



Oakridge News

www.oakridgena.org

February 2022, Vol. 30, No. 02

City Council Update

by Dylan Hedrick, District 7 Councilman and Oakridge Resident

I hope that your 2022 is off to a good start as we are all ready to move past the year that was 2021. Unfortunately in our city, the year ended with tragedy as three teenagers were shot in a convenience store just north of downtown. On January 10, another shooting between teenagers occurred in Armstrong Park in south Garland near IH-635.

In response to these events, the Police Department is putting more resources towards curbing gang violence and intervention in the local schools. Additionally, we will modify the City Budget at our January 18 meeting to fund seven additional positions within the Department and to purchase a Flock license plate reader and gunshot detection system.

Funding will be provided for five additional officers to supplement the existing Gang Unit. A Crime Analyst will be added to assist with complex social media and criminal intelligence, investigative analysis, collection, case support, link analysis, timelines, open-source and intelligence data of criminal investigations. Finally, a Mental Health Clinician will be added to provide continuous resiliency training to police staff and to assist the current Mental Health and Homeless Liaison Officers.

The Flock system will be used to read license plates at selected locations and provide real-time data to the police. The data will be compared against a database for vehicles which come back as stolen or were used in crimes, street racing, and Amber or Silver alerts. The gunshot detection system will triangulate the sound of gunshots to provide more accurate real-time location data than is typically received from citizen reports though the 911 system. All of this data will be encrypted and secured on the AWS Government Cloud and will require a specific search reason by the Police Department to access the data. The data is owned by the Police Department and will not be sold or shared by Flock.

I encourage you to view our January 3 Work Session meeting at the link below to view a presentation from Police Chief Jeff Bryan where he discussed overall crime in the city, the Department’s response, and the FLOCK system. <https://garlandtx.new.swagit.com/videos/152322?ts=5784>

Keep an eye on the garlandtx.gov website for more information about the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new animal shelter. You can also sign up for the weekly City eNewsletter to be notified of other city information and events. The newsletter is sent out each Sunday evening and a link to sign up is here: <https://www.garlandtx.gov/3545/City-Enewsletters>.

Please reach out to me at 469-560-6099 or council7@garlandtx.gov if I may be of any assistance.

Oakridge Street Repairs

by Mike Devanney, ONA District 6 Director

The City started working on Oakridge streets in November 2021. In January I spoke with Dustin (in the Garland Street Department) to get an update on what is being done. Currently they are stabilizing all the panels that need stabilization by spraying foam underneath. This will be completed in the next few weeks.

The day that I spoke with Dustin, they were in the process of asking contractors to bid on street panel replacement. The bidding process takes 4 weeks. The work will start in early spring of 2022. All panels currently marked with white arrows will be replaced. The street department came in last year and graded our streets. Oakridge must have received a grade of 60 or above (out of 100), making us eligible for panel replacement rather than new streets.

Once the street department is ready to begin panel replacement, they will put hangers/flyers on our front doors with a 2-week notice and instructions (i.e., where to park, etc.). The whole process is projected to end late 2023.

Finishing the ONA Year

by Scott Barnes, ONA President

Hello Neighbors.

I want to take a moment to connect as we work our way through the beginning of 2022. The ONA runs on a June-May year, so we are well into the second half of our membership year. This means it is time to start looking for volunteers to serve as ONA Officers/Directors for the coming membership year.

We've published a series of articles over the past couple of years making it clear what the ONA is and does. We've also asked several times for more people to step up to help move the ONA forward. We've had some great neighbors step up—and we need more. For households that have older teens, maybe you'd consider talking with them about this as a leadership opportunity. We'd very much enjoy having them on our team.

Let's recap the basic ONA functions:

- **Environmental** – We maintain the perimeter and entryway landscaping.
- **Communication** – We keep neighbors informed through a newsletter, a website, and by email.
- **Crime Prevention & Safety** – We coordinate Neighborhood Crime Watch activities (including volunteer C.O.P. patrols and volunteer Crime Watch Leads). We also organize the annual National Night Out event, maintain a relationship with the Oakridge Neighborhood Police Officer, and post monthly crime reports and resources on our webpage.
- **Events** – We plan and coordinate opportunities (general meetings, neighborhood walks, plant swaps, ice cream socials, food drives, etc.) for neighbors to come together.

