

# The FAIR OAKS Gazette

February 2016

Volume 6 Issue 2



NEWS FOR THE RESIDENTS OF FAIR OAKS RANCH

## From the Mayor's Desk...

*"Every Day is a Good Day in Fair Oaks Ranch"©*

We have a lot of information to share with you this month – water, bulk/brush trash pick-up, animal control, streets, etc. So here it is.

### **WATER INFORMATION**

Again, Fair Oaks Ranch Utilities (FORU) is recognized by TCEQ as a Superior water system in 2014. This annual report is mailed to our customers with information regarding our water source, what it contains, and the health risks our testing and treatment is designed to. Signage on main through roads such as the Parkway and Dietz Elkhorn lets both the residents and general public know FORU provides a Superior water that is safe for its customers. The full report is on the City website as well.

Interestingly, since 2006 water usage from the city's Trinity Wells (groundwater) has decreased over 51% in the past eight years. Usage from Guadalupe-Blanco (GBRA) which is surface water from Canyon Lake increased approximately 52%. There were 2291 water customers in 2006 and 2688 water customers in 2014 which is approximately 17% increase in customers over the eight years. Interestingly, over the same eight years, total water consumption has decreased from average per household usage of 650 gallons in 2006 to 468 gallons in 2014. Our water customers are engaging in Water Conservation. (Remember that 2011 was Year of Record for the driest and hottest year; and 2015 is one of the wettest in many years.) Bottom-line, population/ water customers increased and average monthly water usage has decreased over these eight years.

Based on the recently completed Water Assessment Study by GLS Solutions, Inc., consulting firm specializing in Texas water, the City of Fair Oaks Ranch has sufficient water to meet customer

demand to year 2070...with 150 AF of water still available. That does not minimize the need for best practices and stewardship of water and all natural resources. The Water Policy Study will soon be completed as well; its primary goal is to guide the City toward administrative and planning improvements to ensure best practices is an ongoing proactive process for water and wastewater.

### **BULK/BRUSH PICK-UP SCHEDULE**

Flyers were mailed out to all residents with the dates for "putting items at the curb" and for actual pickup starts. For our newer residents, the City provides this service twice a year. If you did not receive a flyer, please contact City Hall for details or you can find the flyer on city website ([www.fairoaksranchtx.org](http://www.fairoaksranchtx.org)). The City is divided into three sectors with different dates for each sector.

Republic begins picking up February 1st. Please follow the appropriate sector schedules for putting items at the curb. For instance, Sector 1 begins putting out on January 23rd and Republic begins Sector 1's pickup on February 1st. Keep bulk/metals away from brush by at least 3 feet as different trucks pick up just brush. Some items are not acceptable such as tires, batteries, oil, window/door glass, solvents, electronics, etc. and will not be picked up. Commercial contractors that you for brush or tree trimming must be removed by them; Republic Services will not pick up. There is an ordinance prohibiting Illegal Dumping; please ensure that your trash is not placed on other private properties.

The City's goal is to ensure a speedy and effective brush/bulk trash removal with the intent of keeping our beautiful city a great place to live and visit. Thank you for your cooperation to help the cause!

*(Continued on Page 2)*

# FAIR OAKS RANCH

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Please support the advertisers that make Fair Oaks Gazette possible. If you would like to support the newsletter by advertising, please contact our sales office at 888-687-6444 or [advertising@peelinc.com](mailto:advertising@peelinc.com). The advertising deadline is the 20th of the month prior to the issue.

## 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](mailto:fairoaksranch@peelinc.com). The deadline is the 15th of the month prior to the issue.

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Ambulance ..... 911  
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Animal Control.....210-698-0990

### SCHOOLS

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Fair Oaks Ranch Elementary .....210-698-1616

### UTILITIES

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CPSEnergy.....(new service) 210-353-2222  
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### OTHER

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5837 De Zavala Rd - San Antonio, TX.....210-641-0248

*From the Mayor's Desk (Continued from Cover)*

### PET CLINIC

Recently, a new Animal Control officer was hired from within – Mathew Davila. Under Chief Rubin, plans are being confirmed for the annual Pet Clinic to be held in March/April. I expect Dr. Lee Carriker to again be the veterinarian in-charge. He works great with the animals and their owners. Standard rabies shot plus additional annual shots are available for pets. This is a perfect to register your dog and/or cat with the City of Fair Oaks Ranch as well. Having the tag license registration on file is so helpful especially when the FOR Police have lost pets on hand, they are often able to return the pets to their owners quickly.

