

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 2005, please send your check for \$20 to: OFHA INC., P.O. Box 920561, Houston, TX 77292-0561.

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The OAK LOG

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION FROM OAK FOREST HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION



WINTER 2006

OAK FOREST IS DEED RESTRICTED

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

from Greg Ryden

Oak Forest, this will be my last president's message. At the stroke of midnight, December 31st, as I am ringing in the New Year, I will simultaneously be relinquishing my role as a two-term president of the OFHA.

Without dwelling too much on what has or hasn't been done in the neighborhood these past two years, I would like to say that for the most part I am happy with what we have accomplished. We put together an awareness campaign, which we will continue to do, that allowed our community to recognize what the regional governments have in store for future road construction projects in our area, i.e. the toll road, which has been removed from the plan, and road widening projects along our streets. The Oak Forest Movie in the Park has been in large part a success and with continued effort and support could grow into quite a festivity in the coming years. Beautification Committee Chair Wes Jones's relentless pursuit to plant trees in our neighborhood's countless medians has made the OFHA's beautification effort a process that will benefit this neighborhood for generations to come. Looking forward, in a neighborhood that was established by soldiers returning home from WWII and their families, and with so many new families and people moving in, and given its size, it would only be fitting that our neighborhood put on a Fourth of July Parade. Some residents have expressed an interest in making happen, and I would like to see it happen as well.

I think that in the past there has been resistance, or at the very least ambivalence to the role that the Oak Forest Homeowners Association plays in the neighborhood. My goal has been simple, to make this neighborhood a great place to live. Hopefully over the past two years we've made it clear that we are largely a neighborhood civic club that also happens to be charged with enforcing deed restrictions, and all this by collecting \$20 in voluntary dues every year. At the same time I hope we dispelled the myth that we are an omnipotent oligarchic organization bent on taking away and selling private property because the yard wasn't mowed. Maybe that was feeling of the populace in the past, but not any longer. I know and I can assure you that the next round of OFHA Board Members will understand that as well. We want this neighborhood to get the kind of positive recognition throughout the city that it deserves, and the property values to reflect it. This is never an easy process. It takes the time of volunteers, dedication and perseverance in the face of apathy and resistance to make change happen.

President's Message / Continued on page 3

Join or renew OFHA online.
IT'S EASY AND SAFE WITH PAYPAL.
JUST GO TO WWW.OFHA.ORG/JOIN

NEW OFFICERS FOR 2006

OFHA's officers for 2006 were elected at the meeting on Monday, December 12, 2005. The new officers are:

President	Zack Derryberry
Vice President	Mike Markey
2nd Vice President	Lauren Swarts
Treasurer	Andrea Warren
Secretary	Kathy Boulte
Parliamentarian	Ruth Metzger
Sergeant at Arms	Richard Rabe

Committee Chairs are:

Architectural	Greg Ryden
Beautification	Wes Jones
Deed Restriction	Greg Ryden
Public Relations	Lauren Swarts

Special thanks to Amy Hernandez for her service last year.

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 7p.m.

Dates of upcoming meetings are:

- **January 9th** - Speaker - Dan Raine concerning the HGAC's Regional Pedestrian and Bicyclist Plan
- **February 13th** - Houston Bar Association's Speakers Bureau Attorney discussing buying and selling a home.
- **March 13th** - Speaker - TBA

If you have a topic or suggested speaker, please share them with us at 713-688-OFHA or hotline@ofha.org

HELP WANTED

Join the Oak Forest Homeowners Association!

It's the beginning of a new year and it's time to join the OFHA or renew your membership. Memberships are only \$20 per year. OFHA is dedicated to making our neighborhood a better place to live and work. Become a part of this effort by joining today.

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. 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.

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OAK FOREST FORUMS

The Oak Forest forums are the fastest, most efficient method to get information on activities and happenings in Oak Forest and the Houston area. The messageboards give notice to residents of upcoming events and provide a place to ask questions or raise issues of interest to the Oak Forest community. Messages are posted in real time, and the forums are moderated.

TO VIEW THE FORUMS, REGISTER, OR POST, PLEASE VISIT:
www.ofha.org/forums

OAK FOREST BOOK CLUB HOSTS "WICKED" AT HOBBY CENTER

by Lauren Swarts

On Thursday November 10, Oak Forest residents followed the yellow brick road to The Hobby Center in Downtown Houston to check out the award winning Broadway Musical "Wicked," based on the book Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West by Gregory Maguire. The evening was hosted by the Oak Forest Book Club, where Oakies, friends, and family gathered to see the story of what "really" happened in Oz. The Production was fantastic, and a great time was had by all. Look for upcoming events from the OFBC in the near future.



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ANIMAL ADOPTIONS AT NORTHWEST MALL

by Angelica Wurth

There is a new organization in our neighborhood called SAVING ANIMALS. The goal of this non-profit organization is to end the tragic destruction of healthy, adoptable animals at the City of Houston's Bureau of Animal Regulation and Care (BARC) and to greatly improve Houston's dog and cat overpopulation crisis. As many as 90% of the animals admitted to BARC are destroyed. Saving Animals has developed new dog and cat sterilization and adoption programs to increase the placement of animals from BARC into permanent, loving homes. Additionally, the organization will provide dog and cat sterilization and wellness services for animals belonging to the public, thereby diminishing the number of homeless animals on the streets of Houston. So, this is good for the two-legged citizens of Houston too!

