

# *Willow Creek News & Views*

Winter 2018

A publication of

Willow Creek Homeowners Association, Inc.

"Deed Restricted Single-Family Neighborhood" — [www.wchoatx.com](http://www.wchoatx.com)

P.O. Box 1883, San Marcos, TX 78667-1883 [wchoa99@gmail.com](mailto:wchoa99@gmail.com)

## NEWSLETTER EDITORS: WCHOA Board

Director:	Marianne Moore	<a href="mailto:marimoore2001@yahoo.com">marimoore2001@yahoo.com</a>
Director:	Gordon Love	<a href="mailto:glove266@hotmail.com">glove266@hotmail.com</a>
Director:	Fred Davis	<a href="mailto:fdavis0880@gmail.com">fdavis0880@gmail.com</a>
President:	Becky Dobbins	<a href="mailto:lizdobbins@rocketmail.com">lizdobbins@rocketmail.com</a>
Vice President:	Debbie Harvey	<a href="mailto:topcooker@gmail.com">topcooker@gmail.com</a>
Secretary:	Jon Leonard	<a href="mailto:jlwcehoa@gmail.com">jlwcehoa@gmail.com</a>
Treasurer:	Carol Short	<a href="mailto:cshort101@gmail.com">cshort101@gmail.com</a>

## **President's Message:**

Much news as we prepare for the holiday season!! We hope your Thanksgiving was amazing (however it is you celebrate it) and you are gearing up for the next several weeks of multiple celebrations.

Yes, we will have the holiday lights contest again this year. We will focus on the top 3 (the coveted top 3) that excite our judges and have the best lighting and/or displays. Our judges have keen "designer" eyes and enjoy the neighborhood's efforts to "dress up the yards" for the holidays!

Traditional  
Nontraditional  
Other December Holidays  
Children's  
Judges' Wild Card

Winners will receive a crisp \$50-dollar bill and a picture of your display will be posted on the WCHOA website. Remember that it isn't about the number of lights you put up, it's about the creativity that is used to display the holiday spirit.



The light displays enhance the neighborhood ambiance and add to the warm aspects of our community. Good luck to all who participate. Judges will be out looking at the displays beginning on December 16 and winners will be announced by December 21. This means your neighbors can stop by and enjoy your displays too.

Yes, the weather has turned to fall and winter. We've already had some 23-degree nights (and mornings) so please take good care of your critters and plants. Frostbitten ears, noses and toes for critters (and people) can happen in less than 20 minutes depending on how cold it is and the dryness of the air. Be prepared by planning ahead. Temperatures can be unpredictable and can vary 20 to 40 degrees within a very short time period. Take your pets (and you!) inside to stay warm. Move your plants (if possible) to your porch (against the wall). Cover them with sheets or use holiday lights. A few days of really cold weather will wipe out palm trees or citrus. The date and orange trees prefer smudge pots when it's really cold. Some of you might not know what those are...they are an effective (but ugly) way to save your plants in very cold weather conditions.

## **Porch Pirates:**

The Porch Pirates increase their activity this time of year. If the “drop location” for your packages is not secure or is too street exposed, you may end up having your packages stolen or replaced with an empty box. We have several types of delivery people in the area. The blue and brown shirt drivers will almost always drive “official vehicles” unless they are using some additional U-Haul or Enterprise (for example) rental vehicles. Other companies use “uber” type contactors and they may arrive in Corvettes or van type vehicles. This creates confusion for us because who is real and who isn’t?



**A couple of things to watch for:** someone walking to your door that is looking to the left and right and may be carrying a very light package with blue or gray tape. This may sound odd, but think about it. If you already have a package on your doorstep, quickly move it inside. If the delivery person then takes a quick turnaround, please call the police immediately. One thing that the package pirates do is to have two people in a vehicle: one jumps out of the passenger side and the driver stays in the vehicle. The driver keeps the engine running, and the thief will steal your package(s) and return to the waiting vehicle. Video cams have caught many of these thugs—they usually look quite ordinary—which

underscores that the Porch Pirates can be almost anyone. Be cautious and protect your porch deliveries by removing the packages quickly. If you are not going to be home, have the packages delivered to an alternate location or have a neighbor pick them up.

## **Unusual Occurrences:**

Recently we’ve seen some odd occurrences: free range chickens roaming Leslie Lane and Tate Trail!! Please note that your section deed restrictions may prohibit them. Be aware that loose chickens can be confiscated by animal control since the City of San Marcos bans that.

Another odd occurrence? The buzzards have been feasting on “dead” critters of various types. It’s disconcerting to see eight or more of those black feathered birds gathering around a location doing “clean-up.” They may be in the trees waiting; they be circling in the skies; and they may be on the ground shoving each other around for the best “table seating.”

Contact [animal control](#) if a carcass is in the street or on the curbside. The last two large dead carcasses were deer and they appear to have been hit by a vehicle and moved to the side of the street. It’s possible the injured critters were able to move to those areas; more than likely, someone dragged them out of the roadway. Please call animal control if you hit a deer. It’s the humane thing to do.

