

FORREST LAKE TOWNHOMES



COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 11, ISSUE 3

Paula Williamson, Editor (FLNewsletter@yahoo.com)

April 30, 2010

FORREST LAKE TOWNHOUSE ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES February 18, 2010

Present: Ken Barker, Earline Soterias, Elva Bryant, Stephanie Rush, and Bob Wharton

Earline Soterias called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

The Minutes of the January meeting were approved.

Treasurer: Through the end of January, the year to date operations of Forrest Lake reflects a loss of approximately \$33,000.00. Part of this is due to the timing of payments, but sharp escalation in the cost of some of our purchased water and sewer services is also now becoming a factor. Liens are usually filed on any town home more than 2 months in arrears with maintenance fees, and this list now includes four town homes which each owe more than \$1,500.00.

Maintenance: The repair to the front of homes has been hampered by the weather.

Landscape: There will be 8 new trees and shrubs added in different areas of the property by the end of February, weather permitting.

Security: Forrest Lake has a much lower crime rate compared to the surrounding areas in the northwest. Animals are still being allowed to run free on the property and a few residents are still not following the Forrest Lake's rules (and those of the City of Houston) on picking up after your pets. Anyone caught not abiding by the cleanup rule will be issued a warning. It is our neighborhood and it should be kept clean. There are still a few residents that are exceeding the posted speed limit (of 15mph) on our streets.

Old Business: A memo will go out to residents that have not provided a copy of their current insurance policy. We have over 170 residents that have failed to turn in updated information.

New Business: There are currently 16 homes in Forrest Lake listed for sale. We will be inspecting carports and fences for problems; homeowners in non-compliance will be notified. We are taking bids for the termite inspections for the coming year.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 PM.

Respectively submitted,

Bob Wharton, Secretary

FORREST LAKE TOWNHOUSE ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES March 18, 2010

Present: Ken Barker, Earline Soterias, Elva Bryant, Stephanie Rush, and Bob Wharton

Earline Soterias called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

The Minutes of the February meeting were approved.

Treasurer: Through the period ending February 28, 2010, revenues are lower than the budget by approximately 3,000.00. During this same period, the expenses are up approximately \$14,000.00 from the budget. Currently there are eight homes over \$1,000.00 in arrears on the maintenance fee. Half of these are in foreclosure

Maintenance: Maintenance is working on repairing and painting the front of the homes. Repairs to the back of the homes will start in October.

Landscape: Bids for mowing the property on Tidwell, along Cole Creek, will be taken. As a temporary solution, our Landscaper will mow the area along the south side of Cole Creek no more than two times a month, pending our request by Harris County Flood Control to mow their property. Freeze damage to the irrigation system will be repaired by our maintenance crew saving over \$600.00 from the bids from outside sources.

Security: There are no events to be reported by Security

Old Business: Many residents have turned in their updated homeowners insurance, but we are still missing quite a few.

New Business: We will stay with the current provider, ABC, for the termite inspection

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.

Respectively submitted,

Bob Wharton, Secretary

Reminder About Our Website: www.forrestlake.com

To view the newsletter in color and save pictures, go to the Forrest Lake website, www.forrestlake.com. Although the pagination is a little off, the photos in color make a real difference. You may also find bylaws and other information on the website. Bookmark it and return to read it each month. **Ollie Perry**, former FL resident and Board member, is our webmaster and he does a great job of keeping it up to date for us!

Landscape Corner

Elva Bryant

Donation to the Landscaping Fund

As many of you may remember, Sam Gotsdiner requested that donations be made in Sandy's honor towards landscaping in Forrest Lake. At this time, I would like to thank those of you who chose to make donations. This money is being used to plant additional trees on the grounds.

Front Yards/Common Areas

We will be evaluating the property and removing dead shrubs from the freeze during the winter. Hopefully we are now past any more freezes. Many of the plants will recover, so we do plan to give them the time to do so before removing everything that appears to be dead.

Please also be aware that all plantings placed in your FRONT yards become property of Forrest Lake and are maintained by Forrest Lake as stated in the by-laws. We ask that you take the time to trim your plants so that they not block your front windows and door. The Landscaper will not trim your blooming plantings, but we do ask that you keep them neatly trimmed. The Landscaper will trim where needed to maintain where plants have become neglected.

