

The Village Gazette



Volume 12, Issue 5
Village Creek Community Association

May 2015

Village Creek Yard of the Month

April, 2015 | 12507 Midland Creek

Thank you to Plants for all Seasons for donating the gift certificate for this month's winner. Thanks to Laura Domangue, Board Member and Member of the Village Creek Community Landscape Committee, for the difficult job of judging the Yard of the Month.



The Village Gazette

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HOA MGMT

Spectrum Association Management281-343-9178
Janna Patrick.....jpatrick@spectrumam.com
Fax number.....281-752-5482
After Hours Emergency Numbers281-343-9178
.....or 877-269-9092

Office Address – 16690 Park Row Houston TX 77084

Payment Address – PO Box 1118 Commerce GA 30529 (or
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Village Creek Community Association Website

www.spectrumam.com (register to access)

(must have account number and valid email address to register,
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NEWSLETTER

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RECOGNIZING

Village Creek Volunteers

Editor's note: This is a continuing column highlighting Village Creek Volunteers. This month's Volunteer is Sharon Gabbert.

Hi! My name is Sharon Gabbert. I have lived in Village Creek for nine years along with my husband, Jerry, and two children. We moved here from New Orleans after Katrina destroyed everything in our home. We looked and looked and then decided Village Creek is where we would start over. I can distinctly remember being so excited, after finally moving in on a Friday in March of 2006, to attend the Easter



event the next day. I brought my two year old daughter to the Easter egg hunt to see the Easter Bunny. At that point, I knew we had moved into a great neighborhood for our children.

I was born in New Orleans and raised in Spring/Klein area attending Klein Forest High School and was elected as the very first Eagle Mascot in the 1982/83 school year. I am a graduate of Texas A&M with a degree in Food Science. I have traveled to Europe and lived in Paris, France for two years.

My professional background includes managing corporate food services at ExxonMobil – Houston, managing corporate catering for Chevron - New Orleans, and managing food safety for Chevron – Houston. I have years of experience managing people, analyzing monthly profit and loss statements, maintaining food quality profitability, building teams, and working within budgets. Currently, I am in executive sales with a leading fragrance manufacturer in which I have successfully built solid relationships and sales revenue for the company.

I volunteer on the Village Creek Social Committee, Landscape Committee and Architectural Committee. I'm passionate about one of my favorite events, "Cookies with Santa," mainly because my entire family joins in the fun, and we get to meet lots of Village Creek families. Additionally, I volunteer as time allows at Prince of Peace Catholic Church and Willow Creek Elementary.

So, why do I volunteer? I understand how important it is to have people who make things happen. I decided long ago to devote much of my time to the place closest to home: Village Creek. It is important to have activities and amenities that enhance our neighborhood so as to maintain our home values and to keep Village Creek attractive for new families well into the future. I served on the Village Creek Board for three years. Those years were truly rewarding. I was part of a team that approved getting tables and shades installed at the pool while enhancing our common grounds by maintaining our benches, arbors and trash cans. We brought in new play equipment, play area swings, doggie waste depots around the lake, and repaired sidewalks. Most importantly, we began to beautify our landscaping (in over 100 locations) which was in such need. I look back on those years as a board member as such a great experience seeing all the positive things we accomplished and set in motion.

Constable Safety Tip of the Month

This tip is for all who travel:

1. Contact Precinct 4 and notify us for a Vacation Watch. We will drop by occasionally to check things out.
2. Stop mail and have all deliveries cancelled, or ask a neighbor to collect them for you.
3. Carry a small amount of cash. Try to use traveler's checks or other means of payment.
4. Have your vehicle serviced at least 2 days before you leave.
5. If you plan on driving, tell someone your route. Stick with that route or advise the person you have told that you have changed it.
6. Remember to double-check yourself always. Keep focused and alert.

*Dep. Joseph (J.T.) Cormier
Unit 84816
Harris County Constable, Pct. 4
Patrol Division - West District
281.370.9106 (Lakewood Office)
281.374.0732 (Fax)
281.376.3472 (24 Hr. Dispatch)
Joseph.Cormier@cd4.hctx.net*

SMOKE DETECTORS

Hints that a smoke detector is beginning to fail are when the detector either doesn't work with testing or it goes off randomly even with a new battery. Even if smoke detectors still work fine, most detector manufacturers recommend replacement at 10 years. Did you know that one manufacturer makes a smoke detector with a ten-year battery? I guess you replace the whole thing after ten years. That seems like a good idea.

