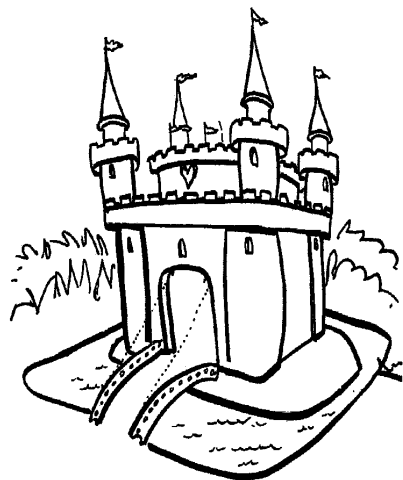


The Moat at Castle Hill
Volume I Issue VIII
Castle Hill Homeowner's Association



1st Quarter News 2008 (January-March)

Association Officers and Committee Members

Raina Smith - President

Dave Pronger – Vice-President

Karen Tucker – Secretary/Treasurer

Architectural Committee – Paul Holton, John Merk,
Kyle Smith

Audit Committee – Lonna Hoffman

Communications Committee – Lonna Hoffman

Landscape Committee – OPEN
(Contact Raina if you are interested)

Social Committee – Kathy Roden

The board can be reached at
castlehillburleson@hotmail.com.
Mailing PO Box 1474
Burleson TX 76028

Letter from the President

Hello neighbors and welcome to a new year. I wish you all the best in the New Year. I write to highlight activities in late 2007 and to look forward to the board's goals for 2008.

The progressive dinner in December was a great success allowing neighbors to come together for fellowship and fun, and I would like to express my gratitude and recognize those who served as host homes and helpers: The Rodens, The Smiths, The Helfrichs, The Hartlines, The Martins, Lonna Hoffman, The Holtons, The Prongers, The Lacys, and The Del Reals for babysitting. I would like to thank Lonna Hoffman for her volunteerism on the Audit and Communications Committees and for doing such a great job and giving her time. Thank you so much to all the volunteers who have served and who continue to serve in the HOA; without these individuals who volunteer their time, we would not be able to maintain our association alone without assistance from a management company.

By the end of the year for 2007 we collected dues from all of the homeowners in the neighborhood. The books were audited by the Audit Committee and there were no suggestions for and the account was in good standing. Our end of year financial statement is included in this newsletter and we ended 2007 with a surplus balance of \$18317.25. With the surplus balance we will keep dues at the same amount and also plan to make improvements in the neighborhood. In November the board received bids and hired Covenant Painting to paint the light poles and stop signs in the neighborhood and what a great transformation. Covenant Painting did an excellent job at a reasonable price for this much needed overhaul.

In 2008 with our surplus we will add this to our reserve for an emergency fund and for repairs. In addition, the board would like to continue to improve the look of the neighborhood, specifically at the park. The board will be seeking bids to cut off and/or repair

the finials which have been broken off the fence at the park as well as to replace the boards or benches at the park as the boards have cracked and some have broken off. If anyone knows any specifics about park benches or where to get them, we would welcome that information.

For 2008 the board voted and approved to increase the budget for the social committee category; this is in part because we have not had any volunteers to hold a garage sale to replenish the petty cash fund and we still want to cover the expenses for the July 4th get together, Fall Festival and Progressive Dinner. Included in this newsletter is the budget for 2008.

Our goal in 2008 is to continue to improve the visual appeal of our neighborhood and to increase communication by getting online with a website for the HOA. Lee Roden is volunteering his time for this activity and we look forward to launching this soon. We look forward to seeing you around the neighborhood.

Thank you for making Castle Hill Estates a great place to live.

President
Raina Smith

Vice-President
Dave Pronger

Secretary/Treasurer
Karen Tucker

1) A Note from the Architectural Committee—

Spring is just around the corner and many of us will be working in our yards and around our homes. We always want the neighborhood to look inviting but remember we are in an HOA and need to respect our neighbors. If you are planning major changes to your home or landscape, these changes may need to be approved. Often, just a phone call is all that is needed.

