UPCOMING EVENTS

**St. Patrick’s Day Social**
March 7, 4:00-6:00, BKS Artisan Ales, St. Patrick’s Day Social

**Neighborhood Garage Sale**
May 2

**Spring Dumpster Day**
May 9

**Summer Social**
June 14

**Fall Dumpster Day**
October 10

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**KEEPING UP WITH THE NEIGHBORHOOD**

“How do I find out what’s happening in Oak Meyer Gardens?” This is a question we received several times in last November’s survey. Keeping the Membership informed has been a priority for the Board as well. When it comes to the internet, some people use NextDoor; others use Facebook. We’re depending heavily on the Block Captain Program to help get the word out. To simplify digital communication, we would like to make our website the “go-to” place for all official Oak Meyer Gardens (OMG) news. Mike Ardis, our Website Manager is working hard to update the website to make it more useful, and hopefully, easier to use. Changes are ongoing; please take a look if you haven’t already. You should be able to find all information on events and services there, as well as all meeting minutes, financial reports, and governing documents. There are also useful links, such as the link to Homes Association of Kansas City so you may pay your dues electronically.

There will be several major changes in the future. Currently, everyone on the internet has access to our website. Soon we will be taking our website private in order to protect member information and OMG financial information. We have changed our website host in order to make security more affordable. The first thing you will notice is that you will have to log in to the website – initially just for financial information, later for all information. It may take a day or two before you are approved to join, but we are doing this to protect your information. This will allow us to establish a voluntary, members directory through our website to make it easier for neighbors to connect. In the future, we hope to publish our newsletter on-line in order to modernize its look, remove many of its space limitations, and save postage expense. (We plan to still give all non-internet users a hard copy.) We will continue to push out all OMG information through the Block Captains and post news of website updates on our Facebook page. We encourage ALL members to follow us on the Oak Meyer Gardens Facebook page in order to receive these notifications. Finally, if you do not use the internet, please save and refer to our newsletter, The Acorn. We post all dates for events and social activities there as soon as they are planned.

Our website address is: www.oakmeyergardens.org

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**OAK MEYER GARDENS**

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**OMG BOARD**

**President** Valerie Schroer
**Vice President** Stuart Wieland
**Treasurer** Cheryl Burbach
**Secretary** Jane McQueeny
**Director** Patty Jensen
**Director** Kevin Marts
**Director** John Kilby

You may contact any of our board members at the following e-mail.
hoa@oakmeyergardens.org

OUR WEBSITE
www.oakmeyergardens.org

FACEBOOK
http://www.facebook.com/groups/oakmeyergardens/

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**NEW OMG SECURITY COMMITTEE**

Board members Stuart Wieland and Kevin Marts are in the process of evaluating the level of interest in a separate committee within the Oak Meyer Gardens Homes Association dealing with a variety of security issues for our members (“OMG Security Committee”). The Board has reached out to KCPD Detective and OMG member Jacob Shroyer, who has indicated his willingness to help the committee in assessing needs and goals for our neighborhood’s increased safety and security. More to come once the specific goals and tasks of the committee have been identified and finalized with the Oak Meyer Gardens Homes Association Strategic Plan, which provides in pertinent part:

**MANAGING SECURITY**

Security and the feeling of security are primary goals of OMG. As such, the Strategic Plan addresses both. The OMG Board will have a Security Committee providing input and recommendations to the Board on all security matters. It is critical that the Security Committee has access to relevant resources and skill sets in order to evaluate existing processes, technologies, and best practices related to neighborhood security. The Security Committee should consider actions providing out-of-town “house watch” services, responses to house fires, including evacuation orders of KCFD, house security alarms, personal injury and medical emergency situations.

**MANAGING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT**

Equally important is the safety and perceived safety of the OMG community. Tactics for promoting a safe environment will be monitored by the Security Committee. This strategic driver involves an on-going relationship and communication with the Kansas City Fire Department (KCFD) and the Kansas City Police Dept. (KCPD), requesting assistance on issues as appropriate.

The streets of OMG not only accommodate vehicles but walkers, joggers and cyclists, etc. The safety of our streets is critical to the neighborhood. OMG must utilize all lawful means to enforce speed limits and other vehicle rules and regulations within the neighborhood. The Security Committee will evaluate OMG streets in order to create a culture of safe driving. Additional efforts will be taken to consider other ideas to maintain the safety of our streets.

