



ACIA

Happenings

October 2011

Official Newsletter of the Atascocita Community Improvement Association

Volume 1, Issue 4

FROM THE *Treasurer's Desk* (volume 1, issue 4)

The most important financial activity of August and September has been the negotiations concerning the repair and renovation of the marina. ACIA Board member Kyle Adams, and Larry Hassinger from the Oaks CIA, have worked diligently in researching the project and collecting bids. The winning bid was \$74,985 and awarded to Baja Construction. The Oaks will contribute to the cost, details are in negotiation. Full financial reports are published on the website (www.atascocitacia.com) and updated quarterly once approved in the Board minutes.

FINANCIAL TIP OF THE MONTH

In August, Issue 2, of "ACIA HAPPENINGS," we talked about the importance of regularity in saving. In September, Issue 3, we suggested a simple method for staying on a budget successfully without it being too time consuming.

- (1) Keep a spending diary for a period of 2 months, write down every penny you and the family spent out of family funds and how you paid for the items (cash, check, debit or credit card, food stamps). Take a few minutes at the end of the day to write in your diary, keeping receipts for that day helps. Notice that what you buy in the grocery and drug store often includes several categories of expenses.
- (2) At the end of the 2 months, identify the categories of each expenditure and note it next to the expenditure. Suggested categories to use, FOOD, include groceries, take-out, eat-out, special treats; HOUSING, mortgage payments, rent, storage, garage rentals, storage, taxes, vacation home costs, insurance, home owner fees; UTILITIES, electric, gas, water, telephones, cellphones, internet, garbage; TRANSPORTATION, gasoline, tires, car payments, car insurance, repairs, cleaning, parking, tolls, bus fees; CHARITY, church, tithing, cash or other donations; EDUCATION, tuition, board, school supplies, before and after-school child care, band, test fees; ENTERTAINMENT, movies, alcohol, books, sports, fitness, newspapers, gambling, parties; HEALTH CARE, insurance, co-pays, out-of-pocket costs, prescriptions and medicines; CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS; MISCELLANEOUS, haircuts and styling, child support, nail care, gifts, etc.; SAVINGS. You can tailor the categories to fit your life styles. Once you identify the categories, you must be consistent in grouping the same kind of expenditures.
- (3) When the 2 months are over, add up how much you spent in each category. Total the spending categories, take each category as a percentage of the total if you wish.

(Continued on Page 2)

TRUSTEE POSITION OPEN FOR 2011

Your neighborhood needs you!

Nominations are now being accepted for two (2) trustee positions open for the Atascocita Community Improvement Association Board (ACIA). The trustees will serve for a three (3) year term, January 1, 2012 through December 31, 2015 and is open to ACIA members. Trustees meet monthly on the fourth Monday at 6:00 p.m. in the community Asset Management offices located at 9802 West FM 1960 bypass, Suite 210, in Humble.

The ACIA Annual Meeting will be scheduled in November (date and location to be determined). Election for the trustee positions will take place at that time by written ballot. Homeowners will receive an ACIA proxy ballot for trustee election, along with other information, prior to the Annual Meeting.

Those members who desire to run for the board positions should prepare a brief resume (no more than six lines). This resume should be submitted to Mindy Marules, ACIA Vice President, by either email (mmarules@atascocitacia.org), mailed to the C.A.M. office or delivered in person. In order to assure your name is placed on the ballot, your resume must be received no later than October 14, 2011.

ACIA HAPPENINGS

COMMUNITY CONTACTS

BOARD MEMBERS

Phil Baumann, President/Grounds.. pbaumann@atascocitacia.org
Mindy Marules, Vice President..... mmarules@atascocitacia.org
Peggy Reap, Treasurer preap@atascocitacia.org
Robert Segraves, Trustee rasegraves@yahoo.com
Kyle Adams, Secretary kadams@atascocitacia.org
David Johnson, Community Asset Manager.....
..... djohnson@communityassetmangement.com

ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL COMMITTEE

Ron Jones.....
Tim Mulkey
Laura Lammers
Sean Parker.....
Steve Daniele.....

