

Woodwind Lakes



It's all right here

July 2013

Volume 2, Issue 7

WHAT ABOUT PARKING ON THE STREET?

by Lee Suydam" below

I don't know about you but I found the back and forth about parking on Nextdoor to be quite illuminating. Thanks to all who weighed in.

First, let's look at the Deed Restrictions on parking. It only speaks to two things; 1) no storage of vehicles (vehicles without movement for 48 hours) and no driveway parking that blocks the side walk.

Next, let's look at parking that violates county regulations. Parking too close to an intersection or corner, too close to a fire hydrant (15') or blocking a driveway are all matters for the Constable's Office and not the HOA.

Should WWL HOA have a parking policy? Residents feel strongly on both sides of the issue. Before we consider a policy, perhaps some suggestions on parking etiquette will be helpful to ameliorate your neighbor's ire and make our community safer for emergency response?

- **Use your garage and driveway** - please use your garage and your driveway rather than the street. If your garage is full of stuff instead of cars, you are being inconsiderate of your neighbors who share the streets of the community.
- **Choose the street and not the cul-de-sac** - please choose street parking over cul-de-sac parking for the sake of fire truck turnaround. This is especially important in The Village because the cul-de-sacs there are narrow. By the way, a "street" has parallel curbs on opposite sides.
- **Avoid creating a gauntlet** - please don't park opposite another parked vehicle on the street thus creating a gauntlet. Also, parking opposite a driveway on a narrow street creates a gauntlet for the homeowner.

Your BOD supports these etiquette guidelines and we hope you too can support them.

A TIME FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION

The municipal utility district (MUD #261) which serves Sections 1, 2 and 3 exclusively, is nearing a time when current indebtedness can be paid off without penalty. Without additional borrowing, residents can look forward to a period of declining property taxes. In other words, that portion of taxes levied for debt service will decline over time.

What can be considered at this point is to examine several community investment opportunities that might enhance our community while keeping taxes near the present levels. It's just a question of whether the community will value one or more of several investment opportunities in order to improve amenities and keep our community attractive to home buyers and competitive with other communities.

Neither the HOA BOD nor MUD #261 is advocating a position. None of these proposed investments will go forward without a showing of grassroots support and coordinated community involvement. If any of these cases develop legs, a referendum election would be held for residents of Sections 1, 2 and 3. A municipal bond election may also be required.

The three investment opportunities are: 1) build a community center, 2) beautify Property boundaries with a neighborhood wall and/or 3) fence off Lakes 1 and 2. The arguments for the opportunities follow.

ARGUMENT FOR A COMMUNITY CENTER

Section 4 has a community center provided by their utility district, Windfern Utility District (WFUD). It's where the officers of the WFUD conduct business and where the WL HOA BOD holds its meetings at Mauna Loa Lane and Gessner Road.

MUD #261 serves Sections 1, 2 and 3 exclusively but has no building and must conduct its business outside of our community. MUD #261 owns the property in the rear of the Reserve and can obtain the funds to build a building there.

Your HOA BOD could meet there. The Women's Club, the Mom's Club, and the Grounds Committee could meet there. MUD #261

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The *Woodwind Lakes Newsletter* is mailed monthly to all Woodwind Lakes residents. Residents, community groups, churches, etc. are welcome to submit information about their organizations in the newsletter. Personal news for the Stork Report, Teenage Job Seekers, recipes, special celebrations, and birthday announcements are also welcome.

To submit an article for consideration please email it to frank@sterlingasi.com. The deadline is the 9th of the month prior to the issue.

Discussion and Decision (Continued from Cover Page)

would maintain the building and schedule it on request to residents in the utility district for various functions. The present parking lot east of the tennis court would be lengthened to provide for ample parking.

ARGUMENT FOR SUBDIVISION BEAUTIFICATION OF PROPERTY BOUNDRIES

Many communities have attractive border walls on the outside of the community to enhance the ambiance of the property inside. Currently, the fences along Fairbanks N Houston and the east side of Windfern, are owned by the individual resident owners. Some of our exterior fences are sorely in need of repair and do not reflect well on the community.

What kind of fence? It is yet to be determined but proposed to be 8-9' high and made of stone or brick. The property outside of current fencing, in other words, outside the property of the individual property owner is where the wall would be built.

