

PINE BROOK PERIODICAL

Official Newsletter of Pine Brook Homeowner's Association

July 2010 - Volume 2, Issue 7

Celebrate the 4th of July at our Annual Bike Parade!

Don't miss the fun as Pine Brook celebrates July 4th with our annual bike decorating contest and parade! New for 2010 - Pets are invited to join in and compete for Pine Brook's Festive Pet award.

The parade starts at the park on Park Center Way at 10 a.m. Those who wish to participate should arrive between 9:30 and 9:35 a.m. to line up. We will parade down Park Center Way to Canary Grass, and then circle back to the park. There will be prizes, refreshments, photo ops, and lots of FUN! For more information or to volunteer your time to help, contact Amy at adbest91@yahoo.com.

BOY SCOUT FLAG SERVICE

Continues for July 4th



Boy Scouts from Troop 870 set up beautiful American flags for the Memorial Day holiday and they are doing it again for July 4th!

If you haven't already subscribed for this fun and easy way to show your pride in the country and in Pine Brook, email your name, address and phone number to: Flags@Troop870wUBC.com. In your email, also mention if you have a sprinkler system. Or you can call 281.216.2493.

The troop will also put out flags for 9/11 and Veterans Day. The annual cost is \$40, but since they are only doing three more flag days this year, the pro-rated cost is just \$30. After you have made contact with the troop, make your check payable to Boy Scout Troop 870 and put it in an envelope under your welcome mat.

The flags are 3'x5' on 10' steel flag poles. The boys put the flags out the day before the holiday and they pick them up the day after the holiday.

If anything happens to the flag or the pole while it is flying at the subscriber's home, the troop will replace it. They store the flags in an

air-conditioned storage unit when they aren't being flown.

The 54 boys of Troop 870 meet on Monday evenings at University Baptist Church on Middlebrook Drive.

They will be using these raised funds to defray part of the cost of sending eight scouts to Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico for 12 days of backpacking and thirty boys to Skymont Scout Reservation in Tennessee for a week of camp this summer.

The troop's primary area of focus is on service projects. In a typical year, they perform well in excess of 1,000 hours of community service. For example, in the aftermath of Hurricane Ike, they manned a relief station at First Baptist Church in Seabrook where they gave out over 7 tons of ice and mountains of water bottles.

Sometime in the early spring next year, they will send out renewal notices to existing subscribers and invitations to those who haven't subscribed yet.

For more information about the troop, visit its website at: www.Troop870wUBC.com.



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Interested in submitting an article? You can do so by emailing jetov@mac.com or by going to:

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All news must be received by the 9th of the month prior to the issue.

ADVERTISING INFORMATION

Please support the businesses that advertise in the Pine Brook Periodical. Their advertising dollars make it possible for all Pine Brook residents to receive the monthly newsletter at no charge. If you would like to support the newsletter by advertising, please contact our sales office at 512-263-9181 or advertising@PEELinc.com. The advertising deadline is the 8th of each month for the following month's newsletter.

DON'T WANT TO WAIT ON THE MAIL?
The Pine Brook Periodical can be viewed
online at www.PEELinc.com

Tournament Champions



The NASA Area Little League (NALL) Twins are the Coach Pitch Tournament Champions. Top row, from left, Assistant Coach Barret Cleveland, Assistant Coach Sean Nimmo, Assistant Coach David Sauer and Head Coach Craig Powell, middle row; Micheal Barrett, Hayden Brookover, Ryan Ruzek, Carson Sauer of Pine Brook, Weston Nimmo, Gavin Dahms, front row; Truett Ross, John Marietta, Jaeden McCleskey of Pine Brook, Dax Massengale, Colton Powell.

Houston Heavy Trash Schedule

Heavy trash is pick-up on the FIRST WEDNESDAY of every month. Odd number months are tree/shrub trash, and even number months are large junk trash.

Tree Waste

Clean wood waste such as tree limbs, branches, and stumps (lumber, furniture, and treated wood will NOT be accepted).

Junk Waste

Furniture, appliances, and other bulky material. Junk Waste may not be placed for collection during a Tree Waste month.

- Tree Waste months: January, March, May, July, September, November
- Junk Waste months: February, April, June, August, October, and December

Yankees Rank 1st in East Division!



It was a nail biting ending of the season as the Yankees pulled out a win in the last inning to beat the Angels, clinching first place in the East Division of the Bay Area Texas Baseball Machine Pitch 1. From left, Tyler Carroll, Jack Beck, Daniel Ing, Logan Reinhart, Sharif Abouleish, Caleb Evans-Pickens, Dustin Graham, Reagan La Mance, Robert White and Nicholas Rodriguez.



COLIN'S HOPE

Increasing water safety awareness and standards

FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT DROWNING

Drowning is the leading cause of unintentional injury-related death in children ages 1-4



Drowning is the 2nd leading cause of unintentional injury-related death ages 1-14.

DROWNING WILL AFFECT YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW

For more information, check out our website at www.colinshope.org

DROWNING CAN STILL OCCUR EVEN IF YOU KNOW HOW TO SWIM

NO ONE is "drown proof" – no matter their level of swimming ability.

