

ONION CREEK MEADOWS property owners association

P.O. Box 434

Manchaca, Texas 78652

Volume 2013

Neighborhood Newsletter

Issue 2

READ ME I'm your newsletter

**“Do all the good you can,
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can.”**

People came from all over to help when the Bastrop fire destroyed 1500 homes, untold numbers of animals and, more importantly, people's lives. The immediate response to survivors of the fertilizer plant explosion in West was to reach out to those who were hurting. We watched in horror the post-tornado pictures from neighboring Oklahoma, and we again without hesitation opened our hearts and wallets. A disaster relief team from Austin left for Moore immediately. One couple in Arroyo Doble collected new and used tools of all kinds and made two trailer trips to Moore to give people the means to rebuild. When two young Afghanistan vets in our OCM family needed household items to begin their post-deployment, our community opened its storage sheds and garages and hearts.

We are our **best** selves when we reach out to others. So do something nice for somebody else today. It'll do **your** body good.

Phyllis Stegall, Editor
pjstegall@austin.rr.com

PETITION TO MAKE A CHANGE IN OUR DEED RESTRICTIONS

At the request of a number of residents, we are in the process of asking for a change to our Deed Restrictions to permit Onion Creek Meadows neighbors to keep up to six laying hens or ducks (**no roosters**). Presently, an attorney is looking over our by-laws and deed restrictions to make sure we are doing this properly. Volunteers will soon be going door-to-door asking for the signatures of **OCM property owners** indicating either support or opposition to this change.



☆☆

☆ HAPPY 237th BIRTHDAY, USA ☆

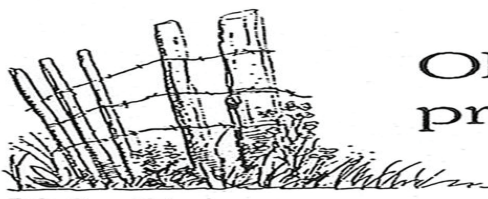
☆ **BUDA will observe the 4th of July with its annual day-long celebration of fun activities for the whole family: RED, WHITE AND BUDA. A Children's Parade forms at 9:30 a.m. down by the old post office, and at 10 rolls down Main Street ending at City Park.**

☆ **From 10-12 children's free fun inflatables provide lots of bouncing, and a magician will perform on stage. Buda Chamber of Commerce is providing the concessions.**

☆ **The Trishas begin the free evening musical program. Paid children's activities and concessions will be available, and then about 9:30 the "biggest fireworks show ever" will fill the sky for over 20 minutes.**

☆ **Bring your own picnic, chairs or a blanket to sit on for the show.**

☆☆



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New President Hopes to Help Neighbors Help Their Neighborhood

By Jim Cullen (in his own words)

My wife, Becky Garcia, and I moved to Shawnee Drive from South Austin in the spring of 2005. We looked at a lot of houses in the Austin area over the course of about a year before we finally found the right place in the Onion Creek Meadows neighborhood. We were attracted to the quiet neighborhood and the big back yard which allows our dogs to stretch their legs.

When we were looking for a new home, we visited a few houses in neighborhoods with mandatory property owners associations. We preferred the voluntary property owners association in Onion Creek Meadows, where neighbors are not forced to sign over mandatory dues, but voluntarily join to work together to advance the interests of the neighborhood.

I am a journalist who grew up in a small town in northwest Iowa and came down to Texas to attend the University of Dallas, getting my BA in 1976. I stuck around to work for daily newspapers in Irving, Texas, Shreveport, La., Longview and Beaumont before I moved to Austin in 1989 as state capitol correspondent for Hearst Newspapers. I was associate editor of The Texas Observer from 1991 to 1995, when I started The Progressive Populist, a twice-monthly newspaper, printed and mailed by my brothers, who publish a community newspaper in our hometown of Storm Lake, Iowa.

Becky earned her master's degree in library science from the University of Texas and a master's degree in business administration from St. Edwards University. She is currently employed as director of development for Host Publications, which publishes books and a literary journal, The Dirty Goat, and is preparing to open a bookstore, Malvern Books, on 29th Street near the University of Texas campus this fall.

We have six dogs — a blue heeler, a border collie mix, a sheltie mix, a pointer mix, a German shepherd and a hound mix. All were rescues and they provide amusement for the squirrels.

