

TAKE PART IN WHERE YOU LIVE.

Coming to our monthly meetings gives you an opportunity to find out what's going on and helps us to know your problems and concerns. Join us on the second Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at Candlelight Park, 1520 Candlelight Boulevard, at the intersection of Oak Forest and Candlelight. If you have not already paid your voluntary dues for 2004, please send your check for \$20 to: OFHA INC., P.O. Box 920561, Houston, TX 77292-0561.

DETACH AND MAIL WITH YOUR CHECK

Name: _____


Address: _____

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Email: _____

Additional donation enclosed for:

\$ _____ Beautification Fund \$ _____ Citizens on Patrol

 **OAK FOREST HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION**
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To correct your address,
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NEIGHBORHOOD ALERT!

The City of Houston has adopted a zero tolerance policy in regards to residents placing heavy trash out at unscheduled times. Avoid fines from \$50-\$2000 by learning the rules.

HEAVY TRASH SCHEDULE INSIDE

OAK FOREST

HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

FALL 2004

OAK FOREST IS DEED RESTRICTED

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

from Greg Ryden

Many of you in Oak Forest may not be aware, but recently our neighborhood narrowly missed being the new home of one of HISD's new satellite facilities for a bus barn terminal. The intention of this project was to relocate the current location of the bus barn at Delmar Stadium to the Acme Brick Plant site at 5050 Acorn (corner of Acorn and Randon). To some this may not sound like such a big deal, but when you factor in that the facility would accommodate up to 300 buses complete with washing, maintenance and refueling facilities, parking for bus drivers and the whirl of those buses passing thru our neighborhood on streets ill-equipped to accommodate them 3-4 times a day, some of our neighbors might have been taking quite a hit on quality of life issues around their homes, as well as probable hit on their property values.

Fortunately, thanks to the Oak Forest Newsgroup, I know that many people were aware the situation, such as the Keller's in section 16 who organized the petition drive, and the 130+ people from Oak Forest as well as Mangum Manor, Forest Pines and Forest West that came to the Homeowners Meeting to voice their opposition to the project. With support and intervention from City of Houston District A Council Member Toni Lawrence, State Representative Duane Bohac and State Senator John Whitmire, the proposed project was officially terminated at the August 11th HISD Board Meeting. HISD is now seeking an alternate property away from Oak Forest to build the bus barn. The Board of Directors and the members of the OFHA would like to extend their gratitude to these elected officials for their efforts in helping combat a problem that many felt we would not be able to overcome.

Another accomplishment that was slightly less recognizable was that we as a community, together with our elected officials, were able to come together and organize an effective force to challenge what we thought was a bad idea for our community. Not many neighborhoods can say that they've made such an accomplishment. Many times efforts such as ours are met with a great opposition force that tends to discourage others from becoming involved. With 5500+ homes in our neighborhood, there is no reason why we should not have a louder voice in Houston. When projects such as these that affect the quality of life in our neighborhood, I know that the OFHA and members of our community will be there to address them head on.

Use your Randalls Card and donate money to OFHA.

For more information go to www.ofha.com/donate.html

USE CODE:
9719

VOLUNTEERS DRIVE OFHA

by Zack Derryberry

The OFHA is not your typical Homeowners Association. We are operated by Oak Forest residents who have volunteered to maintain and protect our neighborhood, not by a faceless management company that measures the height of your lawn on a weekly basis. The OFHA understands that the neighborhood is made up of many individuals, but at the same time we appreciate the importance and responsibility of living in a community such as ours.

Membership in the OFHA is only \$20 annually and is voluntary. Your membership dues are payable each January and memberships are effective January 1st through December 31st. Year to date, the OFHA has 580 paid memberships totaling \$13,082 in membership dues and donations. This representing a small fraction of the total households in Oak Forest. Take part in where you live. Your membership dues are vital to the Association's success and for the betterment of your neighborhood.

We encourage each of you to join the OFHA and become an active member. How else could \$20 go so far toward protecting and enhancing one of your most valuable assets? Please take the time and join the Oak Forest Homeowners Association today. Thanks for your support.

YAHOO NEWSGROUP

The Oak Forest Yahoo newsgroup is the fastest, most efficient method to get information on activities in the Oak Forest community. The group provides notices to residents of upcoming events and provides a place to ask questions or raise issues of interest to the Oak Forest community. Membership is restricted to residents and property owners only, and the group is moderated.

