



July 2018

**COURTYARD HOMEOWNERS
ASSOCIATION, INC.**

COURTYARD CALLER

Official Courtyard Newsletter

Volume 14, Number 7

COURTYARD BOOK CLUB

Tuesday, August 7, 2018

1 p.m. 5612 N. Scout Island Circle

**Please join the Courtyard Book Club in August as we discuss
Sea Wolf by Jack London.**

“Prolific and popular historian Breuer profiles an unusual subject, Rear Admiral John D. Bulkeley, winner of the Medal of Honor for his defense of the Philippines when in command of PT Squadron 3. Bulkeley's subsequent career included a confrontation with the Cubans while commandant at Guantanamo and a long tenure as chief of the Bureau of Inspection and Survey. Breuer is perhaps a trifle uncritical of an officer who seemed prepared to fight his own side as readily as the enemy; nevertheless, the research is thorough and the text well written. This first full-length portrait of a World War II hero who by no means rested on his laurels is recommended for medium-sized or larger naval or military collections.” -- Roland Green

Our book selection for September is *Finding Gobi* by D. Leonard & C. Borlase.

For more information about the Courtyard Book Club or for details about upcoming contact Lou Blemaster at 512-551-2659 or email loublemaster@gmail.com.

TREE TRIMMING

As a reminder, all home owners are responsible for keeping plant materials (shrubs and trees) on their property that extend over public sidewalks and streets trimmed to a height of not less than seven feet (7') per the Courtyard deed restrictions and not less than fourteen (14') per City Code. Please make the effort to take a good look at your trees and see if there are some branches over sidewalks or streets that could use a trim.

COURTYARD FIRE SAFETY

TRUST ME. MAKE A LIST.

By Dawn Engler - Firewise of Southwest Colorado ambassador



Dawn formerly lived in Bastrop County during the 2011 Bastrop County wildfires. She evacuated her home twice in one summer. The following are excerpts from an essay she wrote.

Inside the hall-closet door hung a list of things to grab, listed in order of importance. We realized after the first fire that we thought about our son's seizure medications way too late in the process. This time, those were written at the top of this list. Then, there was a knock on the door. Our neighbor had just received the Reverse 911 call. We were to evacuate...

There are still bags packed in the closet by the front door to this day. Fear-based? Maybe. But I want clean underwear if this happens again. The drought in Texas is far from over. Fire is a constant probability. The fires in Bastrop Country were 100 percent contained six weeks after they started. The fire was ruled accidental, started by a dead branch falling, hitting a power box, and sparking. Over 1,500 homes were lost in one area alone. Miraculously, only two human lives were lost. Eight homes were destroyed in the neighborhood next to us and many, many more from the other fires. The acreage lost is incomprehensible. Looking at houses completely burned down to the fireplace chimneys was eerie. Sometimes all that was left was a shell of an oven range or a washer and dryer. Sometimes an entire area would have no damage at all.

I really took to heart what is important in all of this. And accounting for everything that you own. You can't take it all with you, so deal with it. If it's a loss, at least have your paperwork and photos so that you can get the insurance money to replace it. Have a bag packed at the door or near it, with a weekend's

(Continued on Page 2)

COURTYARD CALLER

CHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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(Continued from Cover)

worth of clothes. And I cannot stress the importance of a list enough. I was shocked at how stupid my anal, organized self was when the "get out" call actually happened.

The list is super easy. Write down a list of everything you can't live without. Now, if you could have everything on the list but one thing, what would you drop? This goes at the bottom of your list. Do it over and over. If you could have everything on the list but one more thing, what would you drop? List that item next from the bottom. Work your way up until everything is prioritized. Check your list, make any adjustments, and hang it by the front door. If you have to leave your home, follow the list until the officers say go. Trust me; none of what gets left behind is really that important, if you did the list.

....

For an excellent tutorial on how the community homeowners can respond to the Wildfire 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 a **home wildfire risk evaluation** by one of our trained teams, email fire-safety@courtyardhoa.org.



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COURTYARD CALLER

BULK PICK-UP SCHEDULED FOR AUGUST 20, 2018!

