



Forest Hills

www.foresthillsdallas.org

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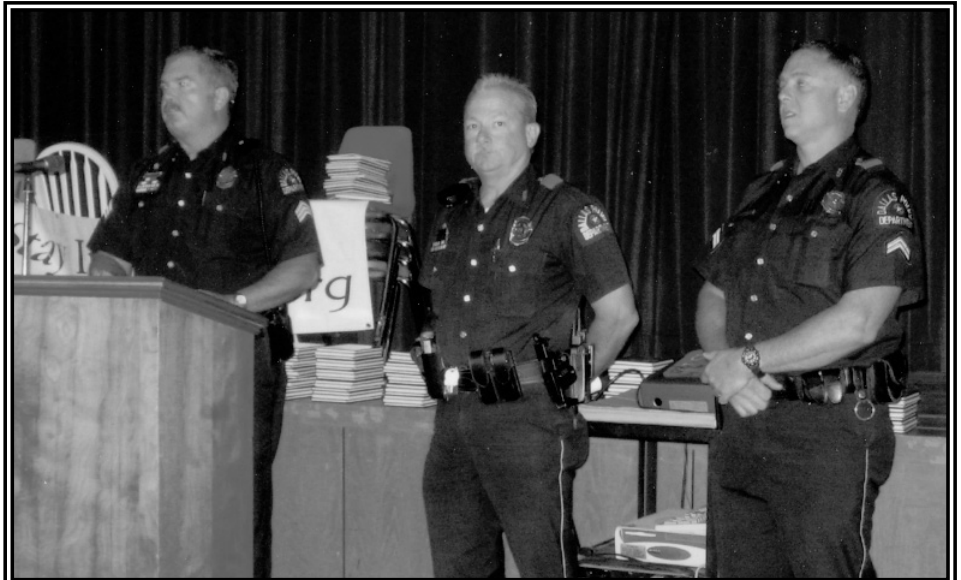
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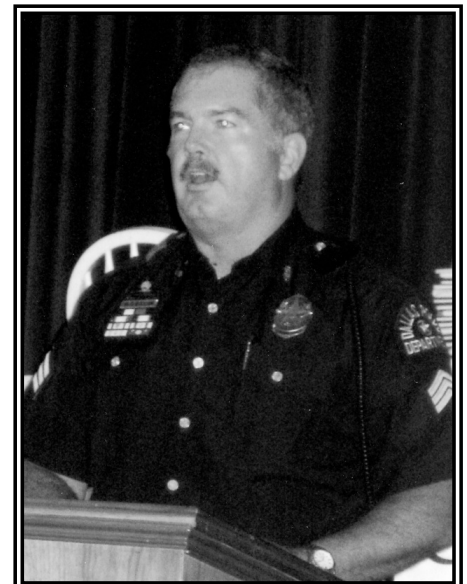
The Reporter

OCTOBER 2007 ISSUE

Criminals Bearing Down on Forest Hills Residents



“THEY ARE JUST KICKING IN THE FRONT DOOR AND TAKING STUFF . . .”



“DON’T BE FEARFUL . . . GET ACTIVE AND TAKE GREATER MEASURES TO SECURE YOUR HOME!”

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

— by Bill Foerster



The new fiscal year begins this month and I want to welcome all the new officers and chairpersons. Please see a listing on the front page of the newsletter.

This year is starting off strong. We met our goals for membership last year and are looking to increase participation by 50%. The increase will bring us to about 60%.

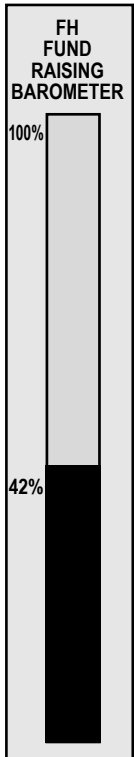
Our neighbors are voicing their opinions about the trees in Forest Hills. We received a record response to the tree preservation petition. It is not too late to let us know your position, please submit your petition if you have not. We have met with city officials and have captured their interest. They will help us meet our goal of preserving the forest in Forest Hills.

