

## October General Meeting

Plans are underway for our annual general meeting the latter part of October. Several details are yet to be finalized, but the meeting will combine both the general meeting and the "neighborhood night out" get together. Further details will be posted on the front sign. Several things were taken into account when considering the combining of the two functions. First and foremost was the lack of volunteers to complete the planning of two separate functions. Second, was the lack of a suitable location for the BBQ in August. Third, less than a third of our neighborhood attended last year and the reasons ranged from lack of time to the temperature.

A potluck format is being considered and an indoor location is being sought. At the general meeting we will cover 1) the election of board members and officers. 2) Status of the water situation. 3) Several subjects from the Architectural Control Committee. 4) The future of the POA and the need for volunteers. Comments, offers of help, ideas or agenda items may be forwarded to Paul at [Pgravett@austin.rr.com](mailto:Pgravett@austin.rr.com) (be sure to put "annual meeting" in the subject line to make it past the SPAM filter).

Each of us is concerned with the livability of our neighborhood. If you are like me, your largest single investment is bolted to a chunk of concrete in this neighborhood. In retrospect, it is easy to find the things that should have been done better or sooner. In the rush of our everyday lives, we sometimes overlook our neighborhood needs. The bottom-line is

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### ACC Update

When each of us closed on our homes or lots here in Oak Forest, we acknowledged receipt of the Covenants and Restrictions for our subdivision. These are often called CCR's which stands for Covenant, Conditions, and Restrictions. The CCR's are effectively a *condition* of our purchase. Each of us is legally bound to other residents, and in some cases, to other entities such as Hays County; to abide by the restrictions set forth in this document.

The CCR's dictate many aspects of life here in our subdivision. For example, there is a minimum size for one and multi-story houses. Exterior masonry restrictions, fence construction guidelines, outbuildings and other improvements must conform to specific size and visual regulations. Certain landscaping requirements are

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## Water Update

Purchase of the water system by the Oak Forest Water Board has been authorized and the offer accepted. Once the water system has been purchased future plans include the drilling of a new well which will be located in a better area of the neighborhood for well production. The existing location was simply a bad location but the existing pumps and other facilities are adequate. Therefore, the new well will run the water through the existing facilities and to the neighborhood. Long term, low-interest debt will be obtained and is expected to be able to be serviced under the current water rates. Lower water rates will be evaluated based on the ability to service the debt and maintain an adequate water supply for the Oak Forest neighborhood.

## Water Saving Tips

Although the worst heat appears to have now past, there is still plenty of hot weather remaining. Here are a few tips to help you get through the remaining hot days and save some water.

- Don't over-water your lawn! Water in the early morning or in the evening. If you are following the five day watering schedule, multi-cycle your controller for at least two waterings on your day. Set start time one for about 2:00 a.m. and set each station for 7 minutes. Set start time 2 for 4:00 a.m. and water for 7 minutes, and repeat with start time three at 5:30 or 6:00 a.m. This technique will get you about the right amount of water and prevent run off.
- To determine how long you should run your sprinklers, place straight-edged cans at different distances away from the sprinkler and time how long it takes to fill an average of one inch of water in each can.
- Don't abuse the benefits of an automatic sprinkler system by wasting large amounts of water.
- Check sprinkler heads regularly to make sure they are working properly.
- Prevent evaporation of water. Cover pools and spas. This can save the equivalent of your pool volume each year.

## Fire Ant Relief

The impact of red imported fire ants in the state of Texas is estimated to be \$1.2 billion annually. Red imported fire ants are pests of urban, agricultural and wildlife areas and can pose a serious health threat to plants and animals. The goal of the Texas Imported Fire Ant Research and Management Project ( <http://fireant.tamu.edu>) is to find effective methods to eliminate this invasive species as a major economic and medical pest. The website provides research-based information to homeowners, agricultural producers, industry professional, institutional clients, educators or anyone looking for way to help manage fire ants.

### How can I tell if I have fire ants?

**You can tell you have fire ants if....**You see a mound of **fluffy worked soil**, particularly a few days after a heavy rain. The **mound has no opening in the center** like most ant mounds. Red imported fire ants leave and enter the mound housing the colony through underground tunnels. Undisturbed mounds in pastures can reach 18 inches in height, but most mounds in turf grass areas are usually just a few inches tall. When you shovel into the colony's mound of soil you see white objects. This is the brood - the eggs, larvae and pupae of developing ants.

**Fire ants are small**, only about 1/8" to 1/4" long.

**Variation in size is a distinguishing characteristic** of imported fire ants. Many other ant species are uniform in size.

When you disturb the mound, dozens to hundreds of reddish-brown worker **ants crawl up vertical surfaces** (like grasses and other objects) on and around the mound. Few native ants charge up vertical surfaces...

If you get stung it feels like being burned. A day or so later, the imported fire ant's unique venom forms a **white fluid filled pustule or blister** at the red sting site that is very characteristic - only fire ant venom causes this symptom! Worker ants bite (with mandibles) and sting (with stingers) aggressively and repeatedly.

