



July 2004
Volume 1, Issue 2

Next Board of Directors Meeting is Thursday, August 5, 7 PM, at the Unitarian Church, El Salido Parkway.

Neighborhood Watch organizational meeting with City of Cedar Park Police, Monday, July 19, 7 PM, at the Unitarian Church, El Salido Parkway.

Inside this Issue

- 1** Fence Update
- 2** El Salido Curbs and Gutters
- 3** Board of Directors
- 4** Committees
- 5** New Web Site
- 6** Neighborhood Watch
- Greenbelts
- Why we need an association
- Mosquito Control
- Association Benefits
- Survey Results
- Reporting Violations
- Yard of the Month
- Ads
- Try to be a better neighbor by...
- Community Information

The quarterly newsletter deadline is September 18, 2004. We would like to distribute the letter during the first week of October. Please submit articles to Terry Tobias, terrance_s@sbcglobal.net

Cypress Quarterly



Fence Update

Installation scheduled for September

The CCHOA signed the contract with Concretex for installation of the fence along El Salido Parkway. Construction is expected to begin in September and take approximately sixty days.

The fence committee has contacted or will contact homeowners who are along the El Salido fence line. The fence committee wants to ensure that they and the homeowners are aware of all possible issues and hopefully solve problems prior to the beginning of construction. Volunteers are needed to complete the survey of the remaining houses. If you are interested in helping with this project, please contact Geoff Meiteen, gmeiteen@austin.rr.com.

At the July 1 Board of Directors Meeting, the Board voted to designate Geoff Meiteen as the primary contact representative to Concretex with Curt Aydelotte as the alternate. The contract with Concretex obligates CCHOA to have one contact person to avoid conflicting information.

At the last two Board of Directors meetings all homeowners in attendance were asked for their color preferences for the fence. The colors selected were in the same reddish color spectrum and have been narrowed down to two: Boot Leather and Log Cabin. These colors will be placed on the sample fence at Jerry and El Salido within the next few

weeks. Homeowners are asked to list their preferences by completing the survey that will be on the What's New page of the CCHOA web site after the samples are installed.

El Salido Curbs and Gutters

At the July 1 Board of Directors meeting, Board Member Rudy Koski reported that the City of Cedar Park will review the possibility of constructing curbs and gutters along El Salido Parkway from Clay Lane to Cypress Creek Boulevard.

Previous Board Members had attempted to include this issue as part of a City of Cedar Park Bond initiative. However, the City funded only the first ten projects. The Cypress Creek gutter and pavement project was moved to #15. That project would have cost in excess of \$900,000 because of drains and extensive excavation. The new proposal will cost much less and will use a different construction method.

Board of Directors

With the resignation of two board members, the CCHOA Board of Directors appointed two new members on July 1 after six homeowners (Charlie Horn, Theresa Horn, Marilyn Stanford, Ed Theiss, Mike Dion, and Bobbie Fuller) volunteered to serve on the board for the remaining terms. The current Board of Directors, the offices they hold, and the year in which their term to the board expires are:

President Rodney Schwalbach 2006

rodney@hr360.org

V. President Mike Dion 2006
mdion@austin.rr.com

Secretary Rudy Koski 2006
rkoski@kvue.com

Treasurer Bobbie Fuller 2005
mfuller1@austin.rr.com

Member Terri Brisse 2007
tbrisse@austin.rr.com

Member Marty Cormier 2006
bwmctx@isp2k.com

Member Terry Tobias 2006
terrance_s@sbcglobal.net

Committees

The community needs your help in making Cypress Creek a friendly, clean, and vibrant neighborhood. We have seven committees.

Architectural Control
Rodney Schwalbach, Chair
rodney@hr360.org

Capital Improvements
Vicki Parrish, Board Liaison
vparrish@austin.rr.com

Communications
Terry Tobias, Chair
terrance_s@sbcglobal.net

Fence
Geoff Meiteen
gmeiteen@austin.rr.com

Landscaping
Marilyn Stanford, Chair
damlstanford2001@yahoo.com

Neighborhood Watch
Marilyn Stanford, Chair
damlstanford2001@yahoo.com

Welcoming
Terri Brisse, Chair
tbrisse@austin.rr.com

If you would like to volunteer for these committees, please contact the committee chairs. Please remember that the Cypress Creek Homeowners Association is dependent on community members to maintain it as an attractive place to live.

