

NATURES TALES

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AANR World Record Skinny Dip

July 11th was the AANR World Record Skinny-Dip event. Although our contribution to the numbers was small, we were still glad to be a part of this first attempt at making a Guinness World Record. We had two couples who came for the weekend just to be a part of this event as well as some day-members helping to increase our numbers. About an hour before the actual count, black clouds rolled in, and we had quite a downpour. However, it didn't last long, and just before 2 p.m. (3 p.m. Eastern time) the sun came out, enabling us to take some good photos. Following the Skinny Dip count we celebrated with Root Beer Floats in the clubhouse.

Our grand total was 23 people. Everyone who took part received a certificate acknowledging their participation in setting the first world record, and once Guinness has accepted the count, we will order commemorative wrist bands for everyone.

Busy! Busy! Busy!

Once the hectic winter season is over and our Winter Texan family heads north, Natures usually takes on a relaxing, peaceful, lazy atmosphere. However, this year has been different.

Oh, there is still plenty of time to relax in the pool, there are still picnics and ice cream sundae socials, but there is a busy atmosphere as we tackle many projects that will make Natures a better place for everyone.

The biggest of the projects was finishing the interior of the clubhouse. Previously the indoor vinyl siding went up about 7 ft from the

floor. Above the 7 ft mark there was only exterior siding and no insulation.

We had a construction company come in with a small army of men, and they studded the upper walls, put in thick insulation, and then continued the siding to the top of the walls. While all their scaffolding and scissor equipment was here we also had them paint the red beams to match the siding.

This project is now complete, and we think that the clubhouse looks awesome!



Insulating and putting up vinyl siding in the Clubhouse



The Finished Product!

100 degree temperatures to make you comfortable in the winter.

Another planned project was to re-plaster the hot tub and volleyball pool. Sometimes things just don't work out the way that they should, and this was the case here. Due to some difficulties that we ran into, the hot tub also became a much larger project than we anticipated. However, it is now complete, and looks pretty with the blue quartz in the plaster. However, the volleyball pool will have to wait until next summer to be re-plastered.

While the contractor was here, we also added an upstairs storage area above the Carriage House which, amongst other things, will house the decorations for our dances and special events. Not only will this upstairs storage area provide more space for the decorations, but it will make them easily accessible. Once again our wonderful volunteers have stepped up to the plate, and have installed shelves so that this area can be used to its full potential. No more climbing up on ladders and balancing storage tubs on the ceiling beams!



Work in Progress – The Carriage House Loft

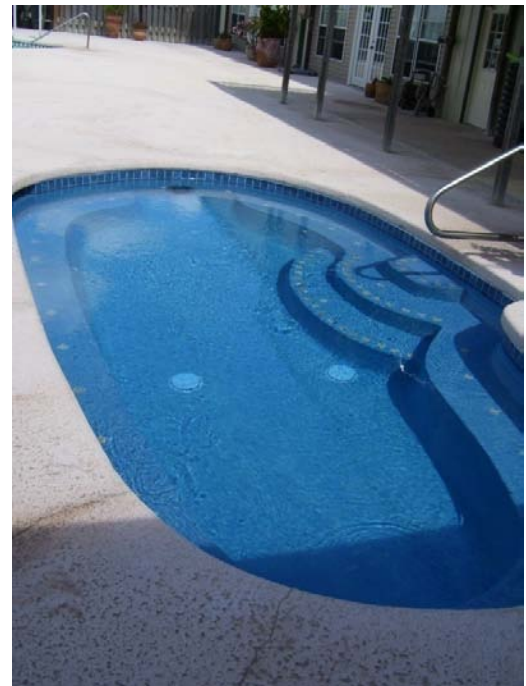


The Hot Tub – Work in Progress



The Finished Product!

With an insulated clubhouse, it was now time to put in the large gas overhead heater for the winter months. Our wonderful volunteers did this, so when it is chilly outside and you are enjoying the warm clubhouse, please remember the folks who worked hard in over



The Finished Hot Tub

A “not so nice” project was the septic system behind Site #31. Some of you might be

aware that we had problems with it during last season. Once the park had quieted down we called in a septic system expert and had him excavate the area to see what the problem was. This project turned into a much bigger job than we anticipated. We basically needed to have most of the piping redone and a new drain field dug. While all the digging was going on the area looked like a war zone with huge piles of dirt and deep trenches. The good news is that the job is complete, and we should never have problems with this septic system again.

Work has also been done in the guest rooms. They have been spackled, painted and given new floor tiles in the bathrooms. Sinks have been installed in the counter tops, and cabinets built under the sinks. A shelf has also been added over the sink to house the microwave and coffee pot. We have also added full place settings for two to each room, and the final touch has been new sheets, towels and bedspreads. The guest rooms now have a bright, cheerful look to them, and we think that those using them will enjoy the improvements.

