



# Oakridge News

www.oakridgena.org November 2022, Vol. 30, No. 11



## Note from the ONA President

by BillyRay Thomas, ONA President

Happy November Oakridge!


I hope everyone is doing great and ready for the winter holidays. I hope you are adjusting to the shorter days and bracing yourselves for another unpredictable Texas winter. The midterm elections are behind us and like me, I am sure you are hopeful that economic relief will be front of mind for our elected officials.

Let me first acknowledge and thank all Veterans, the true heroes of this great nation. It is their sacrifice of service that affords us the freedoms we hold dear. We owe them a great debt. If you are a Veteran, Thank You!

Well, it is turkey time! Thanksgiving is our time to gather with family and friends, feast on fried, baked, or smoked turkey, pumpkin pies, candy yams, watch football, eat again, watch more football then eat some more. Yes, I know we are paying much more for eggs, milk and well everything, but there is still much to be thankful for. From my family to yours, Happy Thanksgiving!

Are you an ONA member?  
Have you received your flag?

If not, please contact us at  
[oakridgemembership@gmail.com](mailto:oakridgemembership@gmail.com)



Hey, I heard Duck Creek's First Annual Halloween Party was an immense success despite inclement weather. From all accounts, the forty or so that braved the storms, had a wonderful time. Stay tuned for 2023.



Later this month as we look ahead to the Christmas and other December celebrations, your ONA District Directors will begin "decking the walls," well the entries and bridge. They are looking for any adult and student volunteers. Check the website for schedule. I hear there could be prizes for the best yard display/lights. Stay tuned.

As always, I am grateful for the continued support of our neighborhood through membership in the ONA. I appreciate the countless hours and combined efforts of those who strive to make living in Oakridge and membership in the ONA more inviting and meaningful. If you are not a member yet, scan the QR code below.

In closing, I genuinely appreciate the diversity of our neighborhood. The myriad of cultures, from all over the globe; rich histories, varied faiths, and familial traditions that we all have but, celebrate differently. That is the true beauty of America, the freedom to be.



Join Today!

Until next time, be well!



## City Councilman Update

by Dylan Hedrick, District 7 City Councilman, Oakridge Resident

This past month, we on the City Council held the ribbon cutting for Texas' newest and second-largest skatepark in the state. The skatepark at Rick Oden Park– nicknamed The Boneyard– has 46,000 square feet of skating area and separate areas for both beginners and expert skaters. The three main sections include a street/plaza area with grinding rails and curbs, a bowl/transition area with drops and ramps, and a beginner area with gentle slopes.

The new park has an area for foot trucks and vendors and has already drawn skaters from all over the country. We know this bond project has been a long time in coming and we are proud to deliver a great attraction that draws skaters from within and outside visitors to our city.



We also broke ground recently on several other Bond Projects including the Hollobaugh Recreation Center expansion on Walnut Street and Fire Station 6 which will be moving from Holford Road to the northeast corner of President George Bush Turnpike and Campbell Road. Holford Recreation Center closed September 30 to allow for the new construction of the recreation center and adjoining pool facility. We are anticipating the new facility will be open for the 2024 swim season, and you can track the progress of all our bond projects at [BuildGarland.com](http://BuildGarland.com).

As the holidays are quickly approaching, I hope you can come out and join us for some of the festive winter activities occurring in Garland. Our annual Christmas on the Square festivities will again move to Firewall Town Center while the Downtown Square is under construction. The tree lighting will occur at 6:30 PM, but attractions open at 5:30 PM and include live reindeer, a snow hill, Christmas carolers and pictures with Santa.

During December, the Plaza Theater will be showing several Christmas movies including "A Christmas Story," "It's a Wonderful Live," "Elf," and "The Santa Clause." The Granville Arts Center will host the Dallas Ballet Company

performances of "The Nutcracker" December 2-11 and various holiday musical performances throughout the month. Visit [GarlandForChristmas.com](http://GarlandForChristmas.com) for dates and more information on holiday events throughout the city.

Finally on a completely separate topic, the City Council approved a Garland Power and Light budget amendment to purchase two Dynamis DT35 Package Turbine Generators at the Olinger Power Station. These resources will provide a total of 69MW of quick-start generation that will be able to spin up to full power production within 10 minutes. Our existing gas production facilities are showing their age and are increasingly expensive to maintain. The new electric production capacity will allow GP&L to respond to market conditions quickly and help stabilize the grid during periods of peak demand. Interestingly these package turbines are manufactured in the Houston area and delivered as a complete package on a 85' trailer that can be set up and running within 10 hours after delivery. We hope that these units will help mitigate any power outages like we experienced February 2020 or during potential rolling blackouts we faced during the summer.

