



Willowlake Watch

www.willowlake.siteblast.com

April 2013

Volume 10, Issue 4

The Official Publication of the Willowlake Homeowners Association

YARD OF THE MONTH COMMITTEE

Introductions

Hello Willowlake residents! I, Phyllis Cutrer, and Tammy Steffen would like to introduce ourselves as the new Yard of the Month Committee chairpersons. Judging for this summer is planned for June, July and August. Watch for upcoming articles in the newsletter.

Phyllis Cutrer's introduction: I have lived in Willowlake for 3 years and I work downtown for Kinder Morgan. I have gone through the Harris County Master Gardening certification and am excited to see and judge the efforts from homeowners. I will also post excerpts from Randy Lemmon on the Gardenline (740 AM Talk Radio) on gardening tips for the month.

Tammy Steffen's introduction: I have lived in Willowlake for 5-1/2 years and I am a middle school teacher for Cypress Fairbanks I.S.D. I have previously served on a homeowners' association board for several years, and have also served on the MUD board. I am excited about helping the HOA, and look forward to awarding neighbors that take pride in our subdivision.

By the YOM Committee

Mark Your Calendar

APRIL 3, 10, 17, 24
WASTE/RECYCLE PICKUP

APRIL 18
BOARD MEETING

APRIL 21
SAN JACINTO DAY

APRIL 22
EARTH DAY

EARTH DAY

April 22

Earth Day, April 22, is a day designed to inspire awareness and appreciation for the Earth's environment. The first Earth Day was in 1970 and it is celebrated in many countries. Earth Day is spring in the Northern Hemisphere and autumn in the Southern Hemisphere.



SAN JACINTO DAY

April 21

San Jacinto Day is the celebration of the battle of San Jacinto on April 21, 1836. It was the final battle of the Texas Revolution where Texas won its independence from Mexico. It is an official holiday according to the state of Texas. An annual festival, which includes a reenactment, is held on the site of the battle. The Sabine Volunteers, a reenactment group from East Texas, participate in the San Jacinto Reenactment annually. This group is named for an actual militia group during the Texas Revolution. The reenactment group consists of four members and has appeared on the History Channel.

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

All Emergencies.....	911
Bratton Pools.....	281-988-7700
Cypress-Fairbanks Hospital.....	281-897-3300
Harris County Sheriff.....	713-221-6000
Department of Public Safety.....	281-890-5440
Fire Department (non-emergency).....	713-466-6161
Center Point Energy - Power Outages Only ...	713-207-2222
Center Point Energy - Gas.....	713-659-2111
Harris County Animal Control.....	281-999-3191
Memorial City Hospital.....	713-932-3000
MUD #11.....	281-807-9500
Poison Control Center.....	800-222-1222
Willowplace Post Office.....	281-890-2392
Harris County Road & Bridge.....	281-353-8424
VF Waste Services, Inc.	713-787-9790
Harris Co. Public Health & Environ. Svcs.	713-920-2831
District 5 Vacation Watch.....	281-290-2100

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Harris County Alarm Detail

In order to increase compliance and spread awareness, our office is requesting your assistance in informing residents in your community through your HOA newsletter or your scheduled HOA meetings, of the need to obtain a permit for operating an alarm system within unincorporated Harris County. Obtaining the required permit will avoid the issuance of a citation and excessive false alarm fees. Should you or any of your residents require a copy of the permit application form, or would like to review the regulations regarding permit requirements, you may do so by visiting the Harris County Sheriff's Office website at www.hcso.hctx.net. The application can be printed from the website, then completed and mailed to our office with the applicable fee. Should you have any questions, please contact the Alarm Detail office at 713-755-4600 during normal business hours.

KIDS' CORNER

Teaching is not for sensitive souls. While reviewing future, past and present tenses with my ninth-grade English class, I posed the question, "I am beautiful is what tense?"

One student raised her hand. "Past tense," she said.

