Bear in mind that the City of Garland requires a permit for many of the repairs and replacements being done. Ask if the contractor will obtain the permit (there is a charge for permits), if he/she won't do it, then you must. In many instances the building codes require an inspection of the completed work by a building inspector. This is for your protection--a bad or faulty or inferior job can result in fires, water damage or a collapse of structure, leading to death or injury. If you don't know whether a permit is required or not, don't assume the contractor will take care of it...it is 'the homeowners responsibility to ensure that a permit is obtained, not the contractor's. Call Garland Building and Zoning at **972-205-2300**--press 0, and ask if the work you're anticipating doing requires a permit. You can also find out how much that permit costs, how it is issued, where it must be posted, etc.

**Check** the Better Business Bureau and look for any online website for the company. This can provide invaluable information. Look for their affiliations, memberships, etc. One of the most reliable websites is Angie's List. There is a fee for use of this service, but it works well, many real estate professionals suggest that potential homeowner's sign up for this service. **Never assume** that just because you saw a

company working at another residence in the neighborhood it must be okay. Find out what work was being done, if it was done on time, etc. and would they hire the company again in the future. Important to ask--are you related to the owner or manager or other employee of this company? *Be aware that some contractors will give a "finder's fee" to individuals who refer someone to their company.*

If a company wants money up front before starting any work on a *non-custom* job--**walk away**. If the contractor needs your cash to buy materials before he/she can do the job, then that contractor may have a credit issue---**walk away**. Some contractors will offer a contract with a proportioned payment plan--1/3, 1/3 and 1/3 or 1/2, 1/2. Read these contracts carefully before you sign them. If it requires a large outlay of money from you in any way, it may be a good idea to have the contract reviewed by an attorney before you sign it. If a contractor has a problem with that--**walk away**. *Custom work contractors* will generally request a down payment--this is protection for them--and it may be a substantial down payment, obviously if the material is custom made or cut for you, if you cancel, the contractor can be stuck with materials he can not utilize. Even if the job is "custom" make sure that you've done background checks, verified the ability of the company to complete the job and do it in a "custom" manner.

The best advice: Know your contractor--gather as much information as you possibly can about him/her before you sign any agreements, make use of the internet, many as you ceeding--that the tractor be done to be eyes and can't be-physical neighbor

contact as official entities can before pro- and make sure work the cons- says needs to actually needs done--use your ears, if you cause of a situation, ask a or friend to be with you when the contractor visits your home. Let someone you trust be in attendance while the contractor is reviewing the damage or area to be addressed. Always keep copies of everything, not only for warranty purposes, but also in the event you need to take action or seek redress in the future.



**City Council (continued)**

(Continued from page 1)

the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) as a Research Engineer and Acting Director of TTI's Center for Transportation Safety. TTI is a member of the Texas A&M University system and seeks solutions to the problems and challenges facing all modes of transportation.

It was very sad to read that 76 year old Nancy Harris died in Parkland Hospital after being set on fire during a convenience store robbery in south Garland. Cases like this are what make me support capital punishment.

In June, selected members of the Garland Citizen Police Academy Alumni Association will begin issuing citations for handicap parking violations within the city. State law allows trained volunteers to issue citations for such violations (under specific circumstances). Initially, 12 trained volunteers who will begin enforcement, and we are likely to expand the number of volunteers in the future as there are a number of cities which already have large groups of volunteers in the same type of program. The volunteers will go out in 2-person teams, will be in light blue volunteer uniforms, and will have magnetic signs on their personal vehicles indicating they are involved with the Handicap Parking Enforcement program.

