

Serving residents to include the entire business community, & 17 apartment complexes. Circ: 1400

May, 2004

www.balconesheights.org



City of Balcones Heights

Crime Control Prevention District approves additional expenditures

Inside:

Front Page Story <i>Investigator hired</i>	1
Inside Story <i>Landscaping plan</i>	2
Inside Story <i>VTA election</i>	2
Inside Story <i>Plaque presentations</i>	4
Inside Story <i>Brush Pick-up</i>	7
Inside Story <i>Flag retirement</i>	7
Inside Story <i>Upcoming events</i>	8

The Crime Control District Board of Directors approved hiring an additional police investigator. They also approved six lap top computers for police vehicles to assist Balcones Heights police officers in fighting the rising tide of crime in the City.

Police Chief Ken Menn says the additional officer will alleviate a backlog of cases. According to Menn, "in many cases, the officers have been

hard pressed to have enough time to complete an investigation in a timely manner. The new officer will really help relieve the increased case loads."

Menn points out that the lap tops will allow officers to spend more time on the streets with the citizens and enable them to file their reports at the scene, rather than return to the Justice Center to file them.

Cass, De Leon declared winners

Council candidates, Bennie Cass and Suzanne de Leon were declared winners of their respective races for Place 1 and 2 on the Balcones Heights City Council at the April 11th Council meeting.

As declared winners, De Leon and Cass will not be listed on the ballot. The May ballot will list only the two Mayoral candidates, Steve Walker and Jim Craven.

Cass will serve a third consecutive term, while De Leon will begin her first term, replacing Councilman Steve Walker who is running for Mayor.

De Leon served this past year on the Planning & Zoning Commission.

City Administrator

Lanny Lambert

Mayor

Jim Craven

Mayor Pro Tem &

Councilman, Place 5

Bill Johnson

Councilwoman, Place 4

Lucille Wohlfarth

Councilwoman, Place 3

Melissa Castro

Councilman, Place 2

Steve Walker

Councilman, Place 1

Bennie Cass

Sample Ballot

Mayoral election

• **Steve Walker**

• **Jim Craven**

Election to be held, Saturday,
May 15th at Justice Center,
3300 Hillcrest.

Early voting

Early voting for the
Mayor's race will
continue until
Monday, May 11th
at 6 p.m.

May 4th-11th
voting hours are:

9 a.m. -6 p.m.

Voters await final approval to decide fate of VIA

VIA has 90 days to respond

A group of citizens submitted a petition concerning VIA to City Council.

They are demanding that citizens be allowed to vote whether or not to maintain VIA bus service in Balcones Heights.

The petition was accepted

by unanimous vote at the April 12th Council meeting

By law, the Council was mandated to accept the petition, once it was validated as meeting referendum requirements.

The next step is for VIA to review the petition and determine whether they will challenge it.

If VIA chooses not to chal-

lenge, the Council will vote at the July Council meeting to set a date for the special election.

Special Election

September 11th, is a possible date for the election.

By law, VIA, TxDot and the State Comptroller's office were notified of the pending special election.

Landscaping plan to beautify City

By George Monsive

Fellow Citizens:

The City of Balcones Heights is developing a beautification plan that will not only improve the public right of way, but will enhance the overall quality of the City, especially Fredericksburg Road area, creating an interesting and comfortable pedestrian environment while preserving the existing character of the city.

Community Center

Fredericksburg Road and the Crossroad Mall area is already an important community center for retail and office activities. Its over-all character offers a focus for civic pride.

The smaller scale and density of Crossroads Boulevard and Hillcrest will offer a perfect opportunity for a bustling pedestrian shopping and working environment. The design plan will guide changes in the existing streetscape, and will be done by the City and/or private property owners.

The improvements proposed will be implemented over time in a series of small projects, as property developments and funds become available.

Streetscape

The primary elements used to improve the streetscape will be street trees, better sidewalks, improved street lighting, signage, benches and other public furnishings.

Business owners are invited to participate in improving the streetscape by providing appropriate materials and amenities in areas adjacent to public streets.