ATTENTION:

Personal information submitted in articles may be archived by Peel, Inc. and searchable in the future.

2013 COMMITTEES

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Park Chairman

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Recipe of the Month

Spinach Quiche

Ingredients

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 cup diced onion
- 2 cups sliced mushrooms
- 1/3 cup water
- 6 cups coarsely chopped spinach
- 4 large eggs
- 1/3 cup milk
- Salt and pepper
- 6 ounces crumbled feta cheese
- 1 9-inch pie crust

Instructions

Preheat oven to 375 deg. F.
Heat olive oil in a sauté pan over medium heat. Add onions and sauté for 10 minutes. Add mushrooms and sauté for 5 minutes. In a sauce pan, combine water and spinach; cook over medium heat until wilted. Drain in a strainer and squeeze out all moisture. In a bowl, beat eggs and milk until smooth. Add salt and pepper to taste. Stir in the spinach and the onion/mushroom mixture. Blend in cheese. Pour into the pie crust; cover the edges with foil. Bake for 35 minutes. Remove the foil then bake an additional 5 minutes to brown the crust. (Makes 8 servings)



WHAT YOU MISSED

If you didn't get a chance to read the February newsletter, here's a few of the articles you missed:

- Residential Waste Collection Guidelines
- Residential Recycle Collection Guidelines (glass included)
- Safety Tips Link
- Christmas Yards of the Month
- Copy of the Harris County Sheriff's Dept. District V Vacation Watch Form
- Teenage Job Seekers
- Charitable Giving, Charitable Fraud

Below are some articles from the January newsletter:

- Annual Recap of the 2012 Homeowners' Association Meeting
- Introduction to the Willowlake Board of Directors, including a group picture
- Harris County Sheriff's Office Crime Report Willowlake for October and November
- Perfect Time For Cool Season Herbicide
- Coca-Cola Chicken Recipe
- Kids' Corner and more...

No Problem. You can view all of these articles and many more at peelinc.com

HCAD INTERNET OPT-OUT FORM

Many people do not want their name linked to their home address for the general public's viewing (via www.hcad.org.) Perhaps you're a teacher, and don't want your students/parents to know where you live. Or, maybe you're a single woman who would rather not advertise that you live alone.

So, Harris County has given you an opportunity to have "Current Owner" displayed next to your address. If you would like your name replaced with Current Owner, simply go to www.hcad.org and click on FORMS from the top menu. After the drop-down menu displays, select GENERAL INFORMATION. You will see the 2nd form listed is "INTERNET OPT-OUT form" GTA-1AD-016.

There is a fill-in version, if you would like to type in your info before printing. After you fill out and sign your form, you must mail it to Harris County Appraisal District Office, 13013 Northwest Freeway, Houston, TX 77040.



Crime Report

Willowlake (2-1-2013 - 2-28-2013)

911 Hang Up	2
Alarm Local	3
Alarm/Sil/Pan/HU	0
Burglary/Motveh	0
Burglary/Habitation	0
Check Park	62
Contract Check	79
Crim Mischief	0
Disch Fire Arm	0
Dist/Family	1
Dist/Juvenile	0
Dist/Loud Noise	3
Dist/Other	0
DWI	0
Illegal Dumping	0
In Progress	0
Meet the Resident	3
Mud Bldg Chk	15
Solicitors	0
Susp Person	1
Theft/Other	0
Traffic Hazard	0
Traffic Initiative	1
Traffic Stop	2
Vacation Watch	0
Veh Abandon	0
Veh Suspicious	4
Vehicle Stolen	0
Welfare Check	0

UNDER THE BIG TOP *2013 Kirk Spring Festival*

Location: 12421 Tanner Road
FRIDAY, May 3, 2013
4:30 pm to 7:30 pm

Come one, come all! Join us Under the Big Top for a fun filled event! We will have lots to do and tons to eat.