I was elected to the board in May 2010 and helped **Maynard and Winnie Spitz** with membership and the property owners' database as the Spitzes eased out of those duties by April 2012. In May 2011 I was named board secretary. In March 2013, after both Vice President **DeDe Whitaker** and President **John Zimmerman** resigned from the board, I became interim president until the general membership meeting on May 5, when I was **re-elected to a second three-year term and was selected as president for the full year.**

In my time on the board, our organization has represented the neighborhood's interests in negotiations with developers of the Heep Ranch and the city of Austin, the county's plans for improvements, including rebuilding the Old San Antonio Road bridge over Onion Creek, and the Aqua Texas rate case, and we have monitored the status of State Highway 45, which appears to be stalled.



Our thoughts and prayers are with our men and women who serve and protect our country here and overseas, especially as we celebrate Independence Day. We thank them and wish them a safe and healthy return home.

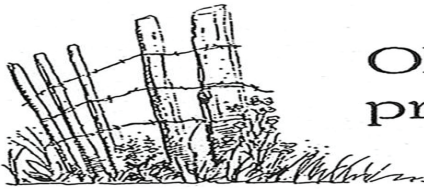
(cont. from previous column)

As development proceeds on the Heep Ranch property to the east of Old San Antonio Road and south of Onion Creek Drive, and Austin city limits follow that development, growth may present challenges for our neighborhood.

We have attempted to get compliance with deed restrictions and will continue those efforts. We also have resumed publication of the Newsletter, organized National Night Out, sponsored the Christmas decoration contest and last summer took advantage of a break in the burn ban to sponsor a small picnic and fireworks watching party at the intersection of Turley and Shawnee on July 4, among other things. We hope for more volunteers to renew the **Neighborhood Watch** program, which has been without a leader since **Joellen Simmons** moved out of the neighborhood.

I don't claim credit for any of the good things that have happened (nor do I necessarily accept blame for any bad things) but I hope as President to facilitate the work of neighbors who want to help. We can spread the credit and blame around.

Property Owners Association dues are only \$20. a year, July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014. They help our Association keep your community the wonderful place it is to live. **Won't you send us your \$20. today? Or, call any Board member for a personal pick-up.**



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HIGHLIGHTS OF OCMPOA ANNUAL MEETING MAY 5TH

In explaining the role of constables in the justice hierarchy, guest speaker **Constable Sally Hernandez**, Travis County Constable for our Precinct 3, said that constables are not first-line officers but serve as back-ups to the sheriffs. They add law enforcement resources supporting the Sheriff's Department. Your 911 call goes to the Sheriff, and a constable may assist with whatever law enforcement is needed for that call, including answering the call personally if a sheriff is not available. Seventeen deputy constables are assigned to the Precinct 3 office, and their duties include process serving, eviction notice serving, investigating fraudulent car inspections, and a number of misdemeanor infractions.

Patrol Deputy Lawrence Martin, a 10 year veteran of the Travis County Sheriff's Department, reassured us that we still live in a low crime area. When he was questioned about the increasing number of gun shots being heard in our area, he replied "if you hear shooting, call 911." He added that road safety and traffic are increasing issues as more and more commuters coming from Hays Co. clog our local roads.

Firefighter Nathan Mendenhall with the Manchaca Volunteer Fire Dept. told the group that their response to a 911 call is 5 minutes. On average they get 700 calls a year, some days 6, some days none, but they must stay prepared 24/7. The **Fire Marshal of Texas** offices will occupy the new building currently under construction next to the MVFD station on FM1626, providing fire-fighting and emergency medical training for the entire state. The burn ban is currently OFF.

MOCHA reported that they are working with a local Boy Scout troop in a project to clean up Live Oak Cemetery.

Following the meeting, we fired up the grill and a picnic lunch and conversation was enjoyed by all.

We need volunteers to help us revitalize our **Neighborhood Watch Program**

VOLUNTEERS are the backbone of our Onion Creek self-governing neighborhood. **VOLUNTEERING** takes just a small fraction of your time. **VOLUNTEERING** feels good. A **Block Watch volunteer** may spend an hour a month, maybe less, but is an important link for safety and communication in our community. Call any Board member to ask how you can help.

ONION CREEK MEADOWS WILL SOON HAVE ITS OWN FACEBOOK PAGE where you can post your activities and photos for all to enjoy. More later.