Forrest Lake Legal Documents state: 1.02. No person shall commence, or permit or cause the commencement of (a) the destruction (in whole or in part) of any Townhouse or the construction, erection or placement of any other or additional improvement or structure, permanent - or temporary, or a change (structural or non-structural) on a Townhouse Site or within a Townhouse, (e) the planting, rearrangement or alteration of any trees, shrubs, bushes, hedges, flowerbeds or any other type of garden or decorative vegetation on a "Townhouse Site (other than in interior patio areas) or elsewhere on the Property

ARTICLE 4- COMMON OPEN AREA

4.03. No Owner shall ever deface, destroy, cut, remove or injure, or permit any of his family or guests to deface, destroy, cut, remove or injure, any improvement or any trees, shrubs, bushes, hedges or flowers situated upon or planted in or growing upon the Common Open Area.

Patio Plantings

Please take the time to trim as needed and remove dead debris from your patios. Maintenance and the Landscaper are not responsible for trees or plants in your patio. Make every effort to keep plantings from contacting the rear of the buildings and out of your gutters. As some homeowners have discovered, this has caused the wood to deteriorate faster than normal.

Pets

I would really hope this issue would only need to be directed to new homeowners/residents and visitors. It is becoming very difficult to walk in some areas on the property because some refuse or don't know the law (city ordinance) requires you to clean up behind your pet. When I have spoken to some about this matter, I'm told that they don't because others don't. Remember two wrongs don't make a right. PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE clean up behind your pet. Also be aware that this gets spread across the property when the grass is mowed. Please be considerate of all who live here and clean up behind your pets.

Yard Watering

The following townhouses have an irrigation system in the front yards and you will not need to water during the spring and summer months. If you feel your area is not getting sufficient, please notify either Maintenance or myself.

Townhouses with irrigation are: Units 1-5 and the south side of unit 1; Units 20-36, including all common areas; Units 76-85; Units 103-111 and all common areas along West Tidwell; Units 112-124 and the east side of unit 133; Units 223-228, including the common areas on the sides and in the fronts of these units; Units 229-243 and all the common areas next to and in front of these units.

Any areas not covered by irrigation, we ask that you take the time to give the yard in front of you home and the near common area a drink of water when times get dry. If you are in need of a hose and sprinkler, please notify Maintenance or myself.

Fire Ants

This came to us courtesy of another Forrest Lake Homeowner. An environmentally friendly cure for fire ants has been announced by Walter Reeves on his Georgia radio program. Testimonials that it REALLY WORKS are coming in.

Walter Reeves is from the University of Georgia Agriculture Department, specializing in home gardening. He has a television show, which appears on Saturdays in Georgia, called "Gardening in Georgia".

"I know fire ants are picky eaters and any type of poison that is effective takes seven feeding steps before the queen receives it. Plus, if the bait is stored in close proximity to any petroleum or fertilizer products they won't touch it. Contact poisons that are on the market just cause the colony to move away. A well developed colony can be as deep as 30 feet and spread out some 20 to 50 feet from the mound center"...This was documented in studies done in the early 60's when they were first sited in Alabama.

Simply pour two cups of CLUB SODA (carbonated water) directly in the center of a fire ant mound. The carbon dioxide in the water is heavier than air and displaces the oxygen which suffocates the queen and the other ants. The whole colony will be dead within about two days.

Besides eliminating the ants, club soda leaves no poisonous residue, does not contaminate the ground water, and does not indiscriminately kill other insects. It is not harmful to your pets and soaks into the ground. Each mound must be treated individually and a one liter bottle of club soda will kill 2 to 3 mounds.

Letters to the Editor:

April 3, 2010

Dear Editor,

In response to Earline Soteras' "FYI" article in the March 31, 2010 newsletter let me say this:

The points that she makes in her article are the biggest joke that I have read in a very long time. For years now we have heard her say "it's on the schedule". But "It" never gets done.

In checking with Home Depot, Lowe's and a couple of paint contractors the exterior of homes in Houston should be painted every five to seven years. This can vary due to weather conditions, the quality of paint used and the condition of the boards being painted. The back of my home was last painted in 1998, 12 years ago. How long has it been since yours was painted?

None of her excuses are acceptable to me and have not been for a long time. I have sent her several emails since last October requesting the painting, general clean up of car ports and repair of storage rooms. All I get back from her is "it's in the schedule". The last email I sent her I requested a copy of "the schedule". That email has yet to be answered.

Exterior maintenance should be an ongoing thing -- not just patch work here and there when needed. Just as our roofs have to be replaced every so often and funds and plans made for this, so should the repair and painting be put on a constant rotation of the buildings.

