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Important Numbers

Constable:
- Emergency: 281-463-6666
- Non-Emergency: 281-463-2446
Westlake Fire Dept.: 281-492-0560
Crest Management: 281-579-0761
Street Lights (CenterPoint): 713-207-2222
Poison Control: 800-764-7661
Animal Control: 281-999-3191

2017 HOA Directors

President James Matthews
Vice-President Victor Treat
Secretary Patrick Hughes
Treasurer Peter Caro
Director at Large Marcia Thomas
Dear Neighbors:

I hope this letter finds you all well. The last few weeks have been trying to say the least. Hurricane Harvey must have loved our area as much as we do as he had no intentions of leaving. We are very fortunate to have the development elevation we have which spared us the loss that many are having to deal with. As we are sure you have already noticed, it is taking a while to get back to a sense of normalcy after this event. During cleanup and recovery efforts we will all need to be a bit more patient. The only way for us to get back to normal is to lend a hand with the recovery effort. I have personally been to Rockport and throughout our local areas to assess and help with storm cleanup. I can tell you if you haven’t seen the devastation personally, the damage is unprecedented. We have seen many great things posted that our neighbors have done. Let’s keep it up!

During the storm, our neighborhood drainage system worked as expected although at times it seemed overwhelmed with the unprecedented amount of water. Unfortunately, there were a few trouble spots in the neighborhood during the storm. The main two areas were on Deeds Road and the Appletree Hill Lane bordering the landfill. We hope that none of you have suffered any damage. However, if you suffered any damage from flood waters, we would certainly like to know about it. Please email Patrick Hughes the details at cpatrickhughes@gmail.com so that we may keep an eye on developing trends. We will be working with the MUD in the coming weeks to see if anything can be done in these areas.

Prior to the storm the HOA board made several update to the safety of our pool and the addition of several new patio tables. We greatly appreciate Lone Star Pools and their life guards for coming out and giving us some much needed relief and a sense of normalcy. The pool was opened from 4 to 8 during the evenings and returned to normal operating hours for the weekends.

In the last few months the board has worked towards Bylaw and Article of Incorporation document changes and reviews of our insurance coverages and management company renewals. A tremendous amount of time was put in by several of our board members and I would like to think Marcia Thomas and Patrick Hughes for the time they spent. In regards to the document changes we are still awaiting the HOA attorney’s response however, we have learned that their office was inundated with flood waters from Harvey. We are hopeful to have a resolution soon. Based on an expert opinion regarding the insurance we as a board chose to renew our present coverages under our current insurance policies. Based on our research and meetings with four additional companies the board unanimously chose to renew our relationship with Crest Management. We will be making changes to the policies and services that they provided in the coming weeks.

The board appreciates the opportunity to serve and we look forward to making the necessary changes to help better serve the needs of our association. Any questions, comments, or concerns are welcome at brhoaprez@gmail.com.

Regards,

Barkers Ridge HOA
**Barker’s Ridge Newsletter**  
**Fall 2017**

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### Support your Neighborhood’s Small Businesses!

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Barker's Ridge Newsletter
Fall 2017

Barker's Ridge Best Broker

Steven is a highly rated, top producing, multi-million dollar producing Realtor/Broker based in Houston, TX. Over the past 25 years, he has helped hundreds of families buy & sell homes in the Houston Metro Area. He has a 4.99/5.0 Client Review Rating, based on verified reviews per the Houston Association of Realtors. His verified reviews may easily be found through a Google search. As a resident and Block Captain of Barker's Ridge, Steven is fully dedicated to serving the community, in any way possible. His real estate services are unsurpassed whether he represents Sellers, Buyers or Landlords. As a second generation Realtor, with a combined family history of over 60 years of real estate experience, Steven is an expert negotiator and knows how to obtain top dollar for his Seller Clients. Don’t hesitate to contact him directly at 832.236.5200 when you are ready to move and experience the best of the best in real estate services.

