



# oak leaves

April 1999

Volume 12

Issue 3

## Calendar of Events

- **Weekends, April**  
Tree Digging and  
Planting, River Oaks  
Nursery and Parkways
- **Tuesday, April 27**  
Board Meeting  
at the Moores',  
2S. 561 River Oaks Dr.  
7:30 PM
- **Friday, April 30**  
Arbor Day

## Cul-De-Sac Circles- Yes Or No?

Should the cul-de-sac circles in River Oaks be removed? In the upper cul-de-sac on Ridge Drive and the lower cul-de-sac on River Oaks Drive, traffic currently flows around grass-covered circular traffic islands. Since the subdivision's roads are scheduled to be resurfaced next year, now is the time to request that the City of Warrenville remove these traffic islands as part of their resurfacing project, if the homeowners want them removed. The Board of Directors needs input from residents as to whether or not this should be done.

These traffic islands were installed at the time of the original building of the subdivision. Since the first residents moved into the subdivision, there have been concerns that there is not sufficient room for traffic to maneuver around the cul-de-sacs. There has been continual damage to these

circles as cars, trucks and buses drive over the curbs and make ruts in the the grass, in their attempt to make the tight turns. Recently the City replaced the outer edge of the circle on Ridge Drive with crushed rock in an attempt to mitigate this problem.

Now we have the opportunity to decide whether these traffic islands should be removed completely. If removed, it should help vehicles trying to make the tight turns. It would, however, change the aesthetics of the cul-de-sacs, especially in the lower cul-de-sac where there are substantial plantings in the circle.

Do you think the circles should be removed, or left in place? Let a Board member know your ideas on this at your earliest convenience. Call or e-mail a Board member your thoughts on the subject.

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## Board Elects New Officers

In their monthly meeting held in March, the Board of Directors elected new officers and assigned committee chairmanships for the new fiscal year. The new officers are as follows:

- Marnee Sinnott, President
- Andy Gorski, Vice-President
- Mark Moore, Treasurer
- Marilyn Hays, Secretary

The Committee Chairmanships are:

- Landscaping - Marnee Sinnott
- Newsletter - Becky Christiansen

- Entertainment - Linda Saxton
- Neighborhood Watch - Linda Saxton
- Nominating - Andy Gorski

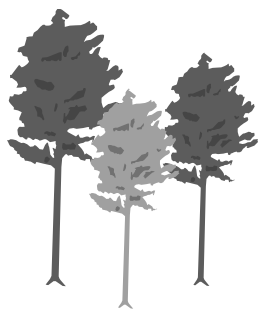
Look for information about Committee meetings in the Newsletter. If you have an interest in serving on a committee, please contact the chairman to let them know. Activities that the committees sponsor rely completely on homeowner involvement. Please consider donating some of your time if you have any interest in these areas.

Landscape work in River Oaks is done on a volunteer basis, and volunteers are always needed. In the spring and fall, help is needed with replanting trees from the tree nursery to the parkways and other public areas of the subdivision. If you can donate some of your time, contact Marnee or Tom Sinnott, (393-3808) or John Christiansen (393-4946). Or be on the lookout for the landscape brigade on the weekends and join in.

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## Trees Available From Nursery

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It's spring again and time to move trees out of the River Oaks tree nursery. This year, there are more than enough trees for the subdivision's public needs (parkway trees and Common Area plantings), which means that there a number of trees we can offer to the homeowners for their own private use.

There are seven trees available that need to come out of the nursery this spring. These are available to any homeowner who will dig and plant them. These include Green Ash, Tatarian Maple, and Hybrid Elm. All of these trees have trunk diameters between 1" and 1 1/2", and are between 8 and 11 feet tall. These trees are tagged with orange tags indicating the species of the tree and marked 'Available'. If you are interested in them, please check them out in the tree nursery.

In case you have never been down to the River Oaks tree nursery, the nursery is located in the lower Common Area, whose entrance is between Lots 39 and 40 (or between 2S. 480 and 431 River Oaks Drive, near the lower cul-de-sac). It is a tree-shaded area that opens to the river at river

level. A small square of this area is fenced in and maintained as a tree nursery. The nursery began as part of the Parkway Tree Program in the subdivision. The trees in the nursery represent a variety of species and have mostly been donations from homeowners.

Each year it is necessary to remove some of the trees from the nursery as they reach a certain size. Priority for these trees goes first to the subdivision's public needs. First, any parkway trees that need replacement are replaced. If there are other planting needs in the Common Areas, then trees are removed for those area. Occasionally more trees than are needed for these plantings are available, as they are this year. These extra trees are offered to the homeowners for private planting. The prerequisite is that the homeowner must be willing to help dig and replant the tree.

