



Lake at White Oak

Fall Newsletter 2009

Dues Increase Proposed for 2010

As each of you are by now aware, your LAWO Board of Directors is recommending a dues increase of \$50 per lot beginning in January 2010. If passed your annual dues would be \$300. This increase would allow us to:

- Keep security detail at current level or allow for an increase
- Allow for overdue maintenance and capital projects (e.g., sidewalk repair, weir management)
- Build a reserve for unexpected expenses such as storm damage

We have included some of the LAWO operating expenses in this newsletter; I would like to explain about a few of the larger expenses:

Repayment of our loan. \$36,820.

Maintenance of our lakes and ponds is mandated by the state and is required by our Covenants and Restrictions. Our lakes and ponds are dedicated drainage areas of the parish and because of this they must be maintained. Our current and most recent budgets have minimal maintenance expenses appropriated and were not enough to cover any sort of emergency repair. Because of this, a few years ago, LAWO had to secure a loan to make emergency repairs to both the upper and lower weirs of the lakes. These repairs included patching major holes in the upper and lower weirs. Water was actually flowing underneath

the weir and undermining the entire dam. Without the repairs the dams would have eventually failed; the parish or the state would have come in and done the repairs and assessed all the residents in the subdivision. This loan allowed us to control the project, which meant we controlled the cost of repairs, and were able to spread the cost out over a five-year period.

Lakes and Pond Maintenance/Environment/Miscellaneous.

\$18,500. We have approximately 22 acres of lakes and ponds that the association is bound by Covenants to maintain. For the amount of area we keep up this is a relatively small expense. It includes a maintenance budget that will allow for period dam repair (we would prefer not to have to do the above expense again). Without getting too boring, we need to have yearly maintenance to repair cracks in the concrete facings of the dams, and periodic borings to determine the integrity of the subsurface. The largest part of the expense is for control of aquatic vegetation and water system quality. This year we had an unexpected expense of a pump that went out in Kelly's Pond and we replaced it. Our lakes are a beautiful amenity that sets our neighborhood apart from most others around the city.

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LAWO
Directory Alert:
New Directories
will be delivered
by September 15



It's Not Nice to Fool With Mother Nature

One of the greatest benefits of our subdivision is our beautiful lakes and ponds and many of us enjoy observing the wildlife these bodies of water attract. Canadian geese use our lakes and ponds as layovers in their spring and fall migrations; they rest and graze on grasses, seeds and vegetation before moving on. While LAWO does not have a formal restriction on feeding the geese as many cities and municipalities do, the LAWO board does discourage residents from regularly feeding the geese for the following health & safety, and financial reasons:

- Regular feeding interrupts normal migration patterns and encourages the geese to stay
- Feeding the geese teaches them to be unafraid of people (an unnatural behavior), and can also cause nutritional problems
- Feeding the geese causes them to become dependent on people
- Domesticated geese attract more wild geese
- Having greater numbers of geese promotes the spread of bird diseases
- Geese cause a large accumulation of droppings (it is estimated one goose puts out about three pounds of waste material a day)
- Large amounts of geese feces harm the water quality of our lakes (droppings adjacent to the lakes

wash into the lakes when it rains).

These feces not only raise the coliform bacterial levels making the water unsafe for water contact, but they also promote excessive growth of algae and rooted aquatic plants

- In the last few years, excessive algae and plant growth in our lakes and Kelly's Pond became so dense, LAWO contracted with lake management professionals for monthly, seasonal spraying and lake management activities
- Geese are wild animals that can be very aggressive toward children and small pets

Canadian geese fall under the protection of the Migratory Bird Act of 1918, which to some extent, has contributed to a robust geese population. Under this protection it is a federal offense to harm, capture, or kill these geese or disturb their goslings or nesting sites; the fines for doing so can be up to \$15,000 and may be combined with imprisonment. Since the Board has received complaints from several residents on the large number of geese living in the subdivision, and in particular homeowner yards, we ask each of you to cooperate with a ban on feeding them. Let us enjoy these beautiful birds as they migrate through our subdivision in spring and fall without encouraging them to become fulltime LAWO residents.

Security Update



The LAWO Board has hired deputies from the East Baton Rouge (EBR) Sheriff's office to patrol our subdivision in order to reduce the number of problems with safety issues. These deputies patrol our subdivision at different times

throughout the day. The Board has approved approximately 80 hours/month for security services. If you observe any suspicious activity or need to report an incident, please call the EBR Sheriff's office at 225-389-5000.

