



Forest Hills

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The Reporter

FEBRUARY 2008 ISSUE

FH REAL ESTATE MARKET HOLDS ITS OWN

by Jenny Capritta, RE/MAX About Dallas

Most of us have heard the gloom and doom reported on the sub prime lending crisis and subsequent decline in home values in many areas of our nation. Fortunately, White Rock Lake real estate has remained robust in spite of the general market conditions.

Inventory remains low while interest rates have decreased to levels not seen in years.

Forest Hills provides diversified housing, expansive lots, towering trees and a neighborhood feeling so often not felt in suburbia. Many of the 2007 home sales were purchased by relocating downtown employees who sought a short commute and an urban oasis. The beginning of 2008 shows signs of improvement as the MLS reports many pending sales and a slight decrease in the days on market.



MLS stats for 2007 in Forest Hills:

Average days on market.....	95
Average price per foot.....	\$193
Highest price per foot.....	\$322
Average square feet.....	2918
Minimum square feet	1249
Maximum square feet	5523
Total properties sold.....	40

Sales Price % of List Price

Minimum	88%
Maximum	102%
Average	97%

PRESIDENTIAL PERSPECTIVE



Bill Foerster
President

We are getting a good response from our survey that went out with our last newsletter. THANK YOU for those that have responded!!!!!!! For those that have not yet responded please take another look at the survey and see if you can take the time to provide the feedback. Let's turn the good to a great response rate. The survey was designed to be an efficient (minimum time commitment with maximum quality information) conduit to make the board more responsive to our neighbors' interests. We will provide a summary of the responses in our next newsletter. Communication is the key in any relationship; let's communicate so we can continue to improve the Forest Hills Neighborhood experience.

Neighborhood Survey Reveals Plenty

The surveys keep pouring in. An average of five arrive daily and many are accompanied with dues payments and outright donations. Imagine the excitement among board members realizing hard work is finally paying off.

Inside the surveys several attitudes are apparent. Most move to Forest Hills because of its aesthetically pleasing Forest feel. And friendly neighbors. The lot sizes also contribute to positive attitudes towards the area. Many survey respondents wish to see trees replanted to repopulate the area and keep the Forest in Forest Hills. Several donated specific monies to ensure this happens.

Large concerns of residents focus on new homes being built that seem out of place. Crime ranked second among their worries but many felt safer because of the existing crime program in place chaired by Judy Whalen. The survey will be posted on our website this month. Go to www.foresthillsdallas.org to weigh in and be part of something positive in your neighborhood.

Board Energized as Neighborhood Participation Levels Rise

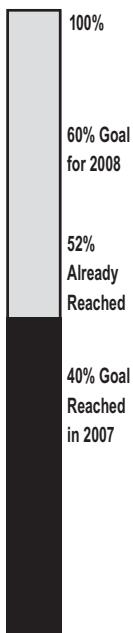
In addition the surveys, money came in during the last month supporting the FHNA's efforts. The money signifies a commitment by neighbors to invest in the programs being outlayed by the FHNA board.

This month's board meeting took place at the home of Lottie Minick (Artbortem Liasion) on San Cristobal. The focus of the meeting was survey results and concerns of residents. Actionable items revolve around beautification. There is a brick monument and garden display centered on the median that exits the neighborhood from Breezewood onto Garland Road. The board expressed interest in placing a "Forest Hills" moniker applique on the brick monument to introduce and showcase Forest Hills from Garland Road.

In other business, the board realizes the need for ongoing tree preservation efforts given the strong input by residents. Monies are being funneled into beautification coffers to address the concerns and plans to re-populate the neighborhood with trees indigenous to Forest Hills.

The next scheduled board meeting will take place on March 10th at the home of Tamela Southan (Social Chair of FHNA).

NEIGHBORHOOD PARTICIPATION BAROMETER



The Neighbors Column

(A NOTE OF GRATITUDE)



Gina Bender
Past FH Treasurer

From each and every FHNA board member and the neighborhood. A special thank you to Gina Bender. Gina has served as treasurer for FHNA for some time during at least three noted leadership transitions. Her dedication to detail and the task at hand is remarkable and appreciated by all of us who have had the privilege to serve along side of her.