Garland has received the preliminary 2012 property tax figures from the Dallas Central Appraisal District. After adjusting for anticipated appeals, we estimate that the tax base will be certified at \$9.919 billion, representing a decline of 2.65% from 2011's certified numbers. These numbers are different from what you will see reported in the *Dallas Morning News*, since the newspaper does not take into account the estimated value lost during the appeals process. It appears that 2012 will be the fourth consecutive year of decline in the tax base - bringing the cumulative loss of value to \$1.3 Billion or 11.6% since the beginning of the recession. The general fund property tax revenue for fiscal year 2012-13 is expected to decline \$725,000 from the current fiscal year, and we anticipate an FY 212-2013

overall deficit of approximately \$1.0 million (assuming no increase in employee compensation). The preliminary appraised values are within range of what the budget office had projected and while disappointing, they are not a surprise. Finding additional cuts after seven years of subpar revenue growth will be challenging, but we do not anticipate material service level changes will be required to close the deficit.

Garland has an "unmanaged landscape" ordinance which as you might guess is difficult to define and enforce. However, one part of the definition includes dead trees and shrubs, and after the drought last year, there are a lot of dead trees. One was the silver maple in my back yard which I bought for \$9.95 in 1981 from K-Mart, and I had it removed last month for \$950.00! Now that I know a lot more about trees, I purchased a quality tree (i.e., a Chinquapin Oak) this time to replace the very poor tree choice I made in 1981.

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

**President's Message (continued)**

Please take a look at our web site and become a member.

Please do not forget that we are still under water restrictions. Our water days are Tuesday and Saturday. By the way you can hand water your outdoor plants by hand anytime.

Hopefully we will be getting some news about the status of the Golf Course soon.

Hope all of our neighbors have a good and safe July.

## **Crime and Safety Report**

### **By Brenda Olive**

**Crime Stats:** A review of crime stats for the first 5 months of 2012 reveal that we have a 25% increase over the same period of 2011. Some of this may be attributable to theft of roofing materials since we did have several reports of stolen roofing, but we also note that in May alone, we had 5 vehicle burglaries within 1 week; even more concerning, the criminal activity seems to be spread throughout the neighborhood. We did have a noticeable spike in door to door solicitors during this same period, many of them “selling” new roofs. In the past we’ve noted that when we have a spike in solicitors, crime also seems to spike up soon afterwards.

This year we worked with the GPD’s unit that handles soliciting permits to advise them of the companies who were soliciting without permits. We learned that as a rule, most of these solicitors did not have permits from the city. Not surprisingly, even though they were advised of the process and necessity of obtaining a permit, the majority never made application. Perhaps the idea of a police background check scared them off! One very positive outcome of the constant monitoring and notifying the police department of these solicitors is that the permitting department has compiled a list for patrol officers of the solicitors who have been issued a permit. The permit process is a good one; it helps ensure that individuals knocking on doors in Garland neighborhoods have been checked out and cleared to be walking up to your front door. The city ordinance against soliciting has definitely reduced the number of flyers and other materials left on doors as well as the constant door knocking and bell ringing of the past.

**Code Violations:** Recently a friend was issued a citation by Garland Code Enforcement because

his yard was “unmaintained”. This individual was more than just a little bit agitated by the citation—explaining that he “just hadn’t had time” to do the necessary work. A great deal of debris, a broken fence, a large tree limb, un-mowed grass, and overgrown shrubbery, were some of the items listed on the complaint letter. Apparently another resident in the area had complained that several yards weren’t being maintained; prompting a visit by Code Enforcement throughout the neighborhood, issuing warnings and citations. This individual was advised that his fine would be \$250.00 if the problem wasn’t rectified by a specific date. Having visited the neighborhood in the past, I was surprised to see the degree of neglect obvious when I visited it recently. Yards not mowed, peeling paint, broken fences, tree limbs lying about, and cars with flat tires---all of these point to a neighborhood in decline—one where crime rates will escalate, houses will be vandalized, etc. All of us get busy with our lives, we all fail to do some of the basic things we must do to maintain our property, from time to time, but, we must do these things to ensure our neighborhood stays a viable one, where residents can live in a relatively crime free state. If you have broken fences, peeling paint, or an your yard is looking ragged, now is the time to take care of it, before we get to the real heat of the summer. Let’s all do our part to keep Oakridge beautiful.

