



The Ridge Runner



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Resident Survey	1
Informed Delivery	6
Community Fence	7
NNO	10
Real Estate	12
Deed Restrictions	13
Birds	15
Calendar	16
Open House	17
Bike Trails	18
Small Businesses	17

The roots of National Night Out took hold in 1984 when a community watch volunteer noticed that no platform existed for community watch associations to connect together. This volunteer took it upon himself to establish this platform where law enforcement, civic organizations, neighbors, etc. could get together across the nation and celebrate their commitment to their communities.

It made me really happy to go to a couple of block parties around our neighborhood and see folks interacting with each other in a way that they normally do not. I noticed that these gatherings for National Night Out transcended racial, religious, cultural, and socio-economic divides that might exist in our community.

Ironically, NNO is followed by heated political races with rhetoric that has a tendency to divide neighbors and communities as well as a nation. We all have differing ideas on how our governing bodies should be run, but that didn't matter on the first Tuesday in October when so many neighbors interacted with each other and had a wonderful time. I call upon each person in this neighborhood to look forward to the season of thanksgiving followed by a season of celebration and joy at the end of the year. We are truly blessed to live in such a wonderful community.

Our resident survey that was taken in the latter part of the summer highlighted the fact that a significant number of our neighbors enjoyed living in this neighborhood because the residents were so nice and supportive of each other. As we approach the holiday season, I encourage you to do something nice for one of your neighbors. Enjoy the differences that make all of us unique. This will continue to make our community the envy of others around us.

Lastly, I want to personally thank all of you that volunteer your time and efforts for our community. I also want to acknowledge the block captain network. These folks keep an eye on our neighborhood and do a great job of welcoming our new neighbors. I look forward to another great year of living in Barkers Ridge.

Patrick Hughes, Barkers Ridge HOA President

Barkers Ridge Resident Survey

by Judith McGlaughlin

In August 2018, the Barkers Ridge HOA conducted a survey of its residents, the objective of which was to gain an assessment of the performance of services provided to Barkers Ridge. The survey elicited the

response of 230 homeowners, or a response rate of 30%. The results of this survey are intended to help the Association's Board of Directors set strategic priorities for the community over the next three years.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Security

Constable (Emergency)
281-463-6666

Westlake Volunteer Fire Dept.
281-492-0560

Water/Refuse

Gulf Utility Service
281-355-1312

Texas Pride Disposal
281-342-8178

Other Important Numbers

Harris County Public Health
713-439-6000

Poison Control
800-764-7661

Harris County Animal Cruelty
832-927-PAWS

Post Office - Bear Creek
281-550-4413

SPCA Houston
713-869-7722

Post Office - Park Row
281-829-5062

Centerpoint (Street Light Repair) 281-391-5104

Centerpoint (Power Outages)
713-207-2222

Harris County Signal Division
713-881-3210

Continued from Page 1.

Barkers Ridge Resident Survey (2/5)

This year's survey results portray a community that is largely happy with their homes, with their neighbors, and with the services that support them. But, we are also somewhat apprehensive about the changes going on in the surrounding community. We feel a strong sense of community, and overwhelmingly cite our neighbors as a key element – but we wish that this sentiment was more widely shared across all residents. And, we really wish that there were fewer cars parked on our streets – and that the vehicles that travel Morton Road would slow.

Our residents are largely satisfied with services delivered to the Barkers Ridge community. Highest marks were given to the Harris County Precinct 5 constables, who draw a nearly perfect rating by the 70 residents who had called the constable this year. Our landscaping services received relatively high marks as well. However, the survey results uncovered a high incidence of dissatisfaction with the mail delivery services provided by the U.S. Postal Service, and our property management company also received somewhat lower marks in the survey, although the sample was confined to the 68 residents who had called Crest Management this year.

While the ranking of services in the 2018 survey largely mirrored the rankings from the 2009 survey, scores were generally lower in 2018 than in 2009. In 2009, there was a greater tendency to score each of the services provided by the HOA or by third parties (e.g. MUD 238 and the U.S. Postal Service) as “excellent” or “pretty good”. In 2018, the ratings appeared to slip, with a higher percentage of residents rating the service as “fair” or “poor”. In 2018, the largest declines were found in the delivery of pool management services, but the trend was across the board. There may be other factors that caused this decline, but it is a trend that should be noted.

Overall Impressions—What is the one thing you like best about Barkers Ridge?

Much as they did in 2009, our residents conveyed a sense of pride and satisfaction with the Barkers Ridge community. More than a third of the 230 responses pointed either to their neighbors

Best Thing	Number	%
Neighbors	39	19%
Sense of community	34	17%
Well-maintained	34	17%
Safe/quiet	31	15%
Stability/established neighborhood	23	11%
Location	18	9%
Trail, amenities	10	5%
Small town feeling	7	3%
HOA	4	2%
Events	3	1%
Grand Total	203	100%

(“caring neighbors”, “great neighbors”, “the helpfulness to and from neighbors”), to the sense of community that they find in Barkers Ridge, and to how well-maintained the community has remained as it grows older. Said one resident, “the best thing about Barkers Ridge is the unity that exists, especially for residents that have lived here for 10+ years.” Said another, the best thing about Barkers Ridge is “the way the community works together and looks out for each other.”

Overall Impressions—What is the one thing you dislike most about Barkers Ridge?

There was less consensus on the things that Barkers Ridge residents do not like. Topping the list were traffic/speeding issues (both on Morton Road and within Barkers Ridge) and the number of cars parked on Barkers Ridge streets. These concerns mirror the comments made in the 2009 survey.

The third most cited concern in the 2018 was the sense that neighbors were not taking care of their homes. Said one resident: “I have been in this subdivision for 18 years and although it is kept up, I can see it is not what is used to be. Some resident seems to be not interested in keeping with the cleanliness, order, and good common neighbor rules.” Following these top three concerns, residents next cited the be-

Continued on page 3.

Continued from Page 2.