ARGUMENT FOR FENCING OFF LAKES 1 AND 2

We have problems with trespassing that will only get worse. We have tried in vain to discourage public visitation with the use of "Notice of Trespass" on the windshields of un-stickered cars. The property looks public, it is accessible from public streets and it is

so attractive that it simply invites the public to invade. We cannot gate the community but we can fence off the lakes. Electronic gates would work with the access cards for the Reserve.

Why can't we gate the community? Such an effort requires significant up-front legal expense and transfer of ownership and maintenance of the streets to the community. Presently, residents of Sections 1, 2 and 3 do not provide for a street maintenance reserve in their annual assessment. Section 4 residents do pay an additional amount for street maintenance because the Association owns and maintains the streets in Section 4. The next requirement is a 100% affirmative vote of all mortgage holders of property and residents in the proposed gated area. Also, it would require a 100% affirmative vote of all property owners within 200' to our community. In other words, those who presently use streets in our community to get to their jobs, stores, and restaurants. This last hurdle is considered impossible and therefore no expenditures have yet been made to begin a process of gating the community.

What kind of fence? The same black iron fence that presently exists in back of homes on these lakes. Electronic gates would be provided along with utility gates for maintenance vehicles. The fences would connect the fences that stop at the street openings and closely follow

(Continued on Page 4)

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Woodwind Lakes

Discussion and Decision (Continued from Page 3)

the walking path. There are two street opening on Lake 1 and three on Lake 2 plus three cul-de-sac openings on Lake 2.



Photo across the street from the family pool with fence superimposed.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Do you want all, some or none of these choices? Talk to your neighbors. Use Nextdoor (WL social network) to express your views. E-mail your HOA Directors. E-mail your MUD #261 Directors. Let it be known if you would like to take part on a steering committee in support of any of these choices.

IT COULD BE WORTH MORE THAN YOU THINK!



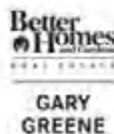
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Gardening Tips

Presented by RCW Nurseries



It's a typical summer in July. The only thing one wants to do is to enjoy a nice cool drink while sitting in the swimming pool. Well, birds feel the same way. They seek out shallow areas of water to wash out the dust in their feathers, and quench their thirst.

A subdivision's lake or puddles on the driveway just don't fit the bill (sorry for the pun). The lake is too deep, and the puddle doesn't have enough water. So make sure that you have a shallow birdbath with sloping sides that can hold about 1- to 2-inches of water at its deepest point. Refill it daily, whatever they don't use will evaporate almost overnight. The birds will stay in your yard eating those pesky grasshoppers, mole-crickets and a host of other insect thugs. And don't worry about harboring mosquito larvae, they prefer standing water.

Trumpet Vine, Cuphea, Turks Cap and Salvia are putting on quite a show now. Means it's almost time for Hummingbirds. But what looks like a Hummingbird, hovers like one, but is not a Hummingbird?

A Sphinx Moth. They're so named because their caterpillars lift and arch their necks when disturbed, supposedly resembling the Giant Sphinx of Egypt. They are also called Hummingbird

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Board Meetings

Regular Board Meetings are held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at the Windfern Forest Utility District building located at 14410 Mauna Loa. Meetings begin at 5:30 p.m. and all Residents are welcome. During Homeowner Input, Residents have the opportunity to address the Board. The agenda is posted on the WWL web site www.woodwindlakes.us



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YARD ART AND RAINWATER COLLECTION SYSTEMS

by Lee Suydam

Woodwind Lakes has a clean look thanks to our beautiful trees and the pride that homeowners take in their landscaping. The community also has Deed Restriction prohibitions against "yard art," that is, birdbaths, bird feeders, fountains, sculpture or decorative embellishments in the yard that can be seen from the street.

It's not a matter of taste. Just as the Deed Restrictions control paint color, roof color, fence construction, tree removal and lawn maintenance, the matter of putting up signs not permitted by policy or placing extraneous items in the yard is controlled. The Deed Restrictions do not attempt to control well-kept foliage, flowers, or shrubbery. A limited number of pots with living plants are okay but empty pots? Well, they are extraneous and ought to be removed. What goes on your front porch is generally okay within reason.

