

Trail Writer

The Official Publication of the
Winchester Trails
Maintenance Assoc. Social Committee

Volume 6, Issue 3
www.winchestertrails.com

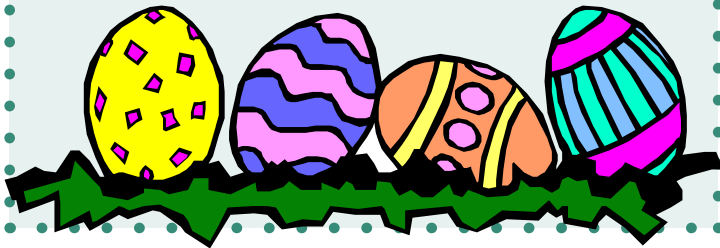
March 2010

Easter Egg Hunt

Sunday March 28th, 2:30pm
at the clubhouse

Bring your baskets and get ready to find some eggs!
Cookies and juice will be served at the clubhouse
after the egg hunt.

If you are interested in donating cookies or your time, please
call Kerry Thomas at 281-955-5033 or Susan Wheelock at
281-477-9271.



Upcoming Events

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| March 14 | Daylight Savings Time begins |
| March 15 - 19 | CFISD Student Holiday |
| March 17 | St. Patrick's Day |
| March 20 | First day of Spring |
| March 27 | Winchester Hurricanes
swim team registration at the community
pool; 10 AM to noon |
| March 28 | Children's Easter Party at the clubhouse,
2:30 PM. |
| April 2 | Good Friday; CFISD Student Holiday |
| April 4 | Easter |
| April 7 | Maintenance Board Meeting 7PM |

Yard of The Month

Congratulations to both our winners



FRONT SECTION

9207 Bent Spur Lane
Mike and Cathey Bachmann



BACK SECTION

10407 Dude Road
Jose and Mary Lou Garza

Winchester Trails

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Paulette Walker 281-894-5708

Jim Malone is the security representative for WT.
His email can be found on the Security page of the Trails website.

MUD #9 OFFICERS

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Wayne Wilcox, Secretary 281-894-6233
Jim Giese, Assistant Secretary 281-890-5207
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To ask questions or report problems concerning the
Winchester Trails Subdivision, call
PLANNED COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT
281-870-0585

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Calling All Bang Elementary 5th Grade Parents!

This year we have a great D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) celebration and 5th grade graduation planned for your student. This event is scheduled for May of 2010, but we need your help now to help plan and finance this awesome day for our kids. We want this year's celebration to ROCK!

Please join us at our next planning meeting at the Backyard Grill on Tuesday, February 16th at 6:30pm. If you have questions, please call Nikki Cowart at 281-787-9935 or Kat Lingner at 713-516-3351.

We win in 2010!

Recycling at Bang Elementary

Don't forget that you can recycle your paper at Bang Elementary. We welcome the following items:

- Newspapers
- Magazines
- Mail
- School and office paper
- Catalogs

Please consider recycling instead of throwing these items away.

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You may contact Ron Matthews or any Board member with questions on this disclaimer.

GREEN THUMB CORNER

We've endured a few cold spells over recent months, but some of the insect pests have survived and the winter weeds have been growing, so it's time to get down to some serious work during the spring season to get the yard and garden in good shape before the warm weather arrives.

For an impressive display of spring and summer color, this is a good time to get started with transplants. There were some nice displays of pansies during the last few months but they won't be very happy in warm weather after the end of March, so pull them up and replace with petunias, marigolds, vinca (periwinkle), begonias or geraniums. Lantana is also very good - as a regional native, it is tolerant to heat and drought and is very hardy in summer conditions (although it may not survive winter frosts if you try to keep it going as a perennial). Plant caladiums and impatiens in the shady areas.