Fall 2009

2009 LAWO Committees

The LAWO Association board meetings are held every month on the third Tuesday at the Jones Creek Library at 6:30 pm.

Board Members

David Simoneaux, President	223-6091	dsimoneaux@cox.net
Harry Burton, Vice President	753-2795	hburtl@cox.net
Lee Ann Thomas, Secretary	755-8144	leethomas@brgeneral.org
Virginia Yarbrough, Treasurer	751-2369	vyardbird@cox.net
Stan Douglas	275-2958	stan57man@cox.net
Nanette Edwards	772-2363	nans-clan@cox.net
Clayton Romie	753-1070	sps@coral-gardens.com

ACC Members**

Johnny Masey	752-4659	JVMasey@dow.com
Rich Whitlow	751-6115	rwhitlow@gmail.com
Janeen Romie	753-1070	romie_j@ligo-la.caltech.edu

**Please contact ACC Members via email.

Chairmanships

Communications	Tracy Alleman	753-2654	lawoemail@bellsouth.net
Newsletter	Beama Pierce	755-3934	beamapierce@yahoo.com
Directory	Beama Pierce	755-3934	beamapierce@yahoo.com
Message Boards	Nanette Edwards	772-2363	nans-clan@cox.net
Voicemail	Jackie Bordelon	756-8816	jfbordelon@cox.net
Environmental	Charles Yarbrough	751-2369	cmyardbird@cox.net
Security	Stan Douglas	275-2958	stan57man@cox.net
Yard of the Month	Jacque Newman	751-3714	rnewmanecon@cox.net
Welcome	Diane Brown	753-3306	acbrownl@cox.net

LAWO Real Estate Update

Currently, there are two homes on the market in LAWO with an average list price of \$302,750 and an average price per square foot of \$117.57. Average days listed on the market are 206. Seven homes have sold and closed this year with an average sales price of \$307,414 and an average price per square foot of \$112.93. Average days listed on the market were 82.

The information provided is based exclusively on MLS data and is neither guaranteed nor warranted nor is it intended to accurately reflect your individual home's value. This information does not include information for homes that have been sold by owner or are currently listed for sale by owner.





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Our property values are enhanced simply because we have these lakes and we must maintain them. We should be stocking them with game fish. We are putting together donations that will allow us to start a stocking program.

Lawn Service. \$36,600. We have numerous common ground areas and 29 cul de sacs that must be mown, weeded, irrigated, and mulched throughout the growing season and this expense includes the labor-intensive task of loading and unloading landscaping equipment multiple times throughout the subdivision. The contract also includes seasonal bedding plantings. Our lawn service contractor is the result of a bid process by a previous board and these rates are locked in until the contract expires the end of 2010.

Security. \$26,000. Our security expense is an optional one since we are not required to provide security; however, since we continue to have security issues in some of our more sheltered cul de sacs and wooded areas, we have employed off-duty sheriff deputies to patrol the neighborhood in both marked and unmarked cars. These deputies have the authority to make arrests and have done so more than once in the last few months.

There are a few things you should consider before casting your vote. First of all, I am sure you will agree with me that Lake at White Oak is one of the most desirable subdivisions in Baton Rouge. Even with this dues increase, our LAWO dues are comparable to or lower than other neighboring subdivisions (a sampling of dues from other HOAs is listed below). I realize there is never a good time to ask for a dues increase. I know your living costs have gone up substantially since Katrina. So have mine. I shouldn't have to convince you that the association's have too. I hope you realize that your board does not take the funds entrusted to us by you lightly. We are truly concerned with spending those funds wisely for the promotion and preservation of our property values in the safe and tranquil environment we know as The Lake at White Oak.

As your president, I urge you to support your neighborhood. Let's continue to make Lake at White Oak a great place to live. Ballots for this special assessment were mailed to each resident's home the week of September 1st.

With Kindest Personal Regards,
David Simoneaux, LAWO President

A sampling of dues from other Baton Rouge subdivisions

White Oak Landing	\$300	Arbor Walk	\$300
Lake Sherwood Acres	\$388	Deer Lake	\$300
Copper Mill (Zachary)	\$450	Gates at Windsong	\$500
Shadows Lake	\$250	White Oak Estates	\$220
South Harrell's Ferry Landing	\$250	Green Trail at Shenandoah	\$600
Audubon Square	\$400	Wilderness at White Oak	\$600-\$900
Laurel Hill	\$250	Carriage Wood Estates	\$600
Clearlake Estates	\$420	Forest Creek	\$300
Twenty White Oak	\$1,200	Rose Hill	\$300