

The Woodlands



Keeping You Informed For 50 Years

July 2018

Bay Area Housing Crisis Hits the Woodlands...

By Ron Chesney

Over the next several months, as the owner of the Citrus Circle office buildings proceed with the city permit process, re-development plans for the site will become clear. It is my understanding that the project planned is like other recent developments in our city; that is, high-density townhouses and multi-story condominiums.

Case in point is the Via Monte housing that's about to start construction behind the Orchards Safeway. This building is going to be a large multi-story condominium complex and bring much needed customers into the shopping center which still has many vacant storefronts. Combine this with the huge athletic center under construction at the former Contra Costa Times site, and the planned Extended Care Facility next door... can you picture it? The Shadelands, and our end of town, will become more urban as these developments are completed.

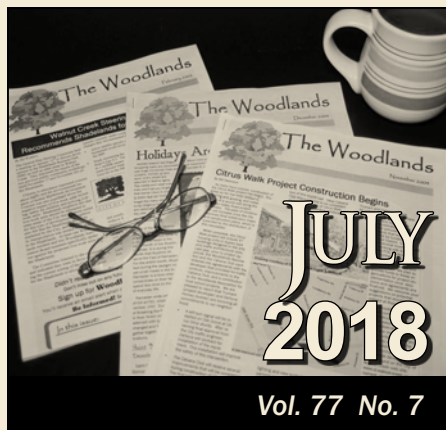


Yes, we need more housing, and developers will always push for the highest density possible because it's the most profitable. Our city leaders, based on recent downtown and Shadelands developments, will likely approve of this for Citrus Circle under the guise that it will be good for the community by helping with the housing shortage and giving more people the opportunity to buy into the neighborhood...is that the true reality?

We're at a critical juncture for our community; the Bay Area housing crisis has arrived with million-dollar 'starter' homes becoming the norm. It's time for residents of the Woodlands to become active in guiding what happens here next. Of course, we can't control area housing prices, or what our neighbors ask for when selling their homes, but we can have a say in the density of our neighborhood and how it's changing. Do you want this urbanization to continue; are you comfortable with the change, or are you worried that the character of the Woodlands will soon be a distant memory?

Whatever your opinion, I urge you to speak up and get involved. We have a great association with a newsletter that can be a vehicle to express your views...please keep the conversation going. Let's influence our city planners before this development gets away from us and we are forced to live with the consequences!

Thank you, Woodlands Association and neighbors, for making this community our home.



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Who to Contact?

The Woodlands Association receives some emails and questions about many issues that are best resolved by contacting the following agencies directly. The following is a reference guide:

Walnut Creek Code Enforcement, 925-256-3508 or 925-943-5863

The Code Enforcement Division of the Community Development Department is responsible for enforcing provisions of the Walnut Creek Municipal Code involving quality of life and neighborhood quality issues. http://www.walnut-creek.org/citygov/depts/cd/nuisance_abatement_n_code_enforcement.asp

Walnut Creek Police Department, 925-943-5844

<http://www.walnut-creek.org/citygov/depts/police/default.asp>
To report a suspicious circumstance, call 925-935-6400

Oversized Vehicle Reporting, Sandy Mulligan: Parking Lead Services Officer, 925-943-5874

Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District (Pests and Insect Issues), 925-771-6196
http://www.contracostamosquito.com/programs_services_index.htm

Contra Costa Water District, 925-688-8000

Water conservation, information, gardening resources, moneysaving tips. <http://www.ccwater.com>

Allied Waste Services of Contra Costa County, 925-603-1144

<http://www.pleasanthillbayshoredisposal.com>

Valley Waste Management (recycling and yard waste service): 925-935-8900

Canal Maintenance, 925-313-2235

The canal is part of the Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District Maintained by the Public Works Department

Graffiti Reporting: City of Walnut Creek, 925-943-5854

Contra Costa County Animal Control, 925-335-8300

After business hours, contact the Walnut Creek Police through Dispatch Center at 925-935-6400.
<http://www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/index.aspx?NID=59>

Street Maintenance: 925-943-5854

WOODLANDS INVITATIONAL IS COMING JULY 20-22 PLEASE DRIVE SAFELY!

