



May / June 2024



# The Whispers

Bi-Monthly Newsletter

PUBLISHED BY NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS, INC. FOR THE WHISPERING OAKS HOMEOWNER'S ASSOCIATION

## The Importance of Volunteering for Whispering Oaks

by Fred Previc

In Whispering Oaks, what does it mean to be a good neighbor? Most importantly, it's about treating neighbors with respect by complying with all Whispering Oaks covenants, deed restrictions, and City of San Antonio codes. The second-most important requirement for all owners of residences in Whispering Oaks is to pay the very minimal \$125 annual dues. Just because belonging to our neighborhood association is voluntary, not mandatory, doesn't mean that one shouldn't support the neighborhood financially. Our neighborhood and facilities continue to be maintained because of extra contributions and legacy gifts from very generous individuals who have compensated for those who refuse to pay dues, though this should not be the case.

Are the above two contributions enough to ensure our neighborhood thrives for many years to come? Not really. Every resident of Whispering Oaks should consider what it means to volunteer one's efforts, services, and talents to the neighborhood. Whispering Oaks has had a long history of volunteerism, such as residents serving on boards, helping maintain facilities, lobbying local officials, serving as block captains, and walking the streets for various community causes.

But nowadays it's harder than in the past to get volunteers to help out. Our neighborhood used to have more events at the pool and on the grounds than it does today, including National Night Out, evening socials, and community garage sales. Quite frankly, some of these haven't taken place in recent years because there haven't been enough volunteers to organize them.

Part of the problem is the decline of volunteerism overall in American society. A recent study by the AARP reported that the number of volunteer hours declined by 50% from 2002 to 2021, with the greatest decline seen in the 25- to 49-year age group. This decline may be partly related to the greater economic stressors in our society, with young parents juggling demands of work and family in an economically difficult

*(Continued on page 3)*

## 'Flying T', Median Making A Difference

A long-awaited safety upgrade to the Whispering Oaks entrance on Whisper Valley was completed last month. City crews installed a 'Flying T' median along Wurzbach which provides safe harbor for motorists entering and leaving the neighborhood.



The unique median provides a curb-enclosed center turn lane for Whisper Valley. Motorists who enter the channel and can safely pause to either cross or join the flow of Wurzbach traffic. The curbing ensures waiting or merging vehicles are protected along the increasingly busy roadway. City engineers confirm the median can accommodate buses and large trucks.

The project was requested by WOHHA and District 9 Councilman John Courage provided the necessary funding when a pledge from TxDot fell short. Courage also fended off a last minute legal challenge from the owner of the adjacent Elms Shopping Center who was concerned that patrons would have difficulty entering the complex. City staff had previously determined legal access would be maintained, but illegal access would be deterred.

Whisper Valley is one of six primary entrances to Whispering Oaks and one of its busiest. WOHHA continues to explore additional enhancements for the roadway, including methods to deter rush hour traffic which cuts through the neighborhood when Wurzbach becomes congested.

### Upcoming WOHHA Member Board Meetings



All Board meetings are open to dues-paying members. If you wish to be on the agenda, please advise the President. All meetings are held at 6:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of every month, except December, unless otherwise posted. All meetings are held at the Adante Independent Living Facility, 2739 Cembola Blvd., in the Game Room on the second floor and last up to two hours. Upcoming meetings:

**Tuesday, 14 May, 6:30 p.m.**

**Tuesday, 11 June, 6:30 p.m.**



## Whispering Oaks Community Yard Sale

Saturday May 31 & Sunday June 1

Register your home to participate for free: [whisperingoaks.org](http://whisperingoaks.org)



2024

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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# Peter's Prez-spective

A Letter from the WOHA President

## Squeaky Wheels Really Do Get Greased

Yet another roadway safety enhancement was installed this spring at one of the Whispering Oaks entrances. This time a 'Flying T' was installed at the long-problematic Whisper Valley entrance at Wurzbach (see article, p. 1). Last year, sidewalks were added along Lockhill-Selma to keep pedestrians and school children safe. And before that, a turn lane was added to the roadway at Whispering Wind to safeguard our residents.

