

Woodwind Lakes



It's all right here

September 2013

Volume 2, Issue 9

RESIDENT CONTRIBUTIONS

By Lee Suydam

Just so you know, your Board of Directors tend to be tight wads. They hold the purse strings of this community tighter than the strings on a banjo. That's not to say that money isn't spent. The BOD is currently discussing a budget for 2014 that includes approximately \$443,536 in expenses. The lion's share goes to services under contract - landscaping (\$91,560), seasonal flowers (\$46,028), pool service (\$42,402), management services (\$26,145), and lake management (\$7,794).

Well, back to the subject. I started thinking about this one afternoon when I happened upon one of our neighbors using a rake to scoop out pine straw from the lake after one of our heavy rains. She worked alone and except for my praise, no one else noticed her contribution.

This year, residents have performed a number of community service projects which have improved our neighborhood and spared an expense to our balance sheet. Here are a few of them.

- Repaired and stained the Serenade Bridge
- Adjusted the pedestrian gate at the Village on Windfern
- Replaced the gate lock at the tennis court
- Installed sod and stone containment around the bench on Allegro
- Chopped roots out of all the walking paths
- Weeded gardens at entrances and corners

While we sign contracts for regular services, extra tasks not covered by the contract must be expensed. In a year's time there usually are a number of light to medium projects that can be set aside for volunteer service. I can't say enough to those who have given their time, energy and sweat equity for the betterment of our neighborhood. Thank you, one and all.

We Had a Town Hall Meeting

by Lee Suydam

That's right, a town hall meeting on August 6 for the residents of the Village of Woodwind lakes. Now you may be asking yourself, what could be so important that would require a town hall meeting? Residents of the Village have grievances. The first grievance has to do with an abdication of responsibility by the Windfern Forrest Utility District (WFUD) to maintain the district's property around the lake in Section 4. Residents of Sections 1, 2 and 3 are fortunate that their municipal utility district recognizes this legal responsibility and cheerfully supports their constituents when it comes to lake property management.

The property around the lake in Section 4 was deeded to WFUD in 1996 when the property was developed. WFUD maintained the property (paid toward cutting the grass around the lake) until 2012 but then suddenly decided it wasn't their job to maintain their property any longer. Your HOA board has sent delegations to the WFUD but all were rebuffed summarily. There were approximately two dozen residents at the town hall meeting. Section 4 residents are not happy with WFUD and explored different avenues to address the problem.

The second grievance has to do with the non-election in May. The four-year terms of three of the five Directors of WFUD were coming to an end and the WFUD was obliged to hold an election. Because of grievance 1 above, two residents of the Village applied as a candidates. However, each was informed after the filing deadline had passed that their applications were defective. Consequently, the three WFUD Directors were re-installed without having to face the voters and WFUD was spared the expense of conducting an election. With regard to this grievance, "unhappy" doesn't go far enough to describe the ire of the community. People wanted to vote for representatives of their choosing but for whatever reasons, were denied.

The solutions to these problems are complex but in another way, very simple. If there is any satisfactory resolution, residents of the Village must become politically active in their utility district if things are to change. Documents related to the above have been posted under "Groups/Issues of the Village," on Nextdoor. Check it out.

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Association Manager - Frank Cario..... frank@sterlingasi.com
Administrative Assistant - Janine Cruz .. janine@sterlingasi.com

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Street Light Outage..... 713-207-2222
..... www.centerpointenergy.com - Have light number.

Texas Department of Public Safety Crime Service

..... http://records.txdps.state.tx.us

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Jason Van Loo Secretary
..... 281-236-6419
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SECTION 4 VILLAGE OF WOODWIND LAKES

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including curbside recycling every Saturday.

USEFUL LINKS

WL Website.....http://woodwindlakes.us/
Sec 1, 2 and 3 Utility.....
..... http://hcmud261.com/HCMUD261/Index.htm
Section 4 Utility http://www.wfud.org/
Social Media .. https://woodwindlakes.nextdoor.com/news_feed/
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ARTICLE INFO

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.