Wondering what to do – join us on one of our carnival rides, either the chair swing or tubs of fun. Prefer to stay on the ground? Check out the trackless train ride. Looking to challenge your skills, try a round or two of Laser Tag and see if you can be the champ.

Not everyone is in for the rides, try one of our ten games and see what you can win! Depending on how many tickets you collect will determine how many prizes you can earn.

Still looking for more to do? Join us in the gym and see if you can win a basket or bid on one of the silent auction items.

Now it is time to re-fuel, join us in the cafeteria for pizza, nachos and other great treats! Or take your chances at the cake walk and win a sweet treat.

****All tickets on sale day of the event****

Want more information, want to get involved? Contact Stephanie 713.858.6265 or slpreto@yahoo.com

TEXAS PARKING LAW

- 30 feet from stop sign
- 20 feet from crosswalk
- 15 feet from fire hydrant
- 18 inches from curb - parallel to curb, turned toward curb, with the traffic direction, car locked
- No more than 48 hours on a public street - sticker after 48 hours, tow after additional 48 hours
- No parking on the sidewalks (except where sidewalk crosses driveway)
- Cannot obstruct another's driveway
- Blocking neighbor's mail box....a gray area. deputy tells them to move. however, this is a us postal problem and probably won't be solved without intervention from deputy
- Vehicles parked on street must show valid current registration and inspection

HOW GRASS GROWS

By Stuart Franklin, President of Nature's Lawn & Garden, Inc.

<http://lawncaresimplified.typepad.com>

A lawn is simply an area of land covered by one or more types of grass plants. There are about a million individual grass plants on a 1000 square feet area. If you really want to know how to care for a lawn, you need to focus in, and learn something about the individual grass plants that comprise it.

Part 1 How Grass Grows

Q. Why is it that you can cut off a third or a half or even more of a grass plant, and do it regularly throughout the growing season, and yet the grass survives? If you did this to any of your other plants in the yard or house, they probably would die within a season.

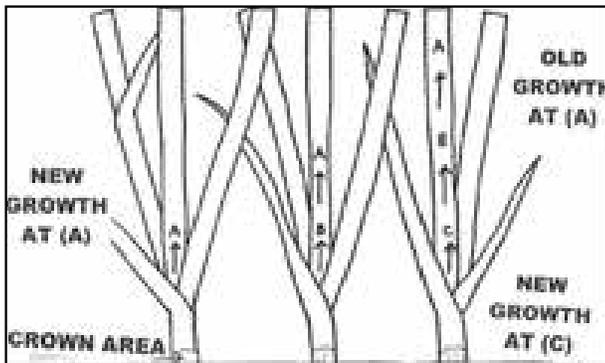
A. Because grass grows differently from most of your other plants.

Other plants, whether shrubs, trees, tomatoes or vines, keep adding on new growth to stems or branches that already have formed. New growth is always occurring at the extremities, far from the base of the plant. Not so with grass. Though some growth occurs on the leaf blades, the key growth point for grass is the crown.

The crown sits at the soil line and it is also where the shoot section and the root section of the grass meet. The crown is a highly active growing point that pushes stems (and the leaf blades that form around them) upward. Aside from the growth that can occur on the grass blades themselves, we find that essentially, the old growth of the grass is at the top of the plant while the new growth is at the bottom.

The crown is also responsible for initiating the roots, but the roots then grow in a more typical fashion. *New growth cells form at the tips of the roots instead of the crown.* The roots elongate in search of water and nutrients and form a very extensive and fibrous network, most of it being invisible to the naked eye.

According to a lawn site at Purdue, one researcher, who examined the root system of Kentucky bluegrass, found that in one cubic inch of soil there were 2,000 roots with 1,000,000 root hairs. Poor root growth, for whatever reason, means a grass plant that suffers from poor water and nutrient absorption.



Salt of the Earth: Sodium & Your Health

by Jose Mejia, M.D., Cardiologist

The Austin Diagnostic Clinic



TIPS FOR REDUCING SODIUM FOR BETTER HEALTH

Sodium is everywhere—swirling in the oceans, stored in vast underground crystalline deposits—and contained in just about every food and drink imaginable.

