

# The Village Gazette



Volume 11, Issue 10  
Village Creek Community Association

October 2014

## Village Creek Yard of the Month

September, 2014 | 12430 Morning Rain

*Thanks to Plants for all Seasons for donating the gift certificates for each month's winner.  
Judging by Laura Domangue, Landscape Committee and Board Member. Photograph by Gordon R. Watson  
Note that the Yard of the Month for last month should have been August and not September.*



# The Village Gazette

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## The Mystery of the Really Dusty Refrigerator Coil

Gordon R. Watson

Some time ago, I bought a device called a Kill-A-Watt meter. It would have cost several hundred dollars ten years ago. Now, it is commonly available for less than \$30. You can plug any 120 volt appliance into it (such as a refrigerator) and determine what its electrical usage is either immediately or over a period of days. You can read Volts, Amps, Watts, Kilowatts, and even Kilowatt hours. To determine what it costs to run the device, you multiply the Kilowatt hours by the electrical cost (\$/kWhr).

I have wondered for a long time if dirty refrigerator coils caused the refrigerator to cost more to run. Further, I have tried this experiment before, but wasn't satisfied that I had actually done a fair job of testing. My latest experiment consisted of running our refrigerator for three days with a fairly dirty condenser coil (see photographs). Then I ran it for roughly the same period after cleaning the coil. My theory was that I would save big bucks after the cleaning.

Well, sadly, I unfortunately have to report that there was zero savings. Zilch. None. Nada. Well, this really surprised me. What do I think? Well, I am not sure how much time has passed since I cleaned the coil last. Maybe a year. Maybe longer. My guess is that the refrigerator manufacturers figure that these coils will never be cleaned, so they make the coils with as much heat transfer area as possible. While the front of the coil gets really dirty, it takes much longer for dirt to completely fill the coil fins in the back. If

you wait long enough, and they get really dirty, the refrigerator will really have to run longer to keep stuff cool. I still think I will try to clean them yearly. They really look bad when dirty. What is the current cost to run our refrigerator at an average of 64 Watts? For one year: \$67. Not bad. Probably cheaper and easier than buying ice at the icehouse.



*Texan Fans have Two Lives*

Sometimes, ceiling fans are still working, but are changed because they no longer fit the décor. If you ever have an extra fan, rather than recycling it, consider installing it on the garage ceiling. Garages tend to get really warm, and a bit of air movement there will greatly enhance your comfort if you need to do some work there. It may seem a bit odd to have a French provincial fan in a garage, but you can always paint it with flat black or army camouflage. Be sure to mount it with a fan-certified electrical box. We don't want it to fall and hurt someone.



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## 2014 Luau was a Great Success!

The annual Luau (Kindergarten Meet and Greet and Back to School Celebration) was held on August 23, 2014. Under the leadership of Susan Giddens, volunteers including Board Candidate, Sharon Gabbert, Jill Haywood, Robin Larue, Sherry Watson, Board Member, Laura Domangue, Jerry Gabbert, and Gordon Watson worked hard to create a tropical atmosphere in our beautiful pool area. Well over one hundred excited children and overwhelmed adults of all ages partied from the wee hours of the morning (10:00 AM) to well past 2:00 PM. A boisterous time was had by all. Rousing events included the Kindergarten Meet and Greet Class of 2027 (gasp, where does the time go?) in the wet and wonderful splash pad area. Throughout the wondrous events, an enthusiastic disc jockey played buoyant music designed to delight everyone (at one time or another). Suspenseful water games and riveting bean bag throw were enjoyed by all, spectators and participants alike. The adults enjoyed the new, cooling, pool area shades and occasional refreshing swim. Savory pizza, sweet and tangy lemonade, and a cooling, icy, treat were served. The magnificent weather cooperated, but a dip in the perfectly tempered pool was deeply appreciated. If you missed this exceptional experience this year, don't miss it next.

Thanks to Laura Domangue, Board Member, for the excellent photographs.



A large advertisement for TexasDirectAuto.com. The top half features a black and white photo of a pug dog's face with wide, staring eyes. To the left of the dog, the text 'SO EASY IT'S' is in a simple, bold font, and 'SPOOKY' is in large, red, dripping letters. Below this, there is a logo for TexasDirectAuto.com featuring a Texas state flag and the website name in a bold, serif font. At the bottom, the text 'SELL US YOUR CAR!' is written in large, red, block letters.

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# The Village Gazette

## Focus on Village Creek People

*Editor's note: "Focus on Village Creek People" recognizes some of the many people who help make Village Creek a success. This month's featured volunteer is Thomas Brogan, Village Creek Home Owner's Association President.*

My name is Thomas Brogan, and I am your current Village Creek HOA President. It has been a real honor to serve all of you as a member of this team for the last four years. As board President, my role is to facilitate our monthly meetings and create an atmosphere of professionalism and transparency where all are welcome to share their thoughts and comments. I also have to sign some official things here and there, but for the most part I am just another member of this team.