**Country Club:** The club hasn’t yet been sold, but a recent discussion with the bank indicates that although a contract hasn’t yet been signed, another candidate is in play. Hopefully, a contract will be negotiated some. In the meantime, notice how nice the fairways are looking. The recent rains have made a big difference and

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**Crime and Safety Report (continued)**

*(Continued from page 4)*

we're praying for additional rain to keep that nice green look going or growing. We still have people trespassing and/or fishing on the property, despite the numerous signs scattered along the 3course, however, the Game Warden has advised that he will be issuing citations to those caught fishing without a license. We have actually noticed that some of these so-called fishermen didn't really have a fishing rod or pole, instead they were "dipping" a tree limb or branch into the creek, pretending to be fishing. Obviously, this is a great way to hide the fact that they're actually just scoping out the neighboring homes, checking to see who is home, who isn't or what time residents come home, etc.

We have had a couple of reports that a man matching the description of our "peeper" was seen riding along streets here in Oakridge and in one instance, he suddenly jumped the curb and rode off across the course grass. Hopefully residents will avoid riding on the course, making it more difficult for that individual to blend in. We're still asking that everyone be on the alert for this individual—we don't know exactly where he is currently living, but since he seems to have an affinity for the Oakridge area, it is incumbent upon all of us to be vigilant and report any sightings.

Finally, concerning the golf course.....we had a call at 8:30pm one night last week, from a resident who observed three young boys, approximately 10-12 years old, swimming in the creek. These boys were located in one of the more remote areas of the course, well hidden from houses along the course as well as from the street. If you're from the 50+ generation, you'll probably remember how nice it was to take a dip

in a nice cool creek in the summer—but you'll also probably remember that an adult was close by, and times were totally different then from the way they are in 2012. Young boys were relatively safe from predators then, adults were more protective of their youths—and most likely you didn't go swimming when it was nearly dark in a remote area where you couldn't have called out for help and been heard by someone. The sad part of this is that in 2012 our children can't enjoy some of the pleasures that we did as children. Parents today must be extremely aware of where their children are, and even though Oakridge is a nice neighborhood, we can never forget that strangers, some of them totally unsavory, have been known to visit the area, particularly along the course. Hopefully soon, the club will be sold, new owners will be working, golfers will be playing and things will settle back down, in the meantime, please stay away from the creek and the course and utilize the local pools and water parks for a cool down.

We've had another report of West Nile Virus, this time in Richardson. Because of the recent rains, mosquitoes are plentiful, and it doesn't seem to matter what time of the day you're outside—they're there too. West Nile Virus can be deadly and we don't want anyone from Oakridge to be infected. After a rain and after your sprinklers run, take a walk around your yard (put on insect repellent first) and make sure that there is no standing water. Mosquitoes need a very scant amount of water to breed. I empty my bird bath every evening and put ice cubes in it in the morning for the birds.

Bear in mind too, summer is upon us, the heat is just beginning, make sure when you're working or playing outside that you stay hydrated, take frequent breaks, and avoid prolonged exposure



