



Courtyard Caller

OFFICIAL COURTYARD NEWSLETTER

Courtyard Homeowners Association, Inc.

February 2009

Volume 8, Number 2

Message to Members

If you missed the annual meeting in January, we would like to reiterate our request that residents consider offering a few hours of their time to serve on one or more of the various standing committees that make things happen in our community throughout the year. Some work throughout the year, others concentrate their efforts on more specific events – such as the Easter Egg Hunt, Spring Neighborhood Garage Sale, Park clean-ups and landscaping projects, and the Fourth of July parade and party. Please contact a committee chairperson if you have any questions, time to spare or suggestions regarding the work of these committees. We can really use your help.

Thank you to everyone who made the effort to clean up overgrowth in their yards and trim their trees this past year. Please remember, however, that beginning this month and running through June, trees should not be pruned due to the danger of oak wilt.

Complaints are again coming in that residents are not picking up after their pets. Please remember to bring a bag or two with you when you walk your pets and do not leave behind these “deposits” for others to step in. If you forget a bag or run out, recall that they are available for free at two easy-to-spot locations in the Park.

Our “blue trash” collections are now every other Friday – that’s February 6 and 20 this month. For more information, contact the City’s Solid Waste Services Department.

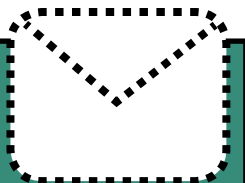
Finally, if you haven’t sent in your annual Homeowners’ Association dues yet, please do so as soon as possible.

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In Memoriam

David Tait

It is hard to think about the Courtyard Community without thinking of our friend and neighbor, David Tait, who passed away just a few days before Christmas, 2008. It is difficult to imagine the Fourth of July picnic, Community Park work days, the Homeowners Association (CHA) Board meetings or the kayak/canoe committee without him. As Treasurer, Dave did not just “keep the books,” but spent hours finding ways to save our community money. The last report he gave to the Board at its December meeting included a 12-month survey and graph of Community water bills. This study showed him showed there was an unexpected surge in water usage which alerted the Board to leaks in the CHA’s watering system. Not content with “paperwork,” Dave was not afraid to get his hands dirty when it came to addressing whatever needed to be done here in our neighborhood. For every highly professional accounting report he produced, he would spend an hour cleaning up a trash pile left on Park property by transients – bottles, cans, and trash left in black plastic bags. In developing the kayak/canoe storage facility he found materials on sale to reduce our costs, and after it was completed, he developed the watering system, planted plants in front of it to maintain the beauty of the park, and tended them. Attempts at thanking him, or praising him for his work met with a persistent denial from him that he had done anything undue.

Dave loved this community and our park. He was fair and honest. He was the real deal. Those of us who worked with Dave know how very much he contributed to our welfare. We know our community will continue to grow, and that it will be because of other wonderful people here who will step in and work to enhance our development and our activities. But it will never be the same without Dave. Heartfelt condolences to the David Tait family: Elizabeth, his wife, Becky, Deb, Morgan, and Mark his children, and his brother Robin.

COURTYARD CALLER

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Vice President , Michael Castanon	231-9789
Secretary , Reese McCrea.....	231-1336
Treasurer , David Tait.....	795-9017
Leslie Craven	502-1124
Ed Ueckert	345-6137
Jim Lloyd	231-0855

Committees

Environmental Control (ECC)	
Diana Apgar.....	415-9412
Community Park	
Jim Reed.....	502-8511
Welcome	
Alice Randolph.....	394-7218
Social	
Michael Castanon.....	231-9789
Landscape & Decorating	
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Compliance	
Waneen Spirduso.....	345-5078
Kayak Committee	
Waneen Spirduso.....	345-5078

Area Development and Zoning Liaison

Bill Meredith	345-0593
Goodwin Management: Marilyn Childress	
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Book Club

