

# The Old Orchard Outlook



FEBRUARY 2015

The Official Newsletter Of The Old Orchard Homeowners Association.

## UPDATE from the Board:

The board wishes everyone a great and safe 2015. We are proud to serve and represent our community.

### The Community has spoken

Late in 2014, a new board of directors' format was adopted based on the desires of the community. The larger community decided to expand the format from a 3 member board to a 5 member board. The new format will assure better representation of the different sections of the community, as well as balancing the workload required to govern our community. The prior format, a 3 member board, was effective in delivering great results that enhance our community. The new board, with its 5 members, brings a well-rounded set of personal and business experiences, as well as a renewed desire to bring the best out of the community. The current board promises to set aside differences and work as a cohesive team to deliver even better results while enhancing our community.

### Relaunch of the Community Website – OldOrchardTexas.com

New Website! We would like to announce the launch of a new Old Orchard Texas website. The address is the same [www.oldorchardtexas.com](http://www.oldorchardtexas.com) but the look is new and fresh. Please take a moment to visit the site and familiarize yourself with the site especially the location of the Parking Form. The site is the home for all community information.

We recommend you make the site a favorite both on your computer and mobile browser. This site is supported on all browsers and mobile devices.

We would like to thank Dennis Grigassy for managing the site up until now and without his assistance it would have been a stale site. Going forward the site is to be hosted and managed in coordination with the firm that prepares our Quarterly Newsletter for seamless integration of information. If there are questions or requests regarding the site please email the board via the website's contact us page.

### Board's assistance with the FBISD rezoning project

The board has been consistently assisting with the community efforts to keep our current zoning under the FBISD new planning. A special mention goes to our board President, **Julio Acosta**, and our board Secretary, **Rodney Warner**, who were present at several of the FBISD sponsored meetings, and who also expressed our community concerns to the FBISD Board of Regents and its consultants for the rezoning project. The board would also like to recognize several members of the community who spent considerable time putting together presentations, flyers, and speeches. The board recognizes **Meeta Thakur** who eloquently and passionately spoke at two different FBISD Board Meetings, **Salman Khan**, **Trupty Mehta**, **Chi Lam**, **Alice Huckabee**, and **Frank Kalkattawi**. Our combined community efforts have paid off as our children will remain zoned to Garcia MS and Austin HS. A formal announcement from FBISD will be forthcoming.

### Community Committees Realignment

One of the new board members has suggested realigning our existing committees to better serve the community and to exhort members of our community to participate. The board asks for your cooperation in supporting and participating on committees as available. Please express your interest to Greg Armstrong through our board email: [oldorchardboard@yahoo.com](mailto:oldorchardboard@yahoo.com). Please check the website for additional information.

(continued on page 3)

## 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](http://www.OldOrchardTexas.com) (OOT) for answers to your questions and important community updates.

### Management Company: MASC Austin Properties, Inc.

Jonathan Rivera (Community Manager)  
Tel: 713-776-1771  
Website: [www.mascape.com](http://www.mascape.com)

### Board of Directors

Julio Acosta  
Sulabh Upadhyaya  
Rodney Warner  
Zeeshan Khurshid  
Greg Armstrong  
Email: [oldorchardboard@yahoo.com](mailto:oldorchardboard@yahoo.com)

### Architectural Review Committee

Julio Acosta  
Email: [oo\\_arc\\_chair@yahoo.com](mailto:oo_arc_chair@yahoo.com)

### Common Area Landscaping Committee

Carole Roberts  
Email: [caroleroberts53@gmail.com](mailto:caroleroberts53@gmail.com)

### Clubhouse Committee

Zeeshan Khurshid  
Email: [Zee.khursid@gmail.com](mailto:Zee.khursid@gmail.com)

### Social Committee

Renel Edmonds  
Email: [OldOrchardSocialCommittee@yahoo.com](mailto:OldOrchardSocialCommittee@yahoo.com)

