

Sugar Mill Connections

ISSUE

10

JAN.
2013

Meetings

Meetings are held at:
Sugar Land First United
Methodist Church
431 Eldridge Road
Sugar Land, TX 77478.

Architectural Control
Committee Meetings are
held the second Tuesday
of each month in Room
608 at 7:00PM.

Lake Committee Meetings
are held the second
Tuesday of each month in
room 600 at 6:30PM.

Board of Directors
Meetings are held the
third Monday of each
month in room 600,
(unless otherwise noted)
at 7:00PM.

HOA Annual Meeting is
held the last Tuesday in
March of each year.

For more information,
please contact Terri Salter
at MASC Austin
Properties, Inc. at:
(713) 776-1771 or
tsalter@mascapi.com.



www.sugarmillhoa.net

From The Board:

The past year has flown by and we are looking forward to the opportunities that this New Year presents. Here are a few of the activities that you may be interested in:

The January Board of Directors meeting will be held on January 28 at 7 PM in room 600 of the Sugar Land First United Methodist Church. The Church is closed on our regular meeting date in observance of Martin Luther King Day.

The first meeting of the Landscape Committee has been moved to Monday, February 4 at 7PM in room 608 of the Church.

The Architectural Control Committee meets on January 8 at 7PM in room 608 of the Church. This Committee meets every second Tuesday of the month – we are still looking for committed volunteers to add to the depth of the committee.

The Annual Meeting is scheduled on March 26 at 7PM Sugar Land First United Methodist Church. You will be receiving information on this important meeting in a separate mailing.

The Board has been working with MASC Austin Properties, Inc., as our property managers. The property management company is so important in making sure that the subdivision is functioning properly. We have been with MASC Austin Properties for more than two years now and are pleased with the professionalism that they demonstrate every day. We asked them to profile the company so that our homeowners could share the knowledge and confidence that we have in this company.

MASC Austin Properties, Inc. is dedicated to helping neighborhoods and communities maintain their property values while helping to manage the place you call home. We

guide and assist our most valuable asset...you! Our dedicated staff takes pride in being a part of your community family.

Communities and neighborhoods are a vital part of the social dynamic of America. MASC API is proud to be a part of the team effort that goes into managing our homes. Being a family owned and operated business since 1993, we are proud to assist in preparing, educating, managing, communicating, and growing with communities and working with neighborhood board of directors. Our clients start with the board of directors and expand to each homeowner and resident. Currently we manage 44 properties, including Sugar Mill.

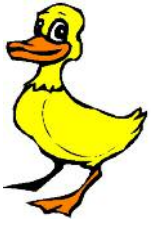
MASC API specializes in PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT. We know each community family is unique in their personalities and needs. Communication is vital with all members of the community (Board of Directors, Committee Members, Homeowners and Vendors). We realize that board members and committee members are volunteers and are a positive and vital tool to any community.

Our services include many management levels to better serve you. The properties we manage include condominiums, townhomes, and subdivisions. Each and every property is served with dedicated property managers and departmental experts.

The owners of MASC Austin Properties, Inc. are Shirley Austin, Angela Connell, Micki Sears, Carrie Austin and Claude McNew. We also have a staff of 18 employees. We are located at 13726 Florence Road, Sugar Land and our office is open Monday – Friday from 9 am to 5 pm.

*For your convenience we have included a
(continued on page 3)*

Please Don't Feed The Ducks



Yes, they are cute and fun to watch. When they beg for our attention and our food, they are hard to resist. But, in reality, feeding ducks anything destroys their health and creates serious health risks to humans. Once they get a taste for junk food, they stop eating the healthy natural foods in their environment. Ducks should not be fed human food.

Additionally, food gets the attention of more than just ducks. A few more drawbacks from duck feeding:

- It also attracts rats, pests and predators that kill ducks and endanger humans.
- Rotting food pollutes the water and breeds deadly diseases and parasites.
- Ducks defecate where food and bread are scattered. Bacteria in feces creates much higher risks for illness or disease.
- Most waterfowl die-offs in the past 10 years have been attributed to artificial feeding.
- Food waste bobbing on the water's edge is ugly.
- Ducks that are overfed create dangerous amounts of waste that harms fish and other animals living in ponds.
- Some foods like corn may be okay as a snack for ducks, but fish can't digest it and they die. Seeds cause severe cramping pain in ducks.

