Keeping You Informed For 50 Years

September 2019

#### **FINAL EDITION**

By Bill Gilmyers



I saw an article this month in the New York
Times about the final edition of the Warroad
Pioneer, a newspaper in Warroad Minnesota
that closed its doors in May after serving a
community of just under 1,800 residents for
over 120 years. I found it to be a poignant
article, in part due to its characterization of the
void the paper's absence will leave in this small
community, but also because it struck so close
to home in run up to this, our final edition of
the Woodlands Newsletter. While there are
many differences between the fate of the
Pioneer and this publication, the impact, and
loss, are similar in many ways.

The Pioneer will no longer print "soft-focus features on residents, reprinted news releases, photos of fishermen with their outsize catches, and news of awards won by children and Shriners." Or "the occasional stories, too, about city officials, the school board and local sports". The Woodlands Association will no longer recap the Fourth of July parade or the light displays around the holidays. We're also losing our best platform to share information about more weighty issues of interest to the neighborhood, including 'hyper-local' coverage of changes in the local shopping centers, who's running for City Council, and proposed new housing.

This is a loss that may not be felt by all, and probably not by any all of the time. We've had plenty of 'slow news weeks' in the six plus years I've been on the Board, and those of us producing this newsletter have certainly thrown in some 'filler' from time to time. There have been many subjects, however, that only we could cover in a way that's useful to this neighborhood. In just the last few years we have devoted significant coverage to a proposed new local school district, speeding on our streets and the Orchards Development as it wound its way through the city's approval process. Now subjects like these will either not be covered at all or will be covered at a much higher level by regional papers like the East Bay Times. Now residents will need to comb through the conversation threads on services like NextDoor and try to separate the wheat from the chaff and attempt to distill the information that is useful from the chatter that is at best idle and at worst misleading.

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Established in 1965, The Woodlands Newsletter is a monthly publication that is published by the Woodlands Association. Archived issues are located at www.WoodlandsAssn.org

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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

# "The future depends on what you do today."

(Mahatma Gandhi)

# **Woodlands Association Board of Directors**

Bill Gilmyers ~ President Erik Ehlers ~ Vice President Vacant ~ *Treasurer* Vacant ~ Secretary Vacant ~ Members at Large Todd McNeill ~ Webmaster Susan Pfau ~ Newsletter Editor

Jennifer Zotti ~ Newsletter Distribution Manager

# Upcoming Board Meetings

8:00 - 9:00 a.m. Saturday, September 7th Saturday, October 5<sup>th</sup>

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

Woodlands residents are encouraged to attend board meetings.

### Thank You to Our Distributors!

By Bill Gilmyers

This is the final issue of the Woodlands Newsletter, and we'd be remiss if we didn't take some time to thank the team that has delivered it to your doorstep every month. First, a big thanks to the Woodlands' Newsletter Distribution Manager, Jen Zotti, who has managed our entire distribution effort since 2015. Jen helps to recruit, train and manage the team of Distribution Leads and Block Captains who make up our neighborhood delivery network.

Every month Jen receives the entire count of newsletters from the printer. She then breaks the newsletters into two groups and delivers them to Marge McDowell and Bill Schasteen. Marge and Bill then divide their stacks into individual bundles, which are hand delivered each block captain. And then the block captains hand deliver them to your doorstep.

This is the final edition of the newsletter, so if you are reading this, everyone has completed their delivery run for the last time. On behalf of the Woodlands Association Board I'd like to thank all our distributors, present and past.

The following individuals are the exceptional residents who have volunteered their time to make sure this newsletter reached your home:

Helen Malboeuf, Ann Raymond, Barbara Johnson, Mark Scafidi, Sue Stuart, Carol McNeil, Corey Brooks, Dave Wong, Debbie Full, Thomas Malott, Ellen Diamond, Lisa Lamm, Jan Warren, Jan Ondeck, Jane Cops, Janet Dolliver, Jennifer Zotti, Jason Roberts, Stella Scafidi, Pankti Clerk, Jerry Ossinger, Mike Benincasa, John Casey, Judy White, Julie Ehlers, Kat Sellis, Melissa Vartan, Lisa Peachee, Kathy Alphin, Sam Chan, Lois Mitchell, Margaret Brown, Margaret Scott, Brad Smith, Marlene Berkman, Kathy Master, Saundra Fairall, Nancy Treadwell, Panya Sawan, Pat Coyle, Patty McDowell, Paul Parkus, Rich Coulter, , Sam Pitluck, Sandy Wagner, Sharon Nelson, Steve Carter, Sue Gardella, Terri Payne, Tony Lansang