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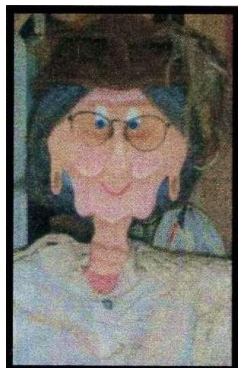
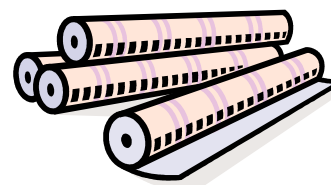
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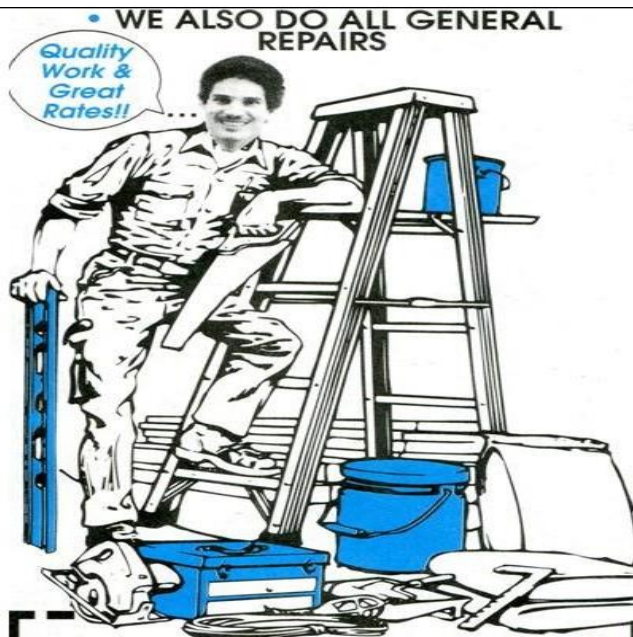
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## **Leadership Garland - Class 32, the next "Best Class"**

**by David Parrish, ONA Director, District 7**

Need a growth opportunity? I highly recommend **Leadership Garland**. And guess what, applications are now being accepted for Class 32. I joined Class 28 to learn more about our community, but came away with much, much more. My classmates form a network that is a cross section of business, education, government and community activities across Garland. They are my friends and colleagues. And our class project, the Community Leadership Connection, continues to provide leadership training and communication among the many non-profit organizations that serve Garland.

Leadership Garland is a program offered by the Garland Chamber of Commerce to any interested citizen who lives or works in Garland or is a member of the Garland Chamber. The purpose

of Leadership Garland is to provide corporate leadership training; to motivate and encourage civic leaders; and to develop personal leadership characteristics and skills within individuals. Participants are introduced to state, county, city officials, school board trustees, administrators, community leaders, community boards and commissions. Leadership skill topics are taught with active participation along with numerous field trips. Each graduate is encouraged to actively contribute to Garland's growth and future.

Questions? Feel free to call me at 972-530-3351. For more information about Leadership Garland or how to apply, go to: <http://www.garlandchamber.com/leadership-garland/leadership-garland>

Sam's Southern Eatery

2119 Buckingham

Richardson, TX

Albertson Shopping Center

If you like fried food you will enjoy the Cajun style food, very flavorful and not to spicy. Be hungry as the portions are large. Nice clean atmosphere, no alcohol, (you can go next door afterward for a beer at the Harbor Point) and no smoking. They have a full menu not everything is fried, so you can eat sensible. If you do not want eat in, they also have carry out.

I had the 6 shrimp and 6 oyster combo, red beans and rice, and fried okra, (\$11.99) way too much food for me, but it was good.

Next time fried chicken livers and gizzards.

I give it 4 burps!

Joe & Beth Fagan

## **Crime and Safety (continued)**

**by Brenda Olive**

*(Continued from page 5)*

to the sun. Let's have a safe, happy summer!

If you're planning on traveling, let us know and we will try to keep an eye on your home while you're away, or, if you prefer, you can contact Garland Police Department and ask them to monitor your property as they do offer that service. You can reach the COP at 972-495-3402 and the Garland Police Department at 972-485-4840-press 1 for an operator. Please bear in mind that the COP does a drive by, front and back, of your property however we do not walk around on the property itself. If we do spot something suspicious, we will call the police immediately.



Your new college freshman can't wait to bolt from home and begin to enjoy independent dorm life. But in preparing for college move-in day, he or she probably hasn't given any thought to those many "extras" needed to make that spartan room more livable. Before leaving for school, a trip to the local hardware store often is essential to stock up on some very important, yet often overlooked items. In addition to the computer, CD player and mini-fridge, try making room in the car for the following:

### **Tools**

A hammer and a box of nails or drywall anchors make hanging pictures and calendars on the walls easier. Double-sided tape or poster putty makes removal of posters from walls less damaging.

