



# The Whispers

Bi-Monthly Newsletter of the Whispering Oaks Homeowners Association Published by Neighborhood News, Inc.

## WHERE DO WOHA CONTRIBUTIONS GO? RIGHT BACK INTO THE NEIGHBORHOOD!

Neighbors, the annual Whispering Oaks Homeowners Association membership renewal season is upon us. As we reach out for your support, you may wonder how we do so much for our wonderful neighborhood for the monthly cost of less than the price of a movie ticket. So exactly how does WOHA spend its members' hard-earned money? It's surprisingly simple actually.

Over 50% of the typical annual budget is spent maintaining and improving the community entrances. This includes landscaping services (mowing, planting, mulching, tree trimming, lighting and irrigation repairs), utilities such as water and electric, and related liability insurances. Our prominent entrances welcome every visitor to our community and attract potential home buyers to the subdivision. Keeping the entrances looking good is an important, year-round, and costly endeavor.

Another 20% of the annual budget is spent on communications such as this newsletter, our robust website that guides residents on a myriad of issues, mailers for critical initiatives, and the community directory. WOHA's multi-faceted outreach contacts every household periodically to keep all residents informed and engaged in our collective quality of life.

The balance of WOHA's yearly spending includes initiatives like community events that bring neighbors together, the Welcome Wagon campaign assisting new arrivals, and oak wilt mitigation efforts which spare homeowners the costly loss of our namesake trees. The Board proudly pinches pennies and strives to focus every donated dollar on critical priorities.

Perhaps what makes the biggest difference doesn't cost a cent. Neighborhood volunteers donate countless hours toward our initiatives and the payoff is significant. In particular, WOHA leaders

steadily lobby city officials for support services and publicly funded improvements which has secured Whispering Oaks more than its fair share of city improvements. Those dollars would have gone to another neighborhood if not for the tireless efforts of our volunteers.

Currently just over half of Whispering Oaks households chip in \$10 a month to keep WOHA on task. The membership rebound in recent years has allowed the organization to avoid a fee increase since 2016. Your support during our 2025 membership drive will be vital to continuing our caretaking and advocacy that have kept Whispering Oaks one of San Antonio's most admired and desired neighborhoods for nearly 60 years. Please show your support by renewing or beginning your membership during the annual drive.

## WO ENTRANCES GET FESTIVE

The community entrances received a holiday refresh in December. Each of the ten engraved entrance monuments received a pair of illuminated oversized wreathes paid for by WOHA members.



WOHA volunteers Maria Frias, Rudy Frias, Janis Witt and Adele Barnett assemble a wreath.

### 2025 WOHA Membership Drive

WOHA  
11515 Whisper Forest #B  
San Antonio 78230

Mail by February 1<sup>st</sup>

- I'll do my part! My check for the \$125 annual household dues is enclosed.
- I'll do a bit more! Additional \$ \_\_\_\_\_ included supports the WOHA Capital Fund.

WO Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse / Partner Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Phone: (      ) \_\_\_\_\_ Year Arrived in WO: \_\_\_\_\_

Prefer credit card or monthly auto-pay? Visit [whisperingoaks.org](http://whisperingoaks.org)





# Peter's Prez-spective

A Letter from WOHA President Peter Lund

## DECADES OF COMMUNITY STEWARDSHIP SHAPED WHISPERING OAKS

I've helped lead a few community groups over the years. I guess I can't resist lending a hand to an worthy cause. And apparently I'm not alone, because each group has relied heavily on volunteers and I am always amazed at how generous busy people can be with their time and talents. WOHA is no exception and the organization's team undertook some daunting challenges in 2024 as its 50th Anniversary approached..

Frankly, the Board has been playing catch up for a few years. Membership had fallen to about 30% of residences a decade ago and the organization was feeling a financial pinch. WOHA's ability to serve as lead community caretaker and advocate was at risk. But once we did a better job publicizing its accomplishments and explained how every penny is put to use (see front page), neighbors responded. By 2024, over half of the subdivision's households were members and many continue to regularly provide additional donations via the Capital Fund and newly established Legacy Fund.

