

Trail Writer

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

Volume 6, Issue 12
www.winchestertrails.com

December 2010

Letter From The President

Dear Winchester Trails Neighbors,

The Annual Meeting was held on October 7 at the Clubhouse with several important items being addressed. One Board Member, Greg Johnson, was re-elected to his second term. All Board members are pleased to have Greg on the Board for another three years, and we look forward to his dedication to the Trails. Working with Greg in the past has been a pleasure.

PCMI made a presentation on the duties of the Board, as well as the Association and its purpose. We also noted a list of accomplishments for 2010 that included no increase in the maintenance fee for the third straight year, resurfacing the tennis courts, the installation of surveillance equipment at the clubhouse, and the Association's application for status as a non-profit organization. The latter of which reduces our tax liabilities. We also established goals for 2011 that includes controlling expenses to keep our fees low, manage delinquencies, maintain a high quality neighborhood and be prepared for unexpected expenses.

Sheriff Andy provided us with an update on security matters. As Andy indicated, Winchester Trails is a safe and secure neighborhood, and we have the Harris County Sheriff's department to thank for this as well as many of the residents of the Trails that help to keep a watch on our neighborhood. We also discussed the potential for reducing speed limits on certain streets in the Trails. Look for more information on this as we consider this further.

We were joined in our meeting by one of the MUD 9 Board members who lives in the Trails. He presented and discussed the partnership the MUD is entering with the City of Houston for the next 30 years. This agreement allows our MUD to remain independent while receiving revenue from a source of taxes not available to the MUD at this time. While our area is in the extra territorial jurisdiction of the City of Houston and we could be annexed into the City, the agreement between the MUD and the City allows us to remain as we are – a community in Harris County. The MUD Board member also updated us on the park plan along with the recent grant received by the MUD.

Finally, we have an opening for a volunteer to become Chair of the Social Committee. Please feel free to contact any Board member if you are interested. The current Chair has been in this position for some time and also has other responsibilities in the Trails.

*Have a safe and joyous holiday season,
Until next month,
Walter*

Holidays in the Trails

Chairperson Needed for

Holidays in The Trails 2010

on Saturday, December 11, 2010

6p.m - 8pm

at Winchester Trails Clubhouse.

We are in need of a chairperson or co-chairpersons for our Holidays in The Trails 2010 event. This simply requires decorating our tree in the clubhouse and having cookies and milk for our children to share with Santa. Our Christmas tree and decorations are at the clubhouse. Funds will be provided for cookies and milk.

Contact Paulette Walker at 281-894-5708 or paulette_walker@sbcglobal.net for further details.

Luminaries in The Trails

As part of our annual Holidays in The Trails, residents are to line their walkways with their luminary candles at dusk on Saturday, December 11, 2010. Fold the white bag 1/3 down, place 2 cups of sand in each bag, and a votive candle in the center of the sand. Bank the sand around the candle to get maximum candle burn. Sand will be provided at our Tennis Courts. Bring a small bucket to get your sand.

???? Trails Santa Claus ????

Do you have a love for our children?

Are you young at heart?

Do you have a "twinkle in your eye"

Are you ready to hear what toys are wanted?

Then we NEED YOU!!!

We need a Santa for this year's Holidays in the Trails.

Contact Paulette Walker at 281-894-5708 or paulette_walker@sbcglobal.net ASAP.

Winchester Trails

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Jim Malone is the security representative for WT.

His email can be found on the Security page of the Trails website.

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To ask questions or report problems concerning the Winchester Trails Subdivision, call

PLANNED COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT
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Sheriff, Non-911 Calls713-221-6000

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Upcoming Events December

- December 1 Board Meeting 7 PM at the clubhouse
- December 1 Happy Hanukkah!
- December 11 "Holiday in the Trails"
At dusk place your luminaries in front of your house. Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts will put out luminaries along Rio Grande pictures and cookies with Santa 6PM - 8PM fun outdoor activities
- December 21 Winter begins
- December 20 - 01/04/11 - CFISD Student Holiday
- December 25 Merry Christmas!
- December 26 Happy Kwanzaa!
- December 31 New Year's Eve

Special Thanks to Boy Scout Troop 815

Thanks to Boy Scout Troop 815 under the leadership of Rosalie Tran for putting together our luminary kits.

Great job Khoi, Michael, Son, Leon, and Kevin along with Ms. Tran.

You are appreciated and you are an asset to our community.

Thank You!

Attention NW Harris County Tri Delta Alumnae

Mark your calendars to join your Tri Delta sisters for our annual holiday gathering an "Ornament and Holiday Recipe Exchange" Tuesday, December 14th, at 7:00 pm. Our group meets on the second Tuesday of every month September - April. We have a diverse group of women of all ages from a variety of colleges. For more information, please contact Christina at 281 -855-6893 or Karen at trideltanews@yahoo.com

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Winchester Trails

Trails Treasures Visit the Holocaust Museum Houston

A group of the Trails Treasures visited the Holocaust Museum Houston in late October. It was such an educational and valuable experience. We highly recommend you spend a few hours there if you have not already done so. For those who could not attend, we missed you. Trails residents 50 and older look for information on future trips.

Mark your calendars for February 19, March 22, and April 14, 2011.



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Alan "Petrodamus" Lammey, host of 'Energy Week', can be heard every Sunday on 1070 KNTH in Houston.

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PUCT #10089



GREEN THUMB CORNER

Cooler weather means that things are not growing very quickly, and that's probably a good thing because we have lots of other demands on our time during the holiday season. But there is still plenty of work that can be done in the yard and garden if you have some spare time on your hands, such as pulling up those usual winter weeds that appear in the lawn, particularly if the grass is in poor health. This is the season for soil cultivation, planting of new trees and shrubs, fertilization of established ones, pruning, mulching, clean-up and bed preparation. A little effort expended now, while it's pleasantly cool, will get things in good shape and reduce the workload when spring warmth returns.

