



The Official Newsletter of the Plum Creek Homeowner Association April 2016 Volume 7, Issue 4



Front Porch Days is almost here. Front Porch Days is a huge gathering each year in May and includes music, a pie baking contest, petting

zoo, pony rides, inflatables, barrel train, Skate Team demo, local organizations, vendors, crafts, food, and more.

All of the entertainment and many of the events are provided by Plum Creek HOA. Money is needed to purchase food, drinks, and products from vendors and community groups or to participate in the golf tournament, 10K, 5K, 3K, or 1K run.

Schedule of Timed Events Saturday, May 14th:

- 7AM: Front Porch Days Races 10K, 5K 3K, & 1K Run, Negley Elem.
- Register online @ www.tinyurl.com/2016FPDRaces
- 9AM: Plum Creek Garden Tour, starts at Haupt Park
- 12 PM Golf Tournament, PC Golf Course. Register online www.frontporchdays.com Sunday, May 15th:
- Front Porch Days Carnival from Noon to 3PM
 - Plum Creek Music Festival from Noon to 3PM
 - Pie Baking Contest @ 11:45 am, PC Community Center
 - Washer Tournament- registration closes at 1 PM
 And More!
- 4PM to 6PM: Family Fishing Day at the Lake

Visit www.frontporchdays.com for details and event updates!

GARDEN TOUR AND YARD OF THE MONTH

It is that time again – Spring! Time to start sprucing up lawns and gardens.

While you are working on that fabulous garden, please consider showing off all your hard work by volunteering to be one of the gardens featured on our annual "Garden Tour". This year's Garden Tour is scheduled for May 14th from 9:00 am to 11:00 am. Contact Sandy Gonzalez at landscape@plumcreektxhoa.com if you would like to have your garden featured, or if you want more details.

Yard of the Month judging begins April 1st. You can nominate any garden in our neighborhood, including your own. Nominations for the first round of judging are due by March 31st, but you can continue submitting nominations up until May 31st. The Landscape Committee will be judging yards for April, May, and June using the following criteria: curb appeal; overall design; weed control; pruned & healthy trees and shrubs; and, clean & neat edgings and borders. Judging will be done the first week of the month, and signs will be placed in the winning yards. Gift cards will also be awarded.

If you have tried unsuccessfully to grow grass on your lawn – and you want something other than mulch as an option – how about "groundcovers?" Soil preparation is one of the keys to success. Clear the soil of any weeds or grass [being careful not to damage existing tree roots], and amend with compost and organic matter [at least 6 inches of well-amended soil to help establish a healthy root system]. Plan on buying about four plants per square foot if you are using 4-inch pots. Some groundcovers can be mowed, and some might need to be trimmed back occasionally. Some weeding will be necessary until the groundcover grows thick enough to crowd out the weeds. Some of the groundcovers that do well in our area include: dwarf

(Continued on Page 3)

Committee Contacts

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Important Numbers

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Article Submission

.....announcements@plumcreektxhoa.com

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View the current issue of the Plum Creek Post on the 1st day of each month at www.PEELinc.com



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(Continued from Cover)

monkey grass, horseherb, leadwort plumbago, oregano, periwinkle, pigeonberry, sedges, frogfruit, silver ponyfoot, and mint. Keep in mind sun and water requirements for these before you plant. Oregano, for example, does best in full sun, while pigeonberry prefers shade.

If you have questions or comments, contact Sandy Gonzalez at landscape@plumcreektxhoa.com. Thank you for making our neighborhood wonderful.



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Pool Season Begins April 29, 2016 Get your Rec Tags and Pool Keys

Both pools will open beginning April 29th.

Lifeguards will then be on duty every day starting May 28th through Labor Day weekend.

Hot Dogs with the YMCA lifeguards: Monday, May 30th from noon until they run out!

New residents can obtain the ADT pool key at the HOA Office at 4100 Everett Ste. 150. Residents, 11 years or older, must have a Rec Tag (recreational ID) to use the pools, fish at the lake, play at the basketball courts or go to the dog park. Rec tags are issued to any homeowner, tenant, or resident family member.