While finding its financial footing, the Board simultaneously began improving relations with city leaders. We became much closer with our District 9 councilman and his knowledgeable staff. That familiarity netted several publicly-funded improvements including new sidewalks along Lockhill-Selma, improved traffic controls throughout the subdivision, and safer dedicated turn lanes into the Whisper Valley and Whispering Wind entrances just to name a few.

WOHA volunteers also established working relationships with city staffers in a wide variety of departments. The Board has called upon them to help resolve lingering concerns such as troubling code violations and disruptive Short Term Rental properties that threatened our collective quality of life and property values. We always let staff know how much we appreciate their efforts and several have repeatedly gone the extra mile for Whispering Oaks in recent years.

Perhaps the most ambitious WOHA undertaking in recent memory has been the proposed amendments to the Community Covenants. This initiative had been sidelined for decades mostly because the process would be complicated, costly, and inevitably controversial. Majority decisions are rarely made without some dissent.

But property owners in Whispering Oaks pay a premium to live here, both in a home's purchase price and its yearly property taxes, and that ownership includes both some simple safeguards and the right to seek new ones as needed. Not every subdivision has that benefit, but ours does. And those common sense neighborly rules, combined with the stewardship of dozens of devoted volunteers, have kept our neighborhood widely admired and desired for over 50 years now.

The dust will settle on the Covenant ballot during 2025 and perhaps not every proposed amendment will be ratified in every Unit. If so, that's just fine with the Board. The democratic process allows for differences. Our role is to pursue whatever our members think is best for Whispering Oaks and encourage others to join their neighbors who tirelessly advocate for the common good.

*The Whispers*



Most non-advertising content in The Whispers is provided by the Whispering Oaks Homeowners Association which can be reached via email ([board@whisperingoaks.org](mailto:board@whisperingoaks.org)) or its website ([whisperingoaks.org](http://whisperingoaks.org))

Advertising concerns or inquiries should be directed to publisher Neighborhood News at 210-558-3160

## NEW FLOODPLAIN MAPS WILL IMPACT WHISPERING OAKS

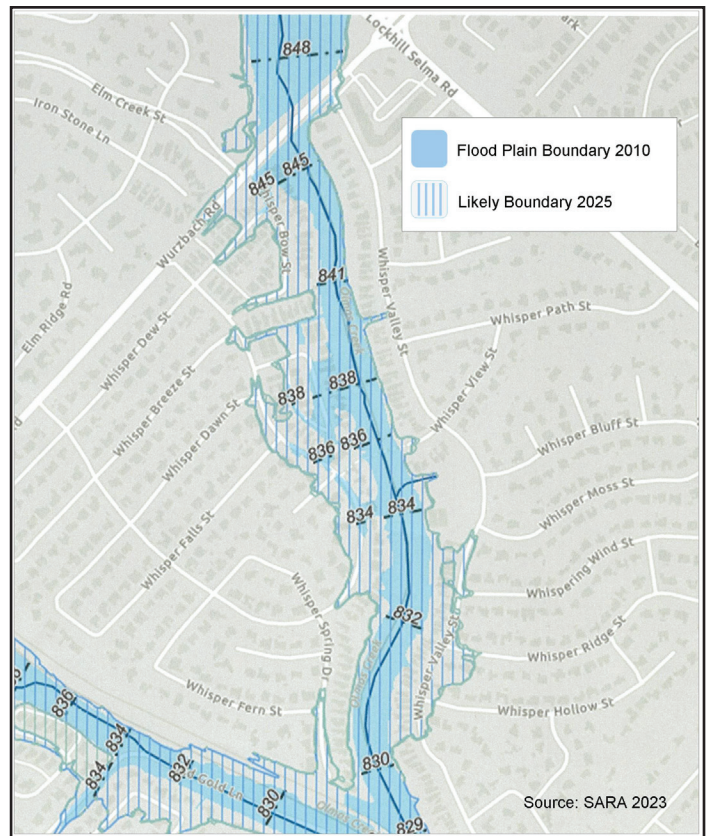
The San Antonio River Authority (SARA) expects that Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) will approve updated floodplain maps in 2025 which will impact portions of Whispering Oaks. Draft maps were shared with local homeowners at a meeting in March 2023, and dozens learned their properties are at increased risk. Those residents could face increased costs because mortgage lenders typically require that homes within a floodplain be covered by specialized insurance.

