

The Whispers

PUBLISHED BI-MONTHLY BY NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS, INC. FOR THE WHISPERING OAKS HOMEOWNER'S ASSOCIATION

WO Homeowners 'Flood' Floodplain Meeting

Dozens of Whispering Oaks homeowners turned out for the San Antonio River Authority Open House on March 14th, concerning the new floodplain maps being drafted for Bexar County. Since more than 200 homes in our neighborhood are adjacent to Olmos Creek and drainage channels, WOHA notified each of those property owners about the meeting to encourage participation. According to Meera Nguyen, a SARA official at this District 9 meeting, hosted by Councilman John Courage, had the highest attendance of any of the floodplain open houses held so far.

More than 75 WO neighbors signed in to meet San Antonio and River Authority officials to ask questions about flood insurance and risk management, and to

see exactly where and how their property would be affected by a high-water event. While the draft maps won't become official for another 12-18 months, homeowners should check with their insurance providers now, since rates are likely to increase once the maps are official.

Flood policies typically do not take effect for 30 days, and property owners should keep in mind that flood insurance is separate from home insurance coverage. Mortgage companies require flood insurance for federally backed home loans.



WOHA Board member Janis Witt and Adele Barnett getting information.



Folks lined up to get information.



Councilman Courage chats with WOHA Board members Evita Morin and Janis Witt.



To view a specific property's location in the floodplain map, go to www.sariverauthority.org/draftFPM. For more information, call SARA at 210-227-1373, or contact Ben Dilly, our Whispering Oaks liaison, at board@whisperingoaks.org.



We are pleased to invite all Whispering Oaks to our annual **Memorial Weekend Party**. The pool is open to all from 1:00-8:00 p.m.—for free! That day, you don't need to be a member. This is a great time to come out and meet your neighbors. Look for future communications on details of the Party. We look forward to seeing you there!

Also mark you calendars for the **annual 4th of July Parade** held on Whisper Valley, followed by a picnic at the pool! Watch the bulletin boards in June.



Pool Season Arrives!



See Page 6



2023

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Peter's Prez-spective

A message from Peter J. Lund

Bear with me dear neighbors, I'm going to discuss Oak Wilt. Yes, I know you've heard countless times about how to prevent it, but let's consider the financial side of this threat for a moment. This deadly fungus can quickly spiral into a costly problem and, frankly, I think it's a huge mistake that resident after resident ends up spending far more cash than necessary.

First, let's establish the harsh reality: When this disease encroaches upon your Oaks, you will spend money. It's a cruel fact—and plenty of folks have tried to fool themselves otherwise. For most property owners, the only real choice is to spend a few hundred to save a tree or at least three times as much to kill it. And, frankly, I am stunned how many Whispering Oaks residents choose the latter.

The math is simple. The cost to treat a 12-inch diameter trunk tree with fungicide is about \$200. And you may have to do a follow-up treatment for the same cost within two years. If that sounds like a lot of money, you're right; especially if you've got lots of Oaks.

But let's say you procrastinate and tell yourself that, somehow, the disease won't ravage your trees the way it did your neighbors. After all, about 10 percent of some Oak species may survive, although they're likely to be permanently disfigured. But when the window to apply fungicide slips away faster than you expected, and that same 12-inch tree dies before you even noticed it was sick, it will cost about \$1200 to remove.

And, yes, by law, you will have to remove it. Just ask the residents who were recently told by City inspectors to cut down lingering dead trees. Rotting trees are a serious safety risk and the City will force their removal no matter where on the property they sit. One dead trunk recently fell into a Whisper Moss neighbor's backyard and easily could have taken out more than just a fence. But, hey, insurance will pay for stuff like that right? Nope. Most policies won't cover a known nuisance that was allowed to fester. That's considered negligence in the insurance biz and they don't pay for that.

But we aren't done yet. Trees add curb appeal to your home—and when they disappear, so does some of your property's value. Experts say it's about 20 percent in a namesake neighborhood like ours. So let's do a little additional math: if the median price of a home in Whispering Oaks is about \$400,000, that equates to a reduction in your nest egg of about \$80,000 in today's dollars. Suddenly spending a few hundred on fungicide doesn't sound so bad.

