



## President's Message

by John Steele  
President, VWOA Board of Directors



Greetings to you and your families from your Board of Directors. I hope all of you have a great summer planned. Our children are out of school so please be extra cautious around our streets throughout the day for children playing. Our pools are open and provide a great venue for your family to cool down and enjoy the Texas summer.

The Annual Meeting was held in April and three Board members were elected to two-year terms; Ms. Jennifer Castro (new to the Board), Mr. Kevin Drummonds, and myself. The Board also elected a new slate of officers for the coming year: I as your president, Mr. Richard Gentry—vice president, Ms. Jennifer Castro—treasurer, Mr. Kevin Drummonds—secretary, and Mr. Kenneth Fowler—assistant secretary. Thank you all for your support and we look forward to serving you during our term of office. We hold monthly Board of Directors meetings and these meetings are always open to our community residents. If you have a concern, recommendation, or suggestion please attend our Board meetings and share them with your fellow community residents and the Board.

On Tuesday, June 5th, The Villages of Westcreek Owners' Association was notified by the KENS5 News Department that they were coming to our community center to discuss complaints made by one of our homeowners. The Community Manager, Mrs. Brenda Tate, contacted the President of our Board of Directors, for direction. The president agreed with Mrs. Tate to openly meet with the reporter and discuss Westcreek and this homeowner's complaint. On the same day we met with reporter Ms. Stacia Willson, and her cameraman at our community center. We discussed

with Ms. Willson the error one of our monitors made while performing his duties of enforcing the standards our community has developed and we abide by for the care and upkeep of our homes. The monitor made a mistake and when the error was brought to the attention of Mrs. Tate on Monday, June 4th, she called the homeowner and apologized for the error. The president of the Westcreek HOA also called the homeowner that evening to apologize for the error. The homeowner accepted our apologies and the issue was closed until the news crew contacted us. The report states the homeowner is in a "battle," clearly stated in the title of the news piece "Residents battle it out with San Antonio HOA," which is very far from the truth. Further, the reporter did not follow up to verify the statements made by either resident.

One resident made a statement that was not true "When it's just every week, and you know to the point where you feel like they're just harassing you it becomes--it's not enjoyable to live in a neighborhood like this anymore." The facts, which we would have shared with the reporter if she came back to follow up on the unsubstantiated accusation, are far from the statement the resident made. The resident was not contacted weekly regarding standards violations but instead the records show only 30 contacts over a period of eight years. The HOA notified the resident about grass in the cracks between the driveway and street on September 23, 2011, June 3, 2009, and August 1, 2008—this is not weekly and certainly not harassment. The resident has received follow-up contacts when violations were not corrected within the allotted time frame. This is not harassment and to report this is not a fair representation of the hard work our community puts into working with each other to build strong, safe, and prosperous neighborhoods in the Villages of Westcreek. (Continued on next page)

## President's Message Continued

His neighbor, who is a renter of the property she resides in, claimed she has been in trouble because of her flower bushes are supposedly too close to the sidewalk--this is also not entirely true. The issue with her flowering bushes is not the proximity to the sidewalk but the fact the bushes were growing over and impeding pedestrian flow on the sidewalk, a clear violation of Texas Code and the Americans with Disabilities Act. We identified the violations so she could trim the bush back and not violate laws that we all must abide by for reasons of safety.

Our final concern is the lean of the story towards fines, overly aggressive harassment, and legal fees--all negative images of our HOA and not a true representation of our community at all. Ms. Willson significantly shortened a statement made regarding a lengthy process the Villages of Westcreek follows to work with our community residents in resolving issues and as the final step we may be forced to eventually go to is legal actions based on the Texas Property Codes. Never did she identify in her report the hard work and numerous opportunities the homeowners and residents have to resolve these issues before legal actions are considered. Westcreek has 3418 homes in it and we try to meet the expectations of all of our residents in a deed-restricted community setting. The Board strongly feels if Ms. Willson placed as much effort in verifying the statements of two residents as she did in shedding a negative light on our community, this story would have been very different. She would have found a community working with our residents and developing relationships within our neighborhoods to promote safe living conditions that help to support our families and homes. Westcreek is a great community with wonderful residents who do not appreciate the misinformation about our neighborhoods the report produced. The Board of Directors has requested KENS5 News Department print a retraction of the report after verifying our comments. The Villages of Westcreek Owners' Association staff has been made available to share with the news team copies of our governing documents, that are also available on our website [www.villagesofwestcreek.com](http://www.villagesofwestcreek.com). The staff also offered to produce redacted copies of Courtesy Notices mentioned in our comments above, upon the news team's request. The Board and staff will redact privacy data for the protection of our homeowners. Please don't let the negative image this report created of our community affect your impression of your community. If you would like to discuss this further, please contact our Community Manager, Mrs. Tate, or any member of your Board of Directors.

