

THE ACORN



Arden Oaks Neighborhood Association Newsletter - ardenoaks.org

December 2021

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December 15-20, 2021

Holiday Lighting and Decorations Contest

January 2022

Annual membership billing
Semi-annual security billing

March 2022

AONA Annual Meeting
Date and location to be announced or if to be conducted by Zoom



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Neighbors,

Happy Holidays! We hope everyone is enjoying the beautiful red, yellow, and orange colors on the trees and leaves throughout the neighborhood and is ready to celebrate the holiday season and welcome in the new year, 2022.

We're very excited to sponsor — for the first time ever — a holiday lighting contest for the neighborhood! While Arden Oaks has always had a number of wonderful displays of holiday lights in past years, we're hoping a little friendly competition (and prizes!) might stimulate a few more people to step up their game and further brighten up the neighborhood. See the flyer inside this newsletter for the details.

This past year, 2021, has been a most productive one for the AONA Board. The Board was honored to have our new County Supervisor Rich Desmond at our annual meeting in March (through video conference), where he spoke to the Arden Oaks neighborhood about homelessness and other issues directly affecting all of us. In the summer, the Board resumed in-person meetings, and with the County turning the corner on the covid-19 pandemic, the Board was pleased to bring back both the 4th of July event and the annual barbecue after the forced cancellations in 2020. Well over a hundred neighbors turned out for both events, and we're so proud to maintain these long-standing traditions in Arden Oaks. We also welcomed dozens of new residents to the neighborhood this year.

The security program has been in full operation for the entire year, and thanks to the many neighbors who contribute to the program, the Board has been able to increase the number of weekly hours of the security patrols during the last quarter. We will be continuing this increased level of service during the holidays.

I want to extend a heartfelt thanks to our wonderful volunteer board members for making this all happen: Glen Fowler (Vice President), James Jack (Secretary), Tom Harvey (Treasurer), Linden Beck, Catherine Bettar, Kathleen Deeringer, Linda Grant, Wendy Klokkevold, Paul Legacki, Larry Nicholas, Marcia Rodebaugh, Molly Parnell, Tim Powell, and Eric Stiff. Together, these neighbors have devoted their time, energy, and expertise to keep our neighborhood safe and a special place to live. Special thanks to board members Glen, James, Tom, Linden, Catherine, Wendy, Larry, and Tim, who contributed to the articles in this newsletter, and to long time Arden Oaks resident and former Sacramento poet laureate Bob Stanley for his poem, also in this newsletter.

On behalf of the entire AONA Board, I wish you all a healthy and safe holiday season and a peaceful and prosperous new year.

Joyce Hsiao
AONA President
aona.president@gmail.com

GOOD FENCES MAKE GOOD NEIGHBORS

In his poem Mending Wall, Robert Frost talks about "Good fences make good neighbors" and he also says "Something there is that doesn't love a wall." Here in Arden Oaks, we have a myriad of fence styles, ranging from the very rustic to the very contemporary. Fences not only serve an important function for home security, but they also play a prominent role in the look and feel of the neighborhood. Sacramento County has specific regulations governing construction of fences in residential neighborhoods including Arden Oaks, the main points of which are summarized below:

- All fences shall be a maximum of 7 feet high, unless the County issues a minor use permit.
- For fences in the front yard, solid walls or fences cannot be more than 3 feet high and chain link or similar woven fences cannot be more than 4 feet high. The front yard is frontage where the main entrance to the home is located.
- In the case of a corner lot where the main entrance faces both frontages, both frontages shall be considered the front yard, and the rules for solid walls or fences apply.

Please note that fences do not necessarily establish the property line. To determine the legal boundaries of your property, the County recommends that you hire a surveyor. You can find the detailed regulations on the County's website at:

<https://code-enforcement.saccounty.net/Documents/FencesBrochure.pdf>

Sacramento County is responsible for enforcing these codes, with the goal of preventing the physical and aesthetic deterioration of our community. So, if you're considering building or replacing your fence, please let's be respectful of our neighbors and our neighborhood and comply with the residential fence regulations.