A flashlight and multiple packs of batteries come in handy if dorm electricity goes out. Extra batteries can also be used for all those extra electronics.

Standard or cordless screwdrivers make putting together furniture easier and help bookshelves and nightstands stay sturdy.

Extension cords and multi-outlet surge protectors are a must. Not only do they help expand room layout possibilities, but they also help protect valuable electronics, like computers.

Electrical wiring, extra cables and splitters are essential for multiple high-tech systems in a room like the stereo, TV, DVD player, computer and video game console.

### **Storage**

Shelf boards and brackets expand storage capabilities and make a small space look larger. Use them to hold books, picture frames and CDs.

Large plastic storage containers that fit discreetly underneath the bed are perfect for stowing away clothing and extra blankets.

### **Appliances**

Many hardware stores carry small coffee makers, toaster ovens and small microwaves for when hunger strikes during those late-night study sessions.

A small desktop or standing fan helps cool off a tiny dorm room.

For quick pickup of dry spills, a small cordless handvac that can be conveniently stored against the wall and out of sight does the dirty work.

A small reading lamp and extra light bulbs give eyes a break from overhead florescent dorm lighting. For a fun twist, pack some colored light bulbs.

### **Extras**

A long mirror visually makes a small room look bigger.

A dry erase board is great for hanging outside on a dorm room door so friends can leave messages. A corkboard also works as a place for posting photos of family and friends, class schedules and notes.

A stepstool makes it easier to reach high shelves in typically tiny dorm closets.

## The Achievement Center of Texas' 6th Annual Golf Tournament

### September 10, 2012

Let's PAR-TEE! You are invited to join our Celebrity Host, SMU-NBA Basketball Great, Ira Terrell and other professional athletes for our 6th Annual Achievement Center of Texas' Golf Tournament. The tournament tees off on Monday, September 10, 2012 with an 8:00 a.m. Shotgun Start at Prestonwood Country Club, 15909 Preston Road, Dallas, Texas 75248. All proceeds benefit the students of the Achievement Center of Texas. Corporate sponsorships range from \$250 to \$5,000 and a Team of four can play for \$500 (Individuals are \$150). For more information and to sign up, please contact the Golf Tournament Chairperson, Patricia Nichols, at [redlucypat@aol.com](mailto:redlucypat@aol.com) or (214) 477-2852 or visit our website- <http://www.actgala.com/act-events/act-annual-golf-tournament/>

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## The ARTS in Garland

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### Plaza Theatre

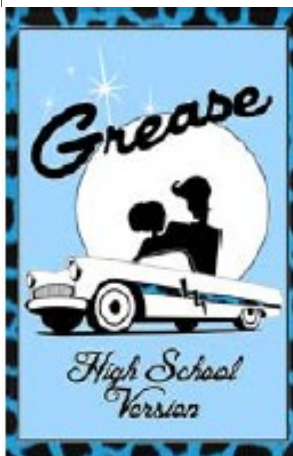
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### July 21 GCMA presents Oldies Night at the Plaza 7:30 pm Plaza Theatre

Garland Country Music Association Presents OLDIES NIGHT AT THE PLAZA on Saturday, July 21 at 7:30 Featuring Guys & Dolls Vocal Group singing classic hits of the 50's & 60's including; Shake Rattle & Roll, That'll

Be The Day, Still of the Night, Doo Ron, Up on the Roof, Ain't No Mountain High, Lion Sleeps Tonight, Let It Be and many more. General Admission tickets are \$15, Seniors (60+) are \$12.50. Tickets are available online at [www.TheGarlandOpry.com](http://www.TheGarlandOpry.com) or by calling 972-494-3835. For more information on Guys & Dolls visit [www.gdvocals.com](http://www.gdvocals.com).



