



Spring Branch Oaks Civic Association



Vol. 23 Issue 3

www.springbranchoaks.com

July—September 2014

President's message

Dear Neighbors,

As you all probably know, Dan Hollingsworth has moved from Spring Branch Oaks. As Vice President, I will take over as Interim President through the end of the year.

Dan was very committed while in office working toward making Spring Branch Oaks a neighborhood we would all be proud of. He committed a lot of time and had great ideas for our neighborhood. Dan will be greatly missed!

I will continue with the Board to follow through on events/changes through the end of year. We have a great team, a lot of committed people working very diligently to make our neighborhood outstanding. With everyone's commitment and help, we can succeed.

I am looking for volunteers for Block Leaders. Anyone interested, please contact me and I'll be glad to sign you up. I have packages with all the forms and responsibilities of a Block Leader and will be glad to drop them by and answer questions.

If I can be of any assistance to anyone, please don't hesitate to contact me. I'm looking forward to an eventful year. Again, thanks to everyone for all their help this year.

Carolyn Schooley

DUES INCREASE UP FOR VOTE

SBOCA annual assessments have not been changed since they were

established in 1952, despite inflation. Higher costs have caused the as-

sociation to operate at a deficit for the past several years, despite the officers' attempts to keep operating costs to a minimum.

At its July meeting, the Board of Directors decided that it is time to raise dues to keep up with current cost of living and to cover some future needs. An assessment of \$100 annually was approved, and this will be voted on by the membership in the fall.

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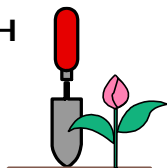
YARD-OF-THE-MONTH WINNERS

Congratulation to our first two Yard-of-the-Month winners for 2014!

Jeffrey and Lynda Stephens were selected for May. The Stephens live at 9309 Walterville Road.

Jim Parasco's home, 1735 Benbow Way,

received the award in June.



Be sure to drive by and see their lovely yards, or check them out on our website, www.springbranchoaks.com. Another winner will be chosen each month through September.

Upcoming Meetings

General Membership and Board meetings are held at St. Christopher's Episcopal Church in Latham Hall, 1656 Blalock Road, beginning at 6:30 p.m.

**General Membership Meetings
October 21**

**Board of Directors Meetings
September 16**

**National Night Out -
Monday, October 6
Details will be announced later.**

DROCOM

Meetings will be held at the Gehring's, 9350 Walterville, the following Mondays at 6:30 p.m.

**August 11
October 6
December 8**

DUES: OPTIONS FOR USE OF ADDED REVENUE

(Continued from page 1)

Among the items which could be considered for funding by the increase in income are these:

- **Enhanced deed restriction enforcement:** The DROCOM generally depends on the good will of residents to abide by the published deed restrictions. However, on some streets there is currently a lack of compliance despite notification of violations. In order to protect the attractiveness and livability of our neighborhood, it may become necessary to take legal action in some instances. This can become expensive very

quickly, depleting the Association's reserves.

- **Professional assistance for the treasurer:** Currently our treasurer is a volunteer with a full-time job. The responsibilities of this office include much more than just mailing assessment notices and receiving payments. Responding to mortgage inquiries is becoming quite time-consuming as more properties come up for sale in the subdivision. Employing an outside professional to assist with these duties would make the treasurer's job more manageable.

- **Traffic calming devices:** Brian Gehring is currently investigating the possibility of initiating a traffic study by the City of Houston, with the hope of having some type of traffic management installed on our busiest cut-through streets. If approved, the city will accept private funding of the devices, which could speed their installation by several years. For neighbors on Benbow, especially, this would be a welcome relief.

- **Improve entrance markers:** Some of the markers at the entrances to our subdivision have been broken or become discolored. The appearance of these would be improved by cleaning or replacing with brick or other more permanent materials, showing that SBOCA residents take

pride in their neighborhood.

- **Security patrols:** Despite the best efforts of our COP volunteers, we know that crime does occur sometimes. Although full-time security is not an option, due to cost, with additional funding it may be possible to have some law enforcement presence in the neighborhood.

These are some of the possibilities your board is considering, and we would appreciate any feedback from SBOCA homeowners.

Ballots to vote on the proposed assessment increase will be mailed to each homeowner in September, with final voting to be completed at the October General Meeting.

Please be sure to let your voice be heard by VOTING on this important issue.

Trash collection schedule

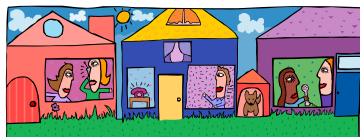


Thursday, June 26	Junk trash
Friday, June 27	Recycle
Saturday, July 5	Friday's garbage & yard waste
Friday, July 11	Recycle
Thursday, July 24	Tree trash
Friday, July 25	Recycle
Friday, August 8	Recycle
Friday, August 22	Recycle
Thursday, August 28	Junk trash
Friday, September 4	Recycle
Friday, September 18	Recycle
Thursday, September 25	Tree trash
Friday, October 2	Recycle

The following note was received by the Association:

The family of Delphino M. Pena would like to express our gratitude to the residents of Spring Branch Oaks for the outpouring of condolences and sympathy.