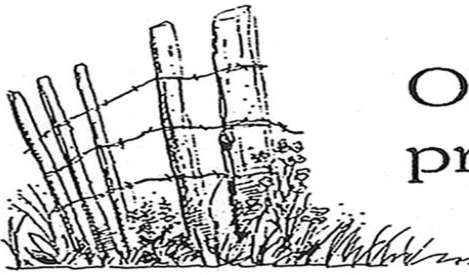
IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT YOUR HEALTH CARE AVAILABILITY

you'll be happy to know that in 2016 if everything goes according to plan, roughly **50 University of Texas** students will become the inaugural class of the **Dell Medical School at UT**. They will work and learn in two new buildings constructed near the Frank Erwin Center in Austin.

Seton Healthcare is planning a new teaching hospital to replace **UMC Brackenridge**. Programs are being designed so that patients will be treated in community clinics instead of more costly emergency rooms for chronic or preventable health issues.

Ten minutes south of us off I-35 is **Seton Medical Center Hays** which opened in 2009 in Kyle with a full range of medical services. The Center includes a 53 bed hospital for medical and surgical needs. Right next door, a large medical building houses the offices of a variety of medical specialists. **Hill Country Oncology Center** on the first floor of the medical building provides chemotherapy for cancer patients who might otherwise have to make an uncomfortable commute into town. Many people living in the south county are finding a trip to the doctor in Kyle or San Marcos for medical needs cuts a lot of travel time. *Since Seton Hays opened, eight senior living facilities have opened nearby.*

A brand new state-of-the-art **Veterans Administration Medical Center** will open in Austin in mid-2013. It will be *the largest V.A. Outpatient Clinic in the United States* and will serve as the flagship for all future V.A. clinics. The V.A. has two existing major medical facilities located within a 50 mile radius (Temple VAMC and San Antonio VAMC), as well as several outpatient clinics within the same distance, including one in Austin.



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ROBIN TO THE RESCUE

On a Saturday afternoon in May **Robin and Pete Haralambous** noticed a pigeon walking around in their driveway on Turley. The bird had a band on its leg identifying it as a racing pigeon. However, the bird stayed and stayed until Robin became concerned and queried the neighborhood Yahoo group to see if anyone kept pigeons. No, no pigeon owners in OCM! Determined as she is, Robin doesn't give up easily. She went on the internet and found that the bird was registered with the American Racing Pigeon Union. Unfortunately they were closed for the weekend but she left a message. She did find someone home at a phone number in Odessa, and from "CC" on the band the bird was traced to someone in Corpus Christi.

Since the bird was "super messy and we had to work the next day," Robin called Austin Wildlife Rescue and took the bird to them Sunday afternoon. Monday morning the Racing Pigeon Union returned Robin's call, and she connected them with the Rescue group. Happy ending for a lucky bird...and Robin and Pete. "I just had to get that pigeon back to its owner, Robin said.



Racing pigeons which weigh about one pound are sometimes called "homing pigeons." They are pampered from egg to birth, and patiently trained to carry out their logic-defying mission of flying home as fast as they can. Known once as "carrier pigeons," they used to be the world's oldest method of communication. The "thoroughbreds of the sky" today compete for big cash prizes.

Recently, for example, prize winning "Miss Elite" returned safely to her home roost in LaPorte after flying for 10 hours straight, at 50 mph, starting 500 miles away in Hoxie, Arkansas, using only her internal GPS. Her owner watched her make a final circle over his yard, swoop in smoothly and walk calmly back to her loft. "She still looked like a million bucks," he said proudly.

Robin is a Heep Ranch Development liaison for OCM-POA, and oversees our annual Yard Sale.

HANDY PHONE NUMBERS

Police/Fire 911 Non-emergency Police 311
OCMPOA President **Jim Cullen** 512-447-8201
Aqua Texas emergency calls (877) 987-2782

We appreciate the Volunteers who delivered this newsletter to your door: **Ryan and Andrea Bright Fontana** who handle distribution to delivery-persons **Marilyn Buckland, Debra Tompkins, Sherry Krupinski, Emma and Nathaniel Duhon, Robin Haralambous, Robert Walker, and Tony and Lucy Lopez.**

LIFE'S RHYTHMS

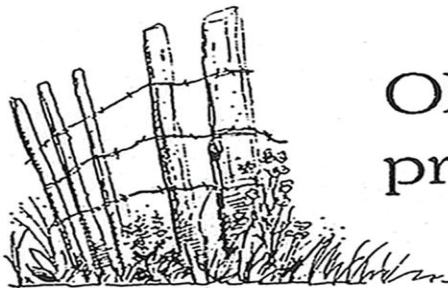
Tony and Luz Lopez on Wild Turkey add a new member to their family when son **Antonio Jr.** weds **Ashlie Danielle King** on June 29th at Hopkins House in Kyle in an outdoor ceremony. During the reception guests will be serenaded by a mariachi band. Tony Sr. is an OCMPOA Board member.

