

The Old Orchard Outlook



AUGUST 2013

The Official Newsletter Of The Old Orchard Homeowners Association.

Update from the Board

Greetings fellow residents! It is already summer and the year is zooming by. We hope that you are enjoying the pool and the summer weather. We would like to follow up on some of the projects we have been working on for the community.

- Finishing the iron fence on 1464 to the water plant. This project is complete.
- Expansion of the community playground. This project is complete. We have seen a large number of kids enjoying the new amenities. This is a project that the community was asking for and we are happy to have it delivered. Always exercise caution when kids are playing. Please provide any feedback you might have.
- Demolishing the original keypad enclosure, and building a new enclosure around the keypad. Bids are in, and a decision has been made in this regard. We should be seeing progress on this fairly soon.
- Replacing and/or reinforcing various street signs around the community. All street signs have been properly secured. If you notice any downed street signs, please report it to Austin Properties so it can be addressed.
- Lakes water replenishment to maintain the water levels during drought times. This project is in motion. You will notice that Lake 1A (to the right of the entrance gate) has been replenished and the water fountain is being repaired. This lake will no longer be the mud pit it used to be.
- Cleaning and refinishing tables and benches around the lake (Lake 2) and the playground area. We are looking at different bids. The initial priority will be to furnish new benches in the playground area after the expansion.
- Enforcement of the "No Street Parking" clause on the Declaration of Covenants (Deed Restrictions), Article VI – Section 4. This has been instituted. While there has been some consternation regarding this enforcement, we have seen a great improvement in the community. The Board is still revising this enforcement to make it clearer to the community. Thanks to all that have abided by the initial restrictions in the covenants.
- Entrance/Exit Gates repairs and repainting. While initially we had the painting scheduled, an accident occurred and the exit gate was hit and bent beyond repair. It will be completely replaced by a new one and the repair of corroded portions and repainting of the entrance section will be completed.

The Board asks for your cooperation. We still need volunteers that would like to take pride in their community and help with the different committees. We also ask for your questions/comments/concerns. Please contact the Board at oldorchardboard@yahoogroups.com.

Community Website

**WWW.
OldOrchardTexas
.com**

For All of Your Neighborhood Information

Important Contacts

Have a question? Please refer to our website at: **www.OldOrchardTexas.com** (OOT) for answers to your questions and important community updates.

Management Company: MASC Austin Properties, Inc.

Bill Gard (Community Manager)
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Tel: 713-776-1771
Website: www.mascapi.com

Board of Directors

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Common Area Landscaping Committee

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Social Committee

Alisha Harrell
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Parking Compliance Committee

John Richardson
Email: j-rich@sbcglobal.net

Newsletter

Contact the Board

ADOPT-A-TREE PROGRAM - AGAIN!



Old Orchard is in need of reforestation in the common areas. The Adopt-a-tree program was launched in 2012, and we are reviving it in 2013. The goal is to have residents sponsor a tree in the area of the community of their choosing. The following are the guidelines of the program:

- A 45 gallon size tree will be planted with 3 guiding stakes, mulch and a “bubbler” attached to the sprinkler system for irrigation.
- Sponsor selects the area where the tree will be planted.
- A small marker will be placed at the tree with the sponsor(s) name(s).
- You can sponsor a tree by yourself (100%) or share the cost with one or more residents.

If you would like more information about this program, please contact the landscaping committee at: faizx@yahoo.com or the Board at: oldorchardboard@yahoo.com.

WHAT ARE THOSE DARK AREAS ON THE MOON?

Ever wonder about the dark areas on the moon? From early times, mankind believed that those were actually liquid oceans and they became known as ‘maria’. Maria is in fact, Latin for “seas” and early astronomers gave the maria formal names such as Mare Serenitatis (“Sea of Serenity”), Mare Imbrium (“Sea of Rain”) and of course, Mare Tranquillitatis, the “Sea of Tranquility” – site of the Apollo 11 landing and man’s first steps on the moon.



The maria are actually gigantic lava basins formed long ago. During the solar system’s early history, asteroid impacts were much more common than they are today. Some of the larger asteroids slammed into the young moon with enough force that they actually cracked the crust. The interior had not yet cooled, and molten lava flowed out to fill the crater created by the impact. With no atmosphere on the moon and therefore no weathering, the maria and the rest of the surface will remain virtually unchanged for eons.

Until next time, **Clear Skies!**
Leonard Ferguson
brazosnightsky@gmail.com

A black and white photograph of a roller coaster track curving upwards. Several cars are visible on the track, with people inside. The background is a clear sky.

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HOMEOWNERS - LOOK & SEE

Many of you have the luxury of having a non-family member maintain your yard. In the past this was an opportunity for the homeowner to do some casual inspections of your home and their surroundings.

So now take some time and take a slow walk around your home, look and make some mental notes of what your property, your home, looks like. If something is out of place, address the issue. It's not uncommon that a small repair or a little adjustment could save you both time and money.

Also, say hello to your neighbors and share your observations. You might be surprised that they could see something about your property that you overlooked. Take care, take pride. Thank you - Phil Lindhurst of Lindhurst's Construction

Community Website
www.
OldOrchardTexas
.com
For All of Your Neighborhood Information

VOLUNTEERS STILL NEEDED!

