

# SPRING TRAILS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE SPRING TRAILS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

VOL 2

ISSUE 9

## TAKING ACTION

Spring Trails, the Forest of Possibilities...we are truly blessed to live in an area that is abundant with nature. From the birds and wild animals to the plants and trees. There aren't many neighborhoods that are as fortunate as we are to have access to so many green nature areas, as well as live next door to Spring Creek and the Spring Creek Nature Area. This is why it was heartbreaking to one of Spring Trails' young residents to witness first-hand the pollution that some of his fellow Spring Trails residents were causing.

Thirteen-year old Matthew Reel of Magnolia Chase has called Spring Trails his home since his birth in 2006. One of the things he has loved most about Spring Trails was the easy access to nature and all that it had to offer. As a young scout he always offered Spring Trails for trash pickups and nature projects to his fellow Scouts and friends in an effort to improve and maintain the beauty he saw in Spring Trails. He has always taken such pride in his community and wanted to share it with visitors and friends.

This devotion to Spring Trails became even more evident after he witnessed some of his fellow residents disposing trash, grass clippings, pet waste and other garbage into the neighborhood stormwater drains. Matthew was disheartened by the thought that people were intentionally disposing garbage in the drains, but thought maybe they just weren't aware of the dangers caused by dumping. It was then Matthew decided to take on a project to educate and remind residents of the impact of their irresponsible use of stormwater drains for garbage disposal.

In the late summer of 2019, Matthew approached the Spring Trails HOA presenting the issues of depositing trash down the stormwater drains. He highlighted the fact that the stormwater drains run off into Spring Creek and how garbage and chemicals can affect and kill the wildlife that call Spring Creek home. He also went into detail how excessive garbage can clog and damage the drains, cause collapse and lead to flooding. He presented to the board, a project to install medallions on the over 450 stormwater drains to remind residents that the drains were not for dumping garbage of any kind.

*Continued on Page 2*



**Spring Trails has a  
Facebook page.**

*Details on page #5*

## Who ya gonna call?

### INFRAMARK

(Spring Trails Property Management) ..... 281-870-0585

### SPRING TRAILS HOA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Request Manager through [www.springtrails.com](http://www.springtrails.com)

Anthony Domingo

Leanne Kessler

Roger Olsen

Jerry Ruschhoff

Mark Zimmerhanel

### NON-EMERGENCY SERVICES

Law Enforcement (*Sheriff or Constable*) . 936-760-5800 & press 3

Fire (*South Montgomery Fire Department*) . ..... 281-363-3473

EMS (*Montgomery County Hospital District*) ..... 936-523-5000

### SCHOOLS

Sue Park Broadway Elementary ..... 281-367-4677

Cox Intermediate School..... 281-465-3200

York Junior High School ..... 832-592-8600

Oak Ridge High School ..... 832-592-5300

Grand Oaks High School ..... 281-939-0000

Conroe I.S.D. Administration ..... 936-709-7752

### MONTGOMERY COUNTY MUD 94

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

MUD 94/*Gulf Utility Services (water and sewer)* ... 281-355-1312

MUD 94/*Republic Services (trash & recycle pickup)* 713-726-7300

### MONTGOMERY COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Montgomery County ..... 936-756-0571

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

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

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

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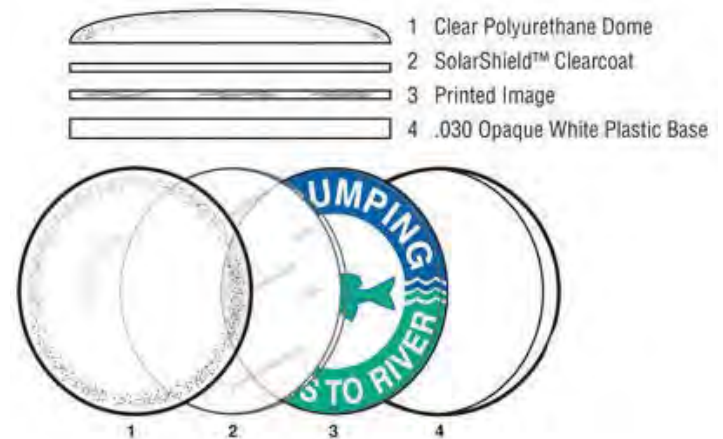
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### Continued from Cover

