

## From the Mayor's Desk...

### "Everyday is a Good Day in Fair Oaks Ranch" ©

Winter is officially gone. Spring is here. All is looking brighter. Hopefully April showers are plentiful bringing forth the May flowers. March certainly contributed its fair share of precipitation. Speaking of rain...

There are approximately 40 additional rain barrels collecting rain water after the City's Rain Barrel Workshop held March 14th led by TX A&M/AgriLife. A new topic was added to the workshop – barrel decoration concepts. Many of our neighborhoods have Restrictions guiding acceptable yard fixtures. Decorating the rain barrel camouflages its real purpose yet provides a pleasant view for the neighbors. The next workshop is scheduled for Saturday, May 17th. Watch for the official notification late April/early May.

#### Citizen Notifications

We strive to share City information for you in a timely manner and we need your help, too. Posting to the City Website is the quickest path to provide news, changes, etc. Most of us do not check various websites daily! That is why Council a number of years ago updated the website service providing the opportunity for residents to receive information via email or text. If you are reading this article, please take a few minutes to go to the City website and sign up for the Notify Me service. (Or, check that your current subscription is still a valid email address.) You will find the Notify Me button on the left-hand side of the website. Click on it... enter your email address and subscribe to the service selecting how you want to receive notices. This is a separate contact system from CodeRED. Recommend subscribing to CodeRED as well (www.fairoaksranchtx.org).

#### City's Annual Audit for 2013-2014

Armstrong, Vaughan & Associates, outside auditing firm,

complimented the City's fiscal strength at the recent March City Council Meeting. In addition, there were no significant issues of concern cited in the accounting and administrative functions conducted by the City. The City's fiscal year is October 1st to September 31st.

The audit (Fiscal Year 2013-2014) covers both the General Fund and the Utility Fund. Combining both of these funds, the City's total net asset position is \$19,149,795 which includes facilities, equipment, infrastructure, reserves, etc. and represents a 5.2% increase over the previous year. The General Fund Balance (Reserve) is \$4,855,707. Certified property tax roll is \$1,080,429,983 for all three counties combined. (Bexar at 63%; Kendall at 28%; and, Comal at 9%).

You will find the full audit on the City's website - www. fairoaksranchtx.org - under Financials. While there, please check out the 2014-2015 General Fund Budget pie chart for both revenue and expense categories.

#### Oak Wilt in Fair Oaks Ranch Presentation

The City contracted with ArborCare and Consulting to update Oak Wilt presence throughout the City recently. A results and recommendation report was presented at the March Council Meeting. Kevin Belter, Certified Oak Wilt Specialist/ Consultant, and Timo Rodriguez, Code Enforcement Officer, drove throughout the City visually noting Oak Wilt issues. The sites are grouped into five centers: The Falls (3 lots), Rocking Horse Lane (4 lots), Noble Lark Lane (9 lots – oldest with trench installed and still holding), Silver Spur (12 large lots), Raintree Woods and Fairways (73 lots combined). As this was a visual

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#### **ARTICLE INFO**

The Fair Oaks Gazette is mailed monthly to all Fair Oaks Ranch area residents. Residents, community groups, churches, etc. are welcome to include information about their organizations in the newsletter. Personal news for the Stork Report, Teenage Job Seekers, recipes, special celebrations, and birthday announcements are also welcome.

To submit an article for the Fair Oaks Gazette, please email it to *fairoaksranch@peelinc.com*. The deadline is the 15th of the month prior to the issue.

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Trinity Glen Rose Groundwater Conservation District Water Conservation Audit

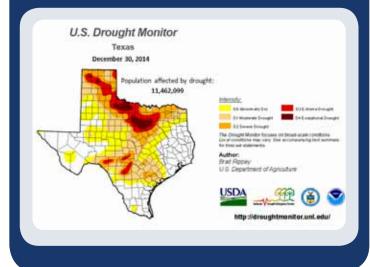
Trinity Glen Rose Groundwater Conservation District (TGRGCD) would like to ask for your continued help in reducing demand on groundwater resources. We have enjoyed very appropriately-timed rains this fall and hope they continue throughout winter.

We offer a free on-site consultation to identify problems areas that could be resulting in higher water usage to home or business owners residing within our District. Following the visit, we offer recommendations to help reduce water usage both inside and outside the home and a "goody" bag full of conservation-related items, including a hose timer, moisture meter, and low-flow showerhead.

As you can see from the US Drought Monitor, areas to our northwest remain under Extreme to Exceptional Drought. As we move into Spring and see increases in temperatures and lawn irrigation, we will be see increasing pressures on our groundwater resources.

Please contact us at 210-698-1155 with questions, or to schedule a free in-home audit!

To learn more about Trinity Glen Rose Groundwater Conservation District, please visit us at www.trinityglenrose.com.



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From the Mayor's Desk (Continued from Cover)

inspection only and not foot inspection of front and back yards, I suspect there are additional lots yet to be discovered.