These might also include seating areas, bike racks, water fountains, refuse receptacles attractive walkways and basic improvement to buildings such as painting and renovation projects. We also encourage small improvements such as flower boxes and landscaping.

Diversity

These will contribute substantially to the richness and diversity of the streetscape environment.

Efficiency and comfort of life is the mainstay of this development plan. It will require the complete cooperation of the business and private sectors.

Working together as a community, we can bring Balcones Heights into the 21st century.

Planning & Zoning Commission

Jim Berchelmann

Gloria Cantu

Beryl Jones

Hallie Vince

George Moellering

Suzanne de Leon

Maria Cruz

George Monsive

For more info or questions call 735-9148. Ext. 235.

Council honors police officers for bravery

Officers save children from burning apartment



Pictured above: Officer Richard Bryan receives a plaque from City Council woman Lucille Wohlfarth for Bryan's efforts in saving a child from a burning apartment unit at the Santa Fe Apartments.

Pictured right, Diana North looks at the plaque her husband, Police Officer Robert North received from the City Council for his bravery in saving a child from the burning apartment. Less than two weeks after the incident, Officer North also administered CPR and resuscitated another apartment dweller from an overdose.

Muscular Dystrophy Lockup coming to Career Point

By Rodney Carr

Career Point Institute, located at 485 Spenser Lane will host an MDA Lockup at the school, Wednesday, May 26th from 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

The school is looking for volunteers who are willing to be jailbirds for our Lockup. It will cost \$62 to bail you out.

Sixty-two dollars is what it costs for one minute of research. A donation of \$2,000 entitles your com-

pany to a television spot on the National Jerry Lewis Telethon, which is held on Labor Day every year.

There will be food, fun, games, dance teams and much more. Please come out and assist us in making this an event to remember..

For more information contact me at 669-3868 or Lupe Roque at 732-3000, Ext. 273.

Dogs & Cats must be registered

By Delia Flores

City Code of Ordinances Chapter 90:55 states that all dogs and cats older than four months must be registered with the City. Must bring shot records to obtain the required \$2 permit.

Sales Tax Report statistics for the General Funds collections are up 47.40 % from last year, and up 35.17 % for the year.

Crime Control receipts are up 50.01 % from last year and up 35.27 % for the year.

Ask the Administrator

by Lanny Lambert

Question: Can I build a fence around my front yard?

Answer: No you cannot. The City's zoning ordinance states, "no fence may be constructed closer to the front property line than the front line of the main building on the lot, or the front line of the main building on the abutting lot."

The existing fences in violation of the ordinance were built before the ordinance was adopted or they are illegal and subject to fine. They were written by the Planning & Zoning in order to prevent site obstructions for automobile drivers on city streets.

You can build a fence in your back yard, but the ordinance places a height restriction of six (6) feet and requires a building permit from the City Building Department.

Question: Can I build a carport in front of my house?

Answer: No. The City's zoning ordinance states, "in no case shall any accessory building be located closer to the front lot in than the front line of the main structure." The existing car ports in front of the home were built before the zoning ordinance was adopted or they are illegal and subject to a fine and legal action. Car ports can be built, if you have enough room in the side or back yard. This construction requires a permit from the City's building department.

Question: When will the City pickup my brush?

Answer: The City of Balcones Heights contracts with Waste Management to pickup refuse in the City limits. The bulky item pickup days are: March 22-26, July 19-23, and November 8-12th.

See newsletter, page 7 for more details.

Specialty Plates are now available

by Michelle Garcia

Specialty License Plates are now available from TxDot. Fees for plates are in addition to the cost of regular registration. Call 1-800-232-7033 or check out TxDots website at www.dot.state.tx.us.

Annual Garage Sale

by Ambrose Vince

The Oak Hills Presbyterian Church at the corner of Callaghan and Babcock is sponsoring their annual garage sale, Saturday, June 6th, from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Items ranging from clothes to furniture will be sold. Clothes for children and adults are available. For more information contact me at 732-4389.