The proposed medallions were made from an opaque white proprietary material consisting of U.V. inhibitors and a layering of materials for flexibility and impact resistance. The image is printed on the plastic base and covered with SolarShield clear coat for added U.V. resistance. Finally a polyurethane "dome" is applied to the face of the medallion creating an optically clear, self-healing, non-yellowing surface. The medallions are affixed using a permanent adhesive specifically formulated for concrete, asphalt, metal, and just about any flat non-soil surface.

The HOA was extremely supportive of the project. However, it was explained to Matthew that Montgomery County MUD 94 was responsible for the maintenance of the stormwater drains and sewers, and he would need to receive approval from the MUD Board to move forward with the project.

Matthew reached out to the MUD 94 Board of Directors requesting an opportunity to present his project to them. And to accommodate the MUD meeting schedule which occurs during school hours, Matthew created a video explaining his project in detail. Weeks later he received the news. Not only had his project been approved but the MUD district was going to help cover the cost of the project.



Just as everything was finally coming together, COVID-19 reared its ugly head and it looked like Matthew's project would be delayed again. Matthew estimated the project would take 6-8 hours to complete with a team of 20-30 volunteers assisting in the effort. Finding that many volunteers during a pandemic and quarantine was simply unrealistic. But while on one of his "quarantine walks" Matthew witnessed a fellow resident dumping garbage down a stormwater drain and decided his project could not wait.

So with the help of his family, Matthew forged ahead with his project, and over the course of three days (over 32 volunteer hours), Matthew installed over 400 medallions on the drains throughout Spring Trails.

Though proud of the difference he was making in his community, Matthew was saddened by what he saw over the course of those 3 days.

*Continued on Page 3*



*Continued from Page 2*



Not only did he observe grass clippings and pet waste in the stormwater drains, he was shocked to find discarded newspapers, junk mail, paint and paint cans, laundry, sheets and towels, holiday decorations (plastic eggs, fireworks, wrapping paper and decorations) and batteries. Some of the drains were so full of garbage, it was a surprise rain and water run-off even made it through.

It is Matthew's hope that the medallions will be a gentle but constant reminder of the importance of NOT using the stormwater drains for dumping. Being aware of the dangers of clogged and damaged drains and taking steps to keep our community drains clear of debris and contaminants will ensure the beauty of Spring Trails is preserved and our Forest of Possibilities will continue to grow! If you would like to learn more about stormwater drainage systems and their impact on nature, send your questions or requests to [springtrailsreporter@gmail.com](mailto:springtrailsreporter@gmail.com).



## Mark Your Calendars!

**September 1st - MUD 94 Board Meeting**

**September 2nd - Recycle Day**

**September 10th - Spring Trails HOA Board Meeting**

**September 11th - Heavy Trash Day**

**September 16th - Recycle Pickup**

**October 1st - Fall communities activities kick-off.**

**October 6th - MUD 94 Board meeting**

**October 7th - Recycle Pickup**

**October 8th - HOA Board meeting**

**October 9th - Heavy Trash Day**

**October 21st - Recycle Pickup**

**November 12th - Annual Meeting and HOA Election**

*Watch for details of new Fall community activities in the October issue of the Spring Trails newsletter.*

## Communications

Thank you to this month's Newsletter Contributors: Roger Olsen, Michael Ruggerio, and the Reel Family. Residents interested in submitting stories or articles for inclusion in the newsletter can do so online at <https://peelinc.com/index.php/submit-an-article/>. Articles are due by the 10th day of the preceding month.

## HOA Updates



Introducing Mark Zimmerhanzel

During a special meeting of the Board of Directors on July 20th, Spring Trails homeowner and resident Mark Zimmerhanzel was appointed to the Board of Directors for the term expiring November 2021.