Following are a few things you can do to protect your local ducks:

- When you are out enjoying our community's lakes and other places where ducks live, simply observe the beauty of the animals and refrain from interfering by feeding them.
- Never toss coins or other objects into water where animals live.
- Remember that ducks live much longer when they eat foods growing naturally in their environment.

Marion's Fishing Corner

Every year at this time, our area lakes experience a phenomenon known as "fall turnover". What exactly is turnover? Well, in a nutshell, this is what usually happens. As our average daytime and nighttime temperatures go down, the top layer of water in the lake begins to cool. The advent of shorter days and longer nights accelerates the process. With cool water being heavier than warm water, the cool upper layer will eventually "sink" to the bottom of the lake. This in turn forces the warmer bottom layer of water to the surface. As this occurs, it disturbs silt and sediment from the bottom of the lake and normally causes the water clarity to decrease. Also, dissolved oxygen levels are affected. All of these factors combined will usually disrupt the fish's feeding habits. The combination of unstable oxygen content, murky water, and changing PH levels will usually negatively affect fishing success for a while. Luckily, the effects of the fall turnover only last a short time. Within a few days, the water will usually stabilize and the fish will get back to their normal feeding habits.

Turnover is a normal occurrence that happens to all lakes in our area. It is a short-lived interruption to some otherwise very favorable fishing conditions. So when these conditions exist, just be patient and give the lake a few days to stabilize. The wait should be well worth it.

Remember to "catch and release", because a bass is too valuable of a resource to catch just once.

Good Luck, Marion

Article written by Marion Raska who has lived in Sugar Mill and fished on Misty Lake for over 18 years.

Lighting of the Lake Contest

There were some really pretty backyards and we so appreciate everyone who decorated this year. It was a hard decision to choose the best one. The winner of the \$25 Lowes Gift Certificate donated by Vicki Haislup with Weichert, Realtors-Wayne Murray Properties goes to Guy & Mary Manna at 14019 Ragus Lakes. Honorable Mentions go to:

1. Brent Holloway at 1258 Misty Lake Court
2. Kami Eisemann at 1106 Morning Mist Court
3. Doug & Michele Barnes at 1123 Morning Mist Court

Thanks to all who help to Light Up The Lake this year. It was truly a beautiful lake parade with all the decorated boats and backyards. The Lake Committee appreciates everyone's participation. It was a big success!



Board Update (continued)

list of staff members who work directly with your community and can assist you with your needs.

*Terri Salter, Property Manager
tsalter@mascape.com*

*Gloria Rodriguez, Deed Restrictions
grodriguez@mascape.com*

*Joanna Figueroa, Maintenance/Property Coordinator
jfigueroa@mascape.com*

*Tiffany Moss, Accounts Manager
tmoss@mascape.com*

*Robert Rivera, Collections
rrivera@mascape.com*

Wishing each of you a safe and happy New Year; MASC Austin Properties, Inc.

As we begin a New Year of living in Sugar Mill we encourage everyone to look around and see the beauty of our subdivision. Look for ways to improve, get involved and fully participate in the community around you.

The Board appreciates all of our residents and thank you for the high standard of living and neighborliness that we enjoy each day.

Thanks,

Sugar Mill HOA Board of Directors

In The Know: Sugar Mill's Covenants, Deed Restrictions & Architectural Guidelines

Deed restrictions are written agreements that restrict, or limit, the use or activities that may take place on property in a subdivision. A primary purpose of most deed restrictions is preserving the aesthetics of a community.

By purchasing a home in Sugar Mill, you are automatically a party to the Covenants, Deed Restrictions and Architectural Guidelines. These legal documents are binding, and are enforced within Sugar Mill by the Architectural Control Committee and the Board of Directors.

Some of these guidelines are "section" specific, and others are community wide. If you have any questions regarding the Deed Restrictions, please contact Terri Salter with MASC Austin Properties at 713-776-1771. In general, these documents govern all exterior changes to your property, and some uses of the property as well.

Request for changes to your home's exterior can be made to the Architectural Control Committee, (ACC) by using the request form located on the community website (www.sugarmillhoa.net), in the Documents section.



City's Drought Contingency Plan

The City of Sugar Land recently adopted a revised Drought Contingency Plan that includes lessons learned from the 2011 drought. The plan simplifies drought plan implementation to achieve water use reductions during drought or emergency conditions.

