



The HOME FRONT

JULY 2019

Official Publication of the Cardiff Ranch HOA

VOL 4, ISSUE 7

Letter from the Board

Friends and Neighbors,

The summer is here and our neighborhood has some exciting news!

First, we are starting on our budget for 2020. RealManage, our new property management company, has told us they will take the lead in this process, which is a huge step forward from years past. If you want to be involved and see how we decide on the annual fees, please join us at our upcoming meetings and participate in these conversations. (A list of board meeting dates is published in this newsletter.)

More exciting news, our developer, Land Tejas, has informed us that they intend to step down from the Board of Cardiff Ranch at our annual meeting. This is something that many residents have been asking for. As part of the process, we need to create new CCR's and governing documents for the Association. Our lawyers have provided us a set of bylaws for review and approval. (Bylaws govern how the Board operates.) Changing the bylaws does not require the approval of homeowners. To change the CCR's – the document which governs individual properties – you the homeowners, must vote for the changes. Please join us at our upcoming meetings to hear more about proposed changes.

In maintenance and upgrade news, we are fixing and upgrading the complete electrical system and lighting at the FM 1493 entrance. LED lamps are being installed to highlight the entrance monuments, and the electrical system is being upgraded to protect it from future damage. The fountain on the north side is also being repaired and improved to prevent future maintenance issues as well.

As a reminder, please don't feed the ducks. The Muscovy ducks we have in and around the lake are an invasive species in Texas. They are an aggressive species that keep the other wildlife away from our lake such as migratory birds. For the HOA, this is a problem, as they breed and root in our landscaping and leave their waste all around the lake, especially in and around the gazebo and clubhouse. This causes extra costs to the community for cleaning and landscaping to correct the damage caused by these Muscovy ducks. Not feeding these ducks encourages them to move on and find homes elsewhere so they are not a burden to our community.

The CiraMobile app, which was previously only available in an iOS

version, has been released for Android. This app allows you to access information about your HOA account and our community. You can also use the app to report concerns and contact RealManage and the Board of Directors.

We encourage you to use the app to report everything you see that needs to be fixed around the neighborhood. Letting us know when something is broken is a huge help to the community, as many issues (such as broken sprinklers or burned out bulbs) may be hard for us to locate and fix. You can also take a picture of anything you find and e-mail it to PROCARDI@CIRAMAIL.COM, along with details of the issue's location.

If you see a streetlight out, please take a picture of the pole number (every light in the neighborhood is numbered on the street side) and note the house address nearest to the pole for reporting. You can report the broken street light through the app, or you can call CenterPoint Energy directly or visit their website to report the outage.

Please keep up with maintenance on your home sprinkler systems as well. We are conducting monthly inspections and lawn appearance is a big part of the inspections. We are issuing notices for poorly maintained yards. The MUD provides a service free of charge that inspects your sprinkler system and provides recommendations for improvements if needed. Please see the inserts in your monthly water bill for more information on this service. You may also consider fertilizing your yard to keep it healthy. There are a number of companies that provide this service or you can do it yourself. As a bonus, a healthy lawn requires less water, so it can help with reducing the cost of water during summer months.

Finally, we are looking for volunteers on almost every committee in the association. As Land Tejas is exiting the community this fall, we need more residents to help with committees and planning. This is a great way to meet your neighbors and help keep our community beautiful and fun. A couple of hours a month is all even the most demanding committee requires. Come to one of our meetings to learn more!

*Your resident board members,
Prasad, Kenny, Ross and Inge*

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

Board Members

Rachel Gwin Land Tejas
Ross Kennedy
Kenny Welshons
Prasad Patibanda
Inge Elmendorp-Huijts

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Hunuma Gujjula
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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.

Save the Date!

Parade and BBQ Contest July 4
Back to School August 10
Community Garage Sale September 14
Halloween October 26
Diwali November 2
Bazar Kids Crafts December 12
Christmas / T-PAK Party December 14

Board Meetings

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.