## **Deed Restricted Single-Family Neighborhood:**

Please remember this community does not permit multi-family or student housing. It’s designed for single family residential living. It’s not a trailer park, nor a motorhome park, nor is it designed for temporary housing. This helps preserve the value of the property and helps protect the unique aspect of Willow Creek Estates. And did you know that other areas around us may use the term Willow Creek, but they have their own HOA’s and their own rules. Those HOAs are working to maintain the character of their communities too. Did you know it takes diligence to maintain the character of the entire neighborhood and surrounding areas? We point out the obvious—your [deed restrictions](#) are very specific. We’ve had very few incidents over the years where people just don’t care—and they’ve lost in court.

**Subscribe & Receive Our Email Updates:** If you are not currently receiving our email communications (neighborhood alerts, informational updates, lost & found), a quick and simple way to start receiving them is to [subscribe](#). You may also use this option to add another household member to our email distribution list.

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## **Garden Shows:**

Diana Mays recently shared the following information with us and we want to pass it on to you.

On Saturday and Sunday mornings KLBJ radio station 590AM has some wonderful talk shows on gardening. They are a wealth of information on how to really care for your yard/acreage. Each of the hosts is very knowledgeable. They all take calls from listeners with any questions on their plants, yard, etc.

"I've found that not too many people know about it and when my sister told me, I became an avid listener. I have learned soooo much," said Diana.



The following info shows the days and hours:

- Saturday 8-9 am – Wildflower Hour with Tom Spencer
- Saturday 9-11 am – Gardening Naturally with John Dromgoole and Jeff Ferris
- Sunday 8-10 am – Gardening Naturally with John Dromgoole and Jeff Ferris (this is *not* a rerun)
- Sunday 10-11 am – Austin Gardner with Sheryl McLaughlin

## **WCHOA is a Mandatory Association:**

.....**But what isn't mandatory is the dues.** Sort of odd, isn't it? And there are two mandatory HOA's within the Willow Creek Estates subdivision (with mandatory dues!). What makes WCHOA special is we must convince you we've earned the annual dues of \$20. We use that money from the voluntary dues to maintain and update our website, run the garage sale, put on the National Night Out event, conduct the annual meeting, have a holiday lights event, maintain the entrance signs and the yard areas around them (we have 2!), and other items as needed. You can pay your voluntary dues [HERE](#).



## **Volunteers Needed:**

Our board is made up of volunteers and we are always looking for helpers. Interested in being our secretary or serving on the [board](#)? We are currently scouting for a secretary since we must replace that position. Our current treasurer is moving up to be a vice president, the current secretary is planning on handling the treasurer position, so we need a secretary. Are you interested in serving on our board in any capacity? Please contact [Becky Dobbins](#) or one of the directors: [Marianne Moore](#), [Gordy Love](#) or [Fred Davis](#). Our meetings are usually held at Perk-Up or someone's home and the meeting schedule is flexible. The one important requirement for a Board Member is to pay the annual dues, plus be willing to serve your local community.

## **Sharing Our Streets:**

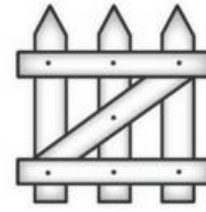
Many thanks to those of you who have slowed your pace when driving through the neighborhood. More of you are acknowledging walkers and joggers as you pass them, and this helps keep people and critters safe. Also, more of our early morning and late evening walkers/joggers are wearing safety vests and carrying flashlights or wearing lighted head-gear. This combined effort is paying off. Granted, we need more work with the cycling community since many of them ride side by side instead of "in tandem" (one behind the other). When driving around curves or cresting a hill, please watch out for pedestrians, and cyclist.

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## What are the most annoying elements to your neighbors?

- Lawns that remain un-mowed for months. Some of these can be reported to the city or county for follow-up. SMTX Connect is an [app](#) or [web-form](#) that the city uses so that people can report violations of city code. If you have questions, contact one of our directors. They will guide you.
- Encroachment—Did you really mean to build the fence that high? Or did you know you have set-back requirements?
- Portable sheds in bad shape.
- Noise—Barking dogs; Construction from early morning to late at night; Constant vehicle traffic; Multiple cars or recreational vehicles (some disabled, in the driveway or offside parking).
- Junk—In the driveway or yard.



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### Stay Informed!

Please sign up for official emergency alerts in our neighborhood—you can receive them by text, email or phone. Visit [warncentraltexas.org](http://warncentraltexas.org) and sign up today! It's a very good warning system for Hays (and a few other) counties.

### Run-Off Election:

[Run-off election](#) for the City of San Marcos will occur on Tuesday, December 11. There are two council seats up for grabs so please mark your calendars to be sure to vote. Run-offs don't usually get the voter traffic of primary or

“regular” elections and too often run-offs are decided by very few voters. If you live within the city limits of San Marcos, let your voice be heard! We are not listing the candidates since there are many other media avenues which will be telling you who the candidates are, what they represent, and their positions on issues that affect this community. The City Council seats up for grabs are numbers 4 & 5. **Vote!**

Welcome to our new Mayor Jane Hughson who was sworn in on Wednesday November 14 by former Mayor Kathy Morris. Melissa Derrick was also sworn in for council seat number 6. Terms are three years for council members and two years for mayor; seats are usually hotly contested.

### Our Advertisers:

We want to acknowledge our great advertisers—all locally owned businesses located in southwest San Marcos. They all say they enjoy working with the great folks in Willow Creek Estates. Their support provides partial funding for our WCHOA sponsored events, maintaining/upgrading our website, and distribution of newsletters. So please consider supporting these local businesses whenever possible.

#### **Our current advertisers:**

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