

NATURES TALES

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The Expansion – It has begun!

From Nature to Natures Resort – A History. ***by Mary Sue H. Rosenberger***

Chapter Three

On July 3, 2007, Natures Resort experienced a change in ownership. Bill Donovan and Misty Katz from Wyoming and a couple of their friends had spent winters at the park beginning in 2003. They were all impressed by the friendliness of the residents and the layout of the park.

“Every nudist dreams of owning a park,” Misty admitted. “So, in January and February of 2007, we began seriously discussing buying the 50% of Natures Resort that was for sale.” After extensive research about the property and management issues, they made an offer.

They discovered that Rich and Sharon Stalcup were delighted to sell them their 50% interest in Natures Resort. Reflecting upon their development of the resort and that change of ownership, Stalcups agree that it

was “a great experience! But would we do it again? No way! It was a lot of work.”

Frank Stanley continued as part of the ownership team. Three of the new owners arrived at Natures Resort in early June, 2007, ready to get oriented to the duties of their new business undertaking. Stalcups spent the entire month graciously and patiently showing them the details of operating the park. Bill Donovan followed Rich around and tried to master some of the unique demands of park maintenance and operation, such as how to drive the backhoe, now without brakes. Several trash cans became flying objects until they learned the trick for stopping the brakeless backhoe: drop the bucket to the ground and it acts as a drag brake!

Even Misty had to master the fine points of maneuvering the backhoe. It was the only way to lift one of the men high enough to trim the overgrown branches from tall trees. No doubt nature was laughing again at the

struggles of the new owners to maintain Natures Resort!

The women spent hour after hour in the office with Sharon. There, they learned the details of procedures from phone answering to the operation of the electric gate. One afternoon, after their tutor had left for home, they were trying to practice what they had learned that day. Trying to recall which computer key would activate the gate, suddenly the system alarm began to sound. "Wrong code, wrong code" it shouted again and again. Terrified, they looked at each other: "What do we do now?" It took a few minutes before they discovered that Misty had laid her elbow on the computer, activating the alarm! Frank Stanley, the only year round Texas resident among the owners, finally assumed all the office responsibilities.

In early fall of 2007, a solemn but light-hearted ceremony finally buried "le chair" that had sat outside the front gate since the park's early days. It had grown old and decrepit in its years of "NR guard duty" and its bright purple hue had become weathered and gray. So it was only fitting that it be laid to its final rest in the dumpster. But, before that burial, "le chair" was properly eulogized by "Brother" Bill Donovan!



La Chair is put to Rest!

Later that fall, an outdoor kitchen was added to the clubhouse and a new WiFi system installed in the park. For the first time, Natures Resort was filled to capacity during the height of the Winter Texan season. Decorative new lighting was added in the community room of the clubhouse and along the inner south walking path. Several large metal sculptures of mythical animals and birds keep watch over some of the roads and paths of the park. They have been artistically created from scrap metal and used car parts and they add a light-hearted and whimsical mood to the entire park.



Damage by Hurricane Dolly

In July of 2008, nature returned to do battle at Natures Resort. Hurricane Dolly paid the park a lengthy visit. The privacy fence around the park was almost completely destroyed. Forty trees were damaged or felled, minor flooding occurred, several sheds were damaged and a few houses sustained minor breakage. There were, however, no personal injuries. Resident volunteers quickly went to work cleaning up the park, restoring it to normal, and notifying non-resident homeowners of any damage their property had suffered. The privacy fence was re-built by a professional crew and expanded northward to prepare for Phase III of park development.



The New Gate goes in

During the 2008-2009 season, Natures was again filled to overflowing. Because of the economic downturn, the hoped-for expansion of the park had to be postponed. Nevertheless, the current ownership team finds great satisfaction in the park's increased occupancy, the out-pouring of volunteerism from the park's residents and the on-going cooperation with Sandpipers Resort in joint activities for the two parks.

"Are we glad we bought into this place?" Misty asks. "Yes. But has it changed our lives? Yes indeed. We're busier now than ever before in our lives. But we're having fun!" It appears that Natures Resort has at last won its battle with nature – both environmental and human! – and has become a well-established and delightful retreat for the nudist population!

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Many thanks to Mary Sue for all the work she did compiling the History of Natures Resort. She has also compiled a detailed time line of the events that have shaped Natures. Both the history and the time line are in the Library for your perusal. Great job Mary Sue!

The Expansion - It has Begun!

How very appropriate. Just as we finish reading the last chapter of Mary Sue's 'History of Natures Resort', we are beginning Phase III – the last stage of development at Natures.