Tidbits from Speckles, our proud Natures Cat!

Summer is a wonderful time here at Natures. It's very hot, so most people are only out in the morning and later afternoon and evening. This means that during the middle of the day I can just sprawl out in some shady spot and snooze while everyone hibernates in their cool homes. However, it's quite hectic for me when people are outdoors, because they are so busy with so many things. I hope that I can remember all that I have seen going on!

- Denny and Roquella – Site #3 have laid a beautiful patio area on their site. It looks terrific.
- Dennis – Site #114 is always so busy taking care of many of the Winter Texans' annual sites here. He spends hours and hours every day watering, weed whacking, mowing and spraying.

- Frank is on vacation! I miss him, but I don't want him to come back yet because he really needs a good, long break. Enjoy yourself Frank!
- Sandy has gone back to Colorado and I miss her too, but it's nice to have Misty here.
- We have had record breaking temperatures here. Hot, hot, hot! Everyone spends hours in the pool, but I prefer the shade of a tree!
- Connie has a new leg and she is doing well. Everyone is so happy for her. She and Richard headed north in the middle of July, and they are greatly missed.
- Al – Site #13 is so busy mowing, mowing, mowing. He also does a lot of weed whacking and spraying to keep our park looking nice.
- The old fence is coming down. It's nice being able to see into the front section of the park.
- Denny and Roquella – Site #3 are building shelves in the carriage house loft, creatively using the 2 x 4's and boards from the fence that's coming down. It's very hot up there, so this is a tough job.
- You should have seen Richard on the backhoe with Al and Denny helping to move a shed. They had to lift it OVER an electric pedestal. What a sight! It was very bad for my nerves, as I was afraid it would fall.
- Al and Joann – Site #100 had their grandson come to visit. It's been great having a teenager in the park.
- After the septic system was fixed, Nick – Site #31 raked the whole area smooth. He is working at trying to get grass growing on the huge bare area.
- There have been some beautiful cactus flowers here this summer. There is one cactus that only flowers at night and the blooms are faded and wilted by the morning! The blooms are about as big as a saucer, and produce a bright red fruit which makes a stunning contrast to the white and green.

- Robin – Site #80 has made a beautiful natural garden area behind her house.
- Nick and Toni – Site #31 had some new carpet laid on their screened porch.
- Sepp and Gerda – Site #52 had their truck stolen in Canada so they had to buy another truck. The day that they arrived here in the new truck, the police in Canada called to say they had found the stolen truck! Now they have TWO trucks!
- In the hot weather some die-hard players are playing petanque at 7:30 p.m. every evening.

That's all from me. It's time for everyone's afternoon siesta! Hope you're enjoying a purrrfect summer!



Summertime Fun!

It certainly has not been “all work and no play” even though it may sound that way.

On July 3rd we celebrated the second anniversary of ‘The New Natures’ by meeting in the clubhouse for decadent “Make your own Brownie Sundae”.

July 4th saw us back at the clubhouse for the traditional picnic. Many thanks to Jean and her helpers for the wonderful food, and a special thanks to Al for being the barbeque grill chef. It was a record breaking hot day, and adding to Al's discomfort at the grill was the gentle south breeze blowing the smoke in his face.

Other events include an English Trifle Dessert evening and a second ice cream sundae event. We are never too busy, too hot or too tired to get together to eat!

The Volunteers are at it again!

Once again we are overwhelmed by the volunteering spirit here at Natures. Although our numbers are very small during the summer months, an amazing amount of work gets done.

The real meaning of the word ‘volunteer’ is someone who does something without being asked. However, in many cases where volunteers are needed, they have to be asked or even coerced into doing the requested job or service. This is NOT the case at Natures. We have REAL volunteers who don't wait to be asked. They just do! With routine maintenance they jump right in and quietly get the job done simply because it needs to be done. So often much of what they do is not noticed by people who are not here year round – but it would certainly be noticed if it were not done!

In addition to routine maintenance, they also give suggestions of how to improve something, have a plan of how to do it and are willing to do the work. Once they get the approval, they are up and running with the project and in no time it is done.

One such suggestion was moving the re-cycle area that was next to the old gate. Now that the fence has been taken down, it looks unsightly when driving into Natures. The suggestion was to build a new re-cycle area immediately east of the workshop where it would be easily accessible, yet out of the way. Our ingenious volunteers even worked out how to build it using recycled materials on hand!

Although our volunteers say they do all this work because they want to keep Natures, their home, looking good, and that they are not looking for praise or recognition, we, the owners, want them to know that we are very aware of all their hard work. We sincerely appreciate the time and energy that they pour into Natures, making it a better place for everyone. These are very special people with huge hearts and Natures would not be the place that it is without them. Thank you SO much! We love our volunteers!