Mark was born and raised in Georgetown TX and attended Southwestern University on a baseball scholarship where he played for 3 years. He worked for the Fayette County Sheriff's Office until 2008 when he retired as Chief Deputy after 27 years of service. After retirement from the Sheriff's Office, Mark continued public service with the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles as Assistant Chief of Enforcement, retiring again in 2019.

Mark and his wife of 38 years Debra, moved to Spring Trails last Fall. Together they spend summers either at the beach or at softball tournaments throughout the United States where Mark plays in an over-60 classification.

Please join the Board in welcoming Mark to the Spring Trails Board of Directors.

# SPRING TRAILS

## Community Events

The impact of COVID-19 on community events has certainly been significant. But through it all Spring Trails' will persevere. Listening to community input and suggestions, the Board of Directors is happy to introduce new Spring Trails, socially distant activities for the Fall. Who knows...maybe they'll even become community and family traditions.

October activities start with **"Boo! Your Neighbor"!**

The idea is simple:

1. Purchase small trinkets/goodies to place in a decorated shoebox, gift bag, or other container.
2. Find an unsuspecting neighbor who DOES NOT have an "I've Been Boomed" sign in their window.
3. Place the surprise on their front patio.
4. Leave for them to find!

Complete instructions and an "I've Been Boomed" sign will be included in the October issue of the Spring Trails newsletter.

Get a head start by collecting goodies and containers in September. Dollar stores are a great resource, however if you need ideas:

- Kids – Playdo, crayons, holiday pencils, candy, stickers, etc
- Families – Cookie mix, cake mix and icing, movies, etc
- Older Neighbors – Coffee, tea, slipper socks, magazine etc.
- Anyone – Fancy socks, craft items, coffee mug, etc.

Join in the fun and let's see if we can "Boo" all our friends and neighbors in Spring Trails! **Boo Your Neighbor will kick off October 1 through October 31.**

Also in October, Spring Trails will host a **Scarecrow Contest**. Families of Spring Trails are invited to create and display a homemade scarecrow at the Visitor's Center. Entries will be eligible for a fun family prize to be awarded the last week of October. Gather up those scarecrow making materials and watch for contest details in the October issue of the Spring Trails newsletter.

Stay tuned for more holiday-themed activities and events planned for November and December.

## Call for Candidates

Nominations for the Spring Trails Board of Directors are now being accepted. This November the Association will elect 2 members to serve 3-year terms on the Association's Board of Directors. Nominations can be submitted through the Spring Trails website at [www.springtrails.com/nomination](http://www.springtrails.com/nomination) and will be accepted through September 30.

Not sure what to expect? You're not alone. Community associations are unique entities, and the Boards of Directors that lead them fill unique roles. Community association board members are expected to anticipate issues, solve problems, meet member expectations, protect jointly owned assets, and establish and enforce policies involving finances, contracts, management and legal responsibilities. Simply stated, community association boards:

1. represent and protect the interests of the community;
2. preserve the quality of life of residents; and
3. protect and increase property values.

Join our strong community of volunteers and be part of preserving The Forest of Possibilities.

## Yard of the Month

Congratulations to Spring Trails' July 2020, Yard of the Month winners! Well done!



Birch Ridge-27723 Amy Willow



Pecan Crossing-1418 Kallie Hills



Willow Glen-2307 Cory Crossing

Three yards will be selected each month, May through August. Winners will receive a gift card and their yards highlighted on the Spring Trails website and newsletter. Good luck and happy landscaping!





## How Does Your Garden Grow?

*Contributed by Roger Olsen*

Well, we've almost made it through summer and hopefully the milder days of Fall will be kind, but watch out! The milder weather (70 – 90 degrees F) coupled with high humidity and cooler evenings will invite a St. Augustine lawn- devastating fungus called "brown patch". If you've been in South Texas for at least one complete set of seasons you know all too well that August through September (and sometimes earlier) brings brown patch and ravages your beautiful lawn.

Take heart! There are preventive habits you can establish to prevent brown patch but it's best to realize that your lawn will not be completely untouched unless you are very lucky or just plain good at managing brown patch through experience and/or listening to very wise advice from local gardening radio shows, turf books, etc.

