



The Village Gazette

Volume 9, Issue 4
Village Creek Community Association

April 2012

LANDSCAPE CORNER

Molasses, Fire Ants, and Lawn Cutting

Digging down a few inches in most of our gardens exposes nothing but hard, hard clay. In general, our soil has very little biological activity such as earthworms or microorganisms, or any hint of life. It turns out; applying ½ pound of dried molasses per 100 square feet of lawn or garden one or two times per year apparently increases the biological activity in the soil. This, alone, might be a good enough reason to use molasses, but there is more! One of our Village Creek residents, and others we have talked to, say when they began using molasses, fire ants no longer invaded their yard. This would be enough reason to try it! It doesn't kill the fire ants. Rather, again according to several web articles, the increased biological activity in the soil is not to fire ants' liking, and they move on. One of the Landscape Committee members has purchased and will be trying it. We will provide updates during the next year on progress. We fully understand that, unlike poisons, molasses isn't going to get rid of fire ants overnight. Oh, dried molasses is available for about \$20 per 50 pounds at one of the local feed and supply stores near us. Shop around. For the entire article on molasses, check out the following web site for the above and much more: "<http://forums.gardenweb.com/forums/load/okgard/msg061201151272.html>." Many lawns are cut too short! When your lawn is mowed, set the mower to cut at about 2.5" as a minimum for St. Augustine grass. The maximum height for St. Augustine

is 4". This is especially important during recent drought conditions. St. Augustine kept neatly cut at 4" provides itself great drought protection. For the complete article and other types of grass, see the following: "aggieturf.tamu.edu/answers4you/mowing.html." Also, leave the clippings from the mower on your lawn. Most mowers use mulching blades which cut grass to sufficiently small clippings that you won't see piles of it after mowing. According to almost everything we have read, leaving the grass clippings on the lawn is the right way to go for your lawn's health. The grass breaks down and provides much needed nutrients for our future earthworms and other biological activity. Don't worry about thatch build-up. Most articles indicate that the concern about thatch build-up caused by not bagging is a myth! A bonus to keeping clippings on your lawn is that these valuable nutrients don't fill up our landfills. For more, see "walterreeves.com."

*Happy Gardening from the
Landscape Committee*



*Drop
us a
Line*

Getting connected in Village Creek just got easier with our new website eForms. You can contact the Board, post a classified, or volunteer for a committee and much more. Go to www.preferredmgt.com/villagecreek to logon and click the Community eForms link.

The Village Gazette

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

EMERGENCY NUMBERS or 911

CenterPoint-Gas Leak713-659-3552
Constables Office 281-376-3472, www.cd4.hctx.net
Klein Fire Dept.281-376-4449
Poison Control Center800-764-7661
Willowbrook Methodist281-477-1000
EMERGENCY 24 HOUR LINE281-537-0957
(select 'emergency' option)

SCHOOLS

Tomball ISD281-357-3100, www.tomballisd.net
Willow Creek Elem (K-4).....281-357-3080
Northpointe Int (5-6)281-357-3020
Willow Wood Jr (7-8)281-357-3030
Tomball High (9-12).....281-357-3220
Tomball Memorial High School.....281-357-3230
Transportation.....281-357-3193

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Preferred Management281-897-8808
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Mailing: P.O. Box 690269 Houston, TX 77269
Village Creek Community Association Website:
www.preferredmgt.com/villagecreek/home.asp

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Domestic Violence281-401-6250
FBI.....713-693-5000
Harris County Animal Control281-999-3191
Houston Chronicle713-220-7211
Greater Houston Pool713-771-7665
Lost Pets... <http://www.preferredmgt.com/villagecreek/home.asp>
Municipal District Services (24 hrs)281-290-6500
Reliant-Street lights713-923-3213
..... www.centerpointenergy.com/outage
Sex Offenders www.familywatchdog.us
Comcast - Cable/High Speed Internet.....713-341-1000
Waste Management.....713-686-6666
Trash pickup Tues/Fri
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Yard Stork kpuente@garygreene.com

NEWSLETTER

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REMINDERS

PARKING RESTRICTIONS

Village Creek Deed Restrictions prohibit overnight parking on subdivision streets. Article 9 section 18 states: No passenger vehicle or pick-up truck owned or used by the residents of a lot shall be permitted to be parked overnight on any street in the Subdivision. No guest of an owner, lessee or other occupant of a lot shall be entitled to park on any street in the subdivision overnight or on the driveway of a lot for a period longer than forty-eight consecutive hours.