Oak Wilt is a serious matter to each property owner and the city as a whole. City Management and Council are extremely concerned with the expansion of the disease in Fair Oaks Ranch. What is Oak wilt? It is a fungal disease that can quickly kill an oak tree in six months or less. Symptoms vary by tree species but generally consist of leaf discoloration, wilt, defoliation, and death. The fungus is spread from diseased to healthy trees by insect vectors or via connections between tree roots. Management of the disease consists mainly of preventing infection by avoiding tree wounds, painting all tree wounds and removing diseased trees immediately.

During the winter, some oaks naturally lose their leaves. If we don't see leaves appearing throughout our oaks, we need to have our tree(s) inspected immediately by a Certified Oak Wilt Specialist. If the top of an oak tree seems to be dying, we need to have our tree(s) inspected immediately by a Certified Oaks Wilt Specialist. As property owners, it is our responsibility to ensure that any and all cuts/wounds on our oaks are painted immediately by us or by the landscape/tree cutting contractors/independents within 30 minutes by City Ordinance. Please contact City Hall if you are concerned that trees are not being painted when cut; the Code Enforcement Officer will investigate the concern.

Aside from the beauty that the many trees provide us in Fair Oaks Ranch, they add monetary value to our properties. The Council of Tree and Landscape Appraisers states that "a mature tree can often have an appraised value of \$1,000 and \$10,000." There is no doubt in my mind that the robust resale of older properties in Fair Oak Ranch is partially due to the mature trees and landscape. The Arbor Day website provides numerous benefits to encourage us to protect our trees and to plant trees. Get 10 free trees for a \$10 membership. Suggestion: plant a variety of tree species instead of oaks.

#### TX DOT / IH10 West Projects

Recently responded to a resident's concern and suggestion. In turn, he recommended that the response be shared on the FO Gazette. Here it is:

Resident's Email: "Madam Mayor: Do you plan to entreat TEXDOT to deal with the Parkway bridge issue before addressing the Old Fredericksburg Rd. bridge? I think it is the more pressing of the two.

Mayor's Response: I am visiting with TX DOT today for just that discussion. Thank you.

Mayor's Response: A follow-up to your concern below. The situation is primarily due to Proposition 1 funds which the Texas voters approved in Nov. 2014. The 12 county TX DOT region we are in received \$125 Million as this region's portion of the Rainy Day Fund percentage. As you can imagine, there are stipulations. The most critical one being that the \$125 Million must be in place on shovel-ready projects end of this fiscal year. Prop 1 monies are primarily for frontages, state roads, etc. The goal throughout the region is to maximize the Rainy Fund dollars effectively and efficiently so as not to lose the funds.

Coming up the frontage from Ralph Fair Road incorporating the Old Fredericksburg changes and over pass is a logical process to achieve the timetable demand plus efficiency. Our bridge was anticipated in 2016 (we hoped early but that was never stated or guaranteed by TX DOT). We may be delayed a few months from that anticipated schedule. There are many projects in the SA area that have been "stopped" due to problems/environmental/ROW issues and delayed for a year or longer...it may be years before those projects are back on TX Dot's to-do-list. Our particular area does not have any of those issues...fortunately.

The City has a good relationship with TX DOT for many decades. The City attends all Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning meetings to help keep that relationship. In addition, there is a specific stakeholders committee organized for this IH10 West which I will attend on a regular basis. Overall purpose is to keep us informed plus opportunity to share concerns with the engineering firm plus TX DOT.

Must admit I have been begging/praying/hoping that the traffic issues in our regional area would be addressed by TX DOT sooner than later. Guess the saying "be careful what you ask for, you may get it" applies to that effort. At this time, there is a lot of traffic "coming through the City" due to the Ralph Fair/IH 10 bridge work. It is scheduled to be completed in a few months. Anticipate the "traveling through" traffic will return to Ralph Fair to IH 10. Moving up to Old Fredericksburg Overpass may or may not divert current traffic patterns. ..the professionals say it will. Once Old Fredericksburg area is completed and work begins for FOR/IH 10, traffic patterns will spread out even more. That doesn't solve the inconvenience we will all feel and have to deal with at various levels through this entire process. I personally try to visualize the finished product and how much better it will be for all of us.

Resident's Response: Very thorough. Thank you. Good copy for the next community newsletter.

#### **Outdoor Recreational Activities**

The days continue to expand into the mid-evening each day and with beautiful weather, everyone is out and about. Stay safe as you walk or jog; wear highly visible/bright colors versus "natural/neutral" colors that blend into backgrounds. Drivers see the bright colors easier versus those that blend into natural backgrounds. It is suggested that walkers and joggers go against traffic for better visibility on their part. Golf carts are to drive on the streets with the traffic and follow the traffic laws applicable to all drivers. That means golf cart drivers must be licensed which include teenagers of age. Watch out for others...watch out for yourself as well. Have fun.

May you and yours enjoy all of the blessings Spring brings to us in Fair Oaks Ranch. Appreciate you taking the time to read all of this. Any questions, please ask. Again, a thank you to Peel, Inc. for providing this community newsletter opportunity.

