

The Village Gazette



Volume 11, Issue 4
Village Creek Community Association

April 2014

LANDSCAPE CORNER

By Gordon R. Watson

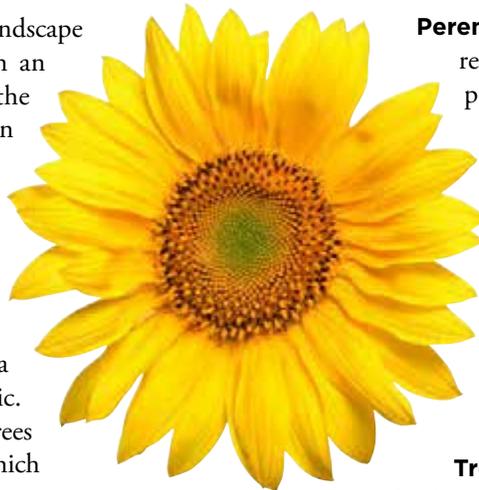
Landscape Committee Update: The landscape committee and Board are working with an arborist to develop a plan for trees in the Village Creek (VC) Common areas (often called “reserves”). In addition, they are working on a plan for the Spring Cypress/Village Creek Trail entrance.

Tree Diversity: As part of the plan, it is likely that some trees which replace the oaks will not be oaks. The arborist has advised us that if VC is ever exposed to a serious oak disease, it would be catastrophic. In short, the plan will be to diversify our trees as time goes on. We will pass along ideas which apply to residents’ trees as we learn them.

Hint: Remind your children that trees and shrubs in common areas are not mature enough for climbing.

Tree Stakes: Many tree stakes are still around trees in yards. In most cases, stakes are not required after the first year. As time goes on, these become VERY difficult to remove.

Vegetables: Warm weather has arrived, so get those warm weather plants in the ground as soon as possible. Large tomatoes have a short season here, so plant them soon (last month would have been better). Consider cherry tomatoes too, as they tend to survive the summer heat well. Placing mulch around plants, such as tomatoes, will help keep the soil cool for a bit. Plant tomatoes deeply to provide better root growth. Remove leaves before burying that part of the stem. This is the month to plant okra (which we enjoy, and it is a star performer here) and sweet potatoes (which also grow really well and are tasty). Add some fertilizer for most plants.



Perennials and Annuals: Divide clumps and remove old growth now. Plant warm season perennials and annuals. Plant bulbs now.

This is the time to plant annuals, though many of us prefer to stick with the less labor-intensive perennials. Plant some sunflower seeds now. Keep the seeds moist until they are well established. For the very large sunflowers, plant the seeds 12” apart rather than a few inches...as the seed package suggests. Plant a few extras in a pot in case some don’t germinate, but most will.

Trees, Shrubs, and Vines: Those trees, shrubs, and vines that have been dormant have awakened for their spring, summer, and fall show. Prune lightly if required. Oaks probably shouldn’t be pruned this month because of the potential for disease transmission. Fertilize trees and shrubs in late winter before growth begins.

Roses: According to the Texas Gardener, April is the peak season for roses. When the rose flowers fade, do a light pruning (deadheading) to remove the old blooms. Add ¼ cup fertilizer to each plant soon after...to encourage new growth.

Lawns: Healthy grass is your best defense against weeds. Apply lawn fertilizer after the second mowing. Use a fertilizer with 3-1-2 or 4-1-2 ratio of nutrients, applying 1 pound of nitrogen per 1000 of square feet of lawn area (from Texas Gardener Magazine). Make sure you are getting sufficient water

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The Village Gazette

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 Constables Office 281-376-3472, www.cd4.hctx.net
 Klein Fire Dept. 281-376-4449
 Poison Control Center 800-764-7661
 Willowbrook Methodist 281-477-1000
 EMERGENCY 24 HOUR LINE 281-537-0957
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SCHOOLS

Tomball ISD 281-357-3100, www.tomballisd.net
 Willow Creek Elem (K-4)..... 281-357-3080
 Northpointe Int (5-6)..... 281-357-3020
 Willow Wood Jr (7-8) 281-357-3030
 Tomball High (9-12)..... 281-357-3220
 Tomball Memorial High School..... 281-357-3230
 Transportation..... 281-357-3193

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 CenterPoint-Gas..... 713-659-2111
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 FBI..... 713-693-5000
 Harris County Animal Control 281-999-3191
 Houston Chronicle 713-220-7211
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 Republic Waste..... 713-849-0400
 Trash pickup Tues/Fri
 Recycling Fri (only newspapers/#1 & 2 plastics/aluminum cans)
 Yard Stork kpuente@garygreene.com

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Editor
 Jerry Gabbert jgabbert@gmail.com
 (Deadline is the 5th of each month)
 Publisher - Peel, Inc..... 512-263-9181
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RESIDENT BOARD MEMBERS

Tom Brogan
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Home Repair Thoughts

by Gordon R. Watson

Our heaters worked hard this winter, and now they will work hard during our warm summer. There really aren't many things that need to be done to maintain air conditioners and furnaces, but a few are pretty much necessities. Change filters at least once a year or more depending on your lifestyle and family size. A good way to determine if a filter needs changing is to look through it at a bright light. If you cannot see the light, the filter should be changed.