Falls, entrapments, and injuries lead to drowning regardless of swimming level.

A majority of people overestimate their own and their child's ability to swim, especially in a panic event.

DROWNING IS QUICK AND SILENT



Drowning occurs in as little as 2 minutes.



Irreversible brain damage occurs in as little as 4 minutes.



Most children are out of sight or missing for less than 5 minutes and usually in the presence of 1 or both parents.



Most children die who are submerged for as little as 6-10 minutes.

Children who drown do not **scream, splash, or struggle**. They silently slip beneath the water, even with adults & lifeguards present.

Neighbors Work At Saving Wetlands

By Houston Chronicle reporter Lisa Gray (This article ran in the Houston Chronicle on May 28. It is reprinted here by permission.)



Pine Brook residents began restoring their tiny prairie wetlands in January 2008, and almost immediately, birds such as this yellow-crowned night heron found it and made it their home.

Ten years ago, John Jacob argued with his co-author. The Pine Brook Neighborhood Park didn't deserve to be listed in their Texas Coastal Wetlands

Guidebook, Jacob said. The park, surrounded by new houses, was a suburban developer's idea of wetlands remediation — not a real wetlands. Or at least not much of one. Not anymore.

Hundreds of years ago, when buffalo and wildfire ruled what's now Clear Lake, the spot was only one of thousands of "prairie potholes," shallow depressions in the grassland that sometimes held water. Birds loved potholes. And its aquatic-plants soil improved water quality, filtering the rainwater before it seeped to the bayous and out to the ocean.

After ranchers and their cattle moved in, the Pine Brook pothole survived mostly intact. But then the suburbs invaded.

Like other pasture lands around it, the low-lying five acres were bulldozed to make way for upscale houses. Then the developer found out that federal wetlands regulations prevented development on that five acres. So the land was given a little viewing deck, called a nature park (an amenity!), and left alone.

But if you want a prairie to survive, you can't just leave it alone. Surrounded by houses, without cattle or buffalo to trample saplings, the marshy grassland succumbed to trees. Almost all of them were Chinese tallowes, a fast-growing species that native bugs and birds won't eat, and that crowds out native plants.

That's barely a functional

wetlands anymore, Jacob told his co-author, Daniel Moulton. That ecosystem is crashing. It's almost gone.

Moulton, though, held his ground. Suburban development is quickly destroying Texas coastal wetlands — it's estimated that fewer than 3 percent still survive — so he argued that they should list even a wetlands as puny and pitiful as Pine Brook's.

Jacob allowed the listing to survive, but it hardly sugar-coated the state of affairs. "May not survive long," it said.

BOOT-SUCKING MUD

A few years ago, Debra Goode, a medical-business consultant, read about the pothole in her

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Electricity is **ON SALE** at StarTex Power!



Alan "Petrodamus" Lammey, host of 'Energy Week', can be heard every Sunday on 1070 KNTH in Houston.

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Neighbors Work at Saving Wetlands - (Continued from Page 4)

neighborhood newsletter. A nature lover, she'd planted her own yard to attract butterflies and birds. It bothered her to think that her neighborhood's nature park wasn't the ecosystem it ought to be.

She appointed herself to organize a rescue effort. She recruited a couple of neighbors to research precisely what it would take to remove the tallow trees, and what they found wasn't encouraging. The trees wouldn't be easy to chain saw: Some were 40 feet tall, but they often stood only a foot apart from each other, and in about foot of swamp water to boot.

In January 2008, she organized a series of neighborhood cleanup days. She wasn't sure people

would show up. Pine Brook is a professional community, full of NASA engineers and consultants and astronauts — people who work long hours, don't know many of their neighbors, and hire services to mow their perfect lawns. Muck and chain saws aren't their scene.

But they came. Over the next few months, more than 85 people volunteered: whole families, retired executives, Scout troops and a shuttle commander.

In the most tallow-crowded part of the pothole, volunteers standing in the calf-high water formed a 100-foot-long assembly line, passing 18-foot cut trees from hand to hand to the water's edge, where an all-terrain vehicle could drag them away. Fairly

often, you'd hear someone call for help and know that the mud had sucked off yet another person's boot.

They planted some aquatic plants, and at the pothole's edge, they added prairie grasses, vines and native trees. And freed from the tallows' shade, seeds long buried in the soil began to sprout. But still, in those first few months, the landscape — a sea of tallow stumps — depressed even Goode.

But to birds, the improvement was more obvious. That very first spring, waterbirds like egrets and herons moved back to the pothole. Migrating birds stopped over in flocks hundreds-strong.

The sight of them riveted Goode. It's working, she thought.

This is going to work.

EARTH'S KIDNEYS

"Maidencane!" Jacob crowed recently, pointing to a tall plant with its feet in the water. "That's a primo prairie grass."

"Red-shouldered hawk!" said Glenn Olsen of the Houston Audubon Society.

They were standing with Debra and me at the edge of the pothole, and as they identified species, they sounded like little boys admiring cards in a Pokémon deck: "Sugarcane plume grass!" ... "A whistling duck!" ... "Oh, look at your buttonbush, girl!"

