



The Jackson Journal

News and Happenings in the Neighborhood

Jackson Hills and Jackson Meadows

Issue 2, 2011

Fire (non-emergency): 972-675-1633 • Police (non-emergency): 972-495-2271

Teresa Lamb, CMA Association Manager: 972-943-2874 • www.jacksoncommunities.com

Upcoming Events

Dec. 3

Pancakes with Santa
5805 Bryan Street
8 a.m. – 11 a.m.
\$5 per person

Dec. 10

Sachse's 4th Annual Christmas Parade
Line-up starts at 8:30 a.m. at Hudson Middle School
4400 Hudson Drive

Dec. 17-23

Neighborhood Christmas Decorating Contest
Begins at 6 p.m.
Winners to be announced on our website in the Photo Gallery section

Dec. 18

Sachse Christmas Lighting Contest
6 p.m. – 9 p.m.
You must send in a registration form to be judged; form is available on our website at www.jacksoncommunities.com/PDFs/sachsenews.pdf

Wanted: Newsletter Writer and Photographer

It is the desire of the neighborhood Board of Directors as well as the community to publish newsletters more often, but they take a great deal of time to produce and we can use your help.

We are looking for one or more volunteers to lead the charge in putting together at least three newsletters each year. Specifically, we need volunteers to help us take pictures of neighborhood-related events and we also need someone who can help write articles. This is a great way to get involved, meet some new friends ... and we can certainly use the help.

If you are willing to help in any of the areas listed above, please let us know. You can go to the Jackson Communities website (www.Jacksoncommunities.com) and click on the CONTACT US tab. Then simply fill in the form and click on the SUBMIT button.



By the way, have you looked at the Photo Gallery on our website lately? There are lots of great pictures that have been taken during our neighborhood activities and events. In addition to being able to view the pictures, you can also order prints, order coffee mugs with pictures on them, and more. Just go to our website and click on the PHOTO

GALLERY tab. We upload pictures quite often, so be sure to check this out on a regular basis. If you have pictures you would like to have added to the photo gallery, just let us know. ☺

www.jacksoncommunities.com

Stage 3 Watering Restrictions in Effect

The City of Sachse has been directed by the North Texas Municipal Water District to implement Stage 3 of the Drought Contingency Plan. Stage 3 limits the number of days residents can water to once every two weeks.

STAGE 3 water restrictions went into effect on NOVEMBER 1

Residents are allowed to water their lawns one time every two weeks on their recycling collection day between 6:00 p.m. and 10:00 a.m. There will be NO watering between 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

If you are not sure which day is your recycling collection day, please visit the city's website at www.cityofsachse.com/index.aspx?NID=185 for more information.

The NTMWD assures us this situation is very real and extremely severe. According to Associated Press (San Antonio), the drought that has

Texas Drought – Continued on page 2

turned Texas and parts of the Plains into a parched moonscape of cracked earth could persist into next year, prolonging the misery of farmers and ranchers who have endured a dry spell that is now expected to be the state’s worst since the 1950s. About 70 percent of Texas rangeland and pastures are classified as being in very poor condition, which means there has been complete or near-complete crop failure or there’s no food for grazing livestock.

Texas saw less than an inch of rain statewide in July, and more than 90 percent of the state is already in the two most extreme stages of drought. In the town of Robert Lee, a rural farming community of about 1,000 in the middle of West Texas, people are worried that Lake E.V. Spence could dry up by winter and leave the town without any water.



Texas State Park police officer Thomas Bigham walks across the cracked lake bed of O.C. Fisher Lake Wednesday, Aug. 3, 2011, in San Angelo, Texas.

One of our residents indicated that they had noticed multiple homes in our neighborhood with damaged driveways as a result of the drought. We also need to make sure the foundations of our homes get watered occasionally. Without water, smectite clay soils will shrink, leaving voids under the supporting foundation. The voids can lead to foundation settlement, which could then cause major structural damage to the foundation and structure.

There’s not much you can do during a drought if water use is restricted, unless you can reduce personal use or pay a surcharge.

If your home is already damaged, a series of steel piers or helical piers can be installed to support the foundation independent of the soils. Both solutions are expensive and you should investigate the availability of a sufficient supply of groundwater before making any decisions.

Contact a structural engineer before deciding on the foundation piers. ☼

Source: Excerpts taken from article written by Paul J. Weber, Associated Press, August 4, 2011; and “Drought can damage home’s foundation” by Dwight Barnett of Scripps Howard News Service, October 9, 2011.

