

Sugar Mill Connections

ISSUE

6

SEPT.
2012

From The Board:

Meetings

Meetings are held at:
Sugar Land First United
Methodist Church
431 Eldridge Road
Sugar Land, TX 77478

Architectural Control
Committee Meetings are
held the second Tuesday
of each month in Room
608.

Lake Committee
Meetings are held the
second Tuesday of each
month in room 600.

Board of Directors
Meetings are held the
third Monday of each
month in room 600.

HOA Annual Meeting is
held the last Tuesday in
March of each year.

For more information,
please contact Terri
Salter at MASC Austin
Properties, Inc. at:
(713) 776-1771 or
tsalter@mascap.com.

The sounds of summer have faded into the symphony of school music! Soon the first cool front of the season will be heading through town and the weekends will be full of family play in the yards.

Sugar Mill is full of different amenities and style options: we have tennis and pool facilities, lakeside living, patio homes and more traditional tree lined streets. All sections are equal and the BOD focuses on all areas. In late July the entire Board met with the City of Sugar Land concerning our Lake – there have been some permitting issues with bulkhead requests. The City Engineer explained the focus on groundwater retention and use of lake areas under the FEMA restrictions and State guidelines that were a sticking point in issuing the necessary permits. The Board pointed out that the Lake is wholly owned by the Association with each homeowner being responsible for the bulkheads on their property. The result of this discussion was an agreement that the City would allow the permits for the bulkheads. The City suggested that the Association contract with an Environmental Engineer to map the Lakes with the water flow/overflow/constant level perimeters so that everyone has an understanding of the retention capacity and peak flow of the Lake. The Board believes that this is important to the future of our community and this study is being included the next budget cycle. It will be shared with the City of Sugar Land and residents, as water is so important to all of our future.

Budget time for the Board is approaching and when the budget is completed, there will be opportunities for the community to have an input on projects. Debra Blesener will be heading the Landscape Committee and we have several residents interested in this committee – if you are interested, please let Debra know (via e-mail) and you will be contacted when the first informational meet-

ing will be held. Remember too that we still have a Board position open and if you are interested please let any member of the Board know.

We would like to remind residents of the importance of properly parking vehicles around your home. It is recommended that garages be used for vehicles – it is against our deed restrictions to convert any garage into living space – so if there is room in your garage, please use it for your vehicles. If the daily driver is too large for the garage, please park it in your driveway being careful not to block the sidewalk and if you are on a corner check to see if it obstructs the sightline of the street. Also, if there are too many vehicles for the garage please park them in a way that will not cause undo problems for your neighbors. This is so important on our cul-de-sacs as parking too many vehicles on the curve can impede any emergency vehicles, trash trucks or other large utility vehicles that must use our streets. On afternoons/evenings when there are football, family and other functions happening at your home, please make sure that your guests are parked in a way that does not obstruct the street. There are many reasons that we use our streets and we urge caution in parking and playing in the streets.

The Board of Directors considers living in Sugar Mill and working for all of our residents a privilege. Some people consider our messages preachy or negative but we do not want that to be the case. In our personal and professional lives, we find that coming home to Sugar Mill a constant reminder of what a wonderful community we inhabit!

Thanks,

Sugar Mill's Board of Directors



www.sugarmillhoa.net

Helpful Tips: How To Lower Your Utility Bills



According to the U.S. Department of Energy, the typical American family spends over \$1,600 a year on utilities. Here's some tips on lowering your utility bills:

Install Extra Insulation. This can be expensive, but it doesn't have to be, especially considering that attics and the areas around utility pipes can be some of the biggest sources for heat/cooling loss. According to the U.S. Department of Energy (USDE), the attic is where most of your home's heat escapes to. Why? Well, heat rises, and some homes may not have enough insulation in their attics to keep the heat from getting out. So, out it floats. Energy Star estimates you can save up to 20% on your heating and cooling costs by effectively insulating your home.