The past six months have been extremely frustrating as we have had to work through many layers of 'red tape' with new rules and regulations that were not in place when phase I and II of Natures were built. Originally we KNEW that we would be finished by October 1, 2010 – but that was when we expected to start construction on April 1, 2010. However, at last the frustration is over. The new layout was finally approved and on August 20, 2010 we started construction.

All the sites in Phase III have been "super sized" to be able to accommodate big rigs, as well as full or small mobiles. Each site has its own septic system which means that each site will also have its own green space – which is going to make this section of the park look quite beautiful when all the sites are occupied. One of the big questions asked is "How much are these 'super-size' sites going to cost?" Because the sites are bigger, they will be more expensive than the sites in Phase I and II. If you are interested in this information, the prices as well as the layout have been posted on Natures Resort's website under "Rates" and "Grounds Layout".

A big thank you goes out to everyone who has been patiently waiting for this expansion to take place. For so long we have only been able to say "I don't know when we will start and I don't know if the sites will be available for the 2010/2011 season." We still do not have a firm completion date, but we hope to have the majority of new sites available by January. The balance of the new sites will be put in during spring of 2011.

At the start of installing the septic systems – the first step of this project - we were sad to see that many of our trees had to be torn down. The area looked as though it had been attacked by an army of giant, berserk gophers



Installing a Septic System – Phase III

Many thanks to the volunteers who took it upon themselves to get rid of the felled trees. What a HUGE task this turned out to be. At first they spent hours cutting up the trees, loading them into the trailer, and hauling load after load to the dump. However, because of the volume of branches they were hauling, the dump was filling up and it was becoming increasingly difficult to find a place to unload! So, despite the fact that we all dislike the smoke, self preservation dictated that the remainder of the downed trees should be burned. This still entailed cutting and stacking the logs that will be used for our winter Friday night bonfires, as well as piling the stumps and brush into burnable piles. Then finally, each time that they did a burn, our volunteers would be out in the heat and smoke for an entire day at a time, ensuring that the fire remained contained. Our volunteers are awesome and we, the owners, are so very proud of them and grateful to them for all of their hard work.

The septic systems are done, but they are only the first stage of getting the sites

ready. Next will be the electric which is done by AEP in two stages. After this we will be putting in the water lines, and then the roads will be done by an outside contractor. We anticipate that we will have workers in the park for the next three months, but we are working hard to ensure the least possible disruption to our Natures family during this time. We have installed a serviced port-a-potty near the north fence, so the workers have no need to be in the developed section of the park. Thus far they have been very respectful of our lifestyle, and they have appreciated that we have left them alone to do their work.

We thank everyone for their patience and understanding while we go through this development process.

Tidbits from Speckles, Natures' Proud Cat!

It's almost time! I can't wait for our family to come south and be with us again.

- First a new house, and now Art & Terry have added a storage room and a screened in porch. I like it because I can talk to Tabetha through the screen!
- A cat sure has to be careful around here. There are big holes and trenches that I can fall into in the front section, not to mention the danger of being squashed by the big backhoe that has been going non-stop working on installing all the septic systems.
- Everyone enjoyed a wonderful feast on Labor Day. Chefs Joanne and Donna did a great job. (Of course I didn't get to taste anything!)

- The first Winter Texans to get back to Natures were Bruce and MarySue. I'm looking forward to the rest of our family returning home.
- We have been having so much rain! Poor Al mows and mows and mows, trying to keep the grass under control. He does a great job. Thanks Al.
- Sepp & Gerda arrived! And only a few days later they left again! They said that they would be back around the end of October.
- Dennis takes care of SO many lots. Mother Nature might have helped him with the watering – but he has sure been doing a lot of weeding, mowing, and weed whacking. He works really hard to keep all your lots looking nice!
- If you see funny little miniature mud chimneys anywhere near your house, BEWARE! Those chimneys are a sure sign of TERMITES!
- During the summer we have had some sort of ice cream social every other week. Root Beer Floats, Banana Splits, or Brownie Sundaes. Misty got everyone confused by having Sundaes on Thursday. Shouldn't Sundaes be on Sunday?
- The wheel fell off the work golf cart when Larry was using it! You should have seen his face!

Reminder

The **Fall Festival** is just around the corner. This is a fun afternoon of eating brats and sampling wine and beer from different parts of the USA and Canada. However, in order to make it a success, Ken would like to remind everyone to bring some of their home town (or State/Province) beers and wines to share.

That's all from me. Safe travels to our Winter Texans!