As always, it is my extreme pleasure to represent the Oakridge neighborhood at the City of Garland. If there is anything I can do for you, please contact me at 469-560-6099 or [council7@garlandtx.gov](mailto:council7@garlandtx.gov).



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## Crime & Safety Update

by Joan Nichols, ONA Crime & Safety Committee Director

The best way to stay safe is with neighbors looking out for each other. Garland Police Department also has several good tips to keep in mind all year long:

- **Lock your cars** to help deter thieves who are looking for an easy target.
- **Remove valuables** from your car including holiday packages, shopping bags, guns, electronics, money, medicine, and jewelry.
- **Report suspicious activity.** If you see suspicious activity or something (or somebody) that seems out of place, call the non-emergency number at 972-485-4840 (or call 911 for emergency or crime in progress). Remember to include details that go beyond race and gender such as behavior, vehicle description, location, time of day, hair, clothing, identifying marks, etc. Share any security camera video that may be helpful with Officer Barnes at [BarnesT@garlandtx.gov](mailto:BarnesT@garlandtx.gov).
- **Vacation Watch Request** (free for Garland residents). If you plan to be out of town, consider having Volunteers in Policing check your home while you are gone. You can click here to complete the Vacation Watch Request form.
- **Discourage Porch Pirates** with the following:
  - Track deliveries on-line and quickly retrieve packages from your porch as soon as they are delivered.
  - Have packages delivered to your office building or remote pickup site. Amazon has several hub lockers around the city. Walgreens, FedEx and UPS also offer similar options.
  - Ask your neighbor to collect packages from your porch when you are away from home.
  - Get a video doorbell (such as Nest or Ring). They may not always stop a Porch Pirate in their tracks, but they can help police identify them later.
- **Video doorbells** can be added to the Garland Video Crime Watch by going to the Garland Police Website.

As always, please feel free to contact us with your Crime and Safety questions at [safety@oakridgena.org](mailto:safety@oakridgena.org).

## Support for Officer Barnes

by Joan Nichols, ONA Crime & Safety Committee Director

Last year, we departed from a 29-year history of providing food for First Responders during the holidays and instead raised over \$9000 to support Officer Barnes in his fight against metastatic breast cancer. The ONA



Board would like to repeat and see if we can match last year as we join together to support Officer Barnes in his battle. Go to the Oakridge Website to see how you can support.

Although not patrolling, he is working with investigations and remains our Neighborhood Police Officer supporting us despite undergoing intense (and costly) treatment.

We are asking Oakridge residents to consider making a donation to Officer Barnes by Monday, December 19th. You can pay by PayPal or by check and mail to: Oakridge Neighborhood Association, P.O. Box 450145, Garland, TX 75045. Checks should be made out to Oakridge Neighborhood Association.

Also, Oakridge residents can sign the e-card for Officer Barnes (no donation required). Visit the Oakridge Website for more info.

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### New to Oakridge?

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## Meet District 6

by Ruba Qewar, ONA District 6 Director

Hello neighbors. My name is Ruba Qewar.

My husband Walaa Shehata and I moved to Oakridge in December 2021 with our fur baby Halloumi, which means "White Cheese" in Arabic. I am an ONA member and serve on the Board representing District 6.

On a personal note, my parents are originally from Jordan, but I was born in Denmark. I moved to the US in 2005. My husband is originally from Egypt. As it turned out, we had both moved back to NE Dallas, me from Virginia and him from North Dakota. We happened to run into each other later discovering we lived on same street. We have been happily married since 2020.

I hold a BA degree in 3D Modeling and Animation Arts and Technology from the University of Texas at Dallas and employed as a full-time contractor with the U.S. Army as an Interactive 3D Modeler/Animator & Developer. Walaa teaches Qur'anic studies at Brighter Horizons Academy and holds a BS degree in Math and a master's degree in Islamic Studies.

We enjoy traveling. I am a vegetarian, but I do not mind eating meat every once a while. I love Chinese Martial Arts; practice Ti Chi and Bagua Kung Fu with my Chinese Master from Hebei China in Richardson.



In June of 2021, we established a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization called "American Islamic Diversity" (AID) chartered to provide the necessities including food, furniture, clothing, toys, and home essentials to families in need. We are intentional about preserving dignity while delivering aid.

