

# STONE FOREST

## Flyer

October 2015

Volume 5, Issue 10



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hey neighbors,

Fall 2015 should be upon us by the time this newsletter reaches you---at least, I sure hope that it has arrived. Heat is good if you're in the air conditioning business but, all in all, I prefer those cooler evenings. It makes it much easier to go out for that evening run, or walk. As usual, we have quite a few new residents as a good number of homes changed ownership this summer. As usual, I'm recommending that you ignore the television, etc., and head out on the sidewalks and meet more of your neighbors.

In the September newsletter, it was spelled out what business the board was looking at in response to the annual homeowners' meeting. Since I'm submitting this message prior to our September HOA board meeting, I can't really give up to date information on the progress. But I can guarantee that each of those suggestions will be on the agenda and action will be taken. For some of them, we will need some volunteers. So, clear your calendars and practice

saying: "Sure I will help."

One additional suggestion was in reference to a community wide garage sale. That should be occurring sometime in the middle of October (perhaps the 17th?). With the help of various meteorologists (and a lotta luck) we should have a cool weekend. So, take a look around your house and garage and see what you would like to convert to money. For those new to the neighborhood, we hold these sales in our own driveways and use signs that we will put out at the neighborhood entrances prior to the weekend. It's fun since you get to meet fellow residents as well as "outsiders" who want to give you money for some of your "treasures."

That's all for now but next month's President's Message will be utterly fascinating.

Thanks,

Dick Leonard, HOA Pres.

# COMMUNITY CONTACTS

## STONE FOREST HOA Spring, Texas 77379 HOA BOARD

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..... **P.O. Box 90045, Houston, TX 77290**

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..... [www.centerpointenergy.com/outage](http://www.centerpointenergy.com/outage)

Harris County Health Dept. .... [www.harriscountyhealth.com](http://www.harriscountyhealth.com)

Harris County Precinct #4 ..... [www.hcp4.net](http://www.hcp4.net)

Comcast (cable) ..... 713-462-9000, [www.comcast.com](http://www.comcast.com)

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### NEWSLETTER INFORMATION

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## TIPS FROM KLEIN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT: GARAGE SAFETY TIPS



- Make sure that the garage door opener control button is out of reach of small children so that they do not play with the controls.
- Consult the owner's manual and learn how to use the garage door's emergency release feature. This can be important in case of a power outage or other emergency.
- Visually inspect the garage door each month. Look at springs, cables, rollers and pulleys for signs of wear. Do not attempt to remove, adjust or repair these parts or anything attached to them. A trained door repairman must make adjustments to these parts, which are under high tension.
- Never place fingers between door sections and explain the dangers to children. If you have small children, consider a door with panels that can't pinch. Avoid cables, springs, and riding or playing on a moving door.
- While on vacation, unplug the garage door opener unit or use a vacation lock console security switch, which renders remotes unusable and is an optional accessory to most openers.
- Never leave the remote control in the car or with a parking attendant. Consider using a key chain remote and always lock the entry to the inside of your home – especially if your opener is programmed to your vehicle. It is a small inconvenience for safety and security.



## Northwest Flyers Youth Track Club Free Registration Breakfast

The Northwest Flyers Youth Track Club will celebrate its 29th Anniversary Season by hosting its annual free Registration/Orientation Breakfast on Saturday, February 6th, 2016. The breakfast starts promptly at 8:30 AM at the Cypress Creek Christian Community Center Forum, 6823 Cypresswood Dr., Spring, TX, 77379.

All boys and girls who wish to join the team for the 2016 spring/summer track season must attend the orientation, which will be highlighted by a special presentation from a member of the USA Track & Field Olympic organization (USATF).

The Northwest Flyers Track Club is a youth (ages 6 -18) track club, affiliated with USATF, that provides a full program of sanctioned "track" events such as sprints, hurdles, middle distance, distance and relays, and "field" events such as long jump, triple jump, high jump, pole vault, shot put, discus and javelin.

For additional information on the Northwest Flyers Track Club, please visit the team website at <http://www.northwestflyers.org>; contact Linette Roach at [linette.roach@sbcglobal.net](mailto:linette.roach@sbcglobal.net); or "Like" the club on Facebook.



