

# FORREST LAKE TOWNHOMES



## COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 11, ISSUE 1

Paula Williamson, Editor ([FLNewsletter@yahoo.com](mailto:FLNewsletter@yahoo.com))

January/February 2010

### FYI:



Earline Soteras

1. Please have all your Christmas decorations removed from yard and shrubs in front of your townhouse by February 28, 2010. They will be taken down if resident does not do so.
2. Reminder: Call maintenance guys (not Pokey) directly on their cell phones to schedule work after hours. Their numbers are listed under Important Phone Numbers.
3. The dumpster at the rear of Building #21 is for maintenance debris only.
4. If anyone wants to donate plants and/or trees to Forrest Lake, contact Elva Bryant (713-688-5807.)
5. Any alterations on the outside of your townhome from the original design will become the responsibility of the home owner. Examples: downspout extensions, patio covers, window screens, storm doors, etc.
6. If you have a problem with your cable TV, contact Comcast. Do not call Cheryl with billing problems or reception problems. She has nothing to do with Comcast.
7. If you use your fireplace, be sure that you have it cleaned and inspected every year.
8. If any home owner has a problem such as roof leaks, dripping water, electrical problem, etc., contact the maintenance office (713-956-6236.) Do not tell the maintenance workers or Cheryl.
9. Homeowners who have patio trees please keep them pruned and away from the rear of the townhome and off the carport roofs.
10. The handle on the gates are not connected to anything; they are required by the city inspector.
11. Drain covers and VAC Alert, etc. had to be installed per city inspector at a cost to you of \$1,665.
12. Please keep your carport area clear of all unnecessary items. Realtors have reported that this does not make a good impression when showing property to prospective buyers.
13. The Maintenance Department has repair work scheduled for carport storage and other areas as soon as weather permits.



### 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) .....	713-222-3131
City of Houston (Loose dog pickup) .....	713-222-3501

#### Board Members:

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

#### Maintenance (for after-hours appointments)

Francisco .....	713-409-4820
Willie .....	713-828-2428
Nahun .....	713-202-7148
Omar .....	713-818-4738



### Financial News

Ken Barker

In the last Forrest Lake (FL) Newsletter back in November 2009 we commented on the results for operations at the end of our Fiscal year 2009 which ended on October 31, 2009. These showed a contribution to the General Fund of over \$6,000. These end of the year surpluses are beneficial to FL because from a cash flow view point our costs do not run at a regular even amount each month. So, available cash in the General Fund provides a very essential cushion for when, from time to time, we get into a negative cash flow situation. We have one such situation now as we end the third month of our Fiscal 2010 operations but anticipate that this Year to Date numbers will come back into budget conformity during subsequent months.

#### Fiscal Year-To-Date thru January 31, 2010 (3 months)

F/2010 YTD thru 1/31/10	Actuals	Budget
Revenues	\$221,749	\$222,688
Expenses	\$240,678	\$215,863
Net before Appropriations	(\$ 18,929)	\$ 6,825
Appropriations (Roofing)	(\$ 14,580)	(\$ 14,580)
Net to Contingency Fund	(\$ 33,509)	( 7,755)

**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 November meeting were approved.

**Treasurer:** The CPA is currently reviewing our Financials for the Fiscal year-end.

**Maintenance:** Maintenance is currently working on the outside of the homes, weather permitting.

**Landscape:** The weather has slowed the progress of the irrigation system. The removal of several tree stumps will begin shortly. Approximately ten trees will be planted on the property.

**Security:** Four more signs which state "The area is on camera" have been placed in different areas around the property to advise trespassers that they are being filmed.

**Old Business:** The review of all carports continues, as does the updating of the Homeowners insurance list.

**New Business:** We have chosen attorney Mark Sternberg for legal counsel for the Association. Mark worked with our previous attorney in the past.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:58 PM.