As we step in to 2022, we are looking for ways to maintain and expand these efforts. The ONA is positioned to encourage neighborhood unity, and the Board works hard to get that done. That's where we need more help from you. Come out and join us in this effort. We would love to hear from neighbors who have creative ideas and a heart to serve the neighborhood.

We have two General Meetings coming up: the 4th Thursdays of February and May. (Keep an eye on the website for details.) At the February meeting, the General Membership will put a Nominating Committee

in place to assemble a slate of Board candidates for the coming 2022-2023 year (the new year begins June 1st).

This is a great time to raise your hand and volunteer!

While we have many volunteer opportunities (see page 3 of this newsletter), I would like to take a moment to highlight an especially important volunteer role: District Director. The District Director (we have 7 of them) is the most active and important job on the Board. It involves being in the districts and being active with neighbors, reaching out on behalf of the ONA and serving as a conduit for folks to reach back. We need signs put out and taken up, new neighbors welcomed, etc. Our District Directors are people who care a lot about Oakridge and have some time and ability to help. We need folks to raise their hand and step forward to fill these important positions.

If you are interested in serving as a District Director, please let us know (info@oakridgena.org) and we will have someone from the Nominating Committee contact you in March.

We are stronger together than separate. Make a decision to be a part of the team then act on that decision. The important thing is to take the first step. We are *by Oakridge* and *for Oakridge* and we need folks to volunteer to lead this volunteer neighborhood association forward.

The time to get involved is March 2022. Reach out and make your presence known (info@oakridgena.org).

I can't stress enough how vital it is to the long-term health and effectiveness of this organization that people volunteer and then put energy into the ONA.

We look forward to hearing from you and having you join us as we work to keep Oakridge connected and improving.

Thanks!
Scott

**ONA General
Membership Meeting**
Feb. 25th (Thursday), 7 p.m., online
Details online at www.oakridgena.org

Volunteer Opportunities

Oakridge Neighborhood Association

The ONA always has plenty of opportunities for volunteers. Here are some of the areas where we need volunteers.

ONA Board Members (officers and district directors)
send an email to info@oakridgena.org

Membership Committee (welcoming new residents)
send an email to oakridgemembership@gmail.com

Communications (newsletter, website)
send an email to communications@oakridgena.org

Environmental (landscape, sprinklers, perimeter)
send an email to environment@oakridgena.org

Crime & Safety (crime watch, Citizens on Patrol)
send an email to safety@oakridgena.org

Event Planning (social events, first responder donations)
send an email to info@oakridgena.org

Did we leave anything off this list? Can you think of another way you would like to help? Do you have questions? Contact us at info@oakridgena.org. We look forward to hearing from you!

ONA Raffle January Winner

by Cecile LaBossiere, ONA Membership Director

Congratulations to ONA Member **Anita McKnight** (Oakridge District 3), winner of the January Member Raffle. She won a Goodie Bag from SF Supermarket (located in Cali Saigon Mall).

Our monthly raffle for ONA members is made possible by the generosity of these businesses. Please join us in supporting them in appreciation for their donations.

Baskin Robbins

Dallas Superstore-SF Supermarket
(in Cali Saigon Mall)

Frank Marino's Texaco

Griff's Hamburgers

Panda Express

Pizza Hut

West Washington Foundation

Monthly Raffle Eligibility: All ONA Members (excluding current board members) are automatically entered for the monthly raffles. ONA Members cannot win twice in the same membership year.

Oakridge Daytimers

by Sally Weiss, Oakridge Daytimers

Sadly, due to the surge of the Omicron variant and the number of break-through cases being reported, the Daytimers January coffee was judiciously cancelled. Naturally, we were all disappointed not to be able to hear from scheduled jewelry designer/creator Leland Baker but hopefully he will be available to join us at a future date. After all, what woman doesn't LOVE jewelry??

Future coffees and programs will be scheduled on a month-by-month basis dependent upon health statistics at the time. In the meantime, take care to stay healthy and don't forget to check on friends and neighbors who may be in need of assistance.