Bulk Items Include:

- Doors
- Carpet
- Furniture
- Appliances (remove doors)
- Passenger car tires
(remove rims; limit eight tires per household)
- Lawn mowers (remove gas/oil)
- Railroad ties (cut in half)
- Pallets
- Rolled fencing
- Nail-free lumber

Bulk Item Collection Crews Cannot Collect:

- Brush, household trash, cardboard boxes, hazardous materials, mirrors, automotive chassis and bodies, motorcycles, trailers, boats and tires that are still mounted on rims
- Sheet glass and other construction and remodeling debris

Collection Guidelines

- Place bulk items at the curb in front of your house by **6:30 a.m.** on the **first day** of your scheduled collection week
- Separate items into three piles as described below
- To prevent damage to your property, keep items **5 feet away** from your trash cart, mailbox, fences or walls, water meter, telephone connection box and parked cars. Do not place any items under low hanging tree limbs or power lines
- Austin Resource Recovery only collects bulk items from its residential trash and recycling customers
- Items will not be collected if they are in an alley in any area, including Hyde Park, in front of a vacant lot or in front of a business
- Do not put items in bags, boxes or other containers. Bulk collection is for items too large to fit in containers. Bags will be treated as extra trash and are subject to extra trash fees

Separate Items into Three Piles

1. **Metal items** - Includes appliances (remove doors). These are taken to our Resource Recovery Center for recycling
2. **Passenger car tires** - Rims must be removed. Limit of eight tires per household. We cannot collect truck or tractor tires. Tires will go to a tire recycling facility
3. **Non-metal items** - Includes carpeting and nail-free lumber. These items go to a landfill. Austin Resource Recovery is working on plans to salvage reusable items from bulk collection to help meet the City of Austin's Zero Waste goal

Because these piles are collected by different trucks, they may be collected at different times throughout the week

TRIMMING LIVE OAK TREES

July 1 through January 31 is the best time to trim Live Oak trees in Texas

Beginning July 1 and continuing through January 31 is the best time of the year to trim Live Oak trees in Texas to avoid oak wilt. Oak wilt, one of the most destructive tree diseases in the U.S., is killing oak trees in central Texas at epidemic proportions. Oak wilt is an infectious disease caused by the fungus *Ceratocystis fagacearum* which invades and disables the water-conducting system in susceptible trees. All oaks are susceptible to oak wilt to some degree, but some species are affected more than others. The successful management of oak wilt depends on correct diagnosis and an understanding of how the pathogen spreads between different oak species. If you have any questions or concerns about your oak trees, need additional information or guidelines for proper pruning of Live Oak trees, you should consult with a Texas Oak Wilt Certified arborist, ISA Certified an oak wilt specialist from a city, county or state government agency such as Texas A&M Forest Service arborist, or an oak wilt specialist from a city, county or state government agency such as the Texas A&M Forest Service or Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service.

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BORROW A DIGITAL HOSE METER FROM AUSTIN WATER

To reduce water waste and help keep trees healthy, Austin Water residential customers can check out a meter attachment for garden hoses and hose-end sprinklers to measure water usage. During the two-week check-out, we encourage you to time how long your equipment needs to run to apply the recommended amount of water.

Distressed trees (including those experiencing drought-related symptoms such as branches dying and leaves wilting, turning brown, or dropping early) should generally be watered once every two weeks. The amount of water needed depends on the tree's diameter. Trees less than 20 inches in diameter should receive five gallons of water per inch of diameter. A 12 inch tree for example will need about 60 gallons of water (12 inches x 5 gallons). Trees greater than 20 inches in diameter should receive ten gallons of water per inch of diameter.

For information on signing out a hose meter, please call 974-2199. For more information on keeping your trees healthy, visit the City of Austin Arborist Program at www.cityofaustin.org/trees.

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View answers online at www.peelinc.com

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The goal is to fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9. Each digit may appear only once in each row, each column, and each 3x3 box.

BOARD MESSAGE

For the benefit of new residents and in response to an increase in complaints about rule violations and questions about enforcement, we decided to go over a few things that we generally discuss with residents every year at the annual meeting.

In matters of compliance, our policy is to first try to resolve problems and achieve compliance using a more “neighborly” informal email or phone call. We are happy to say that in most cases, residents are cooperative and positive results are reached. As an example, if we receive a complaint that your trash containers are still out on Sunday morning, our response is **not** to tape a notice of violation and fine to your front door on Sunday morning. Instead, you’ll first get an email and chance to respond. We also try to apply the rules in a reasonable way. For instance, during those times of the year when a homeowner might have ten to twenty or more bags of leaves/yard debris collected from their yard in a given week, we recognize that the reasonable place to put that many bags is along the sidewalk or street in front of the house. There are simply too many bags to try to keep out of sight and, for some of us, it is too physically difficult to try to move them twice - even if we had a place to “hide” them until Thursday night. These circumstances and the infrequency of their occurrence support treating what is a technical violation as a reasonable variance of the general rule that trash containers should NOT be out in public view until the night before collection -- and yes, those leaf bags are trash containers.

We also ask those few residents who continually and knowingly violate applicable rules to keep in mind that they purchased their Courtyard property subject to certain covenants and restrictions and these covenants and restrictions apply to ALL homeowners – not just the majority of Courtyard homeowners who make the effort to abide by the rules. In fairness and respect for your neighbors, your cooperation is needed to avoid leaving us no choice but to take further formal action.

Below are a few problems that seem to come up more than others.

Contact the ECC Before Starting Outside Work on Your Property

The Declaration contains a long list of actions that require the ECC’s approval before beginning an outside project. How much detail or what kind of information you may need to provide will depend on what your plans are. If you aren’t sure if you need approval, it is best to just check with the ECC. Contact information for the ECC chairman is listed in the *Caller* or you can go to the “Contact Us” page of our website (www.courtyardhoa.org). The ECC members are your neighbors and work very hard to respond quickly to your questions and process your request. The Declaration specifies that you need to supply at least two (2) sets of plans and specs at the time you apply for approval of your project. If you provide the appropriate information needed to conduct a review, the ECC will meet and make a decision within fifteen (15) days. The only holdups tend to occur when the necessary information isn’t provided at the time approval is requested. If this occurs, the ECC is forced to ask for the additional information it needs for its review. Simply checking with the ECC before you start a project can save you time and money in the long run.

Trash Containers and Brown Bags

Trash containers should not be set out before Thursday night. Likewise, containers should be back in Friday evening or, at the latest, Saturday morning. The same time rule applies to brown bags or containers filled with yard debris. If you have a lawn service, make sure they know this.

If you’re going to be gone for a long weekend, please ask someone to move your emptied containers up near your garage and/or off the street. The City picks up yard debris on Fridays, the same day as regular trash. If you are working in your yard and fill a bag or two before Thursday, you should save them somewhere out of sight and put them out on Thursday night.

General Maintenance of Home, Yard & Fences

The Declaration requires that homeowners “shall keep, maintain and care for” all improvements on their property, including all trees, plants, or foliage in “*conformity to its condition when new.*” Please take a look at the outside condition of your home, yard and any fences. Are your gutters so full they are growing “things”? Are trees leaning over onto your roof? Are your fences rotting, warped and/or otherwise falling apart? Do some areas of your home have chipped or fading paint? If so, you are in violation of the Declaration and need to bring the condition of your property into compliance. Don’t wait for it to become a formal compliance issue. Decide on your maintenance plans, send them to the ECC for *prior approval*, and get it done.

Tree, Shrub or other Plantings – Sidewalk and Street Clearances

The City requires that there be fourteen feet (14’) of clearance over streets. The Declaration requires that trees or tall bushes be maintained to clear sidewalks by seven feet (7’). Likewise, do not let your yard plantings grow out of your yard and cover sidewalks. If you need some help with this work, we would be happy to give you the contact information for the people that we use for common area tree and landscape maintenance.

Barking dogs

If you have a problem with or are upset about your neighbor’s barking dog and do not wish to discuss it with them directly, that’s okay. Report it to the Board and let Compliance check into it. One thing NOT to do is send a threatening anonymous note to the dog’s owner. It can be frightening and doesn’t give the owner a chance to learn more about the circumstances and address it in a positive way – and more importantly, remain good neighbors.

Political Signs

Candidate/political signs for the November 6 elections cannot be out until August 8 and must come down by November 16. If you want to show support now, wear a T-shirt or put a sticker on your bumper but NO SIGNS or BANNERS until August 8.

Owners are Responsible for their Tenants and the Condition of their Property

When a homeowner leases his/her Courtyard property, the homeowner is responsible for seeing that the tenant knows the basic rules that must be followed in this community. It is very important that you make sure your tenant knows to keep the Park gate code confidential. For security reasons and in case of emergency, the homeowner should notify the Board that a tenant is living in their house and provide contact information for the tenant. If you want a list of the most basic rules to review yourself or to give to a tenant, contact our Welcome Committee. If you have questions about compliance, please contact the Compliance Committee.

Please know that we aren’t trying to play “gotcha” with the rules. Our rules are far from the draconian rules vigorously enforced in other communities. There are good reasons that we have them, and our intent is to apply them fairly and consistently and make the Courtyard a great place to live.



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In observance of our 4th of July holiday, I will continue my tradition of placing flags in and around
The Courtyard as a gift to you! I hope you have an enjoyable, fun-filled weekend!

Jo Carol Snowden

Broker Associate, ABR, CRS, GRI

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