An effort to adopt animals is underway at the Northwest Mall every Saturday from 10:30am to 4:00pm. For \$45, you can gain a new faithful and loving best friend, who is spayed/neutered and has all vaccinations and city license. Come on by make a difference in your community. Or if you don't need a new animal companion, volunteer to help others find homes! For more information, to volunteer or make a donation: call 713-527-4490 or visit www.savinganimals.org.

OAK FOREST'S BEAUTIFUL HOME WINNER FOR WINTER 2006

As an ongoing project of the Oak Forest Homeowners Association and in an effort to encourage the preservation of our historical community, we selected Troy and Lauri Wenzel's home at 1526 Althea as this quarter's Beautiful Home winner.

The Oak Forest Homeowners Association is committed to improving the beautification of our neighborhood. Because Oak Forest has long since surpassed its fiftieth birthday, many of its homes are in need of restoration. Enhancing the aesthetics of neighborhood homes and yards enhances the value of our neighborhood in addition to setting an inspiring example to the surrounding community.

The homeowners will be given an "OFHA BEAUTIFUL HOME" sign to put in their front yard and a letter of appreciation from the homeowners association.

For future awards, we'd like to invite the community to submit your nomination for Beautiful Home. Email your nominations to the committee chair at lauren@ofha.org.

VIEW THE FALL 2005 BEAUTIFUL HOME ONLINE
www.ofha.org/beautifulhome

WINTER GARDENING FOR SPRING

by Jan Garver

Now that winter is upon us, with its grays and blacks, thinking of the colors of Spring can lighten our outlook and give us something to look forward to in our gardens. Since we have such a long growing season here in Houston, we can begin to prepare and plant for Spring much earlier than the folks "up north".

In fact, January is the time to remove the thatch from the lawn, aerate it and feed it with a low nitrogen mixture. It's also time to build and prepare the beds for the coming season. Add gypsum to heavy soils, repeat in 3 weeks. Add granite dust, rock phosphate and organic matter into the soil to allow time for it to settle before planting. It's always a good idea to do some research on the plants you want to put in. It helps them all if they are grouped by need (e.g. type of fertilizer, watering needs, soil type).

You can fertilize your daylilies, pansies and irises. Don't forget to build up your flower and vegetable beds, too. There are a number of plants that can be put into the ground now, including Cornflowers, Shasta Daisies, Petunias and Stocks. Among the bulbs that can be planted are Amaryllis, Calla, Crocus, Freesia and Tulip. If you have to move a Camillia, this is the time.

February 10th is the average date of the last freeze. With that, comes more planting options. Many cool-weather vegetables can now be set out. Summer flowering bulbs should be planted and it's the last chance to prune fruit trees and shrubs for summer blooms.

Two of my favorite places to get plants, and plant help, are Buchanan's and Another Place in Time. They are both on 11th St. in the Heights, and carry a wonderful selection of plants, including many Texas natives, which assists in their survival down here.

It also helps to have great references. The source for the above information was "A Garden Book for Houston", River Oaks Garden Club. I would also recommend "The Texas Flowerscaper" by Kathy Huber. Happy gardening!

MORE TREES FOR OAK FOREST

by Wes Jones

On December 3rd, the Beautification Committee hosted a tree planting on the esplanades between Mangum and Watonga on 43rd Street. We planted over 60 Oak trees.

Thanks to all the volunteers that came out, the City of Houston for the mulch and Trees for Houston for supplying the trees. Also, a special thanks to Brad Hendricks from the City's Forestry Department for coming out to give a tree-planting demonstration and boosting our volunteers' morale!

If you would like to help the Beautification Committee at the next event, it is easy to volunteer. You can sign up for an email alert to upcoming events by going to www.ofha.org/beautification.

Our events are usually on the last Saturday of every month. Our next meeting will be at the end of January. If you have any more questions, email Wes Jones at wes@ofha.org.

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CHRISTMAS TREE RECYCLING

The City of Houston is encouraging residents to recycle Christmas trees and give them a new lease on life. The Solid Waste Management Department is requesting that residents remove tinsel, lights, plastic tree stands and plastic water bowls from the trees. The recycled trees will be converted into mulch, which will in turn help save landfill space and help preserve the environment.

Flocked trees will not be accepted for recycling; they will be picked up on the neighborhood's scheduled heavy trash day. Commercial vendor trees will not be accepted.

For more information on the City's tree recycling program, contact City of Houston by dialing 3-1-1.

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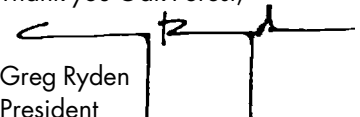
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President's Message / Continued from page 1

Hopefully there are people out there in the neighborhood that share my willingness to grow this community and better the neighborhood. The continued effort of OFHA volunteers is essential for the protection of our most important place, the neighborhood we call home. Please, if you can, get involved at some level.

As I bring this to a close, I would like to thank the Board for all their hard (and near thankless) work; 1st VP and Beautification Chair Wes Jones, 2nd VP Claire Jones, Treasurer Zack Derryberry, Secretary Amy Hernandez, Architectural/Deed Restriction Committee Chair & Sergeant-at-Arms Richard Rabe, Public Relations Committee Chair Andrea Warren and Parliamentarian Ruth Metzger. I would like to make a special thank you to Richard for many years of service as the Architectural/Deed Restriction Committee Chair, as this will mark his final year serving at that post. You all have made the role of President a pleasure and honor to serve and the OFHA a memorable experience to be a part of.

Thank you Oak Forest,


Greg Ryden
President
Oak Forest Homeowners Association