

# NATURES TALES

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*The Expansion Continues.... Slowly!*

## ***The Expansion***

The expansion continues, but it is proving to be a “hurry up and wait” situation. The huge job of putting in all the septic systems is finished (with the exception of four lots along the north fence which will be developed later). Many, many thanks to Al, Denny and Raqualla who took on the enormous task of cutting up and burning the many trees that were removed to make way for the septic systems. Later Bill S and Richard joined the force and also helped with disposing of the trees.

The electric was scheduled to go in immediately after the septic systems, but this did not happen. Now the estimated starting date for the electric is December 1st, and it is expected that the job will take three weeks.

Prior to the electric being installed, we were required to install conduit under all the roads through which the electric cable would run. Doing this under the roads still to be constructed posed no problem. However, doing this under our main entrance was a problem because one of the trenches had to be made close to the gate, thus effectively closing access to the park while the trench was being dug and while waiting for the work to be inspected prior to us being able to fill in the

trench. Those involved with this project did a fantastic job, getting the work done quickly and organizing the inspector so that the road was only closed for a couple of hours.

We thank everyone for their understanding, and apologize for the inconvenience that this road closure caused, especially for those who had to change their schedules. It is fantastic to know that our Natures Family will “go with the flow” when circumstances are inconvenient.

## ***Project Memorial Garden***

The Memorial Garden and Gazebo were originally designed as a place where people could hang out, have social gatherings, or just relax in a pretty environment.

However, over the years the Gazebo has hardly been used and it was not often that people could be seen wandering around the garden. With new faces and new ideas all that is about to change!

The idea is to make the Memorial Garden EVERYBODY’s garden. And how is this going to be accomplished? By making sections of the garden available to anyone who is interested in having an area where they can express their creative talents and exercise their

green thumbs! It is envisioned that with a greater number of people involved, different ideas and different concepts will make the garden a warm and interesting place for everyone to enjoy.

To get ready for Project Memorial Garden Pam, Tony and Larry have spent many, many days cleaning up the garden, weeding, fertilizing, and re-arranging things to include a number of Big Bill's sculptures. They have also cleaned out and washed the Gazebo which is now ready for use

Three or four people have already asked to be included in this venture, and if you would like to be a part of the Memorial Garden Project, contact Pam or Paula who will be overseeing everything, to get additional details and guidelines from them.

If gardening is "not your thing" Project Memorial Garden still includes you! Every gardener will tell you that the greatest reward they can receive for their efforts is to have other people enjoy their flowers. So for the "non-gardeners" your part of Project Memorial Garden is to use it and enjoy it.

### ***Tidbits from Speckles, Natures Proud Cat!***

Everyone's coming back! Everyone's coming back! I'm so excited! I love it when our Winter Texan Family returns home! There are so many things going on I'm going to need help remembering everything.

- Ron & Lynne are moving from Site #60 to Site #53. When the big cement truck came to pour a slab for them, they invited everyone to a Cement Pouring Party. What a fun time it was watching the pad going in. They now have a new mobile on their new cement pad!

- Bill S, Pool Richard, Denny and Al K have been clearing trees and burning brush for the expansion. Thanks for your help guys! (See "On a Lighter Note" on Page 4)
- Willis & Rebecca have the library all straightened out again. Thanks so much for your help!
- The plants around the pool, office and Welcome Home sign are thriving under Richard & Barb's care.
- Bob & Nancy have a brand new 5<sup>th</sup> wheel. Go have a look at it. It's really nice.
- Rick came through his first Chemo treatment without discomfort. Great news!
- I peeked in the clubhouse and it looks awesome with all the Halloween decorations. Jan & Danny have done a great job!
- Al & Jean have started Shanghai Rummy every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon.
- Rick & Tinka moved from Lot #6 to Lot #205.
- Chuck & Sharlotte, Lot 72, bought Rick & Tinka's shed as they didn't need it after moving to Lot #205.
- Stan & Sue had a terrible time getting here. First they had a flat, but the shop used an impact wrench to put the spare on – so 100 miles later the lug bolts snapped. The wheel came off damaging the sheet metal on the side which flapped under the rig and cracked the fiberglass end cap. The damage was so severe they had to use ratchet straps from one side to the other, and then duct tape from the middle of the straps to the bottom to hold it all together. When they drove into the park the 5<sup>th</sup> wheel looked as though it was wearing a thong! To make matters even

worse, 200 miles later they blew a front tire that damaged the fenders on both sides. What a horrible trip! The good news is that they arrived here safely, and I'm glad to have them back!

- Richard and Bill S worked some magic and created a "Beach Buggy" for Connie. Now she can ride up and down the beach collecting shells!
- Rebecca has taken over the water aerobic classes on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings. Thanks Rebecca!
- The big cement truck visited Bob & Florence on site #14, as well as Bob & Nancy on Site #62 and Chuck & Sharlotte on Lot 72.
- Al & Jean have been busy painting and putting some new siding on their shed. It looks brand new!
- The weekly bike rides have started again. I wish I could go!

That's all from me! My purrrrrsonal thanks to Frank, Richard, Ken and Bruce for helping me to remember all the goings-on.