But wait, there's more! If those mature Oaks were shading your home's roof and windows, you can bet your air conditioning didn't have to work so hard during these ever-hotter Texas summers. Now do the math on bills month after month. Frankly, any increase in my CPS bill induces sweat—and an on-going one makes me nauseous.

Look, I get it. No one likes to spend money on things out of our control. But I'm pretty sure that's just part of maintaining a nice home. So choose wisely, my friends—because if you're at risk for Oak Wilt, and many of us are especially on the east side, false hope and procrastination could pick your pocket.

Peter J. Lund, President



It's Really Gonna Happen!

Remember that promise of a "Flying T" at the intersection of Whisper Valley and Wurzbach Road? Remember that the State reneged on its promise? Well, Councilman Courage's office is using its discretionary funds to get it done. Work might even have started before this newsletter comes out.

We all know that many people driving on Wurzbach Road drive like they're already on the Parkway! So, again the Councilman's discretionary funds will pay for the installation of two permanent radar signs that measure a car's speed. Coming soon to a neighborhood that's ours!

It's Done... and it's a beaut.

Thanks to the office of our City Councilman, a sidewalk has been created all the way along Lockhill-Selma Road. And to do it, not one tree had to be cut down. Now people—especially children walking home from school—are safer.



Looking north on Lockhill-Selma to the end of the project.

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EMAIL MILEE.RAY@SANANTONIO.GOV WITH YOUR INTEREST.

—From the office of Councilman John Courage

Do you like planning parties?

How 'bout helping WOHA?

We sure could use a little help.

Please email:

board@whisperingoaks.org



Whispering Oaks Online Communications

Did you know Whispering Oaks HOA is on social media? Please join our Facebook page and Nextdoor Whispering Oaks HOA group for up-to-date information on events and other important news about our neighborhood.



Facebook:

Whispering Oaks Homeowners Association SA



NextDoor:

Whispering Oaks Homeowners Association group



Also, don't forget about the Whispering Oaks HOA website! You can contact the HOA board and join the HOA here. <https://www.whisperingoaks.org/>

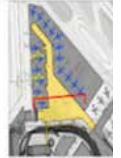
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—Henry Ford

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As Imaged, the New S.A. Airport

As pictured in our Councilman John Courage’s District 9 Dispatch. This investment is expected to make the San Antonio Airport world class.



There is an all-too-common mistake that even well-educated people make in the use of the word “however.” It’s mainly in thinking that, when it appears in a sentence’s middle, it is preceded by a comma and may or may not, according to taste, be succeeded by one:

“The problem arose again, however we had a solution.”

This is not correct because “however” begins a new independent clause—in effect, a new sentence.

There are two solutions:

“The problem arose again. However, we had a solution”
and *“The problem rose again; however, we had a solution.*
There are two other uses of “however”:

“However much you try, you still need practice”—no punctuation.

“The problem, however, needs to be faced.” Here, the word is simply an insertion to gain greater meaning, but could be taken out, leaving the sentence still intact. Any such insertions (“parentheticals”) are surrounded by commas.

Wanna Read Sumpin’ Funny?

A young man, now fully grown, has finally come to appreciate the sacrifices his mother and father had made for him. So, recently, he thanked his mother for all the time and money she and his father had spent on him for orthodontics.

“We had to,” she said, “or you’d still be living at home.”

Y Otro en Español

Fallan los motores de un avión y este empieza a perder altura de tal forma que todos ven inminente una caída total. Entre los pasajeros hay un sacerdote que se para y dice, “Hijos míos, ya no queda más que rezar para lograr que vayamos al Cielo.”

Entonces uno de los pasajeros le grita, “Recemos rápido, padre, porque ¡vamos en dirección contraria...!”

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EASTER RECAP

WO Kids Have a Hopping Good Time!