Program the thermostat. Give the air conditioner a break during the work day. Shifting the settings to allow higher daytime temperatures could cut the average household's electric bill by \$180 a year, according to Energy Star.

Seal Off Gaps. Weather stripping, heat-safe tape, and caulk are all relatively inexpensive and easy to find. Use them to seal off leaks to the outside of your home. The Department of Energy estimates that only 10% of air loss in a typical house comes from windows, whereas 15% comes from ducts and 13% comes from plumbing leading outside or to other un-insulated areas.

Avoid chores. The hotter the space, the harder an air conditioner must work to keep things cool. Limit the use of heat-generating appliances such as the oven, dishwasher and clothes dryer during the daytime hours when temperatures are hottest - that just makes more of a load for your air conditioner. Speaking of laundry, you may want to consider washing clothes in cold water. Approximately 90% of the energy your washer uses goes to heat the water. Since most American families do around 400 loads of laundry per year, switching to cold can really add up.

Maintain/Clean Your Appliances. If your vents are caked in dust, they probably aren't running at maximum efficiency. Likewise, replace or clean the filter on your air conditioner and drain the sediment from your water heater as often as their user manuals say you should. Appliances last longer when they're well-maintained, and it could reduce your utility bill as well.

Change light bulbs. Swapping incandescent bulbs for compact fluorescents can reduce a home's electric bill. Switching one incandescent for a CFL saves \$35 in energy costs over the projected 10-year

Lake Committee View of the Month!



Drum roll please! The Misty Lake View of the Month for August goes to Jeffrie and Terry Thomas, 13930 Drakewood Drive. They will receive a \$25 gift certificate to Home Depot donated by Vicki Haislup, Weichert, Realtors-Wayne Murray Properties. Congratulations!

life of the bulb. Not only do CFLs use less energy than conventional bulbs, they also generate less heat.

Make Your Water Heater More Efficient. If it's an old heater, chances are it's not as well-insulated as it could be. (Though be sure to first check the owner's manual to see if it's safe to add an insulating cover to your water heater.) Most hardware stores sell insulating sleeves for water heaters for around \$20-\$30. Likewise, make sure the pipes leading from your heater to the wall are insulated. If they're not, simple pipe insulation, again available at most hardware stores, should do the trick.

Install A Low-Flow Shower Head. Did you know that many older shower heads put out 4-5 gallons of water per minute? They're easy to install, and they'll help conserve water while saving you money every day.

Lastly, when it comes to saving money on your utility bills, identify the items in your house that use both water and energy. Dishwashers, washing machines, and water heaters are three major appliances that you may want to consider replacing with more energy- and water-efficient models.

Marion's Fishing Corner

Rattling baits vs. Non-rattling baits: How important is sound?

One trip to the crankbait section of the local tackle shop will make you realize just how vast our selection is when it comes to swimming plugs. Choices range from "wakebaits" (that run just under the surface regardless of how fast you retrieve them) to extra-deep divers that are advertised to reach depths of 20 feet on a long cast. And there are crankbaits designed to cover every depth in between. As we have discussed before, many factors have an influence on how deep a crankbait runs. Length and width of the diving bill, length of the cast, and line diameter are just a few.

But what I would like to touch upon today is a crankbait's characteristics for making underwater sounds. Studies have proven that baitfish, especially threadfin shad, emit a "clicking" sound when swimming through the water column. Crankbait manufacturers picked up on this concept and started incorporating a "rattle chamber" into their hardbaits. It became all the rage, and most fishermen would not purchase a bait that did not have some type of internal rattle. But in the last few years, fishermen have discovered that there can be too much of a good thing. Crankbaits became louder and louder, and in some situations they have been thought to actually spook bass and make them stop feeding. So again, bait manufacturers took notice and most of them now offer crankbaits that have no inter-

nal rattle at all. These baits are referred to as their "silent series".

Calm days with clear water are normally the best times to throw the silent baits, while cloudy days or stained to murky water conditions are usually better for the rattling versions. I advise that you try both kinds, and let the fish tell you which one they prefer. On days when fish are active and eating, they will probably readily hit either one. But on those days when fish are being picky and subtle things make a difference, one bait will most likely out-fish the other.