#### (Continued from Pg. 1)



So, this publication, in continuous publication since 1967, ends today, and that is truly a loss. But, while the neighborhood is losing this platform, we are not losing our voice. The Woodlands Association will continue to serve the community, we just won't be arriving on your doorstep every month. We'll continue to advocate for the needs of the neighborhood with local commercial interests, the police and the city. We'll use our website, Facebook, NextDoor, and other channels to communicate to you, and to hear back from you. Look for another article in this issue by Susan Pfau (page 5), which will talk about what the future holds for the Association and how we will continue our work.

Finally, I'd be remiss if I didn't spend some time sharing a few more 'thank you's' for those we've not had the opportunity to call out in the last few issues. First, big thanks to **Ed Wohlers**. Ed served on the Board in many capacities for nearly 10 years. For the last six he's been our unofficial Board Member Emeritus, always happy to offer his time, and more importantly his advice, on how to deal with the important and sometimes tricky issues that come up in the course of managing the association. I've been President of the Association for over three years, and absolutely couldn't have done it without Ed's astute guidance and patient tutelage.

I'd also like to thank our current Board. We usually thank people as they are leaving the Association, but in this case, I think it's even more important to thank those who are staying to carry on our work. Vice President **Erik Ehlers** has served for nearly six years himself, in a challenging role that can best be described as 'other duties as assigned', and in particular stepping up to back up the President when I'm not available. **Todd McNeill** is our Webmaster, serving since 2016, in a role whose title definitely doesn't do his work justice. Better put, Todd is the architect of our technology strategy more broadly, helping us identify the best tools to use to track our data, market ourselves, and drive the organization in the future.

Last but not least, **Susan Pfau** has been our Newsletter Editor for the last two years. While we are sad to be ending the newsletter today, the fact is we would have wrapped things up a lot earlier without Susan holding things together. The Newsletter Editor role has always been the most demanding one on the Board, requiring the coordination of articles and advertisers, month in and month out. Susan has done not just this, but frequently contributed articles of her own to make sure we have enough content every month. There have been some months where basically the whole newsletter was a 'Susan Production' (and those were really good issues!).

And that's that. If you've read this far all that's left is to thank you for doing so, and end with my last admonishment to get involved in your community, be it on our Board or on any of the other wonderful volunteer organizations that make living here special. The Woodlands is an amazing place, I love to live here, and that will continue to be true whether there is a newsletter or not. This marks the end of the Woodlands newsletter, but also a new beginning for the Woodlands Association. I for one can't wait to see what's next for the neighborhood we all call home.

#### WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS – THE WOODLANDS ASSOCIATION

By Susan Pfau

As the newsletter sunsets, I too am sad as it is very much a part of the Woodlands history. But here's the thing, we're still here. Just because the newsletter is going away, doesn't mean your Woodlands Association is going away with it and more importantly our sense of community. I like to think of this time as the next chapter for the Woodlands. Let's see how our community's story unfolds, shall we?

What I would like to see for Woodlands 2.0 (as Bill likes to call it) is more overall community engagement. Without the time devoted to the newsletter, now is the opportunity to solidify the Woodlands Association as the neighborhood advocacy group it's intended to be. There are a few things that are regular concerns for our neighborhood like crime and safety, speeding, and both commercial and residential development.

What about beyond advocacy? How about some more fun? As we continue with our special neighborhood traditions (4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade, Holiday Lights) maybe we can come up with new traditions for all of us to enjoy. Ideas are welcome.

Another focus for the Woodlands Association will be Board recruitment, so don't be shy if you want to help. We ask volunteers to commit 2-4 hours per month, but timing and effort is very flexible. Plus, the current board is made up of some pretty darn brainy, friendly and entertaining folks (if I do say so myself!), we're sure you'll enjoy spending some time with us.