### Newsletter

Contact the Board

# OLD ORCHARD SPEND REPORT

O.O. (Old Orchard) Community Association Inc.					
2014 Assessments - 617 homes at \$ 1,028 each	<b>\$634,276.00</b>				
EXPENSE	BUDGET AMOUNT	% of BUDGET	Spent YTD - DEC 2014	Remaining funds	Notes
<b>Administrative</b> - Audit, Office Expenses/Supplies, Postage, copies, Taxes, Insurance, Website, etc:	\$55,800.00	8.80%	\$57,860.31	(\$2,060.31)	
<b>Contracted Services</b> - Landscaping, Lake Mgmt, Management Co., Pool, Trash	\$263,828.04	41.60%	\$256,980.93	\$6,847.11	
<b>Maintenance Services</b> - Estimating, Clubhouse cleaning, Clubhouse AC, Lake Chemicals, Gates, Fences	\$47,520.00	7.49%	\$42,028.56	\$5,491.44	
<b>Utilities</b> - Street Lighting (whole community), Water service (irrigation), Water Service (Lake replenishment), Internet Access (for front gate camera)	\$141,000.00	22.23%	\$152,496.08	(\$11,496.08)	
<b>Total Required Expenses</b>	<b>\$508,148.04</b>	<b>80.11%</b>	<b>\$509,365.88</b>	<b>(\$1,217.84)</b>	What is annually REQUIRED to maintain from the community
<b>Planned Capital Repairs/Improvements</b>					
*Fences	\$50,000.00	7.88%	\$27,657.88	\$22,342.12	Iron Fence. Painting of Clubhouse from these funds
*Speed Bumps	\$16,200.00	2.55%	\$13,718.44	\$2,481.56	Underbudgeted by 35%
*Entrance Lighting	\$5,000.00	0.79%	\$4,453.85	\$546.15	
*Signs	\$5,000.00	0.79%	\$4,790.00	\$210.00	
*Gate Operators - Was originally pool, but Gate Operators became a priority	\$12,000.00	1.89%	\$15,053.73	(\$3,053.73)	Can reaudit allocation (budget) and move the remaining budget from Speed Bumps to compensate
<b>Total Improvements</b>	<b>\$88,200.00</b>	<b>13.91%</b>	<b>\$65,673.90</b>	<b>\$22,526.10</b>	
<b>Reserve Funding</b> - Emergency Fund	<b>\$37,927.96</b>	<b>5.98%</b>	<b>\$59,236.22</b>	<b>(\$21,308.26)</b>	
<b>Total 2014 Income - Expenses</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>\$634,276.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	

\* Administrative higher due to more collection letters and 15 month term Insurance policy to cover for underinsurance with previous management/insurance company.

\* Utilities higher due to higher electrical consumption and renegotiation of contract

\* Shortfall on Gate Operators covered with overages in other Capital Improvement projects

\* Amount for reserve funding is \$ 21K higher than budgeted - We saved more than planned!

## STARGAZER:

Did Santa bring you or your kids a new telescope for Christmas? Are you possibly frustrated with not being able to figure out how that new 'scope works? Next is figuring out how to really "see" those objects once you find them! While a discussion of the many different telescope designs is far beyond the scope of this space, we can discuss some very basic telescope pointers that will hopefully avoid some frustration and make it easier to get started.

First, let's clear up a common misconception about telescopes: A telescope's primary purpose is *not* to magnify. Its primary purpose is to *gather light*.

Magnification is important, but a telescope's true power lies in the size of its *aperture* - the diameter of its primary mirror or lens. Larger apertures gather more light, allowing you to see fainter objects. A common mistake new telescope owners make is to go straight for the highest magnification available. What they don't realize is that typically in a telescope, as magnification increases, the field of view through the eyepiece decreases. Focus becomes critical, too. So, they end up pointing an unfamiliar instrument at an unfamiliar night sky and trying to

### FACT:

85% of core brain structure is developed by age four.