The fall festival is coming up and this is a good time to get together and meet the newcomers to the neighborhood and see your old friends as well.

See you soon.

FH General Meeting Spotlights 2 Big Issues

— by Neoma Twining

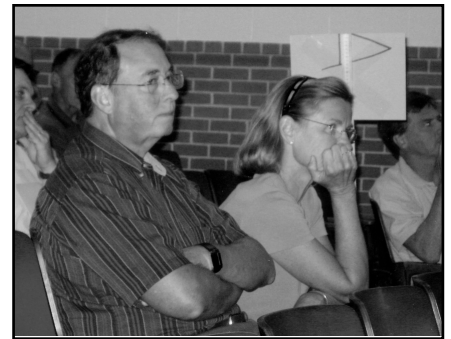


It's never a "full" house when it comes to attendance, but participation in the meeting was more important. President Bill Foerster encouraged an open forum to give FH residents a chance to weigh in.

Two of the neighborhoods hottest topics are Crime and Trees. Crime is on the rise and Trees are falling. You can bet those in attendance had plenty to say about both.

The ENP officers who work within our FHSP were out in force to spoon feed residents facts about crime in the hood. They also came fully loaded to answer residents concerns about the recent rise in home invasions during daytime hours. The police officers demonstrated extreme professionalism by their preparedness and caring attitude.

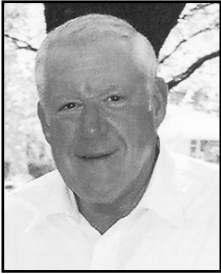
Topic number two is more controversial, however, the majority of residents are in agreement we should work together to preserve the integrity of our life here in FH. One of the big issues is preserving trees. Camilla Mitchell presented a lively speech outlining the purpose of the recent petition circulated and appealed to the hearts of residents to work together to save trees. Two builders were present, Eric Spinannzolla and Forest Webster. The goal of the FHNA is to partner in such a way that we all benefit.



The Neighbors Column

Get Used to Change

— by Debbie Jenevein



John Mitchell

Change is inevitable or so the cliché goes. Having been a Forest Hills resident for over ten years, I've certainly noticed lots of changes. Most have been very positive. I love walking our streets while spotting evidence (swings, bikes, soccer goals etc.) of young families now living in the neighborhood. I like the restfulness of the new park benches nestled on the medians. I don't mind the speed bumps on Highland Road (remember when those weren't there?). I find great comfort in seeing a police car patrolling for our somewhat new Forest Hills Security Program. I like many of our recent "mansions". I even like the increased bicycle traffic on the weekends.

However, there is one change I would like to see reviewed, the cutting down of healthy mature trees. Generally speaking, we all love our trees. We can agree on that. The controversy comes in when we discuss the logistics and specifics from both sides of the equation - the builders vs. the neighborhood. There is a movement afoot to keep homebuilders from freely cutting trees prior to demolishing existing structures. This proposal may take time to pass at City Hall and will most likely be met with opposition. Let's not forget that whatever restrictions are imposed upon builders will have to be imposed upon homeowners as well. Therefore, I encourage our neighborhood to consider another option. What if builders were required to "replace" every tree they cut down . . . not just required to pay a fee for razed trees? If a tree becomes too costly to replace (i.e. several trees would have to be planted to make up for the caliber size of the one tree lost), a builder may think twice before cutting it or may need to be more creative with his architectural design. I think we'd all like that.

Change is coming Let's hope we approach it gracefully while still protecting our neighborhood's greatest asset . . . our trees.

"Forest Hills" Changes Name to "Scraped Hills"

— by Bob Jones

We watched University Park from above as its trees disappeared.

Looking down from the 20th floor of the Athena, the view had been of a forest, almost solid trees reaching to SMU, Preston Center, or downtown. But the older houses with their tree canopies were scraped to make room (barely) for the much larger houses that filled the lots. So after only a few years the forest became a sea of rooftops.

Forest Hills has been a forest to walk in, with houses sitting among the trees. Nature dominated.

