

# The Village Gazette



Volume 10, Issue 10  
Village Creek Community Association

October 2013

## Village Creek Yard of the Month SEPTEMBER 2013 17714 Feathers Landing Drive

*Thank you to Plants for all Seasons for donating the gift certificates for each month's winner.*



# The Village Gazette

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Klein Fire Dept. ....281-376-4449  
Poison Control Center .....800-764-7661  
Willowbrook Methodist .....281-477-1000  
EMERGENCY 24 HOUR LINE .....281-537-0957  
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### SCHOOLS

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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

### HOA MGMT

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Patti Tine..... [patti@preferredmgt.com](mailto:patti@preferredmgt.com)  
Fax .....281-897-8838  
Mailing: P.O. Box 690269 Houston, TX 77269  
**Village Creek Community Association Website:**  
[www.preferredmgt.com/villagecreek/home.asp](http://www.preferredmgt.com/villagecreek/home.asp)

### SERVICES

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Domestic Violence .....281-401-6250  
FBI.....713-693-5000  
Harris County Animal Control .....281-999-3191  
Houston Chronicle .....713-220-7211  
Sweetwater Pools .....281-988-8480  
Lost Pets... <http://www.preferredmgt.com/villagecreek/home.asp>  
Municipal District Services (24 hrs) .....281-290-6500  
Reliant-Street lights .....713-923-3213  
..... [www.centerpointenergy.com/outage](http://www.centerpointenergy.com/outage)  
Sex Offenders ..... [www.familywatchdog.us](http://www.familywatchdog.us)  
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Yard Stork ..... [kpuente@garygreene.com](mailto:kpuente@garygreene.com)

### NEWSLETTER

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## HOW TO REPORT LOST AND FOUND PETS

Recently, an email was sent to all homeowners advising that the Lost and Found section of the website now has the ability for all Village Creek homeowners to post lost and found pets. This is a great resource for everyone who finds pets and also those looking to reunite with lost pets. Because the site is accessible by all owners 24/7 this means you have the ability to post information after hours and on the weekends. We do ask that you notify Preferred Management Services when you have located your pet so that we are able to remove that pet from the website.

The Village Creek Board of Directors also recently discussed the amount of paper and tape added to all the poles within the community. They ask that you not post paper,



etc. on the poles but come to the website instead. You will most likely have better results by posting on the lost and found page where people will automatically go to look and/or post than a piece of paper on a sign post. The paper and tape take away from the aesthetics of the community.

The landscape company has been asked to remove all paper, etc. from signs and common areas. Posting information on County signs is also against the law.

All residents are encouraged to visit the Village Creek Community Association website at <http://www.preferredmgt.com/villagecreek> to get the latest information on what's happening in the neighborhood.



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## Village Creek Resident's Trees

*By Gordon R. Watson, Village Creek Landscape Committee*

### PART ONE

The information contained herein is an honest attempt to provide some guidance to Village Creek homeowners regarding trees on the homeowner's street-facing property. If there are any doubts regarding any of the issues shown below, please consult an expert.

Village Creek is blessed with lots of trees. Of course, trees are not entirely our friend. They can lift sidewalks, damage foundations, and break pipes. Still most will agree that, despite their problems, they are overwhelmingly an asset to our community. They grow more beautiful each year, and trees make such a difference between an ordinary subdivision and a great place to live. They provide shade and habitat for animals. They add to property value. The key is to find a balance between beauty and practicality

#### **What does the Village Creek Deed Restriction say regarding trees?**

b. Removal of individual trees is discouraged unless the tree is diseased, dead, severely damaged or poses a hazard. Any front yard trees removed must be replaced with a minimum 30 gallon container grown tree. Lots in Village Creek require a minimum of three front yard trees. It is the Owner's responsibility to maintain these trees. If a tree dies, leaving fewer than three, it shall be replaced by the Owner with the same species or with a species approved by the ARC. Removal of multiple live trees, without suitable immediate replacements from any single property, will not be approved.

c. Street trees, located on the side portion of any lot adjacent to a street, must be maintained. If a street tree dies, it shall be replaced by the Owner with a minimum 30 gallon tree of the same species or of a species approved by the ARC.

Village Creek's primary tree is the Live Oak, and we have them in abundance. The Live Oak is considered to be a large tree with medium growth (13" to 24" per year). According to, A Garden Book of Houston published by the River Oaks Garden Club, Live Oaks can attain a height of 50 feet and a spread of 75 to 100 feet. If we assume that your tree's branches currently extend to within ten feet of your home, it is probably reasonable to expect that they will touch your roof in ten years (one foot per year). We should all plant and prune accordingly. It is better to obtain approval and remove or replace trees while they are young rather than when they are older and become a problem. Further, it is far better to prune a young tree for form rather than an old one to solve a problem. Note that

Live Oaks can be pruned anytime if there are issues such as broken limbs, interference with traffic, or limbs rubbing on your roof; however, the best time to prune Live Oaks is in December, January, or February (<http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/archives/parsons/trees/oakwtmaint.html>). A&M recommends painting the wound.