For the most part, homeowners cheerfully comply with the Deed Restrictions. A survey of lawn appurtenances in May of this year indicated only seventeen of our six hundred and thirty homes that

were out of compliance because of "yard art."

In 2012, Texas promulgated HOA regulations which addressed, among other things, Rainwater Collection Systems. The combination of drought and technology has made these tube and tank combinations popular. You can have them in Woodwind Lakes, but you can't have them in front of the house or seen from the street. The HOA BOD has issued and posted a policy concerning this which can be found on the website (<http://woodwindlakes.us/community>) along with the sign policy.

Make no mistake about it. The clean look of your neighborhood affects your property value. Imagine, if you will, that instead of seventeen homes out of compliance, we had say, seventy homes out of compliance. When older neighborhoods begin to look tatty, home buyers drive by to newer communities. Home buyers don't just shop a home, they shop the neighborhood. If the appearance of the neighborhood does not appeal to buyers, then home prices must necessarily fall.

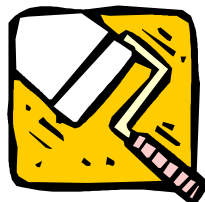
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Grounds Committee

Happy 20th Birthday Woodwind Lakes

Did you know that 2013 marks the twentieth year of Woodwind Lakes? Many of us are original homeowners. But over the years, some residents were transferred out of Houston and upon their transfer back, they returned to Woodwind Lakes. Some residents have simply moved from one section to another. All of us were drawn to WWL because of the large trees — we are very grateful to the developers who were “tree huggers” and to the builders who constructed such beautiful homes while preserving the wooded environment.

Twenty years later, we are still densely forested and can boast three lakes, walking/jogging trails, two swimming pools, exercise equipment and a pavilion with a barbecue. So, yes, you can have your cake and eat it too!!

It's June and it's summer. Our lawns and flowers in our landscaping are so pretty. Our Grounds Committee has really been challenged to choose just one residence from each section for the Yard of the Month award. Committee members rotate quarterly as judges.

Recently, I met with two of our Monarch Landscaping and Design representatives to discuss revitalizing the trail entrance areas. We would like to see more colorful, flowering plants which would greatly enhance those areas. Keep your fingers crossed!

Suzanne and I have a correction to make for last month's YARD of the MONTH — the SECTION FOUR award was given to 9427 SINFONIA.

Thanks everyone. We hope that more of our residents will become involved with the Grounds Committee. Remember, if you have some small plantings that you are removing from your yards, give us a call. We may be able to utilize them elsewhere.

Gardening Tips (Continued from Page 4)

Moths because unlike moths that feed at night, they are active during the day, hovering over nectar-rich flowers just like a Hummingbird. At night you may see them feeding at flowers planted under very bright street lights.

The White-Line Sphinx Moth (*Hyles lineata*) has a big round body nearly 3-inches long, with whirring wings that span up to 3-inches and a long proboscis -- the extendable hollow tube or “tongue” that looks like a Hummingbird's beak.

Another diurnal Sphinx Moth that masquerades as a Hummingbird is the Tersi Sphinx, a sleek-looking moth that is tan and golden colored. Its Latin name, *Xylophanes tersa*, refers to the Greek myth of Phanes, a primordial being that hatched from the cosmic egg, giving rise to the universe. A great story! Perhaps you have seen its caterpillar, a green or brown worm with big white eyespots behind its head. It arches its neck when disturbed making the eyespots look menacing to any would-be predator. (Both pictures are from Wikipedia)

Donald Ray Burger, a local attorney and avid gardener, has been tracking Hummingbirds fall appearance in Houston Heights. From his notes they have been showing up in August, sometimes very late in the month. He suspects it's due to the recent drought. Being further north we see them about late July to early August. They remember us for the Vitex, Esperanza, Texas Star Hibiscus, and other blooming annuals, perennials, and shrubs bearing the nectar-rich blooms they need to survive the trip to their winter grounds in southern Mexico, Central and South America, and the West Indies.

So be the gracious host/hostess who always has refreshments on hand for drop-in friends. It's not too late to plant Hummingbird attracting plants. They'll thank you for getting their roots out of the pot by establishing themselves quickly and blooming profusely. Just plant them either early morning or late evening when it's cooler for you. You'll enjoy a spectacular show of visiting Hummingbirds; and they will also appreciate that bird bath for their drinking and bathing needs.

