

# Forrest Lake Townhomes maintaining its integrity

■ Subdivision now attracting some younger residents

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CHRONICLE CORRESPONDENT

WHEN Ken Barker bought his home in Forrest Lake Townhomes more than 30 years ago, the subdivision was surrounded by piney woods.

He purchased his townhome for \$39,000 in the fall of 1975, just as construction of the 243-unit community was being completed.

The subdivision is located near Bingle Road and West Tidwell Road on a 22-acre site near U.S. 290.

It was once a dairy farm owned or operated by a man with the last name of Forrest, according to the subdivision's Web site.

"We've got great community spirit," said Barker, 76, a retired oil company employee who serves on the Forrest Lake Townhome Association's board of directors.

"It's an easy environment in which to live."

But during the years, apartment complexes and industrial development have replaced the pine trees that once encircled Forrest Lake.

Yet despite the changes, the subdivision has maintained its integrity, Barker said.

"We try to keep our quiet ambience going," he said.

It is located within 15 to 25 minutes of The Galleria, downtown Houston and George Bush Intercontinental Airport.

Forrest Lake's amenities include a lake, clubhouse, swimming pool and tennis courts, Barker said.

It also has security officers, he said.

The price of homes for sale in Forrest Lake range from \$103,000 for a 2,055-square-foot townhome to \$65,000 for a 1,680-square-foot townhome, according to

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KEN BARKER, Forrest Lake Townhome Association

the Houston Association of Realtors' Web site.

Each townhome owner is required to pay a \$275 monthly fee for maintenance, Barker said.

Unlike other similar townhome communities that use management companies, Forrest Lake is managed by its own five-member board of directors, who are unpaid, elected volunteers, he added.

"We work extremely hard to maintain property values in these difficult times and a pleasant lifestyle that is agreeable to at least a majority of our residents," Barker said.

A majority of Forrest Lake's residents are 60 years old or older, Barker said.

Many also are single women and a few are renters, he said, but the demographics are changing.

The subdivision has started to attract more young residents, Barker said.

"We don't want to be looked upon as a community where members are just dying off," he said. "Young professionals can come in here and keep the vitality going."

Amanda Lusby is doing just that.

The 29-year-old Lusby, who provides software product support for a title company, purchased a townhome two years ago.

She said she often feeds turtles at the subdivision's lake and likes that the community is dog-friendly.

"The property is really nice, really secure and very quiet and serene," Lusby



THOMAS NGUYEN: FOR THE CHRONICLE

**CHECKING IT OUT:** Realtor Deborah Kotzur shows Stella Avila and son-in-law Olie Perry unit No. 75, one of the showcase units that were available for viewing during Forrest Lake Townhomes' open house on Aug. 23.

said.

Lusby has enjoyed Forrest Lake so much that she is trying to convince her friends to move into the subdivision.

"It's so close to everything," she said.

Realtor Deborah Kotzur, who has a townhome for sale and another available for lease in the Forrest Lake subdivision, has sold several units.

She said they are often slow to sell because of the subdivision's proximity to nearby apartment complexes.

But Kotzur recommends Forrest Lake because of its setting and active board of directors.

"It's just very quiet over there," she said. "It's just wonderful."