

THE STATE OF THE ESTATES

TAKE THIS JOB AND . . . /THE GATES TO PARADISE/GROUCH IN THE 'HOOD/
A DOUSING SUCCESS/LOCAL HITCHCOCK MURDER/
PUT YOUR (HOOP) DREAMS AWAY/FORE!/NEIGHBORING COMMUNITY LOONEY TUNES

Woodridge Estates Homeowners Association Newsletter

November 2021

FRIENDS, NEIGHBORS, COUNTRYPERSONS: “We come not to bury what you sees here, but to phrase it.” *Our hope with this little epistle is that you find it an enjoyable way to become more aware of our surroundings, both within and without our gates. It is, however, distributed only to each homeowner’s “contact” email address on record, so please forward this to others in your household—especially to those who need either a laugh or something more to get angry about. (And maybe also give a copy to that neighbor who never picks up after his dog.¹)*

Monthly Reminders

Website: Please visit www.woodridgeestatesresident.com for more information about our community and its rules and regulations, HOA activity, a list of useful local phone numbers, and other stuff ya really oughta know.

Management Contact: Please send community questions, comments, and other general information and inquiries to Louis at PMP Management, lmellini@pmpmanage.com.

PMP Pro Tip: If you have a repair or some other common-area task that needs doing, one of our readers (maybe our only reader?) swears by logging into your PMP Management account at www.woodridgecommunityassociation.com and then going to “Dashboard” and then “Submit a Request.” You can even send attachments with your help request, if need be. Cool beans! This handy wormhole portal to PMP also gives you 24-hour access to your HOA account information, online payment options, management communication tools, and other useful info. Check it out!

Emergencies: Always **call 911 first** in a genuine emergency in or around the community. Our Gatehouse personnel are not “security guards”—you can let them know of any problems as well, **but call 911 first in an emergency.**

Suspicious Activity: In the event you have “suspicious activity” or other **non-emergency** matters to report, **do not call 911** but DO call police or fire (**and not the Gatehouse**).

Police: 805-494-8200/8201 Fire: 805-371-1111 ext 34

Board Election: December 22 is the deadline for nominating HOA Board members. If you are interested in serving on the Board, or know someone who is or you think ought to be, please let someone on the HOA Board and Louis at PMP know. (Board email addresses are on the HOA website at www.woodridgeestatesresident.com/helpfulphonenumbers, and Louis can be reached at lmellini@pmpmanage.com.)

¹ You are correct, we are kind of obsessed about this (sometimes not so) little courtesy.

WE'RE NO ANGELS

Next time you go to an LA Walmart, ask the greeter how s/he/it/they feels about also having to be a Covid cop in regard to requiring vaccination proof, vetting claimed religious exemptions, and reminding people about proper masking—yeah, none of that was in the original “greeter” job description. Well, our safety reporter Harold O. Riviera is very sad to report that staff turnover at our gatehouse has gotten particularly high over this past year, as it seems that dealing with visitors unhappy about having to get checked in to our community likewise is not something our gate-arm operators bargained for. That’s right—some of them actually have left us to go work as *flight attendants* for “peace of mind.” That is not a good grade on our visitor comportment!

Seriously, friends, our gatehouse and our visitor entry protocols are a big part of what this community provides for mutual resident benefit. It really is important that your visitors know what to expect when they arrive here, and it should go without saying that they need to treat our gatehouse personnel with respect. But evidently we do have to say it.

If your visiting Uncle Cletus or non-smell good plumber is immune to importunings about simple kindness to fellow humans, maybe remind them that **our gatehouse has excellent hi-def cameras recording all interactions**. And YouTube, “Ridiculousness,” and Yelp! are all just a keyboard click away #shamingiseasythesedays

If you have not yet signed up for the “GateKey” app, please visit the HOA website at www.woodridgestateresident.com and the “Gate Key Access” tab on the lower right of the homepage for information on how to do so. And this link takes you to a log-in page and provides tutorial access: www.gatekey.com/resident-login. This app makes it super easy for even the computer-challenged to set up temporary and permanent visitors so as to ensure smoother entry for your vendors and guests. Visitors always are required to show ID, please make sure they know that, but putting them on these lists with just a few computer clicks (from your phone, even!) is very helpful to our gateminders, especially as the holiday season gets underway and gate traffic increases.