Woodlands Association Board of Directors

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Todd McNeill ~ *Webmaster*
Susan Pfau ~ *Newsletter Coordinator*

Jennifer Zotti ~ *Newsletter Distribution Manager*
Susan Pfau ~ *Newsletter Editor*
Ryan Park ~ *Intern*

Upcoming Board Meetings

8:00 - 9:00 a.m.

Saturday, July 7th

Saturday, August 4th

at Denica's,
2280 Oak Grove Road,
Walnut Creek
(in Citrus Marketplace)

Woodlands residents
are encouraged to
attend board meetings.

Charlie Freschl- Retiring after 22 Years of Service to the Woodlands Association

By Bill Gilmyers

Since he moved to the Woodlands in 1996, Charlie Freschl has volunteered as one of our two Newsletter Delivery Leads. That's right, if you live in the Northeast half of the Woodlands and have read a single issue of the newsletter since the first term of the Clinton administration (!), you've been able to do so because Charlie helped the distribution team get it to your doorstep. Month-in and month out, year after year, Charlie has diligently bundled the newsletters up, handed them off to his Block Captains and made sure they got out to all of his neighbors. He has not always done it himself, sometimes enlisting his son Carl and daughter Guille to help him out, offering them an opportunity to, as Charlie put it, "Get their first work experience."

The newsletter you are reading today is different, as Charlie has decided to retire after his 22 years of service to the Woodlands Association. As he noted, "In the last few months I 'noticed' that my kids have grown up and I'm doing the route all by myself. Even the dog no longer joins me." So, "It's time for me to move on from this position and let the next family take over the fun."

The Woodlands Association would like to offer a hearty "Thank You" to Charlie for his hard work for the neighborhood. This is a special place to live, and that's made possible by the hard work of our neighbors like Charlie, done behind the scenes without fanfare, who make the Woodlands what it is.

Many thanks also to fellow neighbor Bill Schasteen, who has graciously agreed to assume Charlie's duties beginning in July.



Charlie Freschl at the Running of the Bulls in Pamplona, Spain



Meet your new Treasurer Pete DiNapoli!

The Woodlands Association is pleased to welcome Peter DiNapoli, who will be serving as our new treasurer. Peter earned his B.A. in Finance at CSU Sacramento. He recently returned to the Bay Area after living in the New York area for the past five years. Peter is happy to be back to the beautiful California weather where he can play year-round golf! Peter and his wife, Lauren, recently welcomed a beautiful baby girl, Hadley, this past November.

Peter enjoys spending time with his family and two dogs, Rufus and Emma. He is a licensed CPA in the State of California.



Thanks to Robert Baldwin, Outgoing Secretary of the Woodlands Association

The Woodlands Association would like to thank Robert Baldwin for his service to the Woodlands Association as Secretary; Robert's term ends after the Board's July meeting. Robert joined the Board in 2016 and has supported our work by capturing our monthly meeting minutes, and providing his ideas and energy as the Board has taken on a range of issues over the last two years.

Thanks to Robert and we look forward to seeing you around the neighborhood!

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For more information, contact:
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This Month at the Cabana Club

The Woodlands Cabana Club is officially open! Summer is finally here! The pool opened May 12. (At the time of writing, this has not happened yet, but we will fill you in on all the festivities in next month's snippet!) In the meantime, please note our summer hours:

It's officially SUMMER at WOODLANDS! The Cabana Club starts summer hours Friday June 8th - pool will be open every day from 12:00 PM- 8:00 PM. Join us for a BBQ under the Lanai or free swim under the watchful eyes of our lifeguards. Team practice has moved to its morning schedule, and lessons are now available from Monday-Friday 12:00-2:00 and 4:30-6:00. Visit www.swimwoodlands.org for more information.