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Fire, Medical or Life Threatening Emergency 9-1-1
P-4 Constable Dispatch..... 281-376-3472
Humble ISD Police (Schools) 281-641-7900
Atascocita Volunteer Fire Dept (AVFD)
 Non-Emergency Number 281-852-2181
Harris County Animal Control 281-999-3191
Texas Poison Control Center 800-222-1222

UTILITIES

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Gas, Centerpoint Energy 713-659-2111
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 24 Hour Emergency Number 281-209-2100
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Trash, Waste Management..... 888-964-9734
Humble Post Office..... 281-540-1775
Harris County MUD #132 www.hcmud132.com
Harris County MUD #151 www.hcmud151.org

SCHOOLS

Humble ISD 281-641-1000
 Website www.humble.k12.tx.us
Pine Forest Elementary..... 281-641-2100
Maplebrook Elementary 281-641-2900
Atascocita Middle School 281-641-1000
Atascocita High School 281-641-7500

NEWSLETTER INFORMATION

Editor, Mindy Marules..... mmarules@atascocitacia.org
Publisher, Peel, Inc. 888-687-6444
Advertising..... advertising@PEELinc.com

From The Treasurer's Desk - (Continued from Cover Page)

- (4) List all income provided by family members for 2 months. List take-home pay, food stamps, benefit payments, social security, disability, unemployment, interest, dividends, subsidies, child support, etc. You now have all you need to make a personalized family budget. Compare your income to your spending habits and make whatever adjustments are necessary to live within your income. No matter how little it is, start saving on a regular basis to obtain whatever it is you most wish to have. Involving your whole family in this process is an eye opener and can help when it becomes necessary to say "no."

Submitted September 9, 2011

ATASCOCITA GARDEN CLUBS UPCOMING EVENTS

The membership of the Atascocita Garden Club would like to invite our neighbors and residents to attend our meetings on the second Tuesday of each month. We meet at 9:30 am at Rosemont Assisted Living, 6450 Kings Park Way.

UPCOMING EVENTS 2011-2012

- Sept. 13th**..... Becky Mills, M. Gardener speaks on Citrus trees.
Oct. 11th..... Leigh Ann Fletcher, Master Gardener from Warren's Southern Gardens. She will speak on Orchids.
Nov. 8th..... Craft Activity by Kingwood Artist, Anne Vandagriff. She will direct the craft project.
Dec. 6th Christmas Decorating at the Rosemont, 9:30AM
Dec. 13th Holiday party
Jan. 10th Helen Smith experienced designer will give instructions on flower arrangement.
Feb. 7th Arbor Day, tree planting in the community.
Feb. 14th Johzanne Miller, rock and water fall's design.
Mar. 6th Craft Activity with Rosemont residences.
Mar. 13th Ima Hogg's Home and Garden Tour followed by River Oaks Driving Tour – lunch at Avalon Diner
Apr. 10th Bill Beard, presents "Photograph on Wild Flowers in Texas." Bill is a member of the Kingwood Photography Club.
May 8th..... Installation of Officer

Visit our website: atascocitacountrygardeners@yahoo.com

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EXIT STRATEGY.....DO YOU HAVE ONE?

You are about to sign a contract to purchase your next home. It could be a resale or a new construction home. This is one of the largest purchases and decisions you may be making in your life. It is love at first sight, the one you had to have, just the right fit. In your mind you plan to stay 5-10 years. **What's your exit strategy?**

As a Realtor, I have seen many situations in which there was an urgent need for an exit strategy. The following are some reasons that have been discussed with me where an exit strategy may be needed, consisting of the planned and the unexpected.

- Work hours cut back with employment or job loss
- Relocation
- Unexpected medical issues
- Death
- Divorce
- Marriage
- Children going off to college
- Growing family or new family
- Parents move in with you

As your Realtor, my job is to always think exit strategy or resale. I take the emotion out of the buying process and help clients look at their decision while keeping an exit strategy in mind, because you never know when life changes will occur. By taking this approach, my clients are given quite a bit of details so they can make an informed decision.

My job is to focus on the following items as I have a fiduciary responsibility to you, my client. When we focus on these items, it's important to purchase a home that has mass appeal when you elect to sell your home at some point in the future. The value of resale cannot be under estimated.

