

Woodwind Lakes

NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2023



To all who made this another incredible event,
Thank you from the Christmas Committee:

Terry Buckner

Lynn Collins

Sonja and Tim Benford

Terri and Rick Corbitt

Warren Dale

Ruth and Lee Edwards

Gail and Bobby Ford

Merrell Greene

Cindy and Jim Horn

Lynne and Steve James

Linda Merigold

Ellen and Jay Michaels

Carolyn Stinson

Hank Williams



Other
photos from the
event on the
inside

For assisting at the event, a special thanks to:

Linda Copeland
 Pat Richard
 Ann Tatum
 Gemma and Paul Lacanlale

Benford family members
 Ford family members
 Kayla and Chelsea Scotts



Christmas on the Lake 2022 Santa Photos!

Contact Hank Williams, hancqw@gmail.com for higher resolution files for printing. *They're free.*
<https://photos.app.goo.gl/8BzVP3fP8R4jMCme6>



Raised for St. Jude's Children's Hospital

Residents: \$263

Gary House: \$263

Christmas on the Lake 2022 total donations: \$526





The Women's Club holiday luncheon was the best time ever!

EXCELLENT FOOD! **EXCELLENT SERVICE!** **AWESOME FRIENDS!** **LOADS OF FUN!**



Barcelona Restaurant and Lounge
110 Vintage Park Blvd., B

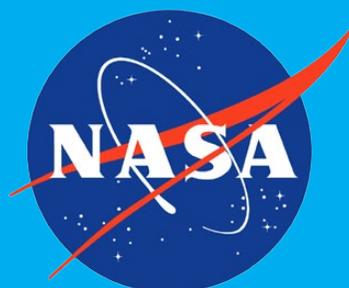


WOMEN'S CLUB JANUARY OUTING

On Tuesday, January 10, the Women's Club will have an outing to Space Center Houston, a science museum that serves as the official visitors' center of NASA.

Ladies will be picked up at the parking area at the pavilion on Allegro Drive and will be driven by a Precinct 1 bus.

The club continues to gain new members, so it's not too late to join.



For more information contact:

Marianne West, *President*
mariannewest@outlook.com

Terry Buckner, *Vice President*
terry214@live.com

Cindy Horn, *Secretary*
cindy.d.horn@gmail.com

Lynn Collins, *Treasurer*
lynn.collins@garygreene.com

Thank You!

Special thanks to our wonderful silent auction sponsors for another successful Christmas on the Lake event.

• Adriatic Cafe

• Ann Tatum

• Blue Iris Florist

• Cara Hawthorne

• Charlene Baugh

• Chick-Fil-A

• Chili's

• Christian Brothers Automotive

• Custom Hand Carwash

• Donna Jackson

• EFI Auto Services

• Fairbanks Liquor

• Friend & Companion Pet Grooming

• HEB

• Jan Dunn

• JC Nursery & Landscape

• Logan's Roadhouse

• Los Cucos

• Lucky Thai

• Mary Livesey

• Me Time Nail Spa

• Merrell Greene

• Mr Detail Car Wash

• Mr. K Donuts

• MVP Magical Vacation Planner (Barbara Swift)

• Nouveau Wellness (Brenda Walters)

• Party Pantry Liquor

• RCW Nursery

• Red Lobster

• Rita's Cantina

• Royal Tea Cafe

• Rudy's BBQ

• Simply Donuts

• Zaf Cleaners

• Top Shelf Liquor & Smoke Shop

• Wanna Tray (Gail Ford)

{ And it wouldn't have been possible without the participation of our awesome community and our fantastic volunteers! }

Gessner and West Road construction *By Ellen Michaels*

(The saga continues...)

I sent *another* email to Commissioner Ellis' office asking for an update on the non-work at the corner of West and Gessner Roads.

It took them a while to reply but they did. See below. *(One more year?!)*

From: "Lopez, Cristina (Commissioner Pct 1)"
 Subject: West Road and Gessner Road Work
 Date: December 16, 2022 at 12:14:38 PM CDT

Good afternoon Ms. Michaels,

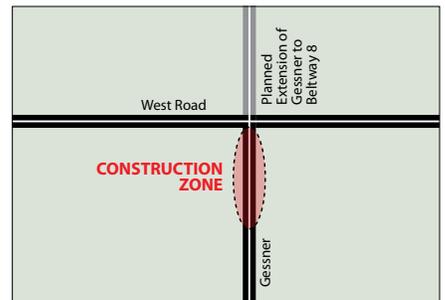
Construction on Gessner Road between West Road and Beltway 8 will resume in early January 2023. Working with the new contractor, Harris County will continue to ensure a safe environment and minimize inconveniences to drivers along the road until construction is completed in about one year.