Tired of that after holiday diet? Take a break and join us on Tuesday, February 10 at 1 p.m. at the Courtyard Tennis & Swim Club as we read from the collection of short stories by Elizabeth Berg, ***THE DAY I ATE WHATEVER I WANTED AND OTHER SMALL ACTS OF LIBERATION***. For the month of the Valentine, this offers women a tribute to themselves for facing everyday challenges in creative and even, heaven forbid, rebellious ways. The Seattle Times writes, "Maybe Freud didn't know the answer to what women want, but Elizabeth Berg certainly does." Spend a few minutes on Berg's website with everything from favorite recipes to vignettes of her girlfriends and a brief description of her growing up and feel that you have a new friend. A quote from her blog gives a nod to her romance with food: "I had a dinner party the other night and was a nervous wreck beforehand. I decided to make food I was COMPLETELY COMFORTABLE with, because, you know, food is like a horse; if it senses you're nervous, it will misbehave." One cannot argue with that! The stories in the collection deal with much more than food; those situations all women grapple with such as relationships and loss.

In March, the Book Club will discuss a timely topic, the relationship of Israelis and Palestinians as presented in Sandy Tolan's ***THE LEMON TREE, AN ARAB, A JEW AND THE HEART OF THE MIDDLE EAST***. Tolan describes the reader response to his book as follows, "I receive messages from people who say, essentially, now I know what this struggle is all about; or, they see their own experience in the story of Dalia and Bashir; or, they have for the first time recognized the humanity of the other side."

REMEMBER, PLEASE:

Austin leash laws require all dogs to be on a leash when off the owner's premises.



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COURTYARD CALLER

Prospective Parent Orientations at Highland Park Elementary School

Highland Park Elementary School is hosting a series of orientations for prospective parents who might wish to learn more about the school. Please note that the next scheduled event is a brown bag lunch and visit with school staff, PTA representatives, and Highland Park parents:

Time: 12:00-1:00pm

Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2009

Place: Highland Park Elementary School,
4900 Fairview Drive, 78731

Name: School staff contact: 414-2090

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact, Kalin Boenig, head of the welcoming committee for Highland Park Elementary: (512) 343-333 and/or kkboenig@yahoo.com. See also the Courtyard's website for additional information about these and future orientations.

Community Park

Park visitors may have noticed a few additions to the Park. Over the winter, the Courtyard's Community Park committee planted a live oak, wildflowers, and seven Cenizos (Texas Sage) in the lower south end of the park. Although our area remains under drought conditions, these tough natives should pull through with just a little watering until the new root growth is established. If you like the new plants and would like to see more, or if you have some ideas for improvements, please share your suggestions with the Community Park Committee. Stay tuned for notices of future spring cleaning plans for the Park. We will really need everyone's support and hope you can afford even an hour of your time one Saturday soon. We want to try to get it done before the weather gets too warm and vegetation gets too thick again.

Community Park Committee

Jim Reed, Chairman



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14 METRO LOCATIONS

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Meet Rebecka

As we look forward to 2009, maybe we have kids graduating from high school, maybe we ourselves decided to go back to school, or maybe we are looking forward to a career change. Either way, we are looking forward to this year with optimism and hope – hope for health and happiness. Whatever our goals are for the new year, the children in foster care remain in pretty much the same place, with the same goals. You see, the children were removed from their homes, from their families – not because of something they did, but something their parents did. Now, they live in a temporary foster care system wondering what the future holds. Foster care is a time for these children to heal, but it is not the end. It is supposed to be a temporary system until the children can move on to permanency, and permanency being the safe, stable and loving family that will be there for them forever.

Meet Rebecka. She has been in foster care a few years and has hopes. Her biggest hope is that someone will love her enough to claim her. Her other hopes include the person, or family, being patient enough for her to learn and grow, and catch up for all of the time missed. For some children, they need that one on one time, the time to be special, the time to feel the object of others attention.