# STONE FOREST FLYER



## Partnerships for Children

Marques is a charming and quiet young man. He loves basketball and enjoys most all sports. He also enjoys riding his bike, playing video games and listening to music. He would enjoy being in a family that would provide activities for him to be active, especially sports. He would like to have a Mom that is caring and loving. He would also like to have a father that will do "guy things" like playing basketball and camping.

Adopting a child from the foster care system requires little or no cost to the adoptive family and funding may be available to help the adoptive family support the child or sibling group.

The Heart Gallery of Central Texas is a program of Partnerships for Children. To learn more about the adoption or fostering process, please call the Heart Gallery of Central Texas at (512) 834-4756, email [heartgallery@partnershipsforchildren.org](mailto:heartgallery@partnershipsforchildren.org) or visit our website at [www.partnershipsforchildren.org](http://www.partnershipsforchildren.org)

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## OMG HOMEWORK

OMG – It's homework time and I need a drink!

Ah, the school year starts. Parents everywhere rejoice with visions of free time!

Free time to catch up on shows that aren't animated, to work out, to get your mani/pedi, to shop without listening to whining, to have conversations with complete sentences and big words.

But, instead that free time is:

Free time to get the oil changed! In both cars, to take the dogs to the vet for annual check ups, to call a plumber to fix the tub jets, to call an electrician because the plumber won't fix the tub jets, to call a tub dealer because the electrician won't fix the tub jets, to have an appliance guy come and tell you the tub has to be removed because the pump was installed backwards – and nope, he doesn't remove tubs, to call BOTH a plumber and the appliance back together – that may take forever to get scheduled, to take a bath IF you ever get the tub fixed!

Still it is easier than doing all of those fun chores AND playing referee to the kids.

With great joy comes great pain and agony – namely Homework!!

Seriously, even Charles Dickens agrees... "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times..." (A Tale of Two Cities)

O.M.G. Homework.

When. Did. Homework.

Become. Such. A. Big.

Horrible. Fricking.

NIGHTMARE???

I remember homework:

I remember homework from when I was a child. The teacher taught something in class. I listened and learned. I took the book home and did the "odd numbered problems" on page 72. This didn't take long because I actually knew the material. I had seen it recently – that same day! Homework – 15 minutes BOOM. Skill reinforced, mom not involved, and STILL time for playing outside.

Homework today?

Now kids stare blankly at the homework page which covers things they discussed months or even grades ago...and maybe, just maybe something they have actually seen before in class. Who refreshes their memory about these long forgotten skills? Mom, of course AND without the help of a textbook!

I remember homework:

I remember homework from my teaching days. (1988-2004) Each subject had a separate day for homework. For me that meant I only gave homework once a week – 20 minutes homework for language arts. The kids had to know what to do or it wasn't useful for reinforcing that day's learning AND the phone rang off the wall the next day with parents complaining. Boom! Skill reinforced, mom not involved, still time for playing outside.

Homework today?

There are no text-books. Everything is online and Lord help me, everything requires 'signing' in. We have log in and password information for countless (no seriously, I don't even want to count them!) accounts:

\*profiles \*schoolology \*band calendar \*PTO information \*lunch account \*soccer schedule \*Prezi \*spelling town \*math practice \*school newsletter AND \*each teacher has a website \*\* I just went to parent night at the school last night and there are more accounts coming soon. Wonderful.

All of the above....for EACH kid. I have trouble keeping track of my own online life and you want me to add 40 logins and passwords per kid? I need a drink.

Skills reinforced? Um....I have no idea what skill this reinforces. Mom involved? You BET! Time to play outside? HAHAAAAHA!

Sigh...remember the good old days?

Homework was easy and painless, dishes washed themselves, fairies did the laundry in the night, beautifully coifed children played happily together while you cooked gourmet meals in your heels and pearls, remember those days? Yeah, me neither. And since none of those things are a part of the world, past, present, or ...well hopefully in the future we need to get it together now!!

Tips for less painful homework time!

1) Pay attention.

Homework time always comes during the witching hour of the day when the baby is crying and the dogs are barking and dinner needs to be cooked... Homework is hard enough when you are focused on it, right? So, do what you can to give yourself the space to pay attention. Like:

\*Make dinner early or use a crockpot.

\*Feed dogs a little earlier so they will not be needy or freaky.

\*Break out the treats for baby.

2) Foster independence.