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Our Cardiff Kids! Featuring, Logan Beck

Every generation since I can remember has been maligned by those that came before it. The same complaints of laziness and idealism are lobbed at the young by the old, and have been for thousands of years. From antiquity to Shakespeare to current studies on millennials, the pattern of youth blaming is undeniable. I fell in line with this belief and began to bemoan today's youth, brainwashed by the media and grumpy middle aged coworkers. The kids I've interviewed for this column, however, consistently defy that stereotype, and Logan Beck is a fierce example of that defiance. I'm sure I've just been lucky so far and will find a few reprobates shortly.

To be fair, I've known Logan since he was a much smaller tyke in kindergarten. But his accomplishments eliminate any need for bias on my part. To be specific, Logan is incredibly community minded, despite his scant 10 years. He has performed no less than 26 acts of charity, all in order to help those in our community and beyond. He's picked up trash around the lake here in Cardiff. He helped organize a food drive. He makes cat toys for cats in need! (Just kidding. The cat toys are to raise money for charity.) He volunteered to help with our neighborhood Christmas event. He also helped build the spooky fence for the neighborhood haunted house.

"Who made you do these things?" I asked. "Your mom or dad?"

"Neither," he replied.

"What do you mean?" I asked, confused. "Why do you do them, then?"

"Because I want to help people."

This can't be, I thought. He's a kid! What kid is so civic minded? Suspicious, I asked how he did in school. "Very well," he said. I looked over at his mom, Kelli. She nodded yes.

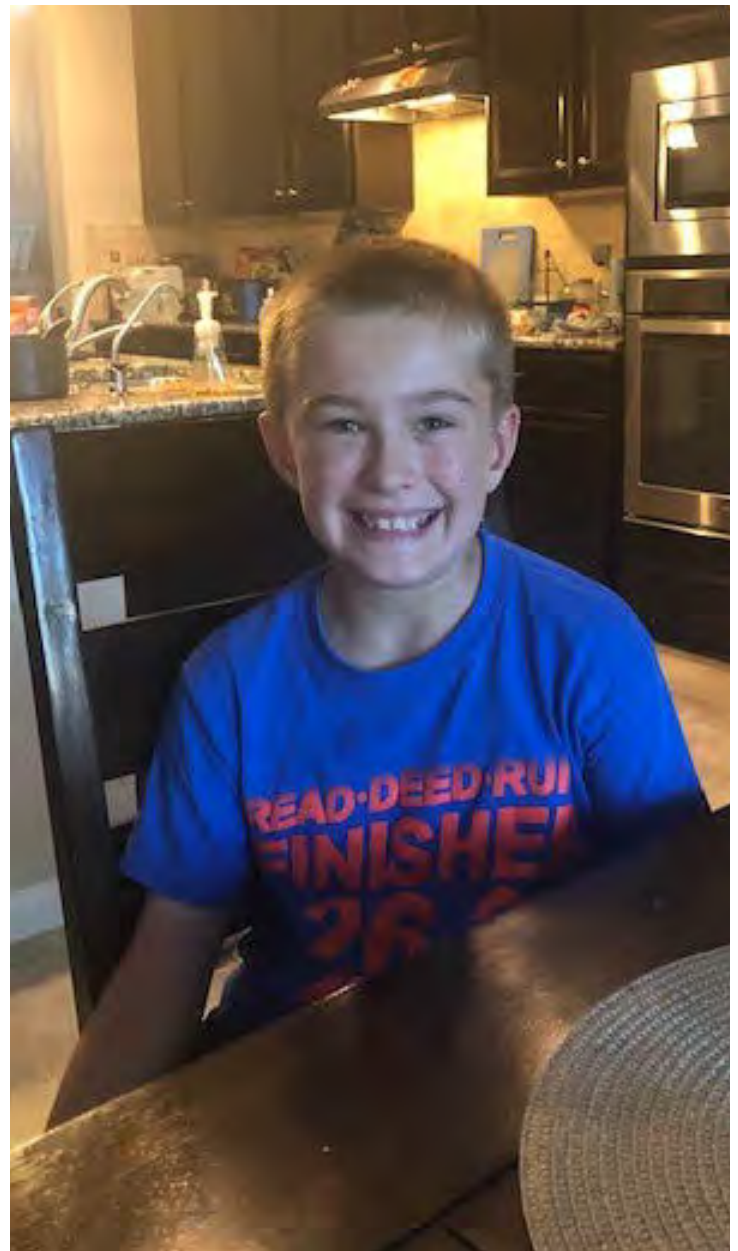
One would think that doing well in school and completing 26 charitable events in less than a year would leave time for little else. Not so with Logan Beck. He plays two positions in baseball, pitcher and first base. And he's good. Really, really good. (I know a guy who checked him out.) Logan is that type of good that every dad dreams about, and his aspirations to become a professional baseball player are not at all unrealistic, should he continue his current trajectory of performance. His father, Joe, is no doubt quite proud. I asked Logan if he was going to behave like a rock star should he become a famous baseball player and marry a Kardashian. He didn't know who the Kardashians are, yet another testament to his wholesome disposition. His idols are George Springer and Ty Cobb, two scandal-free greats.

