



**DECEMBER 2013**

[www.oakbluffestates.com](http://www.oakbluffestates.com)

## Christmas Activities

### CHRISTMAS DINNER DANCE DECEMBER 13

6:30 Mixer, 7:00 Dinner

**RESERVATIONS DUE DECEMBER 4**

You are warmly invited to the annual Christmas dinner-dance to be held at Star Ranch on December 13. Dinner includes a pasta buffet with bow tie and penne pastas, grilled chicken, alfredo and marinara sauces, steamed vegetables, and a Caesar salad and garlic bread. Desserts include a cake buffet including carrot, double chocolate, German chocolate, red velvet, white coconut, and white buttercream cakes. A DJ hosts the music and dancing portion of the evening.

The event is at Star Ranch in their Texas themed club house. The room will be decorated in golds and burgundy, and include a 12+ foot Christmas tree. Recommended dress is after five. For men, this may include a jacket and dress slacks, with or without tie.

Costs are \$17.50 per person or \$35.00 per couple. Each attendee beyond the couple rate is \$35.00 per person. Janis Delman is accepting reservations through Wednesday, December 4. They can be dropped off at her house at 7 Ridge Run (place your check under the mat). You can contact her at [janisdelman@aol.com](mailto:janisdelman@aol.com) for more information.

### CHRISTMAS LIGHTS COMPETITION

Decorate your lawn for Christmas and you might win the lawn decorating competition! Three judges will tour the neighborhood looking for elegantly decorated homes and lawns. The winner will be announced on December 18, 2013, when the judges place a sign on the winning lawn. Good luck to all who participate!



Oak Bluff through the years



Participant at the July 4 HOA parade. Find this picture and more on the Facebook page!

## ANNUAL MEETING RESULTS

We welcome new members Jana Dahl and Linda Cook to the Board of Directors, and welcome existing board member Donna Allen to her first full term on the board. Donna was appointed by the board during the summer to fill an expiring term.

We say goodbye to John Reynolds who has served loyally as Treasurer over the past six years. John and his wife Dotty will be moving to Maryland in the spring. We will miss them.

At the annual meeting volunteers were asked to sign up to serve on the Home Landscaping, Deeds and Covenants Review, and Bylaws task forces. The 12 month term addresses changes in state legislation affecting Texas HOAs. If you'd like to serve on one of these task forces, please review the information on page 4 and contact Dale Ricklefs at [dalericklefs@austin.rr.com](mailto:dalericklefs@austin.rr.com) or 512-334-9177 if you are interested in serving.

## BARKING DOGS AND OTHER HASSLES

It may come as a surprise to homeowners in Oak Bluff Estates Phase II that there are limits to what the HOA board manages. The board exists to enforce existing deed restrictions, make thoughtful variances based on the Architecture Control Committee's recommendation, work with the property manager in determining appropriate fines and consequences for violating deed restrictions or non-payment of assessments, maintain the common areas, and provide opportunities for socializing.

However, board members are often contacted about neighbors barking dogs, loud noise, and activities around certain homes. All of these instances are controlled by city ordinances. There is a robust ordinance on when the city enforces excessive noises from animals, including dogs. There are noise and tree ordinances. And, there are ordinances related to use of property beyond residential use. Many of these ordinances were created after the HOA was developed. The HOA may create deed restrictions that are stricter than the city's ordinance, but enforcing them is difficult, usually resulting in fines that may not be collected until a home sells.

Please review your deed restrictions to learn what the board *should* be enforcing. Garbage cans and cars (and by extension, motor homes) have explicit time frames when these should be visible, and we are now enforcing those universally. There are restrictions on sheds, additional buildings or additions, and setback requirements beyond those required by the city. Did you know you are supposed to contact the committee if you are putting up a new fence, painting your building, or replacing windows and plants that are significantly different than what you have now? Note that there is a four year grandfather clause, which means that we are unable to resolve previous board variances permitted more than four years ago. So, look for the Deed Restriction document you signed when you bought your home. If you want a change in the existing deed restrictions, please join the Deeds and Covenants Task Force!

# WINNERS OF THE 2013 CONTESTS

## YARD OF THE MONTH CONTEST

Congratulations to the winners of the Yard of the Month, and thank you to Chair Becky Margolies and her committee members, Natalie Osborn, Pam Capelli, Louann Woodall, Paul Margolies, for their thoughtful selections. Many of these yards used water wise plants.

