

Oakridge News

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Scatter Shooting with Mike Rose

The Duck Creek Golf Course owners have been working hard at bringing back the “old” course and their efforts and money have begun to pay off for them. Have you driven by the parking lot lately – there are plenty of cars parked. If you look out onto the course you will see carts carrying golfers.

It is good to see the course up and running. I am not a golfer but have been told there are many “finishing touches” that are yet to come. In due time – next spring when the real growing season begins I have been told that these “touches” will be implemented. We have reprinted

the DMN article as it succinctly documents the Oakridge story re the situation we all lived with for the past several years.

All my articles have included a couple of “catch” phrases – either at the beginning or at the conclusion. I truly believe that the condition of *your neighborhood* will influence potential buyers.

And what have you done to support the ONA – and if you are a member your neighborhood thanks you. If not – why not?

Golfers are back in Oakridge by Liz Farmer Neighborsgo—The Dallas Morning News

The golf course in Garland’s Oakridge neighborhood was once the heart of the community. But after the former owners of the now-shuttered Oakridge Country Club filed for bankruptcy in 2010, it sat unplayable and riddled with weeds, a frustrating blight for neighboring homeowners.

Now, new owners are giving the course a new lease on life as the recently opened Duck Creek Golf, a public, daily-fee golf course.

It isn’t the country club that many residents fondly remember, but it’s more than the neighborhood has seen in a while.

“Certainly everyone would love to turn back the clock 30 years, but that’s not reality,” said Mike Ussery, partner of Duck Creek Golf, LP.

The Oakridge Golf Club LP filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in 2010, listing assets and liabilities between \$1 million and \$10 million. The company sold lifetime memberships before filing for bankruptcy, leaving members of the country club high and dry.

“It affected everything, the whole lifestyle of the neighborhood,” Ussery said. “It put a black cloud over the whole community.”

Bringing back the course hasn’t been easy.

The company recently took on the challenge of reseeding the par-71 course and bringing the old irrigation system back to working condition. They’ve opened a small pro golf shop and are working to open a small bar in part of the former clubhouse.

“It’s refreshing, and it’s bringing new life to the neighborhood and I think most people are starting to see that,” Ussery said.

Built in 1982, Oakridge Country Club was once a selling point for homebuyers. Rundown tennis courts and old patio furniture stacked near a drained swimming pool are the sole remnants of yesteryear.

Ussery said the company is not interested in running a

country club but would consider leasing or selling those pieces of property to companies interested in operating the facilities.

“If that doesn’t happen, then we’ll just have to sit down with the community,” Ussery said. “We don’t want it to sit deteriorating.”

Mike Rose, president of the Oakridge Neighborhood Association, lives in a home that overlooks the golf course.

Rose said despite the fact that he’s not a golfer, he wants the new owners to succeed. He’s trying to get skeptical residents on board, especially those who were country club members.

“Obviously, people who were used to going on a Friday night and getting served on a linen tablecloth were mad,” Rose said.

Country clubs are no longer viable business ventures, especially now that an abundance of restaurant options are within a few miles, he said.

Rose said it’s difficult to pinpoint just how the downturn and ultimate closure of the course affected home sales and property values, but he witnessed the number of neighborhood association members dwindle as a result.

The association oversees 6,000 linear feet of landscaping around the community.

“Now, we have water restrictions and drought conditions and because our funds and our members dropped, we don’t have enough money to put in drought-tolerant landscaping,” Rose said.

But that hurdle won’t keep Rose down.

He said he’s just happy to look out his window and finally see green.

After playing several holes Nov. 6, David Bostrom, 42, said the course is nice.

“I drive by it all the time, and I’ve been waiting for it to open,” Bostrom said.

(Continued on page 4)

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Letter from the Editor by Keith Engler

When Karen and I moved to Oakridge in 2002, we liked that there was a group of volunteers who sustain the common areas around the neighborhood. Our old neighborhood was surrounded by a ditch full of weeds that the city would occasionally mow. I think the perimeter of Oakridge surrounded by the brick wall with 9 entrances is classy.

The conceptual design of OakridgeNA.org came from Nelson Prater and I took it over a few years back. If you click on the newsletter section, you can read newsletters as far back as July 1991. You can also read the purpose of the ONA at the bottom of the Home Page.

I decided to be the newsletter editor this year and implement this new format. I thought if we circulated to every home in Oakridge then it would be more attractive to advertisers. I also thought more people would join if they saw every month what the ONA does. Fortunately, the advertisers came and the newsletter is now self sustaining. Unfortunately, membership is way down and I am not sure why.