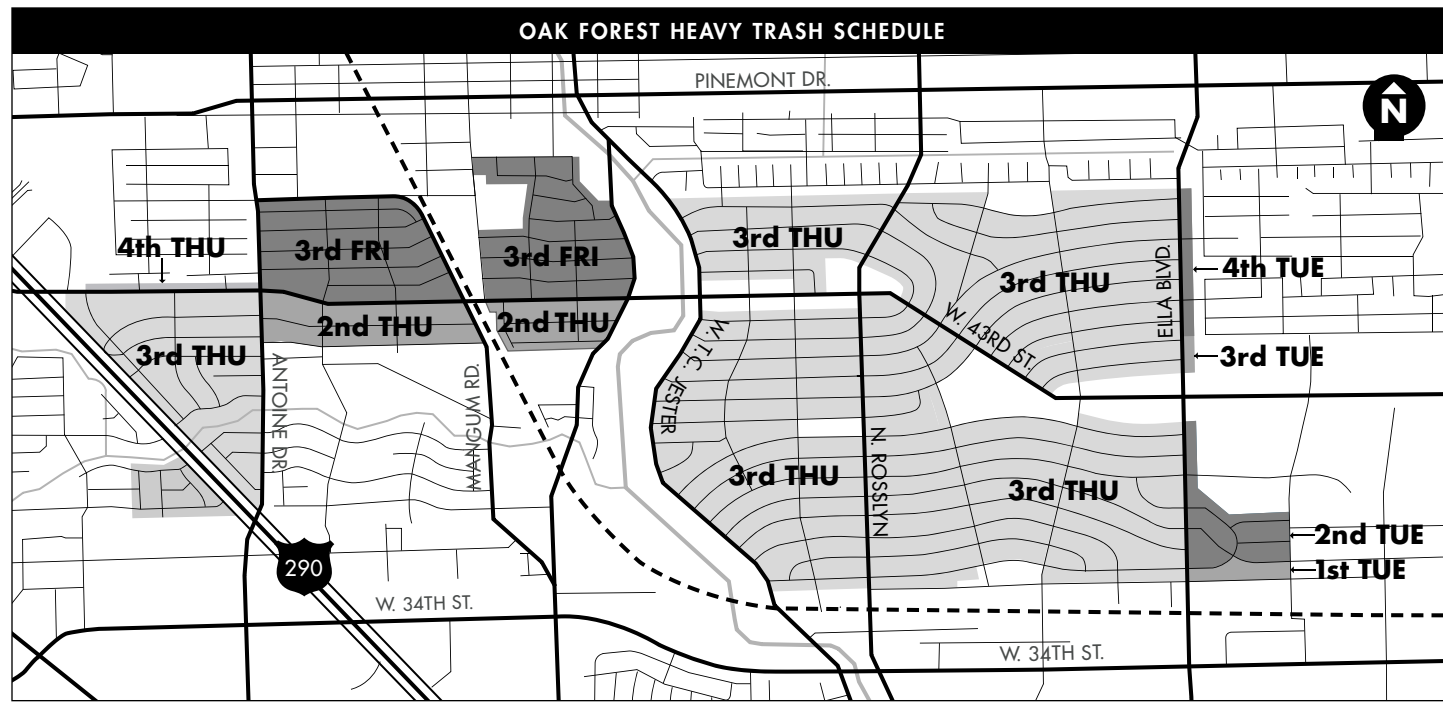
To subscribe, send an email to OFHA-subscribe@yahoogroups.com or email us a hotline@ofha.org

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Oak Forest Homeowners Association meetings are held the second Monday of each month at the Candlelight Community Center located at 1520 Candlelight Boulevard at 7 p.m.

Dates of upcoming meetings are:

- **October 11** - Speaker TBA
- **November 8** - Will be accepting nominees for 2005 Board Members
- **December 13** - Election for 2005 Board Members & Holiday Mixer



CITY'S NEW HEAVY TRASH POLICY

by Greg Ryden

The City of Houston is adopting a Zero Tolerance policy for those who illegally dump trash or ignore the schedule for placement of heavy trash for pick-up. In Oak Forest, heavy trash day and the appropriate time for its placement is routinely disregarded, creating an eyesore that can last for weeks. Residents should adhere to the following pickup instructions:

- Heavy trash should be placed adjacent to the front curb in a location easily accessible to the collection vehicle between the hours of 6:00 p.m. the Friday before, and 7:00 am on the scheduled collection day.
- Heavy trash material should not be stacked under low over head electrical wires or other cabling, signs, or mailboxes; next to fences or posts; or on top of water meters, gas meters, fire hydrants, or other exposed utility components.
- Materials should not be placed in the street, on the sidewalk, or other right-of way, or in any manner which would interfere with pedestrian or vehicular traffic.
- Heavy trash collection is limited to residential units and vacant residential lots only if the waste generated is in connection with the maintenance of the property.

Restrictions for Heavy Trash are as follows:

- A maximum of four cubic yards of building material (not to include roofing shingles, brick, plaster or concrete, meaning no construction debris) generated by the resident in connection with the maintenance of the residential property may be collected by heavy trash crews.