### STREETS

Well, you have probably noticed numerous little flags popping up around town primarily in orange but other colors as well.

Those flags are part of the FOR Roadway Reconstruction project. This is preliminary work to gather data such as surveying notes, underground utility pipe locations, etc. This data then becomes part of the engineering plans. Pape-Dawson will be giving its quarterly report at the February 4th Council Meeting at 9:30am. Anticipate digging to start late Spring/Summer 2016.

To stay informed about this roadway program, the City's website Home page has a link under QUICK LINKS titled: FOR Roadway Reconstruction Project. Clicking on this link will give you status information and updates. If not subscribed to NOTIFY ME on the website, please do so; as the City puts out news you will be notified and staying in the know.

### AQUAHAWK - WATER METER

In my time on the FORHA Board, Council and now Mayor, this is by far the best improvement and investment for our residents.

Sandy, Utilities Clerk, says that she receives numerous positive comments on this automatic meter system. As residents continue to learn how best to use the system for their needs, they realize the savings it provides them both financially and water-wise.

Internally, AquaHawk's program allows Sandy to find potential leaks daily from the daily computer reports and notify the resident.\* Recently, a huge leak – 100,000+ gallons – took days to notify the resident as the telephone number was not correct. It was a broken main line.

Water softeners and/or outside irrigation systems tend to be the primary culprits for "I can't find the leak". After working with the resident and watching the water flow charts, Sandy will suggest one of these two may be at fault. Suspect that during off-watering season, we tend to turn the timer(s) off. To stop the water flow into the irrigation system, you must turn the outside value off for maximum protection. Our clay soils are very active, expanding and shrinking, which affects the irrigation pipes and the spraying heads creating potential leaks.

*(Continued on Page 4)*



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COMMUNICATIONS

# FAIR OAKS RANCH

(Continued from Page 2)

\*Please contact Sandy to make sure your contact information (telephone, email, mailing address, etc.) is updated with her!!

## BISD LONG RANGE FACILITIES PLANNING COMMITTEE

This committee came together beginning October 2015 and ended January 2016 to study enrollment growth trends in the district, to review facilities usage, and to develop a set of recommendations that will guide the board's deliberations related to new facility needs and securing funding to meet those needs. The Mayor of Fair Oaks Ranch has always been involved with BISD's long-term planning and this was no exception.

Some informational highlights: (1) based on demographic study, BISD can expect over 4,434 new students between now and 2025; (2) additional schools and infrastructure are needed today and tomorrow; (3) financing by bond possible; and (4) BISD Board of Directors are final decision-maker to call a bond or not and for what amount. The 2nd elementary school in Fair Oaks Ranch is a high priority as well as a middle school and another elementary school. I feel confident there will be more information coming from BISD. In the meantime, you can check on [www.boerne-isd.net](http://www.boerne-isd.net) for additional information, details, progress, etc.

## POTENTIAL NEW DEVELOPMENT

The Owens property is off Ralph Fair Rd./3351 in Bexar County with small portion in Comal. It is planned as a single family residential development of approximately 90 houses in the \$450 - 600,000 purchase price. The property is in the City's CCN permit and the City is able to provide both water and wastewater services. Almost 95 acres of the property is in the flood plain as well as over the Edwards Recharge Zone. The housing portion will be out of the flood plain acreage. Scott Felders is the developer/builder. The developer will present project to Council at the Feb. 4th meeting.

Another potential development is commercial on 4+ acres at Leslie Pfeiffer and IH10. They, too, will present their concept at the February 4th meeting. The developer is Rodney Schott of Schott's Country Store in Helotes.

Wish you and yours a Happy Valentine's Day!! Reminder that City Hall will be closed Feb. 15th for President's Day.