New Web Site

The new web site is running. With the exception of a few days of unavailability during the transfer, the site hosted by Time Warner is going very well. Our thanks are extended again to Matt Brisse for the time and work. The web site may be found on the following two URLs:

www.cypresscreekhoa.org
www.cypresscreekhoa.com

Please let us know if you have any problems or suggestions for the web site. Also, because we update information frequently, it is a good idea to dump your cache to ensure you access the most current document on the web.

Visit all the pages on the site including: **What's New** for the most recent community information, **Classified** to see your neighbors' businesses that include substantial discounts on other services and local restaurants recommended by homeowners, **Community Links** for local events and government services.

Unfortunately, because of coding problems the **CCHOA Calendar** is not available at this time. We hope to have the problems corrected shortly.

Neighborhood Watch

Suspicious Activity

June 27, 2004, Evening: A man in a white van drove up Sandra Drive

(from El Salido), turned around and drove back toward El Salido. He stopped to ask 2 children that were playing with tennis balls if their tennis balls were for sale. One of them answered no and he continued to drive toward El Salido. The van and its driver were unfamiliar to the children and the surrounding residents. The police were notified.

Please pass this information to your neighbors and make your children aware not to approach or talk to strangers.

If you see suspicious activity that the entire community should be made aware of, please use the web email addresses to forward the information for dissemination to the community. We will post it on the Neighborhood Watch page and send it out through our email listing.

Neighborhood Watch Organizational Meeting

Marilyn Stanford, Chair of the Neighborhood Watch Committee, is organizing a community meeting with Sgt. Brown, City of Cedar Park Police Department, on Monday, July 19, 7 PM, at the Unitarian Church, El Salido Parkway. Please plan to attend this meeting. Neighborhood Watch is an important part of our community safety program.

Security

Vandals posing as solicitors are roaming the neighborhoods looking for unlocked doors and open garage doors. While you may be in the backyard someone may be cleaning out your garage or even be bold enough to enter your home. There has been more than one incident in Cedar Park where a vandal has entered a home through an unlocked door while the homeowners were in the back yard, in another room or even taking a shower. We ask everyone to keep their doors locked and garage doors closed so you are safe. We realize that with children

and necessary frequent access these procedures may be a nuisance. However, we do not want to see anyone in our neighborhood become a crime victim.

Greenbelts

There are two greenbelts within the Cypress Creek subdivision. One is the “wash” that cuts across Sharon Drive. The other one is in back of the homes on Sandra Drive. Both of these greenbelts serve different purposes. We ask homeowners not to dump rubbish, grass clippings, or cut limbs in these areas. The greenbelt on Sharon Drive serves as a runoff for excess water during heavy rains and is maintained by the Association. Removal of debris is paid from Association fees.

The greenbelt behind Sandra Drive and all property beyond a homeowner’s back fence belongs to the Leander Independent School District. The Cedar Park High School Track Team removes litter and tries to keep the area clear for walking and running. If homeowners clear their rear gate area, please place weeds and cut tree limbs on the curb for the Monday trash.

The Leander School District cleared four piles of dead tree limbs and debris from the path in late May. The district grounds foreman and the track coach want to work with us in keeping this area clear for the enjoyment of everyone. Piles of debris are good homes for insects and vermin to breed and a fire hazard in dry conditions. We ask homeowners to help keep these areas clear and safe.

Why we need an Association and a Management Company

A number of homeowners continue to ask why do we need an association and a management company. The benefits of an association far outweigh the negatives. Overall, an association establishes the community standards to which homeowners are expected to adhere. These standards preserve the property values and keep the neighborhood clean and aesthetically pleasing. One only has to drive along Anderson Mill Road or across 620 to see what occurs when there is a weak or nonexistent homeowners association. Tanglebriar Drive, to the west of El Salido Pkwy, is a good example of traffic problems and hazards that accompany trailers, large trucks, and other vehicles parked in the street. One of the reasons homeowners bought their house in Cypress Creek was because neighborhood associations preserve community standards. What do you think would be the resale value of your home if your neighbor added a structure of plywood, painted the fence an unusual color, allowed flowerbeds to overgrow with weeds, and had a car on blocks for months in the driveway or in the street? This situation is a real possibility without a strong association. Associations can also resolve neighborhood complaints because there are standards in writing that are enforced. Associations can give a sense of community and rally all homeowners serving as the representative when city or county issues affect the homeowners.