Here are a couple of recent verified reviews, which you can find on Steven's HAR bio page:

"Selling a home is always stressful. Having a knowledgeable and competent realtor makes a stressful situation a pleasant experience. Steve is that realtor. There are many realtors to choose from; choose wisely. I highly recommend Steve." 5 stars

"Steve is an outstanding agent. He always goes above and beyond the call of duty in everything he does. He is committed, reliable, resourceful, dependable and does whatever it takes to get the job done." 5 stars

BARKERS RIDGE SALES UPDATE

Month after month of HAR press releases this year indicated an ever appreciating market, with higher median sales prices and swiftly selling Properties. Why not our community? Call Steve for more details 832.236.5200

After extensive research of sales in Barker’s Ridge for 2016 and year to date 2017, I can report that the average price of homes has declined across these sections. Here are the stats as of September 4, 2017. Searches are broken down as follows: One story homes with 2 car detached garages: 2016 $89,78 s.f./2017 $87.60 s.f., Two story homes with 2 car detached garages: 2016 $81,20 s.f./2017 $80.38 and two story homes with 2 car attached garages: 2016 $81,52 s.f./2017 $81.02 s.f. Oddly enough, one story homes with attached garages was the only section to show almost a 10% increase in value. Days on the market decreased significantly in 2017 for the most part. Are Sellers in Barker’s Ridge leaving money on the table?

Many thanks to the community for their support of the Hurricane Harvey flood victims and the first responders! Barker’s Ridge was truly blessed.
I want to be your REALTOR!

Why it’s important to interview more than one Realtor

I’m amazed at how many people will hire the first real estate agent that they interview. I mean, you never buy the first car you test drive, order the first item you see on the menu or hire the first job seeker you interview. It’s been a well proven fact that most people will hire the first real estate agent they interview. Agents know this and count on it. I’ve seen it happen countless times during my career. While it provides a great advantage to the “early bird” agent, it rarely benefits the homeowner. You must talk to at least two or three agents and compare each agent’s offerings, experience and expertise.

By interviewing several candidates, you will:
* Get multiple opinions regarding home improvements
* Receive several estimates of what your house could sell for.
* Be able to spot agents that will promise anything just to get a listing
* Have multiple marketing packets to compare
* Receive multiple opinions of your area’s current market volume
* Be able to compare agent personalities
* Feel more confident that you hired the right agent.

Global Advantage Real Estate
3322 Pinery Forest Dr.
Houston, TX 77084

Call me today to schedule a free consultation.
832.236.5200

STEVEN O’MEARA
BROKER ASSOCIATE
Office: 713.789.9900

houstonhomes@hotmail.com
www.energycorridorhoustonhomes.com
Global Advantage Real Estate
3322 Pinery Forest Dr.
Houston, TX 77084

Stage For Success

If you are planning to put your house on the market, it goes without saying that you are hoping to sell your home as quickly as possible and get your asking price. Here are a few staging tips that will help:
* Curb appeal is paramount. Add colorful flowers, paint front doors and faded or rusted hardware and door bells.
* Keep your home sparkling clean. Clean windows in and out, remove or replace old or torn screens. Hire a professional cleaning service and keep everything in it’s place during showings.
* Declutter and remove all non-essential items. Hire a professional to help, if needed.
* Paint neutral colors on the interior and assess the need for exterior repairs or paint.
* Create a lifestyle statement. Generally speaking, you want to play up what your neighborhood or area is known for. Have a house in a quiet, grassy suburb? Hanging a hammock in your backyard and a bench swing on your porch could be the perfect touch.
* Beware pet odors. Plug ins are great.
* Keep property showroom ready at all times, with beds made and dishes put away. Open blinds for appointments before you leave the Property. Turning on lights and some hard jazz makes great. Keep A/C turned down.

My team offers free consultations for staging tips. If your home is vacant, we have a preferred staging company referral, if needed.
Just as Hurricane Harvey displaced thousands of people, Harvey also displaced thousands of wild animals. Compassionate residents have brought birds, snakes, squirrels and even an alligator to TWRC Wildlife Center for care.

Although there is no way of knowing the actual number of animals affected, the numbers are, no doubt, very high. It is human nature to want to help these animals but in some cases, it is better to leave them alone.

**DEER** – Many deer were forced to move to higher ground. People are seeing deer in their yards, in the streets and other areas with dry land. It is for your own safety that you do not try to catch these animals. Make sure that gates are open so they have a way to exit your yard. Sadly, there’s nothing else you can do.

