



Notes by Diego Torres — President

This has been a very strange Winter season for us down here in South Texas but it has not dampened our spirits, especially when we hear of all the snow and ice affecting our friends and families up North. My goal for this year is to continue having events that promote neighborliness and involvement. The members' Clubroom (billiards) will be completed soon which will allow residents a private place to use as a gathering, chatting, TV viewing, billiards playing or Happy Hour site.

The good news for this year is that a settlement has been reached, via mediation, on the "2012 Hail Damage" claim. All the necessary documents have been signed and submitted to the law firm with a stipulation that the settlement agreement including settlement amount, be kept confidential. Therefore, in an effort to comply to this request, I cannot publish this information, If you feel you need to know the information, I will privately disclose it to you.

As you probably noticed, TLC our fertilizer contractor has completed the pre-emergent application of herbicide and fertilizer. The next application will be in April.

We have initiated a Garden Beautification Committee to improve the plantings at the pool, clubhouse, 41st and 43rd street entrance areas. The members are **Judy Bausum, Margie Duck, Wilma Langhamer and Norma Rodriguez.** Thank you ladies.

In view of the fact that the newsletter is now a bimonthly publication, I want to wish everyone a "Happy Easter" and to our Winter residents, "Happy Trails."

Village of Westlakes Board Meeting

Tue., Mar. 17 & Apr. 21 at 7:00 P.M

Finally – Insurance Settlement from the 2012 Hail Storm

by Gregg Groepper

The Village of Westlakes has finally received a settlement from the insurance company on the 2012 Board-initiated insurance claim for damage to the pool building caused by the hailstorms of the previous spring. Our claim was settled for an amount that replaces all the pool building expenditures and still leaves a tidy sum left over.

It took almost three years from the date of the March 2012 hailstorm to get this matter finally resolved for the Village of Westlakes. Because all of the necessary repairs have been completed and paid for, this settlement provides an opportunity to improve neglected or postponed maintenance issues for the Village, increase reserves, or take on new improvements for the Village.

Ultimately, the Board will have to have public comment, vote on priorities and amend the budget to reflect the income and any expenditures that get approved.

Email your recommendations for special projects for these insurance funds To start the process moving forward, we invite our VWL readers to tell us the special projects they think should be done with the funds. Send your ideas to <nkinerk@att.net>. The responses will be collated and be in the next issue of the *LINK* newsletter and will be shared with the Board.

Golf Banquet instead of Potluck

The March potluck will be replaced with the VWL Annual Golf Banquet. All are welcome. Come hear about the phenomenal event by VWL golfers **Kathy Ament** and **Lee Hedtke** who shot back-to-back hole in ones from the #7 tee in League play .

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS



BEGINS Sun., Mar. 8



Bentsen Wildscape Restoration by Gregg Groepper

Nedra Kinerk and I met with Brad Bentsen, McAllen Park Superintendent, on February 19th to discuss the restoration project along the buried irrigation boxes. Brad agreed to find out how viable the current water delivery system is and if it can be used to irrigate the project and any additional trees that will be planted. We both agreed to start with a demonstration project behind the vacant lot on 43rd and the small visible patch by the gas line easement between lots 31 and 32. The vacant lot planting area is approximately 65 ft by 15 ft deep. The smaller area between the two lots is approximately 30 ft wide by 17 ft deep.

First step in the project will be to take current pictures of the site and develop a proposed planting plan for consideration for funding by the City. The Village team will be responsible to get volunteers for planting and, assuming water availability, drip irrigation to the demonstration site. A planting plan will be delivered to Brad Bentsen within two weeks so City management can determine their level of support. Brad committed to have an answer by the end of the third week. Brad is also reserving 20 additional ebony trees to plant in tree sparse areas along the irrigation boxes.

The irrigation district is responsible for mowing the easement that contains the irrigation boxes and down a ways on each side, so that only leaves a strip of approximately 15 feet in depth that is the City's responsibility.