**IMPORTANT PARKING NOTICE**

Thank you to all the neighbors who moved their cars off the street with the last snowfall. We have contracted with Envision Lawn and Tree this year to plow the snow from our streets. With the width of their equipment, they are very concerned about damaging cars. This is especially true for our more narrow streets – 63rd Terrace, Locust, Cherry, and Kenwood. If cars are parked on both sides of any of these narrow streets where it causes a constriction, your block might not be plowed. As a courtesy to your neighbors, please use your driveways during a snow event. If you must park on the street, park on only one side - the north or west side, which is the even numbered side.

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**EARLY ST. PATRICK’S DAY SOCIAL**

Come celebrate St. Patrick’s Day the OMG way! Early!

OMG is hosting a happy hour Saturday, March 7 between 4 and 6 p.m.
Please join us at one of our neighborhood breweries: BKS
**Volunteers Wanted**

Please consider sharing your time by volunteering on OMG’s Security or Social Activities Committees! We are also looking for individuals who might consider Board Membership. If interested in the Security Committee, contact Stuart Wieland at vicepres@oakmeyergardens.org or Kevin Marts at board1@oakmeyergardens.org. You can contact Patty Jensen at pattyjensen10@aim.com if you would like to volunteer on the Social Activities Committee. They are beginning to plan for the summer picnic and are looking for new ideas. For more information on Board Membership, contact Jill Adams at jilladams@sbcglobal.net or (816) 520-8348.

**Beautification Committee Update**

The Beautification Committee is preparing for spring repairs to additional monuments, and adding landscaping to several areas. Projects anticipated to begin in the spring include the repair of monuments at Rockhill Road and Oak Terrace and at 64th Terrace and Holmes. These areas will be re-landscaped after repairs have been completed. Additional landscaping enhancements are proposed in areas where monument repairs were completed last fall, including 66th Street and Cherry (Jack & Jill statues), Rockhill and Oak Street, and Rockhill and Holmes. Landscaping in some areas will be primarily native plants, however, if the owners in these areas have a strong preference for a more traditional design and are willing to care for them, we are open to other options. Landscaping decisions will generally be based on sunlight and watering needs for each landscape area and monument.

To help enhance some of the main entrances into Oak Meyer Gardens, the Committee is working toward seasonal plantings in some of the vases and urns. Residents may have already noticed seasonal plantings in December-January at Rockhill and Oak and at Meyer and Cherry. The Committee would like to expand these enhancements; however, assistance is needed from residents, as most seasonal plantings will need to be watered regularly. If interested in adopting a vase or urn in your area, please contact the Beautification Committee. Such a minor effort by a member would go far in increasing the beauty of our neighborhood! You can contact the Beautification Committee regarding adopting a vase or urn at hoo@oakmeyergardens.org.

The Committee applied for PIAC (Public Improvements Advisory Committee) funds last September to request funding assistance on the significant backlog of monument repairs in Oak Meyer Gardens, as well as deferred maintenance on public streets where monuments and landscape walls could be impacted by future improvements. The two requests submitted for PIAC funds are still in review. We should have an update on this in our summer newsletter.

**Common Questions Found in Our Recent Survey**

**What are the “base assessment” and “other services” shown on the OMG invoice?**

In the “Declaration” of Oak Meyer Gardens, the governing document that established our HOA, J. C. Nichols Investment Company provided a method to fund the Association so it could perform its duties. This method was an assessment for each lot, based on square footage up to 300 feet away from a paved street - a system that was quickly abandoned when establishing future HOAs. Unfortunately, our Declaration also states that it can never be amended to increase this rate. Nichols did not foresee the increase in the rate of inflation. At approximately $7-$8 per lot, this amount won’t even cover the insurance on our markers and monuments. For this reason, a former board and members agreed to add a fee for “Other Services” on the invoice. This was long enough ago that we have no record of it. The members increase this fee from time to time to keep up with inflation, or to provide additional services to the neighborhood. We last raised the dues $20 in 2014.