Barkers Ridge Resident Survey (3/5)

Worst Thing	Number	%
Cars parked on street	33	18%
Traffic/speeding	32	17%
Neighbors who do not take care of their homes	24	13%
Neighborhood etiquette	15	8%
HOA	15	8%
Surrounding area	14	8%
HOA Services	14	8%
Community amenities (repair, insufficient)	13	7%
Landfill	6	3%
Non-HOA services	6	3%
Changing neighborhood	6	3%
Flood threat	4	2%
Other issues	2	1%
Grand Total	184	100%

havior of some Barkers Ridge residents that do not conform with rules of “neighborhood etiquette” - residents who walk their dogs to “clean up the mess”, barking dogs, and the inappropriate use of fireworks. These concerns were echoed in the 2009 survey, but new to the list of concerns was the behavior of residents on Barkers Ridge’s Facebook page, such as “the way people complain & argue on Facebook” and “the constant negativity on Facebook”, and “Facebook quarrels”.

“HOA being involved with petty issues that, in their (not so humble) opinion deter from the essence of Barkers Ridge.”

In 2009, the behavior of the HOA and the service providers that the HOA contracts withdrew comments from 11% of the survey respondents. In 2018, there appeared to be more concern with these two factors. Comments about the HOA’s behavior ranged widely, from an inconsistent enforcement of deed restrictions, to the “bickering” and internal politics of the organization, to an un-

derlying distrust of the communications by the HOA. There were an equal number of comments made about the service providers that the HOA retains, including the pool management company, Crest Management, Texas Pride, and an overall “lack of enforcement of vendors”. Taken together, concerns around the HOA and the services it provides made up 16% of all responses, up notably from the 2009 results.

Pool Management Services

Respondents rated the quality of pool management services, including the maintenance of the pool, the pool deck, and the restroom — as well as the performance and attitudes of the lifeguard staff. Pool maintenance received high marks, especially the deck around the pool, while about 40% of the respondents thought the restrooms were not well maintained.

In the 2009 survey, respondents had expressed some concerns around the behavior of lifeguards while on duty, particularly their ability to maintain control. While such concerns were raised anecdotally via social media this year, the survey results did not show any significant differences in the ratings given to lifeguards, compared with pool management services overall. The attitude of lifeguards toward residents drew the highest number of “excellent, highest rating” responses, but also the second highest number of “OK, could improve a bit” scores.

There were two recommendations provided by residents to improve their experience with the community pool. One recommendation was for the HOA to extend the pool season which, with the general trend to warmer weather earlier in the year — as well as the start of the school year in mid-August, was much too short. The other recommendation was to “revitalize” the pool area, particularly with the additional of slides and upgrades to the toddler pool.

Landscaping Services

Our landscaping services received high marks by most residents, with about 80% of the respondents providing a “good” or “excellent” rating. The landscaping company’s “mowing and edging” services

Continued from Page 3.

Barkers Ridge Resident Survey (4/5)

received the highest assessments, while the lowest ratings were given to shrubbery and landscaping services around the Barkers Ridge monuments – as well as the selection of flowers in the median.

Satisfaction was still high for these two factors, but about 10% of respondents felt that we could do better. Wrote one resident, "I believe our service is doing an adequate job, but nothing outstanding." Other residents commented that the medians could be enhanced, perhaps with the addition of more trees and more color could be added. Of the 63 recommendations provided, 34 comments related to the need for more colorful flowers – and another 7 related to the need for more trees and plants. These residents were not dissatisfied: almost all reported that landscaping services were "OK" or "met expectations": there just was room for improvement.

Waste Collection and Recycling Services

Nearly half of the respondents (45%) reported that waste recycling was "extremely important" to them, and another 18% and 16% considered the practice "very important" and "somewhat important", respectively. Together, some 80% of our residents believe that recycling is important to the community.

Sixty percent of the survey respondents reported that they have never experienced a performance issue with Texas Pride Disposal – that is, there was never

their waste was not picked up one time – and another 40% (35 respondents) said that they experienced more than 1 performance failure, but less than five such incidents. There were six respondents who reported that the provider did not pick up their waste on more than five occasions.

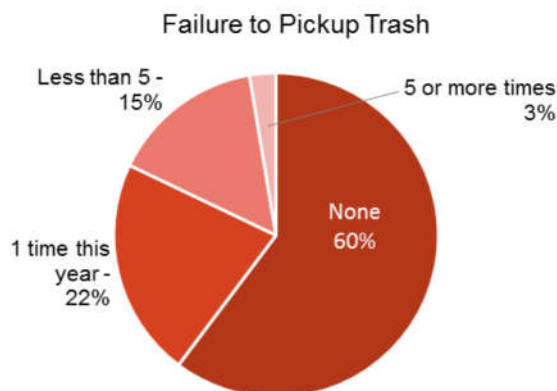
In conjunction with this survey, we asked Texas Pride to provide information on the number of homes where services are not provided because no account had been established, or because the homeowner was late on payments. This number was a surprisingly high 16% (9% without accounts, 7% were 90 or more days late on payment). This 16% "skip rate" was very similar to the percentage of respondents who reported performance issues – and suggests a potential confusion among some residents that an account with Texas Pride must be set up individually. In many HOA's, waste collection services are part of the residents' HOA dues: in Barkers Ridge, this is not the case.

Water Utility Services

While water utility services are not provided by the HOA, they are a service that is provided to our residents and the HOA works collaboratively with the directors of MUD 238 on issues that jointly affect our community. Similarly, we had measured resident satisfaction with this service in 2009 – and could provide MUD 238 with updated information.

The survey measured five attributes of water utility services, including three factors related to billing/invoicing, the clarity and quality of residential water, and the maintenance of both the water and sewage treatment plants. Overall satisfaction with water utility services was high; nearly 7 of 10 respondents rated these services as "excellent" or "pretty good"; compared with the other services measured, these results were exceeded only by our landscaping and law enforcement services. There were no significant differences apparent in the ratings provided to the six components of satisfaction.

Seventy-one residents provided recommendations on how water utility services could be improved.



an incident this year when the provider failed to pick up their general or recycled waste.

Of the remaining 40% who did report an incident, slightly more than half (50 respondents) reported that

Continued from Page 4.

Barkers Ridge Resident Survey (5/5)

The largest number of these comments related to the additional fees charged by the West Harris

"The water bill has consistently increased over the past few months. We are paying double what we were paying a few months ago because they continue to add fees and there is no real clarification on what the fees are for and how long we will be required to pay them."

County Regional Water Authority – coupled with uncertainty as to why such fees are assessed. There were eight

comments each related to the odor at the sewage treatment plant and to observed discoloration of the water.