*Respectfully,  
Cheryl Landman  
[mayor@fairoaksranchtx.org](mailto:mayor@fairoaksranchtx.org)*

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## Soil Amendment Practices

Spring will be here soon and the urge to dig in will not be ignored! Hope the following information will be your guide to healthy landscaping. The natural, organic approach to plant and tree health is the underlining premise through all my previous articles. The foundation of exceptional plant or tree health is the topsoil the plant grows in.

Our hill country soil typically does not have a very deep topsoil but what topsoil we do have is of good quality. Unfortunately, due to construction activities most of this topsoil is graded away and rarely is enough topsoil put back during landscaping. Further, a cheaper and inferior quality soil is often used. Not only that, most lawn maintenance practices include removal of much of the organic litter (grass clippings, leaves, sticks, etc.) that play a crucial role in the build-up of topsoil and natural fertilizing of the plants.

Best management practices include: mulching mowers, composting of excessive (will vary by property) leaves and grass clipping, maintain retention walls or install them as needed for erosion control, and add topsoil turf dressing.

Topsoil turf dressing is mostly a mixture of sandy loam soil and compost. There are varying qualities of turf dressing. My professional opinion finds that compost is the key ingredient of the two. A horse manure base is better than cow or chicken. Human waste bio solid is the last choice on my list.

Unfortunately, no bulk topsoil turf dressing includes either greensand or volcanic. I strongly encourage including these in your yearly application for optimum results as they contain many of the most essential micronutrients your plants need. A quarter inch is the standard depth of application but up to a half an inch in low spots for lawn leveling purposes is possible without smothering the turf. My hope is that these cultural practices will enable you to completely eliminate use of synthetic weed and feed approaches to plant health. The synthetic approach significantly damages the natural cycle of plant and soil health.

*Questions or comments about this article or previous articles have generated, may be directed to me by email: [kevin@arborcareandconsulting.com](mailto:kevin@arborcareandconsulting.com), and phone: (210) 279-6969 or (830) 454-4083*

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## Local Artist Wins San Antonio Artists Foundation Award

*By Veronica Perez*

Sabine Senft, a resident of Fair Oaks and an accomplished artist, has been selected by the Artist Foundation of San Antonio to win this year's Rick Liberto Award for the Visual Arts. The grant will pay for Sabine to develop a commission, based on a proposal she submitted as part of the entry process.

The Artist Foundation (AF) is a 501c non--profit organization, supported in part by The Department for Culture and Creative Development of the City of San Antonio and other generous funders. The AF believes that investment in greater San Antonio based artists is making a profound impact on the quality of life in the city from an arts enrichment aspect.

The award comes as an affirmation of the high quality of Sabine's work and inspiration to continue in her artistic practice. AF judging is done by a panel of diverse curators and arts professionals located across the United States and abroad.

Sabine is a native of Germany, but also lived in the UK, Japan and Brazil before settling in Fair Oaks. Her work reflects influences from the different cultures she has been exposed to. Sabine's primary medium is stone sculpture along with mixed media works. Other recent awards include a commission for the new UHS hospital building in the Medical Center, for which she carved a lifesize limestone and marble sculpture "Embrace" to inspire the healing backdrop of the 10th floor roof terrace.

This current award from the AF will enable the development of an exciting new work based on the issues around the US – Mexico border. As a German citizen growing up with the Berlin Wall, Sabine has many parallels to draw on. Going forward, expect to hear more about this exciting artist living in our community.



## Boerne's *Cave Without A Name* Offers Unique And Unvarnished Natural Experience

With springtime wildflowers and autumn sumac crowding its "no outlet" approach, Cave Without A Name, in the hills just northeast of Boerne, may feel like a dead end destination. Instead, the cave provides passage into a rare and magical Texas world.

One of only seven Texas caves open to the public, Cave Without A Name ([www.cavewithoutaname.com](http://www.cavewithoutaname.com)) manages to convey a sense of personal and immediate discovery - its far recesses remain unexplored, its tours are small, and its infrastructure has changed little since the cave opened to the public in 1939. Cave Without A Name offers up an underground world that's exclaimed over by folks who have never ventured inside the earth...but that is also beloved by experienced cavers.