Yearly, or at least every few years, add a cup of Clorox (liquid bleach) to your air conditioning condensate line (in the attic) to prevent clogging from biological growth. Normally, the place you pour it is a vertical white PVC pipe (usually capped) in the drain line leaving the air conditioning unit in the attic. Use a funnel and eye protection. If the fan is on, air will be coming out of this pipe. You absolutely don't want to drip chlorine bleach down over the furnace. It is VERY corrosive to paint, metals, and electronics. If you aren't sure what to do, you may want to hire someone to do this. If left undone, it is likely that (within

five to ten years) the line will clog and overflow. The worst case is that a secondary drain will not work or a connection will fail, and you will end up with water damage to a floor, ceiling or wall. Most homes here drain the condensate to the sanitary sewer, so you normally will never see the condensate. If you see water dripping out of one of the pipes outside, it is likely that you have a clogged primary drain. The problem must be fixed or damage may occur.

The condensing unit coils outside should be cleaned every year or so. While this is a fairly simple operation (explained on YouTube), electricity and water are involved, so most of us should leave it to the professional.

This is a reminder that if you are having smoke detector problems such as alarms going off even though you have recently replaced batteries, you may need to replace the entire smoke detector. Most detectors should be replaced every ten years. They

(Continued on Page 4)



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ANNUAL EASTER PARADE AND EGG HUNT

Watch your e-mail for final day and time as we are putting the final touches on the Easter Celebration at Village Creek the weekend of April 12th & 13th.

HOW TO FIND PAST NEWSLETTERS

Hey Village Creek...want to take a look at past Village Creek Gazette Newsletters?

Go to <http://www.peelinc.com/newsletter.php?newsletter=VC> and you can download any issue going back to 2004.

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The Village Gazette

Landscape Corner (Continued from Page 2)

to those areas which tend to grow weeds rather than grass. If it doesn't rain, you will need to irrigate your lawn.

A reminder: Strongly consider leaving your grass clippings on the lawn.

Our arborist strongly advises against using a combination lawn weed and feed product because these products cannot distinguish between weeds, trees and bushes.

Mulch: Keep 3 or 4 inches of mulch in all planted areas to keep the soil cool and to minimize water loss. Above all...mulch greatly reduces weeds.

APRIL'S WEATHER FROM INTELLICAST.COM

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Until next time, Happy Gardening!

The Village Creek Landscape Committee.

Home Repair (Continued from Page 2)

don't last forever, and they have saved many lives.

One small, easy to fix, problem homes commonly have is that people forget that the screws holding door handles on tend to loosen over time. Use a phillips screw driver and tighten them up every five years or so. It takes just a moment to tighten these two screws.

It is quite common in our home that TV, camera, and computer cables are not long enough. Extensions or longer cables can usually be purchased (locally or on line) which will solve this problem. You can generally find pretty much any cable product you can imagine these days. Often less expensive cables will work just fine. We recently bought a new computer, and the front USB connector was not appropriately placed for our situation. I found a short 90 degree connector/extension which solved the problem completely.

By the way, a consumer's magazine recommends against high priced speaker cables. This has been my experience as well. I once used a high price speaker cable on the back of a television. The connectors were so tight that, when I pulled the cables off, the permanent television connectors came with the cable.



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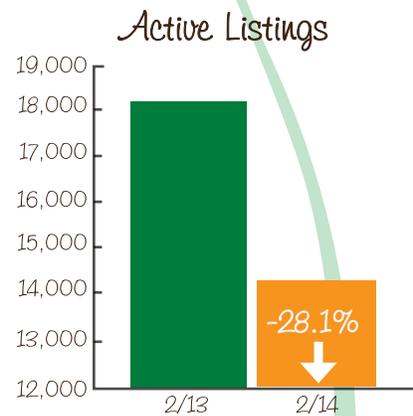
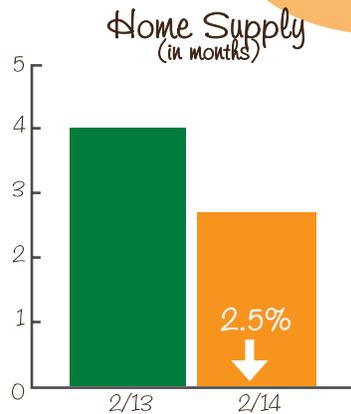
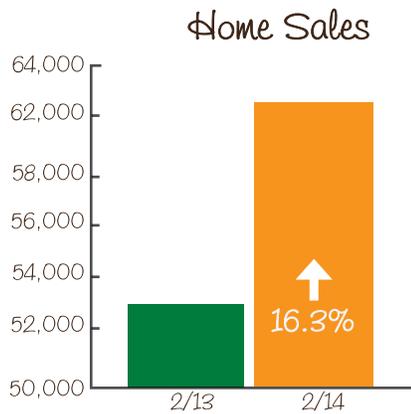


