

The Onion Creek Times

July - August 2021



The Official Newsletter of the Onion Creek Homeowners Association

2021 Board of Directors Committees and Support Staff

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External Committees

Councilmember Kitchen's "Kitchen Cabinet"	Jerry Patterson Kathy Pillmore Ken Jacob
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BOARD Notes

The 2021 Onion Creek Homeowners Association board meetings are being held virtually via Zoom link until further notice. Residents are welcome to attend scheduled meetings. The link to the monthly meeting may be obtained from the HOA office.

TREASURER

Kathy LaHaye

Total revenue Year-to-date = \$222,872. Total operating expenses \$161,400. The most significant variances to the budget were Landscape maintenance, \$1,007 under budget; park maintenance, \$2,020 over; security \$1,388 under budget; newsletter \$2,316 under; supplies \$1,111 over. Net revenue over expense YTD was \$61,472; Cash balances as of 4/30/21 Operating = \$369,790.33; Reserves = \$149,955.75

DELINQUENCIES

Annette Waller

As of 5/10/21 delinquent accounts equaled \$40,592. Recent deposits reduced that amount by \$900. Demand letters were mailed on May 5 and resulted in one payment in full. Resale certificate for home sales went from a paper system to fully digital. An upgrade of the office computer system was completed by the end of March. The HOA's Zoom subscription was renewed for another year, as was the membership in Community Association Institute (CAI), Adobe Acrobat and Office 365.

Pending home sales as of 5/10 were 16 and two additional city buyouts occurred since the April board meeting. Completed home sales were 8, and the city has purchased 129 of 132 homes, 110 have been demolished with 17 remaining. All homeowners who were presented with a buyout offer have accepted.

SEE "Board Notes"..... page 3

President's Message



Kathy Pillmore, HOA President

Summer pounced on us like a tiger after all the spring rain and cooler temps. Back to the weather we expect...hot and muggy day and night. Mosquitos also loved the spring rains. Why are there mosquitos anyway and where do they fit in the hierarchy of critters? Ugh!

Lots of things happening in Onion Creek. The demolition of houses was on hold for a while the city releases funding for the remaining 17 homes yet to be taken down. Hopefully by the time you receive this newsletter, they will be back at it. The last step of the demolition work will be to ensure that the lots are level, all unnecessary metal edging, pipes, etc. are removed along with all left over utility boxes so that ongoing maintenance or re-use projects are facilitated. Both Austin Fire Department and Austin Police Department have executed agreements with the HOA so they can train in the houses prepped for demo.

The Land Re-Use Committee has been working with Watershed Protection Department personnel to begin the survey of OC residents. The survey will help to determine what our neighbors want to see and don't want to see in their neighborhoods where vacant lots remain. This will be a slow process but once we get an idea of where we're headed it should move along.

Development...oh my goodness...there is a lot of it going on around us. Easily 2,000 more apartments, hundreds of new single-family homes and condos and traffic. We only thought it was bad before! We're looking into ways to reduce or even eliminate the cut-through traffic but these are public streets and solutions are limited.

Big surprises for our 4th of July parade...which is on the 3rd this year so that we don't interfere with Sunday services. The HOA & the American Legion Post 326 has are sponsoring a two-pass flyover of a flight of WWII warbirds from the Central Texas Wing of the Commemorative Air Force (See page 5). Plus, we will have a City of Austin Fire Truck from station No. 49... "our" station located on Old San Antonio Road. We just need paraders; so, I hopefully we'll have a lot of participation as we've had in the past.

Also, mark your calendars for Saturday, July 31st, 1 pm when we will dedicate the new playground in Legends Way. It's located on Lehman Way and should be easy to spot. It took longer to get the playground equipment in and installed than was expected due to delivery delays and rain. We'll have at least three food trucks...including Amy's Ice Cream...and who knows what else. The park will be named Perrone Park at Legends Way in honor of Dick Perrone whose idea it was to build a park on the unused parcel of land near the detention pond. The Legends Way neighbors who have been helping to get the park ready, endorsed the idea and it's about time Dick was recognized for all the hard work he does all over Onion Creek.

Don't forget the annual Garage Sale, July 24th followed that week by the city's bulk pick up so you can get rid of all the stuff you didn't sell. If you plan to participate, please fill out the attached form and drop it off at the office, or email the office and let them know so that we know where to put the directional signs.

Stay safe out there!

Kathy

SAVE THESE DATES!