2012 ASSESSMENTS PAST DUE

The 2012 assessments are now past due and delinquent accounts are being charged interest. If you have not made arrangements for payment we encourage you to do so to avoid additional collection fees being added to your account. A payment plan is available to you. You may log on to the Association's website and go to the documents page. Follow the instructions on the payment plan. You may also check your account information on the Association's website at www.preferredmgt.com/villagecreek or you may contact Preferred Management Services at 281.897.8808.

SHOW OFF YOUR SUPERHERO

Parents this is your chance to brag on your kiddos. We want pictures of your kids doing everyday things, school events, plays, sports, etc. Send in your pictures to be featured in The Village Gazette.

E-mail your pictures to villagecreek@peelinc.com by the 5th of the month.



The Village Gazette

Tips for a Diet that promotes Healthy Teeth

Of course we all know that a healthy diet is good for our bodies, but did you know that what you eat affects your teeth as well? Here is a list of simple ways you can improve your oral health by paying close attention to your diet. Brushing and flossing are vital to keeping your teeth healthy, but what you eat and drink in between your daily cleaning rituals also plays an important role in your oral health.

Plaque – an invisible, sticky layer of bacteria – regularly coats your teeth. When the starches and sugars present in many foods come into contact with this bacteria, acid is produced. This acid breaks down the enamel that protects the outside of your teeth, and over time can cause tooth decay. If you choose your foods wisely, you can decrease the amount of acid that attacks your teeth. Here are some diet tips for keeping your teeth healthy:

Limit foods and drinks that are high in sugar, like cookies, candies and sodas – remember even unsweetened fruit juices are high in sugar. **Read packaging labels** to find out how much sugar is included, and make educated choices in the products you purchase. **Limit dried fruits**, which are sticky and cling to the teeth – instead, eat fresh fruit, especially apples, which serve as natural tooth cleaners.

Avoid snacks between meals – but if you must snack, replace sugary treats with crackers, cheese, yogurt, nuts, and celery or carrot sticks, which produce less acid. If you do drink sugary liquids (soda, sports drinks, juices), **avoid sipping slowly** over a long period of time as this extends the period that acid attacks your teeth.

If you're a regular coffee or tea drinker, **reduce or eliminate added sugar**. If your

children snack at school, be sure they have **access to healthy snacks** (veggies, fresh fruits, cheese) instead of packaged foods that are high in sugar. If you occasionally treat yourself to a sugary snack, **brush your teeth afterwards** to reduce the acid effect – if you aren't near a toothbrush, **rinse with water or chew a piece of sugarless gum** to stimulate saliva, which helps clean your teeth.

Your diet also affects your overall health, which helps determine how well your body can fight off infection. If you aren't getting certain nutrients, the tissues in your mouth may not be as resistant, leaving you more prone to periodontal (gum) disease.

If you have any questions about your diet and its effect on your oral health, let us know. We'll be happy to guide you toward healthier eating habits.

Submitted by Dr. Flury

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VILLAGE CREEK MARKET REPORT

CATEGORY	NO.	PRICE	PRICE/SQ FT	DAYS ON MKT
Active Listings	12	\$252,437	\$77.65	129
Pending Listings	2	\$214,711	\$75.43	15
Sold Since 12/1/11	10	\$239,705	\$77.83	147

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Northwest Flyers Track Club

The Northwest Flyers Track Club will host two free open house / registration sessions for all middle and high school athletes and their parents interested in joining for the 2012 season. The events will be held on Thursday, April 5, and Friday, April 20, from 7:00 – 8:30 PM at Cypress Creek High School, 9815 Grant Rd., Houston.