- Appliances containing refrigerant must have a tag attached to them certifying that a qualified technician has removed the refrigerant.
- The Solid Waste Management Department is not allowed to collect any material that was generated by contractors who were retained by a resident to perform work on his or her residential property. It is the responsibility of the contractor to remove all debris that may arise from the contractor's activities. These contractor-related activities include, but are not limited to: trimming and removal of trees, remodeling, new construction and roofing. Even if the trash was placed during the correct time, if it remains past the scheduled pick up date, it will be in violation of the heavy trash ordinance.
- If authorized items placed for collection are mixed with unauthorized items, department personnel shall not be obligated to sort the materials and may refuse the entire load. For those who violate these criteria, fines will be levied against the resident that will range from \$50 to \$2,000.

Different parts of Oak Forest have different days throughout the month for scheduled pick-up, so to help better illustrate when and where those pick-ups will occur, we have included a map defining Heavy Trash Day for Oak Forest (see above).

Please help us keep Oak Forest a beautiful place to live by obeying the trash days and letting your neighbors know about this new development with Heavy Trash pickup. To report large trash violations, please email 311 at 311@cityofhouston.net or call 311. Please make sure to get a reference number from the operator so that you are able to more easily follow up with the complaint.

KNOW YOUR FLOOD RISK: LATEST WHITE OAK BAYOU FLOODPLAIN INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON INTERNET

by Alisa Max, P.E., Harris County Flood Control District

Flooding is our natural disaster in the Harris County area. We don't get earthquakes or mudslides. Instead, when it rains more than our storm sewer and bayou systems can handle, the area is subject to flooding. And no matter how large our drainage systems are, there will always be a storm large enough to overwhelm them. But we can reduce our risks of flooding, and we do-through programs being implemented by governmental entities including the Harris County Flood Control District (the District). And we can be more knowledgeable about our flood risks to help us prepare for the next time we receive extreme rainfall.

Tropical Storm Allison devastated our community, with over \$5 billion in damages in Harris County alone. In the aftermath of the storm, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the District began a multi-year initiative called the Tropical Storm Allison Recovery Project (TSARP) to assess the flood risks associated with the major flooding sources within Harris County, including White Oak Bayou which runs through Oak Forest. This study uses the latest technology and information to give us a better estimate of areas of naturally higher flood risk.

Draft floodplain information for Oak Forest has been completed. This draft information is called Flood Hazard Recovery Data and it represents the most current understanding of where nature has placed the 1% and 0.2% (100-year and 500-year) floodplains and floodways. The information was derived using cutting edge technologies and more data than was ever available before. This Flood Hazard Recovery Data is not a FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map but it will be used by FEMA to develop new preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Maps for all of Harris County in early Fall of this year. FEMA will begin a mandatory administrative process at that time, which will ultimately result in the new maps being finalized and adopted in late 2005 (estimated).

Flood insurance matters will not be affected until the Flood Insurance Rate Maps have been officially adopted (est. late 2005). However, it would be in your best interest to contact your insurance agent prior to the new maps being adopted to discuss the benefits of "grandfathering" and being a "loyal customer". It is still important that everyone residing in Harris County consider purchasing flood insurance, regardless of floodplain designation. Flooding is a natural disaster that can affect any of us.

To see Flood Hazard Recovery Data or to learn more about your flood risk, go to www.tsarp.org or call the TSARP hotline at 713-722-7227.

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BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE UPDATE

OFHA would like to thank all who have volunteered for our recent Beautification Saturdays. The last Saturday of the month is when residents from around Oak Forest meet up and take part in the upkeep of our community.

In the past few months, we've helped clean up Ella Blvd. after its run in with construction, planted 20 trees on Antoine, planted an additional 15 trees on 43rd and maintained and mulched all of the trees on Antoine. It is our goal to make Oak Forest live up to its reputation as the "Urban Woods" by filling it with natural beauty.

The only way we will be able to accomplish this goal is through the financial support of residents and volunteers with a "hands on" attitude. So support us by joining OFHA and volunteering for our next Beautiful Saturday. Again, it's the last Saturday of every month. To find out more, contact Wes Jones at wes@ofha.org.

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ADVERTISE HERE WITH OFHA
 Support your community!
 Reach over 5,000 homes with our quarterly newsletter and website.
 Contact Wes Jones
 at wes@ofha.org

OAK FOREST'S BEAUTIFUL HOME WINNER FOR FALL 2004

by Angelica Wurth

Drum roll please...And the winner of OFHA's award for a *Beautiful Home* this quarter is the home of Mr. William L. Smith. The home is located at 4513 Libbey Lane. It is beautifully manicured, with well kept shrubs and flowers.

We invite our neighbors in Oak Forest to take a look at our *Beautiful Home* winner and get inspired to make their own house a *Beautiful Home!* Not only will you make our neighborhood more beautiful, you will increase the value of your home.

We would like to thank the person who nominated this house (no name submitted). Please submit your nominations for next quarter's winner by emailing Angelica Wurth at angelica@ofha.org.

VIEW THE FALL 2004 BEAUTIFUL HOME ONLINE
www.ofha.org/beautiful_home.html