



Brook Meadows Messenger

The Official Publication of the Brook Meadows Homeowner's Association

Volume 2, Number 11

www.brookmeadows.org

November 2007

Message from the Board

Have you been having a little trouble sleeping late on Saturday mornings? Putting the pillow over your head doesn't drown out that pounding sound? Can't dance around the house to the music you like because the rhythms don't match. Can't sit by the pool, sip a cool one and hear yourself think? NOT IF YOUR NEIGHBOR IS GETTING A NEW ROOF!

For those of us who have actually been praying for a significant hailstorm for a few years now, the interruption of sleep and the sound of nail guns haven't been quite as bothersome. A new roof was a just reward for all those insurance premiums paid for all those years. Well, wasn't it? Especially considering how quickly some of those dear companies cancel our teen-age drivers' policies and put us in the "high-risk" pool. But that is another article entirely.

In fact, in a neighborhood that is totally built-out, it has been rather interesting to see the changes created in the flavor of our homes by the crowning of their facades with a new, more fashionable chapeau. Since April, over twenty-five homes have had new roofs installed in Brook Meadows. The Architectural Review Committee—otherwise known as the ARC—knows that for a fact; they are charged by the CC&R's with the responsibility of keeping track of those kinds of things.

The Architectural Review Committee, like the Board itself, has been dedicated to the philosophy of a revitalized sense of community and neighborhood spirit. To that end, the first order of business after the yearly meeting was to complete the revision of the ARC guidelines that had been undertaken by the previous committee. Fortunately, everyone involved had developed a new spirit of enthusiasm and with it came some

sense of humor as well. The document over time had grown into a monstrous 19 pages --- wonderfully constructed, incredibly detailed, and impossible to easily use. "HOLY COW!" was the first response and "Slice it to Six" became the mantra.

An amazing team effort and countless hours went into the reconstruction of the document recently posted on the web site. It was a concentrated effort at trying to maintain the new spirit of the neighborhood while protecting everyone's property values from anything too strange or unusual. The resulting five pages plus two-page Property Modification Form has been well-received. When posted on the Brook Meadows Web Site for review and comments, no negative feedback was sent to the Board. While that may only mean that no one reads the web site very often, the ARC is optimistic that a majority saw the guidelines as reasonable and prudent.

In the meantime, our homeowners -- our neighbors -- are doing a wonderful job of following those guidelines and the CC&R's. Almost daily the Committee receives a Property Modification Request of some sort. It might be a request for an intriguing addition -- and, curiosity sets in; is it for a parent's suite, or a college student who wants their "own space", or, WOW -- a live-in maid? Well, none of that is the ARC's concern as long as the rules are followed for the addition itself.

The ARC is lucky to have a terrifically experienced construction/contractor executive in Tom Kader as a vital member who can read plans right side up! He also knows when to suggest taking care to make sure a roof replacement meets Class 4 requirements just in case a homeowner hasn't thought about that in the excitement of getting that old

shake shingle hazard replaced. And our new neighbor, Mary Cornelius knows Real Estate and has chipped in with her own suggestions and good work on the committee. We thank them both for their diligence and hard work in getting the ARC from nothing to something through a rough weather period.

The next PMR might be a gorgeous landscape plan with a beautiful fountain that will banish a tired worn-out bunch of bushes to the trash pile. Only in four-foot cut lengths though, if you want our trash guys to haul it off! All in all, our homeowners are fixing up, painting up, sprucing up, keeping up -- all of which should keep property values in Brook Meadows going up! The ARC Committee has worked very hard to keep up, too, with the number of requests coming in. At times it has been difficult to respond as quickly as they would have liked, but they have been working diligently to turn your requests around as fast as possible.

The ARC is actually beginning to be a fun committee. Now that rewriting is over! They could really use some more members. So if you enjoy seeing the changes going on around the neighborhood and can read a plan -- even upside down is a start -- contact a Board member about joining the ARC committee. It's all about keeping our neighborhood the gracious, beautiful, inviting community we chose out of all the others. Besides, one of these days all the roofs will be finished and we WILL be able to sleep late again.

Thanks for being such a great neighbor,
Your Board

Brook Meadows

Brook Meadows Homeowners Association, Inc.

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OCTOBER YARD OF THE MONTH

Our Yard of the Month for October belongs to John and Lisa Brittell, who live at 4514 Shadywood Lane. The Brittells moved to Brook Meadows in January of 2006 after John accepted a position as Vice-President of E-Commerce for Game Stop, headquartered in Grapevine. They have two children, Joe who is a junior at CHHS and Jonathan, a 5th grader at OC Taylor. Their niece, Angela, also resides with them. The Brittells are slightly outnumbered by their pets, which include an assortment of cats, a dog, a rat and a Ball Python named Sheila.

The Brittells are blessed that the previous homeowners shared the same sensibility for natural landscaping and diversity. By their own admission, they are wanted as "Landscape Killers" in several states, so just keeping the existing plants alive is a primary motivation. Some special features are large native rocks ("we can't kill those") placed about the yard and a beautiful fountain by the homes entrance. Some new additions include Petunias, Lantana and Begonias for a splash of color. The Brittells' future plans for their yard are to keep it simple by staying with native plants and flowers that will flourish in our Texas climate. They, like most of us, are looking for good looking plants that are easy to care for.

Thanks to John and Lisa for keeping their "stuff" alive and looking so nice. We all know that it takes a lot of work, and we all appreciate your efforts.