Sometimes the new houses fit in nicely, saving or replacing nature. But in many cases the lots are scraped and filled. Then you mainly notice *The House*.

Besides the beauty, there are many benefits of urban trees. Our city should appreciate and encourage the urban forest, especially since Dallas has to struggle with its air quality. Maybe the city should offer incentives like tax breaks to encourage preservation. Some of the benefits are listed here from the Univ. of Georgia School of Forestry.

Benefits of urban trees: Shade reduces use of energy and cooling bills, usually about 27%; Noise is reduced; Water runoff is reduced, runoff quality is increased; Add measurable value (ours were appraised at \$5000 to \$10,000/tree); Create beauty; Filter pollutants and particulates; Absorb CO2 and produce O2, locally where it counts most (mature trees more effective than smaller ones at reducing pollution); Removing trees immediately increases CO2 by biodegrading of trees.

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PERSPECTIVE - QUIT WHINING

— Peter Hajek

Forest Hills has been our home since 1985. It seemed like we couldn't afford it then and we sure couldn't now. The current development is unprecedented but certainly not unexpected. After all, we knew the "secret" wouldn't last forever. If you harbored some fantasy that Forest Hills would escape the natural process of regeneration, snap out of it.

Personally, I welcome the new construction and its associated inconveniences. This is a good "problem." The metroplex is full of neighborhoods that are dead in the water, with property that no one wants. Will all this building make our taxes go up? No, they will continue to go up the maximum 10% a year forever, regardless of new homes. If anything, the increased tax revenues from these million plussers reduce the pressure to raise tax rates.

I certainly hope we don't convey a muted welcome to our new neighbors who buy these homes. I thought diversity was supposed to be a good thing and if they want to slum with the likes of me (and you), so much the better.

The tree issue is the catalyst for this op-ed letter. By way of introduction, if you don't know where I live it's because you probably thought no one lived there due the overgrown trees etc. Benign neglect is how I describe my landscaping style. My tree guy won't use me as a reference because I'm so loathe to over-trim my domain.

That said, the idea of imposing a tree-cutting prohibition on our neighborhood because of the over-zealous lot clearing of a few builders on about 2% (12 out of 600) properties strikes me as ludicrous. As was pointed out at the meeting, "mitigation" is the only tool available to penalize property owners for cutting down certain varieties that the city deems protected.

Under certain circumstances, like after a demo permit and tree survey have been submitted, a property owner will have to pay the city \$120 per caliper inch of protected tree he/she cuts down and doesn't replace. If we manage to get the required signatures to get the city to make our neighborhood a special tree haven, the form that it will take is mitigation.

Under no circumstances will any city, anywhere, forbid people from cutting down trees on their property. If that's your hope, it's a false one. Therefore, what we'll have is a process whereby the city arborist comes out and evaluates your request, or some builder's request for tree removal, collects a check and says thank you very much. The mitigation fees will be chump change on these building sites of \$400k+.

Where it will hurt is the family who wants a pool or who wants to finally build that addition so they don't have to move. There's a myriad of reasons to take trees out that will "now" require approval. No doubt some well meaning neighbors will monitor the presence of tree trimmers in Forest Hills and look for the posted permit. Personally, I'd like to see all this passion for other people's trees be redirected towards the trees we actually already are supposed to be taking care of.

Namely our medians and around the lake. It's rather disingenuous to take issue with other people's property management when our own property is not up to speed. Adopt a median or part of one, make a donation, do something, but quit whining.

On a less sarcastic note, it's important for people to realize that Forest Hills is already a Planned Development with block specific setbacks. This was done at great effort by some residents, with the neighborhood's consensus, to preserve uniform sightlines down the block.

An overlay attempts to do the same thing but addresses height as well. In my opinion, what we have is far superior, less impugning of property rights and avoids the divisiveness that overlay battles cause. The folks who spearheaded it were prophetic in doing so and we're lucky to avoid that hot potato now.

