

# SPRING TRAILS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE SPRING TRAILS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

VOL 2

ISSUE 3

## Cardinal Sports Park



After several weeks of construction, renovations to the tennis courts at Cardinal Park are complete. Quality Courts and Surfaces completed the final touches in February and literally within hours of re-opening the courts, kids and families were seen playing and enjoying the new amenities.

Courts 3 and 4 received a new surface, a new backboard, and a new separation net between the tennis courts. Courts 1 and 2 received a new surface as well as 4 new amenities: volleyball/badminton, basketball, pickleball and a general purpose court. Still planned are LED upgrades to court lighting and targeted landscaping improvements to control soil erosion and run off.

Spring Trails Board of Directors again wants to recognize the resident volunteers of the Beautification Committee. The overwhelming success of this one-of-a-kind sports facility is a direct result of their hard work and commitment to Spring Trails. Jacob Corbin, John Rigsdell, Brandon McCann, Amanda Fonua, Malinda Seger, Thomas Bullard, Angela Boylan, John Kessler.

### What is Pickleball?



So just what is Pickleball you might ask. Pickleball is a paddle sport that combines aspects of tennis, badminton and ping-pong. The court resembles tennis with a smaller footprint. The net is lower similar to badminton. And the paddle resembles a ping-pong paddle only slightly bigger.

#### Basic rules:

- The ball is served from behind the baseline using an underhand motion and without allowing the ball to bounce from the ground/court. The ball is served to the opponent's service zone.
- When the ball is served, the receiving team/opponent must let the ball bounce before returning, and then the serving team must let it bounce before returning. After the ball has bounced once in each team's court, both teams may either volley the ball or play it off a bounce. This is referred to as the Double-Bounce Rule.
- Points are scored by the serving team only, after the opponent commits a fault.
- The game is won by the first team to successfully score 11 points, with a 2-point margin.

Learn the history of pickleball and more about the rules, skills and strategies of the game at [www.usapa.org](http://www.usapa.org).

# SPRING TRAILS

## Who ya gonna call?

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MUD 94/*Board of Directors*..... [www.mcmud94.com](http://www.mcmud94.com)

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Precinct 3 Commissioner James Noack ..... 936-539-7817

Sheriff Rand Henderson ..... 936-760-5871

Constable Ryan Gable ..... 281-364-4211

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## Mark Your Calendars!

**March 3rd** - MUD 94 Board Meeting

**March 4th** - Recycle Pick Up

**March 9-13** - Spring Break  
(watch out for kids playing outdoors)

**March 12th** - HOA Meeting

**March 13th** - Heavy Trash Day

**March 18th** - Recycle Pick Up

**March 21st** - Community Garage Sale

**April 1st** - Recycle Pick Up

**April 7th** - MUD 94 Board Meeting

**April 9th** - HOA Meeting

**April 10th** - Heavy Trash Day

**April 15th** - Recycle Pick Up

**Visit the Spring Trails Website, Calendar  
for event times and venues.**

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# HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

*Contributed by Roger Olsen*

As summer approaches, you may be thinking how nice it would be to have an attractive St Augustine grass lawn, but aren't sure how to go about it. And you certainly don't want it to become the center of your life. Well, good news! Here are a few basic tips gleaned from Texas A&M University's (TAMU) publication *Maintaining St Augustine Grass Lawns*.

In general, St Augustine is a LIGHT traffic grass. Continuous foot or vehicle traffic are not its friend. It also doesn't like water-logged soil but it is an aggressive plant and can spread quickly to cover bare areas if managed correctly.

Caring for your St Augustine lawn is relatively simple: Begin by getting your mower blade sharpened by a professional and keep it sharp during the mowing seasons. Set the mowing deck height at 2.5 to 3 inches; 3 to 3.5 if lawn is shaded. This height will cause you to mow more often but will produce a tight turf that helps fight weeds. NEVER cut more than 1/3 of the grass height. Modern mowing blades that also mulch clippings prevent thatching and help return valuable nutrients to your lawn. No bags of grass!

What about fertilizing and watering? Fertilizing should begin about 3 weeks after the grass begins to turn green which is soon given our recent weather. Look for a fertilizer with a pre-emergent herbicide in it. Be careful about broadcast weed control under the drip line of your trees. Many of them are injured when they soak up the weed killer. If you have weeds under your trees, spot kill them with a liquid weed killer when they are young.