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"Last Tuesday" at The Glass Cactus

Well, here I go again saying, you should have been with us at the Glass Cactus on Lake Grapevine for September's "Last Tuesday" get together. About 20 of us had a great time visiting on the outdoor patio overlooking beautiful Lake Grapevine on one of the most beautiful nights of the year. I am sure that we will do this again.... and next time, DO NOT MISS IT.

If you have not been to a "Last Tuesday" you are depriving yourself of a great time to get with your neighbors in a very casual environment. If you have not joined us, you have no idea how great your neighbors are. If you have not joined us, you have missed out, and that needs to come to an end. Come one time and you will make plans to join each one thereafter. That is a promise.

By the time you read this, we will have had another great time at Duke's at Central and 183. Please go to your calendar right now and circle November 27th, and plan to meet your neighbors at Lonnegan's on Hwy 26 at 6:30 PM. We even have old neighbors that have moved out of the neighborhood come and join us at these events. Give yourselves a break... join us. You, and we, will be glad you did.



Laura Speights,

Our newest Landscape Committee Member

I grew up in North Dallas and received a B.A. from The University of Texas at Austin. My husband, Mike, and I met in college and have been married for 16 years. Our daughter, Katie, is a freshman at CHHS. We have a son, Jay, who is a 5th grader at O.C. Taylor. Our youngest, Matthew, is in Pre-kindergarten at St. Vincent's Episcopal School. We have lived in the area for 11 years, but moved to Brook Meadows 2 years ago.

I have had an infatuation with gardening for as long as I can remember. I planted my first flower bed in elementary school and graduated to a vegetable garden a few years later. I enjoy the challenge of working with a blank slate. Researching plants and design ideas for the BM landscape committee has brought a renewed interest to my current backyard project which had stalled over the summer.

I look forward to working with the BMHA and I am excited to be a part of the transformation at the Lakeside Fountain entrance. Standby for the new look.

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Raising Confident Kids

It takes confidence to be a kid. Whether going to a new school or stepping up to bat for the first time, kids face a lot of uncharted territory.

Naturally, parents want to instill a can-do attitude in their kids so that they'll bravely take on new challenges and, over time, believe in themselves. While each child is a little different, parents can follow some general guidelines to build kids' confidence.

Self-confidence rises out of a sense of competence. In other words, kids develop confidence not because parents tell them they're great, but because of their achievements, big and small. Sure, it's good

to hear encouraging words from mom and dad. But words of praise mean more when they refer to a child's specific efforts or new abilities.

When kids achieve something, whether it's brushing their own teeth or riding a bike, they get a sense of themselves as able and capable, and tap into that high-octane fuel of confidence.

Building self-confidence can begin very early. When babies learn to turn the pages of a book or toddlers learn to walk, they are getting the idea "I can do it!" With each new skill and milestone, kids can develop increasing confidence.

Parents can help by giving kids lots of opportunities to practice and master their skills, letting kids make mistakes and being there to boost their spirits so they keep trying. Respond with interest and excitement when kids show off a new skill, and reward them with praise when they achieve a goal or make a good effort.

With plentiful opportunities, good instruction, and lots of patience from parents, kids can master basic skills — like tying their shoes and making the bed. Then, when other important challenges present themselves, kids can approach them knowing that they have already been successful in other areas.

Stay on the Sidelines

Of course, supervision is important to ensure that kids stay safe. But to help them really learn a new skill, it's also important not to hover. Give kids the opportunity to try something new, make mistakes, and learn from them.

For instance, if your son wants to learn how to make a peanut butter sandwich, demonstrate, set up the ingredients, and let him give it a try. Will he make a bit of a mess? Almost certainly. But don't swoop in the second some jelly hits the countertop. In fact, avoid any criticism that could discourage him from trying again. If you step in to finish the sandwich, your son will think, "Oh well, I guess I can't make sandwiches."

But if you have patience for the mess and the time it takes to learn, the payoff will be real. Someday soon he'll be able to say, "I'm hungry for lunch, so I'm going to make my own sandwich." You might even reply, "Great, can you make me one, too?" What a clear sign of your faith in his abilities!



Curiosity and Confidence

Encouraging your child's curiosity is another way to foster confidence. Maybe your toddler makes noise - not music - when she bangs on the piano. But that's OK. She's boldly exploring the world to see what she can do.

Offer Encouragement and Praise

Sometimes, it won't be you swooping in when your child falters, but your child giving up. Help by encouraging persistence in the midst of frustration. By trying again, kids learn that obstacles can be overcome.

Once kids reach a goal, you'll want to praise not only the end result but also their willingness to stick with it. For instance, after your son has mastered making that peanut butter sandwich you might show your confidence by saying, "Next time, want to learn how to crack an egg?" Sandwich-fixing and egg-cracking might not seem like huge achievements, but they're important steps in the right direction — toward your child's independence.

Throughout childhood, parents have chances to prepare kids to take care of themselves. Sure, it's great to feel needed, but as kids steadily gain confidence and independence, their relationship with you can be even richer. You can be bonded, not just by dependence, but by love and shared pride in all they've achieved. Eventually, your grown-up kids just might say thanks for how prepared they feel for the road ahead — a road they can take with confidence.

Reviewed by: D'Arcy Lyness, PhD

Date reviewed: January 2007

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The Right Time

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