The Whispering Oaks Pool Board, along with WOHA, held another successful Easter Egg Hunt on the first of April (no fooling!), thanks to all the residents who volunteered their time to stuff and hide eggs and run the games. Over a thousand eggs filled with candy treats or prize coins were hidden across the pool grounds. The participant turnout was about 20 percent higher than last year, the weather was perfect, and the children were eager!

There were games for the very young, minute-to-win-it type games to challenge the older children and this year they also included a Cake Walk. Once again, the rule was enforced that no one under three months or over 95 years was permitted to participate. Of course, the great majority were somewhere in between, especially the children.



Nope, kids. They're not buried underground.



Lotsa prizes for everyone.



Teddy Pastrano shows Bodie Blount how it's done. Bodie's mom, Graciela Pressman, supervises.



This Jelly-Bean Pick-up is the last straw!



Here they are!
Here they are!



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Whispering Oaks Pool In Case You Didn't Know....

HEATED POOL

Our pool has a heater! During cooler months, the pool is heated to 84 degrees. This is a membership benefit that we are excited to provide. If you haven't experienced it yet, please check it out. It feels great to be able to swim even when it's a little cold out.

HOURS

Summer Hours begin in early June with lifeguards on duty from 1:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday. Our pool is "swim at your own risk" anytime a lifeguard is not on duty. Our pool is currently open on weekends with lifeguards.

FOB ACCESS

Our pool is one of the only area neighborhood pools to provide access to our pool to members year-round through a fob system. That means you can swim any day from 6:00 a.m.-11:00 p.m. We ask that you do not open the gate for other members so that they open it with their own fob. If you lose your fob, the replacement cost is \$25. Email info@woswimclub.org if you lose it so we can deactivate it and coordinate with you to replace it.



GUESTS

Members are allowed to bring up to five guests each time they visit the pool. Guest fees are \$5 and are paid online. We collect payment on the honor system, so please be honest and pay!



BLUE MARLINS

The Blue Marlins are the neighborhood swim team. Practices will start in mid-May in the evenings and will transition in early June to morning practices. This is a great opportunity to meet neighbors and for kids to make new friends.

For more information visit whisperingoaksbluemarlins.swimtopia.com

MEMBERSHIP COSTS

- Family Resident Membership - \$395
- Senior Resident with Grandchildren - \$350
- Standard Resident Membership - \$295
- Non-Resident Membership - \$450

If you have any questions, please reach out to the pool board at info@woswimclub.org

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Friendliness Story

A man lives at the entry road to his little town and loves to sit on his porch, watching folks go by. One day, a fellow comes by and asks him this: "I'm thinking about moving here. But what are the people like?"

The resident responds with a question back to him: "Well, what are the folks like where you come from?"

"Well, they're just not friendly at all."

"Well, I think you'll find folks about the same here."

A little later, another stranger comes down the road with the same story and the same question. "Well," he responds, again with a question, "what are folks like where you come from?"

"To tell you the truth, they're about as friendly as they come. I hate to leave."

"I think you'll find folks around here about the same."

Little Free Library... Again

Just to keep track and to keep everyone aware, there are two LFL boxes on the East Side of the neighborhood. There is one at 11503 Whisper Ledge, near the corner of Whisper Bluff, and there is one at 2834 Whisper View, at the corner of Whisper Valley. Here are the requests and the rules:

1. If possible, bring two to take out one.
2. No textbooks or reference books.
3. No damaged or defaced books.
4. Leave no books on the ground and keep the box tidy; fasten the door, please.

If someone has several books to donate, the person can call Mary Ellen Rioux at 956-310-7919. And if you plan to install one on your property, please let your editor know.