In the so called "curb side board meetings" there are rumors of a maintenance fee increase. If any of this is correct I suggest that she and our board take a long look at what has not been.

Jim and Bobbie Elswick

Neighborhood News:

- **Tommye and Ken Barker** are currently enjoying a cruise and vacation to England where they will visit with Ken's children.
- **Linda Carroll, George Schanz, Marga Oliver, Toni Troxell,** and **Paula Williamson** celebrated George's birthday in Kemah complete with motorcycle rides and sailing.
- **Bobbie** and **Jim Elswick** are planning a trip to California to attend their oldest granddaughter's wedding and then stay a few days in San Diego.
- Condolences to the family of **Carnie Berry**, long time neighbor, who died in hospice care April 23.



CARNIE DELTON BERRY passed away on April 23, 2010 of cancer at the age of 89. He was born on April 4, 1921 in Big Heart, Oklahoma and was raised in Houston and the Oklahoma oil fields as the only child of Louis Berry and Elsie Berry Mikeska. Carnie was a WWII combat veteran with the Second Marine Division from 1940-1946, serving with distinction in the South Pacific campaign as a platoon sergeant. He participated in the battles for Tarawa, Guam and Okinawa, and was honorably discharged on November 16, 1946. Mr. Berry worked for the Ethyl Corporation in Houston for 30 years as the supervisor of heavy equipment, retiring in 1982. He was also faithful member of the Second Baptist Church, serving as a deacon, Sunday school class officer and choir member. He received the Deacon Emeritus award in 2006. Carnie loved the Lord and his family and lived life accordingly, positively influencing everyone around him. He also bowled every week of his adult life and was an avid golfer, medaling often in the Texas Senior Olympics in both sports. Carnie is survived by his wife of 65 years, Martha June McAlexander Berry, his daughter Jennifer Berry Ferguson and son-in-law Jerry D. Ferguson of Houston, grandson and granddaughter Shawn and Emily Rhodes Ferguson of Fort Worth, sister-in-law Barbara McAlexander Boutte of Houston and was a hero to numerous nieces and nephews. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Margaret Cullen Marshall Hospice Care Center 1905 Holcombe Boulevard, Houston, TX 77030.

Submissions for Q & A

Residents are encouraged to submit questions about matters concerning Forrest Lake and the Board member responsible for that matter will respond in the newsletter. So few people attend the Town Hall meetings that responses to community questions only get circulated by word of mouth and sometimes are misinterpreted. Please send your questions by e-mail to FLNewsletter@yahoo.com or you may place them in the suggestion box in the mailroom or drop them by the office and Cheryl will forward them to the Board.

FL Needs Volunteers

Ken Barker

I received a call from **Roger Rodriguez** (unit 35) this morning (3-10-10). I feel sure that most of you will remember that Roger has for many years regularly mowed and cleaned the bank-side lot between Cole Creek and Tidwell. The appearance of this area is important because it is often the first impression that visitors to our community get as they approach Forrest Lake. Roger's valuable volunteer work in that area almost every week for the past few years is typical of the quiet, and often unrecognized, efforts of a (sadly) very small number of FL volunteers. Many thanks, Roger.

However, Roger now advises me that due to a recently diagnosed health condition he will not be able to continue with this work for a while, perhaps indefinitely. This situation I think emphasizes the need for us to redouble our efforts to get more of our residents to take an active part in the life of our community and the area around us. Frankly, we have far too many people riding in the FL wagon and not enough of us pushing it And we are getting tired! Ideas anyone?



FYI:

Earline Soteras

We will start painting the backs of the buildings in May. We will start with the ones most in need of repair and paint.

Remember if you change the back (patio doors etc.) this will be totally at owners expense.

There will be an Open Forum meeting Thursday, May 27th at 7:00 PM. Please come and let the Board know if you have any questions or concerns about anything. We try to do the best we can for the Community please let us know where we can improve.