As a community we need to work together to resolve complaints or criticisms before bringing in the news media. The media appears to be focused on highlighting any negative aspect of HOAs and overlooking the benefits HOAs provide community residents. Your Board of Directors is focused and committed to listening to your concerns and when possible to implement improvements to benefit all homeowners. This point is important, we cannot implement every suggestion because sometimes our governing documents prohibit certain actions and sometimes the suggestions benefit only a few residents and not the community at large. It is our responsibility to find that balance and initiate actions to address the Villages of Westcreek's needs. The professional staff we have working for us in the community center is also available to discuss your concerns. The Board has worked very hard with the current staff to focus their attention to service to the community residents and I am very proud of the performance of our staff.

With the return of summer and its associated weather, please remember to maintain your homes to the standards that make Westcreek a community people want to live in. Take a second look at your home from the street and look for improvements that are affordable or need maintenance. If you are in a challenging position due to medical, personal, or work related reasons and cannot meet your home standards requirements, please contact our staff and discuss with them options available to you. Please don't ignore the "little things" like mowing your grass or taking in your trash cans because some of your neighbors are just as focused on your compliance with these standards as you may be in not seeing the importance of doing the "little things." For all of my fellow neighbors that apply the standards and maintain their homes, thank you.

Last item is once again a reminder for pet owners to keep your pets on a leash or in your fenced in backyard. Pets, dogs and cats, are required to be on a leash by Bexar County law; this is not just a Westcreek rule or standard. We request you clean up after your pet when you take them for a walk. For non-pet owners, they do not appreciate the piles on their front yards left by your pets. This is one of the concerns and complaints the Board hears routinely from fellow residents. Please help keep Westcreek clean and pet friendly.





## VWOA Community Info

Phone: (210) 679-8761

Fax: (210) 679-0040

After Hours Duty Phone (Emergency Only):  
(210) 854-9282

Address: 12395 Military Drive West

San Antonio, Texas 78253

Office Hours: Sat-Sun - Closed; Monday 9am-6pm  
Tuesday-Friday 9am-5:30pm; Please contact staff to  
make an appointment for after hours.

Website: [www.villagesofwestcreek.com](http://www.villagesofwestcreek.com)

Email: [board@villagesofwestcreek.com](mailto:board@villagesofwestcreek.com)

[staff@villagesofwestcreek.com](mailto:staff@villagesofwestcreek.com)

### Board of Directors:

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Vice President - Richard Gentry

Secretary - Kevin Drummonds

Asst. Secretary - Kenneth Fowler

Treasurer - Jennifer Castro

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Kenneth Lemanski, Superintendent of Standards

Vacant, Superintendent of Parks & Recreation

Armando Villareal, Maintenance Contractor

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Grace Briggs, Administrative Assistant

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Al Machail, Coach

### Committees & Chairs:

Finance Committee - Jennifer Castro

Sports Park Committee - Richard Gentry

Communications Committee - Bill Fenstermacher

Architectural Review - Derrick Foyle

### Westcreek Times:

Publisher - VWOA Board of Directors

Editor - VWOA Staff

Design and Layout - Paula Roberts

Webmaster - VWOA Staff

## Oak Wilt in Westcreek

The Texas Forest Service has confirmed an unwelcomed resident in the Villages of Westcreek. Oak Wilt has been identified on two of our streets in the Westcreek Forest Village. The following information is from the web site [www.texasoakwilt.org](http://www.texasoakwilt.org). This is an excellent web site for more information about Oak Wilt. This is a small introduction to the Oak Wilt problem and how it can be managed.