Tenants are charged \$25 for each new Rec Tag. At the end of the lease period, tenants are encouraged and expected to return Rec Tags to the HOA Office. When a Rec Tag is returned, \$15 of the original \$25 per Rec Tag is reimbursed. For example, a family of 4 (all 11 and older) renting a home in Plum Creek must purchase 4 Rec Tags at an original cost of \$100. At the end of the lease period with the return of all 4 Rec Tags to the HOA Office, the family is reimbursed \$60. This helps improve security at the pools and offset the cost of continual Rec Tag issuance to rental addresses due to turnover.

(Continued on Page 6)

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JOIN US FOR GOLF AND A GREAT CAUSE!

OLIN'S HOPE

CLASSIC

DATE: Wednesday, April 27th 11:00 am Registration - 1:00 pm Start LOCATION: Flintrock Falls Country Club FORMAT: 4-person scramble COST: \$165 per golfer* *Includes lunch, dinner and lots of swag

> Register online at: www.colinshope.org

Questions about the event? Contact Kim Flasch or Wendi Baldwin (512) 750-8161 or (512) 657-3067 info@colinshope.org



Your Commitment as a Homeowner

The association is glad you've found a home in our community. We presume it has all the amenities you were seeking and you're settling in nicely. This is the time the association likes to remind new homeowners that common-interest communities like ours create some unique obligations to the community and to other residents within it:

Read and comply with the community's governing documents. You should have received a package of documents well before you closed on your home. If you didn't, check the association's website or ask the title company for a copy. Make sure you understand what's included in them, particularly the rules about pets, parking, your home's exterior maintenance, architectural guidelines and when you must pay association assessments.

Provide current contact information to association board members or the manager. Add current contact information to the Plum Creek resident website in case of emergency: www.plumcreektxhoa.com. Make sure that the management company has your current mailing address to receive notices of violation, account statements and annual meeting notices.

Maintain your property according to established standards. The community's appearance can add value to all the homes within it—including yours—so it's important to keep landscaping neatly groomed and your home's exterior well-maintained.

Treat association leaders honestly and respectfully. Board members are homeowners—just like you—who have volunteered to give their time and energy freely to govern the community. While you should share your concerns about the community with them, do so in a way that's constructive, informative and helpful.

Attend board meetings and vote in community elections. Board meetings are open to all who wish to sit in and keep up with issues under discussion. The association is a democracy, and your voice and vote can affect important issues.

Pay association assessments and other obligations on time. Your regular assessments pay for common-area maintenance, amenities and other shared expenses. If you don't pay on time, the burden for paying your portion of the association's bills, like water, electricity and trash removal, falls on your neighbors. Contact a board member or the manager, if you're having problems, to discuss alternative payment arrangements.

Ensure that tenants, visiting relatives and friends adhere to all rules and regulations. If you are leasing your home, you're liable for maintaining the condition of the home and for the behavior of those who live in it. Make sure to screen tenants thoroughly, and familiarize them with the community's rules.

Source: Community Associations Institute www.caionline.org



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Pediatric Dentists

The Academy of Pediatric Dentistry recommends children see a dentist when they get their first tooth & no later than 1 year of age! Our Board Certified Pediatric dentists see children from 6 months to 18 years old!

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www.kidsdentalsmiles.com

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If lost, homeowners and tenants can purchase a replacement Rec Tag for \$10.

One pool key is issued per address. If lost or a second one is needed, they are available for \$25.00 at the HOA Office. The office only accepts checks or money orders. Also, you need to call the office, at 512-262-1140, if you receive a key that is not working properly.

Please remember to have your pool key and Rec Tag available when entering the pool. If you do not have both cards when attending the pools, you may be asked to leave.

Have a fun filled and safe summer!



Safety & Neighborhood Watch Committee



Office James Plant, Kyle PD Community Liaison, visited our Safety & Monitoring Committee meeting in February. He had several suggestions for Plum Creek residents to get involved and help our police department tackle recent criminal activities that have sprung up throughout the city of Kyle since the first

of the year.

Among them was a reminder to take inventory of your personal belongings. Record serial numbers of your electronics, computers, etc. If they are reported stolen, they are entered into a national registry and can be used as evidence if someone is caught with them. Officer Plant really stressed the importance of this. Keep this record in a secure place such as a bank deposit box where it can be accessed by other family members if needed. If your mailbox is compromised, you should also contact the U.S. Postal Service.