According Mike Burrell, speleologist and property caretaker, Cave Without A Name has always been something of a "cavers' cave," recognized in his circles for a wide variety and density of formations. "There are more draperies here than you see almost anywhere," Burrell - who has caved across the globe - said. "That, and the fact that it's got a running underground river that you can easily access, makes it really unique."

Natural cupolas in the cave also result in an unparalleled music-acoustic experience so that concerts, aimed at a variety of tastes, occur throughout the year ([www.cavewithoutaname.com/event-calendar](http://www.cavewithoutaname.com/event-calendar)).

While millions of people will pass through some of the country's better-known caves during the course of a year, Cave Without A Name provides a more intimate experience. Tours simply happen as people arrive at this end-of-the-road destination - sometimes they come two and three at a time, but seldom do they move through the cave in groups larger than 20. Whatever the size of the tour, though, jaws collectively drop upon entry to the incredible central Throne Room. "It's really pretty, even to cavers who've gone all over the world," Burrell said.

And as to the destination's unusual "un-name"? Well that's just another tale to be told at this nothing-like-a dead-end destination. Tucked away in the picturesque Boerne hills, this is simply another endearing, enduring thing about Cave Without A Name.



## TENNIS TIPS

*By USPTA/PTR Master Professional  
Fernando Velasco  
Owner, Manager and Director of Tennis  
Grey Rock Tennis Club, Austin, TX*



**Step 1**

**Step 2**

**Step 3**

**Step 4**

In previous newsletters, I offered tips on how to hit a forehand groundstroke, a two-handed backhand, one-handed backhand, forehand volley, and the two handed backhand volley. In this issue, I will give you instructions on how to execute the serve, considered as the most important stroke, since the player has complete control of the game at this time. In these pictures, Adolfo Gonzalez, one of the tennis pros at the Grey Rock Tennis Club, demonstrates the proper form and technique for a right-handed player. For a left-handed player, the instructions will be the opposite hands.

**Step 1: Ready Position:** The body is sideways with the right hand holding the end of the racket in a forehand grip position and the left hand is holding the ball under the throat of the racket. The left arm is slightly straight and the ball is held with the thumb, index finger and middle finger. This allows for a consistent toss without using the wrist and/or elbow. Feet are a shoulder width apart and the body is in equal balance. For beginners, it is okay to change the grip slightly toward the forehand grip. As the player gets more advanced, the continental grip will be a better one to give more spin on the ball.

**Step 2: Back Swing:** The left arm comes down and the right

arm follows it. It is vital to slow down the motions to allow for both of the arms to have good balance in the front and behind the body. Notice that the hand is in the process of tossing the ball in front of the body and the left wrist is bent down. It is imperative to have a good consistent toss since it will dictate the success or failure of the serve.

**Step 3: Point of contact:** Once the player is ready to hit the ball, the right arm will force the racket toward the point of contact, while the left hand will come down toward the body. This allows for the "snap" of the wrist to accelerate and bring the ball down. Notice that the point of contact is slightly higher than then center of the racket. Eyes are still focused on the point of the contact and will be ready to look down as soon as the ball leaves the frame. The right hip is extended to allow the body to extend up.

**Step 4: Follow Through:** The racket speed will extend to the left side of the body. The right foot is coming forward and is pointing toward the net. The trunk is straight and eyes are focused on the direction of the ball. At this point the player will take the split step and will jump either behind the base line to rally with the opponent or will move toward the net to serve and volley.

*Look for in the next Newsletter: The Half Volley*



# FAIR OAKS RANCH

## NATUREWATCH: **WINTRY WONDERS**

*by Jim and Lynne Weber*

While our winter weather is milder than most, our thoughts often turn to visions of ice and snow. From first frost to ice storms to snow storms, these frozen precipitation events are sporadic in Central Texas, but when they occur, they can also be spectacular!

