



# NATURES TALES

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LIVING LIFE NATURALLY

## *It's a Mystery!*

At 10:30 p.m. the Natures' phone rang. It was Mel (Randy). "We're at the gate, but there is a white delivery truck in front of us and we don't want to open the gate because we don't know who it is." So off we go to investigate, and there it is: A big, white box truck with "Dracko Merchandising Co" written on the side, parked inches from the gate with its lights on ..... but we find there is no one in the truck!

That's creepy! So we call 911 and report that there is a truck blocking our driveway. Denny & Requella arrive home to find the driveway blocked, and the 5 of us speculate while we wait for the deputy to arrive. Why is it there? Where is the driver? Perhaps it is stolen? Are their illegals in the back?



*The Mystery Truck!*

The deputy arrives and investigates. The cab doors are locked. It has not been reported stolen. He calls the phone number on the side of the truck. No answer. The back of the truck is not locked - so with

warnings for us to stand clear, the deputy opens the back. No illegals. In fact, not much of anything.

However, the fact remains. We have a truck blocking our driveway! The deputy said we should call for a tow truck to take it away, which we did. But we still have the mystery: Who left it there? And why?

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

Phew! It has been HOT! Misty uses sprinklers in the pool to cool the water by evaporation. Usually when it is very hot she will use two sprinklers, but for the first time in Natures history she had to use three sprinklers!



- The craft room has been a hive of activity! Laurie and Mel, using a huge bag of flannel scraps as filler (generated by the ladies making liners for Days for Girls) have been busy making dog beds for the animal shelter. What amazing talent these two ladies have for turning nothing into something beautiful and useful! They have already taken 38 dog and cat beds to the shelter, and, as fast as they get their hands on more filler, they continue their production line of beds.
- We had another surprise from the plant world here at Natures. One of the

ponytail palms in the pool area started putting up a strange looking long stem that eventually opened up into a tall flower! Who knew that ponytail palms produced a flower like this? And our favorite, the tall blooming cacti around the park have been covered in their beautiful creamy white blooms that open at night and die off the next day. They produce an edible tasty red fruit that need to be picked as soon as they start changing color or the birds will get to them first!



*Summer Surprises at Natures*



- All it takes is someone with an idea and the drive to carry through. Laurie suggested a game of Mexican Train

(with a small bribe of home baked cookies) and there were enough people for two tables, even some who had never played before. Will this become a semi-regular summer activity?

- We should have known that they wouldn't stop at dog and cat beds. Laurie and Mel are now working on blankets and pillows for Shriners, so that children can have their very own little blanket and pillow.



*The generous, giving spirit at Natures continues!*

- July 4th was a double celebration: Independence Day and the 12th anniversary of the "New" Natures, when Bill & Sandy and Bill & Misty joined up with Frank to form a new partnership. Hosts Janice & Mark with helpers Al & Jean and Laurie and everyone else who pitched in to help did a fantastic job of organizing the event which had a great turnout. As always, an abundance of great food together with good friends and conversation made it a fun occasion.

We're enjoying a wonderful summer here! I hope our family who have gone north are also having a wonderful summer!

That's all from me!



## ***It Started as a Gentle Rain.....***

The weather prediction was 'scattered showers', so it was no surprise when it started raining at about 6 p.m. on June 24th. But the scattered shower turned into a downpour. Then the thunder and lightning started and the breeze turned into gusty, strong wind. And it didn't stop. From 6 p.m. until after midnight we had solid, heavy rain, wind and continuous lightning and thunder. This most definitely was not a rain shower. It was a storm - although not as big as a couple that we had in the past! Because of the heavy rainfall, twice during the storm we had drain some water out of the pools to prevent them from overflowing!



The next morning as the sun came up it was time to investigate and see how much rain had fallen, and if we had suffered any damage.

The rain gauge showed a total of 10.5 inches! Although the rain had collected in the usual places during the storm, by morning it had all drained away except for a couple of little puddles. How fortunate we are to have such good drainage here. That was the good news!



The bad news was that there were a number of trees that had been blown down, or so badly damaged that they would have to be completely removed. Other trees had big limbs broken off by the wind. (A little irony: The day before the storm Tony had pruned the lower part of one of the huge trees, making it easier to walk under and mow around. After all that work, this tree was one of the casualties. It was blown down. However, a dead tree that needed to be removed was left proudly standing!) Unfortunately the damage didn't stop with the trees!

A section of the west fence behind lot #108 and #110 was blown down, but the biggest surprise of all was that the big metal sunshade in the smoking section of the pool area was also blown down, taking the fence behind it down as well. The big pool looked like the new storage area for our chairs! Many of them were blown into the water! (Thank you, Laurie, for dragging them all out!)

person was also contracted to re-build the fence, although he couldn't start immediately because the ground was too wet to be able to set the new posts.

Once again our Natures Family stepped in to help clean up the mess. Many thanks to everyone who helped and who notified people about the state of their property here, but special thanks go to Denny and Raquella who spent many hours replacing much the skirting, gathering and dis-assembling the pieces of west fence, disassembling the big sunshade and re-building the pool fence. Thanks also to Laurie who helped by taking photos of all the damage and filling in for Carolina who could not get work because of the water surrounding her house, and to Al (Jean) who gathered up all the pieces of Jo-Jo's carport and fixed the fence behind her house.

The storm was on a Monday night. By Friday afternoon all the tree mess was gone and the west fence was back up, and life in our little bit of paradise was back to normal.

New guests arrived the following week and could see no evidence that we had suffered any damage from the storm.



In addition, JoJo, (Lot 104) lost her carport, and Jim & Hanna's carport (Lot 50) was also damaged. Skirting panels from many houses were scattered around the park! It was quite a mess, but not nearly as bad as hurricane Dolly in 2008 or the storm of May 11, 2015.

We are still lacking a sunshade in the smoking area of the pool, but arrangements have been made, and a new patio roof will be built in the first week of August.

Some quick phone calls got RGV Tree Experts out to Natures that very day to start clean-up work on the trees, and a fence repair