Introducing the 2012 Board of Directors

The annual meeting was held and the elections for the 2012 Board of Directors took place. A few positions changed but the names of the Board members stayed the same as last year:

- **Scott Branan** remained President
- **Michael Light** became Vice President and Treasurer
- **Chance Lindsey** is Secretary
- **Joe Huber** is head of Communications and Collections
- **Cheryl Shipley** is head of the Rules Committee

Congratulations to our 2012 Board. ☼

Annual Meeting

Even though this year’s annual meeting was not heavily attended, we had lots of lively discussion.

Empty Lots

One of the discussion items that seems to come up every

Annual Meeting – Continued on page 3

Board of Directors – Jackson Communities



Scott Branan,
President



Michael Light
VP & Treasurer



Chance Lindsey
Secretary



Joe Huber
Communications/Collections



Cheryl Shipley
Member-at-Large

year is “empty lots” and what to do with them. They have become eyesores for most of us. Members of the Board are in the process of getting estimates for extending sidewalks across these lots until they sell so people can enjoy an uninterrupted walk.

Scoop the Poop!

We also had a lively discussion about people who walk their dogs and fail to carry the necessary items needed to pick up after them when they do their business on your lawn and on the walkway. What do we do about people who are not showing common courtesy? Do we need signs posted or articles like this to make us all more aware?

We would like to hear from you. What can we do to help make our neighborhood a more inviting place to walk or jog without *stepping in it* if you know what I mean?

Christmas Decorations

There were suggestions that we display our Christmas decorations a little earlier this year. As a result, some of our decorations have already been installed.

Mowing

We discussed people’s yards not being mowed and what to do about a neighbor who thinks it is okay to let the grass grow as tall as his trees. The Board wants to assure you that even though these people may drive you crazy, they are being sent warning letters and are being fined when they do not comply in a timely manner. We also encourage you to take steps in solving this issue. Call or email the code enforcement officer for Sachse. We have found this department to be very responsive in helping us put pressure on irresponsible homeowners. It amazes us to see people who seem content to only react to fines and warnings. Why not do what is less expensive by simply mowing the yard or paying someone to do it?



If you don't have a green thumb or would rather let someone else take care of your lawn mowing, edging, shrubs, leaf cleanup, etc., try DUBYA Lawn Care.

Have you noticed the neighborhood improvements?

Your HOA Board listened to your concerns and suggestions at the Annual Meeting in July and have responded! For example, in the past several months, Jackson Hills has seen an increase in break-ins and vandalism of cars parked along the Jackson and Pennington streets. The Board determined that it was dark and dangerous in that area and more light poles were needed. In an effort to deter further incidents and help keep our neighborhood safe, the Board voted to install two light poles, one for each street. Although, the light poles and installation were paid for by the HOA, the city will take control of their care, upkeep and future expenses.

The light poles have been installed and are operational. The area is now lit up and our hope is that there will be no more criminal occurrences. This project could not have been accomplished without the diligent work and oversight by one of our Board members, Michael Light. Keep in mind that all projects taken on by our Board, are voluntary. We applaud Michael for giving his time and energy to this project. When you see him, be sure and give him a well-deserved pat on the back.

You have a Voice ...

Do you want to have a say in how your dues are spent? Come to the next annual meeting in May. You can also go to our website www.jacksoncommunities.com, click on the CONTACT US tab and fill in the form, then click on the SUBMIT button.

Someone from the Board continuously monitors and reviews all feedback. We welcome new thoughts and ideas and invite all residents to submit questions, suggestions and feedback. What can we do to serve you and our community better? We look forward to hearing from you. ☺

Don't know what is going on in the community? Read the SIGN ! ! ! !

At our Annual Meeting, it was brought to the attention of the Board that the informal homemade signs were unacceptable. Our intention of the signs was to inform and remind the neighborhood of upcoming events, e.g., Annual Meeting, Neighborhood Garage Sale, etc. So the idea of having signs was a big hit; however, it was suggested that a more formal type of sign be used. You spoke and the Board listened.

As promised, the situation was discussed by the Board and the Board approved the purchase of a message board to be installed on the median entering Jackson Meadows. Unfortunately, there is no entrance to Jackson Hills, so no sign can be installed at their location.

