

# Woodland Hills



The Official Publication of the Woodland Hills Homeowner's Association

Volume 9, Number 1

January 2014

## SAVE THE DATE

Woodland Hills HOA Annual Meeting will be held Monday, February 3, at the Colleyville Center located at 5301 Riverwalk Drive. The meeting will start at 7:30 PM.

### Timely Tips for December 2013

*Submitted by Darlene Paige*

Winter can be a wonderful time of year in the garden. Winter may lack the wild riot of color and growth that we all so love in Spring, but Winter has a different kind of beauty. Some of our favorite Winter gardens are understated, tranquil and calming. Interesting evergreen shrubs and grasses really stand out in this season, as well as trees with beautiful bark. Flowering shrubs like Camellias are Winter favorites.

As for annuals, we Texans are quite fortunate in Winter choices. The new generation of cool season pansies will provide color from now until late Spring. Other flowering annuals like Snapdragons, Cyclamen, Flowering Cabbage and Kale provide both color and shape for the Winter garden.

Even better Winter is the perfect time to plan and lay the foundation for Spring. December is the month to plant your chilled bulbs for big Spring blooms. And this is also a good time to prune and reshape your trees and shrubs. Do not top crapemyrtles, simply remove the seedheads and prune for shape.

You should also prepare your garden for cold weather. First of all, make sure that your plants are in excellent shape, well-watered and well-fed, because a healthy plant will survive cold snaps more easily. 3 to 4 inches of mulch provides insulation that keeps the ground beneath it warmer, thus protecting roots. If you have tender plants, stock up on Frost Cloth now, so that you have it on hand when you need it. Frost Cloth is simply an insulating blanket for your plants. It should be draped over them when cold weather is approaching. To be effective the Frost Cloth should reach the ground all the way around, so that it effectively captures the heat emanating from the ground and keeps the air around your plants marginally warmer.

It's a lovely season in Texas, enjoy the cool bite of frosty mornings, warm drinks by the fireside, bright lights on trees and homes, and most of all, your treasured family and friends.

## Community Calendar

JANUARY 13

**Colleyville Library Story Time and Chess**  
*registration opens at 10:00am*

JANUARY 16

**Late Edition Book Club**  
*7:00pm at Colleyville Library*

JANUARY 17-18

**36th Annual Dallas Trade-O-Rec**  
*Grapevine Convention Center*

JANUARY 21

**CHHS Basketball**  
*Girls vs. Trinity 6:30 / Boys vs. Trinity 8:00*

JANUARY 23

**Reel Talk Film Discussion Group**  
*11:00 am at Colleyville Library*

JANUARY 25

**Valentine Oreo Lollipop Demonstration**  
*2:00pm at Colleyville Library*

JANUARY 28

**CHHS Basketball**  
*Girls vs. MAC 6:30 / Boys vs. MAC 8:00*

JANUARY 30

**GCISD Board Meeting**  
*5:30pm*

JANUARY 31- FEBRUARY 1

**Fashion and Flea**  
*Grapevine Convention Center*

FEBRUARY 3

**HOA Annual Meeting**  
*7:30pm at the Colleyville Center*

FEBRUARY 13

**Books 'n' Brunch Book Club**  
*7:00pm at Colleyville Library*

# Woodland Hills

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Please support the businesses that advertise in the Woodland Hills Community Newsletter. Their advertising dollars make it possible for all Woodland Hills residents to receive the monthly newsletter at no charge. No homeowners association funds are used to produce or mail the newsletters. If you would like to support the newsletter by advertising, please contact our sales office at 888-687-6444 or [advertising@PEELinc.com](mailto:advertising@PEELinc.com). The advertising deadline is the 20th of each month for the following month's newsletter.

### CLASSIFIED ADS

**Personal classifieds** (one time sell items, such as a used bike...) run at no charge to Woodland Hills residents, limit 30 words, please e-mail [Tiki1002@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Tiki1002@sbcglobal.net)

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## Colleyville regularly makes D Magazine

Colleyville regularly makes *D Magazine's* list of "Best Suburbs" and Colleyville residents are well aware of the city's many attributes. But the city is also full of off-the-beaten-path, hidden treasures.