Business Alliance to meet at Target

by Lynn Calkin

The May meeting of the Balcones Heights Business Alliance will be held at Target, May 12th at noon. The Board of Directors and Officers will meet at 11 a.m. All Balcones Heights businesses are invited to attend a networking mixer at Dave & Busters, May 20th from 5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

Please RSVP to me at 857-9571, Mel Villarreal at 229-1800 or Elizabeth Wells at 737-6086. Contact the Alliance at 857-9571 or 732-5736 for more information.

Second brush pickup for 2004-July 26th

The second of three annual clean-ups is scheduled for the residential area in Balcones Heights for July 26th

- July 19th through July 23rd (actual pick-up. Monday, July 26th)
- No household hazardous waste
- No appliances with Freon

All discarded items such as old furniture, hot water heaters, appliances, brush, etc. must be

placed at curbside in front of the residence to be serviced no later than 7 a.m. on Monday of the actual pick-up. **No brush should be put to the curb earlier than ten days prior to the pickup.**

Since the collection vehicles will pass down each street only once, pick-up cannot be assured if bulky waste items are placed on the curb after the above cut-off date and time

The third pickup is scheduled for November 15th.

Flag retirement due June 14th

By Arnaldo Muniz

U. S. Flags which are torn and faded should not be displayed. Such flags should not go into the garbage can. Worn out flags should be properly retired.

Our local VFW Post 9603 will be participating in a flag retirement ceremony to be held at VFW Post 4700 located on Frio City Road, on June 14th. Hour to be announced.

State and City VIPs have been invited. The media has been notified as well. All citizens are welcome. You may turn in your old flags to me not later than June 8th. Turn in the flags at 214 Vivian Lane.

Maria Cruz appointed to Planning & Zoning

Maria Cruz, manager of the El Marco apartments has been appointed to serve the unexpired term of Suzanne de Leon on the Planning and Zoning Commission.

De Leon resigned to serve on the City Council.

Cruz, says, "I am honored to serve on the Planning & Zoning Commission. I hope to make a contribution to the efforts of the Commission to update the zoning ordinances for the City."

Council approves new garage sales rules

Council approved limiting garage sales to six times a year, per household. Councilman Bill Johnson who placed the item on the council agenda pointed out he received numerous complaints from residents that some of their neighbors were running garage sales every weekend. According to the new ordinance a permit charge of \$5 per sale will be required.

Another proposed ordinance by Councilman Johnson to set time restrictions for brush and refuse to be placed on property for brush pick-up was tabled for further discussion. Johnson suggested residents be fined for putting out brush too early. (see brush pick-up article at top of page for current guidelines)

The Balcones Heights Newsletter is the official publication of the City of Balcones Heights. Articles must be submitted to Editor Steve Walker before the 25th day of the month. For more information, call City Administrator Lanny Lambert at 735-9148, at Ext. 227.

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City Roster

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City Secretary.....	Delia Flores.....	Ext. 236
Municipal Court Clerk.....	Yvonne Baez.....	Ext. 223
Asst. Court Clerk.....	Michelle Garcia.....	Ext. 224
Police Chief.....	Kenneth Menn.....	Ext. 237
Ast. Police Chief.....	Robert de laGarza.....	Ext. 238
Police Secretary.....	Gracie Lerma.....	Ext. 222
Detective Sgt.....	Joyce Pena.....	Ext. 232
Special Investigator.....	Lee Powers.....	Ext. 240
Dispatcher.....		Ext. 225
Financial Officer.....	JoAnn Vidal.....	Ext. 244
Mayor.....	Jim Craven.....	Ext. 235
Fire Chief.....	Ben Hoeffner.....	Ext. 241
Balcones Heights Justice Center.....		735-9148

Upcoming events in Balcones Heights

- Regularly scheduled Council meetings held the 2nd Monday each month at 6 p. m. at the Justice Center located at the corner of Hillcrest (3300 block) and Gentlemen Road. All citizens are invited to attend the meetings on the first floor in the courtroom.
- Senior Citizen's Dinner will be held the 4th Thursday of the month at the Community Center, located at 107 Glenarm Ave. at 6 p.m. For more information, call Edna Moel-lering at 733-8718.
- Early voting/Justice Center, May 5th- May 11th from 9 a.m.-6 p.m.