The committees who support the Board in different capacities are in need of volunteers. All of these efforts are done by other residents who volunteer their time to make Old Orchard a great place to live. Volunteers are needed for the following teams: Architectural, Social, Landscaping, and Enforcement committees. If you take pride in your community, have the time, and would like to contribute to your neighborhood, please make your desire known by contacting the Board at: oldorchardboard@yahoo.com. By working together, we can make OO a special place to live for all residents.

2013 Pool Schedule

Closing Day: Sunday, September 29

Closed on Mondays for super-chlorination

From now thru August 25th & 31st

Tuesday thru Thursday	12 NOON – 8 PM
Friday, Sunday, Saturday	10 AM – 8 PM

Open September Weekends Only & Labor Day

Saturday	10 AM – 8 PM
Sunday	10 AM – 8 PM
Monday (Labor Day)	10 AM – 8 PM

For a printable calendar of pool open days go to:
www.oldorchardtexas.com/POOL/PoolOpenDays.Calendar-2013.pdf

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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

In The Know About Fort Bend County's Future Infrastructure Projects

The Central Fort Bend Chamber Alliance will hold it's 2013 Fort Bend Regional Infrastructure Conference. The conference, which is scheduled for Sept. 12 at the Rosenberg Civic Center, is a comprehensive resource for forecasts, technical information and updates regarding developing projects in Fort Bend County. Attendees will receive first-hand information from some of the area's most respected authorities on water, transportation, public-private partnerships, and economic forecasting throughout the region. The breakfast keynote is Fort Bend County Judge Robert Hebert, who will give an overview of current and future infrastructure projects that will affect local taxpayers, free-trade, highway financing and ethics. For more information about the conference or to sponsor, contact Shannan Stavinoha at [sstavinoha@cfbca.org](mailto:ssstavinoha@cfbca.org) or 281.342.5464.

Free Dog Training

Is your dog a little hard to handle, or overly enthusiastic? Fort Bend County Libraries' Mamie George Branch Library, 320 Dulles Avenue in Stafford, will present a special program, "Dog Training 101," on Monday, August 26, beginning at 6:00 pm. Dog trainer Kate Guynn will provide tips on basic canine care and on training methods using the positive-rewards method. Guynn will provide an overview of the practice of using rewards to train dogs to behave appropriately. She will show how the positive-reward dog-training technique can be used to address behavioral problems like chewing and jumping and for other issues such as potty training and heeling. Learn how these techniques can also be used to teach a dog to sit and lie down upon command. This instructional program is free and open to the public. For more information, please call the branch library at 281-238-2880.

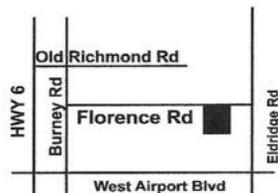
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Tips For Having The Best Lawn:

Lawns can seem difficult to keep healthy in our urban environments, with our hot, drought-prone summers and our alkaline, easily compacted heavy clay soils. But there are some simple ways in which you can boost your lawn's health and avoid the problems with diseases and pests that are so common in our area.

1. Give your lawn a great soil and it will vastly improve its overall health. Lawns need 4"-6" of well drained, organic-rich soil for the roots to be able to access oxygen, moisture and nutrients. Compacted clay soils do not have good air flow, and can prevent water from soaking down to the roots, or conversely, can hold moisture at the roots for too long once it does finally soak-in. Organic matter in the soil breaks up those hard, compacted clay lumps, and allows air and water to flow through the soil, while also feeding beneficial microorganisms. Before you seed or sod turfgrass, till compost or a good garden soil into the native soil. You will be able to feel the difference right away. If you already have a lawn and need to amend the soil under it, apply compost annually as a thin top dressing and let the grass grow up through it.

2. Train your grass roots to grow down deep into the soil by watering 1/2" once a week. If turfgrass is watered too frequently, and only a little at a time, the moisture stays in the upper one or two inches of soil and that is where the roots stay.

But then in the heat of summer that top two inches of soil dries out very quickly, leaving the roots literally high and dry, even if you watered that day. By watering deeply and infrequently, you put moisture in the lower part of the soil profile, and when the upper few inches dry out over the course of the week, the roots grow deeper to access the moisture that is still there at the bottom. When the summer comes, the roots are happy and so are you. To test your irrigation system to check how long it takes to put 1/2" of water on the lawn, put out a straight-sided can marked on the inside at 1/2" up from the bottom, and time how long it takes for the water to reach the mark.

3. Mow your lawn at the right height to avoid stressing it out. St. Augustine is a shade grass, and so in order to get enough light to photosynthesize it needs to have long, wide blades that are kept cut at about 3.5" in height. That means you let it grow to 4" and cut it back to 3.5". If it is cut too short it cannot make its own food and will stress out, making more runners and fewer blades. Zoysia japonica varieties prefer to be kept at a height of about 2.5". Bermudagrass likes to be kept mowed low, at about 1.5" depending on the variety. When bermudagrass is not mowed low frequently, it gets leggy and less dense. Buffalograss likes to be left alone or kept high at about 4". One sure way of killing St. Augustine is to grow it in full sun and mow it low.

Following these simple steps will help keep your lawn healthy throughout the year.