This month and the next two are generally considered the best for planting trees and shrubs. Before planting, check drainage by digging a hole and filling with water - if it takes more than 24 hours to drain, you will need to improve the situation by digging an 'X'-shaped trench pattern filled with good soil to provide drainage away from the center (or find a better location!). Another plan is to create an elevated mound for planting, and this also adds a nice accent to the landscape. Another tip for a poor drainage area - avoid the temptation to plant a tree in a hole filled with a good porous medium, because you may just be creating a "sponge" that causes waterlogged roots; always backfill the hole with the same soil that you dug out. Unfortunately, one of the most common causes of failure is a waterlogged root system due to our poor-draining clay soil, so avoid low areas at all costs. Trees should not be fed during their first season, except for the application of a weak solution as a root stimulator. Established trees can be conveniently fed now while the ground is quite soft from recent rain. Feed trees by using a stake or a length of pipe to drive a series of holes a foot deep and a foot or so apart around the drip line, and apply a small handful of general-purpose fertilizer (such as 12-24-12) in each hole. A good rule of thumb is to apply a total of about one and a half pounds for each inch of trunk diameter. If your pine trees have very pale green or yellowish needles, that's a sign that the soil is too alkaline, and the cure is to include a soil acidifier with the fertilizer (an iron supplement such as Ironite serves the purpose well). Magnolias also need acid soil conditions, so use special azalea/camellia fertilizer or add a soil acidifier.

November was the best time for planting pansies, but they may still be transplanted this month. They can really brighten up an otherwise dull yard, whether in beds or containers. Pansies don't need much attention, but they will benefit from a monthly feeding of manure, super-phosphate or a liquid high-phosphate product. More blooms will be promoted by removing spent or faded flowers.

One more reminder about spring-flowering bulbs - December is the last chance for planting. But remember that tulips should be kept in the refrigerator until the end of the month and then planted between Christmas and New Year's Day (a convenient chance to get a little exercise between the two holidays!).

Azaleas and camellias may be moved at this time and should be kept moist to reduce the risk of cold weather damage. Acidify the

(Continued on page 6)

**NOT AVAILABLE
ONLINE**

*Do You Have Reason
to Celebrate?*

We want to hear from you! Email newsletter@winchester-trails.com to let the community know!

Winchester Trails

Green Thumb Corner - (Continued from Page 5)

soil if necessary. It's a good idea to check the pH value with one of the chemical kits available from the nurseries, or with a meter.

Clean up the beds where fall flowers have finished, and prepare next year's beds now to allow time for settling and weathering, adding lots of humus and also gypsum to break up the clay. In established shrubbery beds a good layer of mulch is just as important in winter as in the heat of summer. Water well and watch out for winter drought. Be prepared to protect tender plants; cloth makes a better cover than plastic, but you can use the latter by rigging a "tent" arrangement to prevent the plastic from touching any foliage. You never know when we might get a surprise early frost, so be prepared for quick action. Potted plants can be moved into the garage (put nails in the overhead beams for hanging baskets) and if it's really cold you can leave the lights on to provide some warmth.

There's not much happening in my vegetable garden because I didn't get around to planting fall vegetables, but some industrious neighbors will probably be harvesting fall tomatoes until the first good frost and there may be a few spring/summer pepper plants that have continued producing through this season. There are just a few things that can be planted this month - asparagus, chives, parsley and onion plants - but the main priority right now is preparation of beds for next spring.

HOLIDAY TIPS: Winter pruning of evergreens such as holly, yew and juniper provides useful trimmings for Christmas decorations, and you can also use the clusters of red berries from nandina shrubs.

And if you're short of Xmas gift ideas for your family or friends, how about a good gardening book?

Phil Richards

Prich8935@aol.com

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MILESTONES

New Teenagers - Happy 13th!

12/03 - Sarah Queen
12/11 - Benjamin Przyborski
12/22 - Erick Dodge
12/28 - Nathan Schatz

New Adults - Happy 21st!

12/12 - John Penafiora, II
12/12 - Brittany Racey
12/27 - Taylor Channing
12/30 - Brandon Korenek

New Drivers - Happy 16th!

12/04 - Brandon Parmely
12/26 - Samantha Shillings
12/27 - Derek Chapman

Happy 20th Anniversary!

12/29 - David & Suzanne
Queen

Happy 25th Anniversary!

12/07 - Greg & Robin Smith

Happy 30th Anniversary!

12/02 - Abe & Juanita
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Pictures with Santa

Santa is coming to Bang Elementary on Thursday, December 2, 2010 (6:00 PM to 9:00 PM), and the entire neighborhood is invited! Bring your kids, grandkids, nieces, nephews, or friends to meet Santa.

Come tell Santa what's on your Christmas list. Don't have a list yet? You can make it while you are there and place it in Santa's special mail box.

You can choose from two photo packages, and your pictures will be printed in seconds, while you wait. You can also meet Christopher Pop-In-Kins and his sister Christine Pop-In-Kins. These very special elves appear in your house the day after Thanksgiving and stay until Christmas Eve. They report back to Santa every night to let Santa know how good you were that day, and they return to very special hiding places throughout your house. These elves are available for purchase so that you can bring them home and start a new family tradition.

The picture packages are \$10.00 for one 5 x 7 and four wallets or \$20.00 for two 5 x 7's and eight wallets. The pictures are cash only. You can purchase Christopher or Christina Pop-In-Kins, book included, for \$32.42.

Come visit Santa at Bang!

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Merry Christmas!



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