



February 2009

Whispers

Whispering Oaks Homeowners Association

Message from President Always

As the time for change is making headlines, it is time for us, as residents of Whispering Oaks, to make some changes to protect one of our most (if not our most) valuable asset, our home. Hopefully this spring, Whispering Oaks Homeowners Association will offer a day to learn and share "Spring Cleaning" ideas for your home which will include remodeling tips, swimming pool care, yard and garden planting, maintenance and curb-appeal ideas, repair and installation of irrigation systems, and oak tree care.

With the assistance of Dickinson Sprinkler and Lawn Seeding Company, the complete repair of the irrigation system of Whispering Oak's common area has been accomplished and plants and grass have been replanted. This project has plagued us and we are all elated to finally have it completed.

The discovery of Oak Wilt disease in Whispering Oaks is of great concern and your board of directors is actively working with numerous outside sources to resolve the immediate danger we face since its diagnosis. As in the past, the board will continue to strive to prevent Oak Wilt in our community by sharing with homeowners and residents the immediate danger and proper methods for trimming, pruning, protecting and preserving our beautiful oak trees. Our annual Neighborhood Directory, website www.whisperingoaks.org and quarterly newsletters offer valuable, educational information on this fungal disease and advice for protection against its very real potential for devastation.

Our long range planning and capital campaign committee is working to develop a presentation of goals and needs the board must address for the future of Whispering Oaks. I am extremely excited about the opportunity to assist the board in making decisions that will positively impact our neighborhood to ensure our homes and surroundings remain a valuable asset for many years to come.

You can help by making your home, inside and out, an asset that brings pride to you and your community. As always, if you have any suggestions that would be of benefit to one or all of the Whispering Oaks neighbors, please share by sending an email to me, president@whisperingoaks.org, or any board member, woha@whisperingoaks.org, as we assure you, each communication is given careful and respectful attention.

Thanks for allowing me to serve,
Howard Always

Rezoning Decision Postponed to February 19, 2009. Voice your opinion!

The struggle to prevent the rezoning of four platted lots in the corner of Dreamland Drive and Lockhill Selma continues. As some might remember, the owners, Ted D. Lee and Jerelene W. Lee, have petitioned the city to have the property rezoned from "R-20" to "R-6" Since May 30, 2008, there have been two amendments to the original petition, and it was unanimously rejected by the Zoning Commission on December 16, 2008 (with one abstention). On the 29th of December of 2008, the applicants requested that the case be placed on the February 19th City Council agenda. On that day, the City Council will make the final determination of this zoning case.

Anyone who sent a message opposing the rezoning needs to do it again by 4:00 pm, February 18, 2009. An email message can be accepted only if it contains the property owner's name(s), address, and telephone number. You can also voice your opposition by sending a letter to:

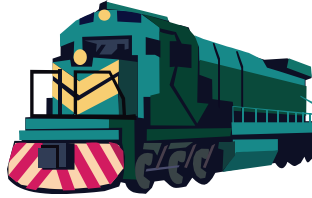
Micah Diaz
Planner, Zoning Section, Land Development Division
Planning & Development Services Department
1901 S Alamo St
San Antonio, Texas 78204-1605

Be sure to reference Zoning Case Number Z2008193 and sign your letter.

For more information and the latest updates, please visit: <http://No-Rezoning.Info>.
(Joel Garcia- 2603 Whisper Dove St)

A TRAIN RUNS THROUGH IT

Not everybody in Whispering Oaks hears the train. But many do. And most of us have stopped for the train as it passes on Wurzbach. What exactly is this train? What's going on?



In fact, the train is either going from or returning to the Vulcan Quarry Company, located off Huebner. For upwards of fifteen years Vulcan has been mining limestone, hauled in the form of concrete rock or readymix.

The manager of the quarry, Rod Perkins, emphasizes that both train and track are owned as well as maintained by Union Pacific. Vulcan simply loads the materials, which are then transported to a much larger quarry, Martin-Marietta,

On average, there are two trains per week, one every three days. Lately, however, business is slow in the construction industry as everywhere else. But there is no expectation that the train from Vulcan will cease to run anytime soon.