The Northwest Flyers is a youth (ages 6 -18) track organization, affiliated with USA Track & Field. The club provides a full program of "track" events such as sprints, hurdles, middle distance, distance and relays, and "field" events such as long jump, triple jump, high jump, pole vault, discus, shot put and javelin. It is an excellent "off-season" program for young athletes who currently compete on their middle school or high school track teams.

The club was founded 25 years ago by Olympic gold medalist Fred Newhouse to foster the development of youth track & field in the northwest Houston area. Last year, the Northwest Flyers sent 62 young athletes to compete at U.S. Junior Olympics National Championships in Wichita, Kansas and Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

Visit the team website at <http://www.northwestflyers.org> for registration forms and information prior to the session, or contact Linette Roach at (281) 587-8442, or linette.roach@sbcglobal.net.

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The Village Gazette

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

1. Abbreviate (abbr.)
5. Mom
9. Rubber cement, for example
10. Confuse
11. Snaky fish
12. To that time
13. Residential district
15. East southeast
16. Freedom
18. Firearms
21. Extra-sensory perception
22. Group of four
26. Ooze
28. Move gently
29. Singing voice
30. Level
31. Sulk
32. Marrow

DOWN

1. Gets older
2. Type of cheese
3. Flower start
4. Ensur
5. Males
6. Not before
7. Slightly wet
8. Awry
10. What a gum chewer blows
14. Troublemaker
17. Believe
18. Vermin
19. Small island
20. Chine
23. Praise
24. Afloat
25. Indent
27. Cut grass

View answers online at www.peelinc.com

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The Village Gazette

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Carrots au Gratin

Ingredients

- 2 lbs. carrot, sliced
- 1/8 tsp. pepper
- 1/2 Cup chopped onions
- 1 1/2 C milk
- 1/4 Cup oleo, divided
- 4 oz. processed
- 3 T. flour
- American cheese, cubed
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 T. dried parsley

Cook carrots until tender crisp. Drain. In saucepan saute onions in 3 T butter. Stir in flour, salt, & pepper. Gradually add milk and bring to boil. Cook for 1 minute or until thickened. Stir in cheese until melted. Add carrots and parsley. Pour in greased 2 quart baking dish. Melt remaining butter and pour over carrots. Bake at 350° 20-25 minutes or until bubbly. (8-10 servings)

Enjoy!



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The Village Gazette

Houston Repertoire Ballet Presents the Classic Cinderella

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WHO

Houston Repertoire Ballet (HRB), featuring guest artist David Armendariz as the prince, while Claire White and Amaris Sharratt will alternate the role of Cinderella.

WHAT

The pre-professional ballet company in Northwest Houston proudly presents the Tomball premiere of its full-length production of Cinderella in three acts. Award-winning choreographer Victoria Vittum brings the classic fairy tale to life with her interpretation of this "happily ever after" ballet set to the timeless score of Sergei Prokofiev.

WHEN & WHERE

**Saturday, April 28 at 4pm & Sunday,
April 29 at 2pm**

**Tomball High School Auditorium
30330 Quinn Road
Tomball, Texas 77375**

TICKETS

Reserved Seating: \$15/\$18. For ticket information, call 281-940-HRB1 (4721) or visit www.hrbdance.org.

OUTREACH

The dancers of HRB perform excerpts from each production and make costumed appearances at various nursing homes, group events and at Arts & Education performances. Also, HRB will perform for the Tomball ISD fourth grade students, fulfilling the arts component of their curriculum. To schedule an outreach event for your organization, call 281-940-HRB1 (4721).

WHAT ELSE

Cinderella's original choreography is the creation of Victoria Vittum, with Barbara Le Gault doing much of the coaching and rehearsing. HRB's beautiful sets transform the stage back into a time where dreams really did come true. The exquisite costumes, designed by an amazing group of volunteers and partnered with Twin Cities Ballet in Monroe, LA, bring the dancers into Cinderella's world of magic and fantasy in this professionally staged production.