Gina, her two sons, Jacob and Matthew, and husband Paul reside on San Fernando. They don't plan on moving anytime soon. Gina has requested she be included in any upcoming events to continue her support of the neighborhood. No doubt, we will be calling on her.

Again, volunteerism is a tough and thankless job. Many of us have huge lives and little time. Gina graciously loaned us her talents and we wish to recognize her service and loyalty to the betterment of this community.

The Tree Whisperer

(MEET JOSÉ MENDEZ)

With Spring on the horizon, the calls requesting “a good tree guy” have been numerous and unending. Plenty of so called “tree experts” advertise door-to-door in Forest Hills. From business cards rubber-banded on your doorknob, to illegal flyers stuffed in your mailbox. Residents have learned to be leary of the yard guy suddenly a tree expert in order to make money.

The Mendez Brothers have been doing business in Forest Hills for the last 15 or so years. Their reputation among neighbors is solid. They operate on word of mouth. Jose Mendez is as charming as he is knowledgeable when it comes to trees. His expertise is hard earned and continuous. Years ago he worked for the Dallas Arboretum. The past two decades have been spent doctoring trees in Plano, Frisco, Lake Highlands, Lakewood and Forest Hills. Needless to say, Jose loves trees. He has a profound relationship with nature he says he learned from his Grandmother.



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Meet Karen Fling, D.V.M . . .

(Neighbor and Friend to the Furry Kind)



Dallas based veterinarian Karen Fling is a tireless animal advocate and a great believer in community outreach. Dr. Fling takes every opportunity to spread the word about how to best care for pets.

A graduate of Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine, Dr. Karen Fling has always viewed her role in the community as much more than a medical caregiver and emphasizes education in and outside of her practice. She began publicly promoting loving, responsible relationships between people and their pets on the radio show *Dr. Jim's Animal Clinic* and thereafter worked for various media and became the weekly featured veterinarian on KXAS/NBC delivering segments on pet care and news. In addition, she has offered public education related to veterinary medical progress and options in pet care, hosting the weekly radio show *All About Pets* on 1190 AM. Dr. Fling has also been a regular columnist for *City and Country Pets* magazine and has acted as a spokesperson for the American Veterinary Medical Association and the Dallas County Veterinary Medical Association.

As owner of East Lake Veterinary Hospital in Dallas, Dr. Fling has incorporated all aspects of her philosophy in its design: pets are members of the family. They should be afforded not only the best medical care, but also receive royal treatment during their visit. Plush lodging areas include dog bedrooms with small televisions and cat condos with a view to outdoor bird feeders. Additionally, a pet visitation room furnished with comfortable couches and floor pillows is available.

In 1993 Dr. Fling began a non-profit pet adoption program, East Lake Pet Orphanage, which successfully matches the personalities of hundreds of homeless animals with new owners every year. All of the pets placed are spayed or neutered, current on immunizations and in the best health possible. The orphanage is a no-kill facility that not only accepts well pets, but also those requiring extensive rehabilitation. If an animal is treatable, no matter how serious the problem, every effort is made to ensure that pet can be adopted. With an 80% euthanasia rate for homeless pets, the orphanage knows they cannot save them all, but works to do everything humanly possible to save the ones that they can.

Dr. Fling has been active within her profession as president of the Dallas County Veterinary Medical Association and its non-profit counterpart which she co-founded, the Dallas County Veterinary Medical Foundation. Additionally, she has spent many years serving as the Dallas County Public Relations Committee chairperson. Besides her love for pets, Dr. Fling is devoted to her husband David, who is also a veterinarian, and their three children Anneliese, Ian, and Gabriel.