Finally, we realize we need to expand and improve our other forms of communication as we will now be more reliant on electronic methods. Our website (woodlandsassn.org) needs some attention. In the coming months, we will discuss ways to improve and update it. For now, we will continue to post on NextDoor (if you're not already on NextDoor, please add yourself). We will be utilizing our Facebook Page more and perhaps even get back on the Twitter wagon should timely news/information need to be dispersed. Is Instagram in the future for the Woodlands Association? You never know! So how do you keep in touch with us?

On NextDoor – Woodlands neighborhood (www.nextdoor.com)

On Facebook – Woodlands Association (Like our page)

Woodlands Website – woodlandsassn.org

Follow us Twitter - @WoodlandsAssn

We're also setting up an e-mail distribution list that people can subscribe to, specifically to be kept aware of issues of importance to the neighborhood. Please e-mail us if you'd like to be added.

To do so, please email us at woodlandswalnutcreek@gmail.com.

And with this, I say the future looks bright. We say it time and time again – The Woodlands is a very special place to live. Let's keep it that way.

#### **THANK YOU**

By Erik Ehlers

The Woodlands Association has been around for a half century now – the demise of the monthly newsletter will not change that. However, as we look back at the neighborhood newsletter, it is important to recognize the current carriers of the torch.

The current president is Bill Gilmyers. While on the board, he has filled the role of president, secretary, treasurer, and has been the driving force behind improved communication between the neighborhood and city staff. Bill has attended countless meetings and tirelessly toiled to represent our corner of the city. Besides all that, I consider Bill a close friend, a man of great integrity and quick wit, always willing to extend himself for the benefit of others in both his board roles and life in general. While the newsletter's watch is now over and knowing that Bill may depart from the board that he has been on for the better part of a decade, I know he will continue to be a great neighbor and someone who is always thinking of the greater good.

I hope you'll indulge me, allow me to share a personal story. Bill and I each have children at the local elementary school, in the same grade even. When all the drama surrounded the schools during the proposed Northgate district episode, Bill brought up salient points that I had not necessarily considered prior to our conversations. He asked whether one side or another would be best not just for our own children but for kids growing up in tougher circumstances. Regardless of his personal feelings at the time, he held the line to make sure the newsletter was neutral in the debate, serving as a conduit for both pro and con voices to be heard. As Bill likes to joke, "My father's a doctor. I got his handwriting, but not his brains." I continue to take issue with that sly jab, well, not with the handwriting part, but you get the idea.

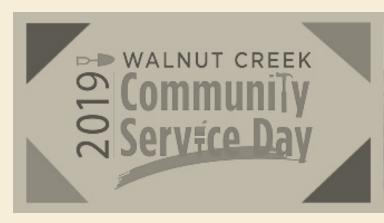
The other pillar of the association I'd like to share a few tidbits about it Susan Pfau. Susan works tirelessly to pull together each month's newsletter. She and Bill work with advertisers who are eager to place an updated version of their ad but less eager to pay their monthly bill, while nudging those who have promised articles to follow through on their commitments in a somewhat timely fashion. She is a regular sight in the early dawn hours walking her dog up and down our fair streets, then transitioning to leading campaigns for causes near and dear to her heart, such as speeding in the neighborhood (slow down folks!) and the welfare of animals. In fact, as you read this, she'll have just helped organize a major fundraiser for a local animal rescue in August. Next time you see your dog or cat wagging their tail contentedly or rubbing up against you pleasantly, be thankful that Susan has been an advocate for our furry friends. Susan and I also each have a child in the same grade, and I am amazed that she manages to keep a sense of humor while dealing with

running a consulting business, raising kids, advocating for animals and putting together this monthly missive. While that last task will be dropping off, I know Susan to be a bright and engaged leader who I look forward to working with on this board for years to come.

Thanks to all those people who have been a part of this newsletter over the past half century – I would certainly fail miserably if I tried to go into detail singing all their deserved praises. I will just say that we are quite fortunate to live in an area where people still seem to find time to care deeply about their neighbors, and we have such a wonderfully unique sense of community. Here' hoping for more of the same.