He also wants to become an engineer, like his parents. His favorite subjects in school are science and math, not surprisingly as both contributors to his DNA are superior in these fields. He says his best qualities are being kind and forgiving. He enjoys playing with his friends and reading Harry Potter books. He is exceedingly protective of his little brother, Cooper. Logan and his family recently suffered the loss of one of his two beloved dogs, but

they still have Bear. He is looking forward to his family summer vacation in Arkansas, staying in a cabin and boating and hiking.

I tried to find something about Logan that would give credence to all the youth disparaging adults. I was unable to. He is Rockwellian. He is an industrious, caring, intelligent young man with a pleasing jib and disposition. He is the boy next door. He also says, "yes ma'am" and "thank you," in almost every sentence.

If I continue to interview our neighborhood kids and they continue to live up to the qualities I've seen so far in children like Logan, I have the greatest of hope for our future generations. Our modern day influencers could learn a few lessons from the likes of young Mr. Beck. We all could.



A Few Helpful Tips On POA Compliance

If you didn't already know, we have a new management company. And if you ever attended any POA or board meetings, you'll know that the lack of enforcement of the POA rules by the prior management was something brought up frequently.

I often wonder, however, how many residents really know the POA rules. So, I thought an article on compliance might prepare us all for the – very good – change in management and the resulting notices some of us might receive. These notices will be sent to those residents who are in violation of the POA rules. Don't take them personally. I once got a notice for weeds. If you get a letter, just check to see that you're in compliance, make any necessary adjustments, and carry on.

A well-kept neighborhood results in higher property values and better neighborly relations.

I'll go over a few of the rules here. If you want to see the full list, simply go to the Resident Portal at <https://www.realmanage.com/resident-services>. I received a copy of the POA rules upon closing, but updates happen, so the website will be the most accurate.

Yards are the biggest source of violations. They must be mowed regularly. Once a week in the summer and once every two weeks in the winter does just fine for mine. Visible weeds in the grass or flower beds must be removed. I do this once a week. It takes me 5 minutes and keeps weeds from really establishing. I hand pull them as weed killers will turn them brown only, resulting in dead weeds that are still an eyesore.

Tree stakes should be removed, unless they are actively supporting a tree.

Not all landscaping edging is acceptable. For example, concrete scallops are not allowed. Quite a few residents have these, so be prepared to replace them if you receive a notice. The stone used by the builders is acceptable.

Trash cans can be left out the night before and put back the day of delivery. We are not allowed to leave trash cans visible any other times.

Homes, siding and gutters must be free of mildew and algae.

Parking is another common complaint. We cannot park on the street overnight. This is only acceptable when overnight guests are visiting and there's no space in the driveway. In the event a vehicle needs to be parked in the street, it must be parked in the same direction as traffic.

Again, please familiarize yourself with all the rules set forth by the POA. These rules are meant to create a uniform, pleasing environment for all of us living in this wonderful community!

Red Beans and Rice

This is a short cut that would infuriate most Cajuns, but as I've already made clear, I'll cheat a little when it comes to cooking.

If the results are delicious and time friendly, carry on, I say.

This recipe feeds 4 or more as a side dish. It's hearty, filling and stores well in the fridge.

You will need:

½ lb. bacon

1 medium onion, diced

1 clove garlic, minced

2 cans red or kidney beans with juice

Creole seasoning

2 teaspoons flour

Kielbasa type sausage (optional)

Fry the bacon in a large skillet until crispy, then set aside. Reserve about 2 tbs. of the bacon grease in the skillet and pour off the rest.