SYNOPSIS

The magical tale of a beautiful, kind young woman who rises from scrubbing floors to marrying a prince comes to life in Cinderella, a full-length ballet presented by HRB. From the wicked stepsisters' hilarious antics to the lovely pas de deux performed by Cinderella and the Prince, the performance is sure to capture the hearts of all. The ballet opens with the sisters fighting over fabric with Cinderella left to pick up the mess. The wicked stepmother orders Cinderella's father to purchase gowns for the sisters (Skinny and Dumpy) leaving Cinderella home alone. The fairy godmother conjures up fairies representing the four seasons to help Cinderella get dressed for the ball where she and the Prince fall in love. After elves stop time and Cinderella loses one of the glass slippers, the Prince travels the world to find her. Once they are reunited, they marry in an enchanted forest amid waltzing dancers.

ABOUT HRB

The Houston Repertoire Ballet (HRB) is a non-profit 501(c)(3), founded by Victoria Vittum and Gilbert Rome, both nationally acclaimed teachers and choreographers who served as its co-artistic directors. Today, Ms. Vittum oversees training and programming with an equal eye to serving the needs of the community. Although Mr. Rome is now retired, he maintains his interest and affiliation with HRB, performing as Drosselmeyer in *The Nutcracker* and as a guest teacher.

Since 1994, HRB has contributed to the cultural fabric of Harris and Montgomery Counties by providing excellent dance training to the area's young ballet stars and dance educators of tomorrow, while also presenting two high-quality productions annually at affordable prices. The *Nutcracker* and its Spring Program, this year *Cinderella*, introduce area children and their families to the world of classical and contemporary ballet. Today, HRB is considered to be the premiere pre-professional ballet company in the Houston region, and is recognized for sharing its gifts with the community and beyond.

The program attracts and develops some of the finest young dancers in the greater Houston area, with many of the dancers advancing to professional ballet companies throughout the country. HRB graduates can be seen with New York City Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Miami City Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Atlanta Ballet, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre and other prestigious companies. HRB has three graduating seniors this year and each will continue with dance at the university level. For more information, please visit: www.hrbdance.org.

MISSION

HRB's mission is dedicated to providing the finest classical ballet instruction, education and performance experience to local gifted students, and to preparing them for a professional career in the world of dance. HRB also is committed to serving the suburban Houston region with high-quality theatre productions that educate, engage and entertain residents of all ages and perpetuate their appreciation of dance as an art form.

Major funding for Houston Repertoire Ballet provided by Houston Endowment, Inc and ConocoPhillips. *Cinderella* is funded in part by a grant from the Texas Commission on the Arts through the Houston Arts Alliance.

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The Village Gazette

Auto Talk – Ask a Medic

Recently my mechanic said my catalytic converter is defective and has to be replaced. What is a catalytic converter and how does it become defective?

A catalytic converter is a device that converts three harmful compounds (hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxides) in car exhaust into harmless compounds. Carbon monoxide is a poison for any air-breathing animal. Nitrogen oxides lead to smog and acid rain, and hydrocarbons produce smog.

A catalytic converter becomes defective when too much raw fuel enters the exhaust system—causing the metals inside to start imploding. When this happens, severe black exhaust fumes (smells like raw fuel) and/or “bogging down” can happen and causes back pressure on the engine. Your check engine light will illuminate on your vehicle’s dashboard when this occurs.

What can I do to prevent catalytic converter failure? Two simple things:

- Make sure your vehicle is tuned up on time; every time. Why? Once the spark plugs become worn, they will not burn fuel optimally—this causes raw fuel to enter and/or collect in the vehicle’s exhaust system.

- Service your cooling system every two years or 30,000 miles (contrary to the manufacturer’s suggestion of five years or 100,000 miles. With wear and tear, your vehicle’s cooling system thermostat may be sticking “open,” causing continuous flow of coolant—never allowing the engine to reach its full operating temperature the majority of the time. The driver will never see this issue on the gauge. It’s a minute problem that will cause severe issues to the catalytic converter later down the road. If the vehicle continuously stays cool, the computer wants to dump more fuel in the engine than what is really needed. This again allows raw fuel to enter the exhaust thereby causing catalytic converter failure.