We wish **Allen and Jenny Snoddy on Onion Creek Drive** a happy future as they leave OCM after 15 years. Jenny says they are going "back to our roots and moving out to a bit more land towards Bastrop." They remember many happy times and good neighbors while living in the community while their children were growing up.

Congratulations to **Anthony Tompkins**, son of **Jim and Debra Tompkins** of Algerita Terrace who graduated from Akins High School on June 7th and has been accepted into the **School of Business at Texas A&M University**. He will pursue a degree in Social Media Marketing and will be moving to College Station in August. Best wishes to both Anthony and his proud Mom and Dad! **Debra** just retired as secretary for the OCMPOA Board but continues as Webmaster and Chair of the Nominating Committee.

Dr. Charles Akins, for whom Akins High School is named, returned to 2013 commencement to hand out 500 awards to Akins students. The first day of each new school year Dr. Akins, 80, comes back to Akins to greet new students with a handshake. Called the "Jackie Robinson of Education," he was AISD's first African-American Principal at Anderson High "during the bleak turbulent times of racial desegregation."

Susie Cerda on Wild Turkey remembers as a child coming with her mother before dawn ("by God's light") in a horse and buggy from Umland to the Heep Ranch to get free calves. The foreman would give away the newborn females, first come, first served, one per family. Once in error he gave them a newborn bull calf, and his mistake enabled them to happily start their own herd.



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In Memoriam

We extend our deepest sympathy to the family of **Nita Smith**, who had lived on Onion Creek Drive with her husband JD for over 30 years before moving last year. Nita died in San Antonio on May 9th after a long battle with breast cancer. She was the consummate military wife, having moved 22 times in 22 years. She and JD were profiled in the September 2011 issue of our newsletter. Nita is survived by her husband of 60 years and by two sons and a daughter, grand- and great-grandchildren.

Lois Imogene "Gene" Stastney, 88, passed away on April 11th in San Marcos where she had been in a nursing facility after a fall which broke her hip. We offer condolences to her son **Rick Stastney** who has lived on Vinyard for 29 years and who served our community as OCMPOA president in the mid-80s. His wife **Frances** shared with us that her mother-in-law worked for over 20 years at the Travis County Blood Bank after the death of her husband, and during her last years there loved working in the canteen serving blood donors their juice and cookies. Gene was proud to have donated over 20 gallons of blood. "An awesome mother, grandmother and great-grandmother" she will be greatly missed by Rick and Frances, their two daughters and their three grandsons.

**WE ARE CURRENTLY
UNDER CRITICAL STAGE III DROUGHT
RESTRICTIONS.**

Our third in five years.

For more information, go to www.bseacd.org

REVERSE 911

Did you know that an Emergency Notification System allows you to register your land-line or your cell phone number to receive critical emergency information when property or human life near your home is in danger? It is called "reverse 911" and will alert you if there is a vital situation of concern around your home.

Log onto CAPCOG.org and follow the directions for registering your phone number. This system works in a 10 county region which includes Travis County.

WHAT'S NEW WITH SH45- IN OR OUT??

Austin City Council, by the time you read this, will have considered a limited-purpose annexation of Estancia Hill Country's 594 acres, that large parcel which sits just south of us, as well as a regulatory plan for its development. We've heard endlessly about the snail-paced movement of an on again/off again SH45 but there's a whiff of something new.

Here is where SH45 comes back into the picture. Those who want a completed SH45 are of the opinion that Austin desperately needs to build an east-to-west highway to connect MoPac and I-35 at the southern edge of Travis County, and thus offer an alternative to the clogged antiquated I-35 for commuters and through traffic. Those opposed are concerned about the environmental impact of a major road sitting on top of the Barton Springs Aquifer.