Daytimers is open to all female residents of Oakridge and meets on the second Tuesday of the month. After visiting, we welcome you to join us. Annual membership dues of \$20.00 are used for speakers, community support and the annual end-of-year luncheon.

Any questions about joining us and the location of our next coffee may be directed to Chris Beyers at 214-697-9541.



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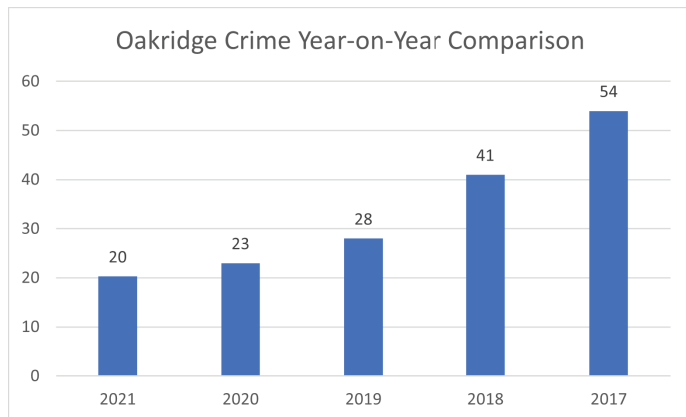
“Quality in the name. Trust in the relationship.”



Oakridge Crime Watch

by Joan Nichols, ONA Crime Prevention & Safety Committee

Thanks to everyone for the best year on record for reported crimes in Oakridge.



What were the most most frequent crimes reported in Oakridge last year?

#1 (40%) Burglary from vehicles. Many thefts were from *unlocked vehicles*. Please lock your car and remove valuables—especially your guns and keys. If possible, park your car in the garage.

#2 (20%) Mail Theft/“Porch Pirates”. Keep an eye out for your package deliveries and bring them inside as soon as they arrive. If you aren’t available to receive a delivery, consider having a neighbor pick up the package or arrange to have your items delivered to a business.

#3 (10%) Catalytic Converter Theft. Police around the country are dealing with a trend of stealing then selling catalytic converters. It only takes 30 seconds for thieves to steal one. Be on alert for suspicious activity around vehicles and call 9-1-1. Anyone with video is asked to please email Officer Barnes at BarnesT@garlandtx.gov. Thanks to Garland Police for cracking down on this type of theft here in Oakridge.

Monthly reports with more details are available on the Oakridge Website under Crime Prevention & Safety.

About Oakridge Crime Watch

Oakridge has a long history of active involvement in the Neighborhood Crime Watch program. In 2021, we became the first **Video Crime Watch Neighborhood** in Garland. Many of you with security cameras (e.g., Ring) have signed up to participate in this program that allows Garland Police to quickly reach out to those in the vicinity of a crime to identify suspects. A link for the sign-up is available on the Garland Police website (<http://www.garlandtx.gov/331/Police>).

Oakridge also participates in Garland Police Department programs like **Citizens on Patrol (COPs)**. Our COP volunteers patrol Oakridge in marked vehicles at various hours every month. We provide a monthly report to Garland Police of this activity and are thankful for our volunteers. We appreciate whatever our COPs can do. Participants in order of number of patrols in 2021:

- Lee & Vickie Litton
- Mark Edwards
- Sue Ratcliffe
- Dotty Moseley
- Joan & Dan Nichols

Sign up for the free and informative COP training events by emailing Officer Barnes at BarnesT@garlandtx.gov.

The ONA Crime Prevention & Safety Committee coordinates the activities of our Neighborhood Crime Watch and also communicates with Oakridge residents about incidents in our neighborhood through emails called **Siren Alerts**. These emails are available to anyone who has joined the ONA, subscribed on our website, or by contacting us at safety@oakridgena.org.

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Safety Tips

by Joan Nichols, ONA Crime Prevention & Safety Committee

How did we keep our crime rates so low in 2021 and what can we do in 2022 to continue to keep Oakridge safe?

Get to know your neighbors. Get to know the neighbors on all sides of you. Go for walks and spend time in your front yard. Join us for ONA-sponsored events like National Night Out or Spring Fling.