Office Plant thanked the Plum Creek Neighborhood Watch organization for their increased reports to the Kyle Police Department of suspicious activities. All residents are responsible to each other. "A chain is only as strong as its weakest link!" Please report "all suspicious persons and activities immediately to our police department" by using the following websites: www. cityofkyle.com/police/traffic-complaint-form, www.cityofkyle. com/police/narcotics-information-tips, or www.nextdoor.com. All reports are read and appreciated. We enjoy a very good relationship with City of Kyle law enforcement.

The Safety & Neighborhood Watch committee will meet on Thursday, April 21, at 6:30 pm at the Haupt Community Room. Current projects include increased services from our private security company, Statewide Patrol at 512-848-4746, a moveable radar speed sign for Plum Creek, and other traffic control devices throughout our community. To contact the Block Captain for your street, email safety@plumcreektxhoa.com. Mention your street address and you will receive the name and phone number for that community volunteer.

There are currently 23 Block Captains. More are needed. To volunteer, consider attending a regular monthly meeting on the third Thursday of each month or contact the HOA office.

Misconceptions about Property Values

Like almost every community in the country, our association is feeling the pinch in the housing market. We'd like to dispel a few common misconceptions about what contributes to the rise and fall of property values.

Assessments are too high

False. Actually, assessments have nothing to do with property values, and high assessments will not turn off potential buyers—if they're educated buyers. Our assessment may be higher—or lower—than a neighboring community depending on many factors. Is our property older? What utilities are included in the assessment or do we have more homes? What amenities are maintained?

The more important question is what value are residents getting for their money? To answer that question, the association provides a detailed budget and makes it available to potential buyers. A low assessment should be as much a red flag as one that appears too high. Assessments should reflect the maintenance of common area property, including capital reserve addition for future maintenance expenses.

We have too many renters

False. Lenders are required to charge higher rates for loans or deny a loan for homes in associations with renter-owner ratios that exceed a certain percentage. But that doesn't mean renters affect property values. Our association board sees renters as owners-in-training who aren't ready to purchase their homes yet. In fact, renters have all the same rights to enjoy our community as owners—except voting or holding office. We welcome renters, encourage them to participate in association activities and hope they will eventually buy a home in our community.

Community living is carefree

True and false. Association living is maintenance free—leaving maintenance decisions to a board—but not entirely carefree. Residents need to care about their community and recognize that common-interest living involves service and commitment. Good maintenance increases curb appeal which helps sales and may help property values. However, without committed residents to serve on the board and in other positions, maintenance and curb appeal are quick to suffer.

Architectural and aesthetic uniformity are necessary to protect property values

False. The board's objective is to maintain standards rather than ensure uniformity. Yes, some uniformity is good, but the board believes there is room for individual expression—as long as aesthetic standards are met.

Property values are based largely on comparative values of homes throughout our community. However, we can ensure that our values are at peak levels by assessing adequate fees to maintain our community now and for years to come, by ensuring all residents are involved and engaged in the community and care about the association and by maintaining high aesthetic appeal.

Source: Community Associations Institute www.caionline.org

PLUM CREEK POST



We Need Gardens to Feature in our Annual Garden Tour!

The PC Landscape Committee will host a Garden Tour on Saturday, May 14, 2016, as part of Front Porch Days. Every year, people both in and out of our neighborhood enjoy walking through these gardens and discovering new ideas for landscaping, as well as new plant combinations. We are looking for five to seven gardens to showcase, especially in the new section of Plum Creek. We plan to begin the tour at 9:00 am, ending about 11:00 am. If you would like to share your garden with your neighbors, or you know of someone with a beautiful garden, please contact us as landscape@plumcreektxhoa.com. We are looking forward to this year's tour!

Make A Clean Sweep With the Community-Wide Garage Sale May 7th

Start cleaning out those closets and get ready for Plum Creek's Spring Community Garage Sale to be held

Saturday, May 7th, from dawn until dusk. So, while you are doing your spring cleaning and you run across things you no longer want—hold onto them for a bit longer and sell them at Plum Creek's Community Garage Sale! Remember-- one neighbor's trash is another's treasure! All homeowners may participate and should display their items on their front lawn for better crowd control. Our goal is to encourage visitors to park on the streets and not in alleys. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated and will help us to have a safe and pleasant garage sale experience. Also, kids are welcome to earn money by selling baked goods or drinks! So, start saving bags for your customers to take home their treasures in and newspapers for wrapping breakable items.