WHAT TO DO WHEN THERE'S FLOODING IN THE CREEK

The recent storms, although welcomed during our current drought conditions, remind many in our neighborhood that our creeks, and some streets and yards, are prone to flooding when there's a significant amount of rainfall.

In some instances, flood prevention efforts can make quite a difference to curtail flooding. Benjamin Franklin famously advised fire-threatened Philadelphians in 1736 that "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." This holds true when it comes to maintaining our creeks to ensure proper creek flow in our neighborhood.

Specifically, for those with yards adjacent to a creek, the County encourages us to keep the creek banks free from debris and overgrowth. Although the creek banks are the homeowners' responsibility to maintain, in the instances when the creek's waterway has a blockage the County will remove the items causing the blockages. Most frequently the County finds fallen branches in the creek that dam the creek and prevent the water from flowing.

If you see a blockage in a creek, contact Sacramento County Water Resources by calling 311 and report the creek blockage. When the 311 representative answers the call, explain that you are in Sacramento County and they'll connect you with the appropriate county representative. Be prepared to share the home address where the creek blockage is occurring so they can send a crew to the specific area and clear the creek.

Another option is to call the Sacramento County Water Resources general information line at (916) 874-6851. Request to speak with George Williams, who is a supervisor with Sacramento County Water Resources. George is familiar with Arden Oaks and welcomes that we ask for his assistance. In the past when we've contacted George, he's asked us to send him photos of the creek blockage along with the associated house address so he can direct a County crew to appropriately address the creek blockage.

If you prefer to submit a request to Sacramento County on-line, you can do so by contacting "311 Connect" at www.311.saccounty.gov/. Our experience has been that the County has been highly responsive in clearing creek debris that causes a blocked waterway.

SECURITY REPORT

During September, October, and November, the AONA security committee has been working hard to keep our neighborhood safe. We previously reported to the neighborhood through the AONA email system about the unfortunate incident that occurred on Maple Glen Road on the evening of September 7 involving a carjacking and subsequent confrontation with a Sacramento County sheriff deputy. Since then, we have increased the off-duty deputy patrols by 25 percent, by either extending the duration of the scheduled shifts or by increasing the number of shifts, with patrol shifts averaging four hours per day, seven days per week.

With the one exception noted above, the off-duty sheriffs reported no incidents in Arden Oaks during this three-month period, as they continue their routine patrol duties and respond to requested vacation checks and inquiries from the residents. Currently, we are working to increase the level of patrolling by an additional 25 percent during the holiday season. The holiday season typically sees an increase in residential package deliveries that can be an attractive target to thieves, which is the reason AONA allocates funding for additional patrols from Thanksgiving through the end of the year. However, the actual increase in patrolling will depend on the availability of officers.

If you become a victim of mail or property theft, the Sacramento Sheriff's Department asks that you file a crime report online at: https://www.sacsheriff.com/pages/crime_report.php
A crime report takes less than 5 minutes to submit and can also provide a benefit to the neighborhood. Since patrol decisions are based in large part on where crime is being reported within the County, submitting a report can help us ensure that the level of service Arden Oaks receives from both on-duty and off-duty patrols continues to enhance the safety of our neighborhood.

Please be sure to read the article in this issue of the *Acorn* about security best practices that we can all implement so that together we can help to keep our neighborhood safe.

SECURITY BEST PRACTICES

Dependable security in Arden Oaks has always been a high priority, and this is especially true during the holiday season. Surprisingly, good security often starts in your own home. Here are some good practices for home security that everyone can do, and these practices will improve overall security for the entire neighborhood:

- **Lock Doors and Windows.** Surprisingly, one of the most common mistakes homeowners make is erroneously assuming their neighborhood is safe enough to leave doors and windows unlocked.
- **Trim Landscaping.** Plantings that grow to more than three feet high can provide adequate concealment for a burglar who is attempting to enter your home. Trim back all landscaping to ensure the front of your home is clearly visible from the road.
- **Keep the lights on.** Your house should appear occupied at all times. Use timers to switch lights on and off when you're not at home. Better yet, invest in smart light bulbs that can be controlled remotely or scheduled to turn on at certain times of the day.
- **Purchase Home Security Services.** Many insurance companies offer discounts and incentives to offset the cost, and home security video can assist in prosecuting the culprit, should valuables be stolen. Some inexpensive cameras are Ring Security Cameras, Arlo, Nest, and SimpliSafe. There are many more.
- If you have a camera that picks up any street activity, consider registering it with the County at https://www.sacsheriff.com/pages/see_surveillance.php

A GOOD TIME WAS HAD BY ALL

On September 12th, Arden Oaks neighbors gathered once again for the annual neighborhood association barbecue. After taking a year off due to Sacramento County restrictions, it was so nice to be back breaking bread with our fellow neighbors. Friends celebrated the night with either roasted tri-tip, rosemary chicken, or spinach and ricotta manicotti provided by Jackson Catering and Leatherby's ice cream. The food was fantastic, and this annual tradition was enjoyed by over 120 neighbors, including both long-time residents and recent newcomers. Live music was provided by According to Bazooka, a Sacramento-based retro-pop group, which was a delightful backdrop to meeting new friends and seeing old friends in our neighborhood. About twenty children joined their parents in the festivities and enjoyed dinner outside with goodie bags. This AONA tradition happens every September so please be on the lookout for next year's date in upcoming newsletters. We look forward to seeing you again soon!



WELCOME NEW NEIGHBORS IN ARDEN OAKS SINCE SEPTEMBER 2021!

Gabe & Lauren Gardner

Anthony & Courtney Montero

Pinkytown Trust

Pedrad Stojakvic

Timothy Terry

Austen & Theresa Worsham

TREES OF ARDEN OAKS

The record-breaking October rainstorm sadly toppled some of Arden Oak's landmark trees, including at least one oak tree over 200 years old. These majestic oaks — the oak in Arden Oaks — are what makes our neighborhood unique, a secluded and tranquil tree-lined oasis, hidden from the concrete suburban development in other parts of the county. With Strong Ranch Slough and tributary creeks winding its way through the neighborhood, Arden Oaks is fortunate to have enough water to have historically supported a robust riparian habitat and wooded floodplains. When Arden Oaks was developed in the 1950s and 1960s, the estate-size lots allowed for plenty of open space to support these centuries-old trees. While some natural loss of these aging trees is unavoidable, today we are now losing many more mature trees than can be replaced in our lifetime. We who live here in Arden Oaks can and must take more care to protect and preserve our magnificent trees.

Trees, especially mature trees, provide countless benefits to all of us. Besides providing shade, cooling the air and reducing the need for air conditioning, trees provide oxygen, purify the air, and help fight climate change. They also prevent water pollution, prevent soil erosion, and reduce the effects of flooding. The trees are home to the bluebirds, woodpeckers, and so much wildlife, including even the turkeys, that brighten and enliven the neighborhood. If you are one of the many who enjoy walking, jogging, and strolling through the neighborhood or simply enjoy looking out your window, you need to thank the many trees in Arden Oaks for the luxury of the urban forest in which we live.

So if you have mature trees on your property, please consider regular consultation with a professional arborist about the appropriate care needed to maintain tree health and to maximize their longevity. You may also want to consider planting native trees, such as oaks, to replace the ones we've lost. A healthy valley oak can live up to 600 years! The care you provide now will not only improve the value of your property but will benefit the entire neighborhood for generations to come.

DONATIONS OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

The AONA Board would like to help the less fortunate with food donations, specifically the fruits and vegetables some of us harvest from our home gardens.

Loaves and Fishes, located at 1351 North C Street near downtown, accepts boxes of fresh fruit and possibly vegetables as well. One of our members has donated to them boxes of oranges and lemons in previous years.