The fact is, sodium is as an essential, life-sustaining ingredient for every known plant and animal on the planet. Without sodium, our bodies would cease to function. Sodium helps our cells draw in nutrients, maintains balanced pH levels, enables nerve function and muscle contraction, helps regulate your heartbeat, and is a key component of your bones, explains Jose Mejia, M.D., a cardiologist for The Austin Diagnostic Clinic (ADC).

Yet, too much of this essential element can pose serious health risks in people, including high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, and congestive heart failure. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the average person should only consume 2,300 milligrams (mg)—about one teaspoon full—or less, per day. If you are 51 or older, are black, or already have high blood pressure, diabetes, or chronic kidney disease, then you should limit your intake to 1,500 mg or less per day, Dr. Mejia adds.

“Unfortunately, the average American gets about 3,400 mg of sodium a day, which is far more than is recommended for good health,” Dr. Mejia says. “Keeping the amount of sodium you eat under control can be challenging, but understanding the main dietary sources of sodium is one of the best ways to start lowering your intake.”

SALT BY ANY OTHER NAME

One of the most troubling parts of monitoring your sodium intake is understanding how extensively the food industry uses sodium as a flavor enhancer and as a preservative in everything from bread to canned soup. And then there’s a matter of naming conventions. Common table salt, otherwise known as sodium chloride, is just one form of sodium. There are many other compounds that contain sodium, including monosodium glutamate (MSG), baking soda, baking powder, disodium phosphate, sodium alginate and sodium nitrite (sometimes just nitrite.)

(Continued on Page 6)

Willowlake

Salt of The Earth (Continued from Page 5)

“Most of the sodium we eat comes from processed foods and foods prepared in restaurants. Sodium is already part of processed foods and cannot be removed. Even fresh fruits, meats, vegetables and dairy products contain sodium,” Dr. Mejia notes. “However, food manufacturers and restaurants can produce foods with far less sodium. In addition, you can select lower sodium foods when possible, and you can cook more foods yourself to better control how much sodium you eat.”

SHOPPING SMART TO REDUCE SODIUM

The most practical way to reduce your sodium is by altering what you bring home from the grocery store. Many items like baked goods, breakfast cereals, soups and lunchmeats are very high in sodium.

“Pay very close attention to food labels,” Dr. Mejia says. “It may add extra time to your shopping trip, but it’s important to understand just what the food industry means when it uses sodium-related terms. Portion size is just as important. Frankly, it’s the only way to make sure you are not eating too much sodium.”

Here are some of the most common terms used on food packaging. If it doesn't have a label, your best option may be to avoid buying it.

“Sodium free” or “Salt free.” Each serving of this product contains less than 5 mg of sodium.

“Very low sodium” - Each serving contains 35 mg of sodium or less.

“Low sodium” - Each serving contains 140 mg of sodium or less.

“Reduced” or “Less sodium” - The product contains at least 25 percent less sodium than the regular version. Check the label to see how much sodium is in a serving.

“Lite” or “Light in sodium” - The sodium content has been reduced by at least 50 percent from the regular version.

“Unsalted” or “No salt added” - Not salt is added during processing of a food that normally contains salt. However, some foods with these labels may still be high in sodium because some of the ingredients may be high in sodium.

A DASH OF SOMETHING ELSE

The widespread use of sodium means it can be challenging to avoid, especially if you are traveling with limited food options at airports. In that case, bringing low sodium snacks is a good option. At home, consider using alternative seasonings that are sodium free. Eventually, your taste buds will adjust to the lower sodium options.

“It takes some effort, but a low sodium diet can have tremendous health benefits,” Dr. Mejia says. “If you are concerned or curious, it may be a good idea to check with your physician about the amount of sodium you are eating.”

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to Celebrate?*

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to let the community know!

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