All of these projects are the direct result of WOHA's relentless advocacy on behalf of our community. It's an easily overlooked benefit of having an active, well-run neighborhood association. Those taxpayer dollars could have gone to important projects in other nearby communities, but they came here because WOHA effectively lobbied for them.

Our Board has become pretty good at securing City-funded improvements, in part because we've cultivated relationships with the decision makers. Councilman John Courage and his staff surely tire of hearing from WOHA, but they have proven to be reliable, dedicated partners for the common good. Anyone who wonders if government can function at the local level can get an earful from me. Whispering Oaks has enjoyed seven years of steady stewardship from Courage, so he will be missed when he terms out of District 9 next May.

The Councilman repeatedly found funding for Whispering Oaks concerns when other City sources didn't pan out. For example, TX-Dot had originally agreed to pay for the Flying T project, but when it backed out, Courage stepped in and somehow covered the cost. The project had sputtered for years and had encountered numerous obstacles, but a small group of local leaders kept plugging away at a good idea. Tenacity usually pays off, if it doesn't kill you first.

Aging suburbs surrounded by urban growth need steady advocacy to be protected. That's why District 9 staff always have at least one lingering project that WOHA has proposed. To help our requests turn into reality, we provide detailed proposals that reflect input solicited from Public Works staff to ensure they are feasible. We even suggest compromises to reduce costs if only partial funding can be found. And when a project begins, WOHA interacts directly with the City staff overseeing the contractors to reduce work for our district partners.

Again, all of this takes the time and talent of dedicated neighborhood volunteers. But, clearly the outcome is worth the effort. And as WOHA enters its golden anniversary year, it's looking for the next generation of neighborhood leaders who recognize the importance and potential of serving our wonderful subdivision. Some on the Board have served for several years and deserve a break. Most residents don't have time to spare these days, but some will have to find it so we all can continue to benefit.

## Whispering Oaks Online Communications

Join our Facebook page and Nextdoor Whispering Oaks HOA group for up-to-date information on events and other important news about our neighborhood.



### Facebook:

Whispering Oaks Homeowners Association SA



### NextDoor:

Whispering Oaks Homeowners Association group

Contact the HOA board and join the HOA at <https://www.whisperingoaks.org/>

*"Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success."*  
—Henry Ford

(Volunteering continued from page 1)



environment. Conversely, those over 65 now make up almost 30% of volunteers, as compared to less than 20% in 2002. Many important positions in Whispering Oaks are held by retirees, which makes sense—up to a point. Will there be residents willing to step up when these individuals are no longer able to help out in the neighborhood?

One of the great joys of volunteering is seeing the results first-hand—the smiles on children’s faces participating in festivities and games, the beautification of the neighborhood, the responsiveness of local officials to our needs, etc. But there is a larger issue at stake. As anyone who receives notifications on NextDoor.com about events happening in nearby neighborhoods can attest, lots of older neighborhoods in San Antonio are really struggling—beset with safety and other issues. Fortunately, Whispering Oaks stands tall among them and will remain that way as long each of us, owners and renters alike, does our part to keep it that way. Obeying codes and covenants and paying annual dues are essential, but adding volunteerism is priceless!

To give your neighbors and your all-volunteer Board of Directors a small hand, email [board@whisperingoaks.org](mailto:board@whisperingoaks.org).

### Can I Post Political Yard Signs? Yes, But Not Yet



With another election season upon us, residents should be aware that Texas state law allows some types of political signage within Whispering Oaks. However, all signage must conform with the minimums allowed under the Texas Election Code which includes the following requirements:

- One yard sign is allowed per candidate or measure appearing on the upcoming ballot.
- Signage may not be posted prior to 90 days before the election (early August for the November ballot) and must be removed 10 days following.
- Signage must be ground-mounted (not attached to a building or tree) and not larger than 4x6 feet.
- Signage may not be enhanced so that it distracts motorists.
- Language or images that would be offensive to the ordinary person are not allowed.
- Signage which fails to comply with the Title 15, Chapter 259 can be cited for mandatory removal.