*D Magazine* recently sent a reporter to tour its highest ranked suburban cities to find some of the best things Colleyville has to offer "for free or cheap." He was on his own and left to find some of Colleyville's best hidden treasures within a few hours. The reporter's favorites were Foreman's General Store on Colleyville Boulevard, LeSara Cupcake Bar in Town Center, and the Colleyville Nature Center, located on Millwood Drive off of Glade Road.

## NOT AVAILABLE ONLINE



## WEATHER

A little preparation can go a long way in keeping your home safe during winter weather. The following precautions are advised:

Keep garage doors closed if there are water supply lines in the garage.

Open kitchen and bathroom cabinet doors to allow warmer air to circulate around the plumbing. Be sure to move any harmful cleaners and household chemicals up out of the reach of children.

When the weather is very cold outside, let the cold water drip from the faucet served by exposed pipes. Running water through the pipe - even at a trickle - helps prevent pipes from freezing.

Keep the thermostat set to the same temperature both during the day and at night. By temporarily suspending the use of lower nighttime temperatures, you may incur a higher heating bill, but you can prevent a much more costly repair job if pipes freeze and burst.

If you will be going away during cold weather, leave the heat on in your home, set to a temperature no lower than 55° F.

If a pipe bursts, shut the water off at the meter. During a major winter weather event, public works crews, police, and fire personnel must prioritize calls. Between accidents, dangerous road conditions, and medical calls, crews may not be able to respond to a call about a burst water pipe quickly. The link to the video below provides instructions on how to turn off your water, if the need arises.

### TO THAW FROZEN PIPES

If you turn on a faucet and only a trickle comes out, suspect a frozen pipe. Likely places for frozen pipes include against exterior walls or where your water service enters your home through the foundation.

Keep the faucet open. As you treat the frozen pipe and the frozen area begins to melt, water will begin to flow through the frozen area. Running water through the pipe will help melt ice in the pipe.

Apply heat to the section of pipe using an electric heating pad wrapped around the pipe, an electric hair dryer, a portable space heater (kept away from flammable materials), or by wrapping pipes with towels soaked in hot water. Do not use a blowtorch, kerosene or propane heater, charcoal stove, or other open flame device.

Apply heat until full water pressure is restored. If you are unable to locate the frozen area, if the frozen area is not accessible, or if you cannot thaw the pipe, call a licensed plumber.

Check all other faucets in your home to find out if you have additional frozen pipes. If one pipe freezes, others may freeze, too.

### TURN OFF SPRINKLER SYSTEMS

Remember to turn off sprinkler systems in freezing conditions. During the next few days, run-off from sprinklers that reaches the road will freeze and create a hazard for drivers. Please help us keep you and your family safe, remember to turn off your system during a freeze.

### BEST ADVICE: STAY HOME IF YOU CAN

Driving conditions are likely to be hazardous through the weekend. As always, in these conditions, the best advice is to stay home if you can. If you must go out, please be careful.



## How To Turn Water Off To Your Home

1. Remove the lid from the City Water Meter (it's located in the front near the street).
2. Using a Meter Valve Tool (available at Home Depot for about \$5.00) place inside meter and on top of the gate valve--- the tool will fit onto the gate valve. Turn clockwise to shut off water. Two holes will align themselves when the water is completely shut off. To turn the water back on turn counter clockwise.

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# Woodland Hills

# 2014

*Submitted by Natalie Verte*

We all make New Year's resolutions in January, and most of us break them before we have even taken down our holiday decorations. Stop eating chocolate? Yeah, sure.

But, when it comes to keeping your work and family life organized, there's a way to stay on track. The secret: using your electronic calendar as more than just a date keeper.

By using a mobile smart calendar creatively, you can bring order out of chaos in areas ranging from bill payment to time management – and, in some cases, even break your habit of being (un)fashionably late.

It's all a matter of getting past the 80/20 rule (80 percent of software users use only 20 percent of the features). Instead of simply entering your business meetings, doctors' appointments and social engagements like parties and weddings as you would on old-style calendars, use all the 'extras' as well as the core calendar itself to help you do a better job of getting your act together.