How does frost, this sparkling layer that sometimes covers the landscape, form? When the temperature of the air reaches a point where the water vapor in it can condense out into water, it is called the dew point. The frost point is when the dew point falls below freezing, and rather than producing dew, it creates frost. Consisting of tiny, spike-like crystal structures called 'spicules' that grow out from a solid surface, frost generally forms on surfaces that are colder than the surrounding air. Even the size of the crystals can

vary, depending upon the amount of time they took to grow, the relative changes in temperature, and the amount of water vapor available.

Cold air is denser than warm air, so quite often when night skies are clear and calm, lower areas become colder due to differences in elevation. Known as surface temperature inversion, this phenomenon forms 'frost pockets' or areas where frost forms first, due to cold air trapped against the ground. On such days, there can be a 40 to 50 degree difference in air temperature between dawn and early afternoon. Getting out early can reward you with a rare and wonderful spectacle of nature when something called 'hoar frost' is formed.

Referring to white ice crystals that are deposited on the ground or loosely attached to exposed objects such as leaves and branches, hoar frost forms on cold, clear nights when heat radiates out to the open sky faster than it can be replaced by nearby sources such as wind. This allows objects in the landscape to cool below the frost point of the surrounding air, and well below the freezing point of water. Hoar frost can form in low-lying cold air even when the air temperature a few feet above ground is well above freezing. The name 'hoar' comes from an Old English adjective meaning 'showing signs of old age', and refers to the frost making the vegetation look like it has grown white hair. When hoar frost forms on objects above the

surface, like branches and leaves, it has a feathery-like appearance and is specifically called air hoar.

Snow, on the other hand, is an entirely different matter. When a

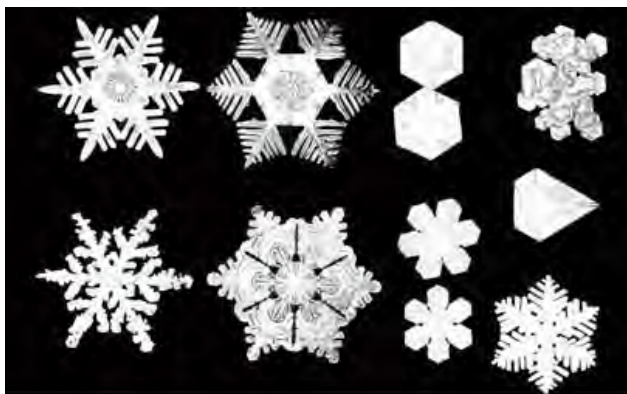


*Hoar frost on barbed wire*

cold water droplet freezes onto a pollen or dust particle high in the sky, it creates an ice crystal. As this primary crystal falls toward the ground, more water vapor freezes on it, building new crystals that form the six characteristic arms of a snowflake. This process of crystallization builds in a symmetrical or patterned way, because it reflects the internal order of the water molecules as they arrange themselves in pre-determined spaces to form the six-sided snowflake.

The most significant factor that determines the basic shape of the ice crystal is the temperature at which it forms, and to a lesser degree humidity. The intricate shape of a single arm of a snowflake is determined by these atmospheric conditions as the entire crystal falls. As slight changes in temperature and humidity

occur minutes or even seconds later, a crystal that begin to grow in one way might then change and branch off in a new direction. Since all six arms of a snowflake experience the same changes in atmospheric conditions, they all grow identically. And since individual snowflakes encounter slightly different atmospheric conditions as they take different paths to the ground, they all tend to look unique, resembling everything from simple prisms and needles to intricately faceted plates and stellar dendrites.



*Snow crystal forms*

On the surface, winter may seem as if nature is shutting down all around us, but take the time for a second look. Aside from the visual beauty they provide, the frozen forms of precipitation during the season are just another part of the ongoing cycle of life and renewal for our native plants and animals.

Send your nature-related questions to [naturewatch@austin.rr.com](mailto:naturewatch@austin.rr.com) and we'll do our best to answer them. Check out our book, *Nature Watch Austin*, published by Texas A&M University Press, and our blog at [naturewatchaustin.blogspot.com](http://naturewatchaustin.blogspot.com) if you enjoy reading these articles!

# FAIR OAKS RANCH

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