Crest Management

Less than a third of the survey respondents reported that they had called Crest Management this year. Of the 68 respondents who had called, 42 (or just over 60%) said that their view of Crest's courteousness was "excellent" or "pretty good", but 25% were dissatisfied with the courteousness of the Crest representative. Only half of the 68 respondents were satisfied with Crest's problem-solving capabilities, and fully 32% were dissatisfied, with half of those recommending that the property management company should be replaced. Half of the 38 respondents who provided comments suggested that the Crest representative should be "more responsive" and "more knowledgeable".

The 30% who rated Crest's "ability to resolve their problem" as "fair" or "poor" is a much larger percentage than the Association would like to see. One solution may be a more active management of the telephone log maintained by Crest, to allow HOA board members to monitor calls that might require our intervention. This process is in place, but improvements in the interface between Crest Management and our residents may still need to be made.

U.S. Postal Services—Mail Delivery

Of all the services measured, the services provided by the Bear Creek Postal Station received the largest number and largest percentage of unfavorable responses. Fully 24% of the respondents—which numbered 55 in total—reported that USPS services were "fair" or "poor"—while only about 50% of the respondents were satisfied—for a net positive rating of only 27%. More than 70% of the respondents reported that the main problem in the mail service was the delivery of mail to the wrong address, while other residents commented that the postal worker fails to lock the boxes after delivering the mail (leading to stolen mail), or that the mail is often damaged. Said one resident: "Mail is not only delivered to the wrong address, but packages are placed in the wrong box, packages are left in an unlocked box,"

Contract Law Enforcement Services—Harris County Precinct 5 Constables

The resident survey also provided an estimate of the percentage of residents who contacted the Harris County Precinct 5 constables, and their evaluation of that interaction. Barkers Ridge has an annual contract with Precinct 5 to provide a dedicated constable during the hours of 6 a.m. and 2 p.m.; outside of those contracted hours, the closest deputy is dispatched to Barkers Ridge to respond to a resident call.

Our survey found that 31% of our residents experienced an incident in the past year where Precinct 5 constables could have been called, and 80% (not all) did make that call. There were 57 residents who provided a rating of the constable services received and 36 of those residents (or 63%) gave the constables a rating of "excellent", while another 9 rated the services as "good".

A more complete summary of the survey results, including verbatim responses, is available.

Contact Judith.Hall.McGlaughlin@gmail.com to request a copy.

Informed Delivery® Offered by USPS in Our Zip Code

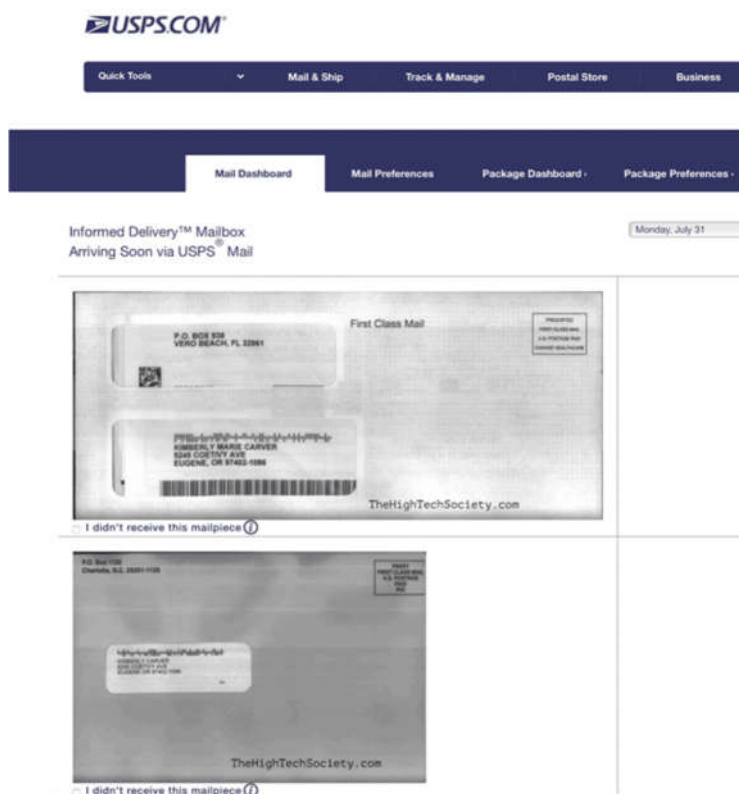
Informed Delivery is a free and optional notification service that gives residential consumers the ability to digitally preview their letter-sized mail pieces and manage their packages that scheduled to arrive. Informed Delivery leverages an existing process by USPS, that is the digital imaging of the front of letter-sized mail pieces that run through automation equipment to sort and delivery mail. USPS is now using those images to provide digital notifications to users in advance of the delivery of physical mail. Informed Delivery gives homeowners visibility into mail and package delivery each day and allows users to take action before important items reach their mailbox.

How Informed Delivery® Works

Informed Delivery allows users to interact with their incoming mail and packages online. Users receive email notifications containing gray-scale images of the exterior, address side of incoming letter-sized mail pieces that are to be delivered. These images are also accessible on the Informed Delivery dashboard at informedelivery.usps.com. They do not include Images of larger mail, such as catalogues or magazines, are only provided if the mailer conducts a synchronized digital marketing campaign. For items with USPS Tracking®, users will be able to view delivery status of packages, provide USPS Delivery Instructions™, manage their notifications, and schedule redelivery from the dashboard. Users can also receive USPS Tracking updates for incoming packages via separate email or text notifications. The dashboard displays mail piece images for a seven-day period, while package information will display for 15 days after each package has been delivered. Users can opt-in to receive email or text notifications with status updates for incoming packages, too.

Signing up for Informed Delivery®

In order to sign up for Informed Delivery, you must live an eligible residential address (zip code 77084 is eligible for this service) and be able to verify your identity. You will also need to



create a personal usps.com® account if you do not already have one. To sign up, use the following link and follow the instructions provided: <https://informedelivery.usps.com/Informed/Delivery>.



The Barkers Ridge HOA will introduce a new website in January 2019, replacing the website that has served us so well over these past 20+ years. Thanks to Steve Crane and Diane Sanders for all that they have done for these many years in supporting our community.

Barkers Ridge Community Fence: What Are the Options?

By Judith McGlaughlin

The Barkers Ridge Homeowners Association owns 6,960 linear feet of community fencing, located along Morton Road and Greenhouse Road. The Greenhouse Road fence was replaced in 2009; the Morton Road fence, in 2015. With proper maintenance, these wooden fences are expected to last 15 years, so it's a bit premature to think about replacing them.