July 3
25th Annual
Bill Stagner Memorial
4th of July Parade

July 24
Community-Wide
Garage Sale

July 31
Dedication of
Perrone Park at Legends Way

The *Onion Creek Times* is the official publication of the Onion Creek Homeowners Association, It is published six times per year and is one of four official sources of information for Onion Creek residents, which include the OCHOA website (www.onioncreekhoa.org), the Notification Network (email blasts), and the Onion Creek Facebook page (www.facebook.com/onioncreekhomeownersassociation). The purpose of the *Onion Creek Times* is to inform residents of issues that directly involve the neighborhood and impact our community, to promote neighborhood events, and to encourage a sense of community in the Onion Creek neighborhood. **Editor:** Kathy Pillmore, (ochoa2019kp@gmail.com). Submissions are welcomed and may be included in appropriate issues, subject to the editor's approval and space available. Reprints of articles from other publications must include a written "permission to reprint" from the originating publication. **Advertising:** Cathy Miller 512.426.9758, catmiller@mindspring.com. Ads must be formatted as TIFF, JPEG, EPS or PDF. Written permission to use customer-supplied art/specialty fonts must accompany all ads. **Photo guidelines:** Written permission to reproduce must accompany all copyrighted material. Photo caption and photo release must accompany photos. Photos should be 300 dpi at 100% of the published size in TIFF or JPEG format. **Disclaimer:** *Neither the Onion Creek Homeowners Association nor Cathy Miller Communications endorses any newsletter advertiser, nor will either entity incur liability for inaccurate or misleading information. Always ask for references before contracting with vendors.*

SECURITY
Sanders Gibbs

An increase in vagrants and suspicious persons/vehicles has been reported. We are cautioned to continue to be vigilant and to watch out for neighbors. OC Security has been successful at responding to suspicious person calls with no incidents. Residents/businesses near the Interstate reported numerous calls about teenagers, vagrants, and non-residents walking through the area. Vagrants have been caught rummaging through dumpsters and sleeping on residential patios and storefronts. Aggressive drivers on OC streets remains a problem as do open garage doors. • The contract for the additional night-time driver expires soon and renewal is recommended. The treasurer confirms that continuation of the contract will not require any increase in current dues structure.

VOLUNTEER SECURITY PATROL
Chris Burges

Chris took over for Jerry McIlhon who resigned due to other obligations. Chris jumped into his new position and met with Beth Cubriel (Neighborhood Watch) and Sanders Gibbs (Security) because of their overlapping responsibilities.

DEVELOPMENT/INFRASTRUCTURE
Wendy Braniff

Substantial dense development is going on around Onion Creek, and other than increased traffic, there isn't anything directly affecting our neighborhood. Carolyn Dyer, Kathy Pillmore and Jerry Patterson are dealing with issues concerning the de facto platting of roads in the Clover Leaf subdivision (formerly Bella Fortuna) and preventing them from connecting to Onion Creek roads. (See Wendy's report on page 5)

SAFETY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE
Beth Cubriel

Seven Onion Creek residents are serving on the committee that is studying safety features for the neighborhood. The committee is compiling a survey to see how residents feel about gating. A camera safety system that records license plates is also being explored.

TRAFFIC CONTROL
Carolyn Dyer

The sidewalk extension between Legends Lane and LaCosta is scheduled for completion in the fall of 2021 • Residents are concerned about the continued speeding on our primary streets. Carolyn is working with a new city contact to address this issue. Attempts to get the current data from the solar speed signs are meeting with no-response from the city's personnel. (See Carolyn's report on page 4)

ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL/RULES ENFORCEMENT
John McNabb

John reported an uptick in the spring-time requests for modifications and complaints.

LANDSCAPE AND PARKS
Dick Perrone

Dick has been working to get trees trimmed along Preston Trails/ Inverrary Circle and Pinehurst South. The Legends Way park play-scape was delivered and is being stored at McCoys until it can be installed. The swing set is also due for delivery. The wet weather has delayed the installation. Dedication of the playground will take place in late July. • Dick reported that mowing of the city lots has been delayed due to the city's contractor being unable to fulfill their contract obligations and walking away from the contract. The HOA will pick up the mowing until the city can get a new contract executed. They will still mow of all lots six times until November.

LEGAL
Darcy Hansen

Darcy and the office staff will be following up on the delinquent dues demand letters. She will review the Smith Security contract for the extra overnight shift and the safety survey to be sure there are no legal issues for the HOA.