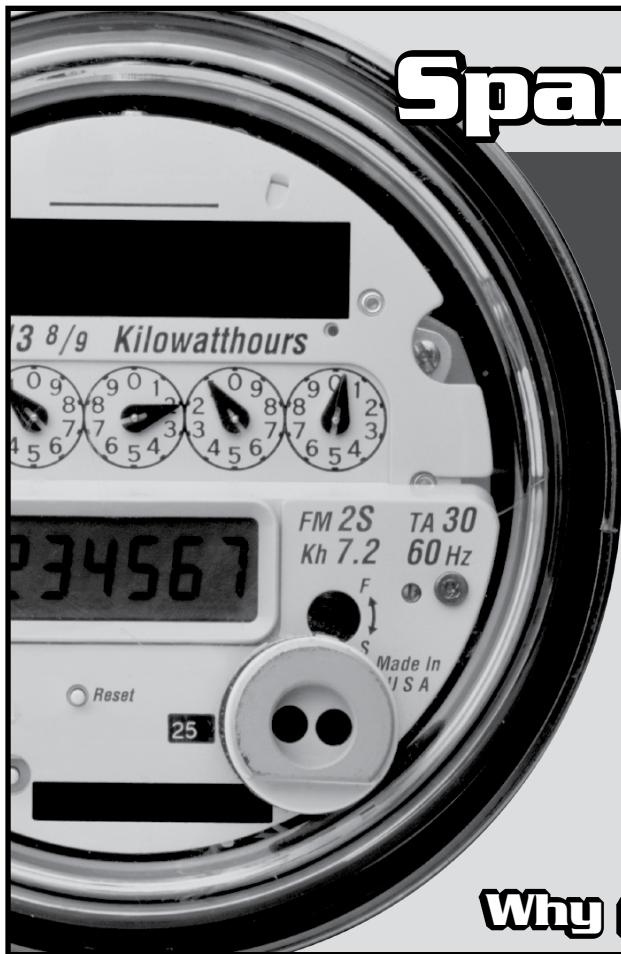
Complete the winter pruning, if not done already. We suffered significant freeze damage this year, so make sure you remove any dead wood and cut back to green growth. Try to complete all tree and shrub planting now, before the first full burst of spring growth, and divide and transplant perennials. We reviewed tree-feeding in last month's article but it's not too late to do it in March/April (for established trees, not newly planted) and don't forget an acidifier (such as Ironite) if the pine trees are looking yellow.

If you're feeling energetic, the lawn will benefit from a good thatch-raking and also aeration by spiking with a spading fork (special mower attachments make both jobs a lot easier). On the subject of mowers, some routine annual maintenance is advisable before the heavy usage begins: sharpen the blade, check the spark plug, change the oil, and you'll get better performance and reliability. A nice clean cut from a sharp mower blade produces a better appearance than the ragged and bruised grass stems that result from a dull edge.

Azaleas can be pruned and fertilized immediately AFTER blooming, and you can give the grass its first feed of the season (use something like 15-5-10) as soon as it has started to green-up. Begin a monthly feeding program with roses (12-24-12 is a good general-purpose fertilizer), and feed all established plants and shrubs. Surface cultivation will mix the fertilizer into the soil and is important to promote good growth and rapid development. And of course, mulch well.

I try to limit the use of chemicals, but it's almost impossible to grow roses in the Houston climate without resorting to pesticides and fungicides. Spray weekly with Daconil to control Black Spot fungus, and Diazinon or Malathion for aphids (you can mix the two treatments in the same spray solution). Unfortunately, spraying is

(Continued on page 4)



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Winchester Trails

Green Thumb Corner - (Continued from page 3)

also necessary for successful fruit trees. Use a "fruit and nut" spray and make the first application when three-quarters of the blossoms have dropped, then continue at 10-day or two-week intervals until a couple of weeks before harvest. I've tried skipping the spray regimen with peaches and plums, and the result has been 100% infestation of the crop by wasp larvae.

In the vegetable garden, set out tomato and pepper plants this month (and if you hurry it may not be too late for broccoli). Plant seeds for beets and carrots now, but wait until April before planting corn, beans, squash, cucumber, cantaloupe and melons (when the soil is warmer for faster and more consistent germination).