### Introduction to Oak Wilt

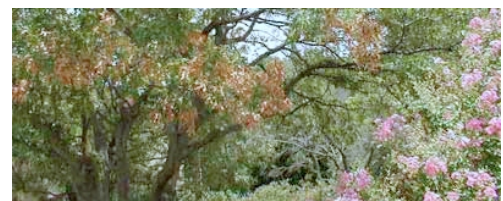
How to Identify and Manage Oak Wilt in Texas  
Oak wilt, one of the most destructive tree diseases in the United States, is killing oak trees in central Texas at epidemic proportions. Oak wilt is an infectious disease caused by the fungus *Ceratocystis fagacearum*, which invades and disables the water-conducting system in susceptible trees. All oaks (*Quercus* spp.) are susceptible to oak wilt to some degree, but some species are affected more than others. The successful management of oak wilt depends on correct diagnosis and an understanding of how the pathogen spreads between different oak species.



### Oak Wilt Management

There are three primary approaches used for oak wilt management in Texas. Successful control usually depends on an integrated program incorporating measures from all three approaches. The first approach attempts to prevent the formation of new oak wilt infection centers by eliminating diseased red oaks, handling firewood properly, and painting wounds on healthy oaks. The second approach involves trenching or other measures to disrupt root connections responsible for root transmission of the pathogen. Finally, injections of the fungicide propiconazole (AlamoTM) into individual, high-value trees help reduce crown loss and may extend the life of the tree. These measures will not cure oak wilt, but can significantly reduce tree losses.

If you suspect you, have Oak Wilt please call Mark Duff, Forester, at 210-494-1742 or email him at [mduff@tfs.tamu.edu](mailto:mduff@tfs.tamu.edu).



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## Manager's Minute

by Brenda Tate  
Community Manager



The Villages of Westcreek pools have opened in all of their glory; I hope everyone has a chance to visit our sports park and pools. Please see our web site [www.villagesofwestcreek.com](http://www.villagesofwestcreek.com) for our pool schedule and other useful information. Parents of small children, please remember the requirement for your infant child is to wear swimming diapers while using our pools. Numerous times last year, and already at least once this year, we were forced to close the pool to disinfect and treat the water due to an "accidental discharge" by a child not wearing an appropriate swimming diaper.

The Villages of Westcreek is in need of volunteers to serve on our many committees. Please contact the office at (210) 679-8761.

Why Volunteer? Volunteering is important for as many reasons as there are needs. Some people volunteer because they just love helping others. Their own joy of giving and making a difference makes them feel valued and valuable to the ones they are serving. They receive back a thousand-fold by seeing the impact created for the people and community they are helping. Others volunteer because they feel a need to give back to a community that has been good to them, and they want to express their gratitude by paying it forward. This is powerful leverage that can build lasting beneficial changes in a viral way. Still others volunteer because it gives them a sense of purpose and meaning to their lives. It is as if their contribution to others is fulfilling a critical aspect for their own self-expression in the world. Of course, many people volunteer to gain valuable new experience in a certain field and pay their dues for developing expertise and career advancement opportunities. Finally, yet importantly, great volunteers enjoy themselves while giving to others. Long-term studies have shown that volunteers live longer, are in better health, have lower rates of depression and less heart disease. The poet John Donne said it best, "No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main..."

Share your gifts with others. Everyone has unique gifts to offer, bar none. When you share your gifts from your heart, you cannot help but feel great! Many of us do not think we can really make a difference. That is why, if you have a desire to help out, do some research and find an opportunity to try it out. Your very own community has plenty of opportunities to do so. The opportunities to make a real difference and affect the lives of others present themselves every day. The question is, will we take advantage of them or let them pass by like an afternoon breeze?

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The following committees could use your help TODAY!

Landscaping Committee  
Nominating Committee  
Communications Committee  
Public Safety Committee  
Sports Park Committee  
Strategic Planning Committee  
Finance Committee  
Firewise Committee

Have a Great Summer and remember my door is always open!