The North Texas Food Bank has approved us to distribute and deliver food to families around the DFW metroplex. We offer vocational training and personal development including driving lessons, IT certified courses, Job Search assistance, English as Second Language (ESL) classes, and Corporate Workshops. American Islamic Diversity (AID) is committed to accommodating all those in need without discrimination or harassment based on age, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, marital status, disability, citizenship, or any other characteristic in accordance with our capacity to help. To learn more, please visit our website at: [www.AmericanIslamicDiversity.org](http://www.AmericanIslamicDiversity.org).



Hope to see you around the neighborhood.

Ruba and Walaa

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## Oakridge Men's Group

by Mark Edwards, Oakridge Resident

Earlier this year we put together a group called The Oakridge Men's Group, sometimes called The Oakridge Boys. We have about seventeen members attending our meetings throughout the summer and fall. We have had some exciting speakers, a lot of them from the city of Garland. Most recently, we had a representative from the Garland Fire Department which was quite informative. We timed a member to dress in Firefighters uniform;

they do it in about sixty seconds, it took our member one hundred seconds which was not too bad. We will not have a meeting in December because it is too close to Christmas. We get together on the 3rd Wednesday of the month 10:30 in the morning at the Duck Creek Golf Club. Our next meeting will be in January. All men in the Oakridge area are welcome to come on by. There is also the possibility of putting together an evening Club to serve the folks who are still working. If you have any questions, give me holler at 214-673-8908. Hope to see you in January.

# Oakridge Cares!

## Helping others within our reach.



**Oakridge & Good Samaritans Coat Drive**  
(Ends November 30th)  
**Contact: Jackie Reynolds**



**2022 Holiday Donation for Officer Barnes.** Contact: Joan Nichols



**American Islamic Diversity (AID).**  
Contact: Ruba Qewar







Local Postal Customer

## Oakridge Daytimers

by Sally Weiss, Oakridge Daytimers

Before I begin, I'd like to thank Cheryl Jones for taking on the daunting task of Communications Director for the Oakridge Neighborhood Association. That's why we're so fortunate to be receiving the ONA Newsletter once again. Thanks once more to Heather Englebretson for her years of selfless service to the organization.

Jane Mayers opened her lovely home to the Daytimers as we celebrated October with munchies from food hostesses Chris Beyers, Peggy Crenshaw and Mary Pattie. Thanks to all you ladies!

Our guest speaker was an epidemiologist from the Garland Health Department and, among other things, he reminded us of the importance of receiving boosters for flu, Covid, pneumonia, etc. if we want to stay protected during this fall, winter and spring season.

Gloria Turner will be our hostess for November's coffee and you can watch for details on Shutterfly.

Daytimers is open to all female residents of Oakridge and meets on the second Tuesday of the month. After visiting, we welcome you to join us. Annual membership dues of \$20.00 are used for speakers, community support and the annual end-of-year luncheon. Any questions about joining us and the location of our next coffee may be directed to Ann Conrath at 469-367-0802.

## 2022-2023 ONA Board

[info@oakridgena.org](mailto:info@oakridgena.org)

### Officers

- President, BillyRay Thomas ..... 214-734-1017
- Vice President, Vickie Litton ..... 972-762-2805
- Secretary, Sharon Parrish ..... 469-939-2270
- Treasurer, Veronica Brown-Corbin..... 214-642-4815

### District Directors

- District 1, Joanna Albright ..... 973-879-5965
- District 2 Co-Directors
  - Jack Lang ..... 214-395-8596
  - Sallie Lang ..... 214-708-2870
- District 3, VACANT
- District 4 Co-Directors
  - Oliver Harter ..... 214-663-8862
  - Jackie Jones..... 972-897-5133
- District 5, Melanie Busby..... 972-989-2253
- District 6, Ruba Qewar ..... 972-207-1911
- District 7, Joetta Harris ..... 469-955-1513

### Committees

- Communications, Cheryl Jones..... 214-437-9132
- Crime & Safety, Joan Nichols ..... 214-543-2546
- Environmental, David Parrish ..... 469-733-6089
- Events, Jackie Reynolds ..... 469-649-5799
- Membership, Cecile LaBossiere..... 972-896-9413

### Report Suspicious Activity in Oakridge

For emergencies  
or crimes in progress, call 911.

For non-emergencies,  
call Garland Police  
at (972) 485-4840.



*We would love your suggestions/ideas for future newsletter content.*

Please send recommendations/comments to  
[communications@oakridgena.org](mailto:communications@oakridgena.org).