Last updated in 2010, the SARA maps are used by insurance companies and government authorities to gauge risk and assess the need for flood mitigation projects. Most of the information used for the revised maps came from updated historical rainfall data from the National Weather Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Topographic changes to Wurzbach Parkway and increased paving among the nearby Alon Market complex and adjacent Alon Estates subdivision have increased the potential for rapid rainfall runoff into Upper Olmos Creek which bisects Whispering Oaks. These factors influenced the floodplain mapping for our subdivision, and streets which may not have experienced flooding in the past may now face some risk.

Within Whispering Oaks, additional properties near the west side of the creek bed and to the southeast of the creek are likely to be added to the floodplain. Portions of Whispers Green, Bow, Trail, Dew, Willow, Forest, Ridge, Valley, and Spring are likely to be most impacted.

Homeowners can verify their properties by visiting the SARA website ([sariverauthority.org](http://sariverauthority.org)) to access its online floodplain viewer and follow the prompts to view a particular address. At-risk residents are encouraged to obtain flood insurance even if not required by a lender, because most standard homeowner's policies do not cover rising water events which can lead to significant structural damage and personal losses.



SARA maps indicate dozens of Whispering Oaks properties are at increased risk of flooding.

## Yard of the Month

*November*



Davis & Leticia Miller  
11331 Whisper Falls

## HALLOWEEN AND HOLIDAY HOME DECORATING HITS NEW HEIGHTS

Thanks to all who decorated their homes for tricks-n-treaters in October. And congratulations to winners of WOHA's annual contest: Faldet & Pate family at 11302 Whisper Dawn (Grand Prize), Shevlin family at 2710 Oak Bluff (Runner Up), and Collins family at 11510 Whisper Circle (Runner Up).



Holiday home decorations in December were equally impressive. Winners of that WOHA contest: Martinez family at 3046 Whisper Fern (Grand Prize), Arredondo family at 11335 Whisper Falls (Runner Up), and Faldet & Pate family at 11302 Whisper Dawn (Runner Up).





# WHISPERING OAKS SALES



October '24 - November '24

Prepared by Jean Ruffini, Resident Realtor

	<u>Price</u>	<u>Per sq. ft.</u>
<b>Sold: 2</b>		
High.....	\$515,000.....	\$175
Low.....	\$309,250.....	\$129
<b>Active: 7</b>		
High.....	\$684,000.....	\$264
Low.....	\$279,000.....	\$131
<b>Pending: 1</b>		
Current.....	\$375,000.....	\$171

The San Antonio real estate market demonstrated resilience in October 2024, with total sales reaching 2,895 marking a significant 19% increase compared to the previous year. The average home price remained stable at \$371,545, while the median price experienced a slight 2% decrease settling at \$309,000.

The average residential rental rate was \$1,793 highlighting continued demand in the rental sector. October also saw a healthy influx of listings with 4,412 new homes added to the market, a 14% increase year-over-year, bringing the total active listings to 14,525 representing a 16% increase from the previous year.

*Data Source: San Antonio Board of Realtors*

## GO AGAINST THE FLOW (OF TRAFFIC)!



A frequent walker, Whispering Oaks resident JR Nevils recently voiced this concern to WOHA regarding others' safety on our streets. "I enjoy walking around the neighborhood, and I've noticed a lot of folks walking on the right side of the road with the

flow of traffic." He encourages neighbors to remember Texas law requires pedestrians in a roadway to walk facing oncoming traffic which allows more reaction time if needed. Please take Mr. Nevils' advice to heart, and face oncoming motorists when strolling our streets.

