



Mother Nature splashed the trees with water, paused, and froze the liquid to make a crystal tree. An accident of nature? It was too elegantly beautiful to be anything other than an artist working with her tools.

The Editor

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

IN CASE OF ANY EMERGENCY DIAL 911

SCHOOLS

Tomball ISD 281-357-3100, www.tomballisd.net
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

SERVICES

Village Creek Management Company.....spectrumam.com
..... 832-500-2221
Village Creek Website Unrelated to the Board.....
..... VillageCreekCommunity.com
Harris County Animal Control 281-999-3191
Lost/Found Pets Nextdoor.com
Harris County Veterinary Public Health..... 281-999-3191
Municipal District Services (24 hrs) 281-290-6503
... For water leaks, water outages, water quality, or sewer
leaks or stoppage.
Street lights out & power outages
..... www.centerpointenergy.com/outage
Harris County traffic signal outages..... 713-881-3210
Best Trash..... 281-313-2378
customerservice@besttrash.com, and www.best-trash.com

Trash and Bulk Waste on both Tuesdays and Fridays
Recycle on Tuesdays only. Recycle only plastics (1-7), steel
and aluminum cans, cardboard, paper, plastic or paper
grocery bags, and glass (any color).

Digging? Two days prior to ANY digging in your yard, call
811 or use <http://www.lonestar811.com/>

NEWSLETTER

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... villagecreek@peelinc.com or Watson.g@sbcglobal.net

Lakewood United Methodist Church Garage Sale @ 11330 Louetta Road

The United Methodist Women will hold their annual garage sale on Saturday, February 11th from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. Great deals on furniture, electronics, clothing, toys, sporting goods and much more! Proceeds from this garage sale will support local missions such as Boys and Girls Country, Habitat for Humanity Northwest Harris County, Northwest Assistance Ministries, TOMAGWA, and Star of Hope among others. For more info, please email umwgaragesale@gmail.com.

ANNUAL UMW GARAGE SALE

Lakewood United Methodist Church
11330 Louetta Road

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11TH
8:00 AM – 2:00 PM

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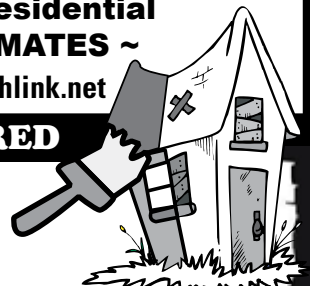
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Best Trash is our New Trash/Recycle Company

This is an abbreviated summary of Best Trash services. Go to their web site for more details at www.best-trash.com. We also will publish a summary on the second page of The Voice.

1. They take any plastic 1-7, aluminum or tin/steel cans, clean paper, cardboard, all colors of glass, and plastic or paper grocery bags (put plastic bags in one bag to prevent blowing around). Nothing else should be recycled. Remove food and all caps. Excess recycle may be set adjacent to the Best Trash bin. Extra bins may be used, but must be clearly marked as recycled materials. Hint: Put as much distance as possible between your trash and your recycling so the men don't need to guess which is which.

2. Trash days are Tuesday and Friday. Recycle is ONLY on Tuesday.

3. Bundle or bag yard trimmings to not exceed 40 pounds. No limbs bigger than 4" and cut to 4 feet long. Tie together or bag (no loose yard debris).

4. Will take most appliances such dryers, washers, water heaters, refrigerators and furniture on either day. Keep in mind that the appliance or furniture must be light enough to be lifted by two men. Freon containing appliances such as refrigerators must be tagged by certified refrigeration mechanic showing Freon was recycled.

Christmas Decorating Winners



As usual, Village Creek, during December, was a winter wonderland of festive lights, Santas, manger scenes, elves, and snowmen. The air was filled with the fragrance of spiced

apple cider, chocolate, and fresh-baked cookies. The homes were covered with marvelous twinkling lights. The sounds of music resounded over the lake and through the forest. Hayrides slid through the neighborhood.