I'll wait for you to stop laughing. I know I just said that the kids don't have any idea what have the homework is even about so how are they supposed to be independent? By trying. Yes, foster that "old college try" while they are still in elementary school. It turns out some of those problems they really CAN do or at least get close.

3) Keep it quiet.

It should go without saying that the house should be quiet. No TV. No DVD. No Internet. Just kids sitting at tables focusing on their task. I have no luck with mine together so I divide and conquer by having them at different work stations. (Fancy word for one at the kitchen table and one at the coffee table.)

4) Free time first.

I believe it a little break between working all day at school and working again on homework, but only a little one. Give them a snack, potty break, time to tell about their day...part of a video game or tv

*(Continued on Page 7)*

*(Continued from Page 6)*

show or swing set time in the backyard. Thirty minutes of downtime gives everyone a breather before settling down for work.

5) NO breaks.

Just get it done. Whining about it and talking about it and needing a drink and throwing a fit, etc. all just wastes time. Tell the kids to just get it over with. We all know that if they would just buckle down, focus, and get to it, homework would take 1/2 the time!

6) Bring the phone.

OK, perhaps this is the "WTF is math all about this year" part of me, but please keep your phone nearby logged into Facebook so you can bail me out when I post a picture of tonight's "how the hell do I figure out this math problem?" photo. I'm happy to help you out, too for more reasonable subjects than math.

7) Be ready.

Have paper, pencils, books, drink, snack, dictionary, lap top ready. Do not give kids the chance to 'forget' something and waste time wandering around the house looking for it. You'll save your sanity by spending 2 minutes getting ready.

8) Have a mantra.

When the kids are whining about how hard the homework is or how stupid the homework is or how 'mean' their teacher is for assigning it, you need a mantra. Do NOT engage in this time wasting conversation – even if Mean Mrs. Smith really did assign the dumbest homework assignment ever. Instead, have a mantra to repeat over and over again in response. Mine is, "We are not talking about that right now. We are doing our homework. Focus." Over and over and over and over.

9) Pat yourself on the back.

Lastly, raise your glass in a toast (we really are drinking now aren't we?) and give yourself a pat on the back. Homework is tough on everyone and making sure they 1) do it and 2) do it well will give them skills to last their entire life. You are doing a great job, momma. Cheers to you!

Boy, you'll need a vacation when you get a break from homework for the holidays.

Stop by and see me for tips on making it AWESOME!

Natalie Tanner, The Educational Tourist helps family plan adventures and make them awesome! [Www.theeducationaltourist.com](http://www.theeducationaltourist.com)

## Hosting an International Exchange Student

*Submitted by Vicki Odom*

Hosting an International Exchange Student is such a great experience for all of those involved. It leads to a better understanding between individuals of other cultures, hopefully branching its way out to a more peaceful global society. But don't just take my word about it, read about Nelva's experience and understanding of the exchange program.

I'm so lucky to have been placed with a great host family in Texas! The best part is when we share each other's cultures and have a lot of quality time together. I'm blessed to have chance to study in American High School.

Being an exchange student is hard. For the first couple days it was hard because I didn't know anybody, the moving class system is new for me and sometimes it's hard to understand what they say. But America is really friendly and handy so I got a lot of help from them. From the exchange program, people can really get to know each other, people start to respect each other and we can start a new chapter to have a better world.

So if you want to enrich your life, host an exchange student!

Nelva is from Indonesia and is spending the academic year here in Texas as part of the Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study (YES) program. This program is funded by the US Department of State which provides scholarships for secondary school students from countries with significant Muslim populations. As part of her program year, Nelva is required to perform at least 60 hours of community service (however most YES students hours amount to hundreds of hours) and continue working with the program in her home country.

Our application process for the 2016 Spring Semester and 2016/2017 academic year will soon be opening. School spots in our area tend to fill up rather quickly, so get your application in early to host one of these amazing students!

Ayusa is a non-profit organization founded in 1981 to promote global learning and leadership through foreign exchange, study abroad, and leadership programs for high school students from the U.S. and around the world.

For more information about hosting a high school foreign exchange student, please contact your local representative Vicki Odom at 832.455.7881 or [vodom@ayusa.org](mailto:vodom@ayusa.org) or Ayusa at 1.888.552.9872 or by visiting the website at [www.ayusa.org](http://www.ayusa.org).





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