Before the irrigation and drainage ditch/Bentsen Road project, the City had about 20 feet of easement that was completely overgrown and contained leakage from the irrigation canal. That area was never maintained and trees, brush and weeds, along with various forms of wildlife were undisturbed. The City never envisioned adding to their Parks responsibility for this strip so the idea of the demonstration project is to determine the feasibility of establishing a maintenance free native plant area that requires zero upkeep once established.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

Que Pasa?

at the Village of Westlakes
for March/April 2015

**VILLAGE OF WESTLAKES
BOARD MEETINGS**
Tuesday, March 17, 2015 7:00 P.M.
Tuesday, April 21, 2015 7:00 P.M.

Golf League play

Golf - Mixed: Tue., at 10:00 A.M.

Golf - Mixed: Wed., at 10:00 A.M.

Golf - Mixed Best Ball: Fri., at 10:00 A.M.

Pool-Water Aerobics: Tue./Wed./Fri.,
at 4:00 P.M.

Coffee Time: 1st Mon., at 9:30 to 11:00 A.M.

Ladies Lunch: 2nd Mon., monthly.

Meet at 11:30 A.M., at the restaurant.

Social/Cocktails: each Thu. 5:00 P.M.

Potluck: 3rd Thu. CANCELLED &
REPLACED with Golf Banquet

Annual Golf Banquet:

Cost: \$12.00 for dinner & wine

Cocktails at 6:00 P.M.;

Dinner at 7:00 P.M.

**Sign up by March 15 at Clubhouse.*

Ladies Lunch



Mon., March 9, 2015 at 11:30 A.M.

Roosevelt's at 7

821 N. Main Street, McAllen

Call **Carol Lund** at 683-9522
by Sunday night for reservations.



COFFEE TIME

The monthly VWL Monday Morning Coffee will be held at the clubhouse March 2nd and April 6th from 9:30 to 11:00 A.M. Come and enjoy a cup of coffee and a goodie with your neighbors. Hope to see you there.



WOW!! 2 Hole-in-Ones!!

by Lee Hedtke

**Congratulations
Kathy Ament and Lee
Hedtke for both having
a hole-in-one on # 7.**



**The Village of West
Lakes in McAllen,**

Texas is on the golf history map. On a windy Friday, February 20, 2015, one of the rarest golf accomplishments occurred during the Friday morning league play. **Nola Hedtke** and **Mildred Hedtke** had already teed off when **Kathy Ament** stepped up to hit her tee shot on the 75 yard par 3 with a 7 iron. We all watched with growing excitement as the ball landed on the green and rolled toward the hole. Shouts were heard around the course for **Kathy's** first hole-in-one. After the excitement had finally calmed down, and hugs all around, **Lee Hedtke** then attempted to follow her lead. The shouts and astonishment were even greater when his Sand Wedge from 80 yards bounced two times and followed **Kathy's** ball into the hole for his first ever hole-in-one. They were both on the same "best ball" team. First **Kathy** shot and her ball went in the hole and then **Lee** shot and his also went in. That was some team!!!

A search on Golf Digest a bit later puts the odds of any one hole-in-one at 1 in 12.500, but the chances of back to back hole in ones by two golfers on the same hole-in-one foursome at 26 million to 1!

The festive hole-in-one party was held the next night in the club house. Certainly **Kathy** and **Lee** will never forget their first hole-in-ones.

The foursome were all on the VWL League "best ball" team. Witnesses were **Kathy Ament, Lee Hedtke, Nola Hedtke, Millie Hedtke, and Nedra Kinerk** (who was working in her yard by #7 tee).

VWL Annual Golf Tournament

by Kathy Ament

The Village of Westlakes Annual Golf Tournament will be held Tuesday and Wednesday, March 10th and 11th at 10:00 A.M. Rain dates are set for Friday and Saturday. Meet at the Clubhouse no later than 9:45 A.M. Nine holes will be played each day. The fee is \$5.00 and includes lunch the last day of the tournament. Non golfers may join us for lunch on Wednesday the 11th for \$5.00. Sign-up sheet is posted on the hallway bulletin board. The cutoff time to sign up is noon on Friday, March 6th. Payment is required by then too. No one else will be eligible to play or join us for lunch if they are not signed up and paid by then.