The existing SH45 Southeast dead-ends on the east side of I-35. To continue west, the connecting road SH45 South would have to cross the southern part of Estancia, and yet the developer's drawings for Estancia Hill Country do not show an expressway crossing their land.

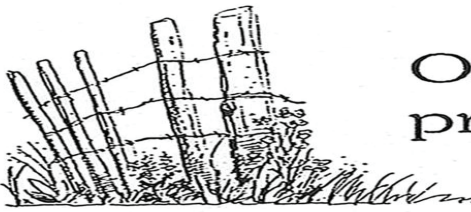
If the City Council approves the annexation of Estancia, is this the end of SH45 South and a ring road around Austin, the only city of its size without one? Although the present plans do not include a pathway for SH45 South, **Travis County and the Estancia developer have agreed to set aside a 400 foot wide allowance for the possible highway**, which for the present Estancia will use for parks and streets.

SH45 was removed from Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's 25 year plan but Hays County put an \$8.2 million dollar **study** on their list of projects to be funded by local government after 2018. The burgeoning population in Buda, Kyle and San Marcos wants a free-of-traffic-lights alternative to I-35 too. You can't miss the increased traffic on OSA, Brodie Lane and Manchaca Road.

And SH45South still needs another controversial piece, a companion road SH45 Southwest, to complete the connection to MoPac. Another fight that is still vigorous!

Might a future City Council abandon all these plans and agreements? City of Austin planner Virginia Collier and the developer say that all agreements will stand. Obviously, a lot more must happen before we hear the growl of earth movers on SH45South.

(Some information obtained from 6/17/13 Statesman.)



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KEEPING UP WITH CHANGES AROUND THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Utility work will be starting this summer on the **Estancia Hill Country** residential tract, which is being built as part of the 600-acre Heep Ranch development south of us at IH-35 and FM 1327. **Lennar Homes** will build homes in the range of \$280,000 to \$375,000 on the section of property located between the I-35 service road and Old San Antonio Road north of Puryear. *A model home will be ready by December.*

Estancia is being complimented by Travis County Commissioners for its trails and parks that will be available to the public, and for the 10 percent of the rental units that will be available at 60 percent of the Median Family Income, and 10 percent of the units that will be for sale at 80 percent of the Median Family Income. "It's an interesting juxtaposition – the location of this large tract along sensitive Onion Creek, historic Old San Antonio road and at the intersection of two regional roadways, and the possible extension of another one," remarks Commissioner Sean Compton.

Landmark Southpark, a 570-unit apartment project, is under construction on 715 W. Slaughter Lane. The clubhouse will open in late August, and the first apartments will rentable in October.

A multi-family housing project is planned for **11400 Old San Antonio Road**. The property is situated immediately west of the extension of Onion Creek Parkway at Old San Antonio Road. The 10.68 acres will surround the old white farmhouse that remains on the property.

The current plan for the **old Fire Hall on 1626** is to tear down the structure and create a county park. The old building contains asbestos and is a health hazard.

Bill Alexander with **MarketPlace Real Estate** reports that the proposed upscale RV park planned for the 50 acre **105 Twin Creeks Rd.** site is no longer on the table. (It is however important to note that the approval for that RV site development permit would have been handled administratively, *meaning there would have been no public hearing for community input.*) Another potential buyer is currently trying to purchase the site for a housing development. Residents of Turley Drive are naturally concerned about the future of this site because their properties back up to the Twin Creeks property.

Winnie Spitz is heading up a volunteer group to landscape the triangle of land at the intersection of Twin Creek Rd. and FM1626. **It's About Thyme Nursery** is supplying some of the plantings. *Interestingly, while that piece of land is not owned by anyone, Travis Co. is requiring lots of paperwork (of course!) to allow the volunteers to convert a scrubby unattractive weed lot to an attractive asset.*

To keep up with more about what's going around our end of the County, go to www.manchacadevelopmentsweebly.com We thank Dana Duyka of Arroyo Doble for initiating and managing this asset.



SCHOOL IS OUT
CHILDREN AT PLAY
Please slow down

Recommended by Your Neighbors

Landscaping:

A.G.P. Rock-N-Dirt Yard
8401 South 1st Street
512-845-9765
(complete landscaping supplies: rocks, crushed granite, soil, sod etc.)