Now for watering: Most homeowners overwater their St Augustine. What? Yep. Except in drought, watering every 5 to 10 days to a depth of 6 inches is sufficient. To save on irrigation, add a simple rain monitor, available at local hardware stores, to your irrigation controller. Set up correctly, Nature will water your lawn with pure rainwater more often and save your expensive domestic water for household uses.

Download a copy of the TAMU publication by typing "Texas A&M St Augustine Grass" into your web browser. The article will be listed as a pdf you can download (HINT: look for publications.tamu.edu). Stick with it and chances are good your lawn will look great!

## Pet Tips from Dolores

*Contributed by Michael Ruggerio "Dolores's Dad"*



As Spring approaches, we are all anxious to get out in our yards and begin redoing flower beds, mulching, pruning, and planting! If you have furry family members, Dolores wants to make sure you keep their health and safety in mind when gardening. Some of our common yard items and even some of our favorite flowers and plants can be harmful or even fatal if ingested by our cats and dogs. Some flowers and plants you

might want to avoid if you have fur-babies are:

- **Daffodils** are toxic to both cats and dogs. The entire plant is toxic, especially the bulbs.
- **Oleander** is extremely popular along the gulf coast and even up in our area. There is even an Oleander Festival in Galveston. While loved by landscapers for its evergreen qualities and delicate flowers, the leaves and flowers are extremely toxic if ingested. They can cause severe vomiting, slow the heart rate and possibly even cause death.
- **Sago Palms** are everywhere. This was a favorite choice by the builders of Spring Trails and there is one in almost every yard it seems. Popular as both a household and outdoor plant, the Sago Palm can be very harmful to pets. If ingested, the leaves and seeds can cause vomiting, bloody stools, damage to the stomach lining, severe liver failure and, in some cases, death.
- **Kalanchoe** plants are very popular and can be found in many of our yards. This popular flowering succulent can cause vomiting, diarrhea and heart arrhythmias if ingested by pets.
- **Lilies** are beautiful whether grown in the yard or brought home to display in a vase. But if you are a cat lover, beware! Many Lilies are extremely toxic to cats. Eating just a small amount of a leaf or flower petal, licking a few pollen grains off its fur while grooming, or drinking the water from the vase can cause your cat to develop fatal kidney failure in less than 3 days. Some of the more common culprits are; Easter Lilies, Day Lilies, Stargazer Lilies, and Asiatic Lilies.
- **Azaleas**, in the same family as rhododendrons, can have serious effects on pets. Eating even a few leaves can result in vomiting, diarrhea and excessive drooling; without immediate veterinary attention, the pet could fall into a coma and possibly die.

Dolores is not saying to never select and enjoy these beautiful plantings. She just says to be mindful and keep an eye on your pets. If you leave your dogs outside unattended, you might want to research what you plant in your backyard.

If you suspect your pet has ingested any of these items or any other questionable substance, call the **ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center (APCC)** at (888) 426-4435 or contact your local veterinarian as soon as possible.



### Dolores' s Pet Friendly Weed Killer!

- 2 Cups Epsom Salts
  - 1 Gallon White Vinegar • ¼ Cup Dawn Dish Soap
- Mix together and place in spray-bottle. Spray weeds in the morning after the morning dew has evaporated.



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## WILD FLOWER GARDEN



Don't look now but Spring Trails' wildflower garden is showing signs of life. Last November, resident volunteers sowed bluebonnet and other wildflower seeds in the area across the street from Cypress Park. By early February, a handful of wildflowers peeked their beautiful petals out to meet the world. It's an exciting start to what is hoped to eventually be a beautiful and lush wildflower attraction for Spring Trails residents.

The community gardens (wildflower and pollinator) are nurtured by the Beautification Committee. Residents interested in future beautification initiatives are encouraged to contact the Board of Directors to connect with committee volunteers.

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The temperatures are slowly rising and Spring is just around the corner. Here are a few tips to help you plan your outdoor Spring clean up.

### Lawns

1. Rake leaves and thatch from your lawns and inspect for unwanted weeds.

2. Repair bare spots and ruts in your lawn.

### Flower beds

1. Remove weeds, diseased and dead plants.

2. Divide crowded perennial plants and/or plant flower bulbs

3. Add/Refresh compost and mulch

### House

1. Wash the front door, garage door and trim of dust, grime, and old pollen.

2. Wipe down outdoor light fixtures and replace light bulbs if needed.

3. Clean out gutters and drains of any debris and leaves.

### Windows

This homemade window cleaner and a squeegee or soft cloth will clean that winter film right off (inside and outside).