Watch out for your neighbors. Oakridge prides itself on a long history of neighbors watching out for each other. Each month we continue to hear many examples of neighbors helping neighbors in Oakridge. For example, a set of keys was found on the sidewalk at Peakwood and were returned to their rightful owner because the residents knew that one of their neighbors regularly walks her dog along that path and they also knew the type of car she drives (which matched what was on the keys).

Learn the daily pattern of your street. Each area of the neighborhood has daily patterns of activity. This includes neighbors who walk/jog regularly, people who walk dogs, families riding bikes, and cars that come and go. If you pay attention, you will gradually start to notice what is normal for your street and what is suspicious.

Discourage criminals. Outdoor security lights and cameras help discourage criminal mischief. Keeping your vehicles locked (remove valuables) and making sure to retrieve your packages promptly from your front porch will help to deter opportunistic thieves.

Report any suspicious activity. Call the non-emergency number at 972-485-4840 to report any suspicious activity. Be detailed in your description.

- Behavior – What was the person doing that made you suspicious?
- Appearance – Hair, clothing (head to toe), identifying marks. Race or gender alone is not enough.
- Vehicle – Make, model, color, direction of travel, license plate
- Location & Time – Address, date, time
- Video footage – If you have video camera footage of the activity, contact Officer Barnes at BarnesT@garlandtx.gov.

Oakridge Gentlemen

by Mark Edwards, Oakridge Gentlemen

The Oakridge Gentlemen did not meet in January due to concern over potential COVID transmission. The week our January meeting was to be held, the COVID-19 risk level was “High Risk of Transmission” according to the Dallas County Health Department and the Garland Health Department.

Members of the Oakridge Gentlemen were asked to vote on whether or not we should meet. They decided it was too risky.

A Garland Health Department official was scheduled to speak at our January meeting, but they called and said they were “extremely busy” as the COVID-19 risk was peaking in our area. That’s bad news. Yet, in a way it is also good news since there is the expectation that (hopefully) the COVID risk will be declining.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 16th, 10:30 A.M. at the Duck Creek Country Club. I’m buying the Coffee. There are now 17 members in the group. There has been some talk of a Separate Evening Group.

Thanks for your help.

Questions? Call Mark Edwards at 214-673-8908.



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Oakridge News

Oakridge Neighborhood Association
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Report Power Outages

Garland Power & Light (GP&L) customers should always report power outages. Even if your neighbor has reported the outage, you should still report your outage since you may be on a different circuit. Report outages by calling 972-205-3000 or texting OUT to 972-205-4000. Visit GP&L online for tips on preparing for an outage. <https://www.gpltexas.org/outage-center/how-you-can-prepare-for-outages>

Surge Protectors



Are your electronic devices protected from power surges/spikes that can occur with power outages, tripped circuit breakers, or (more rarely) lightning strikes? Surge protectors are a great way to help protect your electronic investments.

Are surge protectors and power strips the same thing? Surge protectors come in a variety of shapes and sizes, including some that look like power strips. As a result, many people incorrectly assume all power strips offer surge protection. When shopping for a surge protector, always read the product description to make sure you are purchasing something that can protect against power surges or spikes.

2021-2022 ONA Board

info@oakridgena.org

- President, Scott Barnes480-512-2111
- Vice President, Michelle Mizerak214-962-7795
- Secretary, Sharon Parrish469-939-2270
- Treasurer, Keith Engler972-834-0096
- District 1 Director, Joanna Albright..... 973-879-5965
- District 2 Director, Billy Ray Thomas.....214-734-1017
- District 3 Director, Vanessa West [Washington]469-774-2425
- District 4 Director, Marty Dall.....505-410-0370
- District 5 Director, Melanie Busby972-989-2253
- District 6 Director, Mike Devaney..... 314-440-4350
- District 7 Director, Joetta Harris.....469-955-1513
- Communications, Heather Englebretson.....214-562-7857
- Crime & Safety, Joan Nichols214-543-2546
- Environmental, David Parrish469-733-6089
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- Membership, Cecile LaBossiere.....972-896-9413

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