As to why CCHOA needs a management company, there are many reasons. For a few years CCHOA attempted to conduct its business solely through volunteers. As previous and current board members will verify, the requirements and work of the association were not done primarily because of the lack of time and the lack of knowledge regarding regulations and laws. First of all, the association needs to enforce the deed

restrictions. These deed restrictions contain many restrictions such as residential use only, limitations on building materials, limitations on architectural matters, limitations on noise, limitations on temporary structures, and limitations on unsightly articles. It is not reasonable to expect volunteer board members to always take the time to be able to enforce the deed restrictions and stay on top of all of the violations, thus maintaining the aesthetics of the community. Additionally, the association has a legal duty to maintain insurance, maintain records (financial records in accordance with the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act and other association records in accordance with its governing documents), file tax returns every year, and adopt a budget and levy assessments, among other things. The association must maintain areas of lawn, fencing, and irrigation; pay a manager to enforce the deed restrictions and assist with all of these duties; and also issue resale certificates (this is required by law upon request from any owner and is standard with every sale of a home). The articles of incorporation of the association specifically give the association the power to employ personnel necessary to carry out its functions and duties, and the bylaws give similar authority.

Mosquito Control

Heavy and frequent rains have flooded areas creating pools of water in Central Texas causing an increase in the mosquito population. The City of Cedar Park does not have a mosquito spraying program because of the effect of insecticides on the environment. The City of Cedar Park advises that you can help lower the population by ensuring that no pools of water no matter how small are lying around, that your grass is mowed and trimmed, and use insect repellent. Flower pots, lawn ornaments, and poorly drained areas are a favorite spot for mosquitoes to

breed. By the way, did you know that the City of Cedar Park has an ordinance that prohibits the length of residential grass beyond 6 inches? The City will issue a citation to homeowners who exceed that limit.

The City is looking into the runoff ponds at the new Cypress Creek and El Salido mini-mall to ensure they are clean for proper drainage.

A search of the web revealed these mosquito repellent remedies which we provide for your information. We neither endorse nor have evidence of their effectiveness other than the frog.

Use Bounce Fabric Softener Sheets just wipe on & go.

Take one vitamin B-1 tablet a day April through October. Vitamin B-1(Thiamine Hydrochloride 100 mg.)

If you eat bananas, the mosquitoes like you, - something about the banana oil as your body processes it. Stop eating bananas for the summer and the mosquitoes will be much less interested.

This is going to floor you, but one of the best insect repellents someone found is Vick's Vaporub.

Plant marigolds around the yard, the flowers give off a smell that bugs do not like, so plant some in that garden also to help ward off bugs without using insecticides.

When all else fails--get a frog.

Association Benefits

The Board of Directors would like to ask homeowners for suggestions regarding benefits they would like to see as association members. As many homeowners have pointed out, they

receive no benefits (i.e.: playground, community swimming pool, park) for their association fee. One homeowner suggested forming a benefits committee to explore possibilities. Please send suggestions to cchoa@allianceonline.net

Survey Results

Fifty homeowners submitted the Cypress Creek Homeowners Association Survey by July 1, 2004. Thirty-nine homeowners completed the survey online. Eleven homeowners mailed or gave their survey to the Communications Committee.

The survey results will be placed on the Communication Committee's web site page within the next few weeks.

Reporting Violations

The Board of Directors at the June 3 meeting passed a motion that requires neighbors reporting violations to Alliance Association or the Board of Directors must give their name. The reason for this is to prevent harassment of neighbors and bogus reporting of incidents. The name of the person reporting the violation will not be given to the suspected offender.