Also, please pull into the visitor lane once in awhile and introduce yourself/say hello to our gatehouse folks. They put up with a lot of guff of which we thankfully are mostly unaware and cannot imagine. An occasional resident thank-you wouldn’t hurt and might help keep them from leaving to join Al Qaeda.

PS: Your HOA is developing a plan that will provide all homeowners a simple way to contribute to the annual bonus fund for our gatekeepers. Cookies, cakes, and similar gifts always are appreciated but also can accumulate beyond their capacity to be consumed and go to waste (waist), so watch for an email blast coming soon from PMP with instructions for how to say “Thank You” to our gatehouse personnel with a little extra cash from the entire (we hope) community.

WELCOME TO WOODRIDGE!

Thanks to some very hard work (a sincere labor of love) by several volunteer homeowners, the HOA was pleased to announce at its November meeting (what, you missed it?!?) that construction is commencing on a new planted “gateway” in front of our community gatehouse. This will replace the last of our potted plants intended to ensure vehicles departing our community do not collide with those arriving

(yep, it happens). As previously reported, lost souls on Sunset Hills sometimes become afraid to talk to our gatekeepers about turning around the gatehouse and instead attempt to back up, ending in the slaughter of many a planted pot that used to help divide our comers and goers; the new planted area will feature a more gentle curb to discourage yet survive said reversals when they happen (and they will), and also will provide a flowering entryway that puts added focus on our now working fountain—which also soon will feature lights of its own. Welcome to Woodridge, indeed!

Construction of the cement planter is slated to begin the week of Thanksgiving, pause for the long holiday and weekend break, and finish the following week. Interference with arrivals and departures through the gates should be minimal, please watch for cones and be extra careful (and slow down!) while the workers try to get the hardscape work done efficiently. Installation of irrigation and lighting will follow the cement work, and then will come the planting—all should be done by Christmas. New (and less) signage in the area is coming as well!

Thank you to our devoted homeowners who spearheaded this project but wish to remain anonymous—Susie and Dave, you know who you are.

While on the subject of landscaping, please also remember to check the tree trimming schedule on the HOA website www.woodridgeestateresident.com homepage (top right) under “Showscape Tree Pruning Schedule.” And please be advised that the common areas next to the sidewalk on the north side of Willow Canyon between Woodworth and Morning Ridge are slated for landscaping refreshment as planting weather dictates in the coming weeks and months.

AND THE OSCAR GOES TO . . .

We have been telling you for a couple months that TO is changing waste haulers January 1, and we all will be getting new garbage bins accordingly. We also have reminded you to register with Athens Services, the new garbage guys/gals/people by calling 833-791-2377. (Also visit Athens’ FAQ page at <https://athensservices.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Thousand-Oaks-Residential-FAQ-FINAL.pdf>.) You can order whatever configuration of bins you want, from size to number.

But wait, there’s more!

New state law requires that cities transition to composting food waste, and TO already has complied—along with the new waste cans we will get from Athens, we also are going to be getting new kitchen bins for “food waste,” which apparently is all uneaten food, all bones and eggshells and banana peels and the like, all guts for you hunters and fisherpeople, and any sort of paper product with food shmears on them (wrappers, paper plates, paper “to go” containers, etc.).² And after a great deal of investigation, we also have confirmed that yes, you still can use bags to line your new kitchen food waste bin (you know, to keep away the smell and the vermin) but they have to be bio-degradable (a/k/a “easy tear and spill”) or paper bags. (Wait, didn’t we just go through a whole thing about getting rid of paper bags?)

² We use “etc.” here not because it is obvious what else is included, but because we really have no idea what else you have to toss in this special food waste bin, and so you are on your own.

Furthermore, we are required to dispose of all this food waste in our green “organic waste” bins, along with all our dead plants and, for all you climate change deniers, grass clippings.

We should be getting all these new bins within the first 4-6 weeks of the new year as Athens time-releases the transition. We also are supposed to get written notice ahead of time to leave our bins out after being emptied so they can be replaced by a follow-along vehicle. (Here's hoping these bin picker-uppers did not used to work for Street Services—have you ever noticed how long it takes to get a street striped after repaving? Sheesh!)

So those of you who are challenged to follow our community rule requiring you to get your bins off the street by the evening of the day they are emptied (see R&R Common Area Rule #3 at <https://www.woodridgeestateresident.com/area-information>) will get a slight reprieve at some point next year (looking at you, Country Vista).