First, what is brown patch? It is a fungus that attacks the top portion of the grass plant but does not kill the crown as some fungi will do. The fungus occurs naturally but if you have a lawn mowing service, chances are pretty good it has been transferred to your lawn from another homeowner's lawn.

Second, what does it look like? The actual appearance can vary greatly with the type of grass and soil conditions. It usually makes its early appearance as thinned patches of light brown / yellow grass that are roughly circular in shape. You may even see some suspicious yellowing of individual grass blades before the actual patches appear. Diameters of patches range from a few inches to several feet and may be irregular in shape with tan leaf spots and dark-brown borders on grass blades at or near the soil surface.

Now what? If you experienced brown patch in your lawn last Fall, look in those locations first as the fungus tends to return with a vengeance. Take these steps:

1) Water your lawn only as needed and to a depth of 4-6 inches. During this time of year when rain is frequent, 1 time per week should be sufficient for your lawn;

2) When you do water, water early in the day to allow the grass to dry quickly. Use a simple moisture meter to determine moisture content of soil. These meters are usually sold in the Garden departments of home maintenance stores;

3) Avoid over fertilization in Spring and Fall. If you felt that a little fertilizer was good but a little more was better, it's going to make treatment difficult.

4) Avoid spreading the disease to other areas: Remove grass clippings if the weather is warm and moist to prevent spread to other areas during mowing;

5) Before brown patch appears, treat your lawn with a fungicide

(spray or granule) that is EPA registered for turf diseases. Spray if active disease; granule if no disease is apparent. If you are not sure, use liquid. You need to understand this will be a battle between you and the fungus until much cooler weather inactivates the fungus. Read the fungicide label to understand frequency of application.

Now, the bad news... When fungicides are applied, they CURE, they do not PREVENT. The best way to stop lawn fungal diseases is by learning lawn care habits that decrease fungus friendly conditions such as those listed above. Curative applications will stop the active spread of the fungus but it won't fix the damage that has been done and it most likely won't get rid of the fungal development or spore populations in the area. Fungicides are a quick fix and must be re-applied every couple weeks during the disease spread.

Garden suppliers offer a range of products: Ortho, Scotts, Bonide, Spectricide, Bayer and others. Those products listed as "systemic" may provide a little longer control since they are absorbed into the plant like an antibiotic you may take for an infection. Those products with the active ingredient Myclobutanil offer systemic qualities, but look on the label for the word "systemic".

If you already have active disease growth as I have at times, use a liquid turf fungicide because it gets to work much quicker than granules. I've lost large patches of lawn in the past but early and consistent treatment typically limits the damage. Again, the best treatment is good lawn care habits. But if you don't have it down to a "science" yet like most of us, fungicide applications can help.



## Facebook Launch

Spring Trails has launched an official Facebook page. Here residents can learn of upcoming events and meetings, updates on community developments, activities and projects, invitations to volunteer, and general fun facts and photos. Search @springtrails and join the Spring Trails Facebook community.

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## Mosquito Abatement



Last month, the Board announced efforts to identify alternate mosquito control options to reduce and more effectively control the mosquito population throughout and around the common areas of the community. The natural habitat and vast green spaces enjoyed by residents also provide prime breeding grounds for mosquitoes.

Currently, the Association's pest control contractor, Excalibur, chemically "fogs" residential streets within the community weekly, at night, when mosquitoes are active. This fogging knocks down the current crop of mosquitoes but does nothing to prevent the hatching of mosquito eggs and development of larvae.

Mosquitos can lay their eggs in as little as a tablespoon of stagnant water. In 5-7 days the eggs hatch and the larvae mature to become new mosquitoes. Basically, a new crop of mosquitoes is hatched every week.

After consultation with Excalibur, the Board approved the addition of larvicide to the Association's mosquito control program. During the month of August, Excalibur placed 400 larvicide "briquettes" within the tree lines along Spring Trails Bend, Spring Trails Park and other stagnant water collection areas around common areas. The briquettes contain an environmentally friendly bacteria that attacks and kills mosquito larvae and is harmless to plants and animals. The briquettes are effective for about 30 days.