Yet, in the recent resident survey, several residents commented on the condition of the fence when identifying areas where the Association could positively affect the attractiveness of Barkers Ridge: when asked what residents disliked the most about Barkers Ridge, one resident wrote: "the fence down the middle of Morton. You keep wasting money every few years inside of planning a real solution like most subdivisions have." When asked "Would you support the replacement of the community's wooden fence with a vinyl or composite fence, even if it doubled the purchase cost?", the majority (just short of 60%) said they didn't have enough information to make the decision, while the remainder were divided between support and opposition (18% and 25%, respectively) of this idea.

The objective of this article is to review the options that the Association can consider when replacing the community fence- and the advantages and disadvantages of each – to allow us to revisit this decision in 2019. Unfortunately, we were not able to obtain cost estimates from local fence providers: we will gather these data and publish a true cost/benefit analysis in the future.

There are four main materials that can be used when we replace the community fence: wood, vinyl, composite materials, and concrete/stone.

TRADITIONAL WOOD

Wooden fences are traditional and blend well with flowers and foliage for a natural, classic look. They are affordable to install and cost significantly less up front than the other options for fence materials.

Repairs are simple and relatively inexpensive because damaged or loose boards can be replaced indi-



Wooden Fence

vidually, rather than having to replace whole sections of the fence.

There are a variety of wood types other than pine that can be used, such as redwood or cedar, which stand up well against decay, naturally occurring oils, and wood-boring insects. There are also other varieties of wood that are chemically treated to resist the elements. These options allow you to hold on to the integrity associated with natural wood, but they are less expensive than traditional redwood or cedar.

The heavy maintenance needs of wood are its biggest drawback. Yearly maintenance is required to keep a wood fence in good shape – including regularly reapplying a clear stain or finish to reduce the frequency of fungus or rotting wood. The fence boards can also warp, especially if they haven't been properly treated to resist moisture or changes in temperature. In most climates you'll have to do this annually to preserve the life of the fence, but in harsher climates it'll have to be done more frequently. The average cost of maintenance for a wooden fence is \$20 per foot.

VINYL

Vinyl fencing has become very popular due to its affordability and ease of installation. It's made from extruded polyvinyl chloride (PVC), a material that is lightweight but still durable, weatherproof, insect-proof, and available in a variety of styles and colors.

Continued from Page 7.

Barkers Ridge Community Fence: What Are the Options?



Vinyl Fence

While the standard for vinyl fencing is a simple white, colors and a wood-grain texture are options on the market. It is easily maintained, requiring nothing more than a thorough wash with soap and water.

One of the biggest distinctions is the low maintenance compared to wood. Dirt and graffiti is easily sprayed off vinyl fences due to their glossy, non-porous surfaces. Vinyl fences won't split or crack. They are not subject to termite damage, fungus, or dry rot, and they are fire resistant.

Cost is the biggest disadvantage of vinyl fencing: they tend to cost more upfront than wood fences. In addition, extreme temperatures can make the vinyl expand or bend, and high winds can cause the sections to twist. Overheated vinyl fencing can stretch and pop out of its brackets, and during cold winter months, vinyl can be brittle and more prone to breakage.

A few types of vinyl fences can have mildew problems, especially if they're located near yard sprinklers. While the mildew can easily be removed, if not removed, staining will occur. Strong sunlight over the years can also change the vinyl's color. However, titanium oxide has now added to the PVC mixture to provide ultraviolet resistance, although that can add to cost.

One huge downside to choosing a vinyl fence is the repair. The process typically gets more complicated than just replacing a board or two as with wood, and often an entire section must be replaced for a proper repair. High-end vinyl fencing looks as good as wood from a distance, but it may look plasticky or cheap close-up despite the higher upfront costs.



Composite Fence

Under normal circumstances, it's difficult to break vinyl fence materials, but there are situations where it should not be installed (for example, near parking areas). Vinyl fences can also be damaged while trimming grass with a weed eater.

COMPOSITE WOOD

Made from a combination of recycled plastic and wood fibers, composite fences look like wood, but do not require painting or staining over time. One of the main benefits of composite is its low environmental footprint -- new lumber is not being used to build the fence. Composite fencing is dense, which makes it strong enough to stand up to the elements for years but it is still relatively lightweight.

Composite fencing is generally more expensive than vinyl fencing. Because the fence has some wood in it, it does expand and contract somewhat with the changes in weather and may warp in extreme temperatures. In addition, stains and mold can develop on the fence's surface from contact with nearby grasses over time. Consistent maintenance and care can help prevent some of these issues.

One of the biggest factors in the choice of composite fencing vs. wood is cost. Wood fences typically cost around \$15 per foot; composite wood fences cost around \$25 per foot. However, they are not affected by insect populations and are weather resistant. Most of the dirt is easily removed with a high-powered washer or just water. Mold or smoke stains can simply be removed with a cleanser.

Continued from Page 8.

Barkers Ridge Community Fence: What Are the Options?

Composite fences can be made to look like a many different types of wood – and they look more like wood than do vinyl fences. They often come with a 20+ year warranty.

PRE-CAST CONCRETE

Concrete is one of the most durable materials on the market, providing durable fencing while requiring minimal effort to maintain. Concrete is invulnerable to rot, rust, wind, rain, or most other sources of damage. It can be installed quickly, and although installation costs are high, its long lifespan and low maintenance requirements can offset higher upfront costs.

Pre-cast concrete is concrete that has been molded and set before it is installed on site. The chief difference between precast concrete fence and a concrete wall is thickness. While concrete walls are often a foot thick or more, a precast concrete fence is only a few inches in thickness and is considerably lighter than concrete fences – allowing them to be transported and installed more easily, and to be placed on softer ground without issue.

The main advantages of a pre-cast concrete fence compared to other options is its strength and durability. A precast concrete fence is not affected by extreme temperatures; they are also heat-resistant and UV-stable and can withstand wind loads of up to a Category 4 hurricane. As such, precast concrete fences require little if any maintenance or seasonal upkeep, unlike the need to regularly treat and stain a wooden fence. They can be made in a variety of colors and styles, and it can be hard to tell a pre-cast concrete fence apart from an actual stone fence.