Best Overall: 12523 Midland Creek Drive

Most Traditional: First Place: 2622 Midland Creek Drive

Runner up: 12723 Briar Harbor Drive

Most Festive: First Place: 17226 Eagle Ledge

Runner up: 17623 Empress Cove Lane

Best Block: Empress Cove Lane

Cy-Fair Hospital now has **SEVEN** locations to serve your Emergency and Urgent Care needs.

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(open 24 hours, 7 days a week)

- 1 10655 Steepletop Drive
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Houston, TX 77065
Main Hospital 800.681.2733
ER 281.897.3150
- 2 5655 W. Sam Houston Pkwy. N.
at Tanner Rd,
Houston, TX 77041
281.949.3800
- 3 7015 Barker Cypress at F.M. 529
Cypress, TX 77433
281.949.3600
- 4 8470 Hwy. 6 North at West Rd
Houston, TX 77095
281.949.3799

URGENT CARE

(open 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., 7 days a week)

Walk ins welcome, no appointments necessary

- 5 9110 Barker Cypress at West Rd
Cypress, TX 77433
281.517.9900
- 6 14044 Spring Cypress at Grant Rd
Cypress, TX 77429
281.949.3703
- 7 9138 West Rd at Beltway 8
Houston, TX 77064
281.949.3737



**Cypress Fairbanks
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CyFairHospital.com

The Minimalist Gardener

By Flint Sage



A&M recommends turning your sprinkler system off during winter if we receive normal rainfall. Drain your irrigation backflow preventer before hard freezes (anything below 32 F to be safe). Parts for repairs costs \$30 or

so. Vegetables: Many seasonable vegetables can be transplanted this month including, onions (sets), mustard, collards, and kale. Protect them with blankets when freezing is predicted. Sow seeds for carrots, beets, turnips, and radishes.

Freezing: Minimalist Darwinian Hint: Never plant anything here that cannot tolerate 18 degrees F or so. That was the most recent Tomball low (2002). We had three days of well below freezing weather in early January 2017 (21, 24, and 21 degrees F). These temperatures damaged many plants. In our yard, the plant winning the Minimalist Gardner Darwinian Gleaming Star Survival Award is the Kale (see January photo). Several varieties of Kale didn't even notice the low temperatures.

Fertilization and Mulch: Apply light fertilization to all plants. Maintain a layer (2" to 3") of mulch throughout the year to assist in keeping moisture in and weeds out. Note that in areas with shade, weeds tend not to be a problem. Weeds love open areas, so either plant these areas or apply a thick layer of mulch over few layers of newspapers. Mulching is much easier after pruning (not so many branches to deal with).

Spraying: This is the month to spray fruit trees with oil sprays (before they bud).

Pruning: February is a good month to prune deciduous woody plants before spring growth. Look up specific plants to find out the exact time for pruning. Reminder: Unless you have a better reason than tradition, don't cut any limb larger than a pencil off of your crape myrtle tree. As the professionals say, "Don't be a crape murderer." February is a good month to plant and prune roses.

Grass: Weeds are awaiting warm weather to take off, so if you see some, hand pick them. If you must use chemicals, this is a good month to apply a weed and feed product. Bare lawn areas, with lots of weeds, might be a sign of inadequate irrigation at that location. Nothing prevents weeds better than healthy turf.

Rainfall: We received 85" of rain according to my Village Creek unofficial rain gauge. I doubted my records, but a Harris County gauge near Longwood received about 83". If true, in 2016, Village Creek received among the highest rainfall totals in Harris Country. About 53" is normal for our area.

RECOGNIZING A VOLUNTEER



Lisa Rawles, Chairperson of the Village Creek Social Committee, was raised in New Iberia, LA. She has been and is still close to five brothers and sisters. She graduated from New Iberia Senior High.

Because of his job, she and her husband, Jimmy, relocated here from Abbeville, LA, in 2007. They have four children and five grandchildren in Louisiana. While they miss them very much and see them as often as they can, they have formed family-like relationships with their friends and neighbors here and are pleased with their decision to make Village Creek their home. They love this community and its amenities, but most of all they love the people.

When she has spare time, she enjoys cooking, gardening and golfing.