Location – is the home on a busy street, if it backs up to woods or greenbelt what is the area zoned for, does it back up to water lift stations, sewer treatment plants, railroad tracks, power lines, drill sites, commercial, etc.?

Layout – does the layout fit what the majority of the population will purchase? For example all bedrooms up with a swimming pool will have a very limited list of potential buyers because generally a buyer that purchases all bedrooms up has small children, so they usually do not want a swimming pool.

Price point – in our local market price point is important because property doesn't appreciate as much as it does in other parts of the country. If you overpay for a property, more than likely you will take a loss when you sell it if not held for a specific amount of time. In order to confirm you are paying fair market value, be sure to review a comparative market analysis of sold properties within a 3-month period prior to the time you are purchasing your home. Sold price data provides a buyer with a snapshot of what the buyers are paying in the current market. I provide my clients with this information on every purchase. Generally there are sufficient comps within the same neighborhood to provide supporting documentation.

Other factors to consider: neighborhood amenities and school districts. With new construction, I am with you every step of the way along the transaction. From lot selection, plan selection, design, forms, slab pour, framing, electrical, plumbing, sheetrock, flooring, finish out, and beyond; I am there to assist you and be your advocate if an issue arises.

At the end of the day, it's your decision on what you want to purchase. As a Real Estate Professional, my job is to provide you with as much information as possible so you can make an informed decision. When I do my job correctly on the front end with assisting you on the purchase of a home; you will then have a pretty good exit strategy in place. Please give me a call to discuss how I may be of assistance to you with your next home purchase or selling experience! Building clients for life is my commitment to you! I realize you have a choice, so I appreciate the opportunity to earn your business.

*Respectfully
Rebekah Snipp, ABR, CDPE
You're Neighborhood Realtor*

P.S. – Don't forget I offer a **Free** Local Move to All My Clients that purchase or sell a home with me as their Realtor! (Restrictions Apply) Referrals are the bloodline of my business; please let me know when your friends, family, co-workers, and neighbors are ready to make a move.

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Rebekah Snipp
Realtor, ABR, CDPE
Direct: 832-814-6120
rsnipp@century21.com

Mark Snipp
Broker, GRI
Direct: 832-859-9113

Websites:
majorleaguehomes.com
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ACIA HAPPENINGS

Atascotia Branch Library

The Atascocita Branch Library located at 19520 Pinehurst Trail Dr. has many recurring activities for all ages. For children we have weekly story-times: Family Story Time (all ages) that meet on Mondays at 7 PM, Tales for tots (ages 2-3 yrs) that meet on Wednesdays at 10 AM and 1:30 PM; Baby-time (infants up to 24 mo.) that meet on Wednesdays and Thursdays at 11 AM and on Fridays at 1 PM. Story Pals (ages 3-5) that meet at 10:00 a.m. on Thursdays. For teens (ages 12 - 18) we have: Club Anime, that meet on the first Tuesday of the month at 7 PM, Knit Wits Teen Knitting Club meets on the last Tuesday of the month at 6 PM, and Chess Club which meets on the last Thursday of the month at 7 PM. Finally, for adults there is a monthly meeting for the adult book club Lunch 'n' Lit. This meets on the first Thursday of the month at 1 PM. We also have an adult Craft Club and knitting group called Knit and Knosh. The Craft Club is held on the third Tuesday of the month at 7 PM and Knit and Knosh is on the last Thursday of the month at 7 PM. All of the library's activities can be found through our Events Calendar located on the Harris County Public Library website at www.hcpl.net. All programs are free but some may require prior registration. For more information, visit us on the web at www.hcpl.net or call the library at 281-812-2162.