The project has been delayed since May when a previous company responsible for completing the roadway walked away. Since then, Precinct One has worked diligently with the Harris County Engineering Department to get the project back on track.

We are glad to see this project moving forward again. We thank the community for its patience and understanding during this unanticipated delay.

Sincerely,

Cristina Lopez
 Constituent Services Coordinator
 Commissioner Rodney Ellis
 Harris County Precinct One
 (O) 346.286.1950 (M) 832.206.1378
Cristina.Lopez@cp1.hctx.net



WANT YOUR VOICE TO BE HEARD?

If you want to voice your concerns or have additional questions, contact Rodney Ellis' office: <https://www.hcp1.net/ConnectWithUs>

- Scroll down to CONTACT US and within those instructions, click on "Submit your request online..."
- **Request Type** – select "Miscellaneous" or "Road Repairs"
- **Area** – select "contractor"
- **Address/Location** – 8845 West Rd 77040
- **Cross Street** – West and Gessner Roads
- **Description** – voice your opinion/concerns/frustration/questions, etc.

(Editor's note: Thank you, Ellen, for staying on top of this neighborhood issue that has been going on far too long.)

The WACKY World Of Wildlife



It's hard to imagine a world without wild animals but their populations are declining at rates unprecedented in human history. The World Resource Institute along with the United Nations Environment Programme estimate that between 150 and 200 wild species disappear *every day*. We rarely hear about these disappearances because most of them aren't publicized.

Thankfully, there are hundreds of national and international organizations and governments working to save wild animals and habitats.

With over 1.5 million species of animals on earth, including insects, one could spend a lifetime studying the uniqueness of each species and never come close to learning all there is to know.

Did you know?

- 1.** Eagles have a grip 10 times more powerful than ours. They certainly wouldn't have a wimpy handshake.
- 2.** Vultures can smell a dead animal from more than a mile away. Sometimes I think I can, too.
- 3.** Raccoons don't wash their food. When the animals' paws are wet, their tactile sensory perception is dramatically increased and they are better able to identify the food. Compared to other animals, raccoons have 4 to 5 times more sensory cells in their paws.
- 4.** The reason a flamingo has pink feathers is due to their diet of brine shrimp and blue-green algae. These foods contain a natural pink dye called canthaxanthin that cause the feathers to be pink. Wouldn't it be nice if we could change our hair color just by eating certain foods?
- 5.** Apparently, dolphins like to get "high." They deliberately handle pufferfish which causes the fish to release toxins as a defense mechanism. In high doses, these toxins can be deadly but in the right amounts, they act as a hallucinogenic. It seems the dolphins enjoy the experience.
- 6.** What animal do you think is the deadliest in the world? If you said the bear, tiger or shark, you'd be wrong. It's the mosquito. The World Health Organization reports 725,000 people

are killed every year by mosquito born illnesses like Malaria, dengue fever and yellow fever.

- 7.** Goats have accents. Scientists used to believe that the calls of goats were determined by genetics. According to a United Kingdom study, animals with highly developed vocal abilities, are able to alter their calls to adapt to individuals and groups. Whales, dolphins and bats have this ability also.

- 8.** Cows are smarter than we think and emotionally they are very sensitive. Their intelligence is equal to that of dogs. A study from the University of Cambridge has shown that cows like to learn and show enjoyment by wagging their tails, running and jumping. In a test done by the University of Sydney, cows were trained to solve mazes. The tests revealed their decision-making and executive function abilities.

- 9.** What color are your chickens' ear lobes? White lobes produce white eggs; brown lobes produce brown eggs.

- 10.** Baby elephants may suck on their trunks for comfort just as human babies suck on their thumbs.

- 11.** Worms have 5 hearts.

- 12.** Leeches have 32 brains, 10 stomachs, 9 pairs of testicles, 2 hearts, 300 teeth grouped in 3 jaws and more than 2 pairs of eyes.

- 13.** Herring fish fart! Yes, you heard me right. This is how they communicate with each other.

- 14.** The Texas horned lizard shoots foul-tasting blood out of its eyeballs when threatened.

- 15.** Horses can't breathe out of the mouth. They can only breathe through their nostrils. They can't throw up either.

- 16.** We've all heard houseflies buzz, right? Did you know that they are buzzing in the key of F?