Her Passion is Pets . . . She Built it, They Came

Her passion is pets and it shows. Dr. Karen Fling is the visionary behind East Lake Veterinary Hospital, located nearby on Northwest Hwy. With the utmost commitment to quality pet care, East Lake is the sort of place pet lovers dream about. The color of the building is just like the facility itself-extraordinary. In all my years of traipsing in and out of vet clinics tending to my own flock, I have never stepped inside such an inviting building. It bodes all the comforts of home for humans, but this place is designed and dedicated solely to the comfort and care of pets.

One of the FHNA's goals is to reach to the local business owners and invite them to partner with us as we strive to make Forest Hills an even better place to live. We invited Dr. Fling to our recent board meeting to talk specifically about East Lake and the role of Dr. Fling's team in the community. We are glad to have East Lake's support as a haven for lost pets registered with our Animal Alert Program and we are glad to have Dr. Fling involved with our neighborhood, given her vision for other aspects of her life.





PAWS PAGE



Pet Photo of the Month

CupCake Miller, the Princess Pomeranian of Forest Hills!

Mike & Kelly Miller

East Lake Veterinary Hospital is participating in the first ever National Canine Weight Check.

Throughout February, East Lake Veterinary Hospital is offering free weight assessments by our veterinarians to determine your pets ideal weight.

Call us today and find out how we can help you determine your pets ideal weight and learn more about how to correct health concerns related to obesity.

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To be Posted VERY LOW on the Refrigerator Door — Nose Height!

Dear Dogs and Cats,

The dishes with the paw print are yours and contain your food. The other dishes are mine and contain my food. Please note, placing a paw print in the middle of my plate and food does not stake a claim for it becoming your food and dish, nor do I find that aesthetically pleasing in the slightest.

The stairway was not designed by NASCAR and is not a racetrack. Beating me to the bottom is not the object. Tripping me doesn't help because I fall faster than you can run.

I cannot buy anything bigger than a king sized bed. I am very sorry about this. Do not think I will continue sleeping on the couch to ensure your comfort. Dogs and cats can actually curl up in a ball when they sleep. It is not necessary to sleep perpendicular to each other stretched out to the fullest extent possible. I also know that sticking tails straight out and having tongues hanging out the other end to maximize space is nothing but sarcasm.

For the last time, there is not a secret exit from the bathroom. If by some miracle I beat you there and manage to get the door shut, it is not necessary to claw, whine, meow, try to turn the knob or get your paw under the edge and try to pull the door open. I must exit through the same door I entered. Also, I have been using the bathroom for years — canine or feline attendance is not required.

The proper order is kiss me, then go smell the other dog or cat's butt. I cannot stress this enough!

To pacify you, my dear pets, I have posted the following message on our front door:

To All Non-Pet Owners Who Visit & Like to Complain About Our Pets:

1. They live here. You don't.
2. If you don't want their hair on your clothes, stay off the furniture. (That's why they call it 'fur'niture.)
3. I like my pets a lot better than I like most people.
4. To you, it's an animal. To me, he/she is an adopted son/daughter who is short, hairy, walks on all fours and doesn't speak clearly.

Remember: In many ways, dogs and cats are better than kids because they:

1. Eat less
2. Don't ask for money all the time
3. Are easier to train
4. Normally come when called
5. Never ask to drive the car
6. Don't hang out with drug-using friends
7. Don't smoke or drink
8. Don't have to buy the latest fashions
9. Don't want to wear your clothes
10. Don't need a 'gazillion' dollars for college.

And finally,

11. If they get pregnant, you can sell their children.

CONTACTS FOR THE FOREST HILLS ANIMAL ALERT! PROGRAM

To report a Lost or Found Animal..... Betty Guerra @ (214) 621-7086
 Pat Cage @ (214) 460-1269
 Animal Control Call 311

SECURING POSSESSIONS AGAINST THEFT

— by Judy Whalen



Rod Dillon

Residents can help recover their property if ever lost or stolen by keeping the serial numbers written down in a list kept apart from the property itself. Don't just list everything on a computer; the computer might be what is stolen. Almost every electronic item has a serial number. Another very good way to mark your property is to engrave your Texas License number on it: TXDL #####.