There are some very good crankbaits on the market today that are reasonably priced, so having a good selection in your tackle box shouldn't break the bank. Remember that the feeding mood of the fish can change from hour to hour, so you need to be able to make changes in you presentation. You just might find that certain little triggering mechanism that adds a lot more enjoyment to your time on the water.

Remember to catch and release, because a bass is too valuable of a resource to catch just once.

Good Luck, Marion

August 2012

Article written by Marion Raska who has lived in Sugar Mill and fished on Misty Lake for over 18 years.

City of Sugar Land To Participate In National Night Out

National Night Out is a community police awareness-raising event in the US. While the rest of the country observes the event on the first Tuesday of August, Texas uses the alternate date of Tuesday, October 2, 2012, to avoid hot weather.

The event has been held annually since 1984 and is sponsored by the National Association of Town Watch. National Night Out is meant to increase awareness about police programs in communities, such as drug prevention, town watch, neighborhood watch, and other anti-crime efforts.

Sugar Land neighborhoods will join forces with thousands of communities nationwide for the annual National Night Out (NNO) crime and drug prevention event on Oct. 2, from 6-9 p.m.

"Our City's most important crime prevention tool is citizen involvement," said Officer Harris Johnston, of the Crime Prevention Unit. "The Crime Prevention Program partners with residents to increase safety within the community through programs like NNO. In this spirit of cooperation, these partnerships positively influence the quality of life in Sugar Land."

Neighborhoods, blocks or streets in Sugar Land are able to register their parties each year, and police officers, firefighters, the mayor, City Council members and other City officials visit as many parties as possible.

For more information about National Night Out, contact the Sugar Land Police Department at (281) 275-2580.

Garden Club's Annual Garden Art & Plant Sale - Sept. 22

The Sugar Land Garden Club is hosting its 14th annual Garden Art & Plant Sale on Saturday, September 22, from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., at Sugar Lakes Clubhouse, 930 Sugar Lakes Drive. For more information visit sugarlandgardenclub.org or call 281-491-9609. Admission is free. Sugar Land Garden Club is a 150+ member, 501(c)(3) organization that supports a variety of state-wide and community horticultural projects. The club also offers two scholarships to horticultural students each year. The Garden Art and Plant Sale is one of two major fundraisers that support the club's charitable endeavors. The club is celebrating its 80th year in 2012.

Ron Barker Memorial Golf Tournament - 9/27

Concert/Performing Arts Venue Coming To Sugar Land

The Sugar Land Development Corporation and Sugar Land City Council approved on Aug. 7 a Letter of Intent with ACE Sugar Land, LLC, for the development of a future concert and performing arts facility.

The agreement defines the terms of a public/private partnership for a 6,500-seat concert and performing arts facility in Sugar Land. The venue's proposed location is a 21-acre site near the intersection of U.S. Highway 59 and University Boulevard, an area that will include a larger mixed-use development within an area of Telfair identified for commercial, office and entertainment purposes. No time line has been set for completion of the project.

The Letter of Intent establishes funding to begin programming and schematic design, with a focus on creating a signature facility that will be financially feasible and operationally self-sustainable.

The concert/performing arts venue is expected to benefit the community by promoting economic development, creating employment opportunities and enhancing educational offerings.

Band of Brothers, The Men's Ministry at Sugar Land Methodist Church, welcomes the community to participate in its annual Ron Barker Memorial Golf Tournament. Ron Barker's tireless devotion to the Men's Ministry, plus his untimely passing in 2002, inspired the men of the church to name their annual golf tournament after him.

Ron was a proud former Marine with Christian morals and a great love for his family. He is remembered for his diligent work in a Prison Outreach ministry and the church's Men's Ministry. Some of the most impactful men's retreats took place under his leadership. Being a natural salesman, he was able to effortlessly recruit attendees. He had a very gregarious personality. His close friend, Ty Thomas, speaks fondly of Ron saying, "He would do whatever he could to help a person; he hated to see a brother struggling. And he was very optimistic—I don't think I ever saw him when he wasn't positive and upbeat, even when he was in the hospital and his health was failing."