Water management strategies in the plan address water supply and production capacity increases from the City's new surface water treatment plant as well as regulatory mandates that restrict groundwater pumping.

In the Plan, Stage I mandatory outdoor restrictions are triggered when water demands require production to increase to 65 percent of the system's capacity for three consecutive days. Stage I restrictions limit landscape irrigation to only two designated days for residential, commercial and roadways.

If Stages II and III of the drought plan are triggered at 70 and 80 percent of capacity, respectively, limits on outdoor water use will be increased, progressing to one day per week in Stage II and no outdoor water use in Stage III.

When the City experiences conditions similar to the 2011 drought (an event that reduced water supplies across the state to the lowest in 50 years), Sugar Land's new drought plan will require Stage I (watering limited to two days per week) implementation for only 17 days. As part of the new drought plan, neighborhoods in Sugar Land will be included in one of four irrigation zones. Each neighborhood zone will be assigned two watering days, either Wednesday and Sunday or Tuesday and Saturday.

For more information, visit:
www.sugarlandtx.gov/utilities.

Harman Center Extends Hours

Extended hours of operation at Sugar Land's T.E. Harman Center begin Jan. 2.

The center will be open during the following hours for activities such as health and fitness classes, dances, special events, billiards, ping pong, cards and board games:

Mondays from 8a.m. to 6p.m.

Tuesdays through Thursdays from 8a.m. to 9p.m.

Fridays from 8a.m. to 5p.m.

The T.E. Harman Center, 226 Matlage Way, opened earlier this year after renovations to the building that accommodate Sugar Land senior adult programs and activities, as well as other community uses.

The renovations almost doubled the space previously available to seniors.

The Harman Center includes a computer room/library; game rooms; an arts and crafts room; a teaching kitchen; and multipurpose rooms for classes, movies, exercise, dance, bingo and other forms of entertainment

The center was named after Sugar Land's first mayor, who was elected to the office in 1959. He served until 1961 and then served a second term as Mayor from 1965 to 1967.

For more details, visit:
www.sugarlandtx.gov.

Protecting Yourself Online

1. Check out unfamiliar sellers - Complaints from other shoppers can keep you away from the bad guys. While you'll find many familiar companies online, including ones that you do business with in person, on the Internet you can make purchases from companies and individuals from all over the world. If you're not familiar with the seller, it's a good idea to look for information about complaints at the Better Business Bureau and check the seller ratings on auction or price comparison sites. There are also many online sites where consumers share information about problems with companies and give feedback that can help you decide whether you want to do business with them.

2. Pay the safest way - Credit cards offer extra protections. Even if the seller has no history of serious complaints, that does not guarantee that your purchase will be trouble-free. If you pay with a credit card, you have the right to dispute the charges if the goods or services aren't delivered or were falsely described. It's safe to provide your credit card number online because you also have the right to dispute the charges if someone fraudulently uses it. While you can also dispute unauthorized debits, you don't have the right to dispute debits if the goods or services were misrepresented or never arrived. Note: Some debit card issuers will voluntarily credit the money back in that case, so be sure to ask if you become a victim. Some payment services such as PayPal offer "buyer protection" in case something goes wrong. Read how to qualify

for these protections before using the services.

3. Know A Secure Browser - Look for shttp/https where the "S" is for secure. Some websites use a security feature that turns your account number into code so no one else can read it. If shttp or https appears at the beginning of the website URL (at the top of your computer screen), you know the site is protecting your account number. There may also be a symbol on your screen such as a padlock that closes. Never provide financial account numbers by email, since it's not secure.

4. Never pay using a money transfer service - You could be transferring cash to a crook. Crooks ask consumers to send them payment using a money transfer service such as Western Union or MoneyGram because they can get the cash fast and it's hard to trace. Legitimate sellers don't ask consumers to send payment that way. Money transfer services should only be used to send money to people you have met in person and know well, not to strangers.

When online, it's better to be safe than sorry!