**YARD OF THE MONTH**

*Yard of the Month*

**April 2024**

**CONGRATULATIONS!!!**  
Gail Hughlette at 11503 Whisper Ledge

**CITY OF SAN ANTONIO** Council District 9  
John Courage

**Important Numbers**

Emergency 911  
City Services 311 (210 207 6000)

SAPD Non-Emergency 210 207 7273  
SAFD Non-Emergency 210 207 7744  
Animal Care Services 210 207 4738  
San Antonio Public Libraries 210 207 2500  
Homeless Connections Hotline 210 207 1799  
Walker Ranch Senior Center 210 207 5280  
Mail Theft Information 800 275 8777

CPS Energy 210 353 2222  
SAWS 210 704 7297  
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Contact us: [District9@sanantonio.gov](mailto:District9@sanantonio.gov)

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# Summertime Fun's A-Comin' at YOUR Whispering Oaks Pool



Whispering Oaks Residents, this is the perfect time to join your neighborhood pool. As the temperatures start to rise the Whispering Oaks Pool is a beautiful place to come cool off with friends and neighbors. With your membership, you are allowed to bring up to five (5) guests (daily guest fees apply), a great opportunity to bring friends to hang out.

We have a few neighborhood parties throughout the summer. Mark your calendars for Sunday, May 26th, as we celebrate Memorial Day with a free swim day for everyone. Come check out the pool for yourself. Another party and parade will be on July 4th.

Your neighborhood pool is also heated during the winter months, a rare feature for a neighborhood pool. We are thankful for our partnership with Streamline Swim Team, who gives us the resources to heat the pool. Speaking of swim teams, your Blue Marlins Swim Team starts up practice in mid-May. We are grateful to have the Blue Marlins as part of our neighborhood experience. What a great way to connect with people and allow your children to develop a lifelong skill!

We are thankful to the members who were able to join us for our annual pool clean-up. Your commitment to maintaining the beauty and

cleanliness of our pool and neighborhood area is greatly appreciated. Your Whispering Oaks pool is maintained and operated by volunteer neighbors like you. There are a couple of long-time board members I would like to recognize. Molly Bailey is a long-time resident who spends many of her retirement hours cleaning, edging, painting, buying supplies, giving out key fobs, and many more tasks that keep our pool operating. Thank you, Molly! Another board member who gets busy this time of the year is LoGina Vinclesio. LoGina runs our neighborhood Swim Team, spending countless hours signing up swimmers, hiring coaches, running swim meets and, overall, making swimming a fun activity for our kids. Thank you, LoGina!



Blue Marlins getting coaching



Hope to see you at the pool this summer! Many great memories are yet to be made!

Brent Eilers, President

Whispering Oaks Swim Club

## Swim Team Time. Hooray!



Come Join the Fun! Our Whispering Oaks Blue Marlins Swim Team, which is a member of Maverick Summer Swim League, is open to residents and non-residents of Whispering Oaks. Registration opened on Saturday, 13 April.

Our coaching staff provides a disciplined, fun program for swimmers. We offer beginner levels for all ages up to advanced. We are a learn-to-swim program, which is very popular with children ages 4-6, with coaches and age-group helpers in the water with the kids. They make it fun and the kids really do learn to swim.

Our program runs for approximately seven weeks. Beginning with our first in-water practice on 15 May 2024, it runs through the All Star Meet on 2 July. Meets are optional, but we encourage everyone to participate. There are four Dual Meets (in which we swim against another team), a Championship Meet, and an All Star Meet.

Lessons: Each of our coaches is authorized by the WOSTC board to give lessons at our pool. Information on each of the coaches can be found on our website. To review more details and/or join our team, please go to <https://whisperingoaksbluemarlinsswimtopia.com> or use the QR code below and click on Swim Team.

You may also reach out to [LoGinaVinclesio@teamsabluemarlin@gmail.com](mailto:LoGinaVinclesio@teamsabluemarlin@gmail.com).