The Pine Brook pothole is a tiny, tiny piece of wetlands. But it represents a victory, and these days, prairie experts don't get to

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Neighbors Work at Saving Wetlands - (Continued from Page 5)

celebrate many victories. Jacob, who'd come so close to writing off the Pine Brook pothole, could barely contain himself.

"This is a world-class landscape," he said, nodding toward the water. "And this kind of landscape is vanishing. People say that the rain forest is the earth's lungs. But these boys, the wetlands, they're the earth's kidneys. Everyone worries about the rain forest — about the lungs — but they don't understand that our wetlands are more threatened. Our kidneys are failing. And would we be any less dead without our kidneys than without our lungs?"

Olsen, tracking a bird, put down his binoculars and turned toward us. "This is a great example of what neighborhoods can do," he said. "We need a thousand more Debra Goodes."

**NOT AVAILABLE
ONLINE**

From the Board *The cost of brick fences*

Some residents have asked about the Board's plans for replacing the 12,785 linear feet of existing concrete panel fence surrounding Pine Brook with a brick fence.

The concrete fence is estimated to have a 30-40 year useful life with proper maintenance. The community has spent \$72,000 since 2002 on maintaining the fence and budgets \$4,000 annually for future maintenance, which may be inadequate if failures accelerate.

The Board asked CIA to investigate alternatives for replacement of the fence which are summarized as follows.

The cost to replace the fence is estimated at \$1.2 to \$1.5 million. The community essentially has three options if the residents desire to replace the fence:

1. A special assessment of about \$1,150 per household requiring two-thirds of the residents approval. This option would not significantly impact the existing annual assessment of \$379; although, the Board is considering an increase in 2011.

2. Take a 15-year 6.75 percent bank loan using \$250,000 of our reserve fund. This option would require raising the annual assessment by \$100 per household for the term of the loan. Options one and two will allow the work to commence in 2012 if approved by the residents.

3. Accumulate funds by increasing the annual assessment 15 percent annually until 2015. The annual assessment would increase from \$379 to about \$715 in 2015, and the project would start in 2015.

A Place to Rest



Notice anything new at the tennis courts? The new bench at the tennis court is made of recycled materials and purchased with funds Pine Brook received from winning former city councilman Peter Brown's community recycling contest.

Tell Us How We're Doing!

All residents have or will soon be receiving in the mail a Community Survey from CIA Services. The survey is a report card used by the Board to gauge the sentiment in the community on how well the Board is doing in looking after the community. All residents are encouraged to return the survey to CIA ASAP or the survey can be completed on-line at CIAServices.com.

Book Club, Bunco or Bridge?

Attention neighbors! We are excited to announce we have a budding book club forming and are welcoming new members to join at anytime. The Bunco interest is increasing as well, so please let me know if you would like to be included on this new group's email communications. Are you looking for a way to beat the summer heat? How about enjoying new friendship, fun and refreshments over a daytime game of Bridge?

Many thanks to the wonderful neighbors who have expressed interest in expanding our social activities. I am looking forward to getting to know you all better and encourage everyone to consider trying one of the activities or suggesting a new group. For more information, call or email Amy Best at 713 582-9992, or adbest91@yahoo.com.

Classified Ads

Personal classifieds (one time sell items, such as a used bike...) run at no charge to Pine Brook residents, limit 30 words, please e-mail jetov@mac.com.

Business classifieds (offering a service or product line for profit) are \$50, limit 40 words, please contact Peel, Inc. Sales Office @ 512-263-9181 or advertising@PEELinc.com.

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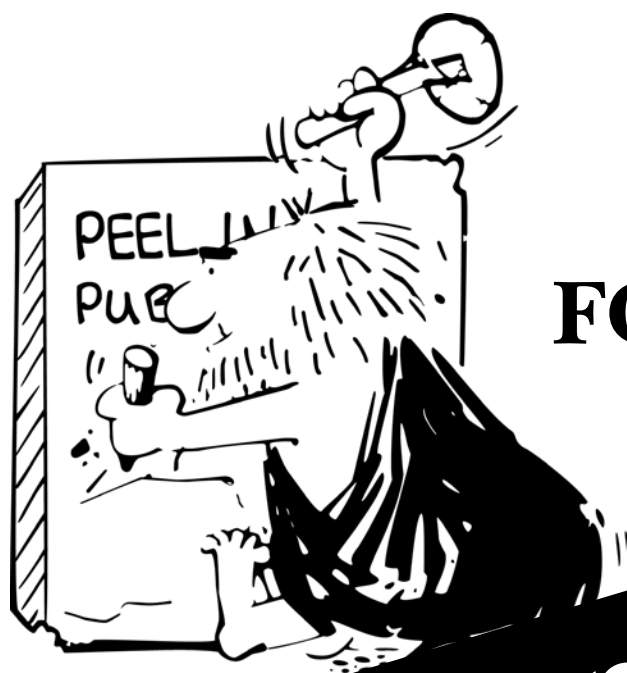
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