Respectfully, Cheryl Landman, Mayor



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## OAK WILT AND COMMUNITY RESPONSE

In last year's issue #7, we covered the biology of oak wilt, how it is transmitted plus a cursory look at various prevention and treatment methods. The focus of this follow-up article covers the communal impact of the disease and the corresponding necessity of a shared response. This devastating pathogen does not just affect individual property owners whose trees are infected. It decreases the entire community's property values, the spirit of life and the well-being of the citizens. In addition, many other aspects play a role such as the amount of money, time, and talent citizens have to invest in more positive ways of building and growing a better community.

As mentioned in the first article, there are many human activities/behaviors that can put the entire community at risk for new outbreaks of the disease. Part of a successful prevention plan is education about these activities/behaviors; once educated, it is hoped that both the citizens and the contractors, who work in the city, will voluntarily choose to utilize these prevention methods.

Unfortunately, some contractors in the tree service/landscaping tend to not take the proper precautions for various reasons: cost of paint, tools, and most specifically, the cost of labor involved in prevention practices. Especially troubling though as mentioned in the previous article, "construction companies and builders using heavy equipment make up the majority of new human-caused oak wilt cases." The most concerning observation during this current oak wilt survey was the contractors on construction sites that seemed to be oblivious to the numerous tree injuries inflicted by their construction process. This survey process was a partnership project; a special thank you to Timo Rodriguez, City's Code Enforcement Officer, for guiding me around the City.

laws. For example, not only do traffic signs need to be displayed, peace officers are absolutely essential in the enforcement of traffic laws. The two combined is what prevents negative community repercussions that occur as a result of traffic law infractions. The same logic holds true with oak wilt: disease education, laws/ordinances, and enforcement of these rules is critical. The Fair Oaks Police Department is respected by its citizens and those around the community for their dedicated commitment to its citizen's well-being. Fair Oaks Ranch needs to also make this valid for their tree protection and oak wilt ordinances.

I hope that by the time you're reading this article I will have successfully presented my oak wilt survey and recommendation of action to the City. Primary points for consideration include both the current oak wilt prevention codes, as well as, embracing ordinances that preserve the canopy cover in the city, not yet infected by oak wilt through revisions and/or new ordinances.

Briefly, the changes that I hope they adopt are reflections of other tree-friendly cities that have already followed suit with similar policies. Such policies are (1) permits for tree care companies, (2) protection plans and corresponding fines to eliminate construction-related activities and (3) re-forestation of tree in communal areas as a way of replacing those removed in order for residencies to be built.

I am convinced that in the long run, the cost of tree-friendly policies will pay immeasurable dividends, not only in monetary value for the entire community, also for the happiness and pride the citizens feel for their City's direction.

Questions or comments this article or previous articles have generated, may be directed to me at: kevin@





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## **Topgolf Event Supports HCPCC**

Topgolf seems to be everywhere these days – Dallas, Austin, Houston and now San Antonio. And whether you are a golfer or just enjoy team games, it seems everyone is talking about what fun this new attraction on I10 at the Rim is.



Yes, you hit a golf ball with a golf club and are trying to get the ball into a hole. But the game is also similar to team games like bowling – where you and your friends sit around a table in your area enjoying each other's antics while taking turns hitting the ball. Or think of skeeball in terms of the level of skill that is actually necessary to get your ball into a hole that's worth the most points.

The Hill Country Pregnancy Care Center is holding its first Topgolf Event on Monday April 20th from 9:30-1:00 at the Topgolf facility on I10. The funds raised from this event will go toward providing FREE services at the HCPCC in Boerne. These free

services include pregnancy tests, first trimester sonograms, STI testing, counseling and treatment, parenting, prenatal and child birth classes, diapers and baby necessities, maternity home referrals and more.

Everyone is invited to join the

fun – as an individual or as a team of 4 or 6 players. The contests will be from 10-12:00 with an Awards Presentation at Noon. Players will enjoy lunch and soda/tea during the games and receive a goody bag and other items along with the prizes they'll compete for. Six person teams are \$600, 4 person teams are \$400 and individual participants are \$125.

So come on out and join the team while supporting a great non-profit in your community! For further information and to register go to www.lifesprecious.org or call 830-249-9717.





### **FORMOSAN TERMITES**



There are three main types of termites that can cause problems for homeowners in Central Texas- native subterranean termites, formosan subterranean termites and drywood termites. This article will focus of formosan termites.

Formosan termites are a more voracious type of subterranean termite. These termites have been spread throughout Texas through transport of infested material or soil. Formosan termites build carton nests that allow them to survive above ground without contact with the soil. Nests are often located in hollow spaces, such as wall voids.

Formosan subterranean termite workers and soldiers.

Formosan termites feed on a wider variety of cellulose than other subterranean termites, including live plants, consuming both spring and summer growth wood whereas native subterranean termites feed only on spring growth. Formosan termites have also been known to chew through non-cellulose materials such as soft metals, plaster or plastic.

The type of termite is determined by using soldiers (the group that defends the colony) or alates (winged reproductives) for identification. Formosan termite soldiers have a hardened head capsule that is tear-drop shaped. The alates have two heavy veins on the leading edge of the front wing along with hairs on the wings. If you suspect termites, you can submit sample insects to me for identification. Treatment would need to be carried out by a profession pest management company.

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600. Check out my blog at www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com

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