THIS MONTH'S TIP: As we get into the warmth and humidity of spring, watch out for Brown Patch lawn fungus, visible as an expanding circle of dead grass. Apply Terraclor granules and feed to encourage new growth - leaves and stems may be dead, but the grass will come back from the roots.

Phil Richards

Prich8935@aol.com

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Winchester Hurricanes Swim Team Registration

Make a splash this summer! Register for the Winchester Hurricanes Swim Team on Saturday, March 27th, or Saturday, April 17th, at the Winchester Country Clubhouse at 9607 Rio Grande Road, from 10am to noon. Late registration will take place at our first practice on Monday, April 19th, at the Winchester Country Pool. You can fill out the registration forms ahead and bring them with you by visiting our website: www.winchesterhurricanes.com. We will have team swim suits available for purchase, so please bring your swimmers. The cost is \$85 each for the first 2 swimmers, \$50 for the 3rd swimmer, and \$40 for the 4th swimmer (credit card payments add \$5). A refundable volunteer deposit check is required at registration. A \$20 non-resident fee applies if outside of Willow Pointe/Winchester Country. Fees include a trophy, a team t-shirts, and the team party. Winchester Swim Team, Inc. serves over 200 neighborhood kids each year and is affiliated with the Northwest Aquatic League "NWAL". A big thank you goes to Winchester Country, Willow Pointe, and Winchester Trails for supporting our team with use of their facilities. This activity is not related to or sponsored by Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District.

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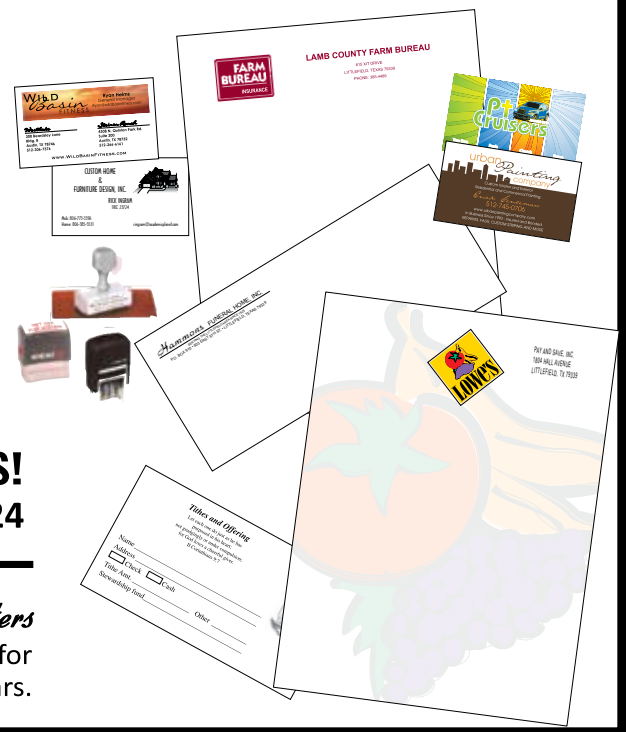
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Cost Impact To West Harris County MUD 9 Property Owners From The North Harris County Regional Water Authority Surface Water Conversion

Monthly RWA fees and taxes will continue in future years

Background

The governmental authority currently controlling the groundwater withdrawn by MUD 9 is the Harris-Galveston Subsidence District (“HGSD”). The HGSD was established by the State Legislature to limit land surface subsidence that has brought on numerous flooding problems throughout the Gulf Coast area. Water pumped out of the ground eventually causes the ground to sink, referred to as subsidence, and this sinking ground causes many of the flooding issues in the area.

In 1999, HGSD ordered owners of groundwater wells, including MUD 9, to convert to at least 30% alternate source water use, such as surface water from lakes and rivers, by 2010. Beginning in 2020 we must convert to 70%, and 80% beginning in 2030. With thousands of groundwater wells in the HGSD, the State Legislature created several water authorities to assist the HGSD with the conversion to a predominant surface water supply. The Authority established in north Harris county, and confirmed by the voters in January 2000, is the North Harris County Regional Water Authority (“NHCRWA”), identified on your water bills as RWA.