Get ready for our annual 4TH OF JULY PARADE and PARTY! A true Woodlands tradition. The parade starts promptly at 11:30 in front of Valle Verde Elementary School on Peachwillow and winds its way to The Woodlands Cabana Club. The Cabana Club will host our biggest party of the year, with food trucks, ice cream, games, a full bar with Calicraft beer. This is open to the public, so bring your friends and family for a great celebration of the summer!

SLOW DOWN WOODLANDS - Anti-Speeding Campaign Update

By Susan Pfau

First and foremost, the Woodlands Association would like to thank all the residents who have shown us great support in launching the Slow Down Woodlands anti-speeding campaign. Again, thank you to our lead sponsor Dayna Wilson of Keller Williams and Tish Kanat of Dudum Real Estate for sponsoring the signage.

You've probably noticed while driving or walking in our neighborhood that several yellow signs are up in front yards. The more signs we put up, the more impactful we will be. In fact, we just received our second shipment of signs so if you don't have one and would like one, please email us at woodlandswalnutcreek@gmail.com.

The next phase of our campaign will be to distribute flyers to fellow residents, vendors, friends and family who visit – anyone we can think of to educate. If you are interested and available to help walk the neighborhood to deliver the flyers to neighbors, please contact the Woodlands Association (woodlandswalnutcreek@gmail.com). We can really use your help, so please let us know. We are also actively working with the Walnut Creek Police Department to see how they can assist us.

As a reminder to us all; the hard truth is that the majority of the speeding is actually done by us so let's please be mindful of the speedometer. Saving a few seconds on time is not worth the possibility of hurting someone or getting hurt. We must not only communicate with each other, but we have to be a little less selfish and think of not just of our immediate needs but how our actions may affect others. By working together, we can keep our neighborhood streets as safe as possible for our kids, pets and ourselves.

"Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success."

-Edward Everett Hale

WOODLANDS ANIMAL CORNER

Keep Your Pets Cool During the Dog Days of Summer

By National Weather Service (www.weather.gov)

The “dog days of summer” is a phrase used to describe the hot and humid days of summer. It can be traced back thousands of years to the days of the Roman Empire. It refers to the dates from July 03 through August 11, which is 20 days prior and 20 days after the star Sirius rises and falls in conjunction with the sun. Sirius was known as the “Dog Star”, because it is the brightest star in the constellation Canis Major (Large Dog).

The dangerous heat and humidity of these "dog days" can be harmful to not only humans, but human's best friend and other animals as well. Pets are considered family to many people, and in the event of an emergency, sometimes people will not evacuate if their pets have to be left behind. To gather information on how to protect your pets this summer, the National Weather Service reached out to Donnie Embrey, the Team Leader for Louisa Virginia Community Animal Response Team. Donnie and his team are part of a non-profit organization dedicated to emergency preparedness, response and management specifically focused on preparedness and response for pets and their owners. Here are a few things to keep in mind during the "dog days" this summer to help keep your pets safe."

Pets, just like humans, are susceptible to heat illness - make sure to keep your animals hydrated! For dogs, Donnie says “A good general guideline is that a healthy dog should drink between ½ and 1 ounce of water per pound of body weight each day under normal conditions. Of course, any pet will need more water on hot and humid days and your pet’s age, hair type, level of activity, medical history and any prior history of a prior heat related illness may dictate that your pet needs more water than the average dog.” When it comes to diet, Donnie says “reducing a pet’s food intake on warmer days can help the pet cope with the heat, especially reducing the intake of grain-based foods that cause a metabolic spike in body temperature.” A common misconception is that giving your pet a buzz cut in the summer is a good idea, but that may not be best for your pet. “A pet’s coat acts as insulation, it keeps it warm in the winter and cool in the summer by blocking the heat of the sun from reaching the skin.” For example, “the several layers of the dog’s coat keep the heat out and air circulating. If you remove the natural cooling process the dog will have a harder time coping with the heat.” Check with a veterinarian or professional groomer to find out what’s best for your pet.