The outreach and support to his wife of 63 years, Matilde Pena, speaks to the heart of our community. One by one .. men, women, & children, walking their faithful companions, from all walks of life, have each paid their respects. There were no strangers to the "gentleman" who always had a ready smile, a friendly wave and a blessing



REALTORS' NEIGHBORHOOD SURVEY

The Houston Chronicle recently published the results of a Houston Association of Realtors' analysis of area subdivisions, based on residential property sales handled through Multiple Listing Service and local appraisal district records. "Median" is the middle, meaning half of the measurements are larger and half are smaller.

Here are the results shown for Spring Branch Oaks:

Homes in subdivision:	244
(doesn't include Saddle-Spur)	
Median square feet:	1,828
Median year build:	1953
Median home taxable value:	\$166,000
Sales 2012:	12
Sales 2013:	17
Median price per sq. ft. 2012:	\$113.65
(for houses sold in that year)	
Median price per sq. ft. 2013:	\$122.14
(for houses sold in that year)	
Percent Change 2009-20013:	22%

In Memoriam

Our long-time neighbor Jim Buechele passed away on May 7. Jim was very active with Boy Scouts and served as DROCOM Chairman for Spring Branch Oaks. He will be missed! Our sympathy is extended to Mara and their family.

We also were saddened by the loss of Delphino Peña in April and extend condolences to his wife Matilde and daughter Vivian. Anyone driving down Spring Branch Drive will remember Mr. Peña's beautiful lilies!

TIPS FOR GOOD WATERING PRACTICE

Summer is in full swing, and although we have been blessed with rain this year we still need to be conservative in our use of precious water. During the summer, lawn watering and other outdoor uses can account for 50% to 80% of home water use. Studies have shown that as much as half of this outdoor use is wasted through poor watering practices. The Texas Water Development Board has offered the following advice:

Water-wise steps

The first step in watering efficiently is to recognize that different areas require different amounts of water. For example, grass areas should be watered separately from shrubs, flowerbeds, and other plants.

The second step is to use proper watering equipment. Grass areas are best watered with sprinklers. Trees, shrubs, flowers, and ground-covers can be watered efficiently with low-volume drip, spray, soaker, or bubbler emitters.

The third step...is to keep equipment well-maintained. Regular adjustment of irrigation systems can save water and money.

Lawn watering practices

Studies have shown that the typical lawn receives twice as much water as required to maintain healthy grass.

- Know when to water by closely observing the grass. Look for a dull green color, footprints visible after walking, or curled grass.

- Determine how much water your sprinkler applies by setting out 3-5 cans near the edge of the sprinkler.
- Water during the early morning or evening hours since evaporation losses will be up to 60% higher during the day. Do not water on windy days. Set sprinklers so the lawn is watered, not driveways and sidewalks.
- Use an overlapping sprinkler pattern to cover the lawn evenly.
- Water can be applied less often to clay and loam soils than to sandy soil, but it should be applied more slowly to prevent runoff. St. Augustine grass generally needs to be watered only every 5 days.
- Do not cut grass too short. Longer blades of grass will reduce evaporation and root stress.
- Mow regularly with a sharp blade and leave clippings to mulch the lawn. When clippings are left, little additional fertilizer is needed.
- Use mulches in flower and shrub beds. Mulches cover and shade the soil, minimize evaporation, reduce weed growth, and slow erosion.
- Shape the soil into earthen basins around all shrubs.
- Choose water-wise plants. Native and adapted plants will use less water and be resistant to local plant diseases and pests.



SBOCA Board of Directors for 2014

President	Carolyn Schooley	carolyn0821@att.net	713-464-2931
Secretary	Linda Cover	cover.linda@yahoo.com	713-464-7787
Treasurer	Linda Lochli	lindalochli@sbcglobal.net	713-461-6504
Board member	Brian Gehring	Brian.Gehring@dnw.com	713-485-4598
Board member	Sheree Speck	shereespeck@speckinsurance.com	713-385-0290
Other contacts			
DROCOM	Jennifer Gehring	sbodrocom@gmail.com	713-485-4598
COP	Jim Majsterski	JimMajsterski@aol.com	713-973-0740

NEWS FLASH!

**There will be NO General Membership meeting in July.
The next meeting will be October 21.**

**Spring Branch Oaks Civic Association
P.O. Box 801562
Houston, Texas 77080**