- 17.** Otters have up to 1 million hairs per square inch. Good thing they don't have to try to get a brush through it! There are two layers of fur with a layer of air between the two to keep the skin dry.

- 18.** Koalas' fingerprints are virtually indistinguishable from humans. Could they contaminate a crime scene? Yes, indeed!

- 19.** In Guinea and West Africa, the residents tap raffia palms and collect the sap. Why? The sap has an alcohol content between 3.1% and 6.9% by volume. Locals love to drink the sap and so do chimpanzees! There's nothing worse than a tipsy chimp!

- 20.** Doctors tell us that naps are good for us. Apparently fire ants know this as well. Researchers have discovered that they take up to 250 naps per day!

Google other animals and learn what makes them unique in the animal kingdom. I know you'll be surprised.

*By Cheryl Conley,
Lake Creek Preserve Board of Directors*

Masked bandits in your attic?

By Cheryl Conley

You're sitting in your recliner watching TV and you hear noises in your attic or walls. What could it be? What do I do? First of all, don't panic. Chances are you're dealing with critters and there are humane ways to get rid of these freeloaders. For this article, let's talk about raccoons which seems to be the biggest problem this time of the year.

The first thing you need to do is walk around your house and find out where the entry point is. The entry point is usually an unsecured grate, a hole in your siding or a small gap in a vent. Look for shredded paper or insulation on the ground around your home. This may help you find where they're getting in. Raccoons are very opportunistic and if there's a way to get in, they'll find it. By identifying the entry point, you'll know what you need to repair once they're gone. Make sure you get the critters out before you do any repairs.

Why have they taken up residence in your attic?

They are not evil animals, they're not there to cause you aggravation. During spring, pregnant raccoons are looking for a protected place to give birth. What good mother wouldn't do the same? Normally they will nest in a hollow tree trunk, cave or crevice but if they happen to find a way into your attic, the pregnant raccoon



will temporarily move in. My suggested solution to ridding your property of a mother raccoon and her babies is to do nothing. Yes, I said it – do nothing. When the babies are old enough, mother and babies will leave on their own. Be patient. It will take a few weeks. Now you need to repair the entry point or this will be a problem again in the future.

Encouraging them to leave

If you can't tolerate the thought of wild animals in your attic, there are some things you can do to encourage them to leave. These are very humane solutions and I highly recommend them.

- Mama raccoon is in your attic because it's a dark and quiet place for her and her babies. So, make it light and noisy! Making sure it's not a fire hazard, place a high wattage light in the attic. You can also try using a spotlight at the entry point if you know where that is. Now, place a radio in the attic tuned to a talk radio station. Music doesn't seem to bother raccoons but the sound of human voices has more of an effect. Play it LOUD. This may bother you for a day or two but you must be persistent for this to work.
- Smells. Depending on what website you're looking at, you'll find several suggestions on smells that will encourage raccoons to move out. One site suggests soaking rags in ammonia or apple cider vinegar, putting them in plastic bags with holes punched in the bag and placing them in the attic. Other sites suggest putting cotton balls soaked with peppermint oil in the attic. You can purchase something called raccoon eviction fluid but I can't vouch for its effectiveness.

One site I looked at suggested an ultrasonic sound emitter. It emits a high frequency noise that only they can hear. Again, sounds good but does it work? I don't know.

I must emphasize, once again, to be patient! These tactics can take several days to work.

What NOT to do.

Do not set up a live trap. Raccoons can be dangerous especially if you are dealing with a mama. It's inhumane as well. When I worked at one of the wildlife centers in Houston, we heard horror stories about mama raccoons chewing off their own limbs to try to escape the trap and get to her babies. Trapping the mom and leaving the babies doesn't solve your problem. If you



trap Mom, you now have orphans that need to be taken to a wildlife center.

Remember, too, that Texas Department of State Health Services states that **it is illegal for a person to transport animals such as fox, skunk, coyote or raccoon within Texas** so you can't relocate the trapped female raccoon or the babies. Please note that relocated raccoons will have to fight with established raccoons for survival in the new territory. For those of you that think trapping and relocating animals will help rid your property of critters, relocating them solves nothing. New ones will move in when one leaves.

Help is available

There are many exterminating companies out there that claim to be humane. BE VERY CAREFUL if you decide to hire one. Ask questions about what they do with the animals. Many of them kill the animals.

At this time of the year, please try to refrain from cutting down trees. Many trees are home to spring babies including birds, squirrels and raccoons. If you find yourself with animals needing help, contact a wildlife center or rehabilitator. Do not try to care for the animal yourself!