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Early Packing List: When to Get Travel Vaccinations

PLANNING AHEAD IS THE KEY TO SAFE, HEALTHY GLOBE-TROTTING

Submitted by Laura Guerrero, M.D., medical director for The Austin Diagnostic Clinic's Travel Clinic

There are just a few days to go before your big trip overseas. You've triple checked your itinerary, memorized important maps, and maybe even practiced speaking a bit of the local language. But unless you have taken the proper vaccination measures well in advance, your health may be at risk.

One of the most overlooked to-dos on a busy pre-travel itinerary checklist is the need to get vaccines and other medical preparations taken care of weeks, sometimes even months, before a trip, says Laura Guerrero, M.D., an internal medicine physician and medical director of the Travel Clinic at The Austin Diagnostic Clinic (ADC).

"Depending on where in the world you are going, you may be exposed to diseases and other pathogens that your body just hasn't had to cope with here in the United States. Often, vaccines are the best preventative measure to protect your health," says Dr. Guerrero. "But what people sometimes forget is that many vaccines have to be taken over an extended period of time before they can effectively prevent an illness."

WHICH VACCINATIONS?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) divides travel vaccines into three categories: routine, recommended, and required. Dr. Guerrero says the number and type of vaccines you should receive will vary depending on what part of the world you are traveling to.

"Your particular vaccination and health needs can be as different as the Amazon jungle is to the Sahara desert," says Dr. Guerrero. "The only way

to know what vaccinations are recommended for you is by consulting with your doctor at least one month before you plan on traveling abroad."

THE RIGHT VACCINE FOR YOU

Routine vaccinations are designed to protect you from diseases that rarely occur in the United States, but are still common in many parts of the world. According to the CDC, routine vaccinations should be administered for things such as influenza, tetanus, hepatitis A and B, measles, chickenpox, and zoster (shingles).

Exactly what routine vaccinations travelers should get will also depend mainly on your age and gender. And if you are traveling with children, they will likely require different vaccinations than an adult. Infants may need to have their vaccines administered over a period of several days or weeks, explains Dr. Guerrero. Recommended vaccinations will also depend on where you are traveling. The CDC lists vaccine information about specific destinations around the world on its website, <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list.htm>. The site includes detailed health information about specific countries.

"We will update your shot record so we know what vaccines you should be receiving," says Dr. Guerrero. "And we will also counsel you about what diseases may be present in your destination, and how you can avoid exposure." As far as required vaccinations go, international health regulations currently only require a vaccination for yellow fever for travelers visiting certain countries in sub-Saharan Africa and tropical South America.

Meningococcal vaccination is also required by the government of Saudi Arabia for annual travel during the Hajj—the term for the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia, which occurs sometime between November and January.

"Even if you do not get your travel vaccines in time, it's always a good idea to see your doctor before you travel abroad because you can still benefit from medications and other information about how to protect yourself from illness and injury while on vacation in another country," adds Dr. Guerrero.

HEALTHY TIPS WHILE ABROAD

Once you have followed the vaccination schedule exactly, there are many other health considerations to take into account, Dr. Guerrero says. If you are taking prescription medications, for example, make sure you bring enough to last your entire trip and that you keep them stowed in their original containers. It's also a good idea to bring medicine for diarrhea, and to be cautious about drinking from local water supplies or eating things like raw seafood or other uncooked items.

"Part of ensuring a memorable travel experience abroad is making sure you are prepared for any potential health situations," explains Dr. Guerrero. "For example, if you have a preexisting health condition, it's always a good idea to know what your emergency care options are if something were to happen abroad. By taking the proper health planning measures, your trip of a lifetime can be filled with good memories instead of bad ones."



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The Village Gazette

SUDOKU

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2		9	1			7		8
				5				
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						4		
					1			
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3					8			
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The goal is to fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9. Each digit may appear only once in each row, each column, and each 3x3 box.

SEND US YOUR

Event Pictures!!

Do you have a picture of an event that you would like to run in this newsletter? Send it to us and we will publish it in the next issue. Email the picture to villagecreek@peelinc.com. Be sure to include the text that you would like to have as the caption. Pictures will appear in color online at www.PEELinc.com.



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