**ALLIGATORS AND SNAKES** – It seems silly that we would have to warn people to stay away from them but sometimes curiosity gets the best of people. Keep your distance. If you need help identifying a snake to find out if it’s venomous, call us and we can help. We can also refer you to a professional who can assist with the removal of snakes. For help with alligators, we recommend you call your Game Warden. To find the Game Warden for your area, go to the Texas Parks and Wildlife website.

It is baby squirrel season right now and in the case of these animals, your intervention may be needed. If you find a baby, you will first need to try to reunite the baby with its mother. You can do this by placing the baby in a small container near the area where you found it. Make sure the container is safe from dogs and cats. Watch to see if mom comes to get her little one. If, after a couple of hours, the mom has not returned, you will need to intervene. The most important thing is to keep the baby warm. You can accomplish by placing the baby in a box along with a soft cloth and place the box on a heating pad set to low. Do NOT attempt to give the baby food or water. Bring the baby to TWRC Wildlife Center as soon as possible.

Chances are very low that you will encounter any other wildlife babies at this time of the year. You may encounter injured adult raccoons, opossums and birds, however. We advise that you do not try to rescue these animals. Their intention is not to hurt you but they may bite or scratch because they are afraid.

If you have questions about wildlife, we are available from 10am to 2pm to help you. Before attempting to rescue an animal and before bringing it in to us, we suggest you give us a call first. After hours, our website can provide you with many answers.

Thank you for your support during this difficult time.
OPOSSUM AND BABIES SET ON FIRE
By Cheryl Conley, TWRC Wildlife Center

Rehabilitating wildlife can take you from the highest of highs to the lowest of lows. Take, for instance, the family of opossums in Houston that was purposely set on fire. The mom and all but two of the babies perished. Houston Police Officers were able to save two little ones who were found in Mom’s pouch. Burned, stressed and in obvious pain they were taken to and treated by the Gulf Coast Veterinary Specialists for initial treatment. From there they were brought to TWRC Wildlife Center for further care and rehabilitation. Sadly, the injuries sustained by one of the babies were so severe we were unable to save him.

Can you imagine the pain these little opossums experienced? You know what it’s like when you burn your finger or get a sunburn. Imagine these little animals, weighing about the same as an egg yolk, experiencing this excruciating pain. In addition to the pain, wild animals experience extreme stress, dehydration, infection along with the loss of mom and littermates.

The main priority of our staff and volunteers is to provide pain-free solutions to every animal we admit to our Center. The baby opossum that didn’t make it was treated with compassion, dignity and respect and we made his passing as easy as possible for him. At least he received the respect he deserved in passing that wasn’t to be his during his short life. The one that survived is now receiving home-based care by a State permitted rehabilitator and is expected to recover and be released back to the wild for a second chance at life.

So just in this one situation, we experienced the lowest of lows and the highest of highs. Knowing these animals suffered needlessly at the hands of some cruel people is incomprehensible. However, we saved one even though the odds were against the little baby surviving. The absolute peak of our happiness and pride will come when we see the opossum walk off into the woods, healthy and free.

We can’t continue to save wildlife babies without your help. Won’t you consider a donation to help us? www.twrcwildlifecenter.org.
Some More Trashy Business

The HOA Board of Directors unanimously approved a new garbage and recycling vendor in May of this year. It is necessary to look at the reason this change had to be made.

In February, the board received a letter from Republic Services indicating that they were going to raise our trash price by 27 cents per month. The letter from Republic Services did not elicit a response from the board as it did not require a response from us. It was going to be raised regardless. Our contract with Republic Services allowed for incremental increases in the costs for garbage collection.

Our former community manager at Crest Management did not relay this information from this particular letter to the board and the rates were raised.

About a month later, the board received another letter from Republic Services stating that they were going to raise our rates to about 39.00 per month. This would have been more than a 130% increase from our previous rates. Republic Services did offer a "single payer" price commensurate with the rate that we are paying now. This letter did require a response from the board. I might also add that Republic's contract language allowed them to submit for this increase.