Please note the sign up sheet is not in the golf/pool room because it is closed for repairs. The sign up sheet is on the hallway bulletin board.

For further information, contact either tournament chair listed below or send an email reply to one of the tournament chairs listed below.

Kathy Ament < Tisserann@aol.com >
Gregg Groepper < jggroepper@sbcglobal.net >
Tournament Chairs

All Are Welcome

for the Annual Golf Banquet

The Village of Westlakes Annual Golf Banquet will take place Saturday, March 21st at the Clubhouse. The cost is \$12.50 per person, which includes your meal and wine with dinner. There is a sign-up sheet at the Clubhouse. Please sign-up before Sunday, March 15th and please pay one of the following:

Kathy Ament, Marsha Davis, Iva Keacher

Cocktails 6:00 P.M.

Dinner 7:00 P.M.

Prizes to follow

You don't have to be a member of the Golf League to attend. Everybody is welcome! For more information contact **Kathy Ament** at 686-5830 or **Marsha Davis** at 631-7788.



Encouraging a Bird-Friendly Area

contributed by Sylvia Casselman, President, Master Gardener Organization and Master Naturalist

What would the Rio Grande Valley be like if all the native plants were replaced with flowers and trees from another area? Such a blemish-free landscape is a food desert for wildlife. Non-native plants usually support very few native insects. Native plants develop defenses against many of the local pests and diseases. Insects are specialists when it comes to their preferred plant host. Native wildlife prefers native plants. Birds and small mammals can even benefit from areas that are left to the elements. Dead trees left standing, unless a safety hazard, are great for woodpeckers seeking insects. These trees can also become home to small burrowing birds such as parrots and owls.

Birds feed their babies insects that are rich in protein needed for growth. If the native insect population suffers, so does the bird population. Without this circle of life, the birds (that draw so many visitors to this area to view) will move to areas where the plant life and insect populations are more to their liking. Insects are necessary for more than the benefit of birds and other creatures who need them as a food source. To grow any plant that produces fruit or seeds for future plant generations, the plants must be pollinated. Without insects, the flowers would have to be painstakingly pollinated by hand.

Some plants purchased locally are grown in Texas, but most, unless purchased from nurseries advertising otherwise, are shipped from places as far away as California and Canada. These plants, while temporarily pretty, may or may not survive past a few seasons. Also, these plants probably will not be what the local wildlife (insect or other) want to eat or use to build their nests. They are not the best nectar or food source for our native insect population. An example is oleander, heavily used in California, with flowers no Texas bird or insect will use because the plant is potentially toxic.

While not as easily found, native plants are readily available in local nurseries. In

Bienvenidos
WELCOME
NEW RESIDENTS



Wally & Jackie Eggers

4101 Harvey Circle lot 58
913 219-0209 (J) 913 230-7973 (W)
kstxegggers@gmail.com

Tony & Alison Niemeir

4102 Camellia Court lot 47L
793-1323
alidemuth@gmail.com
traymond_nie@msn.com

Mike & Sandy Overly

2824 N. 42nd Street lot 93
583-5187 607-8740 cell
Lifestylefit@rgv.rr.com

2012 VWL DIRECTORY ADDITIONS / CORRECTIONS pp.

Michael Holmgren: cell 638-6885

Yolanda Holmgren: cell 532-1088

No home phone # Delete: 664-0862

Emergency: Oscar Rios 956 404-2388

Pickle Ballcourts in the Park??

Brad Bentsen, City Park Superintendent, said the city plans to move the playgrounds and parking in Daffodil Park to the front of the park this fiscal year. The VWL Committee suggested the parking lot by the current playground could be turned into pickle ballcourts rather inexpensively instead of tearing up the asphalt. Brad was interested in the suggestion.

The Link – a voice for VWL HOMEOWNERS
Nedra S. Kinerk *The Link* Editor
Gregg Groepper Special Feature Writer

McAllen, Valley Garden Center has a native plant section. Mike Heep Nursery in San Benito has some of the hard to find natives. If you are in doubt about whether or not a plant is native, a web search for “native plants of Texas” or shrubs or flowers, will produce a variety of sources, the best from Texas A&M.