**Welcome Coffee for
New Neighbors
in Whispering Oaks**

Fun ☞ Fellowship ☞ Food
Time: 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.
Date: Saturday,
February 21, 2009
Place: Andie Stella's House
11115 Whisper Ridge
San Antonio, Tx. 78230
RSVP Tel: 210-408-7201
italianstar@earthlink.net

Whispering Oaks Homeowners Association Board of Directors

President: Howard Alwais
Vice President: Andrea Stella
Secretary: Lisa Abramson
Treasurer: Jennifer Johnson
Membership: Diane Crawford
Block Captains:

Kara Reynolds/ Diane Crawford
Hospitality: Andrea Stella
Communications/Data & Directory:
Sylvia Garcia

Common Space: Norma Sackett
Code Compliance/Covenants:
David Baird

Government Liaison: Oscar Galvan
Capital Campaign Steering Committee: Peter Nettelfield and David Sund

Security: Arthur Stier
Social: Norma Sackett
Architectural: Jeanne Paulk
School Liaison: Ginny Cohen

Newsletter:

Simon Esparza, Publisher
Lisa Abramson -- Board Liaison
Terry Caesar, Editor
Eva Bueno, Layout and Design

Oak Wilt has been found and confirmed in Whispering Oaks !

Several large Live Oak trees on two adjoining properties on Whisper Ledge have recently died from Oak Wilt and several more are now showing signs of the disease. Approximately 30 trees received fungicide treatments the week of January 19th, paid for by those property owners.

We have heard about the risk of Oak Wilt and the measures of prevention, but do we really understand what happens once trees are affected by this destructive infectious fungus? What does this mean for our community?

The fungus invades and disables the vascular system of a tree, blocking the trees' ability to transport water. Once a tree shows signs of the disease, it will defoliate and die within 1 - 6 months. Oak Wilt spreads through the interconnected root system of Live Oaks, moving to adjacent trees at a rate of 100 ft per year. The root system of a live oak extends 2 - 3 times the distance of the tree canopy and most Live Oaks are connected to each other.

Successful control of the disease involves three approaches:

- (1) **Stop the spread.** The only way to stop the spread of the disease is to sever the root system through trenching. The Whispering Oaks Home Owners Association (WOHA) has met and is currently looking into the cost and feasibility of trenching, as suggested by Forester, Mark Duff, of the Texas Tree Service.
- (2) **Reduce tree loss.** Trees within the trench zone can be treated with injections of an approved fungicide. Depending on the proximity of the tree to the Oak Wilt center, the survival rate after treatment can be 85 - 90%.
- (3) **Prevent the formation of new oak wilt centers.** Oak Wilt is initially introduced to a Live Oak or Red Oak by sap-feeding beetles through an open wound or unsealed pruning cut on the tree.

Avoid pruning from February through June.

Regardless of the season spray as you cut: a sap beetle can find a fresh cut within 15 minutes of pruning.

Use commercial pruning sealer, latex paint or car undercoat.

Hire only licensed tree cutters* and always ask your tree cutters, "How do you cut?" If they don't spray as they cut, don't hire them!

Tip: Don't provide any information that clues them to the answer you are looking for, let them do the explaining. You don't want someone saying, 'yes', just because they figure out that is what will get them hired, and if possible watch what they do. What may seem like a good, cheap pruning job can cost thousands of dollars in fungicide treatments, tree removal and loss of property values.

WOHA will continue to provide updates to educate and inform our residents on the management of the Oak Wilt outbreak.

***See San Antonio Municipal Code Art.VIII, Sec.21-170 - 21-171. or ask WOHA to email you a copy.**

(Kara Reynolds—Whisper Ledge)

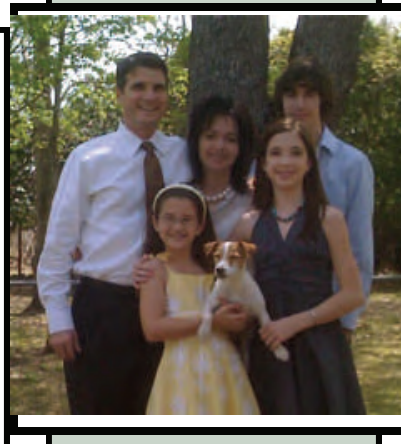
Faces of the Neighborhood: Linda Richardson

Linda Richardson is one of the newest residents of Whispering Oaks, and, with one exception, one of the happiest. Along with her husband, Bryan, the Associate Pastor at First Baptist Church, their three children, Garner (a junior at Clark), Caroline (a freshman) and Faith Anne (a student at Hobby), and Jack Russell terrier, Millie (a stay-at-home), Linda moved here from Corpus Christi six months ago.

Why choose Whispering Oaks? Linda remarks about the beauty of the neighborhood generally, and the large lots or the uncrowded streets more specifically. Just as important has been the friendliness of the people. Linda has already begun to give her own example by joining the Garden Club, and will be a model for the style show in an upcoming luncheon.

That unhappy exception to life here? Linda lives in one of the areas that has been struck by Oak Wilt. One of her best trees is in crisis. Ironically, though, she notes that the disease has brought people on her street together, and deepened their commitment to the unity of the neighborhood.