“Just one more thing,” notes our garbage Columbo: “You also have to re-learn the trash bin color scheme: Green is still for grass clippings and the old flowers you picked from your neighbor's rose bushes, but now it also is for all that “food waste” we tried to describe above; Blue is going to be for paper, plastic, and etc.³ recycling; and Black is for glass (but not *food container* glass, that goes in the Blue recycling bin, you dummy!), broken stuff, sneezed-in tissues, and all those old metal bicycle parts you have been hoarding.

Got it? Yeah, we don't either. We are sure it all will work out, though.

Breaking Garbage News: Our new waste company will charge, after a warning, \$25 for overfilled bins whose lids do not close completely when put out for pickup. Protest all you want, but meanwhile do visit the Athens site noted above and order the number of bins you need to avoid this extra charge

AGUANAUT SUCCESS

Common area water usage and attendant expense have been curtailed quite significantly since your HOA Landscape Committee took up the cause in early summer. Nearly a 30% year-to-year decrease in water usage and an almost 20% year-to-year cost reduction. (Price increases and tiered pricing don't make use reductions equal the cost savings on a percentage basis.) The Landscape Committee continues to monitor common area plant and tree stress and adjusts watering as necessary, but overall the effort has saved both water and HOA funds without significantly impacting our surrounding flora. We are in a drought and live in a desert, so until the rains come back (fingers crossed) we are going to see some stress in the common areas no matter what we do. If you do see areas of concern, though, please let PMP know and the Landscape Committee will check it out and adjust irrigation accordingly.

On a related note, the HOA is looking at a decent surplus here at year-end, largely due to water cost savings. And no dues increase is planned for 2022, so we got that goin' for us. This also is a good time to remind you that the HOA's Reserve Study Summary is available in its own tab under “Helpful Information” on the HOA website at www.woodridgeestateresident.com.

³ See footnote 2, above.

By the way, what counts for “winter” in these parts is coming, so this is a good time to re-calibrate your own irrigation system for the (somewhat) cooler weather and save some water costs for your own bad self. (Re-set your outdoor lighting while you are at it. And those noisy pool filter motors!)

OUR LOCAL MURDER

If you ever get out of the house around suppertime/close of business/happy hour, or if you have your windows open because you eschew the modern convenience of air conditioning in the hope you can save our planet (we have horse buggies for sale for your kind, by the way, let us know if interested), you undoubtedly are aware that we sit below a murder of crows’ flight path to a local rookery in the Wood Ranch neighborhood to our northeast. Occasionally these aviary atavists are unable to reserve a non-stop flight on their way home from scavenging along the coast and have a layover in our tall trees and on our rooftops. You really can’t miss ‘em if you are out around dusk, and they are quite a sight—must be at least a thousand every evening *caw caw-ing* their way over or upon us. (We recommend you not screen *The Birds* for the kiddies until well after dark—no need to have them question your credibility (“Don’t worry, kids, that could never really happen.”) any sooner than they eventually will anyway.)

Our frequent-flying noisemakers are, indeed, crows, not ravens, though those two species are related and hard to tell apart—the tail feathers, sound, and the way they strut when grounded make our local crow identification a sure thing. Crows eat almost anything, and the beaches, beach town garbage bins, farm fields, and Santa Monica mountains to our south are a prime daytime feeding ground for these highly intelligent scavenging aviators. But after dark they are no match for flying predators like hawks and owls, so they flock home to their nesting area in our local open space and stay together all night for mutual protection. They tend to be less communal when not mating, but they enjoy a long season of fun-time, so we get to see and hear them almost year-round.

Creepy crow fact: Crows supposedly are able to distinguish *and remember* human faces! (I guess someone asked them?) And so they probably also know where you live—better be nice! (Clean those birdbaths they mess up on the regular and they might let you live) *Caw!*

HEY, YOU’VE GOT TO HIDE YOUR HOOPS AWAY.

Please be advised that our Community “Rule of the Month” prohibits portable basketball hoops and other play equipment on streets or other common areas:

Portable backboards are not permitted on the streets or Association Property. Portable sports apparatus must be used and stored entirely on resident property at all times and shall not be placed on any sidewalk or portion of the driveway that connects to and is a continuous part of a sidewalk. Sports equipment shall not be placed in a manner that interferes with vehicle traffic or pedestrians using community sidewalks. Placement of all sports equipment and apparatus is subject to ARC review and approval. (See “Signs, Flags, and Miscellaneous Rules” no. 8 at the “Woodridge Community Rules and Regulations” tab at www.woodridgeestateresident.com.)

