



Spring 2014 (May)

www.oakbluffestates.com

TOWN HALL MEETING MAY 12, 7-9 PM

By now you should have received the official announcement of our Town Hall meeting which starts promptly at 7:00 pm at the church located at the intersection of Twin Ridge Parkway and Forest Creek Drive. There is no voting at that meeting, but we need to hear what you have to say about the deed restrictions that we can enforce, water wise lawn guidelines which by state law we must create, bylaws which need some tweaking, and the use of the property at CR123 and Twin Ridge parkway.

Look for documents for this meeting on the web! We hope to see you there!

CALL FOR BOARD MEMBERS

There have been several changes the past few months. Two board members have resigned, one of them an active member and co-chair of the social committee (read: did a lot of the lifting). One board position expires in December 2014, and the other December 2015. A third person,

(continued, next page)



April's Yard of the Month winners are Christine and Don Alfano, 11 Meandering Way.

Chris loves plants and flowers and is inspired by the landscaping she sees in the neighborhood. Flowers, grass, and accents are changed seasonally and mulching helps conserve water.

Look at the Oak Bluff website for the criteria that the committee uses in awarding the Yard of the Month. The recognition continues through September.

Thanks to the committee composed of Becky Margolies, Chair; Louann Woodall; Pam Capelli; Carol Christal; and, Paul Margolies

Call for Board Members (continued from Page 1)

an active board member and committee lead, will not continue past December 2014 as she is traveling quite a bit. Contact a board member if you'd like to serve for these two partial terms, and consider a full term starting January 2015 (elections in November).

Some community members raised the question, "What happens if we DO NOT have an HOA? What are the consequences?" The HOA was formed before the city of Round Rock annexed the land, so a set of requirements was needed. Housing was still being built through the late 1990s as well, and quality of new housing was a concern of those who built these beautiful homes. In the early 1990s, the community also had an amenities package— the club house, tennis courts, and swimming pool.

"What happens if we do not have an HOA?"

Over the years, the HOA lost the amenities center; the city annexed the subdivision; and state and federal laws limited the HOA (and other local governments) from enforcement of certain requirements, e.g., the placement of satellite antennas. And, city ordinances cover a lot of what we used to cite people for, such as weedy lots. We now contact the city for such ordinance violations. Barking dogs, housing domesticated animals, and parking are covered by city ordinances.

The critical requirements of the HOA Board includes: ensuring the medians are maintained, maintaining the 14 acres in the floodplain at CR 123, and enforcing the DCCRs that can be enforced through citation and related fines or fees. It does not have to plan social programs, host yards of the month, have a welcoming committee, provide filled dog cleanup bag stations, coordinate garage sales, etc. And without volunteers, these programs cannot happen.

If the HOA dissolved, it is likely that the medians would be removed as the city would not likely maintain them. Housing stock/yards may deteriorate as the city is not required to enforce DCCRs. It enforces city ordinances.

The remaining four board members are fully engaged and believe strongly in the continual improvement of this subdivision. We **need** two more individuals to help us complete the changes that long term will address most, if not all, community members' needs. Let us know if you'd like to serve. We welcome new members to our subdivision to serve on the board, too.

IMPROVEMENTS TO LANDSCAPING

We hope that you see improvements to our median landscaping. Thanks to former board member and Landscaping Chair Linda Cook for working with our landscaping company to ensure there is delightful color at the entrance and dead plants are removed.

You may have also noticed that the lighting at the CR123/Twin Ridge entrance is now on when it should be. After years of talking about it, there is a light sensitive switch and lighting was replaced with LEDs. The more energy and cost effective lighting should allow us to put up Christmas lighting that will not trip the circuits as it has in the past. Thank you, Heather, at RealManage for making that happen!

Thanks to Mike Moore who worked with a millwork owner to remove the large, fallen trees from the CR 123 property. By the time of our May meeting, the property should have its spring mowing.

FOURTEEN COMMUNITY MEMBERS ACTIVE IN COMMITTEES

We have had great community involvement on several committees and task forces the past 8 months, but certainly need more involvement by those willing to build community and help keep this subdivision the “executive community” envisioned by the initial homeowners.

Three community members and two board members on the **DCCR task force** identified areas where we should concentrate our enforcement efforts. Two community members and three board members on the **CR123 property (the land) committee** brainstormed options for use of the land that is supposed to be available for HOA member use. Two community members have developed draft guidelines as part of the **Home Landscaping task force (water wise guidelines)**.

The **website** is maintained by Nancy Durant, and she does a lovely job of this as a volunteer. She is fast at getting information posted and she quickly resolved an issue with the website related to billing. Please visit the site regularly for updated information.

Doggie bag replacement service was provided by Dotty Reynolds, who moved away May 1.

Of the standing committees, the five community member **Yard of the Month committee**, under Becky Margolies’ great leadership, functioned as a team last year and has already started with this year’s awards. And, until recently the Social Committee met as well, pulling off the great fall contests, the Christmas party, and last year’s July 4 celebration.