Linda majored in interior design at Baylor. Now is she trying to start her own business as a consultant, specializing in window treatment design.



New to the Neighborhood?

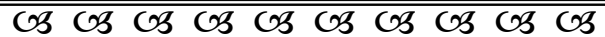
If someone new has moved onto your street, or if you are a new resident, please call Roz Moroh (Whisper View) at 492-2563.

Roz is Whispering Oak's "welcome lady" and the friendly face to new residents. She will visit and bring information about the Homeowners Association, Swim and Tennis Club and Garden Club.

Invitation

Do you know somebody who does something wonderful and could appear in "Faces of the Neighborhood"? Would you like to appear yourself?

Get in touch with us, or urge your fascinating neighbors to drop us a note. We will set up an appointment to do the interview and take the picture.



COP Program

Our WOHA Association encourages participation in the COP (Cellular on Patrol) program sponsored by the San Antonio Police, and the Northwest Neighborhoods Against Crime, Inc. in which we participate. There are three main benefits to participating in the COP program. (1) We learn how to protect our selves and our houses; (2) We learn how to recognize and protect our neighbors, and (3) We learn about trends and other problems in the City, which may not have reached our neighborhood yet.

2009 schedule of classes.

- March 19 (1st half) and 26 (2nd half)
- May 9 (1st half) and 16 (2nd half)
- July 16 (1st half) and 23 (2nd half)
- September 12 (1st half) and 19 (2nd half)

Refresher Class – October 15th

Weekday classes are from 6 PM until 10 PM.

Saturday classes are from 8 AM until 12 noon.

Any questions about the role of COP and how it relates to our neighborhood can be answered by contacting our **WOHA COP Liaison** since 1995, **Joyce Beneke** (Whispering Wind). Special classes for groups of 20 or more can be arranged by contacting Officer Ron Atkinson 207-6087.

Block Captains and Block Captain Wannabe's SOCIAL



We are looking for volunteers! There are several vacant block captain openings on both the east and west sides of Whispering Oaks.

Come to the SOCIAL to learn how you can have fun while serving as a Block Captain for your street. Hope to see you at

DIANE CRAWFORD'S 11146 WHISPER SPRING
Wed., March 18th 6:00 – 7:00 pm
 call **479-3413** or email **crawford_d@att.net**
 to confirm your participation call 479-3413
 or email **crawford_d@att.net**

WOHA Capital Campaign & Long Range Planning Committee
is seeking your input. Please email thoughts & ideas to
woha@whisperingoaks.org



Whispering Oaks
Homeowners Assn
P O Box 780454
San Antonio, TX 78278
www.whisperingoaks.org

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How is Whispering Oaks faring in the current real estate crisis?

Whispering Oaks continues to hold its own. We had a slight increase in average price per sq. ft. for those properties that sold during 2008 vs 2007. The number of homes sold was in line with 2007 sales, but it took longer to sell a home during 2008 by a large percentage.

It is so very important, especially in our current market conditions to continually maintain your home and yard so that our neighborhood is attractive to those buyers comparing neighborhoods to purchase. Our close-in location is a huge advantage for us over outlying neighborhoods with newer homes. However, buyers still want an updated house that is clean and well maintained. It will also put more money in your own pocket when you sell an updated home with good landscaping. To illustrate that point, a home sold just recently by an original owner who had not maintained the property nor done any updating (the original stove/range was still in the home) and the home sold for a low price of \$62.00 per sq. ft. vs the average price of \$95.00 per sq. ft. a net loss of \$66,000 for that owner.



The hot new idea around is to "stage" your home. Stagers will come in for an hourly fee and give you a plan of what to do to get your house in showroom condition. The fees vary, but you can expect to pay a range of \$100 to several thousand, depending on their level of service. It definitely works and staged homes usually sell quicker and for more money.

We now have new homes being constructed in our area, so the competition is heating up for the buyer. However, the beautiful trees, pool/tennis amenities, and community spirit is our greatest advantage, and that, I believe, gives our neighborhood an edge.

**Text and statistics: Nancy Doucette
(Whispering Wind) of Kuper Realty**

REAL ESTATE STATISTICS FOR 2007 AND 2008

2007

21 TOTAL SALES
LOWEST PRICE \$144,900
HIGHEST PRICE \$322,000
AVERAGE PRICE \$240,247
AVERAGE PRICE PER S.F. \$92.00
AVERAGE DAYS ON MARKET 54

2008

23 TOTAL SALES
LOWEST PRICE \$132,000
HIGHEST PRICE \$295,000
AVERAGE PRICE \$221,519
AVERAGE PRICE PER S.F. \$95.01
AVERAGE DAYS ON MARKET 88

