



March 2017

*COURTYARD HOMEOWNERS
ASSOCIATION, INC.*

COURTYARD CALLER

Official Courtyard Newsletter

Volume 13, Number 3

BOARD MESSAGE

To all residents that took the time to sign and send in their proxies and/or attended the Courtyard's annual meeting on January 29 – thank you very much. The quorum was met, and we were able to conduct all necessary business, including approval of a new budget. Congratulations to Jim Lloyd, Cathleen Barrett, and Doug Richards who were re-elected to serve three-year terms on our Board of Directors. We were also very pleased that our new District 10 City Council representative, Alison Alter, was able to attend this meeting and learn something about the Courtyard and issues that concern us. Representative Alter also shared some of her main ideas and focus on issues as she begins work on the council.

Thank you to Paul Siegel for tracking down who to talk to and what information was needed to finally get us temporary "No Parking" designations along both sides of the Courtyard Drive entrance. Paul is still seeking input from residents as to the effectiveness of the No Parking signs and whether they would like this made a permanent condition at our entrance. Please contact Paul to share your experience and provide some feedback on these questions.

Along this same general topic, keep an eye out and please let us know if you see Austin Police enforcing the "No Parking" restrictions along the 360 access roads near the bridge. We were very happy to hear they planned to begin this long overdue enforcement work and hope to see a decrease in the number of illegally parked cars.

We would like to again remind all dog owners that our Park is

NOT an off-leash area. Regrettably, there was another loose dog incident in mid-February that badly frightened a young child. "Roxie," a large white and black dog, was running off leash, and the owner (tall blond with ponytail) could not get the dog to return to her so the leash could be reattached. Roxie confronted the child and his father, who, several times, had to step between the dog and his child. Roxie was growling and not presenting as a friendly dog. Finally, Roxie's owner apparently gave up, left the Park and headed up South Scout Island Circle, still without having been able to get the leash back on the dog. Suffice to say, Roxie is very lucky dog that the father was not "packing" a gun and did not take out the gun and shoot her since the owner was not in control. If an owner is alone in the Park and wants to remove their dog's leash, there is little we can do about it because we are not there. All we can say is that if an owner decides to deliberately violate the City's ordinance and our community rules by removing the dog's leash, that owner had better be darn sure they can control their dog and be able to quickly re-attach the leash if other residents enter the Park. Allowing your dog to roam free outside your own fenced yard when you cannot control your dog is irresponsible. Period. No excuse.

And last, but not least, as the weather grows warmer, the days longer, and more residents and pets are enjoying the outside, it is especially important to continue to drive slowly and safely on our busy streets.

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Circle South**



**5909 Inter Council
Cove**



**5507 Courtyard
Drive**



**5901 Tom Wooten
Cove**



I live here! I work here! I play here!



Joany Price

*Your Courtyard Neighbor
& Tennis Club Member*

*Realtor, CLHMS
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COURTYARD BOOK CLUB

Tuesday, April 3, 2017
5612 N. Scout Island Circle North

The Courtyard Book Club members will gather for the monthly meeting to discuss *Portrait of a Lady* by Henry James. When Isabel Archer, a beautiful, spirited American, is brought to Europe by her wealthy aunt Touchett, it is expected that she will soon marry. But Isabel, resolved to enjoy the freedom that her fortune has opened up and to determine her own fate, does not hesitate to turn down two eligible suitors. Then she finds herself irresistibly drawn to Gilbert Osmond. Charming and cultivated, Osmond sees Isabel as a rich prize waiting to be taken. Beneath his veneer of civilized behavior, Isabel discovers cruelty and stifling darkness. In this portrait of a 'young woman affronting her destiny', Henry James created one of his most magnificent heroines, and a story of intense poignancy.

The book selection for May is *Defending Jacob* by William Landay. All are welcome to join the group that meets the first Tuesday of each month. For more information, call or email Lou Blemaster, 512-551-2659, loublemaster@gmail.com.

2017 COURTYARD EASTER EGG HUNT

Plan now to attend the 2017 Courtyard Easter Egg Hunt in the Park! Bunnies of all ages bring your baskets and hop on down for some Easter fun. Hunt for eggs, play games and win prizes!

Hope to see you there!
 Please call or email to let us know how many egg hunters will be in your group.

Joany Price (Social Chairperson)
512-775-8942, joanyprice@gmail.com

EGG STUFFERS & VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

CONTACT JOANY PRICE IF YOU HAVE
 ANY TIME OR IDEAS TO SHARE!

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Courtyard Fire Safety

Be Ember Aware Firewise Tip #7 – Much About Mulches

Mulches play an important role in northern Nevada landscapes. They can reduce the water requirements of plants, cool soil temperatures, reduce the occurrence of weeds, control soil erosion and dust, and can visually enhance the landscape. Unfortunately, some popular mulches are also combustible, a bad attribute for residential landscapes located in high fire hazard areas, and can be easily ignited by embers during a wildfire.