On medium heat, add onions to bacon grease and sauté until translucent, about 5 minutes. Add the garlic and sauté a minute more, then add 1-2 tsps. of Creole seasoning and flour.

Sauté the roux about 8 minutes, then add the juice from the beans plus enough water to equal 2 total cups of liquid. Simmer until slightly thickened, then add back in bacon, crumbled, the two cans of beans, and sausage, if using.

Adjust seasoning to taste and heat through. Serve over rice, grits or couscous.



Worse Than a Roach. Much Worse!



I've lived in some unsavory places. College and three different rent houses where I lived with other students, all of whom possessed dubious cleaning habits, immediately come to mind. And there was the tilted house in Oak Cliff when I was a child and my parents had yet to achieve any financial success. They all seem like palaces when compared to my first house in Katy.

I had little time to move, and was the only one with a job waiting for me when my family and I came here from Dallas. Upon initially looking at the house I finally decided on, I spied live oak branches touching the roof. This gave me some pause, as I know trees harbor some bad elements that use those branches to sneak in. But the house was clean, open, and the best of the few choices I had in my budget.

It wasn't long before I started seeing them.

Visiting the kitchen one evening for a glass of water, I flipped on the light and caught rapid movement on the floor out of the corner of my eye. There was nothing there when I turned to look directly at it. The uneasy feeling kept me up that night. I knew. My conscious mind was rejecting what my lizard brain had correctly assessed. That was a roach. And it would only get worse. By the time I discovered their hiding spot, it was too late.

My landlord was not receptive to my phone calls pleading for an exterminator or tree trimmer. Store bought sprays and traps did little to help. At the end of my rental agreement, we could not get out fast enough. That house left me with a permanent disability. You see, I can't open a kitchen drawer without flinching, girding my loins in expectation that what haunted my first Katy house may have followed me to the next, fearing that my new kitchen drawers may also be inhabited by the same, tentacle waving, beady eyed, fearless roach that greeted me whenever I reached for a fork. (Shudder.)

I despise roaches and anything roach-like. Water bugs are simply roaches that like water in my book. So, when my husband and I

were sitting on the front porch one recent evening, all my fears came to fruition, but with a new, more terrifying form of roach that I had never known existed.

"What was that?" my husband asked.

"It was an acorn hitting the roof," I said.

"There are no trees above the roof line, Tiffany," my husband replied, with that are you stupid? look on his face. Whatever made the loud thud above as it hit the roof landed in the grass in front of us. I pointed at it. He went over, iPhone flashlight ablaze.

"That's the biggest roach I've ever seen," he calmly said.

"Nooooooooo!" I screamed.

"It's dead and it smells really bad, too," he added. Panicked, I told him to poke it with a stick to see if it was really dead. I would shortly regret this directive, as it wasn't a roach at all. It was far worse.

The proper name is Belostomatidae. Also known as electric light bugs or alligator ticks, they are waterbugs, different than roaches evidently, but often confused with them, according to bugologists. They are all the same to me. Like roaches, water bugs can enter your house, but prefer wet areas. Water bugs are aggressive, where roaches tend to scatter in human presence.

The king of all water bugs is the type that landed in our yard that evening, the toe biter. Common in this area, they typically live in water, but do migrate to breed. They are poor flyers, unable to see very well. Attracted to lights, they often crash into obstacles en route to a romantic rendezvous, as ours had done. They chase and attack what they feel will threaten or nourish them. They will play dead to avoid, well, death. They look like long, fat bodied roaches, with one exception. They have a set of pincers which deliver one of the top five most painful insect "bites" known to man. One victim, ahem, described it as, "...a totally consuming agony, as if a hairdryer had been dropped into my bath, but didn't kill me, just left me in an electric, shocking, full bodied pain for hours."

Poking the bug with a stick as it intentionally plays dead will result in a brief chase and such a bite, which is not a bite at all, but rather the pincers breaking the skin and depositing venom. Very painful venom. The toe biter eats fish, turtles and snakes. Yes, you read that right. Turtles. It plays dead and secretes a horrible smell from its roachy butt. In other words, it's a carnivorous, excruciating pain inducing, retaliatory, aggressive, violent, stinky, monster sized roach.