Respectively submitted,

*Bob Wharton*, Secretary



## Trash in Forrest Lake

Ken Barker

Realtors, and some of our visitors, frequently comment on how relatively free of trash our community is compared with almost all the areas around us. Have you run a check on the state of any of the local bus stops recently? Does Forrest Lake have some secret magic for keeping up this standard, or perhaps some "elves" are at quietly at work? Well, the secret elves might not be so far from the truth as some of our residents regularly roam our grounds and quietly remove any obvious pieces of trash that have been dumped by some of the inconsiderate slobs, and their visitors, that come through. Their valuable work (aided by our Maintenance crew) has played a big part in keeping our community clean and attractive. All praise to **Herb Weaver**, **Roger Rodriguez**, **Stuart Kane**, the late **Sandy Gotsdiner**, and several unknown others who are active in this never ending task. So, to the bulk of FL residents, here is a plea to get more involved in your community: It is not just a place to sleep and keep your "stuff", and your participation and efforts in clean-up programs can make a great difference to the value of your home (still probably your biggest financial asset) and your life style.

# Security Corner

Ken Barker



Thanks to the visibility and vigilance of our two security officers (**Garner** and **Wayne**) Forrest Lake (FL) still has a very low crime rate compared with most of the areas around us. The occasional presence of HPD and Constable Units in our community does not necessarily mean that a crime has just taken place in our location. Police units often use FL as a quiet staging post for "sting" and other actions that they have in progress in the neighborhood. We welcome their presence here as they serve as an additional deterrent to potential trespassers and worse. So, all is well in FL? At the risk of sounding like a closed loop recording, we still have some ongoing problems that never seem to get any better. These include:



A few (a very few) FL residents still allow their dogs to roam without being on a leash (as required by City regulations) and also fail to pick up after their pets. This is particularly upsetting to the vast majority of FL pet owners who conscientiously abide by the regulations and carefully dispose of any deposits their pet leaves. To some of our newer residents who have pets you might not be aware that Cole Creek Park (on Langfield, less than a mile from FL) offers wide open spaces where your dog can run freely. Also T.C. Jester Park (less than 2 miles away) has a new super dog park area designed specifically to allow for free running.



Speed limits on FL private streets remain at 15 mph. However, we still have some residents (but mostly visitors) who think we are providing a local NASCAR race track. Sooner or later we are going to have a major accident or worse, so please counsel all members of your household and visitors to ease up on the gas pedal. It will only cost them a second or two of their valuable time on their way to and from our entrance, and the life they save may be their own.



And lastly, the best security protection we have in FL is the eyes and ears of our residents. If you see signs of criminal activity in progress always immediately call HPD's emergency number (**911**) to report what you are seeing. Your identity is always safeguarded by HPD. Keep calls to 911 to the "real" emergency situations and use the non-emergency number (**713-884-3131**) where the situation is non-life threatening. After you have made this call then always call our FL security officers (**713-204-2240** or **713-201-5656**) to inform them what you have done. This will alert them to the situation (usually they already know about it) and allows them to direct police and emergency units to your location quickly when they arrive. Numbering and location of units in FL is not very logical and seconds matter in emergency situations

## Crime Statistics Tool for Neighborhoods

In an effort to increase public safety and crime prevention awareness in Houston, the Houston Police Department has created an interactive crime tool for citizens at [mycity.houstontx.gov/crime](http://mycity.houstontx.gov/crime)

Users of the My City website can track and map crime trends in neighborhoods throughout the city. The website allows one to search for crime incidents as far back as 30 days or within the previous 24 hours by address, area, Council District, Super Neighborhood or police beat. Additionally, users will be provided monthly Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) of Part I crimes by police beats and districts in a tabular data form dating as far back as January 2006.

## Forrest Lake Ambassadors

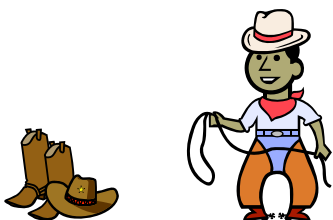


L to R: **Toni Troxell, Marga Oliver, Simone Brown, Stephanie Rush and Tommye Barker.** Not pictured: **Sylvia Busey.**

The Forrest Lake ladies pictured above, including Sylvia Busey who is not pictured, got together and made their annual Christmas cookies that were delivered to the 43<sup>rd</sup> Store Front office for Houston Police Department, the local Houston Fire Department stations and the Precinct One Deputies who serve Forrest Lake.