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COMMUNITY REMINDERS

- The Community Wide Garage Sale weekend is going to be October, 14th through the 16th.
- The ACIA monthly board meeting is the 4th Monday of each month and is held at the C.A.M. offices in Humble, Texas. Please see the "Calendar of Events" on the website for further information.
- Prior to initiating any home improvements requiring Architectural Control Committee approval (painting, pools, roofing, etc) please submit an approval request form to the C.A.M. office. The form and Architectural Guidelines can be found on the website or at the C.A.M. office.
- The 2011 Texas Legislature passed new laws regarding Property Owners Associations. This new legislation will impact several areas, including but not limited to records, forms, document filing and deed restrictions. The attorneys and management company for the ACIA are working hard to bring everything into compliance under the guidelines give by the Texas Legislature. More information will be forthcoming.
- Residents who own golf carts should ensure these carts are not being driven by unlicensed drivers. It is against the law for children who do not hold a valid driver's license to operate golf carts.

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What Do Residents Think?

From the Management

You are among the more than 60 million Americans who live in homeowners associations and condominium communities. We think most residents are happy living in our community—and we certainly hope you are among them—but how do these 60 million residents feel about their own associations? Are they happy with their elected boards? How do they feel about the rules?

The Foundation for Community Association Research, an affiliate of Community Associations Institute (CAI), sponsored a national public opinion survey to answer these and other questions. The research, conducted by Zogby International, shows that more than seven in 10 community association residents say they are satisfied with their community association experience. Only 9 percent express dissatisfaction, and 19 percent are neutral on the question.

HERE ARE MORE FINDINGS FROM THE NOVEMBER 2007 SURVEY:

- 88% of community association residents believe their association board members strive to serve the best interests of the community.
- 73% say their professional managers provide value to their communities.
- 77% say they get a good return for their assessments, while 20 percent expressed some level of dissatisfaction.
- 74 % believe their community association rules “protect and enhance” property values. Only 3 percent say rules harm property values, while about 22 percent see no difference.

According to Zogby, 86 percent of respondents said they knew they were moving into an association when they decided to purchase or rent a home in their community. For 61 percent, the existence of an association had no impact on their decision, but 30 percent said the association made them more likely to buy or rent. Only 9 percent said they were hesitant to join an association community. This finding should tell sellers and realtors that the existence of a well-run association can and should be part of the sales pitch.

While these findings are positive, we'd like to think that we would do even better than the national averages. If you don't think that's the case, we encourage you to bring your concerns to our manager or the board.

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ACIA HAPPENINGS

Southeast Texas Experiencing Historical Drought Conditions with Fire Danger approaching Extreme Levels

With Summer Fire Season just around the corner, fires are becoming more dangerous and difficult to control. Residents are urged to remain vigilant and take steps to protect their Property

HOUSTON, TX JUNE 3, 2011:

As temperatures increase over the coming days and weeks, lack of rainfall is adding to an already high fire danger throughout our area. Most of the Houston area is now at or approaching an average Keetch Byram Drought Index average of 700 or more. The KBDI index ranges from 0 -800 with 700 or more considered to be "extreme" levels of drought and fire danger. Montgomery County's average KBDI reading now sits at 706, with some areas nearing 750. Harris County currently sits at 690 and will surpass that level in a matter of days. These levels are unprecedented for this early in the year, and will continue to rise until the area experiences major rainfall. The area has not seen a soaking rainfall of 2" or more since October of 2010, leaving our wooded areas susceptible to a catastrophic fire.

At these drought levels, any fire can quickly spread out of control and endanger lives and property. Coupled with the long term drought, this makes fires increasingly difficult to control for area firefighters. Recent fires are requiring the commitment of large numbers of firefighters and Forestry crews to bring them under control, and many are continuing to burn and smolder for days. Most recent fires have been due to power lines downed by high winds, but some areas have seen an increase in Juvenile fire setting activity as the school year comes to a close.

Residents are to be commended for complying with the burn bans, but the number of fires caused by improper outdoor burning has started to increase, too. If you have not done so already, now is the time to take a look around your property and take steps to prevent wildfires and protect your property in the event of a wildfire.

A Public Service Announcement from the Harris and Montgomery County Fire Marshal's Offices.