Yard of the Month

The June and July Yard of the Month were selected by a panel of judges from the Landscape Committee and volunteers from the community. The Yard of the Month for June was Sharon and Daron Butler, 1708

Tracy Miller. The Yard of the Month for July was Gaye and Todd Sodoma, 1903 Clay Lane. Our express our thanks to the judges for their time and effort. Terri Georgoulas is scheduled to head the judging for the August Yard of the Month. If you are interested in volunteering for the judging committee, please contact Marilyn Stanford, 336-9872, damlstanford2001@yahoo.com.

Yards of the Month

June, Sharon and Daron Butler, 1708 Tracy Miller



July, Gaye and Todd Sodoma, 1903 Clay Lane.



Ads

If you own a business you may advertise on the web site for free. Rates for advertising in the Cypress Quarterly are posted on the web classified section. Homeowners receive a 50% discount. Please pass your ads to Terry Tobias, terrance_s@sbcglobal.net.



Gaye Sodoma

- Loan Officer
 - Benefits Coordinator
- 512-996-8931 Phone
512-996-0564 Fax
www.cms-link.com
gaye@cms-link.com

YOUR LINK TO COMPLETE HOME OWNERSHIP

CMS understands that you are unique and that everyone has different needs. We provide many specialized programs and mortgage-related **benefits** including **great rates, reduced closing costs, superior service, honesty and integrity.**

We have also partnered with many Austin area businesses to offer you additional discounts. Some are shown below. No mortgage-related business is required to receive the discounts!

Please contact your neighbor **Gaye Sodoma** at **512-996-8931** or visit our web site, www.cms-link.com, for more information and available discounts from area retailers!



Try to be a better neighbor by...

This section of the newsletter is devoted to mentioning problems that are irritating our neighbors. In the long run, correcting these problems make the neighborhood a better place to live. So, let's be sensitive our neighbors' concerns. Remember, it's a two way street! If you have

something bothering you, please let us know.

Speeding... Most of us drive at a reasonable speed through the neighborhood. However, you never know when a child will dart from the sidewalk from behind a parked car. And, the speed limit may NOT be a safe speed when children are at play. We ask that everyone slow down. For parents of teenage drivers:

PLEASE tell your teenagers to slow down. Young drivers are the biggest offenders of speeding throughout the neighborhood. We don't want a child severely hurt or killed and have a driver say "I should have...." It's too late then.

Controlling your pets...

Dogs: The age old problem of walking the dog and not cleaning up the mess is with us. Please, please, please carry plastic bags with you

when you walk fido around the neighborhood. And by all means, don't let your dog mark your neighbor's favorite flowers or shrubbery. The City of Cedar Park has a leash law. The City does enforce it.

Cats: Terri Georgulas reported that she found two kittens recently. She took them to the vet for a checkup. Unfortunately, the kittens were infected with Feline Immunodeficiency Virus and had to be put down. This is a warning to neighbors who allow their cats to roam the neighborhood. Stray cats are infected with FIV and Feline Leukemia. Please keep your cats indoors for their safety and health. More information can be found at www.vetinfo.com

Landscaping.... Many of our homeowners and families take morning and evening walks through the neighborhood. Please be aware of your trees and shrubbery to ensure they are trimmed to allow unimpeded access to the sidewalk. It only takes a few minutes to trim back the overhead tree limbs and the shrub obstruction.

Mowing the back yard. Most homeowners are keeping their front yards in good shape. However, the backyard is another story. You may not be aware that tall grass is an excellent breeding ground for nasty insects (mosquitoes, chiggers, ants of all types, etc.) and vermin. They may not be bothering you, but to your neighbor, their children and pets it's another story. Please keep your yard mowed and trimmed. Did you know that the City of Cedar Park issues citations to homeowners for grass in residential areas that is higher than 6 inches.

Trash Cans.... We have received complaints regarding neighbors putting out trashcans as early as Saturday morning for the Monday collection. Please do not put out your trash can until Sunday evening.