I personally think communication is important and my goal is for this newsletter to be a way to help maintain communication and help develop community. Please feel free to email me with any suggestions and concerns; I am especially interested in why people are not joining the ONA. keithengler@verizon.net

Treasurers Report by Dave Morgan CPA

We just reached another membership plateau of now having 350 members. We only need another 150 members to reach our budgeted goal of 500 members. We are still behind last year's total membership by about 110 members. Even with this huge collective failure on our part to incentivize more of our neighbors to join, we will break even at the end of our fiscal year (May 31, 2014) even IF we do not get one cent of advertising revenue for the full year 2014 billings. That presumes we can maintain our tight cost controls and, thus, presumes we will not have any large expense surprises for the remainder of the fiscal year. Unfortunately, we will NOT be able do anything other than tread water for your neighborhood. The entryways will continue their existing bland look rather than getting the makeovers so much in need. Other aesthetic improvements desired cannot see the light of day, of course. There are other income avenues to be pursued, but that will likely fall to better people on your next fiscal year's ONA Board.

Now dispersing with the dirge above, best wishes are extended to you and those you cherish to have a happy and safe holiday season! We have so much for which to be grateful as we live in the best nation ever created!

Membership Update—Angela Greenwald

District	Total Homes	Non-members	Members	%
1	185	125	60	32%
2	154	88	66	43%
3	140	115	25	18%
4	151	78	73	48%
5	190	150	40	21%
6	123	101	22	18%
7	220	157	63	29%
	1163	814	349	30%

District 7 City Council Scott LeMay

On November 5th Garland voters approved a 2 cent tax increase for funds to be exclusively used for street and alley repair and refurbishment. Collection of those funds will not begin until late next year. The City maintains a Pavement Condition Index (PCI) for each street and alley segment in the city. Garland's current average PCI is 89 for streets and 83 for alleys. Mayor Athas plans to appoint a seven-member citizen task force to work with staff to review many aspects of this decision:

1. Our street maintenance policy.
2. Street prioritization.
3. Measurement methods.
4. Various best practices from other governmental entities.
5. How to assure that current.
6. Additional revenue are all directed toward the need.
7. How to minimize new debt.
8. How soon we can get tax relief if there are additional taxes.
9. Alternative financing options.

The members of this task force should be announced within the next 60 days. If you are interested in serving please contact the Mayor's Office at (972) 205-2400 or at mayor@garlandtx.gov.

As always I encourage you to use the city's website for information about the city. When that doesn't work you can always contact me. My direct cell phone number is (214) 794-8904 and my direct email is scottlemayd7@gmail.com.

Crime Prevention and Safety Bill Olive

People are calling Oakridge residents claiming to be Garland Power & Light. They are claiming that you have not paid your light bill. Scams of this nature have been going on for many years with many variations. The message from this and all the others like it is simply:

You **do not** give your credit card to **anybody** that **calls you**.

Daytimers by Diane Winter

The theme of the November meeting of the Daytimers was "Blessings" and an example of that was speaker, Neighborhood Police Officer, Tommy Barnes. He shared good tips for security for Oakridge homes and alerted the group to scams they might be confronted with via the telephone.


Attendees were greeted at the home of Sharon Carlton and served refreshments. They held a short business meeting and exchanged other blessings that included friends and families. This group visits with neighbors at the meetings and shares information that will help keep the Oakridge community secure and friendly.

Be sure to attend the next meeting of the Daytimers at the home of Ann Conrath, 2131 Windy Ridge on Tuesday, December 10th' at 10:00 am. Bring a wrapped Christmas decoration, ornament, etc from your home for a white elephant exchange.

Daytimers is a social organization that requires residence in Oakridge and \$15.00 annual dues. Daytimers promote the Oakridge community and the Oakridge Neighborhood Association. Any questions should be directed to president, Chris Beyers – 972 530 8292.

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Important Dates:

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Golfers are back in Oakridge by Liz Farmer

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(Continued from page 1)

Bostrom, who lives in a nearby neighborhood and didn't have ties to the country club, said he usually plays at either of the nearby municipal daily fee golf courses Garland's Firewheel Golf Park or Richardson's Sherrill Park Golf Course.

"So far, it's on the same level for sure," Bostrom said.

He said that by the time the course had opened, he believed the yardage markers and several other features would have been installed.

"There's no ball washers, so I'm washing them in these puddles," Bostrom said.

His lone golf cart slogged through the water that had collected in depressions on the cart path and some on the course itself.

James Roberts, Duck Creek Golf's general manager and head golf professional, said the weather hasn't been prime, but opening the course now allows them to work out the kinks before golf season really heats up.

"I think most people will be pretty forgiving," Roberts said. "We definitely have work to do."

Roberts said they haven't started advertising the opening

too much yet.

About 30 golfers still showed up Nov. 3 to enjoy the good weather. Roberts, who previously worked at Sammons Golf Links in Temple, said similar golf courses get about 150 to 170 golfers per day.

"I drove there on Saturday and for the first time in years I saw golfers out there, so I was very happy," said Scott LeMay, Garland City Council member for District 7.

LeMay also said it's hard to know how the course which he said was essentially abandoned affected sales and property values, but he knows the reopening will help the community.

"Our interest as a city is we want the course up and running because it does have an impact on the property values, whether that's a monetary value or an emotional value," LeMay said.

LeMay said he has high hopes for Duck Creek Golf and for the owners behind the effort.

"I think the best thing they've done is being realistic about what they can do."

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