### August 1-5 "Grease: School Version" by GCT's Children On Stage Plaza Theatre

Garland Civic Theatre presents "Grease" School Version by Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey August 1-5. Here is Rydell High's Senior Class of 1959: hot-rodding Burger Palace Boys and their hip-shaking Pink Ladies in bobby sox and pedal pushers, evoking the look

and sound of the 1950's in this rollicking musical, featuring such great hits and favorites as *Summer Nights*, *Greased Lightnin'*, *It's Raining on Prom Night*, and *Alone at the Drive in Movie*. Ticket prices are \$13-\$17 with group rates available. Performances are August 1-5 at 7:30 pm and August 4 & 5 at 2:30 pm. To purchase tickets call the Granville Arts Center Box Office at 972-205-2790, Monday thru Friday 10am-4pm.

### August 4 Senior Awareness Day 9am-12pm The Atrium

State Representative Angie Chen Button and the District 112 Senior Awareness Day Planning Committee will be holding the 4th Annual Senior Awareness Day in partnership with the City of Garland. This event will take place at

the Atrium at the Granville Arts Center, 300 N. Fifth Street, Garland, TX . Visitors will enjoy an informative three hours full of entertainment and prizes.



### August 2-5 "Oliver! The Musical" by CORP

#### Plaza Theatre

Join the Company of Rowlett Performers for "Olive! The Musical" at the Plaza Theatre.

"Please sir, I want some more." Oliver's innocent re-

quest lands him in trouble with the workhouse Matron and the Beadle and sets him on his famous adventure. He is sold to a local undertaker, but runs away and is picked up by the Artful Dodger who invites Oliver to 'Consider Yourself' one of us! Fagin's Gang set out to 'Pick A Pocket or two' and take Oliver along, but he is arrested and taken before the magistrates. When he finds Oliver was an innocent bystander, Mr. Brownlow, the victim of the gang, takes Oliver in. 'Food glorious Food' and 'Where is Love' are just two of the popular songs from Lionel Bart's lively musical based on Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*. Performances are August 2 & 3 at 9:30am and 1:00pm, August 4 at 7:30pm, and August 5 at 2:00pm. Tickets are \$10 each. There is a ticket discount of \$2.00 per ticket for anyone that purchases 10 or more tickets for one performance or 20 tickets for the run of the show. For more information call 972-977-7710, email [donnacovington@yahoo.com](mailto:donnacovington@yahoo.com) or go to [www.CORPtheatre.com](http://www.CORPtheatre.com).

### August 5 "How Can I Ease the Pain?" by Jerry Foundrin 4 pm Plaza Theatre

JFoundrin Productions present the Gospel Stage Play "How Can I Ease the Pain?" on August 5 at 4pm at the Plaza Theatre. This play shows a deepness of love between a man and a woman and the decisions that need to be made, to love but to love God more and make the decision to do the right thing. You don't want to miss this heart-felt production! Tickets are \$25 at the door.





# Oakridge News



Oakridge Neighborhood Association  
P.O. Box 450145  
Garland, TX 75045-0145

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



## July 2012, Vol.20, No. 07

### *IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS*

<b>Emergencies</b>	<b>911</b>
<b>Poison Center</b>	<b>1-800-764-7661</b>
<b>Non-Emergencies</b>	<b>972-485-4840</b>
<b>Water &amp; Sever</b>	<b>972-205-3210</b>
<b>Atmos Gas</b>	<b>1-800-460-3030</b>
<b>Rick Williams</b>	<b>214-535-2648</b>
<b>Solid Waste &amp; Recycling</b>	<b>972-205-3500</b>
<b>Street Light Repair</b>	<b>972-205-3483</b>
<b>Code Compliance</b>	<b>972-485-6400</b>
<b>Animal Services</b>	<b>972-205-3570</b>
<b>Electricity Emergency</b>	<b>972-205-3000</b>
<b>N P O John Capers</b>	<b>972-205-2740</b>
<b>CP&amp;S Bill Olive</b>	<b>972-495-3402</b>

[www.OakridgeNA.org](http://www.OakridgeNA.org)