Philosophically, people who are drawn to Forest Hills and East Dallas, in general, gravitate toward old stuff and loathe the new world. I know because I get queasy north of 635 and start muttering and twitching my head. The truth is, once Forest Hills was the new world and city dwellers thought it was the boonies. Our predisposition towards disliking the new is no more defensible than "Frisco types" presumed disdain for the old. These new large homes or remodels are just a second generation version of what our old houses were when they were built. Think of it as the Circle of Life. Or maybe as déjà vu all over again. At any rate, it's not going away and for that we should be thankful.

FH SECURITY PROGRAM

— by Judy Whalen

We had 6 residential burglaries in the last 6 weeks. That's far above average and 6 more than we'd like to see. Below is the only solid suspect information we have from any of the offenses. Undercover officers are actively on the lookout for this vehicle.

10/5/2007 BURGLARY 8500 BLOCK GROVELAND DR

Witness stated he heard a big bang from a nearby residence and saw the suspects carrying a 36" TV from the house and attempt to place it in the back seat of a possibly dark blue Mitsubishi parked in the driveway. The vehicle is missing the driver's side rear hubcap. Witness stated the suspects were black males in their mid 20's about 5'8" 160 lbs.

The suspects were in the home approximately 5 minutes. Suspects kicked in the front door and exited the same. Other personal items were stolen. The suspects were not able to get the large TV in the vehicle and it was left in the front yard. Crime scene techs were called to print the house.

Please call 911 if you see anything suspicious. Take your cell phone along on walks and in your car for quick 911 calls. Also have a pad of paper and a pen handy in your car to write down license plate numbers of suspicious vehicles.

DATE	OFFENSE	ADDRESS	WATCH
9/1/07	CRIMINAL MISCHIEF	8300 block of SAN CRISTOBAL	2 7a-4p
9/2/07	CRIMINAL MISCHIEF	8100 block of SAN CRISTOBAL	1 11p-8a
9/4/07	THEFT	8300 block of SAN LEANDRO	1 11p-8a
9/4/07	BURGLARY	1700 block of CORDAY	3 3p-12a
9/5/07	BURGLARY	8100 block of SAN BENITO	2 7a-4p
9/5/07	BURGLARY	8000 block of SAN CRISTOBAL	2 7a-4p
9/10/07	TRAFFIC FATALITY #106	1400 block of HIGHLAND	1 11p-8a
9/11/07	BMV	1600 block of SAN RAFAEL	1 11p-8a
9/14/07	THEFT	8100 block of SANTA CLARA	U ?
9/15/07	BURGLARY	8500 block of SAN PEDRO	1 11p-8a
9/15/07	SUSPICIOUS PERSON	8300 block of SAN LEANDRO	3 3p-12a
9/16/07	CRIMINAL MISCHIEF	8300 block of GARLAND	1 11p-8a
9/21/07	THEFT	8500 block of FOREST HILLS	2 7a-4p
10/3/07	BURGLARY	8200 block of SAN FERNANDO	2 7a-4p
10/5/07	BURGLARY	8500 block of GROVELAND	2 7a-4p

4TH QUARTER OCTOBER SECURITY PLEDGE IS DUE

For your personal safety and that of your family and neighbors inside and outside the home.

The Forest Hills Security Program needs EVERYONE participating. The more pledges; the more hours of protection. Also as a current participant you receive the extra benefit of house checks by the police while you are away.

This successful program has been operating and benefiting **EVERY** resident since 2003. The pledge is \$60 each quarter (Jan, April, July, October).

Forest Hills Security Program
8432 San Fernando Way
Dallas, TX 75218

Compliments, Concerns or Payment Inquiry: Judy Whalen 214-324-9894 jwreps@earthlink.net



Please include this information with your \$60 quarterly pledge:

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Email _____



PAWS

"A LESSON LEARNED"

Submitted by Betty Guerra

A recent tragedy might have been averted had one of our neighbors registered his two Shar Pei dogs with the Forest Hills Animal Alert! program. Animal Alert! founder Andie Comini got the phone call on a Sunday afternoon that two dogs were apparently stranded in the creek behind Alex Sanger Elementary School. Andie jumped in her truck and went to see if she could help rescue the dogs.