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS
Jerry Patterson

With the Legislature in session, Jerry reported on one piece of pending legislation affecting HOA's that will likely become law. He is also following up on the potential of a road connection at the end of County Down by the developers of Clover Leaf (formerly Bella Fortuna)

OLD BUSINESS

The latest information on the resurfacing of OC streets, which will actually be a seal application, will probably occur after October. We are also following up with Public Works regarding mismatched sidewalk repairs. After a site visit with the individual responsible for sidewalk repairs, he explained what is happening with these repairs and what needs to happen to fix it. Carolyn Dyer will follow up.

A vacancy exists on the board due to Jerry McIlhon's resignation.

The board approved a fly-over for the 4th of July parade by a flight of six warbirds from the Central Texas Wing of the Commemorative Air Force.

Proposed changes to IH-35 by TxDOT will impact our Onion Creek Parkway overpass and the 1626 overpass. Kathy will ask TxDOT to make a presentation to the board specifically about these two locations.

TRAFFIC REPORT

by Carolyn Dyer

YOU THINK TRAFFIC IS BAD NOW? JUST WAIT!

Recently a neighbor and I took a tour of the development and road construction occurring east and south of our neighborhood. Truthfully, it is not pretty – too much development.

We started our tour by turning right onto Bradshaw Road and driving through the new Clover Leaf development. The houses are being constructed very close to each other and going up very fast. Phase I is almost completed and according to the signs “Phase II Coming Soon”.

Continuing south on Bradshaw Road where “utility” construction is underway on both sides of the road toward FM 1327...an intersection that is also under construction...we turned left on FM 1327 to see the road changes being made near the intersection of No. Turnersville Road. We turned around at the Dollar General and drove west on FM 1327 where we observed infrastructure for another huge housing development between TDS and No. Turnersville Road.

We proceeded to No. IH-35 service road and turned right where we observed the new 900-unit apartment complex before passing St. Albans Episcopal Church. Past the church entrance, we moved into the Right-Turn-Only lane and entered the Cascades on Onion Creek development on Mayall road where we saw the construction of townhomes and/or apartments underway. We headed back to the No. IH-35 service road and stayed in the Right-Turn-Only lane and turned into the last entrance on Cascades Avenue where noticed a trail with a small bridge running east towards the back of the property. There we discover a partially built stone wall with an entrance road marked PVT (private) into a housing section where there were 60 wooden foundations, each having a numbered address, and a group of clustered mailboxes already in place.

What does this tour have to do with traffic control in our neighborhood? Within the next two-three years the traffic moving around us and through our neighborhood will continue to increase and the speeding problem in OC will worsen. When I asked the Capital Improvement Program Manager – Speed Management Department, (Program & Project Delivery), Austin Transportation Department what options are available for speed calming devices he replied;

“The Speed Management program itself utilizes a model which... determines roadways that will receive traffic calming treatments. The model has many data points, i.e. speeding, crashes, physical context (sidewalks, bike lanes, transit facilities, nearby developments etc. Speed Management differs from the previous Local Area Traffic Management Program (LATM) in that LATM was request-based. ATD discontinued that program because it proved counterproductive to our mission of equitably distributing resources across Austin. Looking at our existing data, it appears we have identified a speeding issue, with 85th percentile speeds above 33mph both on River Plantation and North Pinehurst. However, neither roadway ranked high enough for funding in 2020”.

As we look for ways to keep cut-through traffic down and ask our own residents to curb their speeding, we are facing a future with much more traffic congestion around us and the likelihood of an increase in speeding as frustrations increase with the traffic levels. Please help yourselves by keeping to the speed limit in our neighborhood. And asking your neighbors to do the same....Thanks!

Ready on the firing line!

Kathy Pillmore

A full class of 18 OC residents are now more aware of what it’s like to own and fire a pistol and are qualified to obtain their License to Carry. We spent 4-1/2 hours in the classroom with instructor Tom Schaefer who’s laid-back style interspersed with his dry humor made the time pass quickly and made the information memorable. We took our test, grabbed lunch and headed out to the range at Schaefer’s ranch. A pleasant 20-minute drive (30-if you don’t follow directions) through scenic countrysides we arrived at the ranch in Dale, Texas. There, everyone took their turn loading and firing at targets at three different distances to test their proficiency with a gun. As one participant, I felt the class was enjoyable, informative and successful for everyone. If there’s enough interest, another class can be organized.



Shooters reload their magazines. Those who needed assistance received it from one of the qualified instructors.