Hot asphalt or cement can easily burn an animal's paws, so try to minimize walking your pet during the hottest part of the day. Not sure how hot the asphalt is? Place the back of your hand on the asphalt - if it's too hot for you, it's too hot for them.

Also, as mentioned before, animals can suffer from heat illness. A few signs of heat illness in pets are rapid or irregular heart rate, excessive drooling, lethargy, refusal to eat, or excessive panting. "Panting is a normal cooling mechanism for a dog", says Donnie, "but a very bad sign for a cat. Be aware of excessive panting in dogs." If you notice any of these signs of heat illness "remove your pet from the heated environment and get it into a cooler environment. Apply cool towels to the pet, remove the towels, wring out the warm water, re-wet and reapply. Provide plenty of cool fresh water for the pet but be careful not to chill the pet."

Last but not least, NEVER leave a pet unattended inside a vehicle. The temperature inside a vehicle can rise very quickly and is just as dangerous for pets as it is for people. Rolling down the windows is not a safe alternative. Keep these things in mind and have a safe and fun-filled dog days of summer.

Wildlife Watching in the Woodlands

By Monika Eckfield

Welcome to what I hope will be a semi-regular series of articles for The Woodlands newsletter! My family and I moved to the Woodlands in 2015 after spending 20 years in San Francisco. Since then, the neighborhood and the greater Walnut Creek area has seemed to reveal more and more about itself to us in measured increments. We fell in love with the neighborhood the first time we saw it—the big backyards, the friendly sidewalks with neighbors walking their dogs, the Cabana Club, the Canal Trail and Pine Creek. But that was just the tip of the iceberg! I hope to share some of my experiences as a Woodlands newcomer and capture some of the history and beauty of The Woodlands.




One of the first things I wondered about when we moved in was the wildlife we heard and saw. In our first year we spotted a North American Gray Fox twice in our backyard, which opens onto the Lime Ridge Open Space. Not only were we amazed to see these lovely, stealthy creatures in our yard, but fascinated to see that this member of the canine family can climb trees! We learned from a naturalist at Mt. Diablo State Park that the gray fox is one of only two animals in the canine family who can climb trees, the other being the East Asian Raccoon Dog. Once we adopted our first canine pet (a miniature poodle), the fox stopped dropping by. But there were plenty of other wildlife to marvel over!

We took up a keen interest in bird watching and were amazed by how many different birdsongs we could hear in our yard. We were accustomed to seeing and hearing Mourning Doves and Mocking Birds in the City (the Mocking Birds often imitated the call of car alarms just as well as they did other birds), but here in the Woodlands we became familiar with the sights and sounds of owls, hawks, kites, vultures, House Finches, Red-Winged Blackbirds, Robins, Scrub Jays, Canada Geese, California Towhees, woodpeckers, Western Bluebirds, and the enchanting ruffling sound of various species of hummingbirds' wings. Two Barn Swallow families crafted their mud nests near our front door and we watched several swallow couples become parents and teach their fledglings to fly. This Spring the house finches decided to make their nests inside the swallows' mud nests before they returned from their winter respite. Who knew finches would capitalize on another species' nests? We did not, and we tried to resist making jokes about the birds feeling the effects of the Bay Area housing shortage. More recently we have learned about guided bird and animal identification hikes offered by the Rangers of the Walnut Creek Open Space. They publish a brochure of events at the end of every June and December that describes the educational and environmental events they host over the upcoming six-month period. You can also find the events online at <http://www.walnut-creek.org/departments/open-space/open-space-activities>. I hope to make it to one of the guided Lime Ridge hikes soon, and to one on Shell Ridge, and in the Acalanes Open Space ... perhaps we will cross paths there!

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Thinking about a move? Make sure to include Steve Hansen in your interviewing process. ALL my Woodlands sellers are sure glad they did!

Whether you are thinking about a move this year, just curious about your home's value or considering some updating and want to know which improvements add the most value, please do not hesitate to contact me for a complementary, no obligation consultation and assessment of your home's current market value.



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