Engravers can be borrowed from the Northeast Police Station. Contact ronald.carpenter@dpd.dallascityhall.com. Markings must be visible to the naked eye to be effective. There is GPS software for computers, especially laptops that will report the unit's location when connected to the Internet. Strong password encryption of your computer is the best defense to losing personal data.

For personal things like jewelry or silverware, if you have a digital camera that can take extreme close-ups, that would be helpful in proving ownership of custom made pieces, personal items or jewelry. There is laser engraving of diamonds, but as a practical matter those markings are visible only to a professional jeweler. Silverware can be photographed, but it would have to be serial numbered and would only be recovered if an officer discovers it prior to the thief selling it on E-Bay. Keep a receipt or appraisal for all your

valuables somewhere for your insurance company. A great hiding place for jewelry or other smaller items can be found at [www.instructables.com/id/Your-Own-Secret-Hidden-Safe!](http://www.instructables.com/id/Your-Own-Secret-Hidden-Safe/) There are also commercial hidden safes available on-line. Coming up with hiding places like the freezer, a bag of sugar, the dryer or a cookie jar is not a good solution. Most thieves know about "clever" hiding places!

The Dallas Police Department has a unit of detectives who investigate any activity connected to pawnshops. Most pawnshops voluntarily participate in a computer program where they enter their transactions each day including serial numbers of property they purchase or make loans against. These records are searched each day with property from police reports that have unique serial

numbers. It is not in a Pawnshop's best interest to buy stolen items, so they routinely turn down items they absolutely know are stolen. They will not buy any property with a Texas Driver's License number etched on it unless that number matches the person selling the item. If stolen property is located in a pawnshop, the detective places a 60-day hold on the item and contacts the property owner. The owner is advised as to the location of the property and is given the opportunity to buy back their property, usually at the amount the pawnshop paid for it. Or a request for a Magistrate's Hearing to determine the ownership of the property can be filed by the detective, which can be a long process.



Dave Wilson



David De Tamble

Our Forest



*"I think that I shall never see
A poem as lovely as a tree
A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;
A tree that looks at God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray,
A tree that may in summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;
Upon whose bosom snow has lain,
Who intimately lives with rain . . ."*



This famous poem by Joyce Kilmer captures the beauty, the majesty and the awe to be found in the marvelous creation of a tree and its timeless wisdom embodied within.

Trees add more than greenery, natural beauty and value to our properties. As environmental heroes they gobble up air pollutants helping the air we breathe, by removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and storing it until they die and decompose. That carbon dioxide is responsible for half of the greenhouse effect, thus trees are a natural control against global warming. A healthy tree removes 25-45 pounds of carbon from the air each year and gives us back the precious gift of oxygen.

Their benefit is greater than meets the eye. They buffer noise. They cool hot spots. If placed well, trees can shade buildings and reduce their energy consumption by up to 50 percent! Trees are essential for our survival.



*Farewell,
old
friend . . .*



*The
Bare
Fact*



*Sad Fact: The fallen trees
along our streets are not
being replaced.*



*We need to rebuild
our forest.*

I would like to encourage each homeowner when they lose a tree to replace it with at least one or two new ones this fall when tree planting is best. We are losing our tree-lined streets. Consider planting several slow growing/long living trees in the greenway near the curb to bring back the cool canopy over our hot streets. It's a responsible gift of well-being to future generations.

Keep the "Forest" in Forest Hills!

*Love,
Mother Nature*

Garden Club News

The February meeting was held at the home of Katrina Moran. We had a wonderful speaker on organic gardening and were also visited by Allen Houston who writes Neighbors-To-Go for the Dallas Morning News. So be on the lookout for some pictures in the newspaper in the coming weeks. The March meeting will be held at the home of Mary Ehrenberger on Thursday March 5th at 7:30 PM. Call Barb Michaels (214-327-3817) for details.