The sign has been installed and it does add some class that the cardboard signs were lacking. If you have



The above "message board" was recently installed on the median entering Jackson Meadows. One picture shows the front side; the other picture shows the back side.

not seen it yet, take a drive-by. It is enclosed in locked Plexiglass with lots of room for notices. The information will be updated continually by one of your neighbors and Board member, Chance Lindsey. As events or notices are upcoming, check the sign for information. You can also visit our website: www.jacksoncommunities.com. The home page is continuously updated with a calendar of upcoming events.

Thank you to Walter Shipley, handyman and husband of Cheryl Shipley, for installing the new message board for our neighborhood. ☼

Annual Dues Assessment

DUES – it is not just another four letter word!!!

No one likes to pay HOA dues, but do we realize how important they truly are? HOA dues (assessments) are used for a variety of things, everything from new sign posts, message boards, new light poles, neighborhood events to supporting the general maintenance and upkeep of our property values. It is much more difficult, if not impossible, to sell a home (at Fair Market Value) in a deteriorated neighborhood than a neighborhood that is clean and enticing... not to mention the fact that it is a much better and safer environment to bring up your children. Have you taken a drive through a neighborhood lately that does not have an HOA? Give it a try, it is an eye-opener.

Speaking of annual assessments, thanks to the diligence and oversight of the Board and Management company, ***your assessments have gone down again this year*** to only \$165! That is pretty cheap insurance against property loss, don't you think ?

While it is believed by some that assessments are not important, it is in fact, the duty of each and everyone of us to pay them in full and on time. When we purchased our homes, among the mountains of paperwork, we agreed to support our HOA. The annual assessment is as much our responsibility as our mortgage payment or utility bills. Perhaps more importantly, just as we signed the contract on the home, we signed the contract with the HOA.

When assessments are late or not paid at all, each of us suffer. It can be said, with great pride, that we have a conscientious board and none of us want to impose late fees, legal fees or even foreclosure on any of our neighbors. However, it is the duty of your board to enforce consistent collection efforts from each and every home. When someone in the neighborhood does not pay, then the neighborhood as a group must make up the difference. In our present economy, there are some extenuating circumstances and the Board realizes this and



offers payment plans for those that need a little extra time. Your Board members are your neighbors and want to help. IF you have a problem and need some additional time, then contact us immediately. We, as well as the Management company, will work with you to resolve any issues. Do not wait until you are behind several months, or turned over to the attorney! Give us a chance to work with you!

The key to not getting added penalties, is to pay in full and on time. Do not forget – the due date is January 31st. Mark it on your calendar, watch the newsletter, signs, or check our website: www.jacksoncommunities.com. ✨

Lots of People to Thank!

During our annual meeting, the Board recognized several people for their tireless work in our community. They were mentioned in a previous article but one lady who was not at the annual meeting because she had another

commitment was Tricia Lindsey (wife of Board member, Chance Lindsey.) The Board publicly recognized her and presented her award to her husband, Chance, for all that she does for us. She is the head of our Social Committee and is the person who coordinates all events.



Tricia Lindsey

Our annual National Night out event continues to grow each year; and this year was a huge success. We met people who had never attended before. There were new games with lots of prizes for kids and adults. A wonderful police officer handed out stickers to the kids from his motorcycle and the kids proudly displayed their new stickers.



The Board is so appreciative of the work that goes into these types of events from all the volunteers and for Tricia leading the charge. If she is not volunteering for us, then she is leading the Girl Scouts in an event happening there, or we can call her to find out if the sprinkler system is working at the entrance, or we may ask if all the bulbs are working properly on the Christmas lights. She is



always doing something. We need more volunteers like Tricia. Openings are available for you to join this fun committee.

In the picture to the right, Board member, Cheryl Shipley, and her two granddaughters decorated Jackson Hills neighborhood for the 4th of July. Kelly Cobos (not pictured) organized the effort for both Jackson Hills and Jackson Meadows. Thank you Kelly and Cheryl.



Cheryl Shipley and her two granddaughters decorated Jackson Hills for July 4

What has God gifted you to do? We need your talents. What would you like to do for our community? Go to our website www.jacksoncommunities.com/ click on the CONTACT US tab; or give Joe Huber a call (214-789-3805.) We'd love to hear from you! ✨

New Yard of the Month Judges

For the past several years, we have had two faithful volunteers who were heavily involved in the Yard-of-the-Month program for our neighborhood. They selected the winners, took pictures for the newsletter and website, and took care of ensuring that a gift certificate from Calloway's was presented to each winner. In addition, Rosemary Thomas also wrote numerous articles for the newsletter. Rosemary Thomas and Kathy Barret were recognized at our annual meeting and each were presented with a \$50 gift certificate. They both felt it was time to pass the baton on to other volunteers. The Board is so appreciative of their service to our community.