Important Phone Numbers

Office Manager (<i>Cheryl</i>)	713-681-3591
Property Manager (<i>Pokey</i>)	713-956-6236
Security (<i>Wayne or Garner</i>)	713-201-5656
	713-204-2240
Emergency (Life Threatening)	911*
Houston Police Dept. (non-emergency)	713-884-3131
City of Houston (Loose dog pickup)	713-222-3501
 <u>Board Members:</u>	
Earline Soteras	713-688-3730
Ken Barker	713-681-1115
Elva Bryant	713-688-5807
Stephanie Rush	713-812-1080
Bob Wharton	713-680-8377
 <u>Maintenance (for after-hours appointments)</u>	
Francisco	713-409-4820
Willie	713-828-2428
Nahun	713-202-7148
Omar	713-818-4738

Near Northwest Management District - Security Meeting

Ken Barker

I attended the monthly Near Northwest Management District (NNMD) security meeting on April 13, 2010. Over 30 representatives and law enforcement personnel were there. Main points from the meeting were:

- A new crime prevention officer (Art St. John) has been appointed for the NNMD district. I met with this impressive officer and will arrange for a security audit to be made of FL to be made by him probably in late May. Officer St. John has much experience in these type matters and should be able to give us many useful tips to assist our ongoing improvement of FL security.
- HPD warned everyone that with the start of the summer season we should expect a sharp increase in crime activities, particularly juvenile crime, in our area as many older children and young adults will no longer be in school. Juvenile gang activity in our neighborhood is on the rise again and has many willing "wannabees" About 1 out of every 15 persons living in Houston can expect to be a the victim of a criminal act over the next 12 months.
- Sex offenders (both registered and unregistered) abound in our area and parents and guardians of young children should be constantly aware of this menace. Leaving young children outside unsupervised, even for just a very short period, can be dangerous.
- HPD is still suffering shortages of manpower for its street operations. We should only use the 911 number if the incident is deemed life threatening. Use the non-emergency number (713-884-3131) for all other matters and if possible give as much detail over the telephone. The HPD dispatcher will decide whether a site visit by an officer is necessary or not. All personal information provided is treated as confidential by HPD and will not be shared with others to avoid any victimization or retaliation by the other parties involved.
- I mentioned Ollie Perry's recent comments to me about the loud noise from over-amplified car stereos that is increasing and becoming a serious problem in our area. Some vehicles are now even being fitted with outside speakers to increase their volume levels. HPD officers and Constables advise that they are aware of this problem and are cracking down on it.
- Greater Inwood Partnership (GIP) is sponsoring a festival at the Ledet (?) Water Park on Antoine on May 1. All are welcome.

Hot Crab and Artichoke Spread

Portia Sweet

1 ½ c. freshly grated parmesan cheese (Kraft shredded is OK)
1 13 or 14-oz. can artichoke hearts, drained and chopped
1 ½ c. mayonnaise (Portia uses Light Miracle Whip)
½ c. finely minced onion
½ tsp. Worcestershire sauce
¼ c. fine bread crumbs (plain)
1/8 tsp. garlic powder
2 drops Tobasco sauce
1 60-oz. can crab meat, drained, flaked

Mix all ingredients. Spray or butter a 9-inch glass pie plate. Spread mixture on to plate. Sprinkle a good amount of paprika on top. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes. Serve with crackers..

A Message From The Houston Fire Department

www.houstonfire.org

Pool Safety Is Not Just For The Summer

Parents-

- NEVER leave a child alone near water
- Always watch your children around swimming pools
- Use approved flotation devices
- If your apartment has a pool, inspect the fence and gate. If the gate does not lock or you find any other defects with the fence, report it to the apartment management immediately.
- Bring a cell phone to the pool in case of emergency
- Make sure there is no standing water on the pool deck. Standing water is the #1 cause of slips and falls around a pool. **NO RUNNING** on the pool deck!
- Enroll children over the age of 3 in swimming lessons taught by qualified instructors.
- **REMEMBER-** Swimming lessons do not make your child "Drown-Proof"!
- Always have a first aid kit and emergency contacts handy
- Watch for dangerous "**TOOs**"- Too Tired, Too Cold, Too Far from Safety, Too Much Sun, Too Much Strenuous Activity
- Pay attention to local weather conditions and forecasts. If lightning and thunder are nearby, get out until the storm has passed.

Teach Your Kids these Safety Tips-

- Always swim with a buddy
- Don't dive into unknown bodies of water. Jump in feet first to avoid hitting your head on the shallow bottom.
- Don't push or jump on others in or around water
- Swim in supervised areas only
- Obey all rules and posted signs

Correction: In the last newsletter, March 31, 2001, I wrote that **Bill Smith's** tree was damaged by Hurricane Ike. (page 1) I made a mistake; his tree was damaged by bugs and was dead. He replaced the tree and paid for the planting as a donation to Forrest Lake.

pw

National Day of Prayer

May 6, 2010