



The HOME FRONT

MAY 2019

Official Publication of the Cardiff Ranch HOA

VOL 4, ISSUE 5

Letter from the Board

We have many exciting developments this month to share with our community. The board you elected to help improve and manage our community has been busy since their elections in late 2018. Below are a few highlights. Let us know what you think at the next board meeting!

New Management Company

Everyone please join the board of directors in welcoming RealManage as our new management company. RealManage brings with them years of experience and an impressive document and vendor management system that will benefit the whole community. This is a major accomplishment for the board members as the process started in December of 2018 after board elections.

What you need to know:

- This change to RealManage officially took place on April 1, 2019.
- Everyone should have received a welcome letter to RealManage, including information on how to access their CiraNet online portal.
- We anticipate the transition process away from First Service Residential to take about 60 days. We hope to have everything completed by June 1, 2019.
- If you have not received a letter, please contact RealManage via the contact information at the end of this article.

Clubhouse by Meeting Only

One of the changes that you may have noticed is that we are no longer keeping regular hours at the clubhouse. If you would like to visit the clubhouse for a meeting, please schedule an appointment by contacting RealManage's Resident Service center. The gym and the pool access can still be accessed with your fingerprint or security code. The Clubhouse is still available for rentals by residents, as always.

Focus on a Great Look

Everyone's efforts to help keep our neighborhood an attractive

and great place live also preserves and protects our property values. As we transition our management company to RealManage's service, please take the time to get acquainted with the Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions for Cardiff Ranch. This information is available in the new online portal and our community maintained website at <http://www.cardifffranchkaty.com>.

Please be advised that 2019 will have an increased focus on compliance facilitated through consistent scheduled inspections and attention to violations. Inspections and violation reporting will be conducted by the RealManage inspectors with the assistance of the board of directors. Homeowners can also report violations by emailing or calling RealManage.

Pool Opening – May 25

We are celebrating the opening of the pool on May 25 with our Pool Party Event. We hope to have a grill onsite to serve fresh grilled snacks and goodies.

If you need to have your fingerprints verified or set up in the system, we will be doing so from 12:00pm till 3:00pm that day at the clubhouse. If you cannot make this date, please schedule an appointment to have your information updated.

In Other News

The board has also updated contracts with Lake Management, Cannon Companies, and Swim Houston.

Next Board Meeting

We hope to see many of you at our board meeting on May 16, 2019, at 7:00 pm or at the round table meeting on May 11, 2019 at 9:30 am. Please consider attending to learn more about what's happening around Cardiff Ranch. See you around the neighborhood!

RealManage Contact Info
RealManage Resident Service Center
1-866-4RealService (1-866-473-2573)
7:30 am – 7:00 pm
PROCARDI@ciramail.com
www.realmanage.com

CARDIFF RANCH

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

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Emergency	911
Fort Bend County Sheriff	281-342-6116
Poison Control	800-222-1222
RealManage Service Center	866-473-2573

UTILITIES

Best Trash.....	281-313-2378
En-Touch (Customer Service)	281-225-1000
Fort Bend MUD # 58 (Water)	713-405-1750

SCHOOLS

Katy ISD	281-396-6000
Davidson Elementary	281-234-2500
Wood Creek Junior High	281-234-0800
Obra D. Tompkins High School	281-234-1000

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

RealManage

16000 Barkers Point Lane, Suite 250 Houston, TX 77079
(866)473-2573 • procardi@ciramail.com

CARDIFF RANCH HOA

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IMPORTANT INFO

To set up access for the pool and gym use please contact
(866)473-2573

The Clubhouse is available for rentals by association members. Please call (866)473-2573 or email procardi@ciramall.com for more information.

You can report violations or concerns by calling (866)473-2573 or emailing procardi@ciramall.com. Please include photos of the violation if possible. All violation reports remain confidential.

Cardiff Ranch Announcements



SAVE THE DATES!