## Neighborhood News:

- It is with great sadness that we have learned of the death of **Tiffany Hutchison** from a long courageous battle with cancer. We will remember her bright smile and sweet spirit. Condolences to her mother and step-father who have been so close to her during this time.
- Long-time resident and former Board member, **Sandy Gotsdiner**, died at home December 13<sup>th</sup> after a courageous battle with illness. Graveside services were held December 15<sup>th</sup> and it has been reported that there about 100 mourners present. What a tribute to Sandy! Our hearts and prayers go out to his wife, **Sam**.
- Condolences to the family and friends of **Claude Ashby** who died at home January 11<sup>th</sup>.
- Condolences to the family of Forrest Lake resident, **Cathy Bayliss**
- Condolences to **George Schanz** and **Linda Carroll** who lost George's beloved cat, **Rocky**, 21 years old.
- Welcome new neighbors: **Diane Ellstrom** (#122) and **Casey Musgrove** (#178.)
- **Marga Oliver** just returned from Royce City where she celebrated her great-grandson's first birthday.
- **Toni Troxell** and **John Weining** celebrated their birthdays (John's was Feb. 10<sup>th</sup> and Toni's was Feb. 17<sup>th</sup>) by making a trip to the casinos in Lake Charles.
- **Bill Smith** is waiting for better weather so that he can have his picture made with the trees that he bought and had planted. The photo will be posted in the newsletter.



**Go Texan!**

**2010 Census – Be Counted**

Mayor Annise Parker released the statement below regarding the 2010 Census.

The 2010 Census will arrive in mailboxes in March, 2010! The ten questions will take ten minutes to complete and will affect public and private decisions for ten years. Answers are entirely confidential. Take the time, fill it out and mail it back. Increasing Houston's response rate increases the accuracy of our count and reduces the chance for undercounting.

A better count improves the possibility of:

- Increased funding for hundreds of critical programs serving youth, seniors and others in need
- More funding from the Institutes of Health, the National Endowment of the Arts and a dozen other Federal agencies
- Better highways and more transit investment
- Another member of Congress and more representation in Austin
- A more accurate picture of our population to use when adding two new City Council Districts in 2011

For more information about the 2010 Census visit [www.houstontx.gov/census2010](http://www.houstontx.gov/census2010)

## Expanded use of Email

**Ken Barker**

We are always looking at ways to improve the flow of information to our residents about the Forrest Lake (FL) community, and its changes and events. Currently we use notices in the mail room, even larger notices on the bridge and pool gates, the Newsletter and our Website, the notices on the clips in your car port, and, on more specific matters, separate private letters mailed to individual residents and home owners. All of these methods have their strengths and weaknesses but costs and available time are always important issues. We would like to add another method to this number and so bring FL communications more into the 21<sup>st</sup>. century. Over the last few years we have been slowly accumulating email addresses of our residents and have occasionally used these to pass on information to them and to respond quickly to specific questions, requirements and problems they may have. We already extensively use email for our contacts with realtors, vendors, and our contractors. We want to expand this communication method to more general contacts with a wider range of our residents because we feel that this will allow information to be sent out quickly to them but also get incoming comments and problems they may have to be more quickly addressed. The FL office email address is as follows so if you want to be included on the confidential FL email list just send us a request message including your details:

[flta1@att.net](mailto:flta1@att.net)

We, of course, realize that not everyone in FL uses email but nevertheless a considerable number of our residents do and we will thus be able to reach them more quickly. Any email address information provided will of course be held confidential in the same way we do with your personal and business contact telephone numbers. It will not be shared with others.

**For non-email users** : Expanded use of email will not effect the current posting of mailroom notices etc., or the excellent coverage given to FL matters in our Newsletter and website, .all of which will continue as before.

### 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](mailto: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.

*Ladies In Red*

The annual Ladies in Red brunch for Forrest Lake ladies was held in the clubhouse February 14<sup>th</sup>. Thanks to the Social Committee for their hard work and tasty treats. Those who attended had a good time. Ken Barker took pictures and shared the following:

