

Arbors Angles



The Arbors Improvement Association Newsletter

Bits From the Board

by AIA Board

The Arbors is 10 years old now as Section 1 deed restrictions were filed by the developer on July 21, 1997; Section 2 on Jan 25, 1999!

Since those filings, our community has grown steadily; at last count there were 153 houses in the Arbors at Dogwood Creek. It's sometimes hard to remember that a little over 10 years ago this area was pretty much virgin land, covered with trees and underbrush, and home to a vast variety of wild animals.

So where am I going with my comments? Well, right here: many of the wild animals living on acreage surrounding our community still consider the Arbors as part of their home. Deer trails that cross many of the lots and the roads that divide them are well used, and some of the undeveloped Arbors properties house a plethora of birds, snakes, and small mammals.

For our newer residents, this is a reminder that wild animals

see Board page 5

Youth Safety Program

by Kathy Mowrey

The men had their coffee and the ladies had their tea – now it's time for the kids to have a program just for them. All neighborhood children and their parent(s) are invited to participate in this program which will be held in our park on Saturday, June 7 at 9 a.m. Rusty Kohler of the Bastrop County Sheriff's Department will be the main speaker and he will work with our children on bike safety, as well as addressing personal safety issues for them as they travel and play throughout the neighborhood. This is a timely program as summer vacation from school will have just begun for our

children. Officer Kohler promises to be set up and ready to go early so we urge you to be on time for this very important program. Children are encouraged to ride/bring their bike as this will be an interactive program. Parents will want to bring a lawn chair for themselves and a mat or cushion for the children to sit upon because Rusty will be showing a few videos and they'll want to sit as a group in front of the TV. Let's make this safety program a big success. Put Saturday, June 7 on your calendar and plan to attend. No RSVP is needed. We'll serve bottled water and cookies.

Spring Potluck

by Kathy Mowrey

Our Spring Potluck Dinner will be on Saturday, May 31, at 5 p.m. in our park, with Sunday, June 1 as our rain date. The Welcome/Social Committee will be providing hamburgers and hot dogs, bottled water and soft drinks. This event is open to all Arbors' residents only and we hope to see your family there! To insure we have plenty of sandwiches and beverages available be sure to RSVP. To give the number of attendees and to sign up to bring your favorite dish, please

see PotLuck page 4

Garden Tour

by Kathy Mowrey

We will have a Garden Tour on Saturday, May 10, with about seven residents having volunteered their landscaping and gardens for our viewing. Everyone who wants to participate in the tour should plan to meet at 9 a.m. at the Mowrey residence, 333 Arbors Circle, to receive maps and start the tour. Each homeowner will be available to share information with us about their experience growing plants and trees here in The Arbors. It'll be educational and lots of fun!

ACC Spring Report

by Randal Wilkerson

The Arbors continues to be a desired place to live. We are growing and the pace of construction of new homes remains strong. With 153 homes now located in the Arbors, we've reached a build out ratio of 63%. Most of our lots are privately owned, with only 7 lots still titled with Forestar Real Estate Group (formerly known as Sabine Investment). We expect our build out to continue to increase during 2008 because the ACC continues to receive requests for the approval of the construction of new homes. In addition to the homes under construction right now on Elmwood Drive, Pin Oak Crossing, Sycamore Trail and Arbors Circle, watch for new homes starts on Ironwood Cove and Spanish Oak Trail in the next few weeks.

Many of our residents are striving to improve their existing homes. In addition to request for fences and outbuildings, the most recent trend of projects for homes within the Arbors is the addition of a swimming pool. By summers' end, if all submissions are completed, the Arbors will have 15 homes that have swimming pools.

While each home or other building project, such as a swimming pool, is under construction the ACC works with each builder to ensure compliance with the signed builder/owner agreement. This compliance agreement sets forth the rules and guidelines in place for the protection of the Arbors common areas, such as

the ROW and roads, and that must be followed during the construction of any project within the Arbors.

Monitoring builders for compliance is only one side of the coin needed to keep the Arbors looking its best. Residents have a responsibility to follow the rules and keep the appearance of their homes, yards and gardens neat and tidy. With Spring in the air, many residents have yard projects underway. Please accept this reminder that the neighborhood drive report, completed each month to monitor the status of homes in the area, contains a 'watch only' category. The report category is used if a minor item is identified but appears to be temporary. The item is listed on the report for reference and no reminders letters are sent. Then, when the next drive report is completed, review determines if the item was resolved, and if it was, it is removed from the report. If the item still exists, the item advances to the friendly reminder letter level. Since the implementation of 'watch only' system in 2005, reminder letters have decreased, as many items resolve themselves without any type of written reminder. It is obvious that residents are interested in maintaining their homes and maintaining the look of our neighborhood.

As we grow each owner's voluntary compliance becomes more important. Thank you for your continued efforts.

Spring Mowing

by AIA Board

Spring is once again here and so are the abundant blooms of all the wildflowers, some native and some sown by Arbors residents. They've all been beautiful!

The AIA owns the ROW and carries the responsibility for mowing the ROW. During the early spring, the ROW mowing can become a touchy subject due to the beauty of the displays of the flowers. As with years past, the Board has delayed mowing the full 15' ROW until late in the spring so most of the flowers can seed and be ready for next year's show.

With the first full ROW mowing of the year the Board receives a comment or two from some residents that don't want the ROW in front of their property mowed. While the Board understands the reasoning behind these comments, it is important that the weeds in the ROW be controlled to reduce and hopefully eliminate their reseeding. In order to try to get what little grass there is in the ROW's to grow, the weeds, which in many cases don't re-grow after mowing, must be mowed so the grass, which is not affected by mowing, can better compete for the nutrients in the soil. And keeping healthy vegetation growing in the ROW protects our roads by protecting against erosion in our soft sand drainage areas.

The appeal of any subdivision is in its well maintained appearance, something that can not be assured when the mowing of common areas are not managed on a consistent basis.

Traffic Problems In the Neighborhood

by AIA Board

Compliance with the posted road signs within the Arbors continues to be a hot topic at the Board meetings and within the community. Most owners are concerned by non compliance with the speed and stop signs posted on our private roads. With contractors, the issue is addressed in writing with the Builders Compliance Agreement. Each owner and builder must sign the agreement which then provides the AIA with the tools it needs to penalize contractors that do not abide by the posted speed and stop signs on our private roads. While the problem is not completely solved, we at least have the tools to control it and force change. And we use them. Just ask those that track down contractors that speed and run stop signs and ask the builders that have been contacted and fined.

But how do we as a community enforce compliance with the posted speed and stop signs on the owners in our own community? Believe it or not, we have owners that fail to stop at posted signs or that speed through our community. Appealing in the meetings and newsletters for self control and compliance with posted signs has not accomplished the goal of safety and compliance. Witnessed reports of owners

speeding and running stop signs continue to be received. And it's a shame. We value our community and expect appropriate behavior from its owners.

While the community has discussed the use of speed bumps and humps, flashing lights, rented signs that tell the offender how fast they are traveling and systems that snap pictures of those running the stop signs at the park intersection to force compliance, all of those items cost money. And frankly, the Board and the community do not want to spend funds that would otherwise be earmarked for the road fund on devices to force owners to comply with what is best for the safety of the community.

So, where does this leave the community on enforcement? To begin with, failure to stop at posted signs and obvious speeding will become finable offenses. We are asking those that witness an event to take a moment and report it to Pioneer. Once reported, the owner will receive a letter letting them know that they have been reported. Multiple reports would lead to a fine being imposed.

When reporting an event, you will

need to be as exact as possible. Date, time, description of the vehicle, name of owner, if you know it, license number if possible, the address of the owner's residence, if you know it, are all important pieces of information. Pioneer, with the assistance of the Board if needed, will identify the owner. Although the Board will know who reported the owner, as a part of this process, the offending owner will not be told who reported them. Those reported are not automatically fined, but if repeated reports are received, in addition to multiple letters received, a fine will be imposed according to the established fine schedule imposed on those that don't follow the rules. Civil fines are enforceable.

As always, we'd prefer that everyone follow the posted signs and relieve the community from the burden to report offenses. If being reported and fined doesn't work on the offending owners, we may have no option but to spend funds we'd rather not spend on enforcement devices. So, please, please, please slow down and stop.

To report an event, please call 512-447-4496 ext. 101 or email jamie@austinusa.com.

National Night Out

by Kathy Mowrey

National Night Out in Texas has been moved from its usual night, the first Tuesday in August, to the first Tuesday in October so this year, we will observe NNO on October 7. The National Association of Town Watch Executive Director has

agreed to extend the alternative date to the State of Texas so that we can participate in the activities during a cooler time of the year. More information will be available in the Fall 2008 Arbor's Angles.



Fabulous Ladies Tea

by Kathy Mowrey

The Ladies Tea was held on Saturday, March 1 in the home of Kathy Mowrey with 27 women attending. Fragile teacups and saucers were admired and an assortment of hot teas were available for sampling. Everyone enjoyed the wonderful foods provided by each lady - and the opportunity to wear a hat either from home or from the collection of vintage hats provided by Sherry Potter. Many funny and interesting facts were shared and it was a great opportunity to meet new neighbors or get to know one another better. Thanks go to the ladies of the Welcome/Social Committee for all their planning and hard work: Dorothy Bixler, Kristie Chasteen, Sharon Lakings, Gail Newman, Georgie Pyeatt, Diana Reading, Betty Switzer, Brenda Tolbert, Connie Vestal and Lily Wright; and to Jan Osburn for pitching in at the last minute.



Potluck

continued from page 1

contact Kathy Mowrey at 281-4601 or kmowrey@austin.rr.com no later than Thursday, May 29. This is a great opportunity to visit with your neighbors over a plate of good food in our neighborhood park. Mark your calendars, RSVP to Kathy Mowrey, and plan to attend. For your comfort, please remember to bring lawn chairs.

Pool Fencing Policy Proposal

by AIA Board

At the April 2008 Board meeting, a proposal was submitted that the Arbors adopt a policy which requires a permanent fence surrounding all swimming pools located within the Arbors. It is generally accepted that communities, whether city, county or neighborhoods such as the Arbors, maintain rules regarding fencing pool for the safety of children in the area. The proposed policy is detailed below. The proposed policy is also posted on the Arborsia.org site. Please feel free to submit your comments regarding the proposed policy.

Proposed Arbors of Dogwood Creek Policy

Policy Summary of Fence Requirements for Outdoor Residential Swimming Pools

1. During construction, all swimming pools must be surrounded by a temporary fence, approved by the ACC as a part of the construction process.
2. A permanent fence must be constructed of materials that comply with the CC&Rs and be approved by the ACC prior to the swimming pool

containing water.

3. The permanent fence must completely surround the swimming pool and must obstruct access to the swimming pool from all sides, excluding the house side of the pool. The swimming pool may be contained in a fenced backyard of a home.
4. The permanent fence must be at least 4 feet (48 inches) high.
5. A building wall, such as a home or out building, may form part of the required fence.
6. Permanent fences should be located so as to prohibit permanent structures, equipment or similar objects from being used to climb the fences.
7. Failure to comply with approved AIA policy will result in fines following the established fine structure.
8. Owners of swimming pools located in the Arbors that are not fenced and the pool was constructed before the approval of this policy must submit a permanent fence plan to the ACC within 60 days of policy approval and have the fence constructed within 90 days of policy approval.

YOUTH SAFETY PROGRAM

SATURDAY, JUNE 7 AT
9 AM
ARBORS PARK



BRING BICYCLES,
MATS, LAWN CHAIRS,
AND CHILDREN

Welcome Neighbors

by Kathy Mowrey

The Arbors Improvement Association would like to welcome our new neighbors:

David & Karen Barber
371 Arbors Circle

Michael & Sharon Matthew
191 Juniper Trail

Welcome Neighbors!

Yard of the Month

by Kathy Mowrey

This award is given every month except December, so be sure to watch for the sign as you are driving throughout the neighborhood.

February:

Juan & Claudia DeAnda
556 Arbors Circle

March:

Bob & Dorothy Baker
565 Arbors Circle

April:

Keith & Gail Newman
150 Juniper Trail

Spring
Pot Luck
May 31st
at 5 pm, Arbors Park

Board

continued from page 1

will continue to be part of your experience here. Much of our community borders on undeveloped land and a Wildlife Preserve. Beyond the Reserve are some 11, 700 acres belonging to Camp Swift, home to the Texas National Guard.

Since much of the Camp's acreage is left in a virgin state, it is also an ideal home for deer, feral hogs, coyotes, bob cats, and (as sighted), at least one cougar.

It should be noted that Camp Swift is currently in an expansion mode. Soldiers in the past were sent to Fort Hood to receive pre-deployment training. Now the Camp's mission is to train those soldiers in combat arms specialty skills for a nine-state region. Camp Swift officers expect to train 1,500 to 1,700 soldiers for each graduation.

Long time residents have always sighted feral hogs, javalina, deer and coyotes in our community. However, the increase in activity at Camp Swift is likely to drive even more of the wildlife further north, closer to our properties.

There are some precautions a resident can take to manage a wildlife "invasion". Be aware that small pets (cats, rabbits, dogs) are considered fair game by coyotes, so don't leave small pets unattended outside, especially at night. Feral hogs and deer share similar diets: acorns, grains, corn, etc, so while

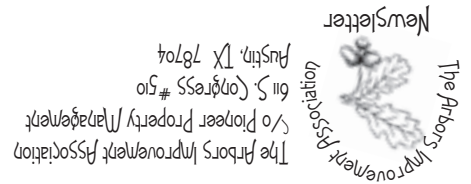
it may be a thoughtful gesture to provide local deer corn from a feeder, it will also attract these large hogs who simply follow deer trails into our subdivision! Also, if you do feed pets outdoors, pick up any uneaten food after the pet finishes eating; not only does pet food attract the larger mammals, but also skunks, raccoons, rats, and snakes.

As much of a headache it is to have a hog tear up a grass lawn, or a deer family strip that Sweet Broom bush of its flowers, please remember why you wanted to live here. We are all part of this landscape and all its creatures...it would be a much more sterile existence without them! So please take care when driving our streets. Our wildlife often doesn't look both ways before crossing!

In addition to watching out for wildlife while driving, residents and visitors alike must be also aware that there are now a large number of children calling our community home. At last count there were approximately 45 children living in the Arbors. Observance of the speed limit (30 MPH throughout the Arbors) and stopping at all STOP SIGNS should be the norm for all drivers as our roads have blind turns and rises which are not marked as they are on the State and National highways.

Please preserve life in our community...wild and otherwise!

Happy Mother's Day
May 11, 2008



AIA Meetings

Meetings are held monthly at the First National Bank Community Room in Elgin on **the second Wednesday of the month at 7 pm**. Everyone is welcome!

The next Meeting is Wed. May 14th, 7pm

AIA Social Events Calendar

Event	Date	Time	Place
Garden/Yard Tour	Sat. May 10	9 am	333 Arbor's Circle
Spring Potluck	Sat. May 31	5 pm	Arbors Park
Youth Safety Program	Sat. June 7	9 am	Arbors Park
4th of July Ice Cream Social	Sat. July 5	4 pm	Arbors Park
Neighborhood Night Out	Tues. Oct. 7	6 pm	Arbors Park