Why not consider donating your excess home-grown produce, like persimmons, citrus fruit, tomatoes, or whatever produce you grow in excess quantities? If needed, we will assist you with picking, boxing, and delivering to Loaves and Fishes. Please contact Larry Nicholas (email lmnicholas@sbcglobal.net), AONA board member, for more information or assistance.

RE-ENVISION WEST ARDEN ARCADE

Sacramento County has been awarded a grant to prepare streets plan for West Arden Arcade, an area that extends from Watt to Howe between Cottage and Northrop, including the area directly west of Arden Oaks. The draft plan, called "Re-Envision West Arden Arcade," is a long-range visioning effort focused on ideas to create a safer and more appealing environment for walking, rolling, bicycling, and driving in this area. It is not a construction project. At this point in the project, the planners have chosen to focus their ideas on Alta Arden and the connector streets of Bell, Cottage, Fulton, and Morse and to omit the larger thoroughways of Watt, Howe, Arden, and Fulton. For more information as to why this area was chosen and next steps, please go to the Sacramento County Planning and Environmental Review website: <https://planning.saccounty.net/PlansandProjectsIn-Progress/Pages/REWAA.aspx>



FIRST ANNUAL HOLIDAY LIGHTING AND DECORATION CONTEST

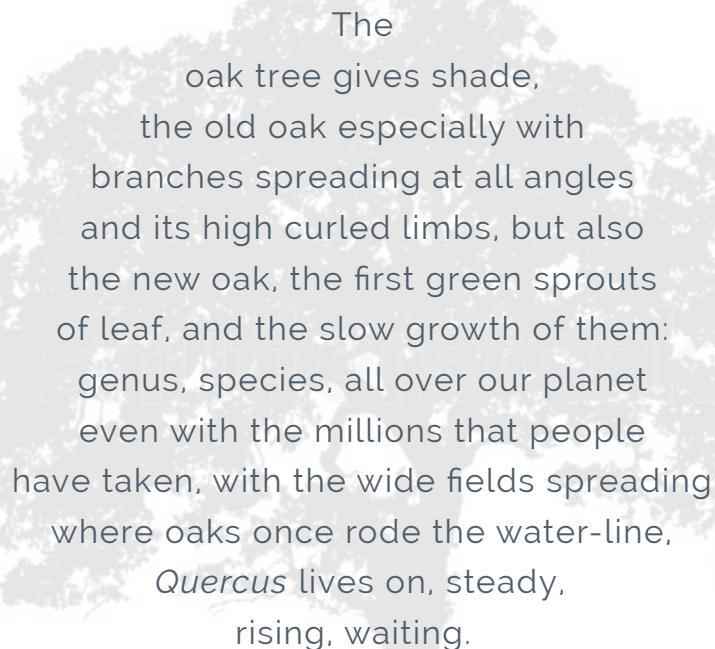


This year, the AONA Board will be sponsoring a Holiday Lighting and Decoration Contest, open to all residents in Arden Oaks. We will be awarding prizes to the winners! Judging will be conducted by a panel of Arden Oaks residents.

TO BE CONSIDERED FOR THE PRIZES

1. Send an email by December 14 with your street address to aona.president@gmail.com. Unless you state otherwise, we will send your prize to this same address if you are a winner.
2. Set up your lighting and decorations by **December 14**. Judging will be conducted from **December 15 through December 20, from about 5 to 10 p.m.** We will be awarding the prizes on **December 22–23**.

That's all there is to it! We hope this becomes an annual tradition in our neighborhood. So this holiday season, when the days grow short and the nights grow long, let's all brighten up the neighborhood with holiday lights.

A large, faded, light gray illustration of an oak tree with a thick trunk and a full, rounded canopy of leaves, serving as a background for the text.

The
oak tree gives shade,
the old oak especially with
branches spreading at all angles
and its high curled limbs, but also
the new oak, the first green sprouts
of leaf, and the slow growth of them:
genus, species, all over our planet
even with the millions that people
have taken, with the wide fields spreading
where oaks once rode the water-line,
Quercus lives on, steady,
rising, waiting.