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andrew@bcgroups.net  
*Whispering Oaks Resident*



## Memorial Weekend Party

The Whispering Oaks Swim Club is pleased to invite all Whispering Oakers to our annual Memorial Weekend Party. The pool is open all day Sunday from 1:00–8:00 p.m.—for free! That day, you don't need to be a member. This is a great time to come out and meet your neighbors. Look for future communications on details of the Party. We look forward to seeing you there!

Also mark you calendars for the annual 4th of July Parade held on Whisper Valley, followed by a picnic at the pool! Watch the bulletin boards in June.

## SAFFE Officer Theresa LaFroscia

SAFFE is short for San Antonio Fear Free Environment. Each substation has its own unit for that service area. Each substation is broken down by districts, with a SAFFE Officer assigned to each of those districts. SAFFE Officers work with residents, businesses, community leaders, and patrol officers to help prevent crimes before they happen. SAFFE officer duties include but are not limited to (1) identify and resolve problems, (2) act as liaisons with other city agencies, (3) participate in school and youth outreach programs, (4) coordinate graffiti removal, (5) and provide crime prevention resources to residents. We also work closely with homeless advocates and provide resources to the unhoused. I believe SAFFE Officers are most important in policing because we build a positive bridge in the gap between policing and the communities we serve.

Personally, I come from a family of police officers, mainly NYPD. I was born and raised in NYC so I like to consider that a part of my work history! I would listen to their stories and was always amazed by how brave they were, so I wanted to be just like them. As I got older, if there was some kind of commotion, while people were running away, I always found myself running toward the scene to see how I can help and just knew I belonged in this field.

I have been with SAPD for a little bit over three years. I was on patrol for 2.5 years here at the Prue Sub-station, then came over to our SAFFE unit in November. While on patrol, I worked the same part of town I now serve as a SAFFE Officer, which has made the transition a lot easier. Prior to SAPD, I worked inside Bexar County Jail for 2.5 years. While there, I worked mainly in the Infirmary and Lockdown units and then Booking/Releasing.

My main goal as a Police Officer is to make a difference. The job itself is not meant for everyone and I'm grateful I have what it takes to be in this field; therefore, I don't take what I do for granted. I try to approach each call, each situation as if a family member or friend had called the police, then think of how I would want the police to respond to them. That is, I try to use my life experience to humanize myself beyond the uniform, which I believe has been helpful in my journey as an officer to help make a difference in the way people view officers.

Being a female officer in a male-dominated field can be challenging at times; however, that's what I love about it. It forces me to push myself harder when I'm working out or doing any other kind of training. In this field it's a must that we work together and understand each other's strengths and weakness. I may not be as physically strong as some of my male counterparts (some of them!), but sometimes I may be better at communication or reading situations. As for dealing with the communities, sometimes victims or suspects may feel comfortable speaking to a female officer, so I truly believe both male and female officers are needed in this field.

Overall, I am just happy to be a SAFFE Officer for the San Antonio Police Department. I love what we do and how we are involved with all aspects of this city. I love learning from my peers and my supervisors, and I enjoy seeing how involved we are with the communities we serve.

Ofc. Thereas LaFroscia #1049  
 San Antonio Police Department  
 Prue SAFFE Unit  
 5020 Prue Rd  
 San Antonio, TX 78240  
 SAFFE Office: 210-207-7169  
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# Is There Life After Oak Wilt?

by Fred Previc

Over the past 15 years, there has been a massive effort to save our Live Oak trees in the face of the devastating Oak Wilt infestation. Unfortunately, because of the timing of treatments and other factors, not every Oak tree in our neighborhood has been saved. After one loses trees in one's yard, life must go on and canopies must be restored. A yard without Live Oaks can still be beautifully landscaped with new flora and trees, as attested to by JoAnn Aguilera of 2834 Whisper View. JoAnn lost several trees about ten years ago in her front yard but then re-landscaped so beautifully that she won "Yard of The Month" two years ago. This account provides hope and guidance for others in her predicament.

