



Briar Village Newsletter

Serving 768 Homes Since the 1970s

Community Association (BPCIA) Meets Regularly on 4th Thursday - Everyone Welcome

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Rent the BV Clubhouse - Great for Parties!

Thinking about hosting an event or party but concerned your house may not be the right space? Rent the BV clubhouse for the event. Seating, tables and a full kitchen are ready for use. There's also plenty of parking. Pricing is \$150 weekdays and \$200 on weekend days. A \$200 deposit is required and will be returned pending a post-event inspection. A complete Rental Agreement is available on the BV Website under the Amenities tab, or call Graham Management to discuss availability. Remember: YOU own the clubhouse, enjoy it but treat it the way you'd treat your own home.

Let's Talk About Dogs

What's not to love about them. They wear silly grins, have wet noses and if you're nice to them they'll even lick your face. But not all dogs are super lovable or obedient. In recent months, there have been several instances of loose dogs roaming the neighborhood unescorted and unleashed. And in some cases, these unattended animals have turned vicious and have actually killed other dogs and cats. This is a tragedy.

Not all loose dogs are savage monsters on the prowl. Sometimes gates are left open or other circumstances occur that allow pets to go on unscheduled field trips without a permission slip. It happens.

If you do see a loose dog, pay close attention to its behavior. Odds are it's lost or frightened. You may be tempted to help it out. However, approach with caution. They may be aggressive.



Houston ordinances make dog owners directly responsible for their pets. It's unlawful for any person responsible for a dog to allow the animal to be "at large" without the owner or person in charge having direct physical control over it. In other words, with a leash. There are exceptions, like at nearby dog parks. But if you're one of those pet owners that lets your dog out to roam free and go potty, you're actually breaking the law twice. Twice because there's also a law requiring dog owners to pick up their dog's feces when in any public space.

Don't hesitate to report any stray dogs, although don't expect any action to be taken immediately. A dog must be documented to be "at large" at least 3 times in a 12-month period before it can be deemed a public nuisance by authorities and before further actions can be taken. Documentation must include a date and time stamped photograph. Digital photos qualify.

So unfortunately, this problem is difficult to address. If your pet has a history of getting loose or of aggressive behavior, please address the problem. If you see a stray, it may be a lost and harmless. Try to photograph it and report the incident on social media and to the BARC Animal Shelter (832-395-9084). Hopefully the animal can be reunited with its owner. If there's an instance involving a biting or worse, call the Houston non-emergency police number at 713-884-3131 or Houston's 311. They will take your report seriously.

Sources

https://library.municode.com/tx/houston/codes/code_of_ordinances

<https://www.click2houston.com>, image by macrovector on Freepik

Briar Village Newsletter

Want to contribute to your BV newsletter? BV residents can submit articles and other content to Robert Belkin, rlbelkin@mail.com



Board/Committies

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Tennis Court - Melissa, Casey

Security - Larry, Eric

Website - Robert, David

Social - Eric, Carrie

Newsletter - Robert, David

DRV / ACC - David, Casey

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Problem Resolution

The Board asks residents not to contact service providers directly for problem resolution; please contact the Director over that area on the BPCIA Board of Directors and let that Director handle the problem.

Deed Restriction Violations (DRV)

Please review your Deed Restrictions, which are on the BV Website. If you receive a DRV Letter, please take it seriously, but please do not take it personally. The best course of action is to simply fix the problem and move on. If you are uncomfortable in any manner with a letter you received or need more time to remedy things, contact a board member or Graham Management as soon as possible to discuss it.

Architectural Control Committee (ACC)

All improvements visible from the street must have ACC approval BEFORE work starts. Get the ACC Approval Form on the BV Website or from Graham Management.

BV Governing Docs & Forms

Under the "Resources" tab of the Briar Village website, there are links to important BV documents, including: deed restrictions, amendments and guidelines, and the CIA's formation documents. The Board also regularly posts the approved meeting minutes, past newsletters and important forms. under this tab.