If you might like help or advice about these trees, please contact Tom Sinnott (393-2808) or John Christiansen (393-4946) as soon as possible. Because of the unusual warmth this year, the trees will not be dormant for long, so they must come out before the



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## New Sign For Subdivision

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Proposals for a new subdivision sign were discussed at the River Oaks Homeowners' Annual Meeting. Those homeowners who attended the meeting were in favor of a new brick sign, which current estimates place around \$3,000. in cost. This sign would be a two-sided brick sign that would replace the current wooden sign in the entryway island.

Several types of brick signs were discussed, including ones with a carved inlay of stone

or stone-like material, as well as ones with metallic letters attached directly to the bricks. A concern mentioned at the meeting was the difficulty in seeing the sign at night, and it was suggested that the metallic letters might be a better means of reflecting the ambient light.

The cost for this new sign would come out of the budget surpluses that have accrued


*(Continued on page 5)*

## River Oaks Chronicles: Part 1 - The Beginning


In 1986 Anden Corporation, a California-based developer, entered into an agreement with the City of Warrenville to build the subdivision known as River Oaks. Anden was in the process of building the Fox Hollow subdivision when it purchased a piece of land on the east side of Rt. 59. Initially this plot of land was one homestead, with thick borders of trees that separated it from the road and from its neighbors. There was a pond in the area we now know as the upper bowl of the Common Area, and the old home was built in what is now the lower cul-de-sac of River Oaks Dr. A driveway ran from Rt. 59, near the current subdivision entrance, along what is now Ridge Drive, and across the raised land that lies between the two bowls of the Common Area, down to the original home.

The first plans for the subdivision called for 62 houses, then changed to 64 houses. A legacy of these plans can be found in the ByLaws and Covenants of River Oaks which still refer to the Common Area as Lot 63, or sometimes Lot 65. The final plans were changed to include 66 houses, but somehow the ByLaws and Covenants were never changed accordingly.


Anden began building the subdivision in 1986, constructing the four model homes




**THE ASHFORD**  
1804 SQ. FT.  
\$119,990



**THE BRIARWOOD**  
2080 SQ. FT.  
\$124,990



**THE COVENTRY**  
2385 SQ. FT.  
\$129,990



**THE DOVER**  
2412 SQ. FT.  
\$134,990

**OPTIONS:**  
Fireplaces \$3,150, Central Air \$2,100, Basements \$9,000

**MODELS AND PRICES - 1987 SALES BROCHURE**

first. Unfortunately, these models all burned down one night and had to be rebuilt. This also resulted in the base price of the houses increasing overnight.

The second set of models are the first four houses along the east side of River Oaks Drive, in Lots 14, 15, 16 and 17. That's the

*(Continued on page 5)*

**\$123,000** **NEAR CHICAGO**

• *White shutters and a big front porch say 'welcome home'*

Our first stop is the "Briarwood" in suburban Chicago. Check out the eye-popping curb appeal of this classic two-story colonial, complete with bay window and front porch.

Anden's 2,080-square-foot plan second-guesses

your wish list. On the main level you'll find a formal entry, living and dining rooms, family room, spacious eat-in kitchen, and handy powder room. Upstairs are four big bedrooms and two baths. The master bath has a separate shower and tub.



PHOTOGRAPH BY WILLIAM HOPKINS, JR. FIELD EDITOR: MARGARET ANN FOWLER

**FLOOR PLAN**



continued on page 101

**ROOM TO ROOM**

There's room for the whole family to spread out here; open planning downstairs merges the kitchen and breakfast nook with the family room. Upstairs, closets and baths work with the stairwell and central hall to make each room as private as possible.

**A PURSE-STRETCHER**

Wall sections are built at the factory, then assembled at the site. Result: A cheaper, stronger, tighter shell. It works for any style, including Tudor.

Architect: L. James Bartisch  
Builder: Anden Corporation

*For architect and builder addresses call page 122*

**Affordable Houses, BETTER HOMES AND GARDENS, October 1988**

River Oaks subdivision is now over 12 years old, well into its second decade. We thought a little history review might be fun, so hence the debut this month of 'River Oaks Chronicles'. Look for info and facts about the subdivision that we hope you find interesting and maybe even a little helpful, on occasion.

Do you have something to sell? Or a service to advertise? If you do, then let the Newsletter know. We will take classified ads from River Oaks homeowners. E-mail the ad to Becky Christiansen or drop it off at her house (25. 600 River Oaks Dr.).