Cost is the biggest disadvantage of precast concrete fencing. It can cost double the expense, compared to other fencing options. It is imperative that the measurements are accurate before the fence is made, otherwise, the pieces will not fit correctly, and it will not be aesthetically pleasing. Pre-cast concrete does not have a lot of elements within its structure, so if there are cracks or crumbling issues longer term, an entire section will have to be replaced.



Pre-Cast Concrete

Please send your questions and comments as they relate to these (and other) fence options to BarkersRidgeHOA@gmail.com. Our research process has just begun, and we want any decision to be thoroughly vetted with our residents.

Fry Outside Storage
We store anything outside

- 18 Wheelers
- Boats, Jet Ski
- Business Vehicles
- Car, Trucks, Motorcycles, ATVs
- Contractor Equipment Storage
- Lawn & Garden Equipment
- Personal and Business Trailers
- RVs
- Recreational Equipment
- Trailers

Fry Outside Storage provides outside storage, parking facilities and a park and sell lot. Our facility is perfect for homeowners, apartment dwellers, small businesses or anyone who needs to store anything outside. Our secure outdoor parking facility is a well lit, fenced environment with video camera security and 24 hour access 7 days a week.

20224 Morton Rd. Katy, TX 77449

Mike & Sharon Fry
(281) 830-2721

. Se habla espanol (832) 612-9993

National Night Out in Barkers Ridge



Team Sellers (Block 22)



Team Lowe-Wade-Sanchez (Blocks 47, 48 and 49)



Team Taitano (Block 32)



Team Ingram (Block 8)

National Night Out in Barkers Ridge



Team Love-Thornton (Blocks 12,13)



Team Blevins-Carrett (Blocks 54, 55)



Team Gardner (Block 23)



Team Carter-Proffitt (Blocks 24, 26)



Team Ingram was preparing for Halloween at the same time!

Barkers Ridge Real Estate Update

What's Happening Now With Home Sales in Barkers Ridge?

By d. Diane Sanders

This is the #1 Question BR residents ask me. The answer is fluid and changing. Currently, it is like **HALLOWEEN: SCARY and NORMAL!**

SCARY-WHY: Prices are a bit scary now because Days on Market (DOM) is increasing and price /sq.ft. is decreasing. The average DOM for all sold homes (listing on our MLS system – HAR.com) in Barkers Ridge for 2018 is 23. The average DOM for Active homes (currently listed for sale) is 62, and for Pending homes (currently on the market with contracts awaiting the closing date) is 43.

My brain operates very simply: If 23 DOM is an A, then 43 is a B, and 62 is a C. Yikes, that is scary!

NORMAL-WHY: As nice as the weather is this week, it is fall/winter in Houston and in most markets, BR included, buying a home is not top of mind. Spring/Summer tends to be our 'Hot Market' period. I often explain it to buyers and sellers like this: *"Christmas is to the retail market as Summer is to real estate. People shop retail all year long, but the big retail push is from Thanksgiving to Christmas Eve – because of the Christmas Season giving. Houses sell year-round, but the big push is from April – August because people often move around the school calendar."* So, this Scary market with prices softening and homes languishing on the market – is NORMAL for October – just like Halloween!

Of the 9 homes in Active, 7 of them have been on the market longer than the average sold time of 23 DOM. Of the 3 in Pending, 2 of them were on longer than the average DOM for Solds.

CRYSTAL BALL for 2019: I am hearing hints of a slowdown somewhere between mid-2019 and 2020. Rising interest rates will likely play a role. And, we have been riding a nice price wave for about a decade. Yes, it has been that long since the crash. Prices were soaring in early Spring and through most of the summer of 2018 to where many were thinking we would see a 10% - 15% year-over-year increase. It appears in BR prices will shake out by the end of the year at a respectable 5-6% increase.

Year	% chg *	Significance
2010-2011	2%	Buyer tax credit expired early 2010
2011-2012	5%	Pent-up demand from sluggish 2010 ending
2012-2013	6%	Easing of foreclosures + demand
2013-2014	9%	Low BR inventory + high demand
2014-2015	12%	Strong demand, low inventory
2015-2016	2%	Oil industry layoffs slowed markets
2016-2017	1%	Harvey
2017-2018	5% (thru Oct.)	Harvey (leases expired), early buyers

\$/square foot.

Barkers Ridge Statistics January 1, 2018– October 27, 2018

(Total/F = Foreclosures)

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Active									9
Pending									3
Sold	37/7	31/4	27/2	48/3	33/3	40/1	30	44/2	29/1
% of Fore-closure Sold	19%	13%	7%	6%	9%	2%	0%	5%	3%
Avg. \$/sq.ft. SOLD	\$61	\$60	\$63	\$67	\$73	\$82	\$84	\$85	\$89
Avg. \$/SOLD	\$158K	\$153K	\$159K	\$163K	\$183K	\$213K	\$217K	\$204K	\$222K

So You Got a Letter from Crest? You're Not Alone ...

by Judith McGlaughlin

A number of themes emerged from the resident survey—centered around the HOA's responsibility to enforce the community's aesthetic standards. First, residents clearly have a sense of pride in the way that the neighborhood has matured over its nearly 30-year history. When asked to identify the "best thing" about Barkers Ridge, four in 10 residents pointed out that the neighborhood was well-maintained, even as it had grown older. Wrote one resident, "I like the fact that it looks like a well-cared for established community."

But when asked about their greatest concern, there was a significant number who worried that these standards were not being maintained. Said one resident, "Some residents seem to be not interested in keeping with the cleanliness, order and good common neighbor rules."

Finally, there was a general sense that compliance with our deed restrictions was very much needed but that the enforcement of those rules could be

improved: "Please enforce the deed restrictions but be sensible! Enforce the deed restrictions with the worst offenders first," said one resident. Said another: "Stop letters to power wash in the dead of winter! Save that for spring. Every single year we get one in January/February to power wash the green from the bricks or to take care of dead branches. That will be done once the weather is warmer. You can send as many letters as you want, but not going to happen."