From left to right is Kathy Barret, Rosemary Thomas, and Scott Branan.



Dennis and Kim McClurg make up our new Yard-of-the-Month selection committee.

Fortunately, Dennis and Kim McClurg stepped up to the plate and volunteered to become our new selection committee for the Yard-of-the-Month program. They have been married for 22 years, have two children, and have lived in the Dallas area most of their lives. They became residents of our community

Yard of the Month Judges – Continued on page 6

three years ago. Kim and Dennis enjoy fishing, shopping, travel, and home improvement projects.

Have you seen them out cruising our neighborhoods over the past few months to select our Yard-of-the-Month winners? Even though the Yard-of-the-Month program was suspended temporarily during the summer drought, we still had a few winners throughout the year. You can view photos of all the winners by going to the Yard of the Month page on our website (www.jacksoncommunities.com/YOM.htm).

So if you are up for the challenge and want to “spiff up” your yard, YOU might become the next proud homeowner chosen for the Yard-of-the-Month award!

With Christmas only weeks away, we will be having a Christmas Decorating Contest again this year. First and second place winners will each receive gift certificates (\$50 for first place, \$25 for second place.) We are looking forward to seeing your home glistening with lights and other festive decorations as we celebrate the joy of the Christmas season!

If you want your home to be included in the Christmas Decorating Contest, be sure to have all decorations on display with the lights turned on by 6 p.m., December 17. Judging may take more than one day. Winners will be posted on the website in the Photo Gallery section. ✨

Calloway's Tip of the Month – December



Working in your garden is an excellent escape during the holidays. It is a perfect time to plant trees and shrubs so they can develop a strong root system for next

Spring. Cool weather color such as Pansies, Snapdragons, Cyclamen, Flowering Cabbage and Kale add splashes of color to your landscape. Spring flowering bulbs can be planted now once they have been properly chilled.

Prune Summer flowering shrubs and vines now. They will bloom on new growth. Remember, do not top your Crape Myrtles! Simply prune to remove seed heads and shape. Trim evergreens only to reshape.

Prepare for the cold weather before it hits! One of the best things you can do for your landscape plants is to provide a 2-to 3-inch layer of mulch. **Mulching** is necessary year round but during the colder periods, it provides a layer of insulation for the roots.

Secondly, water your landscape well before a cold spell. A drought-stressed plant is more susceptible to freeze damage. Thirdly, for more tender plants, purchase frost cloth for extra protection. Frost cloth is a fabric which adds 3 to 4 degrees of warmth. Cover the plant completely allowing the edges to come all the way to the ground. We are utilizing the heat which radiates from the ground.

Become a member of the Calloway's Garden Club and you will receive email notices prior to any weather crisis. Visit www.calloways.com to join.

This is also an excellent time to start planning changes or additions to your landscape. Bring a sketch or photo with you and let our Texas Certified Nursery Professionals assist you! ✨

Calloway's is our Yard-of-the-Month Sponsor

A special THANK YOU goes to Calloway's Nursery for sponsoring our Good Neighbor Yard-of-the-Month program. Each month during the growing season, two yard-of-the-month winners are selected (unless we have severe drought conditions). One of the winners is from Jackson Meadows and the other one is from Jackson Hills. Each winner receives a \$25 gift certificate from Calloway's Nursery.

Calloway's also provides us with a discount coupon worth \$5 off every \$25 purchase. To print a copy of this coupon, click on the picture of the coupon that appears on the website: www.jacksoncommunities.com/YOM.htm; or you can cutout the coupon that appears below. This makes us all winners. Thanks, Calloway's! ✨





Identity Theft
Think you're not at risk?

"People whose identities have been stolen can spend months or years – and thousands of dollars – cleaning up the mess the thieves have made of their good name and credit record"

—Federal Trade Commission: When Bad Things Happen to Your Good Name, September 2002

- **130 million Visa/Mastercard customers impacted** ... malicious software compromised credit card transactions (Heartland Payment Systems, 2009)
- **77 million Sony PlayStation records affected** ... Data center hacked (2011)
- **76 million military veterans affected** ... defective hard drive sent to vendor for repair without first destroying data (2009)

Source: Privacy Rights Clearinghouse, www.privacyrights.org

In addition to **continuous monitoring**, if you become a victim of identity theft, **EXPERTS work on your behalf** to correct identity theft issues for you.
No do-it-yourself kits ... no dollar limits. Why settle for less?
Get the coverage where RESTORATION is done for you by experts.