## STRESSED OAKS MAY NEED ADDITIONAL WINTER WATER

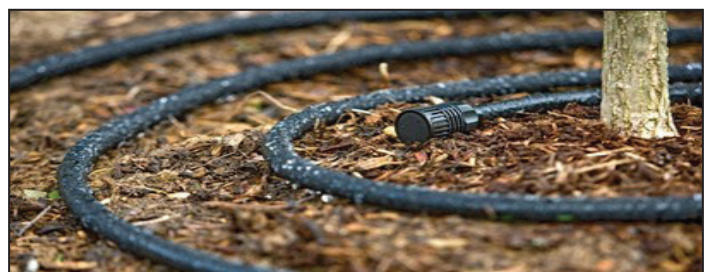
Robert Edmonson, an arborist from Texas A&M Forest Service, walked the margins of Whispering Oaks' eastside Oak Wilt outbreak in November. The agency periodically tours the area to monitor the disease's progress. This visit revealed some mixed results.

Due to the extreme temperatures of the last two summers and the ongoing severe drought, the disease may be spreading more slowly than in previous periods, although the entire south side of Whisper Fawn and both sides of Whisper Valley near Whisper Ridge continue to be current hot spots. Visit [whisperingoaks.org](http://whisperingoaks.org) to view the latest outbreak map.

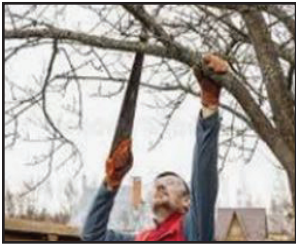
Unfortunately, Edmonson did note something not seen in the past: a large number of trees, particularly native Live Oaks, are showing signs of distress by dropping leaves early, or entire branches dying off. And continued climate conditions could take a toll this summer because stressed trees are more vulnerable to disease and even sudden death.

This winter may not provide sufficient repeated rainfall, so Edmonson recommends supplemental watering now to help the trees fully re-leaf in the spring. However using your lawn sprinkler may not be the best method. Effectively watering trees requires slow steady watering which can be achieved via soaker hoses spiraled around the tree base in 6 to 18" spacing depending upon the size of the trunk. Soak for 3 to 5 hours to deeply saturate the soil and reach roots which can run deep. Repeat soakings every 10 days until the tree leafs out the best it can.

Edmonson does not recommend fertilizing since chemicals can add to a struggling tree's stress. He encourages homeowners to remember that oak roots can extend 100 ft from the trunk, so fertilizing a lawn also impacts the tree. This is why "weed and feed" type fertilizers are not recommended for properties with mature trees. However organic compost may be placed under the tree canopy which will leach gentle nutrients and also help retain root moisture.



## CITY BRUSH PICK-UP SCHEDULED FOR JANUARY 21ST



City of San Antonio Solid Waste trucks will drive neighborhood streets starting the week of January 21st to pick up to 8 cubic yards of brush and tree trimmings placed curbside. Be sure placement provides crews unobstructed access and be mindful of low overhead branches.

Be advised, leaves in paper bags or cardboard boxes will not be collected, however each residence can request up to two free pickups per year via 311.

## SPRING IS OAK WILT TREATMENT TIME



Properties at risk for oak wilt disease are encouraged to plan ahead for spring. Fungicide injection is best administered during sunny, mild weather following winter rains which have hydrated the tree. Visit [whisperingoaks.org](http://whisperingoaks.org) for helpful advice and referrals to specially certified arborists. While most reputable local arborists are certified by the International Society of Arborists (ISA), only a handful have also been specially certified by Texas A&M Forest Service to properly administer oak wilt fungicide. Look for the best credentials.

## LITTLE BUG. BIG TROUBLE.



Avoid trimming oaks February 1 thru June 30 to minimize Oak Wilt infection. The Nitidulid Beetle is most active during this period and the tiny insect plays a key role transmitting deadly fungal spores to oaks with open wounds. If you must prune during spring and summer, insist your arborist seal each and every cut within 30 minutes.

## LEAVES IN THE STREET?

Wet leaves create a dangerous slip hazard on Whispering Oak streets and can clog roadway drainage. That's why raking or blowing yard waste into the street can result in a costly citation. A homeowner whose landscaping crew makes the mistake can be held responsible, so please supervise responsibly during this time of year. Instruct your crew to haul leaves away if your green bin is full, or provide paper bags which will be accepted for City collection.