Organic mulches are made from plant materials. Combustible examples include pine needles, wheat straw, pine bark nuggets of various sizes, shredded western red cedar and redwood sometimes referred to as “gorilla hair” mulch, and wood chips from recycled pallets or wildfire fuel reduction projects. These materials vary considerably in terms of size, shape, and texture; factors that also influence their flammability.

Inorganic mulches are derived from non-plant materials and include rock, stone, and gravel. Most inorganic mulches are noncombustible and are good choices for homes located in high fire hazard areas. The important exception would be ground or shredded recycled rubber. Rubber mulch products, which are often used in playgrounds, burn very intensely and are difficult to extinguish.

Some important mulch tips for homeowners living in high fire hazard areas are:

- Do not use organic mulches within 3 to 5 feet of the house. This is particularly important for wood or other combustible material (e.g. vinyl and other plastic materials) sided houses. During a wildfire, burning embers may accumulate in this area, thus providing ample sources of ignition for wood and bark mulches.
- Keep organic mulches at least several feet away from combustible materials such as wood posts, firewood stacks, wooden fences, decks, stairs, etc.
- Irrigating organic mulches, as in a flowerbed, may improve their ignition resistance, although the surface layers of mulch will dry out quickly during wildfire weather conditions.
- Do not allow thick layers of pine needles to accumulate within 30 feet of the house.
- Don't use ground rubber mulches within 30 feet of the house or deck.
- Near the home, emphasize the use of inorganic mulches such as rock and gravel.

For an excellent tutorial on how the community homeowners can respond to the risk, see **Making Your Home Firewise**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t6jV-gM9EwQ>

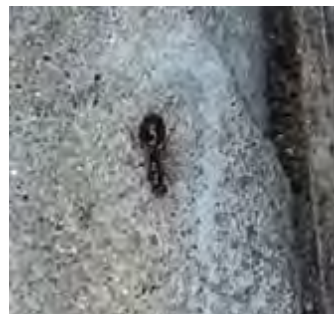
To sign up with the Courtyard Fire Safety Committee to **schedule an evaluation** by one of our trained teams, email fire-safety@courtyardhoa.org.

TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION

Red Imported Fire Ants

I was making dinner the other night and my kiddo was outside playing. He came rushing in panicked. He discovered the fire ants of the season. While I knew it was inevitable, I was hoping that it would occur a bit later in the year. But, it's true. Fire ants have begun to yet again, dot the landscape with their mounds.

Spring time is usually when people see fire ants swarming (although it can also happen in the fall). Swarming is a reproductive process that usually occurs on warm days after a rain event. Winged males and females leave the mound and fly into the air to mate. After mating, they fall to the ground where males die and females break off their wings and search for a location to establish a new colony. Mated females dig a small chamber in soil, lay a few eggs and rear those young by themselves until the young become mature worker ants. At that point workers take over colony functions and the queen continues to expand the population of the colony by laying more eggs.



Fire ant queen without wings.

While searching for a new colony location, many mated fire ant queens are killed by lizards, birds, spiders, other ants, and often my shoe stomping on them. Queens that survive can be managed by broadcasting fire ant bait over your entire property. New colonies are usually very small and may not have substantial mounds for locating easily for individual treatment. When worker ants forage for food, they would have the opportunity to locate, pick up, and carry fire ant bait back to the colony to share with other ants including the queen.

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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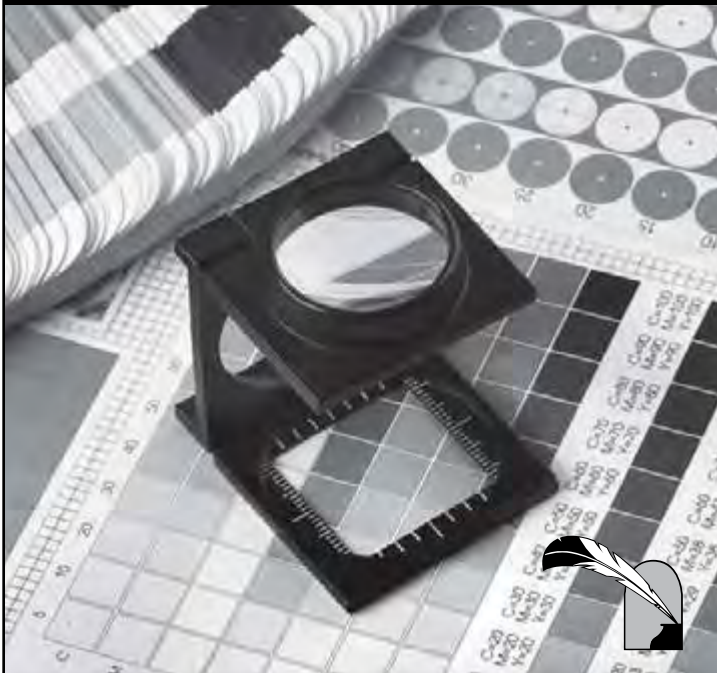
REMINDER: Oak Trees Should Not be Trimmed Until July

Please be aware that January was the last opportunity for oak trees to be trimmed until July of this year. The season not to trim oak trees is from February through June when the oak wilt carrier beetle is most active. Oak Wilt is a serious threat to the oak trees in central Texas.



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