In response to these comments, we thought we would highlight the deed restriction enforcement process – with the hope of gaining consensus on what violations are the most important, and how the HOA Board can do a better job of maintaining community standards. This summary is from Crest Management's October drive, and shows that 149 residents received what is known as an "A" letter – which is a courtesy letter to remind the resident of a deed restriction violation and a kind request to address that violation. There were 51

Number Category	Section	1A	1B	2	3	4	5	Grand Total
A		36	18	24	10	24	37	149
Mildew/discoloration		9	9	8	2	8	12	48
Yard - mow/edge/weed		10	3	7	2	5	12	39
Yard - tree branches/stump violation		6	-	3	1	3	9	22
Store items out of public view		2	1	3	-	1	2	9
Yard - missing lawn or landscaping		2	2	1	-	2	-	7
Structural damage or defect		1	1	1	-	1	-	4
Commercial vehicle or trailer		1	1	1	1	-	-	4
Painting required		2	-	-	-	1	-	3
Fence repair		1	-	-	1	1	-	3
Structure in front yard		1	-	-	1	1	-	3
Address marker		-	-	-	2	-	1	3
Holiday decorations		-	1	-	-	1	-	2
EMR Violation		1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Paint		-	-	-	-	-	1	1
B		15	12	11	6	2	5	51
Mildew/discoloration		6	5	1	-	-	1	13
Yard - tree branches/stump violation		3	1	4	1	-	2	11
Structural damage or defect		2	2	1	2	-	-	7
Yard - mow/edge/weed		1	2	1	1	-	2	7
Holiday decorations		1	1	1	-	-	-	3
Store items out of public view		-	-	-	1	1	-	2
Yard - missing lawn or landscaping		1	-	1	-	-	-	2
EMR Violation		-	-	-	1	1	-	2
Vehicles - inoperable		1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Commercial vehicle or trailer		-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Basketball goal/net		-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Painting required		-	-	1	-	-	-	1
C		-	-	-	-	2	-	2
Yard - tree branches/stump violation		-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Holiday decorations		-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Grand Total		51	30	35	16	28	42	202

Continued from Page 13.

So You Got a Letter from Crest? You're Not Alone ...



With the warm, humid climate in Houston, mildew is a common occurrence.

“B” letters, which convey that the violation was not fixed and to request that action be taken. This letter can be sent several times for the same violation before a demand letter is sent. Finally, there were 2 “C” letters, which is a certified letter stating that the violation should be fixed, and that the violation is being documented for possible attorney action in the future.

Of these letters, the violations most frequently cited are mildew and discoloration somewhere around the home – typically, the exterior siding and trim around the home. With the warm, humid climate in Houston, mildew is a common occurrence – and there are many proposed remedies posted on the web for the prevention and removal of mildew. The second most common relate to our yards, either the need to mow or edge, or to trim shrubs and trees to a well-manicured condition – followed by letters for residents to store “miscellaneous items” from view: these include trailers, trash containers, RV’s, and metal objects were cited in the most recent drive.

While It is difficult to apply our standards consistently, it is our strong desire to do so. In many cases, members of the HOA board will walk through the neighborhood to review reported violations, especially if they have risen to the “B” or “C” level, so that we can, as a team, agree on the specific standard that has been cited. If we are forced to seek our attorney’s help in enforcing a standard, the board members are well aware of the violation



Citing lawn violations is difficult with once-a-month drives—but chronic violations are unappealing.

before that decision is made. It’s important to note that the ultimate responsibility for enforcing our deed restrictions lies with the HOA board, not Crest Management.

So, what do you do if you receive a letter – and you are either not sure of what violation is being cited, or it’s the dead of winter and no one is willing to power wash your home? Here is what the experts advise:

First, stay in communication - communicate with the HOA Board (our email is BarkersRidge-HOA@gmail.com) and ask for specifics as to what needs to be done. Send photos if you think it will help us better understand the situation.

Secondly, don’t ignore a letter if you receive one. Handle the issue promptly if possible, and if not, communicate with the HOA and let them know your plans to correct. If you recognize that actions need to be taken, but you need time, the board will likely work with you so that we both win.

Finally, attend homeowners’ meetings to learn more about your neighborhood’s concerns, and how we can work together to protect and maintain the community we value.

Kill the Lights, Save the Birds - Cheryl Conley, TWRC Wildlife Center

Who doesn't love seeing the Houston skyline at night, or any big city for that matter? The buildings are all lit up like Christmas trees but did you know that the lights can have a devastating effect on migrating birds? Digital billboards, floodlights and electric signs can have the same effect on them. About two-thirds of migratory birds travel at night and use the moon and stars to help guide them. The lights disorient them and can cause them to fly in circles and to crash into windows. Over 100 MILLION birds die annually according to Massachusetts Audubon. The inappropriate or excessive use of artificial light has come to be called light pollution.

In May of 2017, nearly 400 birds were found dead outside the American National Insurance building in Galveston. Richard Gibbons with Houston Audubon believes the building's lights disoriented them.

For the last three years on September 21st in Portland, Oregon, more than a dozen buildings turned off their lights in observance of Lights Out Portland. The purpose of the event is to call attention to the impact that lights have on migrating birds. The Convention Center has gone a step further and has modified their lighting to be less attractive to birds year round.

Each year on September 11th, New York City remembers those lost with two powerful searchlights aimed towards the heavens near where the World Trade Center once stood. It is called the Tribute

in Light. For the past ten years, researchers have tracked millions of migrating birds as they fly across the United States. While analyzing the data, they were stunned to learn that the Tribute in Light attracted and altered the migratory behavior of bird densities up to 150 times their normal levels. It was estimated that this affected 1.1 million birds.

New York City Audubon decided to do something about it. They positioned volunteers called "tribute counters" with binoculars near the base of the tribute. If they reported densities of more than 1,000 birds or if a dead bird was found, the tribute lights were turned off for a short time. This happened for the first time in 2010 and the lights were turned off a total of 5 times during the night of September 11th/12th. Scientists were able to observe on radar the effects of turning off the lights. Once off, the birds resumed their migration heading southwest.

Drs. Farnsworth and Horton, scientists at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, have identified 5 major cities that pose the greatest risk to migrating birds—Chicago, Houston, Dallas, Atlanta and New York. They used historical records, radar and satellite data to monitor the intensity of light pollution. In addi-



Between 2008 and 2016, roughly 1.1 million migrating birds were affected by the "Tribute in Light". For some, the attraction was fatal: unable to escape the thrall of the beams, the birds became disoriented and exhausted by hours of mindless spiraling flight.

October/November 2018

Key Dates in October and November 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28	29	30—Mobile Vet Clinic	31-Halloween	1-WHCRWA Event	2	3
Early Voting						
4	5	6 Election Day	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22—Thanksgiving	23	24
KISD Thanksgiving Holiday						
25	26	27	28	29	30	1



“WHY ARE MY WATER RATES GOING UP?!?”