## Standards Question of the Qtr

Why are there some areas in the Villages of Westcreek that don't get mowed when they should?

The Villages of Westcreek does not own all of the areas that we, as residents, may think are common areas. Bexar County Public Works maintains most of the drainage easements and these are cut as their schedule and workload dictate. A third party company maintains the natural gas line pipeline easement and it is on their schedule for mowing. A third party contractor for CPS Energy also maintains the high-tension power line easement in the area behind Galm Elementary School, and it is their schedule. AT&T is also responsible for the areas where they have their buildings.

Centex/Pulte Group has nine parcels of property in three of our villages that they are responsible for maintaining. The association has been working with them for over a year to get them to cut their areas and we have recently have had some success with these efforts.

Our contractor maintains the common areas that the association is responsible for their upkeep and maintenance. These are the grass areas along the main roads, the sports park and the community center. Our contractor also cuts the yards of homeowners who refuse to mow their yards after proper notification is given. The owner of the property is invoiced and charged for the work.

Currently there are thirty homes in the Villages of Westcreek that are empty, foreclosed on or the owners have abandoned their property. The association has to follow a legal process before we can go on that property and mow the grass. We realize this takes longer than most people would like, but the rules are in place to protect the owner and the association.

## Thank You Cards & Courtesy Notices

The goal of the Standards Department is to enforce the standards of the association through contact with our residents and to educate them on the standards to which we all agreed to follow when we moved into the Villages of Westcreek. Some of us bought our home here and others have moved here as tenants. This is a

deed-restricted community with a mandatory membership to the Villages of Westcreek Owners' Association. Like any large organization, there are standards or rules in place for everyone who lives here, in a Home Owners' Association (HOA). Most people chose to live in an HOA because they want to maintain the value of the largest investment that they will ever make and that is their home.

I recently spoke with one of our local realtors who has been selling homes in the Villages of Westcreek for many years and he has had several families who originally moved in here as tenants and now they are homeowners in Westcreek. Many families like to move into an established neighborhood with a strong and active HOA that offers many amenities and things for the family to do.

The Standards Monitors have been instructed by the Community Manager, Mrs. Tate, to write more "Thank You Notices". The majority of homeowners take care of their property and the pride shows through their efforts with their yards and the appearance of their homes. We want to make sure these individuals are also getting the proper recognition that they deserve. The Standards Monitors will be looking for those yards and homes that meet or exceed the standards so we can recognize those homeowners who take great pride in their homes. Our goal is to see more thank you cards written than courtesy notices for standards violations. We are also working out the procedure and qualifications to bring back a yard recognition program for those homeowners who go above and beyond what is required for their property.

The Communications Committee is also seeking nice looking yards to use in a video for our web site to highlight our community so we can tell the world what a great place it is to live in the Villages of Westcreek. If you would like to show off your yard, please call the office at 210-679-8761 or email Ken Lemanski at [vwoa-cc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:vwoa-cc@sbcglobal.net).

Please make yourself aware of the standards, which can be found on our website and do your part in keeping Westcreek the best-looking community in Bexar County.



To stay updated on community events and information, go to our website: [www.VillagesOfWestcreek.com](http://www.VillagesOfWestcreek.com) and sign up for our free email service. You can also find us on Facebook!



## A Firewise Community

by Ken Lemanski  
Superintendent of Standards



The Villages of Westcreek is in the process of becoming a Firewise Community. A Firewise Community is a community that takes pro-active steps to help reduce potential fires. Our community is bordered on the north by heavy woodland, hills and open ranch land. This area is also ripe for a fast spreading wild fire from the north. With the right conditions of low humidity, wind and a careless spark there are several hundred homes in the Villages of Westcreek that could be in danger from a wild fire.