Gun safety was paramount. Keep your finger off the trigger until you’re ready to fire. Never point a gun, loaded or unloaded, at anyone, etc. Each individual fired approximately 100 rounds at three increasingly longer distances.

INFRASTRUCTURE & DEVELOPMENT

Wendy Braniff



There are now four low-income housing projects under construction around the OC neighborhood:

- Brandt Road (241 units)
- Goodnight Commons – E. Slaughter
- Moonlight Gardens – E. Slaughter
- NW Corner of IH-35 South Bound Service Road

Although low-income housing is necessary for large cities, like any dense suburban development, they contribute to existing road and school area traffic congestion. They are also sometimes referred to as “planned ghettos” because the project developers build and lease the property, then sell the projects to other owners. The new owners are restricted from raising rents, however building and maintenance materials typically increase in costs over time, resulting in the new owners being unable to properly maintain the property because frozen rents do not provide sufficient revenues to pay the increased costs of maintenance and upkeep. Thus, the properties ultimately fall into disrepair.

Whereas at the onset, young families, students and elderly individuals are the targeted renters. As the properties deteriorate in appearance and upkeep, those renters tend to leave, and the only renters willing to live in the deteriorated buildings are people without any concern for their home’s appearance, safety and value including convicted criminals, drug addicts, and other socially compromised individuals. The buildings become urban ghettos, with inhabitants that prey upon the surrounding communities increasing crime, and decreasing neighboring property values.

It’s your responsibility!

Onion Creek has some of the lowest association dues based on similarly situated neighborhoods in the Austin area and yet, not all homeowners pay their dues. Our Homeowners association relies on your dues for its operating income. It is what your Board uses to pay for various things in and around our neighborhood including, security, improvements, repairs and maintenance. When an HOA comes up short on money due to unpaid assessments, it is forced to do one of three things: cut financial corners, tap into its reserve fund, or charge special assessments.

Cutting corners could risk the quality of security, maintenance and repair work within our community. This could lead to an unsafe environment particularly during these times where police are stretched thin. Tapping into the reserves is also an ill-favored choice. Your reserve fund exists for emergencies and future replacements. It is not supposed to cover operating expenses. Using our reserves will only force the board to charge higher fees the following year to make up for the loss. Finally, if our operating fund can not cover daily expenditures, we may need to charge special assessments, which negatively impacts all homeowners.

Please be a responsible neighbor and pay you dues before the board is forced to take legal action, which again, directly impacts operating costs. The majority of homeowners should not be penalized for the inaction of a minority of our neighbors.

-Darcy Hansen

Independence Day - Bill Stagner Memorial Parade - July 3 - 9 a.m.

Fly Over!

Onion Creek’s Annual Parade will include a fly-over by a flight of WWII Warbirds from the **Central Texas Wing of the Commemorative Air Force**. They will make two passes over Onion Creek. The first pass begins at the east end of River Plantation and ends at Pinehurst. The second pass begins at the north end of Pinehurst and ends at the south end.

Sponsored by the Onion Creek HOA & Onion Creek American Legion Post 326
HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY ONION CREEK!



LAST OF THE SOUTHERN BELLES

by Tammy Jackson

How many of us have known a centenarian? One of our long-time residents in Onion Creek lived to be 106 years old. Her name was Ann Katherine Ainsmith Howerton. Ann was born in Washington, D.C. on January 27, 1915 and left us April 2, 2021. She moved to Yorktown, Texas when she was seven years old. Ann was introduced to her future husband, Charles “Sunshine” Cabaniss Howerton, Jr (1907-1984) by his brother, Pete Howerton. Ann and Charles married in Alabama in 1935 and honeymooned in Virginia. At the time of their marriage, Charles was in the Navy stationed in Pensacola, Florida. The Howertons welcomed their son, Charles C. Howerton, III, on June 24, 1938 in Cuero, Texas.

Howerton advanced to the rank of admiral and during his 31-year Naval career the family lived all over the world including such exotic places as Hawaii, Guam, Buenos Aires, Coronado, Atlantic City, and Johnsville, Pennsylvania. Ann was a warm and gracious Naval officer’s wife and hostess to the many parties and galas expected by the admiral’s rank. His rank also put them in the company of some well-known people including astronauts Buzz Aldrin and David Scott, and Tyrone Power and his wife who were guests at one of the Howerton’s dinners. Gerald Ford, while in the Navy in Evansville, Illinois, served under Admiral Howerton.