April: 5 Oak Moore

May: Debbie and Aaron Hess, 38 Meandering Way

June: Linda and Rich Russell, 72 Twin Ridge Parkway

July: Sallie and Jerry Cooper, 10 Shaded Way

August: Shirley and Lewis Watts, 26 Wilderness Way

September: Carol and Wiley Christal, 4 Misty Woods

Check out the link on the website for large pictures of the yards and the winners. We hope you are preparing your lawns for 2014!

## JACK O' LANTERN CONTEST

"It was a dark and stormy night: the rain fell in torrents – except at occasional intervals – when it was checked by a violent gust of wind which swept up the street." That quote, written by English novelist Edward Bulwer-Lytton, perfectly describes October 30<sup>th</sup>, the evening of the Oak Bluff Jack O' Lantern Contest.

Braving the elements, judges Lou Ann Woodall and Ella Jez drove the rain drenched streets of Oak Bluff to find the top entrants in the Jack O' Lantern Contest. The competition was stiff but three pumpkin entries stood out above the rest taking the top honors which include a full year of braggin' rights.

The Most Creative Jack O' Lantern - # 14 Scenic Terrace

The Happiest Jack O' Lantern - #4 Ridge Run

The Spookiest Jack O' Lantern - #25 Meandering Way

The Oak Bluff Estates Board and the Social Committee thank the judges and those who entered the Jack O' Lantern Contest. Check out the website for pictures of this year's winners!



## CALL FOR TASK FORCE MEMBERS

President Dale Ricklefs announced the formation of three task forces to address issues due to changes in Texas law regulating HOAs. The goal is to complete the work in time for the 2014 Annual Meeting. A draft of proposed changes to existing documents would be presented at a late spring Town Hall meeting of the HOA.

### Home landscaping

*Core issue:*

Legislation passed by Texas legislators over the last three bienniums has resulted in a requirement for HOAs to review landscaping regulations and respond to them through policies and procedures. The focus is on acceptable ***new and redesigned*** home landscaping as a result of water conservation requirements.

### Deeds and covenants

*Core issues:*

Basic clean up as the document includes verbiage related to developer control, no longer an issue

Address restrictions that have been granted frequent variances, e.g., inclusion of quality metal fencing (wood or concrete only currently allowed in the restrictions)

Address restrictions that may be limiting given the current age of the members of the HOA, e.g., the length of time a motor home may be placed in someone's driveway, visible from the street

Address restrictions that are governed by the city of Round Rock, e.g., removal of trees on residential property (a tree protection ordinance and its subsequent revision addresses this, created after the deeds and covenants)

The group may also wish to recommend policies and procedures related to commonly occurring violations, e.g., building maintenance issues, enforcement of non-structural issues such as visibility of garbage cans and quality of basketball hoops, including recommended fines.

### Bylaws

*Core issue:*

The bylaws are 17 years old and reflect an even, rather than odd, number of board members. The group would review job duties, the role of property managers, changes in Texas law as it relates to board responsibilities, and incorporate the single resolution filed with the county related to change in officer and fiscal year.

If you are interested in serving, contact Dale Ricklefs at [dalericklefs@austin.rr.com](mailto:dalericklefs@austin.rr.com), 512-334-9177.

### OCTOBER FLOOD

The HOA Board expresses sympathy to those affected by the October floods. It came to our attention that if you had damage you may contact the city for some assistance. You should request a *Citizen Incident Inquiry Sheet*. Call 512-218-5493 and ask to speak to the city's Risk Manager.

### YOUR 2014 BOARD

*Officers to be elected Dec. 10*

Donna Allen (Treasurer 2013)

Linda Cook

Jana Dahl

Janis Delman (Director 2013)

Ella Jez (Vice President 2013)

Dale Ricklefs (President 2013)

### COMMITTEE CONTACTS

**Social:** Ella Jez,

[ejez@austin.rr.com](mailto:ejez@austin.rr.com)

**Architectural :** Janis Delman,

[janisdelman@aol.com](mailto:janisdelman@aol.com)

**Landscaping** (public areas):

Linda Cook

[ladygto68@aol.com](mailto:ladygto68@aol.com)

### PROPERTY MANAGER

RealManage, Heather Hood

[oakbluff@ciramail.com](mailto:oakbluff@ciramail.com)

### Keeping Up with the HOA

[www.oakbluffestates.com](http://www.oakbluffestates.com)

Constant Contact— sign on through website

Facebook page-

[https://](https://www.facebook.com/groups/384227548332961/)

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