Remember these few items need to have HOA approval before work begins:

- ✓ Storage sheds or buildings (cannot be visible from the front of your property and should be lower than the fence)
- ✓ Room additions or change to physical structure
- ✓ Major landscape changes
- ✓ Fence additions or stain color change
- ✓ Make sure you reread your copy of the "Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions" pamphlet for complete information.
- ✓ I have received a few calls about exterior house painting; if you are changing the color a request must be submitted.
- ✓ Enclosed should be a form that should be filled for changes to your property.
- ✓ Thanks for helping keep our neighborhood neat, clean and beautiful. Feel free to call or write with any questions.

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2) Recipe of the Quarter

(Do you have a favorite recipe you would like to share? Just email it to lmhoffman@sbcglobal.net so we can use it in a future edition of the Moat)

Peanut Butter Quickies

2 cups sugar

½ cup margarine

½ cup milk

7 tbsps Hershey's Cocoa

Combine and bring to a boil for 30 seconds.

Remove from burner and add:

1 cup peanut butter

1 tsp vanilla

3 cups Quaker oats

Drop on waxed paper.

I love these because they are a snap to make and you don't even have to heat up the oven!

Raina

3) Welcome New Neighbors!

The Butlers *217 Flagstone Dr. (Richard, Grace, Jessica and Jake)

The Atwoods *319 Castle Hill Dr. (James and Ruth)

The Hans *201 Castle Hill Dr. (Seung)

The Moss' *309 Castle Hill Dr. (Stacey Jean and daughter)

Belo Kellam *216 Castle Hill Dr.

Matt Aiken *212 Castle Hill Dr.

4) Season to Season...

I am an armchair horticulturalist. I love to dig in the dirt. I know that many of you are too. I have been attending Neil Sperry's Garden Show since the late 80's. I love reading his magazine, his gardening calendar and listening to his radio show every Saturday when I can. So now that you know the source of my limited knowledge, I thought in this article I would share just a few thoughts of the basics of what I have learned over the years as it relates to maintaining a lawn in Castle Hill Estates.

I am a regular attendee to the Burleson Mulch Center (Just South off of Renfro, East of I-35) and bring back as much free shredded mulch/bark as I can possible carry. This spring I have already spread 12 wheel barrel loads (12 yard-waste bags from Lowes) onto my beds. I could use 12 more and probably will before the summer arrives.

My compost pile is in my back yard and out of sight. I put most of my yard waste and kitchen scraps in it. The black soil, the final product it produces, is an awesome foundation for starting new beds and as a topping to existing beds each year.

Most of us water our yards too much. Last year I only watered my yard one time. It was one of the wettest

seasons on record. Bermuda grass only needs 1" of water applied once a week. St. Augustine grass, shrubs and flowering plants need more, but Bermuda grass does not. In fact, our Post Oaks in this neighborhood can be damaged by too much water. They are a drought tolerant tree. Save some on your water bill. Try watering twice (or even once) a week instead of three times.

Scalp your yard by dropping your mower one to two notches in early to mid March. This will remove the winter stubble and weeds, allowing the grass to green up more quickly as the sun warms the soil. You can raise it back up after a couple of mowings.

Weed control is a year round effort. The ones you see now germinated last fall (cool season weeds). The ones you will see this summer (warm season weeds) will germinate in mid March and June. Apply a pre-emergent granular weed killer in early March to prevent germination of warm season weeds. Repeat the application 90 days later in early June. To handle your cool season weeds, apply your pre-emergent in early September. Check with your local garden store/supplier for the pre-emergent they recommend and carry. Corn Gluten Meal is the organic solution and should be applied at 20 pounds per 1,000 feet in early March. (A great primer on weed control was in the Star-Telegram's March 1st YourLife section in an article titled, "Identifying the Weeds Invading Your Turf." You can look it up on line.) Apply broad-leafed weed killer (containing 2, 4-d) to eliminate clover and dandelions that you see in your yard now.

Fertilize your yard with a balanced 3-1-2 fertilizer that has at least 50% of its nitrogen (the first number) in a slow-release form. Follow the label for application rates. Fertilize your lawn in early April and repeat the application every two months until October for Bermuda grass. St. Augustine grass only needs three feedings - in April, June and late September. A mid-summer feeding only fuels the growth of fungal diseases.

I could go on and on, but this should jump start us with enough to keep our yards green and relatively weed free this summer. Happy gardening.

Tim Lacy

204 Flagstone Dr.