There are many reasons for this rule including child and auto safety, animal control, and esthetics. If you are going away, please ask a neighbor to put the trash out or take it in for you. And if you see a trash can out long after it is suppose to be taken in, please assist them by moving into their drive and check on your neighbor. Short story: In 2002 the long 4th of July weekend, a friend of mine in Washington DC saw his neighbor's newspapers piling up on the sidewalk. My friend was going to call, but didn't bother. Monday morning the neighbor was found dead. He had gone into diabetic shock and passed away. Needless to say, my friend still is not feeling well about this lack of attentiveness. Let's be conscious of our neighbors and be good neighbors. If you see something out of the ordinary, something may be wrong. Please check to see if anything is wrong.

that the raccoon entered through one of the large mushroom vents on the roof or at least that is what the owner believes. If this happens to you it's important to first call for assistance in trapping the animal prior to repairing the point of entry. Avoid trapping them inside and as a preventative, trim tree limbs at least 3 feet from your roof.



Community Information

The Patter of Little Feet

Contributed by Dar Rice

Ever hear something go bump in the night? Be sure to check out your attic to see whether you have an unwanted visitor.

Recently one of our homeowners after several nights of unrest finally contacted professional help to investigate noises in the attic. Much to everyone's surprise it turned out to be a raccoon. A mother was initially caught but the noises continued and within the week, 4 babies were trapped, reunited with their mother and all were relocated.

How did they get in when there wasn't any noticeable point of entry? That is the BIG question. It appeared



New Texas Law for Vehicle Drivers

A new Texas law requires that when drivers see a stopped emergency vehicle with flashing lights, the driver must either slow down to 20 mph below the speed limit or move into another lane on a multi-lane highway. Until recently, police have issued warning tickets. This is no longer the case. Fines are heavy for failing to obey this law. Emergency vehicles are defined as police, ambulances, fire trucks, tow trucks, etc. It is best to assume any vehicle with flashing lights on the road is an emergency vehicle to be safe.

Docents Needed

The newly created University of Texas Blanton Museum of Art, scheduled to open in early 2006, needs volunteer museum guides to help in sharing its treasures with the Austin community. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Donna de Ville, 512 471-9205 or email deville@mail.utexas.edu.

Cedar Park Multi-Purpose Recreation Center

Hearings and seminars are taking place throughout Cedar Park for a proposed \$32 million, 6,000-seat multipurpose center that would contain an ice arena suitable for hockey and a civic center. This center will anchor a town center planned for the area north of FM 1431 at Discovery Blvd. The Austin Ice Bats hockey team will occupy the sports area.

The city would own the building and receive proceeds from events there, but Global Entertainment, a Phoenix-based sports entertainment and media company, would manage and operate the civic center.

A funding mechanism and whether voter approval will be needed haven't been determined. The Ice Bats would be the anchor tenant for the center, which also would host concerts and conventions. A center like the one proposed for Cedar Park would be home to at least 200 events a year, with about 35 of those being Ice Bats games.

An earlier effort to bring a sports complex to Cedar Park failed in 2002 after voters rejected \$8.6 million in property tax bonds, which would have helped finance a \$32 million ice arena and amphitheater. The proposed event center is different because it won't be strictly for sports.

Average attendance for Ice Bats games in the 2001-02 season was just shy of 5,000. Cedar Park's population grew 16.8 percent from July 2001 to July 2002, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Williamson County was the fifth fastest-growing county in the country from April 2000 to July 2001, according to Census Bureau estimates.

Despite its increasing population numbers, Cedar Park has been lagging in event space. Area high schools have nowhere in Cedar Park to hold graduation ceremonies going to downtown Austin where seating is limited, and the chamber of commerce holds its annual banquet at the Renaissance hotel in Northwest Austin -- nearly 11 miles from Cedar Park.

If the City of Cedar Park does not build a center, another town in the area will which will take business, visitors, and money out of the community.

Electricity Bills

If you are wondering why there was a sharp increase in your electrical bill for last month, it wasn't so much the warmer weather as the Power Cost Recovery Factor charge (PCRF).

The PCRF is the rate component that is a direct reflection of the fluctuating cost of natural gas required to run an electric generation plant. While the cost of electricity has not increased, the cost of the fuel to produce this electricity has. Your electric company can pass this increase along to the homeowner.

Last August 2003, the PCRF factor was \$.0052 for each kilowatt hour. In May 2004, the PCRF was \$.0155. For June 2004 the PCRF was \$.024 for each kilowatt hour. While you may be using less electricity, you actually will pay more because of the increase in the PCR.