Community Pool & Tennis Courts

Access Card required for admittance, and can be ordered for \$25 from Graham Management. Form is on the BV website. Pool hours open in May. Visit briarvillage.com for details.

Garbage and Recycling: Texas Pride Waste

- Pick-up Tuesday & Friday: Trash can only be put by the curb after 6:00 p.m. on Monday & Thursday or by 7:00 a.m. on Tuesday & Friday.
- Bagged Lawn Debris is not to be left curbside except at above times. Up to 8 bags or cans with weight limit 40 pounds each. Landscapers should be instructed to place bagged debris behind fences if their work does not coincide with the trash schedule.
- No construction debris, hazardous waste, tires.
- Bundle/tie limbs 4' long.
- Heavy Trash on Tuesday & Friday (dishwashers, water heaters, etc.) No more than 2 bulky items per trash day. Note you cannot put out bulky items and let them sit on the curb for 3 days while awaiting the next heavy trash pick up day. Deed restriction enforcement will occur.
- Recycle Day is Thursday - use recycle bins only on Thursdays
- If Tues, Thurs or Fri are Holidays, pick-up is skipped.
- Holidays are: New Years, Thanksgiving, Christmas.

Getting In Touch

The most effective way to send and receive information with your board and the HOA is through the official Management website: graham.cincwebaxis.com. The site allows access to Payment, Document, ACC request, Violation and Contact information.

Keep this information for future reference

Stars and Stripes

Briar Village held its annual 4th of July Parade celebrating America's 248th birthday and it was a big success. We had a fantastic showing. Bicycles were decorated and patriotic attire proudly worn. Over 60 ice cream treats were handed out, thanks to Eric Wallin who made the day's arrangements. A huge thank you to the generous firefighters from Fire Station 86 who led the procession and to all the residents who decorated their vehicles and joined the parade; cars and trucks and bicycles and scooters, too! Big thanks to every one who shared the community fun. Looking forward to celebrating with you again next year!



Cars and Stripes



After more years than any one can remember, the old faded parking spaces have been renewed! Last month, the pool and clubhouse parking lot was power washed and restriped. The handicap space is clearly visible and a few no parking areas have been demarked for everyone's safety. Thank you, Casey Collins, for spearheading this long overdue maintenance.

Balls and Stripes

Speaking of stripes, brand new blue pickleball court stripes have been added to the east-most tennis court. Now you can play the country's hottest racket sport. Never played before? Pickle Ball is fun and easy. It's the Platypus of the racket sport world! It's got a little DNA from all the court sports. The ball is similar to a wiffle ball, the rackets are more like large ping-pong paddles, and the court is small like in badminton. A complete copy of the official rules can be found on the USA Pickleball website at usapickleball.org. It's fast paced and fun so get out to the tennis courts and start pickle balling!



Volunteer Opportunities

We are always looking for volunteers to help with events and initiatives. Please help while getting to know your neighbors. Email cew3832hoa@gmail.com for info.

Lawn Care for Sweltering Summers

By Karen Avery

Our summer temperatures are forecasted to peak in the sweltering zone for the foreseeable future, making expansive turf lawns impractical. Consider reducing your water-hogging grassy areas by extending your flower beds and by creating mulched "islands" with some drought tolerant plantings. If you had to re-sod after last summer's damage, you are likely to have to do it again after this coming summer's assault.

In an attempt to conserve water statewide going forward, the Texas Legislature has enacted laws that say homeowners must be allowed to use water-conserving landscaping designs. (Outdoor watering accounts for an average of 50 percent to 80 percent of a home's water use, according to the Texas Water Development Board.) Homes under HOA restrictions will continue to be required to have your redesign plans pre-approved, but there are so many creative ways drought-tolerant plantings can reduce your water bills and maintain curb appeal.