**Question:** *You were inside the original trenched area, so it must have been a huge disappointment to suddenly lose your Live Oak trees. What were your initial thoughts on what to do next?*

**A:** Actually, they did not die suddenly, it took a few years for the disease to reach my trees. Unfortunately, there were differing opinions in the household on if and when to treat. If we had acted in a timely manner (i.e., with the chemical treatment), some trees may have survived. I suspect that such disagreements could easily occur in other households, since treatment is expensive, complicated, and not guaranteed. Once the trees died, it took a while to recover, so I focused on getting a few young trees planted ASAP.

**Question:** *One of the things that is most costly is to remove the stumps of the trees. You evidently found someone to do it professionally and relatively cheaply. Right?*

**A:** It did take me a while to remove the stumps, not only of the Live Oaks but other stumps that the previous owner had left. I heard about The Stump Guy and was impressed with how responsive and affordable this sole proprietor is, plus he's located right down the road on Honeysuckle Lane, just south of 410. The eight or so stumps were medium sized, which may have been why it was so reasonable. Or maybe it was lucky timing. At the time, he had a few different-sized stump-remover machines, which he runs with a remote control! It was cool seeing the machines work so quickly!

**Question:** *What species did you use to replace the trees you lost, and did you make any changes to your plan in midstream?*

**A:** To start, I used the CPS Shade Tree rebate program to reduce the cost of two Shumard Oaks and got those in the ground. Within a few years, I purchased and added a Burr Oak (I'm not sure if I used the CPS program). Then I planted a Red Oak and

another Shumard Oak that my mother started from an acorn. Plus, I purchased and planted an Elm after losing a large Loquat tree, then cut down the Elm since I didn't like it. So, yes, I made lots of changes along the way (plus I tend to do things the hard way)!

**Question:** *You ended up designing several beds and planters, as well as a large amount of xeriscaping in the portion of your yard abutting Whisper Valley. Did you get rebates from the City of San Antonio in the process?*

**A:** Being on a corner lot, I needed to do whatever I could to reduce turf, which I started doing in 2015. I took advantage of SAWS programs to help reduce the cost of materials and got both inspiration and knowledge from the Bexar County Master Gardener program. I was going through a lot of personal changes, so transforming the yard was therapeutic. I didn't want to pay a professional to prepare and implement a design, so I took it on myself with a bit of help from family and friends early on. Early work included renting a Turf Cutter machine since there was so much grass to remove. I was able to find a few folks in WO who wanted worthwhile chunks of turf. There have been plenty of times when the yard has looked rough, and I appreciate my neighbors' patience.

**Question:** *What was the most pleasant aspect of your new yard (besides, of course, winning "Yard of the Month")?*

**A:** I am a descendent of farming families, which may be why I love getting my hands into the earth. Plus, working in the yard is a great source of exercise. The result, along with fresh air, sweat and challenge, gives me much satisfaction.

**Question:** *In retrospect, is there anything you would have done differently in your re-landscaping?*

**A:** No. I am glad I got it started and persisted, even though there was rework and delays along the way. When I bought the house, there wasn't much landscaping—just trees and lots of turf. The loss of Live Oaks gave me a blanker slate to start with. This year, my plan is to focus time and energy on maturing the existing plantings, which are ones that have made it through recent hard freezes and brutal heat.

**Question:** *Do you have any suggestions for homeowners who may face your same prospect in the future?*

**A:** Regardless of whether Oak Wilt may be a threat to your property or not, there are plenty of other threats to trees and turf. Pay attention to the state of your property, take pride and educate yourself. Look into and take advantage of SAWS and CPS programs. Plant a tree or even several. Just do it and don't be afraid of 'failing.' Horticulture is a journey, so get started!



JoAnn's home before re-landscaping.



JoAnn's beautiful home today.

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# Was There an Easter Egg Hunt This Year?

## Well, Not Eggzactly...

Some 65 folks, children of all ages from two to 82 (no children over 95 were permitted entry), came out for a good time on Saturday, 23 March. Although there were lots of plastic eggs, there was only socializing—and a good deal of it. For lack of volunteers (hint, hint) the activities this year had to be limited. As the pictures show, it was a happy, happy time, one typical of life at Whispering Oaks.