## WATER USE CUT BY HALF AT ENTRANCES

Recent improvements to WOHA's irrigation systems have significantly reduced water use in the planting beds at the community's entrances. Nearly \$3,000 of cost savings are expected in the coming year and the subdivision is reducing its impact on the strained Edward's aquifer.

Last spring most beds were propagated with more native and drought tolerant shrubs which require less water once established. Then during the summer, crews removed over 4,300 feet of commercial grade tubing whose drip emitters were factory-spaced every 18 inches and replaced them with 35% fewer feet of more selective tubing which allows for more targeted watering. By only watering where a shrub that needs on-going watering is planted, weed growth and the resulting labor costs are also reduced.

In 2023, WOHA also invested in upgraded irrigation timers which are easier for volunteers to program and manage. Most planting beds don't receive any supplemental water during cool and wet winter months which adds to the annual cost savings.

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*Whispering Oaks Resident*

## REALTORS: DEMAND FOR WHISPERING OAKS WILL CONTINUE

Real estate professionals serving Whispering Oaks are continually asked by potential buyers and sellers how the market is doing. There have been lots of conflicting data in the news lately, but experts believe the local real estate market is looking promising for 2025 and that will translate to continued demand for homes in our subdivision.

Corie Dilley, a Whispering Oaks resident and realtor says at the heart of the optimistic outlook is San Antonio's continued population growth and economic prosperity. The city has been attracting new residents, making it one of the top cities for population gains. This influx of people is driving demand for housing, which bodes well for sellers.

Although with an ample supply of homes for sale, San Antonio may be tilting toward a buyer's market. This means prospective buyers have more options and negotiating power, which can lead to better deals and more favorable terms.

Dilley says while there are some signs of the market cooling slightly, with some single-family homes selling below ambitious asking prices and remaining on the market a bit longer, the overall outlook remains positive. She believes the city's appeal and affordability are expected to continue attracting homebuyers and investors.

San Antonio Board of Realtors data confirms that compared to other major Texas cities like Austin or Dallas, San Antonio remains more affordable. That lower cost of living is particularly attractive to both families and young professionals seeking to balance career growth with quality of life. And within San Antonio, centrally located Whispering Oaks remains a sought after subdivision.

Whispering Oaks generally offers well-kept homes along attractive, quiet streets. Dilley says that competitively priced, renovated homes with curb appeal tend have garnered multiple offers and expects 2025 will be no exception.



Time for a home safety  
**S.C.A.N.**

- S. smoke alarms:** They should be installed on every level of the home, inside every bedroom, and outside each sleeping area. Test all smoke detectors at least once a month.
- C. clear the path of escape:** Hoarding puts first responders in harm's way, increases the risk of fire, and impedes the search and rescue of people and pets.
- A. action plan:** Create a fire escape plan, and practice with all the members of your home. Also, make sure every room has two ways to escape, and create a family emergency communications plan.
- N. neighbors:** Reach out. Identify neighbors you feel may be vulnerable to fire dangers, then safely and kindly do your best to connect. Also, remember to help check your vulnerable family members living spaces frequently.

For more information and detailed instructions on safety plans and community resources including safety checks and smoke detectors visit:  
[www.FireSafeSA.com](http://www.FireSafeSA.com)

Have questions?  
Email [FireSafeSA@sanantonio.gov](mailto:FireSafeSA@sanantonio.gov)

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*Time Dated*

# Whispering Oaks Garden Club



The Whispering Oaks Garden Club held its annual Christmas Luncheon at Club Giraud on December 12th, hosted by members Emma and Diane Terrazas. More than 40 neighbors enjoyed the excellent meal and each other's company while discussing plans for the 2025 season of programs. WOGC membership is open to any interested gardeners, especially those who live in our area. Contact [whisperingoaksgardenclub@gmail.com](mailto:whisperingoaksgardenclub@gmail.com) for more information.