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Important Numbers

Sugar Mill's Board of Directors:

Name	Position	Contact #	Email Address
Bill Cure	President	281-491-9536	bill.cure@gmail.com
Robert Sheffield	Vice-President	281-242-0453	rsheffield81@comcast.net
Hank Ochel	Treasurer	214-293-4376	hank_ochel@me.com
Debra Blesener	Secretary	713-628-6991	debrablesener@gmail.com
Open	Asst. Secretary		

MASC Austin Properties, Inc.
13726 Florence Road
Sugar Land, TX 77498

Terri Salter
Property Manager
713-776-1771 / TSalter@mascape.com

Sugar Land Dispatch	281-275-2525
Sugar Land Police	281-275-2020
Sugar Land Fire Dept	281-275-2851
Sugar Land City Hall	281-275-2700
Sugar Land Library	281-277-8934
Sugar Land Post Office	800-275-8777
Police, Fire, Ambulance	911
Sherriff's Department	281-341-4700
Crime Stoppers	281-342-8477
Kempner High School	281-634-2300
Sugar Land Middle School	281-634-3080
Sugar Mill Elementary	281-634-4440
Fort Bend ISD	281-634-1000
Animal Control	281-275-2596

Stay Safe On The Highways This Winter

The Texas Department of Safety advises you to *Plan For The Road* when driving on Texas highways this winter. Here are some tips:

You can reduce your risk by simply practicing a few road safety habits. Avoid getting caught by surprise, plan

ahead, and be aware of alerts and advisories. Good road safety tips include:

- ✓ Stay tuned to local news and weather alerts
 - ✓ Obtain information about road conditions online at www.TxDOT.gov
- keyword: ROAD CONDITIONS or by

calling 1-800-452-9292

Also, ensure your vehicle is safe by checking wiper blades, heater-defroster, battery, anti-freeze level, brakes, tires, and your headlights and tail lights.

Most of all, drive safe!

Sugar Land

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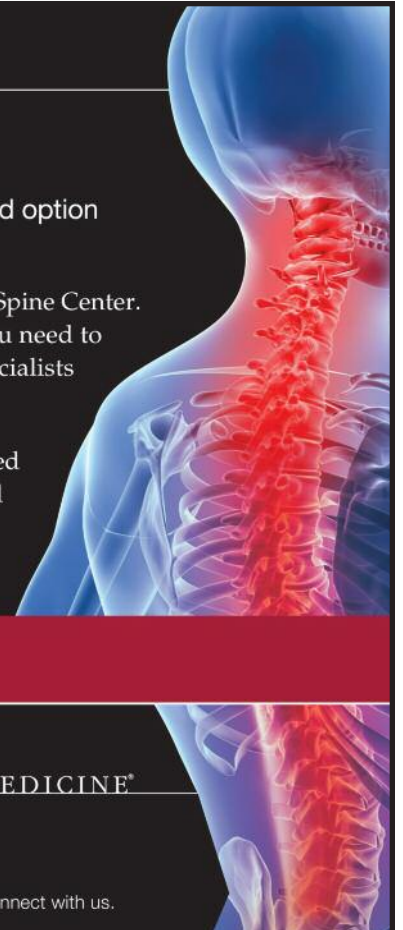
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MARTHA'S

TIPS AND TRENDS TO HELP
MAXIMIZE HOME BUYING AND SELLING

Season Pass

The weather may not be as chilly in California or Texas as it is in New York or Wisconsin, but getting your home ready for a new season is still a good idea. Put these "winterizing" tips from MSN Real Estate on your to-do list.

Clean your gutters. Autumn leaves are pretty, but once they fall, they can reveal their ugly side — by contributing to clogged gutters. Neglecting your gutters can eventually cause water to seep into your home. Rid gutters of leaves and other debris by hand (be sure to wear thick gloves) or with a scraper and rinse with a powerful hose to ensure proper drainage.

Plug leaks. Avoid leaks from rain with a simple maneuver. On a windy day, walk around the inside

of your home with a lit incense stick or candle and hold it near commonly drafty areas — windows, door frames, electrical outlets — and apply caulk or other sealants to gaps. For more protection against the elements, install storm windows or buy a window insulator kit (about \$5 per window) for a cheaper fix.

Bundle up. Insulation, no matter where you live, is a necessity. Experts say that regardless of where you call home, attics should contain a minimum of 12 inches of insulation. Ensure that your insulation is adequate to help you avoid wasted money in heating or energy bills.



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Source: 2012 NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®
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If you are currently working with another real estate agent or broker, it is not a solicitation for business.

Sugar Mill Specialist and Waterfront Specialist