This web site (ANIMAL HELP NOW) can help you find rehabilitators in your area – along with much useful information: <https://ahnow.org/#/>

Cheryl Conley, Lake Creek Preserve
Board of Directors

Overwatering houseplants can lead to... (GASP)

Fungus Gnats

Fungus gnats can become a problem in homes when houseplants are overwatered. Since this time of year can bring poinsettias or other plants into the home, watch out for fungus gnats.

Fungus gnat adults are small, black, long-legged flies with long antennae. Most adults are about $\frac{1}{16}$ an inch but some can get up to $\frac{1}{2}$ an inch. They are weak fliers and generally remain near potted plants, growing media, foliage or leaf litter.

Larvae or immatures, have a black head capsule and long translucent, whitish body without legs. They feed on organic matter such as mulch, compost, grass clippings, plant roots and fungi. When conditions are very moist, fungus gnat larvae can become abundant and may leave slime trails on media that look like trails left by snails or slugs.

While these gnats are a nuisance, they are easy to manage. Indoors, it is a good idea to use yellow sticky cards as a monitoring tool. Potato pieces may also be used as a monitoring tool for fungus gnat larvae. To do this, imbed a peeled potato cube into media and inspect the

underside of the potato and the media directly below it twice a week for fungus gnat larvae. Make sure to change out the potato cube to avoid other types of small fly problems.

To manage fungus gnat populations, work on reducing excessively moist conditions. Avoid overwatering and make sure that there is good drainage. Use a moisture meter or poke the soil with a finger to check to see if the plants require water.

Bacillus thuringiensis var. *israelensis* or the nematode *Steinernema feltiae* can be applied in containers to control larvae. Either spray on the media surface or apply as a soil drench. Biologicals work best when they are applied early in an infestation. If a population is already large, they may not provide the control desired.

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at (512) 854-9600.

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Some helpful things to know

Where can I find the Constable's Report on neighborhood activity?

<http://www.woodwindlakeshoa.com/constable-reports.html>

Where can I find the form to apply for various exterior home improvements?

<http://www.woodwindlakeshoa.com/forms.html>

Where's the page with Important Contact information?

<http://nebula.wsimg.com/35a2c194a300b282524ae6c4efd4cffc?AccessKeyId=F3DB5C8692855128107F&disposition=0&alloworigin=1>

How do I reserve the Pavilion?

<https://hipaa.jotform.com/223396626347060>

Can I pay my HOA dues online? (Short answer: Yes, but you must sign in or register first)

<https://graham.cincwebaxis.com>

IMPORTANT REMINDER

Waste Management procedures for residents in Sections 1, 2, 3

COLLECTION DAYS

Collection days are **Mondays (trash)** and **Thursdays (trash and recycle)**.

The 96-gallon waste cart with green lid will be used for our normal trash and grass clipping bags. Loose trash bags or bags left by yard maintenance workers will no longer be picked up by the automated collection trucks unless they are inside the green waste carts. If there are too many loose bags to fit in the cart on normal collection days, they will be picked up on the bulk service day.

BULK SERVICE DAY

Bulk service day is the **second Thursday of each month**.

Acceptable Bulk Items

Acceptable bulk items include broken down and bundled moving boxes, old furniture, bagged grass clippings, leaves, branches and tree trimmings. Branches and tree trimmings that are tied and bundled should be no more than three inches (3") in diameter and four feet (4') in length and weighing no more than forty to fifty (40-50) pounds.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Your service carts must be placed at the curb to be serviced.
- Place carts 4 feet from obstructions (such as mailboxes and cars) and within 1 foot from the curb.
- Keep area around the service cart clear for easy access by collection truck.

Recycle bottles, cans, paper and cardboard.

- Keep food and liquid out of your recycling.
- No loose plastic bags.
- No bagged recyclables.

Please remember: in order to keep our neighborhood looking its best, do not put the barrels or bulk items out to the curb for pickup before 5:00 pm on the day before pickup is scheduled.

If you have any questions about the curbside automated side load (ASL) collection, please call Waste Management's Customer Service department at 800-800-5804 or you may email questions to cssatex@wm.com.

BEST CHRISTMAS DECOR

SECTION 1



7807 BRAHMS COURT

SECTION 2



9007 RHAPSODY LANE

SECTION 3



7806 PERCUSSION PLACE

SECTION 4



9307 SINFONIA DRIVE

BEST DECORATING BOTH FRONT AND LAKESIDE



8746 SERENADE LANE