- 1 cup rubbing alcohol,

- 1 cup water,

- 1 tablespoon of white wine vinegar

Avoid using abrasive cleaners or a high-pressure spray washer on windows. Don't forget the screens. A mild detergent is all you need.

### Driveways and Sidewalks

Consider having your driveway and sidewalks cleaned or pressure washed to remove all of those nasty deposits. If pressure washing is not an option, there are a number of products on the market that are safe and effective at cleaning and removing dirt, moss, mold, mildew, and algae.

## Home Improvements and Repairs

Are you planning home improvements or repairs this Spring? If so, don't forget to submit an Application for Approval to Modify Home or Property, more commonly known as an ARC Request. Any change or addition to a home or property which would affect the exterior appearance requires prior approval by the Architectural Review Committee. It's easy and painless. Simply go to the Documents tab on [www.springtrails.com](http://www.springtrails.com) and click Architectural Review Committee. A list of resources will appear including the ARC request form. Please allow up to 45 days for the review process.

If expedited review is needed for emergency situations, please contact the Board of Directors through Request Manager to alert them of the pending application. Questions regarding the architectural review process may be directed to the Board through Request Manager as well.





# Planning a Spring Vacation?



Everyone loves a vacation. But no one likes surprises when you return home. Add the below steps to your vacation planning checklist and look forward to a stress-free vacation and homecoming.

The easiest and most comforting step you can take is to ask a friend to house-sit. Arranging for someone to routinely check or stay at your home, turn on and off lights around the house, and park a car in the driveway is the most reliable way to ensure your home and its contents are safe and secure while you're away.

**Prepare your home for the extended down time by following these easy steps:**

- Clean your toilets and other areas prone to growing things while you're not around.
- Check your refrigerator for food that could spoil. Place an opened box of baking soda inside to absorb odors.
- Dispose of your garbage.
- Did you make arrangements for the care of your pets? Same goes for your houseplants.
- Schedule payment of any bills...especially utility bills...that might come due during your trip.
- Adjust the temperature on your water heater and thermostat, and replace batteries controlling them if needed.
- Leave closet doors open to prevent air from getting musty.

- Turn off water valves to sinks, toilets, dishwasher, and washing machine.

- Unplug small appliances.

Securing your home will deter unwanted guests from taking advantage of your absence.

- Suspend your newspaper and mail delivery, have it forwarded to a PO Box or ask a friend to pick it up while you're away.

- Set timers to turn on and off lights throughout the house at varying times of the evening.

- Check all exterior doors and windows to ensure they are locked.

- Remove outdoor hidden keys.

- Pack your car inside the garage.

- Notify your home security service &/OR request "Constable vacation watch" through the Request Manager on the Spring Trails website.

Share your travel plans with a trusted friend who can deal with emergencies in your absence. While away, check in with neighbors. Avoid posting vacation photos to social media until you return home.

Enjoy your vacation, and have peace of mind your home and belongings will be safe and secure until you return.

# Junior Reporter



Spring Trails is seeking young reporters and photographers to contribute to the community's newsletter. Topics and areas of interest include school news (Broadway, Cox, York, Grand Oaks), nature, local events, kids and kindness, and special interests. Interested in joining in on the fun? Email your questions or suggestions to [STJuniorReporter@gmail.com](mailto:STJuniorReporter@gmail.com).

## 2020 Community Calendar

Spring Trails has a lot of community activities and events planned for 2020. New activities are being planned and updates to some old favorites are in store. Visit the website and watch for weekly eblasts for dates, locations and opportunities to volunteer.

## CenterPoint Upgrade

Spring Trails learned last November at the annual meeting that CenterPoint was planning to install an additional electrical transmission line to increase electrical capacity to Spring Trails and the surrounding area. Mr. Justin Hemperley with CenterPoint recently shared with the Board of Directors that trees have been cut, pathways are being staked, and towers are being prepared for installation. The project is progressing as planned and is slated to be active in May 2020.

## Welcome to Spring Trails!

New to Spring Trails? Welcome! You've probably already figured out how unique Spring Trails is. Well you ain't seen nothin' yet. Stay up-to-date on community news by registering with the Spring Trails website at [www.springtrails.com](http://www.springtrails.com). There you can review the Community's governing documents, preview and RSVP to upcoming community events, contact property management and the Board of Directors, request amenity access, sign up for text and email announcements, read about community initiatives, and much more.

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