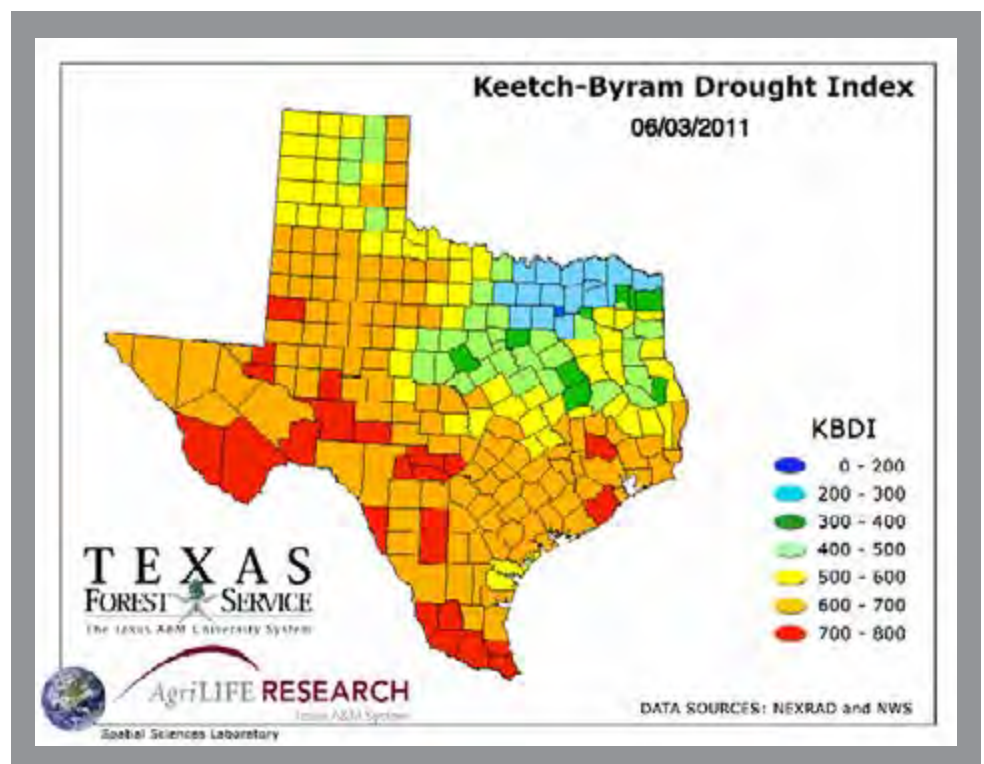


ELEVEN SIMPLE STEPS TO PROTECT YOUR HOME FROM WILDLAND FIRE



Wildfire can strike home if you have not taken some steps to protect your house and property. The actions and precautions listed below are designed to help you prepare your home and lessen the threat of wildland fire damage to you and your property.

1. **DO NOT burn on "red Flag" or windy days and think twice before burning outdoors when KBDI approaches 700 or more.**
2. LPG tanks should be far enough away from buildings for valves to be shut off in case of fire. Keep area around the tank clear of flammable vegetation.
3. Store gasoline in an approved safety can away from occupied buildings.
4. All combustibles such as firewood, wooden picnic tables, boats and stacked lumber should be kept away from structures.
5. Clear roof surfaces and gutters regularly to avoid build-up of flammable materials such as leaves and other debris.
6. Remove branches from trees to a height of 15 feet or more.
7. In rural areas, clear a fuel break of at least three times the fuel length around all structures.
8. Have fire tools handy such as: ladder long enough to reach your roof, shovel, rake and a bucket or two for water.
9. Place connected garden hoses at all sides of your home for emergency use.
10. Assure that you and your family know all emergency exits from your home.
11. Assure that you and your family know all emergency exits from your neighborhood.



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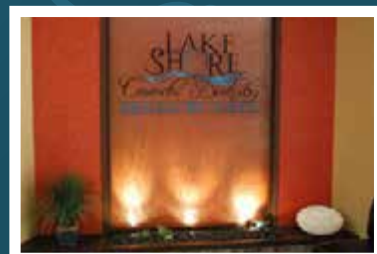
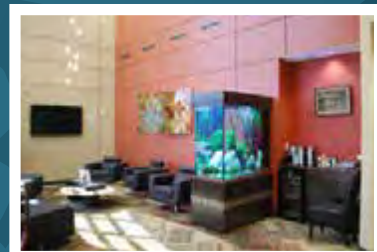
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