This rule also applies to goalie nets and goal posts and pickleball grandstands. There is, however, no prohibition on using the manhole cover as home plate for whiffle ball games in any of our *cul de sacs*.

(Yeah, those really were our salad days, remember? Anyone? Bueller?) Meanwhile, throwing dice, pitching pennies, and other games of chance in the common areas are prohibited by state law, so we don't need our own rule for such shenanigans.

ADDICTED TO ROUGH

Anyone else can't get enough of a good walk spoiled on a golf course? We tried a 12-Step program, but it didn't take; turned into a 9,875-step 18-hole program on a local golf course, of which there are many in the Conejo Valley. Many area golf courses are open to the public, and several—for example, Simi Hills, Sinaloa, and Los Robles Greens, all within a nine-iron of Woodridge—are publicly owned, as in by a local city like TO or a countywide Parks and Recreation Department.

Now maybe you don't play golf, but then you also probably don't play baseball or softball or soccer or tennis or use dog parks or take the kids or grandkids to a bike and skate park or hike any of our many public open-space trails—and yet we bet you still very much like the fact that these many and varied recreational facilities are available in our community. They help preserve the open space you adore, and they give your neighborhood Dennis the Menace a place out of earshot to unwind all that pent-up youthful energy you have forgotten you once had, too. It also turns out that publicly owned golf courses produce most of the city and county revenues that support all these other fee-free recreational greenways, while also incubating new water capture/reuse and many other eco-friendly technologies—seriously, you can look it up, golf courses support our natural environment!

Well, remember how happy you were to hear that one of our Woodridge residents is going to build an extra home on his lot, and how satisfied you were to learn that you actually voted for that in recent state elections? (See our September newsletter.) It turns out you also voted to have the state pay for turning publicly owned golf courses into “affordable housing” tracts—surprise! But don’t worry, they would never do that in our open spaces, we are quite sure it will stop at those pesky elitist golf courses. So, never mind, nothing to see here, move along, what me worry . . .

This proposal of the Sacramento brain trust we call a “legislature” is known as “Assembly Bill 672.” Be sure to call and encourage our local legislators to proceed since, again, they for sure will stop at golf courses and you hate golf (and dogs and flowers and kids) anyway. Or, maybe let them know that unlike the Accessory Dwelling Unit thing they just did while you weren’t paying attention, this time you know what they are doing ahead of time and won’t forget it at the next election.

Your State Senator is Henry Stern. <https://sd27.senate.ca.gov/>

Your State Representative is Jacqui Irwin. <https://a44.asmdc.org/>

(If you know them already, this info is not for you two.)

WILE E. IS NOT AMUSED

Another T.O. Acorn exclusive: The HOA for the North Pointe development over by Sapwi Trails Community Park at the north end of Westlake Boulevard recently engaged a company to “capture and

relocate" coyotes that were "annoying" the residents. But coyotes are territorial and can't be relocated without life-endangering risk; so state wildlife regulations actually *require* that captured coyotes be *euthanized*.⁴

We would resort to our usual snarkiness and just say "Oops!" for our neighbors' ignorance, but evidently North Pointe's trapping plan already has led to at least one coyote's euthanasia, and that is too tragic to mock. Local wildlife officials and non-profits are looking into it, and residents and North Pointe HOA board members don't have enough fingers to point at all the other people they blame for this; it reminds us of the 60's (to the extent we can remember them at all, we just know we were there) when Pauline Kael of the New Yorker expressed shock that Nixon got elected because she didn't know anyone who voted for him. Or for you youngsters, everyone at North Pointe is all, like, what Shaggy said, "Wasn't me."