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DROWNING IS PREVENTABLE

Landscape Corner

The Landscape Committee has given the Board projects to improve fifteen areas of Village Creek and to add fifteen new trees at the lake to provide shade along the upper path and to improve the area around the bridge. We hope these can be approved soon. We also have submitted a proposal to prune Wax Myrtles to regain control over their gangly appearance. Finally, we are awaiting direction from the Board on a proposal (recently based on a resident's suggestion) to remove or move those Crape Myrtles which have been problematic at the pool area. If any residents have suggestions for improvements anywhere in the Public Areas of Village Creek, please send them to the Landscape Committee via our management company: Spectrum.

Landscape Committee: Sherry Watson, Chairperson, Laura Domangue, Board Interface, Sharon Gabbert, and Gordon Watson

This month, remove the dead Crape myrtle flowers to force more flower growth.

Fruit trees need lots of water now.

Vegetables: Heat tolerant vegetables can be planted now. Among these are sweet potatoes, pumpkins, squashes, and southern peas. Plant sunflowers. They are so fast growing. Kids love the big ones. Plant them at least 12" apart.

Perennials & Annuals: Fertilize this month and keep 4" of mulch around the drip line (but keep mulch away from the trunk). Upper horizontal root-tops should almost show.

We have noticed that many of you have removed your tree volcanoes (the mulch piled high on many of our trees). We are working toward that end in our yard as well, and the gardener for the public area will be doing to same. Remember that you should be able to see the "flare" of the trunk as it enters the ground. Avoiding volcanoes will be a hard sell, as they are so common as to be considered OK, though all experts advise against them. For those of you who like the appearance, well, we will just keep preaching!

If you haven't applied your spring lawn fertilizer, apply one pound of nitrogen per 1000 square feet soon. What does Texas A&M say about buying fertilizers? Check out their web site on this subject.

From: <http://aggieturf.tamu.edu/answers4you/fertilization.html>

Phosphorous and Potassium are also important and it would be very helpful to buy a fertilizer with some of these nutrients included, but you can use a product like ammonium sulfate (21 - 0 - 0) or urea (46 - 0 - 0) for most of your fertilizer needs unless a soil test report shows that the other two nutrients are low in your soil. In many Texas soils, phosphorous is already at high levels and adding more from your fertilizer could actually cause problems."

Worth repeating from "Texas Gardener Magazine:"

"Older trees and shrubs need not be fertilized at all. The goal of fertilizing is to speed a young plant along toward an acceptable size, so additional feeding is not needed, and, in fact, can result in more pruning work."

We can expect the average temperature in May to be about 85, so we are definitely into the watering season. The Houston area has had a very



good rainy season so far, but make sure you make up for those weeks when it doesn't rain. The best way to determine if your lawn needs water is to step on a sharp shovel to see how far it is easy to insert. If you cannot shove it 4" to 6" easily, the lawn probably needs water. Remember that our lawns, during summer, require between 0.75 and 1 inch per week. This must come from either rain or irrigation. Got a continuously wet spot in your yard? It is likely an irrigation valve leaking internally...far away from the actual soggy area.

Village Creek Plant of the Month: We will try to provide you with ideas for various plants and trees which do well in Village Creek. If you have such a favorite, and want to share, send a description to Watson.g@sbcglobal.net. If possible, include a photograph of yours. This month's Plant of the Month is Lord Byron Viburnum. This is a fairly new hybrid that has grown well in Village Creek. It is about four years old (or so), and is about 8' high by 8' wide. We finally pruned it a bit this spring to remove crossing and rubbing branches. It has small non-fragrant flowers in 3.5" clusters from March through May. The foliage is considered neat and tidy. It grows in full sun to partial shade. It doesn't appear to attract any significant insects. It is deciduous. Check out the picture of its spring blooms!

Until next time, Happy Gardening!

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Village Creek

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

This month's recipe is from Pillsbury.com. Please go to their web site to confirm all is well with this copy/paste version.

Breakfast Bake (Facebook Recipe)

Comfort Breakfast Bake (recipe from Rocking Lion)

- 10 eggs
- 1/2 cup milk
- 16 oz refrigerated breakfast biscuits (I used the Pillsbury flakey kind) ***DO NOT COOK FIRST!!!***
- 4 scallions (green onions, spring onions, whatever you prefer to call them)
- 1 cup shredded extra sharp cheddar cheese
- If you're into the meats – cooked center cut bacon or cooked sausage

1. Mix your eggs and milk in a large bowl. Cut each biscuit (I'm all about scissors in the kitchen) into fours and add it to the bowl. I like to do this before I cook the bacon or cut up the scallions – give



the biscuits some time to really soak in the eggs.

2. Cut up your scallions, shred your cheese, cook and break up your bacon (or sausage). Add everything to the bowl.

3. Mix it all up and pour into your pan. Bake at 350 for 25-30 minutes... closer to 30 so it isn't runny.

BLC Hint/Tip *** - If you want to make this the night before, leave it in the mixing bowl covered with saran and put in fridge overnight. The next morn, give it a good stir and bake as directed!!

