

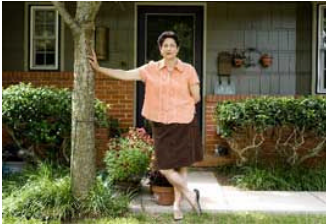
Ridgewood Park full of families

05:55 PM CDT on Friday, June 20, 2008

By MARY JACOBS / Special Contributor to The Dallas Morning News

When the Ridgewood Park neighborhood organized a Fourth of July parade in 1999, only four children participated. In 2007, more than 40 kids – on festively decorated bikes and tricycles and even in strollers – showed up for the parade.

That's one of many examples of how Ridgewood Park has come to life in the last few years. A Dallas neighborhood of about 400 homes, Ridgewood Park is bordered by Abrams and Fisher roads and Lovers Lane. Trammel Road and the DART rail form the southern border. The community was developed in the mid-1950s; by the late 1980s, most of the residents were original owners who'd become empty nesters.



MATT NAGER/Special Contributor

Things started to shift by the mid-1990s. In 1996, the Ridgewood Park Neighborhood Association was formed. Singles and young families began to move in, lured by the central location, mature trees and reasonably priced homes. "I was one of a very few singles when I moved here in 1993, but now there's a mixture – young couples, young families with kids, singles and empty nesters," said Jodee Sedalnick, the neighborhood association president.

Last year, residents hosted two garage sales to help finish raising money to refurbish Axton Circle, a small park on a cul-de-sac. Neglected until recently, the park is now graced by landscaping, a swing and a walking path. It's become a popular spot for events. Rush Creek, which runs through the neighborhood, is another. "Many homeowners have invested a lot of money to make the area around the creek beautiful," said Amy Timmerman, a Realtor with Keller Williams. "It's become the center of the neighborhood." Most of the houses are mid-1950s ranch homes of about 1,300 to 3,000 square feet with two or three bedrooms and one or two baths. There are few new homes; most residents add on or remodel.

Ms. Timmerman says homes in Ridgewood Park are selling well despite the downturn. "I'm always surprised by what people ask for when they put a home on the market here, but they always seem to sell pretty quickly," said Ms. Sedalnick. Resident Christy Coman says she often has to explain to visitors where Ridgewood Park is, but the hidden quality is one of its pluses. "You're a minute from Mockingbird, a minute from Lovers Lane," she said.

"It's a very tight-knit neighborhood with a strong neighborhood association," Ms. Coman said.