The briquettes look like small donuts about 4 inches in diameter and 1 inch in thickness. While this is an environmentally friendly bacteria (except to mosquitos) and does not harm plants or animals, residents should be aware of and avoid moving or disturbing the briquettes. Residents are also reminded to continue self-help mosquito control by ensuring rain or irrigation water is not collecting in containers or locations in your yard. For more do-it-yourself mosquito control tips, visit the Agrilife Extension website at <https://agrilifeextension.tamu.edu/browse/mosquito-control/>.

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## Pet Tips from Dolores “The Dog Days of Summer”

Contributed by Michael Ruggerio “Dolores’s Dad”



It's on these hot days of summer that I am particularly grateful for my pink stroller! I can't even imagine actually “walking” while on our walks. But I know that some of my friends enjoy their walks a great deal so let's be sure our people know what precautions to take when it's hot.

You might think the pads on our paws are tough, but we can burn our paws just like you can burn yours! Vetsnow Group came up with an easy way to test if the sidewalks are too hot for us guys. Simply take the back of your hand and place it on the pavement for seven seconds. If you struggle to hold it down, it's too hot for our paws! Remember this, if it is 77 degrees outside and there is no wind, asphalt can reach a temperature of 125 degrees.

If your pup is unusually difficult to control, it is possible that they are just trying to get to a cooler surface. Try to plan walks with your dogs in the early morning hours before the pavement heats up or later in the evening after the sidewalks have cooled down. If you must walk during hotter parts of the day, try to keep us in the shade and in grass as much as possible.

There are products that help to protect our paws, such as paw-wax. Some folks even invest in summer booties for their four-legged friends. These can make the difference in an enjoyable walk and a trip to the vet. Burnt paws can be extremely dangerous and lead to infection. If you think your pup's paws might be burned, contact your vet immediately. Signs of burned paws can be a pinkish color, excessive licking or chewing and, of course, blisters.

We do not have to be on a walk to get overheated. Here are a few

other things to remember:

- Never leave us in a car. Even on a mild day in the 80's, the inside of a car can quickly get to 120 degrees. Cracking a window will not help. Just don't do it!

- Keep the house cool, even when you are gone. Instead of turning the AC off, try leaving it slightly higher, but still on when you are not home. Consider closing blinds and/or curtains when you are out to reduce sun coming into the house.

- Again, walk us during cooler parts of the day and maybe even invest in an Evaporative Dog Cooling Vest! These are wonderful!

- We consume twice the amount of water during hotter months. Water helps us cool down and dispel heat through panting without dehydrating. You can always encourage us to drink more water by making sure our water is fresh and even adding few spoons of chicken broth.

- If we must stay outside during any part of the day, make sure we are as comfortable as possible. Fans make a difference, as do a raised bed that allows air to pass underneath, a shade or canopy. Be sure we have plenty of fresh water and shade.

- We sure would rather be inside though!

Signs of heat exhaustion:

- Reddening of the skin
- Nausea and vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Rapid panting
- Restlessness
- Increased respiratory and heart rate
- Excess drooling

Signs of heat stroke:

- Acting confused
- Dizziness
- Lethargic behavior
- Drooling / thick saliva
- Dry gums
- Refusing water
- High temperature (feels hot to touch)
- Rectal bleeding
- Seizures
- Loss of consciousness
- Shock

If you believe we have become over heated, you should cool us down immediately. Move us to a cool area and offer us fresh, cool water. Wet our fur down with room temperature water, avoid cold water as it can cause us to cool down too quickly and cause other problems. Once our fur is wet, place us in front of a fan to dry.

If you think it is more serious and you think we might be having a heat stroke, immediately hose us down with water. Do not dry us off – place us wet in the car, run the AC and get us to the Vet!

Remember that we love you and we will follow you anywhere. It is up to you to keep us healthy, happy and safe! And maybe a stroller!



*Dolores del Lago would like to acknowledge her research data from The American Red Cross and Vetsnow Group.*



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