



# Saddle Bags

## Your Neighbor is watching out for YOU!

### NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH



### IS ON THE MOVE

Your Neighborhood Watch is up and running for 2009 / 2010. President Jim Thomas has ordered new NW signs, the City has agreed to install posts at the entrances and the SPOA Board is considering installing a third set of signs within the Subdivision. County Commissioner Will Conley has agreed to speak at the October 6<sup>th</sup> National Night Out and local offi-

cially including the Crime Prevention Team will be invited to attend and answer all your questions related to the City and County.

Neighborhood Watch is a critical program for SaddleRidge. Burglaries have increased, the drought has created wild-fire conditions and there have been recent local traffic accidents and delays. Neighborhood Watch is the mechanism for quickly providing traffic safety, fire and weather alerts issued by the Sheriff and Fire Departments to Property Owners.

In the near future, all Property Owners will receive NW material containing information related to crime prevention, fire safety, medical emergencies, disasters and family protection.

All residents are encouraged to contact their Block Captains. They are listed on the SaddleRidge web site [www.saddleridge.com](http://www.saddleridge.com).

If you are not familiar with the Neighborhood Watch Program or would like to join the SaddleRidge Team, please contact us at 847-0207. **GET INVOLVED NOW – YOU WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE.**

### National Night Out

**Mark your calendars now for Tuesday, October 6<sup>th</sup> which will be National Night Out. Come out and meet your neighbors!**

**Cecil and Lee Gibson, Neighborhood Watch Coordinators**

### 2009 Board

**President:** Jim Thomas, 512.722.3083, president09@saddleridge.com  
**Vice President:** Glenda Moss, 512.393.3429, vicepresident09@saddleridge.com  
**Secretary:** Bob Eastlake, 512.847.8333, secretary09@saddleridge.com  
**Treasurer:** Joe Williams, 512.847.0390, treasurer09@saddleridge.com

### Architectural Committee

**Chair:** Ricardo Cardenas, 512.847.7363, cardrlmb@austin.rr.com  
**Member:** Pat Caballero, 512.847.5536, pcaballero@austin.rr.com  
**Member:** Francis Savage, 512.847.0955, fisavjr@earthlink.net

### Clubhouse Rental

Karen Stewart, 512.722.3133, kstewart1718@austin.rr.com

### Neighborhood Watch Coordinator

Cecil & Lee Gibson

### Firewise Coordinator

Ron Steel  
firewise@saddleridge.com

### Newsletter by Email

If you received your Saddle Bag Newsletter by US Postal service and prefer to receive it by email, send your email address to president09@saddleridge.com.

## RR12 Project Update

On Monday, July 20, 2009, Hays County Commissioner Will Conley, Precinct 3, and the project team met with the neighborhood at the SaddleRidge Clubhouse to discuss the upcoming safety improvements to RR 12, including the Junction to San Marcos. The County is sponsoring three different projects: (1) RR 12/RM 32 Junction, (2) Sink Creek Bridge, and (3) Hugo Road Turn Lane. During the meeting, maps and exhibits were on display, and information on the project development process was available for review and discussion. For more information, you can contact the project team by phone at 512-691-2207 or send an e-mail to [RJWatson@hntb.com](mailto:RJWatson@hntb.com).

# President's Notes

## Association Positions Filled

The SaddleRidge Board is pleased to announce that all open positions have been filled by dedicated and well qualified people. The Board Secretary position has been filled by Robert Eastlake. Robert is not new to the Board and has served in several positions in the past. We thank Robert for his willingness to serve in this very important position. Our Neighborhood Watch Coordinator position has been filled by Cecil and Lee Gibson. The Gibson's were instrumental in starting the Neighborhood Watch program back in the late 1990's and have agreed to step back into this critical role in our neighborhood. Many of us know Cecil and Lee and are very appreciative of their dedication and willingness to serve the SaddleRidge community again.