Rebecka, 11, is an active, intelligent and engaging child, who needs direction, and assistance in staying focused. Rebecka likes to read, listen to country music, sing, attend church and play with friends. Rebecka is talented, intelligent and a gifted vocalist. She likes to play with kids her age. Rebecka however, at this time, requires supervision while with peers. She vies for attention. She is a young girl with a beautiful smile and a lot of potential. Although she may exhibit challenging behaviors, she will thrive with a committed family.

Rebecka would benefit from being adopted by parents who have strong parenting skills. Rebecka will need time to bond. She would benefit from a permanent placement with a loving, supportive and understanding family where she continue to grow and learn. Rebecka needs consistent care from parents who will promote her future success. If you would like to learn more about adoption from foster care, please contact the Adoption Coalition of Texas at info@adopttexas.org or 512-301-2825. If you are interested in learning more about Rebecka, contact Grace Lindren, LMSW, Wendy's Wonderful Kids Recruiter/Adoption Coalition of Texas

512-687-3209/fax 512-692-2540, gracelindgren@adopttexas.org.

If you are interested, you can view a story with Rebecka on News 8 Austin Forever Families ~ just click the link: http://www.news8austin.com/content/living/forever_families/?ArID=226023&SecID=428

*Photo Courtesy of the Adoption Coalition of Texas/The Heart Gallery of Central Texas
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February is American Heart Month

Submitted by Karen Behrend

February is American Heart Month! Here are some facts and tips to help you keep your heart healthy and help prevent Heart Disease.

COOL HEART FACTS:

- o The heart beats 2.5 billion times in a lifetime (65 yrs) (if you take care of it, maybe more!)
- o It takes 23-24 seconds for a drop of blood to circulate through the entire body
- o Your body pumps 1 million barrels of blood in a lifetime!
- o Your body has 60,000 miles of blood vessels
- o Every day over 650 Americans have coronary bypass surgery.

RISK FACTORS:

I. Unalterable Risk Factors you CAN NOT change:

- o Family History (father/brother had heart disease before age 55, or mother/sister before age 65).
- o Gender (men have a higher risk)
- o Age (Men over 45 and Women over 55 are at increase risk)

II. Risk Factors you CAN alter:

- o High Blood Pressure (three readings at 140/90 in a month, see your doctor)
- o Smoking (#1 preventable cause of heart attacks in the US. Smokers have a 70% great risk than nonsmokers). Tough habit to break, but sooner or later you will quit!
- o Cholesterol (Blood cholesterol of 200 mg/dl is desirable, 239 mg/dl is borderline and 240 mg/dl+ is high) Know your numbers and get a complete breakdown of your total cholesterol, HDL, LDL and Triglycerides. Have your doctor explain the numbers to you!
- o Obesity (more than 30% of your desirable weight) Eating too much of the wrong foods can make you fat! Focus on 5 fruits or veggies a day for the next 20 days.
- o Physical Inactivity (Choose to move! 30-60 minutes 3-4 times a week!)

III. Other contributing Factors

- o Diabetes
- o Stress/Tension
- o Hormonal Factors
- o Alcohol

Primary Risk Factors have the strongest relationship to heart disease (family history, smoking, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and physical inactivity), when two or more of these are present, the likelihood of heart disease greatly increases.

10 TIPS TO HELP DEVELOP HEALTHY HABITS AND PREVENT HEART DISEASE IN YOUR FAMILY

Take care of your heart and your children's hearts by:

1. Regular daily physical activity (walk, bike, hike together)
2. Participate in age-appropriate sports, lesson or clubs. Let kids try a variety and find what they like
3. Participate in household chores (the physical kind)
4. Follow a healthy diet; low in fat and high in complex carbohydrates. Be supportive. Focus on positive instead of negative. Praise for a job well done!
5. Don't reward kids with food...find other ways to celebrate!
6. Be supportive. Focus on positive instead of negative. Praise for a job well done!
7. Limit TV, video game and computer time...disconnect from it! 1-2 hours a day max!
8. Be a positive role model and practice what you preach
9. Set goals and limits. Daily activity, 1-2 desserts a week
10. Learn CPR. The next life you save may be someone you love!



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