If you have to re-sod after the summer damage, consider giving some CPR to be damaged soil underneath first. After you have removed the dead grass sprinkle about one-inch of quality compost and water it in with some liquid seaweed. Regular watering for new sod is needed daily for two weeks. Regular watering for established lawns should be one-inch a week (measure with a tuna can!) Oscillating sprinklers are the least efficient. Spinners waste less water. Spread some re-mineralizer such as Azomite (it has 79 trace minerals) over the whole lawn. This soil amendment is only needed every 3- 4 years. Another option is a rock mineral such as Texas green or lava sand. If possible, it is best to spread a bag or two of compost on the rest of the lawn. It is worth the money and effort. Water it all in with some liquid seaweed. My favorite quality compost is Leaf Mold Compost made by Nature's Way Resources in Conroe. (The compost and mulch industry is not regulated so you can get some pretty worthless stuff at the box stores.) This compost is pricey, so my second favorite is the compost sold at The Ground Up (about 4 mi. west of Highway 6 on FM1093). These suggestions are organic solutions.

It is advisable against the use of Weed 'N Feed for several reasons. The time of the year needed to apply "feed" is different from the time of year we need to apply "weed". Synthetic fertilizers kill off beneficial microorganisms in the soil, creating more disease and weed problems and affect the soil structure. Most also contain Atroazine which damages tree and shrub roots and kill aquatic life in run-off.



Chinch bugs only attack areas that are moisture-deprived. They like a crunchy-dry environment...like next to a hot sidewalk...or on a slope where all moisture runs downhill or on a raised spot in the middle of a yard. Other areas are on a spot where the soil has lost all nutrients and is dry year-after-year. It is my experience you can drown them to get rid of them, but if their damage is done, you'll need to give the area CPR (compost, trace minerals and occasional water). It is probably best to think about a re-use of this area.

There is a great gardening show on 610AM (normally a sports channel) every Saturday morning from 7 – 9 a.m. They offer lots of advice for gardening with chemical alternatives. Hope these tips are helpful to some of our BV gardeners.

Citizen Patrol

The Citizen Patrol needs you! Citizen Patrol is actively seeking new members. Join this great group of residents who volunteer some of their free time to drive our neighborhood keeping an eye on things on your behalf.

No experience No experience is required, but a background check and attendance at a one-night training session are required.

For more information contact Maurice Townsend at mtowns7557@aol.com.



Maintaining Your Home's Foundation: Tips and Insights

By Amy Backlass

Many of us in Briar Village have experienced foundation issues, from cracks appearing in our homes to doors not locking properly. When faced with such problems, our first instinct is often to call foundation specialists. However, I'd like to share an alternative solution based on my personal experience.

About three years ago, I noticed cracks inside my house and observed that the brick exterior was pulling away from the boards. Concerned, I obtained bids from three foundation companies, ranging from \$11,000 to \$18,000 to add piers or pilings. Fortunately, a neighbor recommended consulting a structural engineer before making any decisions. This turned out to be a game-changer.



The engineer assessed my property and identified two trees in my front and back yards as the culprits behind the foundation issues. Rather than costly repairs, he suggested installing root barriers to prevent further damage. I followed his advice and had the barriers installed almost two years ago. Upon reevaluation, the elevation measurements showed improved foundation stability. My trees are remained healthy.

Here are some general recommendations from the engineer for maintaining any home's foundation:

Drainage: Extend downspout discharges using splash blocks and extenders. Fill eroded or low areas and monitor water against the foundation during heavy rains.

Soil Management: Place soil around the foundation (four inches of exposure is sufficient). Ensure the soil slopes away from the foundation and maintain grass or plants a few feet around it.

Watering: Water plants or grass enough to keep them healthy, especially during dry summer months. Avoid watering flatwork near the foundation or areas that have undergone repairs.

Tree Placement: Do not plant trees closer than 12 feet from the foundation.

In conclusion, if you're facing foundation issues, consider hiring a structural engineer for an expert assessment. It could save you thousands of dollars and lead to effective solutions.