If you would like information about how to set up a Little Free Library, go to LittleFreeLibrary.org. And thanks. *Happy reading!*



Whispering Oaks Sales

Jan 1, 2022-Jan 1, 2023

Prepared by Jean Marie Ruffini,
Resident Realtor®

	<u>Price</u>	<u>Per Sq. Ft.</u>
Sold listings – 11		
High	\$521,000	\$179
Median	\$380,000	\$160
Low	\$265,000	\$126
Active – 7		
High	\$595,000	\$223
Low	\$305,900	\$171

According to the San Antonio Board of REALTORS®, 2023 continues to see a decline in home sales with a 17% decrease in total home sales for the month of February with 2,287 closed listings, according to the Multiple Listing Service (MLS)

The area also saw steady increases in average and median home prices with 2% increases from February 2022, now at \$365,678 and \$310,000, respectively. Residential rental also saw a slight increase of 3% with the average price now at \$1,804.

–San Antonio Board of Realtors



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Walker Ranch Senior Center

Walker Ranch ain't just a beautiful park. You should see the City's newest Senior Center, the eleventh comprehensive Senior Center in all. It's all free, being supported by the City, by the Federal government, and by various agencies that contribute their time, such as WellMed, who provide medical services, and Meals-on-Wheels, who provide delicious lunches. And it's all free for all folks over 60. Just sign up.

Besides the free lunches—and, yes, there is such a thing...if, in a sense, you've already paid your dues, otherwise known as a lifetime of taxes—there's a plethora of activities available in the 26,000-square foot facility. Within the large, bright building, there are computer classes, a movie, tables for card games and chess, exercise machines (some can even accommodate folks in wheelchairs!), beginning pickleball, nutrition education, art classes, guitar classes, a book club... on an on.

And beyond the building there is a range of Field Trips provided: Mitchell Lake Audubon Center, Senior Fiesta at Wonderland Mall, Friedrich Wilderness Park, and a range of museums. There's even an upcoming Fiesta car show for members who have classic cars to show off.

Under the very competent management of Vanessa Jiménez (who clearly loves her work), the facility is run by only nine full-time employees...and scores of volunteers. That's necessary because it's a busy, busy place, serving over 300 people on a given day and feeding about 220. The dining room turns out to be a place where people not only eat good, healthful food, but actually make friends: "Do you mind if I join you?"



Our staff greeters. Once registered, all you gotta do is sign in.



Fun and games in the game room, with pool and ping-pong.

Gals playing at Mahjong. How come it's always women playing? Is there such a thing as Pahjong?



Ah, some exercise... a weighty activity.



Bob and Mary, two of the Center's ever-faithful, very friendly volunteers. Bob is considered by Director Jiménez to be "volunteer of the year," while Mary has served at other Centers and so brings a wealth of experience to the new Center.

**The Senior Center is located at
835 W. Rhapsody, on the edge of the park.
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8:00 p.m. and on Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

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Tips to Save Money When Hosting a BBQ



If you have BBQ on the brain, you are not alone. As we make our way into Summer, you might consider hosting a cookout with family or friends. It's a great way to catch up and enjoy some relaxing times with those you love.

Today's economy has made having a BBQ more expensive than in years past. The cost of meats and vegetables in stores have risen, but there are still ways to have a great BBQ without spending an arm and a leg.

Here are a few tips to help you save money when having a BBQ.

Buy Cheaper Meat. Buying cheaper cuts of meat is a must during times of inflation. If chosen carefully, you can host a fine BBQ without spending any extra cash.

BEEF

Ribeye and T-bones are usually the top choices; however, there are cuts of beef that will provide a similarly satisfying experience. Make sure the cuts of beef are well-marbled to get that same tenderness and flavor. Choices such as flat-iron steaks, chuck, and petite filets are usually well-marbled and offer a substantially lower price tag. Add a few hotdogs and hamburgers in for good measure.

PORK

Pork, also known as 'the other white meat,' makes a great alternative to more expensive meat choices. In fact, during grilling season, the price of pork is substantially lower. Pork spareribs and country-style boneless pork ribs are a great substitution and are delicious when cooked over an open flame.

SEAFOOD

If grilling seafood hasn't occurred to you, then you are in for a real treat. Low-cost fish, such as mackerel, kingfish, and halibut, make a nice alternative for guests that aren't beef eaters. Flavorful seasonings can be added to give it that extra boost of flavor for your guests.