FREE Panel Discussion featuring representatives from the 3 Regional Water Authorities discussing water supply, distribution, costs, and other water-related topics impacting Municipal Utility Districts and their constituents.

Thursday, November 1, 2018

6:00-8:00PM

Member's Choice Credit Union

18211 Katy Freeway, First Floor, Houston, TX 77094

- **October 30—Mobile Vet Clinic**, at the Barkers Ridge Recreational Area, 4p to 7p. For more information, go to <http://www.themobilevetclinic.com/>.
- **October 30—Stop Greenhouse Landfill Meeting**, at the Westlake Volunteer Fire Department (large conference room), 6:30p. For more information, go to <http://stopgreenhouselandfill.com/>.
- **October 31—Annual return of “Trick of Treaters”** to Barkers Ridge. Keep porch-light on and stock up on lots of treats for our kids, start time around dusk to ?
- **November 6—Election Day.**
- **November 19-November 23—KISD’s annual Thanksgiving Break.**

Kill the Lights, Save the Birds

Continued from Page 16.

tion, they have discovered that over half of the birds migrating across the United States in the fall do so within a 10-day period of time. Scientists from Cornell, the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and Oxford University are now able to forecast these migration days. These major cities could use this information to extinguish lights to give the birds safe passage. Wouldn't it be great if these cities would use this information and turn out the lights?

Across the country, there are many cities that

are now observing “lights out days” during the fall. If your city isn't one of them, contact your city officials. They may not be aware of light pollution. If you're a homeowner, replace those bulbs that are on all night with motion-activated lights.

TWRC Wildlife Center is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to helping you live in harmony with the animals we share our world with. Please check out our website at www.twrcwildlifecenter.org and be sure to follow us on Facebook.

Hold an Open House to Increase Your Odds of Getting Burglarized

BY STEVEN O'MEARA

https://www.har.com/steven-omeara/ratings_426677

When you are trying to sell your home, you probably expect your real estate agent to hold at least one open house. After all, you have seen the signs in your neighborhood and oodles of cars parked in front of the open house right?

Well, not when it comes to open houses. An open house offers little benefit in the sales process and puts you at risk of having your home burglarized. Real Estate agents use open houses as an opportunity to prospect for business. A large percentage of agents don't want you to say NO to an open house. In fact, these agents will gladly put your home at risk for their personal gain.

Do open houses increase your risk of a burglary? Of course they do! Is your real estate agent going to tell you this? Probably not..."

Open for Theft – How Open Houses Put You at Risk

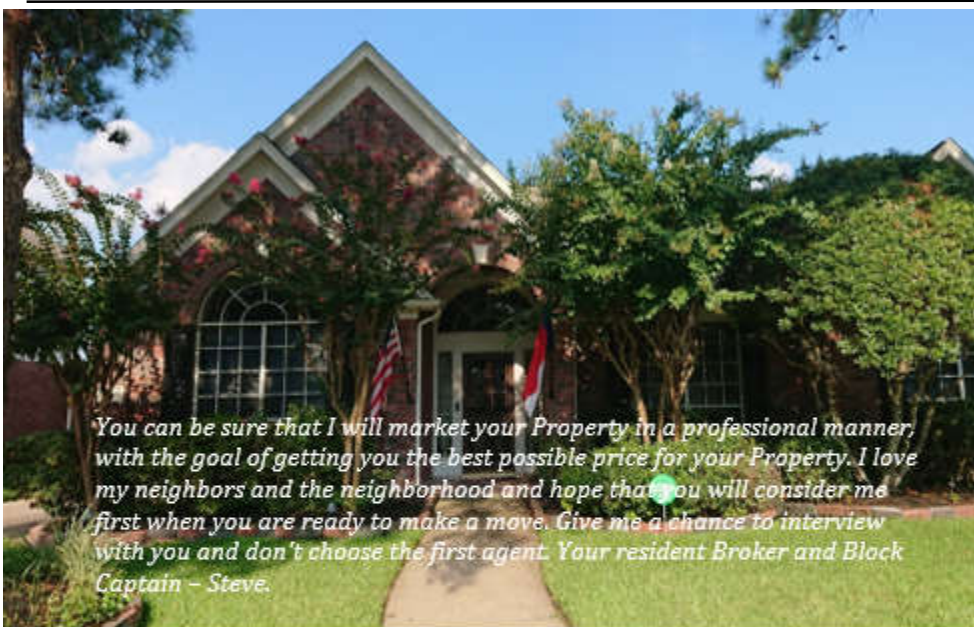
If you have never been to an open house, you have probably at least seen one represented on television or in a

movie. A Realtor puts up signs and advertises the fact that a home will be open for viewing on a particular day at a specific time. Anyone interested in viewing the home can come through the door, meet with the Realtor, and explore the house.

Unfortunately, opening up your home to the public puts you at considerable risk. There is no vetting process with an open house. While there may be a book or form to sign-in as visitors come into the home, there is no screening process to determine if each visitor should be allowed inside the house.

That means that anyone – including burglars – can come inside and scope out your home.

While the Realtor may be there to greet visitors and answer questions, he or she can only provide so much coverage. Once the Realtor begins speaking with one visitor, all the other visitors are left to fend for themselves. They can pretty much do whatever they want.



You can be sure that I will market your Property in a professional manner, with the goal of getting you the best possible price for your Property. I love my neighbors and the neighborhood and hope that you will consider me first when you are ready to make a move. Give me a chance to interview with you and don't choose the first agent. Your resident Broker and Block Captain – Steve.

"Selling a home is always stressful. Having a knowledgeable and competent realtor makes a stressful situation a pleasant experience. Steve is that realtor. There are many realtors to choose from; choose wisely. I highly recommend Steve."

Steve O'Meara

Broker Associate, Realtor



Welcome to the Neighborhood

As a Barkers Ridge Resident, my goal as your Broker will be to guarantee the highest and best price for your Property. I'm not afraid to push the envelope and advise you to not leave any money on the table. My vested interest as a Barkers Ridge homeowner is to maintain the maximum value in my Property and neighborhood.