Please see the picture. Burn the image into your brain. Show the picture to your children. Tell them never to touch it, even if it looks dead. Tell them it will cause horrific pain. If you have a pool, scan it before you jump in, as they've been known to hang out in such spots. Water gardens attract them, as well. And for the sake of domestic harmony, don't ask your spouse to poke a "dead" toe biter. The resulting disaster could well end an otherwise harmonious marriage.

CARDIFF RANCH

Millipedes

Recent rain has led to a significant increase in millipedes infiltrating homes in Central Texas. Millipedes are long, brown segmented insects with many legs. They are often noticed curled into a spiral when dead. Millipedes live outdoors and thrive in mulch where they eat decaying organic matter but when heavy rains occur, these insects tend to move indoors.

Millipedes can be a nuisance but are generally not a threat to people. The best protection against millipedes is to avoid overwatering your landscaping and remove debris around the foundation of your home. Leaking plumbing, such as HVAC lines, can attract millipedes. Consider sealing any holes or cracks in the exterior of your home and ensure that windows and doors are properly sealed. Pesticides may offer a short-term solution, but are generally less effective in the rain and require careful application around children and pets.



We want your content! Do you have something fun to share? We want to hear it! This is YOUR newsletter.

Whether you want to submit just one article, a monthly column, or a quarterly editorial, we welcome your stories and community advice.

Here are some ideas, but don't feel limited to just these...

- 1) Gardening or lawn tips
- 2) Community resources for your ethnic or cultural group
- 3) Favorite recipes
- 4) Volunteering opportunities
- 5) A community crossword
- 6) Advice on just about anything: from pets to pools
- 7) Best places in Katy to bike or hike
- 8) Rainy day activities for your kids
- 9) Home maintenance dos and don'ts
- 10) Best of Nextdoor roundups on your favorite topics
- 11) News about a school event, tradition, or sports game
- 12) Recap of a community event

Here are a few items to please AVOID:

- 1) Anything with a business name or for a business purpose – sorry it's against our newsletter company's editorial guidelines.
- 2) Anything political or opinionated. Not the place for op-ed guys. Let's keep it fun and friendly!
- 3) Anything promoting a specific religion, belief, or cause (even if it's a really great one).

Want advice on what to write or if a topic is appropriate? Please email cardifffranchnews@gmail.com.

Submit articles to: cardifffranchnews@gmail.com.

Articles are due by the 1st of every month for the FOLLOWING month's newsletter. (E.g. articles submitted May 1, will go into the June newsletter.)

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PORTABLE FIRE EXTINGUISHER

A portable fire extinguisher can save lives and property by putting out a small fire or containing it until the fire department arrives; but portable extinguishers have limitations. Because fire grows and spreads so rapidly, the number one priority for residents is to get out safely.

Use a portable fire extinguisher when the fire is confined to a small area, such as a wastebasket, and is not growing; everyone has exited the building; the fire department has been called or is being called; and the room is not filled with smoke.

To operate a fire extinguisher, remember the word PASS:

- **PULL** the pin. Hold the extinguisher with the nozzle pointing away from you, and release the locking mechanism.
- **AIM** low. Point the extinguisher at the base of the fire.
- **SQUEEZE** the lever slowly and evenly.
- **SWEEP** the nozzle from side-to-side.

For the home, select a multi-purpose extinguisher (can be used on all types of home fires) that is large enough to put out a small fire, but not so heavy as to be difficult to handle.

Choose a fire extinguisher that carries the label of an independent testing laboratory.

Read the instructions that come with the fire extinguisher and become familiar with its parts and operation before a fire breaks out.

Install fire extinguishers close to an exit and keep your back to a clear exit when you use the device so you can make an easy escape if the fire cannot be controlled. If the room fills with smoke, leave immediately.

Know when to go. Fire extinguishers are one element of a fire response plan, but the primary element is safe escape. Every household should have a home fire escape plan and working smoke alarms.

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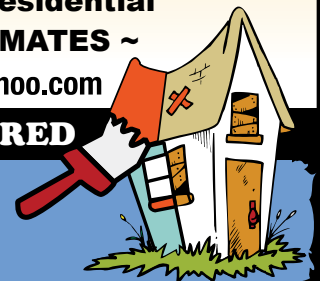
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