Andie found the two Shar Peis but could not reach them, so she called Animal Control for help. Andie and the Animal Control Officer worked in vain to capture the dogs. The dogs were mother and son, both in panic mode. Even if Andie had been able to reach the pups, neither dog wore a collar, thus she had no way of contacting an owner. After attempting to lower food to the animals, Andie called 911. That was the last option as Animal Control had no one to tranquilize the dogs on a Sunday. Had they been able to tranquilize them, they would have been able to lift them up to safety. The Dallas Fire Department rushed to the scene followed by television news crews. Sadly, the mother dog could be seen licking and consoling her son. But again, no one was able to reach them. After three and a half hours, rescue efforts were called off for the night. Andie contacted Animal Alert! to see if there were any Shar Peis registered, hoping to be able to inform the owner that his dogs were in danger and enlist his help. There were no dogs matching their description in the database.

Unfortunately the rains came overnight. The creek rose four feet. The next morning there were no signs of the Shar Pei mother and son. Two weeks later we receive the news that a neighbor's Shar Pei was missing. Miraculously, when the water rose the mother dog swam to safety and returned home. But her son who was blind, apparently did not survive.

PLEASE!!!! - Help us help you by registering your pets in the Animal Alert! Program. If the Shar Peis had been registered and their photos on file, we could have immediately contacted their owner. Always have a collar on your pets, even if they live inside. You never know when your beloved family member will slip out the door or through the fence or gate.

The Forest Hills Animal Alert! Program is FREE. Please take a moment to visit our website WWW.FORESTHILLSDALLAS.ORG and register your pets. It just might save their life.

NOTE: Donations to help with the program are greatly appreciated AND needed as this program is completely supported by volunteers. You can send a check to our FHNA Treasurer - Gina Bender at 8222 San Fernando Way. Please note on your check that this is for the Animal Alert! Program.



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Owners

FHHA PET OF THE MONTH

To nominate your pet – please send story and picture to Susan Wells – sbwells0918@sbcglobal.net.



Bailey, the dog - under pillow - and Sampson, the cat Moran – on top, of course!

"Bailey is our 8 year old female Llewelyn English Setter, who is the sweetest creature on God's green earth. Sampson is a male cat that came to us from across the street. He was a Katrina evacuee, and his owners left him behind with our neighbor when they fled New Orleans. Sampson began visiting us across the street, then ultimately decided he preferred our accommodations and moved in. My first "meeting then neighbor" was a walk over to say that his cat had adopted us. Awkward. But they were apparently happy to be rid of him. Sampson is all male, without the ego. He is very laid back and extremely social. He comes to greet all of our house-guests, and will favor them with a hop in their lap so they can pet him. Sampson is also very fond of Bailey, who does not know what to make of her new crate-mate!!!"

Proud Parents: Mark and Katrina Moran

THIS JUST IN.....(Submitted by: Susan Wells)

- **NEED TO POST A SIGN FOR A LOST OR FOUND ANIMAL?** A bulletin Board for community use (NO business cards) has just been installed at the Spillway on Garland Road.
- **Disturbing news about more DEAD CATS FOUND:** Your FHNA Animal Alert! Program is in frequent contact with similar groups within our neighboring associations. Recently, there have been several reports of cat mutilations in areas as near as Lakewood. Some suspect coyotes – others fear human cruelty. If you find a dead cat, or witness any kind of animal attack or act of cruelty, please take it upon yourself to report it to the appropriate authority: **City Animal Control - 311; City Investigator of Cruelty to Animals 214-671-0245;** and the **SPCA 214-651-9611.**
- **RUN YOUR TAIL OFF!** The Lakewood Service League's **4th ANNUAL WALK & WAG AND RUN EVENT** takes place on **Saturday, October the 27th from 9am – 2pm** at Winfrey Point. Food, live music, a dog walk and agility course, **HOWL-0-ween kids fair, costume contests, arts and crafts** and much more! For more details, visit www.walkandwag.org.
- Thank you, Buhmann family – for your recent generosity.
- **Block Captains:** We will begin forwarding information on all Lost and Found pets to each of you. Our thought is that you are probably more familiar with the pets and their owners on your own blocks and be able to help in reuniting the two parties! Thanks for any and all help.