Keep BV Beautiful

- Take pride in the appearance of your home and your landscaping.
- Lawn services working on non-garbage pickup days should place bagged leaves/grass out of sight, not on the curb.
- Help minimize street flooding by bagging your landscaping rather than blowing it into the street.
- Keep an eye on your pups and their poops!
- Power-washing is really affordable and can make a world of difference on your driveways, sidewalks, fences and homes.
- Parking on grass is prohibited - it is a COH fineable offense
- If you see something, say something.

A Morning with Nature

by Amy Backlas

This morning, I had a delightful experience of observing cicada killers buzzing around my ferns. It's exciting to see various wildlife finding my yard favorable. Nature brings me so much joy.

Cicada killers, spotted in the summer, make their nests in the ground to rear their young. These fascinating insects feed on nectar and aid in pollination. They play a crucial role in controlling cicada populations, so it's best to avoid harming them. Despite their name, cicada killers are not aggressive. They help keep cicada numbers in check, which is important because cicadas burrow their eggs in tree bark, weakening trees. Additionally, cicadas provide sustenance for the larvae of future cicada killers. I'm so in awe of the web of life.

It's vital to maintain our yards without pesticides, opting for organic and chemical-free products instead. I always strive to honor the interconnectedness of life and appreciate the role each organism plays in our ecosystem.

Nature inspired me to write this piece, and I hope it inspires you too.



Speeders

Slow down, you move too fast.

Unfortunately, Briar Village is used by non-residents as a shortcut around the Highway 6 intersection. People who do this think they are saving drive-time but between the road humps, a 4-way stop and the lighted intersection that they ultimately encounter, the actual time saved is negligible.

The unposted legal speed limit in Briar Village, like all other area neighborhoods, is 30 mph. But the reality is if you regularly top out at speeds over 30 mph, or bottom out on speed humps you are probably going too fast. The amount of time saved traveling from one entrance of Briar Village to another at these higher speeds is negligible.

For pedestrians, however, that small reduction in vehicle speed could be life changing. A 2011 study conducted by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety indicated that the average risk of severe injury for a pedestrian struck by a vehicle at a speed of 23 mph is 25% and doubles to 50% at 31 mph. The risk of death also increases from a 10% risk of fatality when being struck at 23 mph versus a 25% risk at 35 mph. That's a 150% increase!

State law allows counties to lower speed limits on residential streets in unincorporated areas to 25 mph, but cities like Houston are required to conduct traffic studies, enforcement investigations and other time-consuming and costly tasks before taking a similar action.

Currently, a bill (SB 1663) proposed by Houston State Sen. Carol Alvarado is making its way through the legislative process with bipartisan support. It would give power to the cities to lower speed limits on residential streets without having to go through a series of costly traffic studies.

It's nearly impossible to police all the short-cut takers who think that speeding solves things. Thankfully, we have Mark Wilson (MJM Security, 832-356-3224) making his presence known. Meanwhile, remember to drive friendly, especially during the summer months when children are at play. And if you're a power walker, dog walker or just occasional street crosser, be careful and look out for the speeders!

Sources: abc13.com, axios.com, aaafoundation.org



Yard of the Month

The Yard of the Month recognizes Briar Village residents who demonstrate distinguished efforts in maintaining their property, thus contributing to the overall appearance of our neighborhood. Congratulations and thank you to our most recent winners! Your efforts make coming home enjoyable for us all.

If you're interested in joining the YOTM Selection Committee or would like to nominate a property, please contact Eric Wallin (cew3832hoa@gmail.com). Selection usually takes place during the fourth week of each month.



YOTM APRIL - 2315 Briarlee

Rick and Cindy Lewis have lived at 2315 Briarlee for the past 33 years. For the most part, Cindy takes care of all the yard maintenance herself with the exception of the installation of the bubbling urn in the front yard and a large koi pond in the backyard which was done by Rick with his waterscaping Company. Cindy does all the yard work and she says keeps her fit.