WHITE ROCK EAST GARDEN AND ARTISAN TOUR

Tour date for this year is Sunday, May 18th from 11-5 PM. We are looking for three gardens to be on the tour. If you would like to participate or want to nominate a garden please call Barb Michaels (214-327-3817) or Lottie Minnick (214-320-3868). This event was very much enjoyed by all who volunteered and attended last year. In addition it was a great source of revenue for our neighborhood beautification.

PLANTS NEEDED FOR THE GARDEN TOUR

In addition to the gardens and artists we will have another wonderful plant sale this year. If you have plants that need to be divided please dig them up and put in one gallon pots — or call Barb or Lottie and we can arrange to help you repot them for the sale. It is a great time to share the beauty and bounty of our gardens!

LETTER TO THE EDITOR:



Neoma Twining
Newsletter Editor

Dear Editor:

I'm noticing that a lot of neighbors are leaving their front porch lights on at night. In some cases, the lights shine in bedroom windows. I am wondering if they're doing this to prevent crime?



Editor's response:

We checked with several neighbors who had their porch lights on. We found out that indeed they are doing this as a security measure. They feel safer with their front door lit. After weighing in with the police department, the advice is to change things up. In other words, sometimes leave the light on, sometimes leave the light off. If the lights are particularly bothersome, you may have to consult your neighbor in a friendly fashion.



Sanger Elementary News

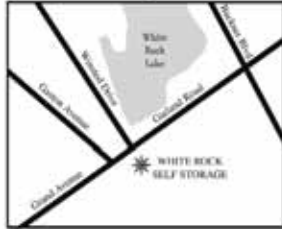
January 17th was a very exciting day for Sanger students! The first of three concerts presented by the Van Cliburn Foundation was presented. The program is called Musical Awakenings; each presentation is developed to teach children about the basic elements of music through fun, interactive activities within the context of classical piano repertoire. A grand piano is brought into the school and a camcorder and projector are used to project the pianist's hands onto a screen for all students to view. Illustrations further enhance the student's experiences. The first program was called: Musical organizers. Programs two and three are titled What makes a Hero a Hero and Taste the Music of many Countries. This is quite an honor for Alex Sanger as only four schools out of the district are chosen to participate in this program.

In other news, the Forest Hills garden club has graciously agreed to help with the renovation of the school garden. We have already received a beautiful bird house lovingly built by the family of a kindergartner. Anyone wishing to contribute some time, plants, pathway materials etc., may contact Mary Ehrenberger (214) 327-7994. We're hoping to coordinate a workday where everyone can come out for some fun, sun, snacks, and fellowship. We should have the date available for the March newsletter, and please remember "the more the merrier"!

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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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Yard of the Month

Steve and Meghan Bakota are recipients of February Yard of the Month. They reside at 8146 San Leandro. Congratulations are definitely in order for all their hard work!



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Email your request to ntwining@swbell.net.

The cost is \$400.00 per run which does not include paper stock costs. Great way to reach 616 Forest Hills residents in a personal way.

White Rock Boat House Wins in Austin



Way back in late October, White Rock Boat House rowers, Nan Miller and Tina Westmoreland, made the trek to Austin's Lady Bird Lake for the annual Pumpkinhead regatta. As first-time regatta competitors, placing in the 5K Masters Double Scull event seemed a long shot at best. But, due to rigorous early morning workouts and many strategy sessions at Starbucks, these gals came in with a winning time of 24:26:4, and brought home GOLD MEDALS to show off to their families and fellow rowers. Their take on the victory? "The great thing about rowing is the more time you put in on the water, the more competitive you get. Age really doesn't matter much. We're just going to get better and better," says Tina. Nan adds, "It brings a whole new dimension when

you start training for a regatta. But I still love lolly-gagging around the lake, chasing the pelicans."

White Rock Boat House is expanding into the old Filter House on top of the dam. In addition to housing larger crew boats, the facility will include a beautifully renovated event space overlooking White Rock Lake. Called "Water Works," it will be open by Summer 2008, and available to rent for your next special occasion. For more details, call Nan Miller at 214-535-3592. For information about learning to row, visit www.rowtherock.com.



Photos courtesy of Enduro Photo

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