ANOTHER WAY TO KILL TREES

WITHOUT cutting them down! This house is at 8416 Santa Clara. There is no way these trees will survive having all this weight on their root zone. In addition the construction workers drive all over the front yard and leave their vehicles parked there. And they raised the grade of the property in the back which will kill any trees in the back yard.

— by Barb Michaels and John Davis



FH Residents Truly “Passionate” About Their Trees

447 tree petitions (out of 616) were signed in an effort to demonstrate interest in preservation of FH Trees. These petitions were hand carried to the office of Terese O’Donnelly at Dallas City Hall on Thursday, October 11th. When you walk in the door at City Hall with this kind of “paper” momentum, trust me, they tend to take you seriously.

The purpose of the recent petition was to raise awareness and strengthen existing ordinances that protect our trees. We are not in the business of strapping builders efforts, simply monitoring them.

In addition to the petitions, we collected approximately \$700 to aid in the preservation effort. These funds have been placed directly into Beautification coffers along with money for benches and landscaping.

Special thanks to every one of you who took the time to sign the petition to say “Our Trees Do Matter!!”

We are in the process of laying out plans in cooperation with the city to advance our position on tree preservation. We will be giving residents periodic updates of our progress.

The Dallas Farmers Market presents:

PUMPKIN PARTY . . . A SMASHING GOOD TIME

Saturday, October 27, 2007 • 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 P.M.

www.dallasfarmersmarket.org

FOREST HILLS FALL FESTIVAL 2007 SATURDAY OCTOBER 27TH

3:00 - 7:00 pm • 1623 San Rafael (corner of San Leandro)

Hosted by Mike & Shelly Clem

FHA welcomes all to join us to kick off the Fall Events ~ get to know FH neighbors & welcome our newcomers! Scheduled Activities for all & Great Raffle Prizes!

3:00 - 4:00 pm • Potato Sack Race; Bowling for Mummies; Face Painting; Pirate Ship Jump House

4:00 - 4:45 pm • Pet and Children's Costume Contest

1st, 2nd & 3rd Place Prizes

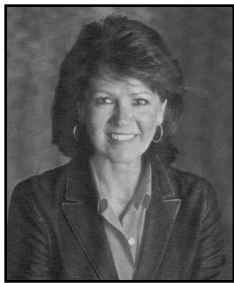
4:45 - 7:00 • Food / Festivities / Live Music / Fall Photo Ops - Doug Kerr

Join the FHA Fall Festival to learn more about your neighborhood! Looking to get involved?
Sign up as a FHA volunteer & get to know your neighbors while having a BLAST!

Garden Club News

Several members of the Forest Hills Garden Club attended the Texas State Fair on Thursday October 4th. Our main interest in visiting the fair was to view the demonstration gardens and to see the beautiful sculpture garden created by our fellow member Lottie Minnick. The meeting for November will be at Mary Deighton's home - 8326 San Fernando Way. Date is Thursday November 1 at 7 PM. Call Mary (214-328-2649) if you plan on attending.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR:



Neoma Twining
Newsletter Editor

Dear Editor:

I am not sure everyone is paying enough attention to the amount of "strange" people and cars in our neighborhood. Daily, there are intrusions of construction vehicles where many are standing around staring and watching us neighbors come and go from our homes. I am tired of it and it makes me really nervous. Are we doing anything about it? — *B. Campbell*



Response:

An effort is being organized to "deputize" FH citizens who wish to support the cops. Such an effort would provide more "eyes" on potential crime. We are systematically encouraging everyone to do their part and report any strange or out of place things they see. Most importantly, write down the license number of any suspect vehicle to have it checked out. We are also working with builders to control the number of cars parked on our streets daily to the extent that we can, keeping roadways clear for emergency vehicles to get through.