The single payer scenario is one in which the HOA pays for the entire garbage contract through HOA assessments. If the HOA were to pay for the garbage contract, it would require a minimum of 192,000.00 added to the budget (21.00/month x 762 homes x 12 months). That also equates to an additional 252.00 (minimum) being added to homeowner annual assessments per year.

The board was tasked with finding a new trash company within 90 days. We looked at several different options. The board had to make a decision as to whether we should saddle the homeowners with higher prices, contract for less service than we currently have, or enter into a single payer contract.

The majority opinion of the board was one where the prices were not raised substantially and the individual homeowner was left with a choice to not utilize the service. There are homeowners in our neighborhood that do not utilize the trash service. In a single payer system, the homeowner is unable to choose whether or not to utilize the contracted service. Contracting for a single payer service would have required a special assessment of 250.00 or more to each homeowner during the middle of the summer which would have paid for garbage service for one year. Further, the board would have had to increase the annual assessments 10% per year (maximum per the bylaws) for 4 years to pay for a single payer service. During that 4 years, it would have further required special assessments to make up for the budget shortfall.

Texas Pride bid the service with a modest increase over our previous contract and they did not require a single payer system. The board voted unanimously (all 5 members at the time) to contract with Texas Pride.

It is distressing that we are having an issue with our recycling bins not being emptied. The board, along with Crest Management has been in contact with the owner of Texas Pride seeking a resolution for the current issues. The board knew that this decision to change was not going to be an easy one...and it has not been.

We as homeowners will have to have a conversation in the near future about single payer service. The amount of disposal companies that allow for individual billing is dwindling every day or they are charging exponentially more for it. Changing to a single payer service is not something that can occur with 90 days notice. There has to be a plan in place to pay for it.

Patrick Hughes
8/21/2017 Year to Date Barkers Ridge Crime Statistics:

- Burglary of a Residence: 1
- Burglary of a Motor Vehicle: 3
- Stolen Vehicle: 2
- Theft: 1
- Criminal Mischief: 1
- Arrest: 2

The Burglary of Residence was a re-entry of a previous resident after a rental home eviction where they took the appliances.

On the Burglary of a Motor Vehicle, two were in the street and unlocked...one was in the driveway.

Both Stolen vehicles were parked in the driveway - no forced entry.

Theft – wheels and tires from vehicle parked on the street.

Regards,

Marcia Thomas

Neighbors Night Out is October 3, 2017– Please stay tuned for more news regarding that!
Talk about tough times – we have been through some of them lately.

But even better, we have seen some tough Soldiers created from everyday peopls.

I don’t think there is anything I can add to what has already been said about the disaster known as Harvey. Like you, I have never been more proud of Houston and the world for stepping up. It has been humbling to witness. I’m afraid the battle has just begun for our neighbors. But, all the neighboring soldiers are out with one goal – TO HELP. Have you ever seen so many volunteers so quickly! This has been The Disaster of the Social Media era – meaning members on SM have been so proactive and diligent about getting rescue teams, volunteers, staging areas and other immediate services together. This has been SM at its finest. We can't depend on the government to swoop in and help us, but we can depend on each other.
I just this minute received the below email from a former BR resident; I thought you would enjoy:

‘There are great people in the world! I saw a man interviewed on Barker Cypress at I-10. He was from Austin and had no boat before the hurricane. His Father flew to Austin from Virginia, they went to Cabela’s and bought a boat, trailer and motor and went to Houston to help. When the interviewer said how great they were he told her that they were not the only ones, that there were many others at Cabela’s doing the same thing. Brings tears to my eyes and there are thousands other examples of good people. Restores your faith in humanity. I am doing okay. Of course, we are watching Hurricane Irma closely... So glad to hear you are all safe and well.”

Note to the elephant in the room: What will all of this do to our prices in Barkers Ridge, and to the surrounding area? If the last flood is any indication, rentals will be in strong demand – especially short-terms ones. Prices for moderately priced homes that did not flood, will increase. I expect there to be stronger demand for Barkers Ridge and Oak Ridge homes. These subdivision are at a very desirable price point and location. Under $200K is phenomenal and up to about $250K is strong. We have, however, seen a drop in the price per sq.ft. in Barkers Ridge from earlier in the year. The earlier data may have been a bit skewed with only 13 sold as of the LAST writing (May). At that time, the price per sq.ft. was $88 and now it is $84 AVERAGE price per sq.ft.