SIP AND SEW.....CROCHET CLASS

Full fill your New Year's resolution and learn to crochet. Ursula Richards will share her expertise and teach a class, "Learn to Crochet". She will bring several wonderful item to show and teach! The room will be filled with individuals knitting, punch needle, rug hooking, needle pointyou may decide that you want additional classes. Our class will be at the HOA Office, 4100 Everett, Suite 150.

The second Tuesday of the month, April 12th, 6:30-8:30 pm. If you plan to attend the class, please contact Iris Sandle – 512-405-0054 or Sandra Sigler 405-0187. We would like a head count to bring the needed supplies. Come, Sip and Sew

Please Trim Those Trees!

Due to safety concerns, the HOA is evaluating street and yard trees that encroach on the streets and sidewalks. Since these trees belong to the homeowner, we want to provide residents with the opportunity to prune their own trees. The HOA requests that you prune your trees up 7 feet and/or away from the sidewalk and 14 feet over the streets to prevent to prevent damage to emergency vehicles.

For information and diagrams about pruning, visit www. treesaregood.com, www.ci.austin.tx.us/growgreen/pruning.htm, or www.plumcreektxhoa.com.

So, get out there with your clippers and let's clear those sidewalks and streets!



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PLUM CREEK POST

Irrigation Leaks

Plum Creek has many acres of common area property that needs to be watered regularly to keep it looking great. Due to the drought conditions, the commercial irrigation system has to run on a certain schedule. The timers are used to set the irrigations systems to run automatically to reduce the manual labor involved of having a person activate each zone. At times, leaks occur or zones do not turn off as scheduled. There are several reasons why irrigations systems to fail and cause unwanted run off. Here are a few reasons:

- The timers that run the zone are electrical. The timers fail to activate properly and need to be reset. Several causes are excessive heat, ground shifts, and age of the timer. These are replaced on an as needed basis.
- The drought conditions cause the ground to shift and pull. This can cause an underground pvc line to break. We call these lateral line breaks. These are repaired when they are reported.
- A sprinkler head is broken off. Basically, it boils downs to: being run over or water pressure unscrews the sprinkler head.

The irrigation company checks the sprinklers and zones monthly in phases. Since many hazards can happen to an irrigation system in a 30 day period like kids with sticks, runners, bicyclists, lawn mowers, golf carts, cars, it is hard to know exactly what is going on in each zone on a daily basis. We need help from owners and residents to keep us informed about irrigation leaks.

Report irrigation leaks to the Plum Creek HOA office at 512-262-1140 or to plumcreekmanager@goodwintx.com. If you call the City of Kyle about irrigation leaks, they will issue a fine to Plum Creek HOA which comes out of your dues.



Honey Bee Swarms

Honey bees are beneficial by producing honey, wax and pollinating crops. With warmer temperatures, honey bees are becoming more active and may soon begin to swarm.

Honey bee swarms look like a large clump of bees clustered together. The swarm may stay in a location from a few hours to a week. Swarms are produced as a part of the colony's reproductive process. An established colony produces a new queen, causing the old queen and half the worker bees to leave the colony to search for a new nesting location. Swarming honey bees are usually gentle and unlikely to sting. Swarms are not protecting their home, food or offspring. Scout bees are sent out from the swarm to search for a nesting site. Colonies produce comb and honey and are defensive. Bees from a colony are more likely to sting as they are guarding their home, food and offspring.

Sometimes, honey bee colonies can be found in wall voids, chimneys, attics or sheds. If bees are in a wall void, DO NOT block their entrance; this makes them search for another way to exit and could lead bees into the structure. To keep bees from entering a home, seal any holes found in walls where pipes enter the home, cracks in window framing, knotholes, weep holes, or cracks between wood and brick junctures.

While many enjoy having honey bees around, some people are severely allergic to their venom. This, along with other situations, such as bees located near sensitive areas (such as playgrounds) may require removal or even extermination of the bees.

People should NOT try remove or exterminate bees on their own. Beekeepers and pest control companies have equipment to carry out these jobs in a safe manner. The city or county does not provide bee removal services.

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600. Check out my blog at www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com

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