Concrete work:

Austex Concrete
Jerry Acosta
512-705-5172

Kevin Cain Construction
Kevin Cain
512-848-6288

Experienced Babysitting/Childcare

Robert Walker (lives in OCM)
512-699-3533

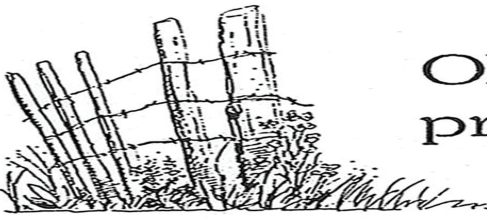
Plumbing Supplies (especially for hard to find)

Harrel's Supply & Service Center
1409 Oltorf Street in South Austin
512-699-3533

YOUR MESSAGE COULD BE PRINTED HERE

For \$10. per issue (or \$30. for 4 issues) you can advertise your services to our community in a 1/8th page space.

(which is *larger* than this space)



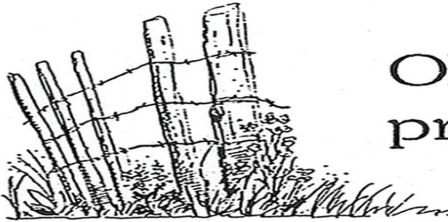
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OCMPOA BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Jim Cullen	Board President Database, Membership	512-447-8201 jcullen@austin.rr.com
Andrea Bright-Fontana	Board Vice-President Deed Restrictions Chair Activities Chair	512-577-6368 abrightfontana@gmail.com
Sherry Krupinski	Board Treasurer Welcome Chair OCMPOA Alert Back-up	512-1144 sherrykrupinski@yahoo.com
Lisa Putman	Board Secretary Deed Restrictions Heep Ranch Development	512-517-5095 lisaatthelake369@gmail.com
Trudy Richards	Board Member Facebook Page	512-560-7543 trudy_richards@hotmail.com
Phyllis Stegall	Board Member, Newsletter Editor, OCMPOA Alert List, Yahoo Group Administrator	512-291-0202 pjstegall@austin.rr.com
Tony Lopez	Board Member Activities, Neighborhood Watch	512-291-4992 lucym165@yahoo.com
Debra Tompkins	Webpage, Nominations	512-282-2380 deblou4@juno.com
Gabe Tamayo	Deed Restrictions	512-282-6529 gabetamayo@austin.rr.com
Robin Haralambous	Garage Sale Coordinator Heep Ranch Development	512-569-9850 robin_302@yahoo.com
Ron Ralph	Heep Ranch Development	512-280-9648 ronralph@austin.rr.com



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MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL FORM (From July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014)

Onion Creek Meadows Property Owners Association
P.O. Box 434
Manchaca, TX 78652

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ **Date:** _____

Lot(s) For Each Per Year Total*

Property Owner Membership: _____ X \$20.00 = _____

*Multiple lot owners may choose to pay (1) the minimum \$20 dues for a single lot and one membership vote or (2) \$20 for each additional lot which entitles you to an additional vote.

Join your **ONIONCREEKMEADOWS@YAHOOGROUPS.COM**

Here is a useful (and often very active) on-line forum to share your neighborhood news directly neighbor-to-neighbor, such as offering free or for sale items or services, sharing seeds and plants and gardening advice, locating lost and found pets or other items, looking for household help or services, asking questions about area concerns, making announcements or sharing information you think others might be interested in. **Anyone living in Onion Creek Meadows and its surrounding neighborhoods** is welcome to sign up. *This site is monitored for content and appropriateness by two moderators.* Ask to join at **onioncreekmeadows@yahoogroups.com.**

Get OCMPOA Alerts

If you are interested in reporting or receiving information about unusual or suspicious activity in the Onion Creek Meadows area, be sure we have your email address is on **ocmpoaalertlist@gmail.** This is a free valuable service available to anyone living in OCM. Your email address will not be shared with anyone else. Just contact the list by email.

911 Emergencies

In an emergency your first call is to 911. Make sure that **your house has numbers easily readable** from the street, especially at night, and that **lights are on outside** to guide the emergency crews. If possible, **have someone outside to help direct emergency vehicles** exactly where help is needed.

Non-Emergencies

The **non-emergency** Sheriff's Department number is **974-0845** to use if you want to notify them you will be out of town and would like them to keep a close watch on your house. When you call, wait out the options until a live voice comes on the line. Ask your neighbors to keep an eye out too. They are also available for reporting unusual non-criminal activity you are concerned about.