GARDENING TIPS

Presented by RCW Nurseries

Are you sighing with relief that it's September, promising cooler weather? We are looking forward to enjoying generally nice weather for the next six months -- the best time for gardening, or just about any outdoor activity. But when you're outside please make sure to apply sunscreen -- even though the days are getting shorter the sun's UV rays are still strong and you can get sunburned. Don't forget to apply an appropriate insecticide to repel mosquitoes. While products containing DEET provide the longest lasting protection, if you're sensitive to it, want to use something gentler or kid-friendly, consider using products containing cedar or eucalyptus.

Hummingbird migration is in full swing, so keep filling those feeders. And make sure your garage door is closed, or at least hide the red knob of the emergency door release. To hummingbirds that red knob looks like a potential nectar bearing flower or feeder. If a hummingbird does wander into your garage, try our suggestions for safely getting her out. You'll find the link to it on our website, www.rcwnurseries.com.

Final pruning of shrubs such as Photinia, Eleagnus, Ligustrum, Boxwood, and others should be done this month. Once fall starts (September 22nd) the days will be getting shorter and the shrubs will no longer be actively producing new growth. Do not prune Camellias, Azaleas and other spring-flowering shrubs as you'll be removing their flowers. You can safely trim the seed heads off Crape Myrtles -- this may stimulate them to produce one final, albeit smaller, flush of flowers.

After conserving energy during the hot summer days, roses will be blooming heavily again. Go ahead and lightly prune your hybrid teas and shrub roses, feed them with their favorite fertilizer, and enjoy the show.

Do any of your trees have their own "web site"? If a pantyhose-like web appears on the trunks of your trees, consider yourself lucky. It is the result of a small brown insect called the Webbing Bark Louse aka Tree Bark Louse, aka Tree Bark Lice. It is a beneficial insect, especially attracted to oak trees, but we've also seen them on Hackberrys and Elms. They spin this web as a means to protect themselves from predators while they feed on lichens, dead insects and fungi.

Sometimes the web is very large and looks as though it might smother the tree. No need to worry. Trees breathe through tiny openings called stomata on the underside of their leaves. Since the web doesn't cover the leaves, it does not affect the tree's breathing. The Webbing Bark Lice even clean up after themselves by consuming their web when they don't need it anymore. So let this beneficial insect do its job. Your trees will be the talk of the neighborhood -- the kids will think it's awesome.

(Continued on Page 4)

COMMUNITY GARAGE SALE

The Fall Garage sale is scheduled for
Saturday, September 7th between 7:00 a.m. - ?
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 Joyce Kraft or Lee Suydam.



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Woodwind Lakes

Gardening Tips (Continued from Page 3)

Vegetable gardening is at its best in fall, and September is a good time to plant tomatoes. They will grow rapidly in the warm temperatures and won't be needing protection from the afternoon sun. With cooler night time temperatures, they will more successfully flower and set fruit.

If you don't have room for a vegetable garden, try your hand with growing vegetables in hanging baskets. Good choices include: Kale, Lettuce, Radishes, Spinach and Strawberries. Here's a lettuce harvesting tip: no matter what type of lettuce you grow, the freshly picked leaves taste bitter because of the plant's milky sap. The trick to enjoying home grown lettuce is to harvest and refrigerate the leaves (or head) the day before serving them. This forces the sap to turn sweet.



Grounds Committee

Diana Mintner & Suzanne Fontenot-Williams

Since we will not have the August Yard of the Month winners picked by our September issue deadline, Suzanne and I thought we would again explain the selection process. Our Grounds Committee members, on a rotating basis, make two selections, first choice/second choice, from the section he/she is responsible for judging. One cannot judge a section in which he or she lives. All EIGHT are submitted to Sterling to confirm that the Owners are in good standing. Ideally, the first choice is approved but if not, the second, hopefully, will be approved. If that does not occur, then a third address is submitted. If a resident has received YOM during the past twelve months, he/she is not eligible again for another year. We keep records from many years ago. Winners receive a certificate and a \$15 gift card from RCW Nurseries. This year, many homeowners have upgraded their landscaping. Great job everyone because it makes our job more challenging!!!