**Is Oak Meyer Gardens audited?**

We are audited in an indirect way. We contract with Homes Associations of Kansas City (HAKC) to perform our bookkeeping, banking and financial reports. HAKC is a not-for-profit entity that was created in 1944 to handle the full-time accounting and administrative requirements of member homes associations. They are audited annually by an independent accounting firm.

You do not have to wait for a survey to ask the board a question. Feel free to ask us anytime by sending an email to HOA@oakmeyergardens.org.
My neighbor is lucky enough that the previous owner of her house had left the historical Abstract of Title with the house when they moved. Up until just after J.C. Nichols Investment Company bought the land, abstracts used to be updated and typed manually. They included the record of ownership of the land through the legal documents as filed in the Jackson County Courthouse.

A settler by the name of Boone Hays of Callaway County deposited a certificate at the Register of Land Office in Lexington, Missouri, on November 1, 1848, for the purchase of the land from the United States Government where we now live. James K. Polk was the President at the time. He likely paid $1 an acre for the 80 acres per the Land Act of 1820. He and his wife, Kiturrah, worked the land for several years and later sold it to Samuel Hays, probably a son. Documents of ownership for the next 100 years ensues.

While the description of the proceedings was in the abstract, I was able to find a copy of the original land patent of 1848 by visiting the Website for the Bureau of Land Management. If you would like to see an electronic copy of these documents, they can be found on the OMG website under the Historical Documents link. If any of you have copies of Abstracts in your house, would you please consider allowing us to scan them so that they may be preserved and made available to the Membership on our website? Please contact Valerie Schroer at HOA@oakmeyergardens.org.
COMMITTEE CHANGES

We’ve had an update of committee heads with the new election. Below you will find the OMG Committees and their chairperson.

Beautification Committee:
Co-chairs, Stuart Wieland and Matt Wright

Communications Committee: John Kilby

Finance Committee: Cheryl Burbach

Nominating Committee: Jill Adams

Security Committee: Co-chairs, Stuart Wieland and Kevin Marts

Social Activities Committee: Patty Jensen

SWEET GUM BALL REMINDER

Please try to keep your sidewalks free of the sweet gum balls as they pose a risk of a fall or twisted ankle!

WHAT DO OUR OMG DUES DO?

You may have wondered how money received from the Oak Meyer Gardens Homes Association annual dues is spent. An HOA is a group of homeowners in the same neighborhood (or building) who share costs, set rules, and manage common areas together. Almost every planned community is run by a homeowner’s association (HOA). OMG’s obligations are set forth in the governing documents, such as the Bylaws for the development.

Among the HOA’s main obligations is to maintain, repair and replace the common areas. This includes our beautiful statues throughout the neighborhood. It also allows OMG to offer Christmas tree pickup, provide dumpsters a few times during the year, snow removal on our streets, as well as social events (like block parties and ice cream socials). Perhaps most importantly, OMG’s dues provide financial support so that we can communicate with all of you through our website, social media, and newsletters like this one. Communication is an important focus of the organization to keep everyone informed and safe! And if the OMG association cannot collect enough to maintain, repair, and replace items in the common areas, conditions in the development can go downhill.

OMG treasurer, Cheryl Burbach would like to thank all of you that have paid your annual dues. Please feel free to contact Cheryl or any of the board members if you have questions.

You can reach Cheryl at: treasurer@oakmeyergardens.org

BLOCK CAPTAINS NEEDED

As many of you know, we re-instated the Block Captain program last year. Recently, there have been some changes to how the blocks are divided for the program. This was done in order to keep the size of the different blocks similar. Block Captains help to disseminate information to the residents of their block via email or printed flyer, encourage and coordinate block parties, and help welcome new residents to the neighborhood.

While most blocks are currently represented, a few blocks are without captains. The unrepresented blocks are:

63rd Terrace (Oak St to Cherry St)
Meyer Blvd (Oak St to Cherry St)
Meyer Blvd (Cherry St to Holmes Rd)
65th Terrace (Cherry St to Holmes Rd)
66th Street (Cherry St to Holmes Rd)
Kenwood (North section - Rockhill to E 66th Terr)
Holmes Rd (69th St to E 66th Terr)

If you are interested in being a block captain, or have a neighbor you’d like to recommend, please contact Dawn Kilby at dmkilby76@gmail.com or Valerie Schroer via the OMG website or social media pages.