Both Ann and the admiral were well-respected and made many friends wherever they lived. During the admiral’s career,

he received the Order of Naval Merit and Distinguished Flying Cross. The family moved back to Texas after Admiral Howerton retired from the Navy in Johnsville. Both Ann and *Sunshine* were avid golfers and wanted to make their home in a golf community. They chose to build their home in Onion Creek and in 1979 and *Sunshine* became the first president of the men’s golf association.

Ann leaves behind her son Charles, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great grandchildren. Her son, says that his mother “will be remembered as beautiful, fun-loving and always a lady!”

ANN HOWERTON • “SUNSHINE” AND ANN



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY ANN’S SON, CHARLES HOWERTON III. THANKS ALSO TO CHARLES FOR SHARING HIS FAMILY’S STORY. -TAMMY JACKSON

Legends Way at Onion Creek Yard of the Month



MAY

(Homeowner and address unavailable at press time)

Photos courtesy of Jody Plummer



JUNE

Martin & Ausra Benavides • 11404 River Plantation

2021 Newsletter

Deadlines

The Onion Creek Times is published six times per year by the Onion Creek Homeowners Association. Articles and/or photos are welcomed and may be submitted via email to ochoa2019kp@gmail.com. Publication is subject to approval and space available.

Issue	Editorial/Photo	Advertising*
September/October	August 10	August 1
November/December	October 10	October 1

*Please direct all advertising inquiries to Cathy Miller at 512.426.9758 or email catmiller@mindspring.com.

ONION CREEK BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2021 Board Meetings

All board meetings will be held virtually via Zoom until further notice. The link for meetings may be obtained from the HOA office.

- Saturday, May 15, 10 am - 12 pm
- Thursday, June 17, 4 - 6 pm
- Thursday, July 15, 4 - 6 pm
- Saturday, August 21, 10 am - 12 pm
- Thursday, September 16, 4 - 6 pm
- Thursday, October 21, 4 - 6 pm
- Saturday, November 20, 10 am - 12 pm
- Thursday, December 16, 4 - 6 pm
- General Membership Meeting - January 15, 2022



2021 OCHOA

Calendar

JULY

- Independence Day Parade, 9 am..... July 3
- Independence Day..... July 4
- World Chocolate Day July 7
- OCHOA Board of Directors Meeting, Via Zoom*, 4a pm - 6 pm.....Thursday, July 15**
- National Ice Cream Day July 18
- National Tequila Day July 24

AUGUST

- National Sisters Day Aug 1
- National Lefthander's Day..... Aug 13
- AISD First Day of School..... Aug 17
- OCHOA Board of Directors Meeting, Onion Creek Club Executive Dining room, 4 - 6 pmThursday, August 19**
- National Senior Citizens Day Aug 21
- National Dog Day..... Aug 26
- Frankenstein Day 🧛..... Aug 30
- *Attend the HOA meetings - email the office (ochoa8110@sbcglobal.net) for the Zoom link.**

AVAILABLE IN YOUR HOA OFFICE

NOTARY SERVICES at no charge to OC residents.

BATTERY DISPOSAL Small (A's, C's, D's etc.) batteries to be recycled. No car batteries please!

If it's an EMERGENCY
Call 911 First
 Then Call
ONION CREEK SECURITY
512-940-9269
 If it's NOT an emergency,
 Call 311

ONION CREEK HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

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Office Hours: Mon-Tue-Thu-Fri • 10am - 2pm
Weds • 8am - 5pm

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The Onion Creek HOA board meetings are held the 3rd Thursday of each month from 4 to 6 p.m. or the second month each quarter on the 3rd Saturday at 10 am. All meetings are held virtually via Zoom link which may be obtained from the HOA office. Check www.onioncreekhoa.org for the agenda any changes.

Yard of the Month



MAY 2021

*William and Suzanne Eisenhower
10304 Pinehurst*



JUNE 2021

*James E. & Barbara B. Browne
10836 River Plantation*

Photos courtesy of Hector Eichelmann

REAL Estate Round Up



BY HECTOR EICHELMMANN

MUSTIN & PORTER REALTORS

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The Onion Creek Real Estate Report as of June 10, 2021

3 Houses & Condos for sale at an average price of \$653,333

8 Houses & Condos pending under contract at an average price of \$567,830

14 Houses & Condos sold for:

List Price Average \$510,879 - Max. \$685,000

Sold Price Average \$546,714 - Max. \$685,000

Onion Creek average days on the market - 17