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Tomball ISD ..... 281-357-3100, [www.tomballisd.net](http://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](http://spectrumam.com)  
Email: [villagecreek@spectrumam.com](mailto:villagecreek@spectrumam.com) ..... 832-500-2221  
Village Creek Board Website..... [myvillagecreek.com](http://myvillagecreek.com)  
Village Creek Website ..... Unrelated to the Board  
..... [VillageCreekCommunity.com](http://VillageCreekCommunity.com)  
Harris County Animal Control ..... 281-999-3191  
Lost/Found Pets ..... [Nextdoor.com](http://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](http://www.centerpointenergy.com/outage)  
Harris County traffic signal outages..... 713-881-3210  
Best Trash..... 281-313-2378  
[customerservice@besttrash.com](mailto:customerservice@besttrash.com), and [www.best-trash.com](http://www.best-trash.com)

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Digging? Two days prior to ANY digging in your yard, call  
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#### NEWSLETTER

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## Social Committee News

*By Lisa Rawles, Chair*

The annual Cookies with Santa was an exceptional success this year. While excited attendees waited to visit with Santa, Mrs. Claus handed out candy canes and offered occasional photo opportunities. After talking things over with Santa, kiddies made their way to Santa's Gift Table where volunteers handed out bags filled with wonderful treasures of all sorts. Finally, the festive families made their way to Santa's Food Table where happy volunteers handed out delicious cookies and poured hot drinks.

Volunteer Helpers: Lisa Rawles (Social Committee Chair), Jimmy Rawles, Ashley Wheeler, Taylor Wheeler, Olivia Wheeler, Amy Martin, Brian Martin, Cole Martin, Kate Martin, and Sherry Watson.



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# The Voice

## November Committee Updates

**Architectural Review Committee** - Steven Winter, Chair; Joe Wright Member (and one other anonymous volunteer).

During November, the ARC processed eight applications consisting of three fences, front yard Landscaping, multiple window replacement, a roof replacement, a patio cover and a pool with patio. The average turn-around for an application was three days.

The Architectural Review Committee is looking for a few more volunteer members. Currently, we have two members plus the Chairman, and ideally, we would like to recruit two more members to bring that number to five. An ARC member must read and understand the Village Creek Deed Restrictions, Covenants, and Guideline documents and apply their guidance to the applications received. There are no particular technical or engineer skills needed, but a general understanding of what we want our neighborhood to look like is fundamental. All of the committee business is conducted by email. Meetings or special set aside time is not required. We try to turn-around all requests in 7 days or less and to date we have been running 3 to 4 days on average.

If you are interested in serving on the Architectural Review Committee or would like to find out more about how it works, please contact me. Steve Winter, Architectural Review Chairman, [stevenfwinter@gmail.com](mailto:stevenfwinter@gmail.com) 713-724-6576

**Pool Committee**- Gordon Watson, Chair and Stacy Cheeseman, Member.

The Committee is working on a Request for Quotation (work scope) which may be used to rebid the pool management contract. We also are arranging for a repair person to do some miscellaneous repairs and maintenance around the pool area. Because of budget concerns, there will be no significant changes.

**Landscape Committee** - Sherry Watson, Chair; Laura Domangue and Kristin Jones, Members

Final HOA-owned street tree trimming was approved, and the work was completed in early December. The HOA owns more than 200 street trees. With sufficient clearance (14 feet), these trees should avoid any Precinct 4 one-sided pruning. Resident owned street trees must be trimmed (by the resident) to a height of 14 feet above street from curb to curb to avoid Precinct 4 trimming which can result after just one complaint filed. Precinct 4 has no obligation to notify residents when their trees will be trimmed.

The new front yard and street tree guidelines are in effect. The three-tree minimum was changed to two-trees in FRONT yards. Remember that this two-tree rule is negotiable and does not apply to SIDE-YARD trees. Above all, any changes to trees in front or side yards MUST receive ARC approval.

As usual, many Village Creek homes were gloriously decorated for the Holiday Season. Award winners, not chosen at the time of publication, will be mentioned in next month's "The Voice."