The NHCRWA has the primary mission to deliver alternate sur-

face water supplies to the approximately 160 water utilities within its boundaries. After exploring several surface water supply options, the NHCRWA contracted with the City of Houston, the owner of most of the surface water rights in the area, for future surface water capacity from a new water treatment plant at Lake Houston. In order to deliver the water to the various MUDs and other entities, the NHCRWA is constructing transmission and distribution infrastructure (pipelines, pressure stations, and storage tanks) at a current estimated cost of \$802.8 million dollars. Additionally, the NHCRWA is responsible for the capital costs associated with procuring and treating the water delivered to the NHCRWA. An integral part of this water distribution system will be a primary pipeline that will allow MUDs to connect to this surface water supply with short periphery connections. While these costs will be spread out over several decades, the financing of the infrastructure requirements has already begun, and has and will affect MUD 9 property owners and residents for years to come.

Costs to Property Owners

You are paying the cost of the surface water conversion in two ways. First, on your monthly water bill you will see an “RWA” charge which

(Continued on page 6)

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MILESTONES

NEW DRIVERS - HAPPY 16TH!

03/21 - Allison Artz

NEW VOTERS - HAPPY 18TH!

03/18 - Garrett Gorka

NEW ADULTS - HAPPY 21ST!

03/01 - Leslie Henderson

03/01 - Patrick Woods

03/06 - Vincent Sanchez

03/14 - Scott Terry

03/28 - Travis Halverson

03/29 - Alex Moore

HAPPY 5TH ANNIVERSARY!

03/04 - Ted & Tawnya Martin

HAPPY 15TH ANNIVERSARY!

03/25 - Tom & Candace Hurt

HAPPY 25TH ANNIVERSARY!

03/23 - Larry Hackemesser & Brenda Engdahl

HAPPY 30TH ANNIVERSARY!

03/01 - Willie & Nanette Larry

03/08 - Clifford & Ann Warnke

Melissa Zmerzlikar directory@winchestertrails.com

**NOT AVAILABLE
ONLINE**

Winchester Trails Classifieds

Have any items that you need to get rid of but think someone else could use? Have a useful service to offer your neighbors? Why not place an ad in The Trail Writer? Just send the info and a phone to the newsletter editor, and your ad will be run in the newsletter for two issues.

Personal classifieds (one time sell items, such as a used bike...) run at no charge to Winchester residents, limit 30 words, please e-mail articles@PEELinc.com.

Business classifieds (offering a service or product line for profit) are \$50, limit 40 words, please contact Peel, Inc. Sales Office @ 888-687-6444 or advertising@PEELinc.com.

MUD 9 - (Continued from page 5)

is a pass-through of a portion of the pumpage fee assessed by the NHCRWA for water we pump annually from our well. As of January 1, 2010, the current monthly charge is \$1.75 per 1000 gallons used per household as well as for apartments and businesses in the district. These costs are subject to change based on the amount of water pumped by MUD 9 and the rate NHCRWA charges for pumped water. The second cost is a component of your annual MUD 9 ad valorem tax obligation. MUD 9 is given the option to finance directly its share of capital charges to the NHCRWA to help pay the cost of the water distribution infrastructure. To pay these capital costs, MUD 9 sells bonds which are repaid by the ad valorem taxes collected from the property owners. Since the inception of the NHCRWA, we have paid \$3,987,768 in infrastructure capital charges. The current tax impact to the property owner is approximately \$0.11 per \$100.00 of taxable value, or \$150 per year for the average residence in MUD 9.

While no one relishes paying higher fees or taxes, strategic decisions to ensure a reliable source of water in future years that won't contribute to subsidence and potential flooding problems requires property owners to pay for this conversion. For more information please visit the NHCRWA website at www.nhcrwa.com, or attend a MUD 9 Board Meeting the fourth Monday of each month at the MUD's Administration Building at West Road and Rio Grande.

The Directors of West Harris County MUD 9

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