Host a Potluck BBQ. If the host is expected to feed everyone, hosting a BBQ can be expensive. Switch it up a bit this year and consider hosting a BBQ potluck. There are many ways this can be done.

BRING YOUR OWN MEAT (BYOM).

This can be a fun way to host a party. Guests can BYOM and you can grill it up for them. Just remember to ask them how they like it.

BRING YOUR OWN SIDE DISH (BYOSD).

These are my favorite kinds of parties because there is usually so much more variety when everyone brings their own dish. Just be sure to have a running list so everyone doesn't show up with potato salad. Ask them to bring the dish they are 'famous' for to create a well-rounded menu.

HEAVY ON THE SIDES.

While the BBQ is usually the main entrée for the meal, consider adding a few extra sides to make sure everyone gets enough to eat. You can even add some extra veggies on the sides such as salads and corn on the cob.

Hopefully, these tips are making you hungry enough to plan a BBQ of your own. Enjoy those close to you and eat to your hearts' content.

Eggplant Burgers with Cheese

Ingredients

- 1 eggplant large, cut into 1/4 inch thick slices
- 1/2 tsp kosher salt
- 1/2 tsp ground black pepper
- 1/2 tsp dried thyme leaves
- 1/2 tsp dried oregano leaves
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 4 whole-wheat hamburger buns
- 1/3 cup feta cheese crumbles fat-free
- 1 tomato large, cut into 1/8 slices
- 1 red onion cut into thin strips
- 4 romaine lettuce leaves large
- 1/2 cup Greek yogurt plain
- 2 garlic cloves minced
- 1 tsp dry dill



Instructions

- Season each side of the eggplant with salt, pepper, thyme, and oregano.
- In a large skillet on medium heat, heat the olive oil. Once hot, add the seasoned eggplant. Cook each side, about 3 minutes or until eggplant is soft and lightly golden brown on each side. Remove from the pan and set aside.
- Brush the inside of each hamburger bun with the remaining olive oil. Heat the same pan the eggplant was cooked in to medium heat and place the buns into the pan oiled side down. Cook about 2 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pan.
- Place the bottom toasted bun onto a serving plate. Top with 2 slices of the eggplant followed by feta, tomato, red onion, and lettuce.
- In a small bowl, combine the yogurt, garlic, and dill and stir well. Drizzle over the top of the eggplant. Place the top bun onto the burger and serve.

—Courtesy of Neighborhood News

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Tips for a Spring Garden

By Sharon Reynolds
Neighborhood News Staff Writer



It's my favorite time of year again, time to get into spring gardening. If you're the type of gardener who has a blue thumb, no worries. The following list contains tried-and-true gardening tips that anyone can master.

1. First Things First.

Preparation is key in gardening. It's important to remove overgrown grass and weeds from around rose bushes and blooming flowers to ensure the soil is clear and ready to plant. I really don't like the thought of using pesticides to kill weeds, so each time I take my dog outside I pull a few more by hand.

Tip: Be sure to water the area where the weeds are, before pulling. This will make the ground soft and easier to get them out by their roots.

2. Prune, Prune, Prune.

If you have plants or small bushes in your garden, be sure to prune them back to promote healthy growth. Don't be afraid to cut them back. I remember when my husband first "pruned" my rose bushes. Let's just say he left me what I called "sticks" in my flower bed. Lo and behold, my roses came out big and beautiful that year and I learned something new!

3. Make Your Plan.

Now it's time to make your plan to where your plants will reside in their forever home. Texas can be a tough place to grow a garden due to the extreme temperatures when summer arrives. Be mindful of the amount of sunlight and shade each plant variety needs to survive. Then map out where your plants will go and get to work. Remember, plants look better in clusters of 3, 5, and 7.

4. To Mulch or Not to Mulch, That is the Question.

Adding mulch to your spring garden can save water and keep your soil moist. It also shields the soil from the hot sun. Be sure to put a weed barrier over the soil and around the plants before adding mulch to assist with keeping weeds out of your garden. My favorite type of mulch is the shredded hardwood. I usually layer it about 3-4 inches deep in my flowerbeds. Ideally, mulch should be re-assessed every six months.