YUMMY!! Serve with Fresh Fruit Salad and lotsa coffee/tea and assorted juices.

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TRAVEL WITH CAHL

By *Cahl Rasmussen*

If you have never been to Hawaii then this article should be helpful to you in making your first trip there. First of all you will need to decide on which island or islands you want to visit. The five major islands are Kauai, Oahu, Lanai, Maui, and Hawaii. All offer different types of vacations. Since there is so much information to give, I will be continuing this article next month.

First, getting to Hawaii from Houston. You can fly nonstop to Hawaii from Houston-Honolulu. United has a flight once a day and all other flights to Hawaii will require you make a connection somewhere. So if your plan is just to fly to Honolulu then the nonstop flight is the way to go. It's eight hours long, but just think of where you are going and the time will fly by. When landing at Honolulu airport you will be surprised to see that outside of the boarding areas of the airport the majority is in the open air. No, you won't be greeted by Hawaiian girls in grass skirts with leis, but you can buy one if you are so inclined. Just remember to take it off each night and put it in the refrigerator. It will stay fresher longer that way.

If you decide to go to another island you will have to connect. Now, there are two ways to make a connection. First fly nonstop to Honolulu and then connect on to Hawaiian Airlines to the other islands. Hawaiian Airlines flies B-717's to all of the islands, and the longest flight from Honolulu to the other islands is only 40 minutes. Second, you can fly to L.A. or San Francisco on United and then connect to flights to Kauai, Maui, or Hawaii. If you are going to Lanai then you will need to connect in Honolulu. Now I only listed United, but American and Delta also fly to Hawaii, but you will have to connect as well either in Dallas, Atlanta, Salt Lake, or L.A. . If you fly Alaska Airlines you will connect in Seattle. So I just listed United since it would be the easiest way out of Houston.

Kauai is a nature lover's vacation with hiking, biking, zip lining and a lot of other outdoor activities. There is not a lot of night life there but if you are into nature and want to see the "Grand Canyon of the Pacific", or just relaxing is your thing then Kauai is for you. Just an FYI, be careful of the chickens in Kauai. They roam wild and are everywhere!

Oahu is where Honolulu is located. Honolulu is a very large city in the middle of the Pacific. They have everything good and bad in a large city. There is plenty of night life and shopping, of course. If this is your first time to Hawaii I would recommend a stop there of about 3 days. A must see is the Arizona/Missouri Memorial at Pearl Harbor. It is where WWII started and ended. The Arizona memorial is an absolute must see. The Missouri which is moored directly behind the Arizona memorial is where the Japanese surrendered to the Allies. So you will see where the war started and ended in Pearl Harbor. Also on Oahu is the Polynesian Cultural Center. There are all of the countries that make up the Polynesian islands there and you see how they live and work. It is very interactive, and we enjoyed that very much. It's about 25 miles out of Honolulu, but it is well worth the trip. If you go to Oahu during the winter months take a drive to the north shore to see the "Pipeline". It is surfing at its best. Thirty foot waves are not uncommon, and you can see professional surfers try and tame these waves.

Next Month... Lanai, Maui, and the Big Island of Hawaii.

The Broken Window Riddle

Gordon R. Watson

I recently read that someone had their window broken with a gunshot. Shortly thereafter, I noticed that a nail was stuck in one of our backyard screens (see picture). This made me think that many "windows shot out with a bullet" are sometimes windows shot out by rocks and nails propelled by a lawn mower. Several years ago, I worked in an office not far from the tempered plate-glass windows at the front of our building. One day, I heard a large bang. Gunshot? No. Our landscape contractor running a lawnmower had thrown a rock. It hit the glass and it fractured it completely.

According to the CPSC, each year, about 25,300 people are injured and 75 people are killed on or near riding lawnmowers and garden tractors. One out of every five deaths involves a child. CPSC estimates that most of the deaths to children occurred when a child was in the path of a moving mower.

Obviously, we all should be very careful when we mow. No children should be anywhere near the mower. We should all wear heavy shoes which will protect our feet from flying rocks and nails. Ideally, we would wear safety glasses as well. You will notice that Earthcare, our primary landscape contractor, has trained lawn mower drivers to stop and let walkers get by before they continue with their mowing. Here is a partial list of rules published by the Consumer Product Safety Commission. See their web site for more information.

Dress appropriately for the task. Wear long pants, long-sleeved shirts (to avoid injuries from thrown objects like rocks or sticks), close-fitting clothes and no jewelry (to avoid getting anything caught in moving parts), sturdy shoes with slip-resistant rubber soles, eye protection, heavy gloves (protects hands when changing, sharpening, or cleaning blades), and hearing protection such as ear plugs when using motor-driven equipment.