Lisa has always been an entrepreneur. For 14 years, she owned and operated a construction company specializing in remodeling and repairs. After that, for seven years, she did catering for businesses, weddings, and reunions. She also worked for a chemical company as a customer service representative.

After moving here, she decided to go into Real Estate. Lisa took the required courses and passed the State exam. She now practices sales with Champions wReal Estate Group.

Three years ago, while reading the community newsletter, she noticed that a Social Committee Chairperson was needed. Lisa volunteered. She says she enjoys seeing all of the excited children enjoying the yearly events. Sometimes when kids see her in the neighborhood, they ask if we are doing this or that event again this year! As a bonus, with the kiddos entertained, the adults get a chance to visit with their neighbors. Of course, she gives credit to the other volunteers and says that she could not do it alone. She is very grateful and appreciative for each and every one who volunteers their time to help make these functions possible.



DON'T STOP ME IF YOU HAVE HEARD THIS ONE

I see on the television that we are going to get a driving rain today. I'll go get the car ready.

Bonus Joke this Month Only:

Dang! I just found out that when people tell me I need to step up the plate, they didn't mean for another helping of corn dogs.

The Voice Cooks up some Vittles

FRENCH VEGETABLE SOUP

This recipe is from the House Detective's Secretary. It was Editor taste-tasted and perfect for a cold winter night. Hint: It's as good refrigerated and heated the next day.

Ingredients

2 lbs. stew meat cut into small (1/2 inch or so) cubes
1/4 cup oil
1 10-1/2 can condensed onion soup plus 5 cans water
or 1 pkg. onion soup mix plus 8 cups water
1 6 oz. can tomato paste
1 T. basil
1-1/2 t. salt
1/4 t. pepper
8 carrots, sliced
2 cups celery, sliced
1 16 oz. can kidney beans (not drained)
1 16 oz. can green beans or wax beans (drained)
1/2 c. parmesan cheese

Cooking Directions

Brown meat in oil, stir in soup, water, tomato paste, basil, salt, and pepper. Simmer covered 1-1/2 hours. Add all vegetables, reheat to boiling, simmer covered 30 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Stir in cheese. Serves eight.



A large rectangular advertisement with a light gray background featuring faint diagonal lines. The central text "SELL US YOUR CAR!" is written in large, bold, black capital letters. Several puppies are integrated into the design: one is perched on the top of the letter 'L', another on the top of 'U', a third is peeking out from behind the letter 'R', and a fourth is sitting to the right of the exclamation mark. In the bottom left corner, there is a small graphic of a Texas state flag. At the bottom, the website "TEXASDIRECTAUTO.COM" is displayed in a white, serif font against a dark gray horizontal bar.

A HOUSE DETECTIVE MYSTERY: **The Case of the Dying Swing**

Business was slow. Cold weather does that. It keeps the bad guys away. Sensing my lack of paid work, my secretary recently advised me that our backyard garden swing needed some detective work.

The swing is about ten years old and had about five different construction problems. The most vital problem was that the swing's fasteners (screws, bolts, nuts, and washers, in this case) were rusting to dust. For iron to rust, it requires iron, oxygen, and water. This swing's fasteners had all of these readily available.

The builder fabricated the swing with hundreds of fasteners intended for interior use. As an aside, when one sand-blasts iron, it has sort of flat-silver color, but will, almost magically, right after blasting, rust before your eyes. Manufacturers coat steel screws with a thin layer of bright, shiny zinc. This zinc provides sufficient protection when used inside in an air conditioned space. If used outside (particularly in a humid environment), the zinc will quickly disappear, and the steel fastener will corrode to a red dust. The builder should have used stainless steel or coated deck screws. Hot dipped galvanized might work as well, but I am not sure about that. These better screws do cost about four times what interior screws do, but I think a homeowner would have paid an additional \$50

for a product costing several thousand dollars if he knew the swing would last thirty rather than ten years. The lesson learned is that if you are building anything outside such as a fence (either by yourself or with a contractor), make sure that the project is put together with exterior nails, staples, screws, nuts, washers, and bolts.



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