Lots of conversation, between big and small.



I think this one would be good for scrambling.



Well, why didn't you bring your ears, Dad?

## In Memoriam

### Yvonne Treviño O'Brien,

45, daughter of Roland and Sheila Treviño, passed away on 3 December 2023. Yvonne and her sister Katherine grew up on Whisper Ridge and both graduated from Incarnate Word High School. Yvonne was a bilingual elementary teacher, known for her compassionate and vibrant spirit. She leaves behind two daughters, Alana and London.



## Whispering Oaks Sales

February 2023 - January 2024

Prepared by Jean Marie Ruffini,  
Resident Realtor®

	Price	Per Sq. Ft.
<b>Sold listings – 27</b>		
High	\$535,000	\$198
Median	\$480,000	\$170
Low	\$280,000	\$165
<b>Active – 1</b>	\$420,000	\$199
<b>Pending – 1</b>	\$425,000	\$170

In Bexar County, there were 1,780 closed sales in February, a 6.3% increase from the same time a year ago. Average and median home prices declined by 2.9% and 3.2% - with price reported at \$325,094 and \$280,615, respectively.

The days on the market for February was 80, an 11% increase from 2023. The months of inventory was reported at 4.3, similar to the last couple of months.

Residential rental saw a Year to year decrease of 1% with an average price reported at \$1,875. San Antonio Board of Realtors

## Whose Wall Is It, Anyway?

The responsibility for the perimeter wall is controlled by the deed restrictions of each home adjoining the wall. Accordingly, the upkeep is the individual homeowner's responsibility. The Whispering Oaks Homeowners Association does not own those enclosing walls. Insurance, maintenance and repair are the responsibility of the individual homeowners on whose property the walls sit.

We're sorry there are no jokes this issue. No room! Maybe next issue.

## Walk-Ins Welcome



Join us for our  
Community Fiesta  
Block Party

04/20/24  
FREE Neck Shaves,  
Food, Drinks & Raffle  
11:30am-4pm

14415 Blanco Road  
Monday 10am-4pm  
Tuesday-Friday 8am-6pm  
Saturday 8am-3pm

210.888.1848



Whispering Oaks HOA  
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SCAN ME



The Garden Club will cap off a successful ten months of events with the annual evening party in May. Then the newly elected officers and committees will meet during June and July to plan programs and outings for the 2024–2025 Calendar.

Kudos to President JoAnn Aguilera and all the club officers for providing enlightening presentations on recycling, fire safety, native plants, and a tour of Walker Ranch Senior Center.

Special thanks go to the following:

Betty Lezanic and her helpers for organizing a “heart-warming” service project for the Sarah Roberts French Home;



Ann Parsons, Laura Ehnstrom, Diana Krauskopf, Teresa Walker, Betty Lezanic, and Letty Tijerina help host the San Antonio Garden Center March meeting.

Letty Tijerina, Teresa Walker, and helpers for a lovely table of delights at the March meeting of the San Antonio Garden Center;

JoAnn Aguilera, Pamela Harrison Martinez, Gloria Elizondo, Laura Ehnstrom, Suzanne Stewart, and Letty Tijerina for inviting us into their homes for meetings and those members who brought snacks and raffle prizes;

Emma Terrazas for reserving Club Giraud for our December Luncheon and Tammy Anderson for booking the March Quad-Club Luncheon and Style Show at the Petroleum Club;

Corie Dilley, Laura Ehnstrom, and Letty Tijerina for modeling the Chico fashions with style and grace.



Tammy Anderson, daughter of Norma Sackett, welcomes members and guests to the Petroleum Club for the annual Quad-Club luncheon and style show.



Letty Tijerina styling in a Chico's outfit.

### The Winter of our Discontent

“In early June the world of leaf and blade and flowers explodes, and every sunset is different.” — John Steinbeck

WOGC is NOT a “women only” organization. So you guys and gals who want to join us, please call anyone named above for information. The kickoff coffee is tentatively set for **Thursday, August 15.**



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