Um, yeah, see, coyotes are all around us in the Conejo Valley and were here first. (Heck, they were all around us in Hollywood before we moved out here to a city that has more designated open space than developed space and is in a valley *named* for having a lot of rabbits, a/k/a "coyote ramen.") Coyotes dine on all kinds of small animals, pets included, and your little ones on two legs also shouldn't be out back all alone. So maybe North Pointers should learn to live with their open space surroundings, stop leaving pets and pet food out, keep their fruit trees picked, put rollers on their fence tops, and grab some pots and pans for making noise to scare coyotes away if they get too close—coyotes are bold but not particularly brave, and you, yes you, are known to them as the local "apex predator." So cowboy up and remind the coyotes of who's the alpha, and they will go back to the circle of life out in their open space territory and leave you and your little ones to your back yard. But let's not murder them just for being themselves. Good grief. (We are totally cool with killing spiders, though. Yuk.)

OLD BUSINESS

Prior newsletters are posted on the HOA website at www.woodridgeestatesresident.com and under the "Newsletter" tab. (Tricky!) Some quick reminders of prior topics if you can't remember (don't worry, it is not Alzheimers until you can't remember your internet passwords):

-Rat season is here with a vengeance; this is the time when the little creeps start looking for warmer places to hole-up for what we consider "cold" in these parts. Keep your garage doors closed, empty your bird feeders, don't leave pet food out, and maybe get rid of some of those boxes of things in your garage that you don't know what's in them anyway—the vermin love to set up winter camp in your cozy boxes of forgotten clothing you know you won't ever fit into again so stop kidding yourself. #nobodylikesahoarder

-Free hazardous waste drop off for Crazy Glue that you can't get out of the tube anymore (because, *glue*) and icky solvents and batteries and computer parts and such: <https://www.toaks.org>

-Ventura County fire prevention info: <https://vcfd.org/public-info/ready-set-go/>, and venturafiresafe.org. See also [https://www.woodridgeestatesresident.com/current-events-and-issues](http://www.woodridgeestatesresident.com/current-events-and-issues) about fire prevention efforts specific to our community.

⁴ We first learned about euthanasia from a schoolmate's junior high oral report. We thought he was talking about "youth in Asia" and fingered him as a future serial killer. It turned out okay, though, he got out last year.

-Please slow down and stop tailgating. (Some of us slow *waaaay* down when you creep up too close. . . . We know your day was long but you're almost home, *so calm down and slow down.*)

MISCELLANEOUS

Holiday of the Month: Thanksgiving (U.S.) is November 25. It's on a Thursday this year.

It also was Veteran's Day on November 11, and we hope you had a chance to thank a veteran for his/her service. "Thank you for service" is considered "trite" in some circles, but trust us, that or any other acknowledgment is greatly appreciated. And it never is said too late.

Holiday of next Month: No matter which of the December holidays you celebrate, 'tis the season to be jolly—and also on guard. For a list of crime prevention reminders, please revisit the October Newsletter at www.woodridgeestatesresident.com, "Newsletters" tab. For a list of other tips to make your holidays more enjoyable, call your mom.

Thick Crust Pizza of the Month: Numero Uno in Agoura Hills. Oh yeah.

Riddle of the Month: Is "BINGO" the name of the dog or the farmer? #grammarmatters

Non-Coincidence of the Month: "Listen" and "silent" have the same letters.

Jazz Musician Life Quote of the Month: "When you hit a wrong note, it is the next note that makes it good or bad." Miles Davis

PMP Tip of the Month: Log into your account at www.woodridgecommunityassociation.com and make sure your contact information is correct, especially your principal contact email address. That will help ensure you don't miss any alerts and reminders from our property management team (and this newsletter will get to the right place, too—your inbox, that is, not your trash, smartypants). And once again, get the GateKey app if you haven't already: www.gatekey.com/resident-login

That's all s/he/it/they/we wrote for this month. Don't forget to check out the HOA website at www.woodridgeestatesresident.com for more information, including a convenient list of useful local phone numbers at www.woodridgeestatesresident.com/helpfulphonenumbers.

NEXT HOA BOARD MEETING: January 20, 2022 (no meeting in December), and you should get an email invitation that will clarify the manner and means of the meeting (probably Zoom again) about a week before. *Please attend, it is your HOA!* ("Silence is where reasonable complaints go to die." C.R. Mudgeon.)

TO PROVIDE INFORMATION AND IDEAS FOR INTERESTING/FUN/SILLY/IMPORTANT/WHATEVER STUFF TO BE INCLUDED IN THIS NEWSLETTER, WRITE jbriggs@jbriggslaw.com

TO COMPLAIN ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER, WRITE: goodluckwiththat@californiastatelegislature.gov