Easter April 13th

Community Garage Sale April 27th

Cinco de Mayo May 4th

Pool Party and Opening May 25th

Parade and BBQ Contest July 4th

Back to School August 10th

Community Garage Sale September 14th

Halloween October 26th

Diwali November 2nd

Bazar Kids Crafts December 12th

Christmas/T-PAK Party December 14th

BOARD MEETINGS:

May 11, 9:30 a.m.

May 16, 7:00 p.m.

June 8, 9:30 a.m.

July 13, 9:30 a.m.

July 18, 7:00 p.m.

August 10, 9:30 a.m.

September 14, 9:30 a.m.

September 19, 7:00 p.m.

October 12, 9:30 a.m.

November 9, 9:30 a.m.

November 21, 7:00 p.m.

December 14, 9:30 a.m.

Cardiff Kids Say Features Sabrina Smith



Despite the overwhelming irritation of her younger brother, parents and grandmother, Sabrina has accomplished much in her short 12 years.

Known as “The Bird Whisperer,” Sabrina spends much of her time with the door to her room closed, contemplating the deeper meaning of preteen life with her cockatiel, parakeet, and dog. She has trained the cockatiel to attack her brother.

When she does emerge from her three eyed raven state, it’s usually to forage for food. However, two times a

week, Sabrina goes to Tae Kwon Do, where she has achieved not only a third degree brown belt, but numerous medals for her performance in state competitions. She also produces prized works of art, many of which she’s sold in order to finance the tremendous cost of art supplies, which her parents stopped funding at age 5. Her persistence in the art world not only led to numerous sales of her works, but another medal in a local art competition.

Her Halloween birthday seems to have influenced her disposition, and she is happiest in the month of October, setting up the haunted house that her family puts on for the neighborhood. Halloween allows her to express her most unusual thoughts to their creepiest extent, much to the enjoyment of others – and to the relief of her mom and dad.

Another favorite time for Sabrina is in the summer, when she gets to travel without her parents on a plane to Connecticut to visit her grandparents. She takes selfies lounging on her grandad’s sailboat in the Long Island Sound and sends them to her overworked parents, captioning them with phrases such as “just living the life” or “wish you were here...not!” She also gets to visit New York City on these trips, eat Italian food “where the mafia guys eat,” and see Broadway plays.

Sabrina has already decided the trajectory of her entire life. She plans to eschew the traditional path to higher education. Though she is an excellent student, her goal is a life in the military. Upon graduation from high school, she says, she will enlist in the Marines and will attend college through their program, saving herself and family thousands in tuition. She has already extensively researched all the military branches and feels the Marines will be the challenge she needs to fully form her character. They will also allow a degree in art. She intends to stay in the Marines for 25 years, invest her income and retire with full benefits and a pension around 45, then live simply in Paris and paint. Her mother thinks she’s the smartest person in the world, except for the Paris part, unless she means Paris, Texas.

Do you have a child you’d love to tell us about? We’d love to feature them in the next newsletter. Email tiffivellytx@gmail.com. An interview may be requested!

Don't Let Mealy Bugs Make a Meal Out of Your Garden

I love all of God’s creatures. I won’t kill a spider. Mating toads that scream at my bedroom window, I relocate. I will stop in the middle of traffic to rescue an oblivious, doomed tortoise.

I draw the line at just two creatures I believe may have been made in error. The first is a roach. Let me tell you about the second.

Sitting on my front porch last summer, my heart sank as I spotted the all too familiar vortex of tiny gnats, flying in perfect unison. I knew what that meant. Somewhere close, something I loved in my garden had dreaded mealy bugs, a pest so insidious that they make me long for roaches. Almost.

Two years prior I had learned what they were, and I watched helplessly as they destroyed ten 6-foot hibiscus plants overnight. First, the leaves turned yellow. Then they fell off. The plants no longer bloomed and within a very short time, nothing but bare branches and tiny white fluff balls remained. I can’t imagine anything more horrifying to a committed gardener. I vowed never to fall prey to them again and began an odyssey of research and experimentation that saved all but one plant when I was once again infested last year.