## Neighborhood Concerns

### Barking Dogs

Several complaints have come to our board regarding barking dogs that have become a nuisance to the neighbors. This is in violation of our covenants and Hays County ordinances. Please be mindful that not only excessive barking noise at night is very disturbing, many people in the area have jobs where they work at home during the day and are also disturbed by constant barking of dogs nearby. Please find ways to prevent your animals from becoming a nuisance to others. Keeping dogs inside, the use of shock collars, and being certain the animals have all needs met with food and water may help. Be considerate of your neighbors.

## Fire Danger – Burn Ban in Effect

The Burn Ban is back in effect for Hays County. The extremely hot temperatures have created a very dangerous situation for homeowners in our community as well as others. Have a dependable water source near any fires. Mowing tall grasses near residences also decreases the possibility of a residential fire. Please be "firewise" so all residents can remain safe from the extreme danger and devastation that fires cause.

### Water Conservation

Along with the fire danger the unusually high temperatures have caused, conserving our precious water supply that comes primarily from the Hays Trinity aquifer (Glen Rose branch) becomes everyone's concern. The ex-

treme drought that we find ourselves in means our water usage is not being replaced. Since the water supply is not unlimited, all measures we can implement to limit our usage will help all users in this area of Texas. Each of us can help by using water limiting appliances, faucets, shower heads, etc. If you have landscaping, using a drip irrigation system helps place water at the best location without excessive evaporation. Installing a simple rainwater collection system for plant watering use will save considerable water. If you water, water during the cooler part of the day to minimize evaporation. There are multiple web sites that list water conservation suggestions. Let's all get together in SaddleRidge and make water conservation a primary concern.

Jim Thomas  
2009 President

## Article Contribution by Concerned Resident:

*There are many newcomers to SaddleRidge that may be interested in helping keep the balance of nature. Take a moment to read an article from a concerned naturalist in our neighborhood:*

### Please Don't Feed the Deer

Just in case you hadn't noticed, summer is here and that means hot and dry weather. And it REALLY does not bode well for the critters that rely on that vegetation in one form or another.

Like our feathered friends, the birds. Seed eating birds will have a hard time finding enough things to eat since so many of the plants won't have a good flowering season, if they even

flower at all. Without rain, the flowers that create the pollen that supports the bees will be sparse. The bees are already in decline; the drought may hasten it even more. The birds that feed insects to their nestlings (the ones that hatch at least) will find fewer and fewer of those insects, and will have to work harder to find them since the bugs, busy and on the move, will be having a hard time finding living leaves to munch on. The lizards and any other critters that eat insects will be extending a lot of energy moving around trying to find their next meal. The small ground mammals will be working extra hard trying to find whatever it is they eat.

Everything suffers in this heat and drought. These little guys in the food chain are easy to miss. Their struggles tend to go unnoticed. Other than feeding the birds, most of us don't do anything to help these smaller, lesser things survive. After all, do you intentionally get aphids on your plants so the ants have something to farm? Do you keep an area in your yard damp and full of humus so the earthworms can thrive and feed the robins? How about letting the grubs take over your yard, giving the voles and mice something to eat so that the red tail hawk that lives in my neighbor's yard has something to feed its babies? These are the things

that occur when there is a natural biodiversity to the land. And it usually all takes place without our help. But we sometimes do things that affect the process, sometimes for good, sometimes for bad, sometimes intentionally, and sometimes unintentionally.

What we do see, and want to help, are the deer, and by now, those cute, cute fawns. They are bigger, more noticeable, and prettier than the skink or ground vole, even prettier than some (most) of the birds. Maybe that hawk doing lazy circles catches your eye, maybe not. But he sure isn't as easy to see as those little spotted fawns are.

So, what's the problem? Well, the fawns will be hungry, their moms will be thin, and we will want to feed them. After all, we

## Treasurer's Report

There's not much new to report from the SaddleRidge Treasurer's position. We've continued to have outstanding dues trickle in since the Newsletter that went out in April this year. We still have a few remaining 2009 dues that have not been paid, and liens and lien notice letters have been prepared and mailed. If those dues have not been paid within 30 days, liens will be filed against those properties.