Tip: As time progresses you may notice a white fungus on the underside of your mulch. Don't worry, this is okay, as this is a beneficial fungus, known as saprophytic fungi. It works to break down organic matter such as compost, mulch, and soil conditioner. It's important to know it does not attack plants or cause plant diseases. This fungus is beneficial to the soil because it releases essential minerals to plant roots.

5. Magic Ingredient.

Some of you may already know about this magic ingredient. It leads to a full and beautiful spring garden. This magical ingredient is known as water. Sounds simple, right? However, over-watering can be just as deadly to plants as under-watering. Be sure to use cool water during the morning or evening hours. If you're unsure about the level of watering you're supposed to do, have no fear. Soil should be moist to a depth of six to eight inches, which takes about two inches of water, roughly. Since it does rain often during this time of year, be sure not to over-water your spring garden. If you are unsure about whether to water, put your finger down into the soil. If it's dry, you should water slow and down to the roots. Watering two times per week should be sufficient to grow a beautifully healthy spring garden

Resources: <https://www.txamfoundation.com/News/10-Tips-and-Tricks-for-Spring-Gardening.aspx> - <https://txmg.org/bell/monthly-gardening-in-central-texas/>



The Maldonados - 2810 Whisper Hill

Beware of Snakes!

If you live along the euphemistically named Upper Olmos Creek, otherwise known as the Drainage Ditch, beware of snakes! It's not joke. Many snakes live in the ravine and just love to come up the banks to explore. When they find one of your pets, you might as well say goodbye.

So, beware. It's been known to happen. Protect your pets, especially the little ones, too small to defend themselves.



WHISPERING OAKS GARDEN CLUBBING

Garden Club Doings



The Whispering Oaks Garden Club will soon wrap up its 2022–23 schedule with an evening party in late May. At this event, the Club provides the meat course and drinks. Each attending member brings a side or dessert and maybe a spouse or guest. It’s a party we all look forward to.

Our March event was the Quad-Club Luncheon at the Quarry Golf Club, at which our members JoAnn Aguilera and Corie Dilley modeled fashions from J Jill, along with models from the other three clubs.

April was a busy month. The San Antonio Garden Center assigned us to provide the “sweets” table at their regular First Wednesday meeting. Our sweet snacks, fruit, and Fiesta decorations were a big hit. And, as icing on the cake, we all learned how to make beautiful flowers out of heavy-stock colored paper.

Our regular third-Thursday April meeting included a SAWS presentation on Waste Management and voting in a new board of officers. During the summer hiatus, these officers and any interested members will prepare the 2023–24 Schedule of Events for August through May.

We always welcome new members.



Modeling at the Quad-Club luncheon by our own JoAnn Aguilera and Corie Dilley

“Don’t tell secrets in the garden. The potatoes have eyes, the corn has ears, and the bean stalk. —Anonymous



Fiesta flowers, by Virginia González



L-R: Teresa Walker, Ann Parsons, Betty Lezanic, and Diane Crawford at the SAGC “sweets” table

It Just Rained a Lot, so the Drought is Over. Right?

Nuh uh! Just take a look at our averages. The last time it rained over the average for the month was **?** even though we just had one good rain, finally. But even so, we’re still in Stage Two, watering restrictions. Some are surprised we aren’t in Stage Three.



So let’s do all we can to conserve water. It’s not just about us, it’s about our children’s future on this planet.

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Founded in 2013, The Eleanor Kolitz Hebrew Language Academy is located here in the city of San Antonio. EKHLA raises the bar in public education by providing strong academic and behavioral standards, as well as teaching impactful core values. EKHLA's core values are Support, Passion, Integrity & Honesty, Respect & Acceptance, Curiosity, Creativity, and Learning and "Repairing the World". With a total enrollment of under 550, students in grades Kindergarten thru 8th, receive extraordinary support from staff. Geography Bee, Spelling Bee, and Israeli Culture class all provide a fun, purposeful experience for our thriving student body.

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