***On a Lighter Note.*** By Misty

One night the Natures phone startled me out of a deep sleep shortly after midnight and a commanding voice said, "Open the gate. One of your trailers is on fire!" My sleepy mind switched to alert, and I immediately opened the gate, then moving faster than I thought I could, I jumped out of bed, pulled on some clothes and zoomed around the park as fast as the golf cart would go, looking for which house was on fire. (No, I didn't observe the 5 mile per hour speed limit!)

As I raced west along the north road the fire came into sight. And what a spectacular fire it was! In the pitch black night the flames were shooting high into the sky, accompanied

by the loud crackle of fast burning wood. It was NOT a house. It was the entire brush pile which had been made ready for burning the following day that was blazing away.

The sheriff, who had called from the gate, had seen the flames from the road (Yes, they were so big that they could easily be seen over the fence!) He had already called 911 – so within a few minutes the quiet night was filled with sirens, and in rolled all the emergency equipment. Three fire trucks, two sheriff's SUV's and an ambulance – all with their lights flashing to add to the bright flickering light of the flames. It was quite a spectacular sight!

At first the sheriff was most annoyed saying that we shouldn't "just light a fire like that, without a permit and at night!" Once he realized that we didn't set the fire on purpose he calmed down, and then became quite apologetic about waking me up! The brush pile was well away from anything else that could have burned so there was little danger and no damage. However, I was very appreciative as it COULD have been a house on fire and his quick action might have saved it. Apparently an ember from the previous authorized burn about 5 days before had sparked the blaze!

Had it not been totally inappropriate, it might have been fun to have brought out the marshmallows to roast over the embers. With the firemen, paramedics, sheriff, deputies and myself, there were enough people for a marshmallow party, but the firemen didn't stop spraying water until the whole thing was a soggy, cold mess, with absolutely no chance of enough heat to melt even one marshmallow.

The good news was that the big brush pile was no more – which saved our awesome volunteers from having to burn it the next day!

## **Wonderful Volunteers**

We, the owners, never cease to be amazed by the incredible volunteering spirit at Natures! It seems that wherever we look there is a volunteer doing something, or we notice something that a volunteer has done. Some of the things that volunteers do are huge and take not just many hours, but many days, some are on-going and others are smaller, but all are just as important in keeping Natures looking good and being a fun place to live or visit.

Some of the work that our volunteers are involved with: Disposing of the trees to make way for the expansion; cleaning up the Memorial Garden; cutting lower branches off trees so that they don't get in the way; mowing the grass; fixing the WiFi and keeping it running; maintaining the library; keeping the exercise room clean; watering trees and plants; organizing the yard sales, blood drives, dances and potlucks; organizing activities like cards, dominoes, sewing circle, breakfasts or other outings like shopping or bike rides. The list goes on and on.....

Thank you so much all you wonderful volunteers. We want you to know that we do see all that you are doing. You are awesome and are greatly appreciated.

### **November Special Events**

**Special Request:** All special events need a host and helpers. Please consider hosting and helping with a special event. The Fun Association Board has detailed guidelines and instructions, so hosting a dance is easy and fun!

- 1<sup>st</sup>** Blood Drive with United Blood Services. Please remember to bring identification with you.
- 13<sup>th</sup>** Fall Fest 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Hosted by Ken. Brats provided. Music provided

by keyboardist Danny Kay. Don't forget to bring your hometown beers and wine.

- 14<sup>th</sup>** Birthday Party 6:30 p.m. Celebrate all the November birthdays and anniversaries with cake and ice cream
- 17<sup>th</sup>** Sadie Hawkins Dance 7:00 p.m. hosted by Bob & Florence
- 18<sup>th</sup>** Yard Sale in the Clubhouse. Petra is looking for volunteers to help
- 19<sup>th</sup>** Yard Sale on Monte Cristo Road
- 20<sup>th</sup>** Members Meeting at 9:00 a.m.
- 20<sup>th</sup>** 84<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party for Dave #57 7:00 p.m. No Gifts Please. Bring a snack to share. Music provided by Cindy.
- 25<sup>th</sup>** Thanksgiving Dinner **A host and helpers are needed for this event.**
- 26<sup>th</sup>** Trim-a-Tree hosted by Al & Jean and Barb. Time to be announced.
- 27<sup>th</sup>** Dance with Ruthi 7:00 p.m. hosted by Jack & Jane

### **Weekly Activities**

- Aerobics Indoors: – 9:00 a.m. Tuesday and Thursday – Clubhouse
- Bible Study: 10:30 a.m. Monday – Gezabo
- Bike Rides: 9:00 a.m. Thursday. Meet on the north side of the clubhouse
- Bowling: Flamingo Bowling Lanes in McAllen – Starting on November 19<sup>th</sup>.
- Camp Fire: 5:00 p.m. Friday. Bring hotdogs to cook over the fire, buns, chairs etc
- Euchre: 6:30 p.m. Wednesday - Card Room
- Line Dancing & Western Dance: –6:30 p.m. Wednesday - Clubhouse
- Men's Breakfast: – 8:00 a.m. every other Tuesday – Details on Bulletin Board
- Sewing Circle: – 1:00 p.m. Friday - Clubhouse
- Shanghi Rummy: – 1:00 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday – Card room
- Trivial Pursuit: – 6:30 p.m. Thursday – Card Room
- Water Aerobics: – 9:00 a.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday
- Water Volleyball: Starting soon – Watch impromptu board for days and times.