September 2019





# COMMUNITY SERVICE DAY – SATURDAY OCTOBER 12, 2019

Join the City of Walnut Creek for a citywide Community Service Day.

Saturday, October 12, 2019.

Right here in the Woodlands at Valley Verde Elementary School.

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

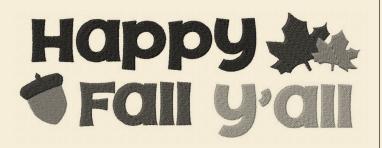
To sign up for the project at VVE or see other projects please visit: www.Walnut-Creek.org/Service.

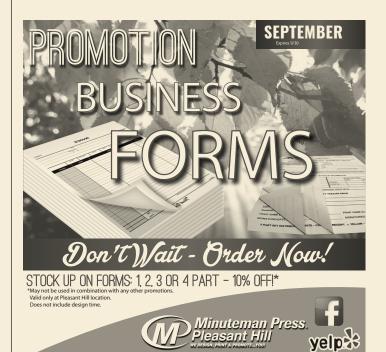


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Starting on Tuesday, September 3 rd

call 945 - 4575 To Register

Please do not call prior to this date

# Registration Ends Sunday, September 29 th

When you call, please leave (1) your name, (2) home phone number, (3) address, & (4) a brief description of the items for sale.

You will receive a call back to confirm the information within a few days.

Garage sale hours are advertised as 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. You can open and close your garage whenever you wish.

Because of the details involved in setting up this event, Please Call No Later Than 6:00 p.m., Sunday, September 29 th



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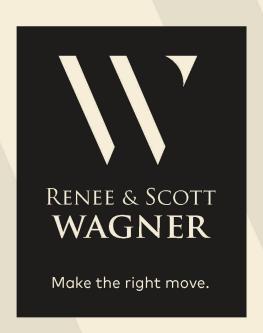
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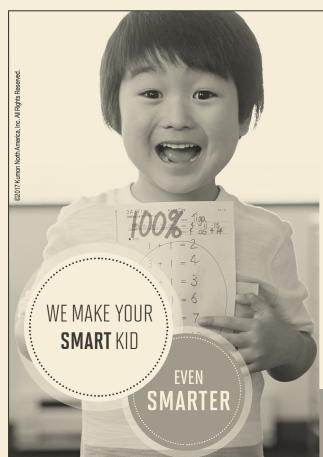
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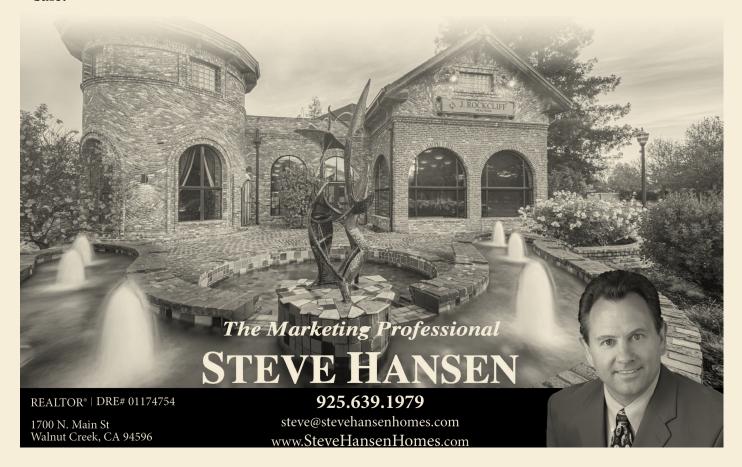


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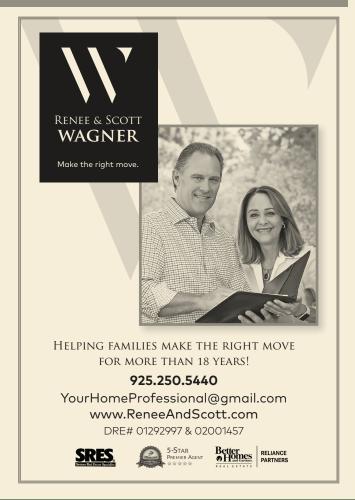
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