I have lived in Village Creek for 8 years with my lovely wife, Lana, and our 5 children. Yes, you heard that right, 5! We absolutely love this neighborhood and want to see it thrive, which is why I ran for that open board position 4 years ago. Since being elected, I have had the privilege of getting to know and work with so many of you, and I feel so lucky to be a part of this community.

My professional background is in business management, financial investment advising and compliance. I am a graduate of the University of Houston and currently work for National Oilwell Varco in corporate trade compliance. In addition, I also sit on the board of Heritage Christian Homeschool which serves about 200 homeschooling families in Northwest Houston and is led by my amazing wife.

Together, Lana and I are driven to support and participate in this community that we live, work and play in. After all, it isn't the grass, the trees or the houses that make the neighborhood; it is the people that live there. We are proud to call Village Creek our home and equally as proud to have you all as neighbors.

I look forward to meeting more of you over the next year and seeing Village Creek continue to flourish. I will leave you with this final thought. This is our community! If you see anything out of place, see something that needs to be addressed, or just have a suggestion for an improvement please log on to the website and let us know. Together we can achieve amazing results!

--Tom

## Landscape Corner

By Gordon R. Watson

The fall months are a good time to consider planting trees and shrubs.

**Fertilizing:** October is the time for fertilizing our Saint Augustine lawns. As a general rule, when you no longer need to mow your lawn every week, it is time to fertilize. This will commonly happen on October 15th +/- one week, according to Doug Welsh's Texas Garden Almanac. Apply a fertilizer with these numbers: 2-1-2 or 1-0-1. Check the bag for area covered. Weeds are best controlled with a healthy turf rather than herbicides; however, if absolutely needed, apply weed killers as directed on the container.

**Bare Spots:** Does your lawn have bare spots or spots with some grass other than Saint Augustine? I am pretty sure that those areas in our lawn which have unhealthy turf are a weakness in our irrigation system. Nothing shows an irrigation system's weakness better than a drought.

**Vegetables:** According to Agrilife Extension, cool season vegetables can be planted in middle October including the following: carrots, Swiss chard, Chinese cabbage, collards, Kohlrabi plants, lettuce, mustard, onion transplant for scallions, onion multipliers, English and snap peas, radish, spinach, and turnips.

**Mulch:** Mulch anytime. There is little bad to be said about a three or four inch layer of mulch.

**Irrigation:** Assuming the heat drops a bit, the Texas Garden Almanac says we can shut off our lawn irrigation system in October with the caution that, if there is no rain, you should turn it back on to water every 3 or 4 weeks. You will need to water your vegetables during their growing season.

**Trimming Oaks:** What is the best time to trim oaks? According to The University of Texas at Austin (<http://www.wildflower.org/expert/show.php?id=2428>), do NOT trim between February and June. The best time is during a cold period from November through January. Reasonable safe times are the hottest months from July through September. These trimming months are based on risks associated with a beetle that carries oak wilt fungus.

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October 23rd at 6:30 p.m.**



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## Landscape Committee Update

The Landscape Committee has given the Board a list of trees that are considered suitable for the public (reserve) areas. The criteria, in general, included trees no taller than 50 to 60 feet, suitable for drought, suitable for our soil, hardy, long-lived, non-toxic, resistant to disease, not too messy, and tough against winds. Most trees were recommended originally by Harris County Extension, the Houston Chronicle, Lady Bird Johnson Wild Flower Center, and other reputable organizations. When approved, this list will be made available to all of Village Creek.

The committee has also provided the Board with a map showing proposed phase one tree locations along Lake Vista and at the Club House. As with all Landscape Committee projects, the intent is to plant, first, in those areas where the new trees will benefit the most people.

From <http://www.intellicast.com/>

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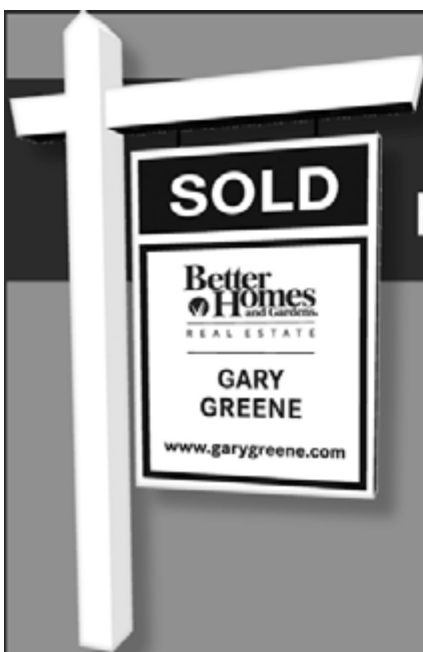


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