Here’s what I learned.

Don’t allow an infestation. It’s much more difficult to contain. Look for signs, like the leaf yellowing and dropping and those irritating gnats. They are the male end of this insecticidal serial killer. They fly in a group of about 6 to 12, always in a tornado-type pattern. The females are rather striking, but can be found attached to the plant, looking like angelic, miniature, fluffy tanks, covered in a glistening, snow white armor with a crystal like sheen. And they are tiny. Their job is to suck the life (sap) from the plant. If you see one of these beautiful bugs on any plant, inside your house or out, it’s time for action.

Mealy bugs are protected by ants that devour the dew produced by the female. They have few natural enemies. You can buy and release ladybugs, one of those enemies, but I’ve found this method to be ineffective in the long term. If you can, get rid of any ants in your yard to stop the chance for infestation. I can’t do this. Some of my flowers, like bird of paradise, require a few ants.

If you do get mealy bugs, the best method of eradication is a combination of persistence and insecticidal soap. I found this out the hard way, after many fails using other methods. I spray all of my plants, and particularly those preferred by mealy bugs (palms, citrus, hibiscus and ferns, among

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others) with a cost-saving homemade insecticidal soap. The solution is environmentally friendly, far less than store bought versions, and kills the awful creatures on contact.

However, rain, time and wind will render this solution ineffective after a couple of weeks and will not stop a new mealy bug from making a new home on your prized camellia. This is where persistence pays off. It's imperative to spray every two weeks without fail. Don't give them a chance to establish.

There are many recipes for homemade insecticidal soap online, but all use a combination of natural soap, like Dawn, vegetable oil, and water. I fill a two gallon pump sprayer, which makes a quick, 30-minute job of it with little hassle. Soak the plant, leaves and stems, and be sure to drench any bugs you see. You can also use Neem Oil, too, but it's much more expensive and requires the same application process. Whatever you do, get rid of them! Honestly, they serve no other purpose than to destroy all that you love.

Do you have a gardening question or dilemma? I would love to answer your gardening question in my next feature! Email me at tiffivelytx@gmail.com.

GERMAN PANCAKES

At least twice a week, German pancakes are my go-to for breakfast. Known alternately as Dutch babies or little Bismarcks, my family loves them. This particular recipe came with my great grandparents from Germany.

I make the batter the night before and store it in the fridge for easy morning prep. The batter can be cut in half, doubled, or tripled. You can make it in virtually any pan that has sides. Just be sure to spray the entire baking vessel with a little Pam, as this pancake crawls up the sides as it bakes and could stick. The batter must be poured into a hot pan.

The below recipe fits nicely in a medium skillet.

Preheat oven to 425 degrees.

Melt ½ stick of butter in an oven proof pan in the oven, so the pan gets nice and hot.

Mix together 2 eggs, ½ cup flour and ½ cup milk with a pinch of salt. It may have some lumps and that's okay. Pour the batter into the melted butter in the skillet, return to oven and bake for 12-15 minutes, until risen and a golden brown. It will deflate a bit once you cut it.

Top with syrup, fruit, powdered sugar, or nothing. It tastes delicious all on its own.

Nota bene: Sometimes these pancakes don't rise. No one knows why. Just try again with different flour or butter or eggs. It's only occurred to me three times in the 25 years I've been making them. You can also cut the butter down to as much as half, but Julia Childs would surely not advise that.

Would you like to share a specific recipe? Your neighbors would love to read about it! Email me at tiffivelytx@gmail.com. If I don't, my Cordon Bleu trained stepmother will!



GO GREEN



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Mosquitoes



Mosquitoes can not only be irritating by biting, but they also are able to transmit various diseases to humans and animals. They are known to transmit heartworm in dogs and cats, and they can spread encephalitis (including West Nile Virus), Chikungunya, Zika, dengue, yellow fever, malaria and filariasis among humans.