Band of Brothers hopes to raise \$25,000 at this year's tournament, and has chosen to donate 50 percent of the proceeds to the Providence Children's Home and Community Center, which is a nonprofit organization created to build and operate an orphanage in Ngong, Kenya. Providence Home is a sustainable campus on a 15-acre site. Architects, educators and activists in America and in Kenya have worked together on this project to help with the

African AIDS crisis. For more information about Providence Children's Home, visit providencekenya.org. The balance of the tournament's proceeds will be used for Band of Brothers' 2013 Ministry activities.



Another important goal of the tournament is to provide fellowship for members of Sugar Land Methodists and their guests. Even non-golfers can come to the post-tournament festivities, which include a silent auction, dinner, raffle items and door prizes. The cost to enter the tournament is \$125/person; the cost for dinner only is \$20/person.

Sugar Creek Country Club is located at 420 Sugar Creek Boulevard, just inside the Sugar Creek subdivision off Highway 59 and Sugar Creek Boulevard. The tournament begins at 1:00 pm on Thursday, September 27th. Please contact Rick Nixon for more information at 281-635-3279 or rick.nixon@fmcti.com. Registration deadline is Sunday, September 23rd. To find out more about the church, call 281-491-6041, visit sugarland-methodist.org, or stop by the church office at 431 Eldridge. Sunday services are at 9:00 and 11:15 am and the community is always welcome.

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Robert Sheffield	Vice-President	281-242-0453	rsheffield81@comcast.net
Hank Ochel	Treasurer	214-293-4376	hank_ochel@me.com
Debra Blesener	Secretary	713-628-6991	debrablesener@gmail.com
Open	Asst. Secretary		

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Terri Salter
Property Manager
713-776-1771 / TSalter@mascapi.com

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Sugar Land Police	281-275-2020
Sugar Land Fire Dept	281-275-2851
Sugar Land City Hall	281-275-2700
Sugar Land Library	281-277-8934
Sugar Land Post Office	800-275-8777
Police, Fire, Ambulance	911
Sherriff's Department	281-341-4700
Crime Stoppers	281-342-8477
Kempner High School	281-634-2300
Sugar Land Middle School	281-634-3080
Sugar Mill Elementary	281-634-4440
Fort Bend ISD	281-634-1000
Animal Control	281-275-2596

Computer Savvy

Here are some tips that can increase your productivity and make your overall computer experience a lot more enjoyable:

When searching on the Internet, make sure to get the most out of every search result. If you're not finding what you want try surrounding the text in quotes. For example, if you were searching for 'computer help' this actually searches for pages that contain both computer and help and not necessarily pages that have computer and help next to each other. If you search for "computer help" with the quotes around the search query, this will only return pages that actually have computer and help next to each other.

If you're filling out an online form, e-mail, or other text field you can quickly move between each of the fields by pressing the Tab key or Shift + Tab to move back a field. For example, if you're filling out your name and the next field is your e-mail address you can press the Tab key to switch to the e-mail field.

Tip: This tip also applies to the buttons, if you press tab and the web developer has designed correctly the button should be selected and will allow you to press the space bar or enter to push the button.

Tip: If you have a drop-down box that lists every country or every state you can click that box and then press the letter of the state or country you're looking for. For example, in a drop-down box of States in the United States you could press t on the keyboard to quickly scroll to Texas.

There are dozens of different shortcut keys that can be used with Internet browsers. Below are a few top suggested Internet browser shortcuts.

- Pressing Alt + D in any major Internet browser will move the cursor into the address bar. This is a great way to quickly enter an Internet address without having to click the mouse cursor in the address bar.
- Hold down the Ctrl key and press the + or - to increase and decrease the size of text.
- Press the backspace key or hold down the Alt key + left arrow to go back a page.
- Press F5 to refresh or reload a web page.
- Press F11 to make the Internet browser screen full screen.
- Press Ctrl + B to open your Internet bookmarks.
- Press Ctrl + F to open the find box in the browser to search for text within the

web page you're looking at.