Before starting up machinery, remove objects from the area in which you are working that can cause injury or damage equipment, such as sticks, glass, metal, wire, and stones.

Make sure that safety devices on the equipment are in place and functioning properly before starting work.

Never let a child ride or operate a garden tractor or riding mower, even if the child is supervised. Teenagers should only be allowed to operate outdoor power equipment if they possess adequate strength and maturity to do so safely. They also should be supervised by a responsible adult.

Keep children indoors and supervised at all times when any outdoor power equipment is being used. Young children move quickly and are attracted to mowers and mowing activity, especially if they have been given rides on mowers before.

Never assume children will remain where you last saw them.

(Continued on Page 9)

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The April 28th Easter Event was a Great Success!

By Lisa Rawles, Social Committee Chairperson

The Easter Event was a great success. We had approximately 200 - 250 parents and children attend on a beautiful Saturday. I would like to thank all of the volunteers that gave of their time to help to get the event set up as well as cleaned up afterward. Their help was greatly appreciated.

Sharon Gabbert

Tracy McCoy

Sharen Dillard (Our Awesome

Paris Gabbert

Jennifer Adams

Easter Bunny!!!)

Caren Seal

Jimmy Rawles

We also received a lot of feedback from the residents in appreciation for holding this event, parents and children alike had a wonderful time. Thanks to all who attended.

I look forward to our next community event.



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WINDOWS (Continued from Page 7)

Be alert and turn off the mower if children enter the mowing area. Use extra care when backing up or when approaching corners, shrubs, and trees.

Unplug electric tools and disconnect spark plug wires on gasoline-powered tools before making adjustments or clearing jams near moving parts.

Be sure power tools are turned off and made inoperable if they must be left unattended to prevent use by children.

Handle gas carefully. Never fill gasoline tanks while machinery is on or when equipment is still hot. Wipe up spills. Store gas in an approved container away from the house. Finally, never smoke or use any type of flame around gasoline or any gasoline-powered equipment.

Never work with electric power tools in wet or damp conditions. For protection against electrocution, use a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI). GFCIs come in several models, including a portable plug-in type.

Be sure that extension cords are in good condition, are rated for outdoor use, and are the proper gauge for the electrical current capacity of the tool.

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The Strange Case of the Slightly Open Door

A Mystery by Gordon R. Watson

A few weeks ago, my son and daughter-in-law mentioned that their oven door was not shutting properly. After examination, it was apparent that it had a 1/2" (or so) gap at the top. Further, the door was not parallel to the floor when opened. In other words, it sagged a bit. I had no idea how oven doors work, so I went on line to YouTube to see if anyone had done a video on such problems. I used search words such as oven door repair, Whirlpool, etc. I found a very good video for the same make as theirs. In essence, it said that such a problem can be fixed by replacing both oven door springs. Then I Googled the model for springs. An on line parts store had them for \$80 for two, and I relayed this price to my son. Since I had never worked on an oven door before, I sort of hoped my son would advise me that they were going to buy a new oven. No such luck. They said to go ahead with the project. I ordered the springs, and they arrived within a few days. Nice service, though I wasn't in a hurry. My son's family happened to be on vacation for a week or so, so I had their house to myself. I was very worried about breaking the front glass, and happened to know that a replacement glass would cost over \$200. I imagined that my "profit" (\$0.00) for this work might go negative. At that point, I asked myself why I got myself into these sort of projects. From the YouTube video, I understand

that oven doors in the past could be removed by just pulling up on them (sort of like removing the back from some living room chairs). These days, it is almost as simple (at least with this model) except that you need to slide two temporary pins into the hinge mechanism to allow you to release the spring pressure. If you didn't know this trick (for this model, anyway), you would never be able to remove the door. The oven door really isn't attached to the oven itself except by the forces of the spring.

I put a protective cloth on their kitchen island and proceeded to take the door apart. It turned out that the door had four separate glass pieces to insulate the high oven heat from the cool door front. It came apart quite easily, and the hinges were easy to remove. Dang! The old hinges looked pretty much the same as the new ones. They weren't broken, bent, or mutilated. I figured that I had probably wasted \$80. It even crossed my mind that I might as well package them back up and send the new ones back for a refund. Still, I figured, there is a slight chance that the new springs are somehow superior. I cleaned all of the glass and put it back together. Knowing there was hardly any chance it would work, I removed the temporary pins from the new hinges. Voila! It closed tightly! Amazing! Sometimes the home handyman gods are with you.



TIME TO START THINKING ABOUT SUMMER!

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