There is a $0 down payment FHA loan available to flood surviours who were either in a rental or owned their home. Homeowners of flooded homes would need to sell their current home first, I believe. So, this program will work great for renters who flooded. The lender can even pay most of their closing costs - making the transition from flooded renter to homeowner rather quick and inexpensive. I would prefer buyers to put down at least 20%. So, I am not advocating $0 down for extended times. But, in these dire times, this may be a wonderful program that helps ease the pain many are experiencing. If you know of someone who could benefit from this program, have them contact their lender and their realtor. There are many good ones in this neighborhood – check on the Barkers Ridge FaceBook page. If you are not a member of that page, you may want to check in on it. Sometimes there is so very good information posted on it.

I am starting a campaign with you to help individuals we know, right here in our immediate area, who were devasted. See the backpage of the newsletter for details.

Contact me if we can help you…my website is continually updated showing rating by ALL clients. (www.DianeSanders.com). AND, to find “INDUSTRY PARTNERS,” which are vendors we recommend, go to our company website: www.SandersFamilyRealEstate.com. I am continually updating that section.

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**Barker’s Ridge Statistics January 1, 2017 – September 6, 2017**
*(Total/F = Foreclosures)*

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<tr>
<td>Avg. S/sq ft. SOLD</td>
<td>$58</td>
<td>$61</td>
<td>$60</td>
<td>$63</td>
<td>$67</td>
<td>$73</td>
<td>$82</td>
<td>$84</td>
<td>$83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. $/SOLD</td>
<td>$145K</td>
<td>$158K</td>
<td>$153K</td>
<td>$159K</td>
<td>$163K</td>
<td>$183K</td>
<td>$213K</td>
<td>$217K</td>
<td>$205K</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(All sales data is per HAR MLS; deemed reliable but not guaranteed.)*
Patriotism was on full parade at the annual Barkers Ridge Bike Parade on July 4th. If you are new to Barkers Ridge and are unfamiliar, we encouraged the younger ones of our neighborhood to decorate their bikes, wagons, strollers, and even their dogs and participate in a parade around the block led by our local firefighters and deputy constables. Afterwards, we award three prizes for the most decorated bikes and trikes.

We extend a special thanks to Westlake Volunteer Fire Department and the Precinct 5 Deputy Constables for their service. The kids really enjoyed climbing on the fire trucks and interacting with the firefighters and police officers. Further I want to thank all of the volunteers that made this a success.

Here are a few pictures of some of the festivities. We appreciate Rock the Block Yard Greetings (Angela Hamilton) for providing the signs and Boy Scout Troop 320 for raising our flag. As well, some of the pictures were provided by Angus Mann, a resident and amateur photographer. You can view some more pictures at the following address https://angus-mann.smugmug.com/Family/Barkers-Ridge-2017-July-4th-Bike-Parade.
Barkers Ridge Cares...

Like many of you, we are wanting to make a DIFFERENCE in the lives of at least one family HERE – IN OUR AREA. We know the needs are great, but we can’t do it all.

GOALS:
- Immediate needs – food & shelter
- School: Clothes, school supplies, help with homework...
- Everyday needs: Dr. appts, hair appointments...
- Special events: birthdays, holidays, movies...
- Pets: vet bills, food, and medicines...

If BARKERS Ridge residents want to share in this goal by donating whatever time or money is in your budget, we can all help a family or two!

WHO? We want your input, advice and counsel on who to choose. We think it should be a family with a child in one of our 3 schools: Mayde Creek Jr, Sr. or Schmalz.

We are staring with $700 – profit from a lease Austin & I secured in BR to a flooded family and $500 from Ann Bennett, with Rock Mortgage = $1200.

What to donate: ideas, time, money ($1 - $?) If every home donated $5, we would have over $5,000! That would be a huge impact on a suffering family.

REALTORS & LENDERS & INSPECTORS & APPRAISERS in Barkers Ridge – please join us.

Ways to donate: call, email, text or FB message me; I will be going door-to-door.

We would like to find our new BARKERS RIDGE CARES family by early next week.

...thank you for your business and guidance---

...d. Diane Sanders J