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find some fuzzy object through the smallest field of view. Even experienced observers can't find anything this way. Take your time and ease back on the magnification. You'll be surprised at the number of star clusters and nebulae you can observe at low power.

Something else most people don't realize is that looking through a telescope is a "learned" skill just like anything else. A skilled observer can look through the same instrument and see far more detail on the moon and planets than a beginner can, so once you spend the effort finding, centering, and focusing that object, reward yourself...spend some time *observing* it.

Should you find yourself bitten by the astronomy bug and really wanting to get 'serious' about this wonderful hobby, then I would recommend getting in touch with one of the local astronomy clubs. There are several large clubs in the Fort Bend and Houston areas, and all are open to visitors and very eager to assist beginners. As always, feel free to email me at the address below.

Until next time...Clear Skies! Leonard Ferguson  
[brazosnightsky@gmail.com](mailto:brazosnightsky@gmail.com) On Twitter: @TexasAstronomer

# UPDATE FROM THE BOARD CONTINUED:

## Brighter Fountains

Have you noticed how bright our fountains look? The board decided to implement a complete change of the lighting system from halogen to bright LED to enhance the look of our fountains. We have received commendations from homeowners that have noticed the change. Our fountains are also getting to the end of their useful life and a plan is being established to replace them. Please enjoy the beauty of the fountains with the new, brighter lighting.



## Entry Gates Update

The entry gates have been fitted with the top of the line commercial openers, the Elite CSW 200. This is the highest rated opener for continuous, high traffic locations. This system will guarantee Old Orchard years of uninterrupted service as long as it is not tampered with. The board also moved in securing a Preventive Maintenance (PM) contract that will check the operation, and subsequent maintenance on a monthly basis.

## Fencing on Old Orchard Drive and Old Oak Grove Drive

The current board contracted with a Surveying company to determine the location of the wooden fence in relation to residence lots. The results of the survey are that the entire 5,100 ft. of fencing fall on the common (reserve) area which implies that the HOA has ownership of them, and as such, is responsible for its maintenance and upkeep. Now that this has been confirmed, the board will plan for repairs of the fences to enhance the curb appeal of the community and allow a few more years to the structure. Longer term, a complete replacement of the fences should be considered.

## Recreation Area – Clubhouse and Pool house – Maintenance

The inside of the Clubhouse has been repainted, and bids for carpet replacement are being gathered. The outside of both buildings is being worked on (repaired, primed and painted) but the work has been delayed due to the inclement weather we have been experiencing. Hopefully by the time this newsletter is published, the work would be complete.

# SPRING LANDSCAPING TIPS:

With spring around the corner, weed growth in southern lawns is a normal occurrence. Sometime in February or March as the weather begins to warm, the application of a fertilizer with weed control will help to control the weeds and allow the dormant grass a good start for the spring.

Another tip would be the installation of fresh mulch for the beds and tree wells of your home. This enhances the beauty of the community as a whole. Along with fertilizer and mulch, the best way to enhance the look of the community and your property is to keep your grass cut, preferably weekly, but not more than every 14 days between each cutting.



## Considering Selling?

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## News That You Can Use

### Board meetings

HOA Board Meetings are usually held on the last Thursday of most months, 6:30pm, at the Clubhouse. Please contact the management company in advance, to be sure there haven't been any changes in date/time/place. All residents are welcome, and encouraged, to attend these meetings.

### Calendar of events

Please check our website, [www.OldOrchardTexas.com](http://www.OldOrchardTexas.com) for updates.

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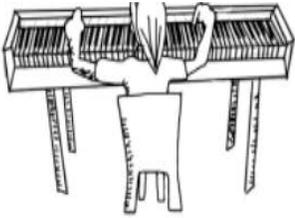
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## Courtesy Reminder: Lawn Services

As a courtesy to your neighbors, please have lawncare workers start work after 9am on weekends. Some neighbors have recently been jolted awake at 7:30am on weekends, from the sound of mowing and leaf-blowers. Little ones enjoy sleeping in on those days, as do some adults! Thank you.

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