## **HERE ARE 10 WAYS TO HACK YOUR CALENDAR APP FOR OPTIMAL PRODUCTIVITY**

1. Set a monthly recurring appointment to sit down and pay your bills. That way, you'll never miss a payment again.
2. Create an online shared family calendar including all school and work holidays. Then, set reminders to alert you when to book time off work, arrange child care around school holidays, and so on.
3. If your app has a meeting scheduler, use it to block off proposed meeting times and send invitations to easily coordinate attendee schedules from your phone.
4. Block times on your calendar to give you the ability to accomplish

your goals. For example, if you want to hit the gym or go for a run three to five times a week, book it on your calendar. If spending more time with family and friends in the New Year is on your list, maximize your time by inviting a friend to work out with you. You'll hit two goals in the same amount of time.

5. For business, use the "Notes" field in your calendar to record information about the people you'll meet and the proposed agenda. This will help you stay on track during meetings, and also make it easy to remember what the meeting was about if you ever need to revisit it.

Some smart calendars will even scan the "Notes" field and intelligently link your meeting to relevant information such as notes from your Evernote account or profiles of meeting attendees from LinkedIn.

6. If you have lots of small tasks to get done, block off 30 or 60 minutes on your calendar and challenge yourself to see how many you can knock off in that timeframe.

7. If you take paper notes, use Evernote's Document Camera on your phone to store them digitally. Some smart calendar apps will link these notes to meeting information, making it easy to track down what you talked about without fumbling through a pile of papers.

8. Write your property tax amounts and due dates on your calendar. Immediately write the checks and address, stuff and stamp the envelopes so that they're ready to go as soon as the "send" reminder pops up on your calendar. If you're self-employed, do the same with your quarterly income tax estimates.

9. Keep your to-do list on your calendar app so that you can retrieve it easily, update it at any time, and tick items off the list as you complete them.

10. If your calendar has drive time calculation abilities, be sure to include the destination address when you enter an appointment, even if you know how to get there. Some calendars predict your drive time based on current and historic traffic conditions and let you know when to leave so you won't have to make excuses for late arrivals.

Remember: today's online calendars are more than digital date books. They're also productivity, time-saving and even habit-changing tools. So, if you are determined to get organized in 2014, turn over a new (electronic) calendar leaf. It may be the first New Year's resolution you ever keep.

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN WOODLAND HILLS

4 Properties Currently Listed For Sale  
Average List Price - \$519,850  
Average Price Per Sq. Ft. - \$116.44  
Average Days on Market - 121

19 Properties Sold in the Last 6 Months  
Average List Price - \$471,947  
Average Price Per Sq. Ft. - \$128.63  
Average Days on Market - 33



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CHRIS MINTER

YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD EXPERT

14 YEAR WOODLAND HILLS RESIDENT

## Beware of Homestead Exemption Scams

Homestead exceptions are a great way to lower your overall property taxes. Why? An exemption removes part of the value of your property from taxation and lowers your taxes. For example, if your home is valued at \$125,000 and you qualify for a \$15,000 exemption, you pay taxes on your home as if it was worth \$110,000. This exemption only applies to your principal residence, not to any other property you own.

There is no fee for making the application for a homestead exemption. Again, there is no fee. However, certain companies offer to "process" your application for a fee, notifying homeowners by sending you a letter in the mail. These letters usually will start appearing in your mailbox around the first few weeks of the new year.

The Texas attorney general's office reports that companies in the past have styled their advertising to make it appear that they are an "official" taxing authority, or that their fee must be paid for the homeowner to get the exemption. Other companies will act as "tax processing centers" – when in fact they're doing no such thing.

These companies will often mail a very official-looking

solicitation letter, saying that for a fee (usually \$50 or more) they'll take care of your homestead exemption application. But the fact is that Texas law requires all these companies to make it clear that they are not a governmental agency. Still, many people are confused by these letters and send in the fees.

Go to the Texas comptroller's website at [www.window.state.tx.us](http://www.window.state.tx.us) to download Form 50-114, Application for Residence Homestead Exemption and file it with the appraisal district



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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.

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