YOTM MAY - 2102 Briarstem

This stunning home at 2102 Briarstem belongs to Eddie and Kristi Giles and their son. They moved here on April Fool's Day in 2006. Their 15 year old son loves to do yard work did the majority of the design and work you see here. They love to entertain the neighbors and friends at their home in the backyard.



YOTM June - 13802 Ella Lee



June's Yard-of-the-Month is 13802 Ella Lee. Owners Dylan and Cassandra Mumm moved to BV from Minneapolis in 2017 and say they enjoyed learning together about Texas gardening. Their landscape features one Island garden bed that contains a palm tree, Guara Dianthus, Milkweed and purple Katy Ruella. But it is the row of bright red, healthy Knock Out roses along the front wall of their home that first catches your eye at the curb. Freshly mulched beds with neat borders and a lush green lawn complete this handsome picture. A big thank you to the Mumm Family for adding to the Attractiveness of our neighborhood community.

Essential Resources for Hurricane Season

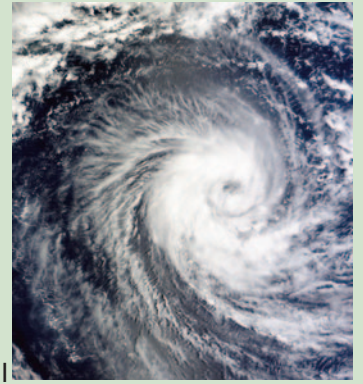
by Amy Backlas

Our recent encounter with Hurricane Beryl serves as an important reminder that 2024 promises to be a busy hurricane season. Here are a few essential resources to help keep you informed.

You can tune into the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) at www.noaa.gov. This agency issues official watches and warnings and offers a wealth of maps, radar and tracking data. While it may be more technical than some other sites, NOAA is the primary source for storm news.

For no-hype weather information, check out Space City Weather – www.spacecityweather.com. The editors of the website are two scientists who manage it as a hobby alongside their day jobs. I have found their content to be both informative and educational. Sponsored by Reliant, the site features no ads and offers a mobile app and email updates. Their companion site, The Eyewall at www.theeyewall.com, is specifically devoted to hurricanes.

Ready at <https://www.ready.gov> is a national public service designed to educate and empower people to prepare for, respond to, and mitigate emergencies and disasters. The website provides a wealth of information on steps to plan for disasters.



Clubhouse Office Gets Revived

After many years of accumulating paperwork and supplies, decorations, and party goods in the clubhouse office/storage room from an ever revolving panel of Board Members and various neighborhood activities, Briar Village's very own Secretary Melissa Mehall decided to take on mission impossible; making the club house office usable again.

So she took on the challenge and cleaned out and reorganized the small office herself.

"It wasn't just an eyesore. It was difficult to find anything and know exactly what we had on hand. I simply took advantage of previously unused vertical space and arranged like things together with a few more plastic bins and my trusty label maker!"

She started with the addition of new closet shelves that helped convert an unsustainable pile of boxes and containers into something functional. She found a great, sturdy cubby that a neighbor put out on trash day, for more vertical space.

Also, with the help of Director Larry Cannon, Melissa discovered more than few boxes of outdated bank statements in the attic that now are destined for the shredder.

Thank you, Melissa and Larry, for the much needed overhaul.



A Friendly DRV Reminder

When you receive a deed restriction violation ("DRV") letter from Graham Management, do not ignore it! If you agree with the DRV letter, fix the issue and be done with it. It's not necessary to contact Graham if you address things in a timely manner.

If you disagree with the letter or need more time to correct the violation, contact April Pitarra at 940-239-9332 or apitarra@grahammanagementhouston.com and explain your situation. Have an idea as to how long of an extension is needed or an idea of what is an appropriate solution.

Remember that Graham is managing hundreds of DRVs at various stages of resolution. So if you see another home with concerning issues and feel they are getting preferential treatment, be certain that is not the case. Feel free to report any matters to Graham Management or a member of the board.