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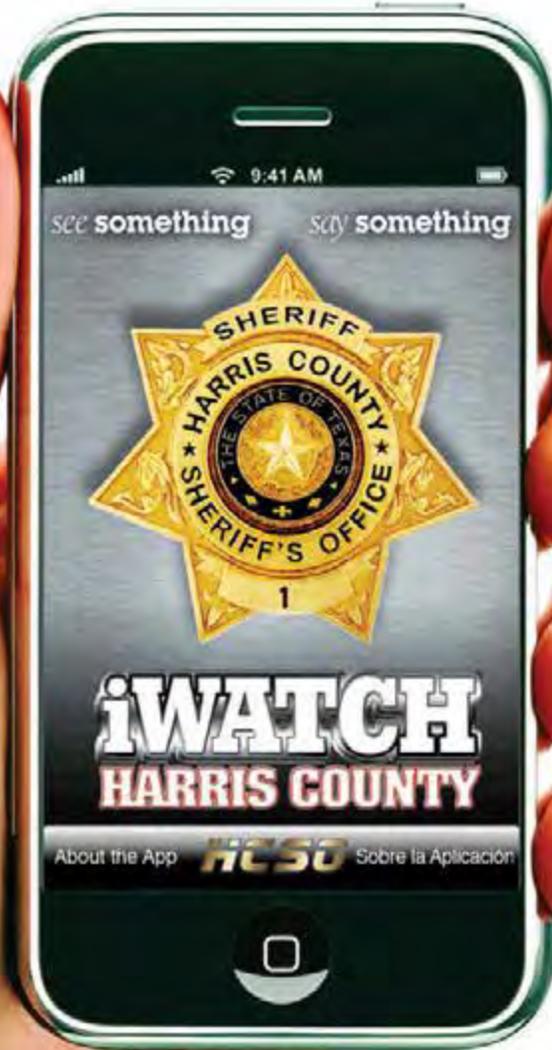
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What is iWatchHarrisCounty?

iWatchHarrisCounty is a mobile crime watch tool that you and your neighbors can use to report suspicious or criminal activity. It's a proactive, hands-on, partnership between you, the citizens of Harris County, and the Harris County Sheriff's Office (HCSO).

Why should I report these behaviors and activities?

You are the eyes and ears of your community. Your awareness of suspicious behaviors and activities and reporting it to the police can help solve crimes or prevent crimes.

What should I report?

Give as many details as possible, for example:

- ✓ Time of day
- ✓ Where it happened
- ✓ What you witnessed
- ✓ A description of individual(s) involved
- ✓ Was there a vehicle?
Color and license plate number?
- ✓ Have you seen this activity before?

There are four ways to report:

- ✓ Report online at iWatchHarrisCounty.com
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- ✓ Use the downloadable app found on iWatchHarrisCounty.com
- ✓ Call 1-855-HCSO-iWatch (1-855-427-6492)

If you have an emergency and need the police immediately do not use iWatchHarrisCounty, call 911.

If you see something, say something.

A simple observation, a single report can help solve or prevent a crime.

If one person can make a difference, consider what an entire community can do.

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Adrian Garcia, Sheriff

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2014 Spring Festivals & Events

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April 5 - 6 Houston Ultimate Women's Expo.....	HoustonWomensExpo.com
April 5 & 6 Katy's Home for the Holidays Spring Gift Market	HomeForTheHolidaysGiftMarket.com
April 6 Houston Barbecue Festival.....	houbbq.com
April 12 Japan Festival.....	713.963.0121
April 12 2014 Houston Amazing Pet Expo	Reliant Center
April 12 Earth Day Houston, Discovery Green	EarthDayHouston.org
April 12 8 th 'Art in the Park' at Elizabeth Baldwin Park.....	MidtownArtInThePark.com
April 12 - 13 19 th Bayou City Cajun Festival.....	TradersVillage.com
April 12 & 13 50 th Annual Bluebonnet Festival, Chappel Hill.....	ChappellHillMuseum.org
April 25 - 26 Freeport Riverfest 2014.....	FreeportRiverFest.com
April 25-27 & May 2-4 28 th Texas Crawfish & Music Festival	TexasCrawfishFestival.com
April 26 San Jacinto Day Festival & Battle Reenactment	SanJacinto-Museum.org
April 26 - May 4 Houston International Festival.	iFest.org
May 3 14 th Houston Dragon Boat Festival.....	HoustonDragonBoat.com
May 3 - 4 Keels-Wheels at Lakewood Yacht Club in Seabrook....	Keels-Wheels.com
May 10 Art Car Parade.....	OrangeShow.org
May 16 - 18 41 st Pasadena Strawberry Festival.....	StrawberryFest.org
June 7 Caribbean American Heritage Festival	caribbeanheritagetx.org
July 4 2014 Freedom Over Texas.....	freedomovertexas.org

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