832.236.5200 www.energycorridorhoustonhomes.com



**GLOBAL ADVANTAGE
REAL ESTATE**

3322 Piney Forest Drive
Houston, TX 77084

Exploring the Bicycle Trails in West Houston – Part 2

By Judith McGlaughlin

Our second installment in the continuing series highlights a three-mile trail starting near Barker Cypress Road on the south side of Interstate-10 and ending (for now) in the heart of George Bush Park. The trail is primarily used for hiking, trail running, birding, and road biking and is accessible year-round. Dogs are also able to use this trail but must be kept on leash.

For a broader view of the West Houston bike trails, include maps, go to the Energy Corridor website: <http://www.energycorridor.org/commuter-solutions/bike-walk/bike-maps>.

Getting to Interstate-10

As we described in our initial installment, the most challenging part of the journey is getting to and across Interstate 10. There are 2 options: (1) pack your bike on the car, and drive to the Precinct 5 Constable's Office at 17423 Katy Freeway, or (2) from Cullen Park, you can travel by bicycle on South Park View, turning right on Barker Cypress Road at the Chevron station, and proceeding south to Interstate 10 on Barker Cypress. You should be aware that the trail in this section is either in poor shape or does not exist at all, especially around the elevated perimeter of Addicks Dam. In this section, it's just better to walk your bike along the dirt path. If there is no trail, you should not travel by bicycle on Barker Cypress Road: just walk. While I use Option 2, it's not recommended for others: use Option 2 at your own risk.

A Journey Into the Reservoir

Once you cross Interstate 10, you will proceed south where Barker Cypress Road becomes Kingsland Boulevard. Rather than following Kingsland at this juncture, bear to the left, where you will find a narrow sidewalk that intersects with Barker Clodine Road. Turn right at this juncture, and you will travel along Barker Clodine for only a couple of hundred yards before you reach the trailhead. At this point, a barrier has been erected to prohibit vehicles. There is a nostalgic quality, as the faded remains of a thoroughfare previously traveled are clearly evident.

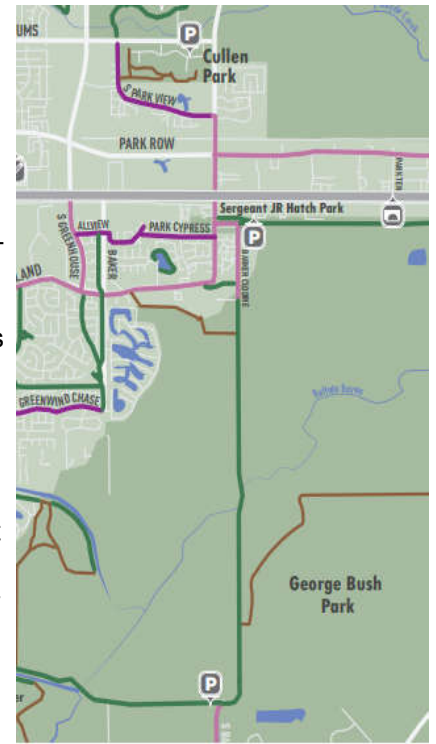
The trail is very long and very straight. Said one reviewer: "the trail itself is as boring as could be -

a long, straight, flat, 10 foot wide length of asphalt. But this path is essentially a safe, comfortable causeway through a swamp that is teeming with life and threatening wildness. During the last hours of the day, after the sun goes behind the trees and the forest starts to come alive, it was a magical and beautiful place that completely distracted me from the path." There is one bend in the trail about half-way through the 3-mile journey, found at a newly constructed bridge over one of the area's many streams. As you near the end of the three miles, you will hear loud popping sounds: this is the active target shooting range, just off to your left.

The trail continues from the parking lot, heading west toward the Fun Fair Positive soccer fields, and further to South Fry. At this point, you can travel north, and pick up the South Mason Creek Trail that was the subject of our last travelogue – or south toward Cinco Ranch.

Future Travels

Assuming that you do not take either of these trails, the return home requires you to traverse the long, straight, and potentially boring trail back to Barker Clodine road, proceeding north on Barker Clodine road until you pass over the elevated perimeter of Barkers Dam, where you can take a short trail back to Barker Cypress Road and then to Interstate-10. Before you do, note the trail that runs along the dam to your right: this will be the starting point for our next installment, the 30-mile trek to and from the Terry Hershey Park and Bike Trail.



The Bakers Reservoir trail to George Bush Park is very straight.

Support Your Neighborhood's Small Businesses!

Skincare Products

Rodan+Fields

annbattenbishop.myrodanandfields.com
Ann Batten Bishop

Scented wax. wax warmers and plug ins,
and more

Scentsy

<https://mrskaylaayala.scentsy.us/>
Kayla Ayala

Personalization of cups, towels, clothing,
and accessories

Top Notch

annbattenbishop.myrodanandfields.com
Ann Batten Bishop

Yard sign decorating

Rock the Block Yard Greetings

www.facebook.com/rocktheblockyardgreetings/
Angela Renee Hamilton

Transportation services—errands, doctor
appointments, groceries

Friends for Life Transportation

amylynnkaiser@hotmail.com
Amy Kaiser—832-206-0464

Contact BarkersRidgeHOA@gmail.com if
you would like to advertise your small
business.

Contact BarkersRidgeHOA@gmail.com if
you would like to advertise your small
business.

Contact BarkersRidgeHOA@gmail.com if
you would like to advertise your small
business.

Got leaves in your pool?
Leaves and acorns stain your pool and
lowers your chemicals balance, which
causes algae.



**Call owner Ernest Kaiser for honest and
professional service - guaranteed**

512-799-8856 – or email at ClearSapphirePools@outlook.com

Weekly Maintenance
Installation and Repair
Filter Clean Chemicals

Clear Sapphire Pools, LLC

Ernest Kaiser, Owner

Clear **Sapphire** Pools

d. Diane Sanders

The Barkers Ridge Realtor

Sanders Family Real Estate

2918 Dulaney Rd. Houston 77084

281-732-0256 Cell

Diane@DianeSanders.com Diane@Soldmany.com

www.DianeSanders.com **4.98 Star Rating** www.SandersFamilyRealEstate.com

**Happy to represent Barkers Ridge in the
Community for almost 25 years**

...closing in on 500 SOLDs (sides) in BARKERS RIDGE in
that time (15+ sales on average per year), may I say:

*“Thank you, Barkers Ridge for your
TRUST.” ...SANDERS FAMILY REAL ESTATE...*

d. Diane Sanders