On another note, not Grounds Committee related: PLEASE everyone.....STOP at the stop signs. I as well as other residents, are continually amazed at the number of cars that don't even bother to stop, particularly at three-way intersections. And yes, thanks to our Woodwind Lakes stickers, the offenders live amongst us.

We are thrilled that the trails have been kept clean because we pet owners are responsible for pet waste removal.

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 and will start doing some improvements as the weather becomes more bearable.

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The Women's Club of WWL

We have an exciting year planned for the Women's Club of WWL! Come join us on Tuesday, September 17, 2013 at 10:00 a.m. in the home of Diana Mintner (7806 Ensemble Drive) as we kick off the new 2013-2014 year.

The purpose of the Women's Club is to offer a convenient and friendly environment for members to socialize with the ladies in the neighborhood and participate in fun and interesting activities. Meetings are held the third Tuesday of each month from September through May. Our annual membership dues are \$25 per year.

For more information about the Women's Club please contact: Diana Mintner, President (dianamintner@gmail.com); Gail Ford, Vice-President (ggford@sbcglobal.net); Stacia Harvey, Secretary (sfonfara@gmail.com); Dawn Porter, Treasurer (dawns_08080@yahoo.com)

WOODWIND LAKES LADIES BIBLE STUDY

The Woodwind Lakes Ladies Bible Study will resume September 12th. The group meets at 9:30 a.m. on Thursdays at 7815 Allegro Drive and please plan to attend. For more information, please call Sandi Whitworth at 713 896-8320.

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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Let's Talk About Ducks

by Lee Suydam

I don't know if you have noticed or not, but our Muscovy duck population on the lakes is down significantly. You may recall the firestorm of protest following a Muscovy duck capture in March of this year. At that time, the Muscovy duck population on lakes 1&2 numbered in excess of 250 birds. Although an insignificant number of Muscovy ducks were removed, our numbers are nowhere near what they were then. So, what happened to the Muscovy ducks?

Several things have contributed to the reduction of the Muscovy duck population.

Curtailed of feeding – previous to March, residents and visitors were in the habit of distributing large amounts of food. This contributed to overpopulation and excessive breeding. The Muscovy duck does quite well consuming its natural diet of insects. We are grateful to those who have stopped or curtailed the feeding of Muscovy ducks.

Volunteer nest management – some of our residents are controlling overpopulation by preventing the hatching of eggs. The Muscovy duck is a prolific breeder and without control measures can easily triple their population in a year's time. The Muscovy duck, with its red fleshy mask around the bill and eyes, is restricted under law and cannot be released to other public or private properties. Except for three counties along the Rio Grande where they are raised for human consumption, the Muscovy duck is considered invasive poultry and is not protected under Fish and Wildlife regulations.

Curtailed of duck dumping – because we had so many Muscovy ducks, non-residents and even some animal control companies thought it okay to release Muscovy ducks to our community. Law enforcement officials have been notified whenever violators have been observed releasing Muscovy ducks in our community.

The urban coyote – some say they have seen coyotes take Muscovy ducks at night. Maybe so, but I have not witnessed this. The coyote feeds on ground-nesting birds, pets as well as pet food or garbage on the ground. Too many Muscovy ducks invites such scavengers into the community.

The Animal Husbandry section of the Deed Restrictions prohibits the "keeping of poultry," as well as sheep, goats, horses, cattle, swine, snakes, or livestock. The control of the Muscovy ducks has opened up more habitats for wild aquatic animals who must share what the habitat in our neighborhood provides. Many thanks to those who have helped in the control effort.

Trash Pickup Reminder

Sections 1, 2 & 3 trash service is on Tuesday and Friday. Trash pickup for Section 4 only, is on Wednesday and Saturday, including curbside recycling every Saturday. Please do not put your trash out any sooner than the evening before trash day.



Adult Pool and Pavilion

The Pavilion and Adult Pool have been busy, busy this summer. All kinds of activities have taken place over there! Don't forget that, even after the pool closes for the fall, the Pavilion is a great place for a party. Please contact me if you want to make a reservation. Donna Jackson 713-466-8668
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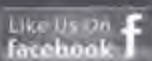
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