On a positive note, we continue to maintain a very good financial position. Our spending this year has been conservative and we'll probably be able to move some reserves to savings by year end, assuming no unexpected expenses.

Someone asked recently how we spend the dues we collect. We collect a total of about \$20,000 each year. Mowing at the entrances and at the clubhouse is

about \$3800/year. PEC electric at the south entrance and clubhouse is about \$2400/year. Clubhouse maintenance runs about \$3700/year. Property and Liability insurance runs almost \$4000/year. Property taxes on the clubhouse was \$1500 this year. Postage, copies, stationary, and miscellaneous office supplies run about \$1000/year. The Saddleridge annual picnic and Fall Neighborhood Night Out cost about \$700 per year. Some years we consult with an attorney over legal issues that can get expensive, so we budget about \$900 per year for that. All of that totals about \$18,000, leaving us about \$2,000 for special projects and unexpected repairs each year. In good years some of that gets moved to reserves, in other years we may have to use some of the reserves to cover expenses.

Looking forward over the next few years, we're going to have some significant expenses with work on the entrances. As TxDot

begins widening of RR12, the signs and fences at the south entrance will have to be relocated further back from RR12. We don't know yet what the impact is likely to be. We expect some offset from TxDot as a result of the required move as they might pay us some of the cost of moving the fence and signs. It's possible that we won't be able to move the signs without destroying them, and, as a result, may have to completely replace with new signs at the south entrance. That could be expensive, and could require considerable capital expense that will reduce our reserves at that time. The fencing will have to be removed, and new designs will need to be developed.

As always, we need new volunteers to serve in Board positions and committee positions. If you've got any time at all, please consider getting involved with SaddleRidge. You'll learn a lot, and we'll all benefit from your involvement. Thanks.

Joe Williams  
2009 Treasurer

## Article Contribution by Concerned Resident (Continued from Page 2):

know we can help them make it through this drought. BUT... feeding them is just what you shouldn't be doing. If you supplement the deer you guarantee that the other parts of the food chain, the parts that feed those birds, and lizards, and small mammals, will decline even more, and faster, than the drought is making happen.

Those fawns that get that extra food you're putting out will soon start grazing; their mommas have already been eating everything they can in order to have milk for their babies. And all they have to eat is those same shrubs, flowers, and trees that hold and feed all that other life that abounds around us. Do you really want to sacrifice all those other living things for only one kind of animal? Are the deer that valuable to you that no other species matter? Do you really want to have a neighborhood full of only those plants that the deer hate to eat; the ones that are too woody, or that smell bad, or are poisonous? If you answer yes to those questions, than yes, go ahead and feed the

deer.

However, I, personally don't want to see all the biodiversity die around me in my neighborhood. I like being surrounded by **ALL** God's creatures, not just a few of them, so I **won't** feed the deer.

I, personally, won't put out supplemental water either. I don't know about you, but as much as I love and want all those other critters in my neighborhood, I don't want them congregating around my house to drink, plus the raccoons and opossums tend to have fleas, and I have dogs. I think you can figure out why I do not want those cute critters (well, I guess the possums can't be called cute) in my yard every night.

Plus, with water being scarce, the water holes are going to be busy places. If you have ever watched any animal documentaries, you know that means the predators are going to be hanging around, watching and waiting. In our environment, that means snakes (rattlers and others) and coyotes,

again not something I want to encourage to hang around my backdoor. I already have a 3-foot garter snake (better than a rattlesnake I guess) living in my pond wrecking havoc with the frogs and toads that I, being a gardener, value so much for their bug eating habits

If you really want to help the wildlife of our neighborhood, start by planting native species. And then, **DON'T, DON'T** feed the deer. If we increase, or even just keep, the natural biodiversity of our flora we increase the biodiversity of the fauna as well. Keep our neighborhood full of wildlife, not just deer.

Sun Gatto

For community events visit: <http://www.visitwimberley.com/>