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## THE HOUSE DETECTIVE The Case of the Iceman

By Gordon R. Watson

Not many people know this, but there is a little man in today's icemakers. I will refer to him as the Iceman. With the refrigerator door closed, he continuously shines an infrared beam across the ice storage bin to decide if ice is needed. I mention that the door needs to be closed because the Iceman will not allow ice to drop out if the door is open. It is part of his job not to dump ice onto your kitchen floor. If the beam is not obstructed by ice (in other words, the ice bin is low), the Iceman decides to go to work. First, he turns the heater (located on the bottom of the icemaker) on. This melts a thin layer of ice between the ice tray and the ice to loosen the cubes. Then he turns on the little motor that turns a plastic cam that pushes them out. After the cubes have dropped into the ice bin, he shuts off the motor. Now he climbs down a little ladder to the bottom back of the refrigerator and opens a valve for about seven seconds to fill the ice tray with water. He closes it and climbs back up to the icemaker. Now he reads the paper or watches a little TV. Occasionally, he gets up and measures the water temperature. When it reaches 32 degrees, he knows that it has frozen, but he waits a bit longer until he is sure. Now he shines the infrared beam across the ice bin again to see if it is full. If it is not, he takes all of the actions previously described. He keeps doing this until he can no longer shine his infrared flashlight across the bin.

Did you know that you can buy most icemaker parts on line on either Amazon or Ebay and they are fairly inexpensive? I will say that two of the parts I purchased had issues, but eventually, I received good ones, and the icemaker works fine. Probably the most difficult part of replacing an icemaker is figuring out how to remove it. Go to YouTube to see how.

## The Minimalist Gardener

By Flint Sage

Continue with your freeze protection effort through the remainder of the winter. When the weatherman predicts a "hard freeze" (or similar), shut off and drain your backflow preventer. Water landscape plants, trees, and vegetables before the freeze. Try not to water foliage. Water is very good at retaining heat in the soil to help prevent freezing. Maintain a layer of mulch on bare areas to retain heat and moisture and to keep weeds down. Best of all, read plant labels before you buy. If they won't tolerate freezing, consider planting something different.

**Lawns:** Very little water is required, but water plants and lawns once a month if it doesn't rain.

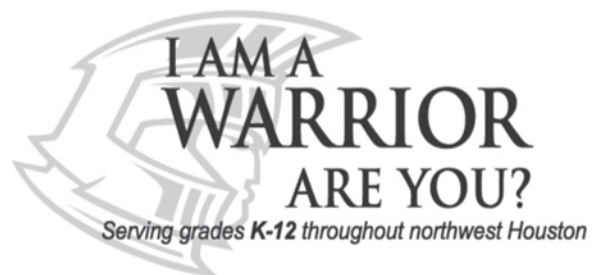
Plant roses anytime. If planting in January, choose bare root. Plant annual flowers such as calendula, cyclamen, dianthus, ornamental kale, cabbage, pansies, and petunias. Plant bluebonnet transplants into garden beds.

**Pruning:** Avoid pruning frost-damaged trees and bushes until February or March. Crape Myrtles are trees and should be allowed to grow as trees. Unless you have a good reason, please don't cut off any branch larger than a pencil. There are many varieties of crape, so select a shorter variety if height is a problem.

Plant cool-season seedlings such as asparagus, broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, Chinese cabbage, collards, turnip greens, Irish potato, kohlrabi, leaf lettuces, onions, and swiss chard. Sow seeds this month for beets, carrots, English peas, greens, leaf lettuces, radishes, sugar snap, snow peas, and turnips.



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## Souper Bowl of Caring

The Super Bowl is fast approaching and so is the Boy Scouts annual “**Souper Bowl of Caring**” food drive supporting local food banks in the area. Each year since 2012, Village Creek has beaten the previous record of pounds of food collected. Last year, we collected over 1600 pounds of food from Village Creek and we’re looking forward to serving the community again this year!

Scouts from Boy Scout Troop 928, Cub Scout Pack 1928, and American Heritage Girls Troop 2928 will be leaving donation bags on doorknobs **January 26th**. They will pick up filled donation bags left on doorsteps the morning of **February 2nd** so please put your donation bags out early to ensure pickup. On behalf of all the Scouts, thank you in advance for your support in this worthwhile effort!

## Editor’s Eleven-Minute Microwaved Baked Potato

### Ingredients

- 1 large russet potato
- 1 tablespoon of butter or margarine.
- 3 tablespoons of shredded Cheddar (or your favorite) cheese.
- 2 tablespoons of bacon crumbles
- Dash of Salt
- Dash of Pepper
- 2 tablespoons of seeds such as pumpkin, flax, sunflower, etc. (if desired)
- Add after cooking if desired:
  - 2 tablespoons of sour cream

**Directions-** Scrub the potato, and prick several time with the tines of a fork (to avoid having potato explode). Place on a microwave-friendly dish.

Cook on full power in the microwave for 5 minutes. Turn over, and continue to cook for 5 more minutes. When the potato is soft, remove from the microwave, and cut in half lengthwise. Mash up insides with a fork. Add salt and pepper, butter, bacon crumbles, seeds, and Cheddar cheese. Return to the microwave, and cook for about 1 minute to melt the cheese. Top with sour cream (if desired), and serve.



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