This represents **14 non-board members involved** in making YOUR community a better place in which to live. Talking to counterparts in other HOAs, this is a GREAT number!!! But, help is needed...

WHERE COMMITTEE HELP IS NEEDED– SOME CRITICAL

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP VACANT: Social committee:

This valuable committee needs to be restarted with at least one non-board member leader or co-leader. Without leadership, we will be unable to host a July 3/4 parade and party, Neighborhood Night Out, or any awards for Christmas tree lighting. There will be no “welcome” to new neighbors. Or, do you have a passion for one of these activities and would like to recruit 3-4 community members to plan and execute it? Let Janis Delman know (email at the end of this newsletter).

VACANT: Right of way committee (Landscaping):

At least two individuals are needed who can work with the landscaper and the board in finalizing plans for the median landscaping redesign and its implementation. Experience in irrigation, drought/shade tolerant plants, and minimizing maintenance of landscaping desirable.

AT LEAST ONE PROACTIVE MEMBER NEEDED: Architectural Control Committee:

Somewhat a misnomer, this is actually the enforcement arm of the Deeds and Covenants. This committee responds to residents’ requests for any physical changes to homeowners’ homes, fences, and landscaping that are going to be different than what is already in place. It also works with RealManage in defining what should, or should not, be enforced and develops policy on enforcement. This cannot be a one person committee according to the DCCR document. At least two individuals need to review and act on approval requests in a timely manner. Janis Delman is the current chair and needs two individuals who wish to **proactively** serve with her and back her up. She will be going off the board in December 2014, so someone needs to be trained to take her place as well.

VACANT: Dog Station Bag Replacement:

This person or small committee is responsible for ensuring that the dog stations have bags for owners to pick up their dogs’ feces. ***It is not the responsibility of the committee or RealManage to remove bags full of feces someone places under a tree. The dog owner is responsible for properly disposing such waste.***

SPRING: TIME TO WORK ON LAWN/HOUSE/FENCES

We have a lovely neighborhood. And it could certainly be more lovely by fixing these elements around your home, if applicable. The HOA board will begin to enforce the DCCRS addressing these elements after years of non-enforcement to avoid further deterioration of some of the housing stock and property.

Fences: *Currently our first significant complaint in terms of poor condition, fences can make good or poor neighbors. If you have a fence you share with a neighbor and it is sagging or rotting, see if your neighbors will split the cost with you to replace it. If you have a dog that has been slowly destroying your neighbor's fence by clawing at it or pushing it, please consider offering to help split the cost for a new fence. Given the cost of some of these fences, you may wish to visit with an attorney to see if the fence is considered shared property. If you change your fencing to something other than what you currently have, you must get approval from the neighbors affected by the change. All fencing changes other than a replacement with the same material, size, and type requires ACC approval. Allow 14 days for approval.*

Painting/cleaning exterior building: A growing problem in the subdivision, rock buildings get mold or mildew, especially on the north side and near the base of the house. The web offers a lot of low-cost solutions to mitigate this. Houses may need painting. Most paint jobs are good for 5-7 years depending on the quality of the previous paint job, the paint, and the substrate. If you are going to paint the house a color other than what you see in this community, you must get approval from the ACC. Allow 14 days for approval.

Yard waste, removal of dead plants and trees: The good news is that the HOA Board will not enforce landscaping requirements other than lawn mowing during the winter. The bad news is that it is not winter. Please remove all yard waste, dead plants, and dead trees. Prune trees when necessary. As we are now in full spring, you may also receive a citation for dead lawns and dead trees. Don't know what to plant? Ask one of the current or past Yard of the Month winners as they have struggled with what works under trees and in this dense clay soil. Their names and addresses are on the website. If you are going to radically change your lawn or want to go to a water wise lawn, you need to get approval from the ACC. Allow 14 days for approval.

Swimming pools: This is also the time of year to put in a swimming pool. Approval is required by the ACC. Again, before you sign on the dotted line, allow 14 days for approval.

YOUR 2014 BOARD

Dale Ricklefs, President
dalericklefs@gmail.com
Vice President– Vacant
Donna Allen, Treasurer
donnacallen@bcomusa.net
Jana Dahl, Secretary
janadahl@gmail.com
Janis Delman, Director
janisdelman@aol.com
Director– Vacant

COMMITTEE CONTACTS

Social: Janis Delman,
janisdelman@aol.com
Architectural (ACC): Janis
Delman,
janisdelman@aol.com
Landscaping (public areas):
Vacant

PROPERTY MANAGER

RealManage, Heather Hood
oakbluff@ciramail.com

Keeping Up with the HOA www.oakbluffstates.com

Constant Contact (an email
based newsletter)– sign on
through website

Facebook page- The Facebook
page is not considered official
communication. However,
neighbors use this to
communicate with each other.
When requested, the HOA Board
will respond to a question related
to a policy, procedure, or activity.
The website, Constant Contact,
this newsletter, community
meetings, and information from
RealManage constitute official
communication outlets.

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