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## Annual Garage Sale - Spring or Fall?

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Each year, the River Oaks subdivision holds an annual garage sale open to any homeowners here who wish to participate. The sale is advertised in local newspapers and the turnout can be quite good.

In the past, we have tried varied arrangements. When we first started, the garage sale was a two day event. The neighborhood was young, and there were a lot of us stay-at-home moms. Then we decided two days was too much, and went to just a Saturday event. This seems to be the best.

Now we have to decide whether to continue

holding the sale in the spring, or have it in the fall. I need input from the homeowners. If we continue in the spring/summer should we continue to hold the sale before or after school gets out? If we move it to the fall, should we hold the sale before or after school starts? Over the next few weeks I will be calling randomly throughout the neighborhood to solicit your comments or opinion. If you like, you may call me @ 393-2206 and leave a message. Or e-mail me at [saxton@mcs.com](mailto:saxton@mcs.com).

Thanks for your input!

*Linda Saxton*

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## River Oaks Classifieds

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### Green Iguana Free to Good Home

Need a pet who does not shed, mess in your neighbors yard, and never needs to be walked? Have I got a pet for you !

We have had Suntoucher for 4 years and raised him from a hatchling. He is fairly tame



and can be hand fed. He is a vegetarian, so no crickets or bugs are needed. Suntoucher needs a good home and someone to feed and care for him. He can be picked up and does not bite, but because he is not handled as much as he was, needs patience to be further tamed. Iguanas are afraid of dogs so a dogless house is best.

Included with the iguana will be 2 cages, stand, lights, books and whatever food and bedding bark I have left. You may come to the house to visit and get to know Suntoucher before you make a decision.

Please call the Saxtons @ 393-2206.

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## New Sign (cont.)

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(Continued from page 2)

in the past several years. This surplus is a result of less than the full number of budgeted grass cuttings in the Common Areas due to weather conditions. If this money is used for the sign, then no dues increase will be necessary.

It was also suggested at the meeting that the old wooden sign should not be discarded. A

possible use for the old sign would be along the river bank at the stairs in the Upper Common Area to identify the subdivision to canoers and river traffic.

If you have an opinion on the sign issue, now is the time to inform the Board. We hope to be able to discuss bids for the sign at the next Board meeting in April.

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## Chronicles (cont.)

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(Continued from page 3)

reason for different sidewalk arrangement at these houses.

River Oaks actually made it into the national magazine **BETTER HOMES AND GARDENS** in October, 1988. An article on 13 affordable houses in America under \$125,000 included the Briarwood model (see picture). The fact that the actual house in question was listed at \$50,000 more than this price somehow escaped the writers.

The model fire was not the only problem that occurred during the initial building phase. Another disaster was the retaining wall that was built on the west side of the lower bowl of the Upper Common Area, behind Lots 8 and 9. It was built initially as one long high wall along the Common Area easement. Unfortunately, the wall fell down, and they decided to rebuild it as two lower walls, creating a terraced effect.

When it was rebuilt, the upper portion of the wall was shifted onto Lots 8 and 9, much to the surprise of the homeowners of these lots, with the lower half on the Common Area easement,.

The first occupants of River Oaks moved in during the summer of 1987. By February of 1988, more than 75% of the houses were sold. This triggered the first Annual Homeowners Meeting, held at City Hall and presided over by representatives of Anden Corporation. It was at this meeting that we learned that the name of the homeowners group was not River Oaks Homeowners Association, but instead was River Oaks Improvement Association, since the former name was already in use in the state of Illinois. The first Board of Directors consisted of nine members. Each year, three directorships would be up for election, for three year terms. Three current residents were on this original

So you've read the Oak Leaves, are fired up about the committees, want a free tree, and want to express yourself on the traffic circles. The best way to be heard is to contact a Board member, by phone or e-mail. Or catch one outside on a nice day and give them a piece of your mind. Also, remember that all monthly Board of Directors Meetings are open to all homeowners. Check the time and place in the calendar section of Oak Leaves.

### Board of Directors

Marnee Sinnott	President Landscaping	393-2808	tsinnott@megsinet.net
Andy Gorski	Vice-President Nominating	393-0886	
Mark Moore	Treasurer	393-6473	mt@megsinet.net
Marilyn Hayes	Secretary	863-1424	hayesmarjm@aol.com
Linda Saxton	Entertainment Neighborhood Watch	393-2206	saxton@mcs.com
Becky Christiansen	Newsletter	393-4946	becky@cyberoak.com
Steve Hodges	to be announced	393-7761	