Also, for one flat monthly fee, you can access legal advice, no matter how traumatic or trivial the issue. Legal Shield gives you the ability to talk to an attorney on any matter without worrying about high hourly costs.

Call for additional information 972-612-8686

Connie Kouba Licensed/Independent Associate with Legal Shield
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Data breaches and hacking of computer systems make us all vulnerable for identity theft. Get the coverage where "expert" restoration is done for you.

82nd Texas Legislative Session and Its Impact on HOAs

More than 12 laws were passed by the legislature this year that collectively change the operational procedures of homeowner associations. Some laws became effective as early as September 1, 2011; while others are effective on January 1, 2012.

At this time, we will concentrate only on those regarding Board Meetings; as **there is action that each owner needs to take NOW if they want to be notified of the meetings.**

Future articles will address other areas such as changes in the Annual Meeting notices and processes, voting rights, collections, and ACC items.

Your Board of Directors will be adopting required policies to comply with the new laws and you will be receiving these in the mail in the next couple of months.

But for this article, let's focus on Board Meetings. (The law appears at the end of this article.) The important things to note: "All Property Owner Association (POA) regular

and special Board meetings must be open to members," as well as the notice requirements for these meetings.

Your Board of Directors generally meets on a quarterly basis in one of their homes. Meetings are usually set a few weeks in advance. Owners are welcome to attend any Board Meeting! They will, however, be asked to exit during the Executive Session when sensitive issues are discussed, such as collection or enforcement actions of a particular homeowner. If an owner wishes to address the Board about a particular issue, they may contact the Manager in advance and we will be happy to add them to the Agenda.

HOA's now have 2 choices to provide notices of Board Meetings: (1) send by mail at least 10 days in advance or (2) post in a common area AND send an email to all registered owners at least 72 hours in advance. As you can imagine, sending by mail is very costly to the HOA. Therefore, your Board will be posting on the new Sign board at Jackson Meadows, posting on the website, and using the services of CMA Management to send an email to all owners that "opt in" to receive the notices.

Even though you have registered an email in the past at CMA's website, you will need to go online to your profile and go to the middle of the screen under "Email notifications" and select the days prior to the meeting that you wish to receive an email. Please note that it is your responsibility to notify CMA if you change your email address. You also may check your "spam" folder to add CMA to your contacts so that it will come to your regular inbox folder.

As always, we are here to help and if you have any questions, please feel free to contact our CMA representative, Teresa Lamb.

Best Wishes for a great Holiday Season! ✨

Open Meetings/Records (HB 2761 & 1821) Meetings

- Defines board meeting
 - "...a deliberation between quorums of the voting board...or between a quorum of the voting board and another person, during which POA business is conducted and the board takes formal action..."
 - A board meeting is NOT a quorum of the board at a social function, at a regional, state or national convention, ceremonial event or press conference as long as formal action is not taken

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New Laws – Continued from page 7

- All POA regular and special Board meetings must be open to members
- Board meetings must be held in county of association, or adjacent county, unless telephonic or electronic meeting
- Written minutes must be kept and made available for member inspection
- Executive session meetings defined
 - Can only include actions involving personnel, pending or threatened litigation, contract negotiations, enforcement actions, confidential communications with association's attorney, confidential matters
 - Executive session decisions must be summarized orally in regular meetings; and placed in the minutes in general terms, including any expenditures approved
- Telephonic & Electronic meetings permitted; or unanimous consent
 - Topics permitted: routine & administrative matters; reasonably unforeseen emergency or urgent necessity
 - Topics NOT permitted: fines, damage assessments, initiation of foreclosure & enforcement actions (excluding TRO), increases in assessments, special assessments, ACC appeals or suspension of owners' rights
 - Must report at next regular meeting and include in the minutes
- POAs have to give all members notice of regular and special meetings
 - Notice must be provided in one of the following ways: mailed to each property owner 10-60 days before the meeting; or provide 72 hours notice before the meeting in a place located on association's common property, or an owner's property if permitted; or on website... AND email notice to anyone who has registered an email address with the POA
 - Notice must include the date, hour, place and general subject including a general description of any executive session matter. ☼



This newsletter is a regular publication of the Jackson Communities, Inc. Homeowners' Association. Views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent those of Jackson Hills, Jackson Meadows and/or Jackson Communities, Inc., its officers, directors, or constituents.

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