Most female mosquitoes require a blood meal for egg production whereas males feed on nectar and do not bite. Eggs are laid on the surface of water or in dry locations that can be flooded by water. Eggs laid in dry locations can remain dormant under for several months. Eggs hatch into larvae, or wigglers. Mosquito larvae live in water and feed on organic debris or microscopic plants and animals. Larvae molt into pupae which are non-feeding. Mosquito pupae spend the majority of their time at the surface of the water, only moving when disturbed.

Many things can help to reduce mosquito problems around the home. Since three of the four life stages of mosquitoes are in or near water, it is best to eliminate all sources of standing water. Containers such as watering cans, buckets and bottles can turn into mosquito breeding grounds. Water should be drained from birdbaths, gutters, flowerpots and pet dishes at least once a week. Children's wading pools should be emptied of water at least once a week and stored so they cannot collect water when not in use. Tree holes should be filled in with sand or mortar, or drained after each rain. Leaky faucets and pipes located outside should be repaired.

Areas that cannot be drained, such as ponds or large rain collection systems, can be stocked with fish that eat mosquito larvae. Dunks can also be used in these areas. Dunks are a small, donut-shaped

product that contains *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *israeliensis*. The donut disrupts the life cycle of the mosquito and is non-toxic to humans, amphibians and fish.

Avoiding outdoor activities during peak mosquito hours is the best method to avoid being bitten. When outside, wear loose-fitting, light colored clothing with long sleeves & long pants. Repellants containing active ingredients such as DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE), para-methane-diol (PMD), or 2-undecanone can be effective to keep mosquitoes from biting when evening activities cannot be rescheduled.

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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CARDIFF RANCH

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The Killdeer A Skilled Actor

By Cheryl Conley, TWRC Wildlife Center



A concerned citizen who came across a nest on the ground with eggs in it and an injured mama nearby contacted us via Facebook. The lady wanted to know what she could do to help. She posted pictures to help us identify the bird. Not being familiar with the hundreds of bird species we have here, I reached out to our former

Executive Director who not only identified the bird but also shared some interesting information about the species.

The bird was a Killdeer. They find small depressions in the ground and build their nests with sticks, grass, weeds, shells or rocks. Their nests can be found in parking lots, golf courses, lawns, athletic fields, etc. Their nests are often overlooked because they are almost level with the ground around it. What makes this bird so fascinating is that females will fake injuries to lure predators away from their nests. As a predator approaches, she will drag herself farther and farther away from her nest continuing to fake her injuries. It's also been observed that she may roll completely over, pant and gasp for air—all an act. Another tactic they use to protect the nest is by pretending to build a nest. When a predator approaches the real nest, the Killdeer will move away, find a depression in the ground and pretend to be covering her non-existent eggs. As the predator approaches the fake nest, the Killdeer will leave only to repeat this fake-out until the enemy tires of her games and flies away.

Sometimes groups of Killdeer get in on the action of chasing away real or perceived predators. The first one to spot the enemy will fly very close to the face of the animal while making a loud, shrill cry as if to be yelling at it. Soon others join in with the same loud cries. In most cases, this is enough to scare anything away.

Because Killdeer build their nests on the ground, it can take up to six attempts in a season to successfully hatch their eggs. Pesticides, other lawn chemicals and cats are the biggest threats.

The Killdeer is a member of the plover family. Plover, as defined by the Free Dictionary, is, "Any of various widely distributed shorebirds of the family Charadriidae, having rounded bodies, short tails, and short bills". Although defined as a shorebird, it's equally happy in dry or wet locations. It is classified, as migratory but is a year-round resident in most areas of Texas.

According to Texas Parks and Wildlife, the Killdeer is one of the noisiest birds in America. Their name was derived from their call—a loud "KILL-DEER".

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