Happy Gardening!

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Adult Pool and Pavilion

We are so fortunate to have such lovely facilities in our neighborhood....The Adult Pool is hopping and the Pavilion has lots of reservations....

A decision was made at the last Board Meeting concerning the keys for the Adult Pool. Should you need a new one, you would get that from me (Donna Jackson) as usual. You would then send a \$10 check to Sterling, payable to Woodwind Lakes for this new key. When I give you the key, I will give you their mailing address for this transaction.

Stay cool and enjoy your summer....Donna Jackson

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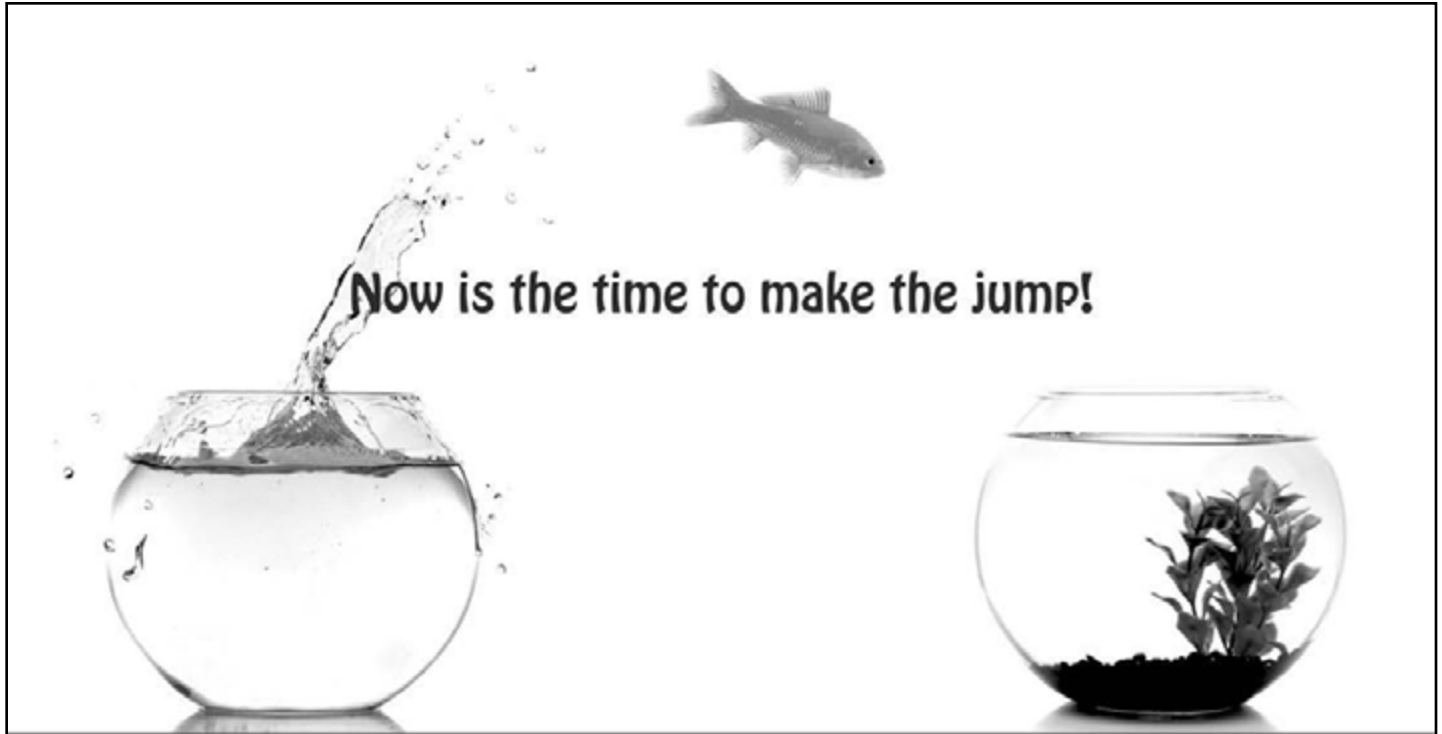


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