

LIVING LIFE NATURALLY

Tidbits from Cally, Natures Proud Cat

I am so excited I don't know what to do with myself! My friends from up north are starting to head south. It will be so much fun to hear all about their summer adventures! It's been rather quiet here, so I'm looking forward to everyone's return and the start of all the activities.



- It was fun getting together for our ice cream socials during the summer. Many thanks to Al & Jean for the great job they did hosting.
- When Hurricane Harvey was heading towards Texas we all battened down the hatches as best we could, and put away anything that we thought might blow away. If you are missing anything from your lot, look under your stairs. That is where we stashed your stuff! With all our preparations done, I hopped on top of Misty's van where I would be safe from the rising water. But nothing happened! We were so fortunate. I am so glad that Harvey didn't come our way, but I'm sad for everyone else who was in the path of Harvey and Irma.
- What a fantastic meal we had on Labor Day. Fried chicken, salads, baked beans and wonderful desserts. Thank you Ken and Terry for organizing such a wonderful celebration.
- I'm so happy that Bill R is back home after his surgery. It is nice to see him out and about around the park. Take it easy Bill! Don't rush your recovery!

That's all from me. For everyone who will soon be heading back home, please have a purrrrfectly safe trip.



Two Reminders:

Beer & Brats: The 11th Annual Beer & Brats will be held on the 11th day of the 11th month. This is one of our most popular events, sampling wines and beers from different states and countries. If you are able to, please bring a local beer or wine down with you for everyone to sample on November 11th.

Quilt Show: Once again we will be decorating the clubhouse with beautiful quilts for the months of January and February. If you have a quilt that you have made, or an heirloom quilt that has been passed down to you, please bring it with you. We would love to see your quilts and hear the story about it.

Then and Now - Chapter 3

In 2010 we began the long awaited expansion project which was the development of the north area of the park. Cutting through the red tape was a nightmare and took many months but eventually our plans were approved and we could begin the work.

Our first step was to mark out the lot lines and roads after which we contracted to have all the septic systems built, one for each lot as was required by the new building code. Although we were excited about starting the actual work of the expansion, it was sad to see so many of the big trees being torn down and the grass in this park-like area being torn up. The whole area looked as though it had been attacked by giant gophers!

Part of the electric was done as contract work, and part was done by yet another group of volunteers. This entailed more trenches being dug, and by the time the final trenches had been filled back in there was hardly a blade of grass left in the expansion area.



Laying the water lines was a massive "in house" job with Richard acting as foreman supervising teams of volunteers who put in many hours of backbreaking work digging the trenches, laying the pipe and then filling in the trenches. Although we had the backhoe, there was still a lot of digging and backfilling that needed to be done by hand. This could not have been accomplished without the help of our awesome volunteers.

At this time we were fully booked in the 'old' section, so people were anxiously waiting for us to complete some of the new lots so that they could have a space.

we now have our own WiFi tower with a completely new WiFi system.



The tall palm tree at the top of the road is on Lot 108 (Ellis) - visible in both photos



Constructing the caliche roads was exciting, as this was the last step that we needed to complete in order to get the lots inspected and approved by the Hidalgo Planning Department and Health Department. Once we received their approval we could get the power turned on, and the majority of these lots were in use by the end of 2011.

The final step came a year after the lots were opened up. The caliche roads had been given 12 months to settle, and at last we were able to get the roads blacktopped. March, 2012, the expansion was complete!

That has not been the end of improvements to Natures though. Since then we have cemented the caliche paths, added cement paths to the memorial garden, rebuilt all the showers and bathrooms, re-plastered all the pools, and re-finished the cool deck around them. We refurbished the guest rooms, built storage areas, built 'Richard's Pool Room', and



Below, thanks to Google Earth, is a series of photos that shows Natures growing from bare land to what it is today, giving us a final picture of 'Then' and 'Now'.



January, 1995



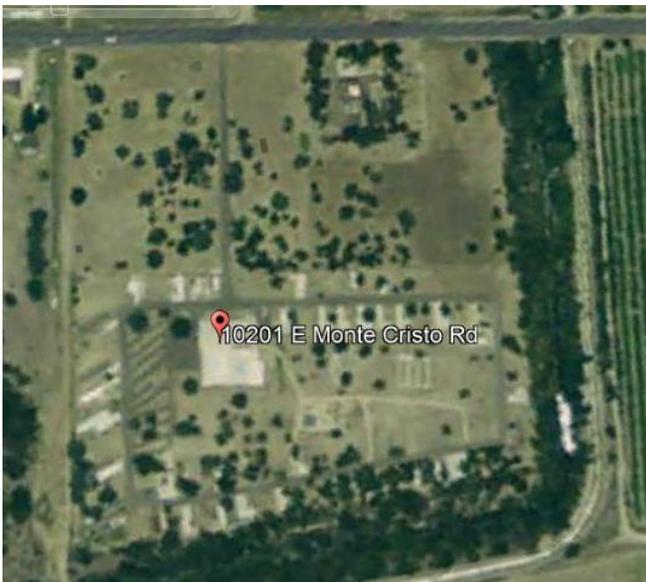
October, 2007



September, 2003



December, 2010



October, 2005



February, 2015