The Deed Restriction doesn't require three Live Oaks in the front yard. It just requires three trees (this number was recently reduced from five trees). It also doesn't require any particular type of tree, so you have some latitude to request board approval for trees you might prefer. Live Oaks are considered large trees, but medium or small trees might be better in some yards. The Board has latitude to adjust the number of trees to fit your lot. For example, in the smallest front yard in Village Creek, it is possible only one or two trees are needed. On the other hand, other lots are huge...and can support more than three trees. It is not in anyone's interest that your yard has too many or too few trees. If your case is unique, take your proposal to the Board through the application process.

Texas A&M (<http://texastreeplanting.tamu.edu/AvailableSpace.html>) suggests that large trees such as Live Oaks should have about 180 square feet available for each tree. If planted in a row, they should, according to this web site, be planted 45 feet apart.



### PART TWO

According to A Garden Book for Houston, Live Oaks may need tree stakes for a few months to a year. Beyond that, supports can become detrimental to the tree. There are numerous tools and methods to remove these stakes. Check YouTube on the internet or ask your gardener. The longer you wait, the more difficult it will be to remove them, and the more likely it will be that the roots will be damaged. In some cases, support wire will grow into the tree...risking the tree's health (and become a hidden safety issue to future tree trimmers). If you want sources for removing either the stakes or wires, ask the Landscape Committee for help by logging into the Village Creek website. Open eForms and then Landscape Committee Request Suggestion.

Roots are an important issue for Village Creek. A very good explanation of root spread (distance from tree trunk) for live oaks can be found at (<http://www.warnell.uga.edu/news/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/Live-Oak-Keynote-pub.pdf>). Based on this

*(Continued on Page 6)*



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## *Resident Trees- (Continued from Page 4)*

web site, a tree with a 48" diameter trunk, such as a Live Oak might attain, would have a root radius of about 21 feet. The one issue which all of us should pay attention to is the distance trees are to our home's foundation. If yours is closer, it is not the end of the world. It is probably OK to trim a root on its way to your foundation. Another solution to root/foundation problems may be a root barrier. Such barriers are described in the following web site: [http://aggiehorticulture.tamu.edu/newsletters/hortupdate/hortupdate\\_archives/2002/mar02/art3mar.html](http://aggiehorticulture.tamu.edu/newsletters/hortupdate/hortupdate_archives/2002/mar02/art3mar.html). Keep in mind that one of the purposes of the roots is to reduce the potential for the tree falling over in a storm. In general, though, according to A Garden Book for Houston, Live Oaks are well known to be fairly wind tolerant. Consult an expert if there is any doubt.

While it is best to keep tree roots away from utilities, this will prove all but impossible. The good news is that electrical, gas, sewer, and water lines are relatively flexible, strong and are generally below most roots. Note that the water meter box is a weak link because the water lines must rise up to the meter, and to make matters worse, the box generally is filled with water...a natural attraction for roots.

With regard to selecting a tree, it is hard to beat Texas A&M's tree selection chart at the following site: <http://texastreeplanting.tamu.edu/CustomSelector.aspx>. It will guide you to good trees for our

specific area. It will not answer all of your questions (such as root habits), so when you find the right tree there, take the additional step of doing some more research on those areas not covered.

Pruning trees when young is important. Keep in mind that horizontal branches will not increase in height as the tree grows. In some cases, these branches will actually sag. Trim lower branches to allow walking and driving beneath. Keeping lower branches trimmed will also force upward growth. Street trees in particular, must have sufficient clearance for large vehicles. These vehicles will do their own trimming, but you may not like the result (and neither will the vehicle owner). It is already fairly common for trucks to hit existing trees in Village Creek...a good hint that such trees need pruning. For pruning, Texas A&M has some excellent guidance at the following web site: <http://aggiehorticulture.tamu.edu/earthkind/landscape/proper-pruning-techniques/>

Finally, removing or adding trees from front or side yards requires the Village Creek Board's consent. The Board consists of volunteers we have elected to keep Village Creek a great place to live while retaining property values. Remember also that the Board has (with a few exceptions) latitude regarding their decisions. The more logical and complete your proposal, the more likely it is that it will be approved. They are reasonable people. Of course, it goes without saying, that being pleasant is always beneficial.

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