Take full advantage of tabbed browsing in all Internet browsers today.

While reading any web page if you come across a link you may be interested in, open that link in a new tab so it can be viewed later. A new tab can be opened by holding down the Ctrl key and clicking the link or if you have a mouse with a wheel click the link with the middle mouse button.

When typing an Internet address you do not need to type http:// or even www. in the address. For example, if you wanted to visit Sugar Mill's website you could just type sugarmillhoa.net and press enter.

Today, everyone is fully aware of a mouse wheels ability to scroll up and down on a page. However, the mouse wheel is not just a wheel, it can also be used as a button. Pressing down on the wheel will act like a third mouse button. This can be used to open a web page in a tab by clicking the wheel on any link and can also be used to close a tab by clicking the wheel on any open tab.





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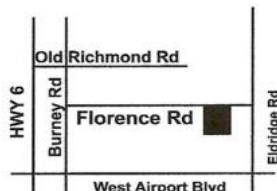
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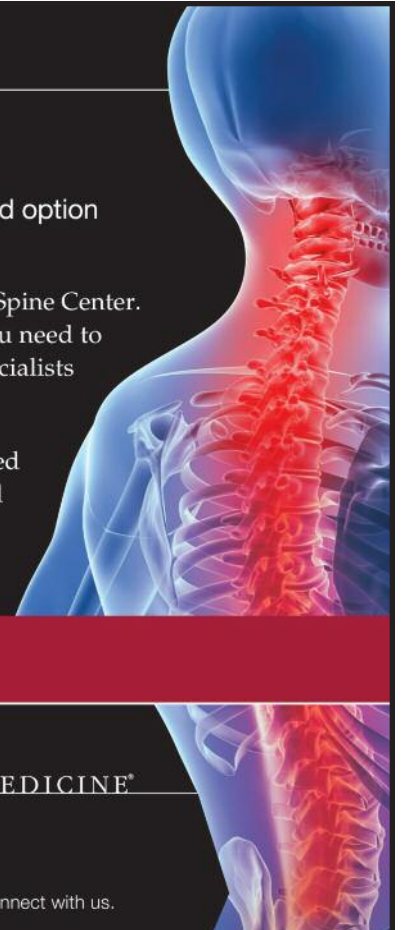
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MARTHA'S

TIPS AND TRENDS TO HELP
 MAXIMIZE HOME BUYING AND SELLING

NO BUGS ALLOWED

The excessive heat and drought conditions that have gripped much of the country may have curtailed normal outdoor activities for some, but the weather has also created an ideal breeding environment for pests, according to the National Pest Management Association (NPMA). The growing pest population has wreaked havoc on homes and everyday living.

"Hot and dry conditions send many pests indoors to seek moisture and cooler temperatures, so homeowners will likely encounter more pests in their homes than usual," says Missy Henriksen of NPMA. "Even areas of the country that are receiving rain aren't in the clear, as standing rain water breeds mosquitoes, which can spread West Nile virus," she adds.

The NPMA suggests the following tips to prevent pests from entering the home.

- Keep all tree branches, shrubs and plants trimmed to create a barrier between the shrubbery and the house. Seal off any holes outside

the home to eliminate entry points for small pests.

- In the kitchen, clean out areas where food is stored, and keep cereal, crackers and cookies in sealed containers. Dust and vacuum regularly to prevent cobwebs and spiders.

- Eliminate all sources of standing water around the home, which can attract mosquitoes, and check gutters, windows and porch lights for wasp and hornet nests.

- If a pest problem persists, contact a local pest professional.

While you can't change the weather, you can take steps to prevent bugs from spoiling your summer.



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Source: PestWorld.org

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Sugar Mill Specialist and Waterfront Specialist