### Broadcast Baits for Fire Ant Control

In most situations, broadcast baits are the easiest, fastest, least expensive and most effective way to control fire

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## KNOW YOUR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

Hays County Sheriff – Allen Bridges – 512-393-7896

Hays County Clerk – Lee Carlisle – 512-393-7330

State Representative District 45 – Patrick Rose – 512-463-0647

Hays County Commissioner – Susie Carter – 512-262-2091

US Representative – Lamar Smith – Austin District – 21 512-469-6034

US Senator – John Cornyn – Central Texas – 512-916-5834

US Senator – Kay Bailey Hutchison – Central Texas – 512-916-5834

Buda Mayor – John Trube – 512-312-0084

Texas Senator – District 25 – Jeff Wentworth 512-463-0125

## SPEED LIMITS

A friendly reminder that the posted speed limit within Oak Forest is 30 mph. We continue to have numerous occurrences of both cars and trucks exceeding the speed limit. School has once again started so we must be aware of school buses and children waiting for school buses in the early morning hours. We are also approaching the time of year where the days get shorter. We have a beautiful neighborhood in which many of our neighbors enjoy early morning and evening walks. As the days get shorter, more of this walking occurs in lower light conditions. Be courteous and follow the speed limit to make our neighborhood a safe place to enjoy a walk and a safe place for our children.

## OFPOA BOARD

President – Richard Bischoff

Vice-President – Phil Suitt

Treasurer – Paul Gravett

Secretary – Margie Laughlin

Members – Skip Gibbons, Rick Patty

ACC – Arlis Walker, Chris Gravett

## Fall Landscaping Tips

- The fall months should be the most desirable season to develop or improve the landscape and flower gardens. During early fall, a compost container should be constructed for the residue of summer plants and leaves that will be available in a month or two.
- Mid to late September is about the latest time to sow Bermuda grass seed before cool weather, to patch an old lawn or start a new one.
- Now is the best time to aerate the lawn, so the water and fertilizer elements can easily move down to the root zone of the grass during the fall and winter seasons. If water and fertilizer don't penetrate down to the root zone, they are wasted and the run off pollutes the streams.
- New perennial plants should be set this month, so they have time to develop a normal root system before winter

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ants. "Broadcasting" a bait means to scatter it lightly across an area, eliminating the need to find and treat individual mounds. These products are designed for the homeowner and are widely available in retail stores, garden centers and farm and ranch supply stores (Wal-Mart, Lowe's, Home Depot, Tractor Supply, etc.). They are sold in small containers with enough material to cover a home yard up to a few acres.

Literally dozens of products are available as individual mound treatments. For more information: Contact your local Extension Agent or log on to: <http://fireant.tamu.edu> for more information on individual mound treatments

## 1626 Construction

Based on a TX DOT Construction report, the construction for FM 1626 from 0.2 miles west of Bliss Spillar to 0.2 miles east of Bliss Spillar, will take approximately 71 days to install a continuous turn land and a paved shoulder.

Source:  
([www.dot.state.tx.us/insdot/geodist/aus/cserve/constrpt/cnst\\_6.htm](http://www.dot.state.tx.us/insdot/geodist/aus/cserve/constrpt/cnst_6.htm))

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that those of us who have been volunteering have no more time left. Current volunteers are working on several projects at once, just to get the work done. There is a lot of work to do in our neighborhood. We need volunteers to serve on the ACC, we need a committee for the night out event, we need a committee for the annual meeting, and we need volunteers to assist with the website and newsletter. We need volunteers to work with the neighborhood watch. We need volunteers to run for the board of directors and to serve as officers. Are we concerned about the care of our common areas in the neighborhood? Are we interested in having a community wide garage sale?

As Jerry Garcia once said-

*"Somebody has got to do something; and it is a shame that it has to be us". If we don't do it, who will?*

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mandated as well as the visual appearance or storage of vehicles, boats etc.

Confusingly, each phase of our neighborhood (Sections one and two) have slightly different CCR's. Some of those changes removed ambiguities, while others closed loopholes or corrected mistakes in prior versions. Therefore, depending upon where your home or lot is located, slightly different rules apply.

The Architectural Control Committee (ACC) is the "governing body" for interpretation of the CCR's. The ACC is currently comprised of three residents- POA President- Richard Bischoff, POA board member- Arlis Walker and Christopher Gravett. This body routinely reviews all new house plans and all resident requests for lot improvements (sheds, pools, fences, etc.)

The ACC sees itself as being charged with the duty to protect the property values in our subdivision. Their mission is to attempt to accommodate the individual needs and desires of a community such as ours, while maintaining a livable standard for all. From time to time the diligence with which the CCR's have been enforced has varied in the past. Limited time and manpower has

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sometimes lead to more attention being paid to "major issues" while less time was devoted to more minor ones. Many of us were confused about the process of gaining ACC approval of requests. For these and other reasons, many CCR's were routinely ignored by some residents. We know that this has resulted in inconsistencies throughout the neighborhood. We have been asked on more than one occasion "why do I have to follow the CCR's when so and so is not conforming to the rules".

At our October general meeting, the ACC will propose an "amnesty plan" for residents who wish to retroactively comply with our rules. The intent of this plan would not be to harass or penalize residents who may have honestly been unaware of CCR requirements. Generally, the plan would permit residents who have "unapproved construction" to submit plans to the ACC. If the unapproved construction would require modification to come into compliance with the CCR's, the submitted plans would offer such adjustment.

The amnesty plan will allow each property owner the ability to "self-review" their CCR status and make needed corrections. During this period, the ACC would look to the general intent of the CCR's and would "err on the side of the homeowner" where there is room for interpretation. Each of us takes pride in our homes and community. It would be much nicer if we would all take a week end to look around our property and correct the simple things we may have overlooked in the "rush" of the moment. Take a moment to look for boats, trailers and RVs that are visible from the street. Clotheslines, unused vehicles, lot cleanup and construction debris or piles of building materials should be reviewed. Once the amnesty period has expired, the ACC would begin issuing notices of violation and pursuing legal remedies as provided by the CCR's.

Oak Forest Property Owners Association  
P.O. Box ?????  
Manchaca, TX ?????

BULK RATE
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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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