Sanger Elementary PTA Presents THE WINTER ART FAIR

Saturday, December 8, 2007 • Time: 10:00am-6:00pm
Alex Sanger Elementary • 8410 San Leandro @ St. Francis (Mapsco 37Z)
Admission: Free (donations accepted)

Making a stop at the Alex Sanger Winter Art Fair is a MUST this year. What better way to find unique and wonderful holiday gift items, for yourself or others, while helping fund academic and campus improvements for the children at Sanger Elementary.

Celebrating it's 9th year, this show is known for an eclectic mix of quality original work, like fused and blown glass, textiles, ceramics, paintings, jewelry, hand made soaps, candles, botanicals, photography and much, much more. There is certainly something for every taste and budget.

This year's event chair, Sabrina Jones says, "I think this will be the best Winter Art Fair ever. We have a huge following and I'm already getting calls wanting to know when the show will be. There are several friends and neighbors who called to say they do all their holiday shopping at our show." Sabrina continues, "It just tickles me to hear that. We are proud of what we are doing for our neighborhood school."



In the past, funds raised from this event have built a new playground, supplied scoreboards and timers for the PE coaches, a piano, area rugs for the kindergarten classes, art supplies, tables, educational books, teaching tools and much more.

Please come, have fun, shop and support our school by attending this worthwhile event.

Forest Hills Yard of the Month

The October yard of the month is awarded to Barb Michaels and John Davis at 8430 Santa Clara Dr. Barb and John have lived in Forest Hills since 1995 and both love gardens and gardening, especially Japanese gardens. From original parent Japanese Maples already growing on the property they propagated 15 seedlings into mature. Barb also maintains an extensive herb garden.



Kathy Wall
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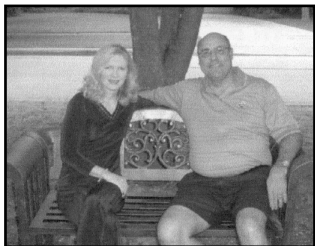
FH Team has “Bench Strength”

A little play on words but we hope you catch our drift. Early in the spring the FHNA launched a campaign to beautify the medians. Our plan was three-fold; 1) water the medians, 2) landscape the medians and 3) place benches throughout the medians



*Andie Comini, Bear and PooChini
St. Francis Park location*

We felt benches would signify a “warm” welcome feeling to those who live in the neighborhood and others who visit. We were right. The feedback about the benches has been nothing but positive. And the participation is at an all time high!!



*Kelly Miller - Nash and Mike Nash
8100 Forest Hills Blvd.*

We will feature two bench donators a month in upcoming newsletters to say thank you and spotlight the locations of the “sitting spots!”

LET'S TALK REAL ESTATE

with
Jenny Capritta



THE ELEMENTS OF LOCATION

When you are in the market for a home, how should you evaluate the properties that appeal to you? There is an old cliché about the three most important factors of a piece of property—location, location and location.

Some neighborhoods have a certain distinction that attracts buyers, but there are other factors to take into account. A house in a good location may have a few points subtracted if it is located on a busy street. There are buyers who would like to be close to schools, shopping, and churches, but don't want to live across the street from these facilities. You may want an easy commute to your job, but would not consider a location close to the “on” ramp of the interstate. A location close to an airport would be convenient if you are a commercial pilot, but might make it difficult to sell even the most wonderful house.

As you balance all of the factors, remember that a location liability that gets you a great house at a reasonable price will probably require you to pass a similar savings on to future buyers.

Whether you are buying or selling a home, Jenny takes the time to ensure you have the pertinent information you need to make a sound decision. So, before your next move, turn to the professional with the passion, energy and drive to make a difference. Serving the area since 1987, Jenny Knows White Rock Lake and can help you make your next move the best yet.

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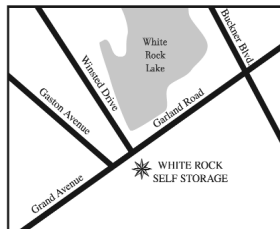
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