On April 16, 2012 the Texas Forest Service conducted a site survey of our community and came back with a rating of a medium risk for our community for wild land fire. Areas of concern are the wooded area that is owned by the Villages of Westcreek adjacent to and in the Highpoint Village. Many of the homes in that village are right up against the wooded area with no firebreak between their cedar fences and the woods and the backside of the Estates Village along the wood line in that area. Another area of concern is the lack of access for fire equipment. Several homes in the Highpoint Village sit on the top of a hill and fire moves faster uphill than it does downhill. One more area of concern is the lack of egress for the Forest Village. There is only one exit from Sage Run onto Westcreek Oaks Drive for a village that has 203 homes in it, with an average

population of 508 people. This village also has many trees on the north and east sides of it and within the village itself. At the May 17, 2012 Board meeting the Board of Directors agreed to form a sub-committee under the Strategic Planning Committee. The purpose of the Firewise Committee is to plan for mitigation projects, routes of access for fire apparatus and egress routes for the homeowners who live in the areas that face the highest threat from wild land fires.

If you are interested in volunteering for the Firewise Committee please contact the association office.

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## WC Wonder Folks

Our Westcreek Wonder Folk for our summer 2012 Newsletter is Mr. Harold "Rick" Severs. Rick and his wife Rosemary and their six children have been residents of the Villages of Westcreek since 2007. They first moved in as renters and then bought a home here in Westcreek.

Mr. Severs is very familiar with public service to his country and to his community. He is a former helicopter pilot for the U.S. Army and for the North Carolina Forestry Service. This sense of public service has been passed onto his children. Several of his adult children are members of the San Antonio Police Department.

In 2007, Rick was first elected to the Villages of Westcreek Board of Directors as Assistant Secretary. He has since served on the board as Vice President, President and then again as Assistant Secretary. He is currently the Chairman of the Strategic Planning Committee and he recently accepted the position as Chairman of the Ad Hoc By-Laws Committee. He is also an alternate member of the Architectural Review Committee (ARC). His expertise and knowledge of the standards was very beneficial in the last two revisions of the Standards. He is also a member of the Firewise Committee.

Rick has taken all of the classes available to volunteer members of a Home Owners Association through the Community Association Institute (CAI) to increase his knowledge and expertise in the management of a community organization such as ours. He is always willing to help in any way that he can, and is often called on by current board members and staff for his background knowledge and expertise on items relating to the Villages of Westcreek. He never lets things get him down and you can always count on his sense of humor and his smile. If you see him at a monthly board meeting or any other Westcreek meeting or event please take the time to thank this gentleman for his service to the community and for being our Westcreek Wonder Folk for the summer of 2012.



## Advertising In The WC Times

A complete list of guidelines for advertising in the Westcreek Times, as well as required submission forms, are available on our website or at the VWOA office.

Full page (7.5"wx10"h) \$450 ; Half page (7.5"wx5"h or 3.75"wx10"h) \$250 ; Quarter page (3.75"wx5"h) \$150; Eighth page (3.75"wx2.5"h) \$80.00.

Classified advertisements are \$10 for three lines of text (55 characters per line); additional lines are \$2 each. Ads should be emailed in high resolution color .jpg format to [vwoaacm@sbcglobal.net](mailto:vwoaacm@sbcglobal.net); payment and forms should be dropped off at the VWOA office or mailed to Villages of Westcreek Advertising, 12395 Military Drive West, San Antonio, TX 78253.

The deadline for submission is the 10th day of the month prior to publication. All ads are subject to editing or rejection, and VWOA is not responsible for errors in original copy. For our errors, VWOA liability is limited to running one corrected ad. Neither VWOA nor its Board of Directors endorses any product or service advertised by this publication. Ads will be accepted on a first-come, space available basis. Therefore, all ads shall be submitted and paid for at the time, or put on a waiting list if need be. (Classified ads excluded).



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**Jessica's Babysitting Services:** CPR & First Aid Certified. 4 years' experience kids 2 -10 yrs old. Can also assist with kid's birthday parties. Call 210-475-3354

**Christian Home Educators of West San Antonio** home school families in the Westcreek area. Email Janet at [wcreel@sbcglobal.net](mailto:wcreel@sbcglobal.net) for more information.

**South Texas Blue Sky:** New HDTV Technologies, New long distance HDTV. Antennas can eliminate monthly cable bills. Call (210) 523-5836.

**Home Based Oils:** Come learn about 100% Pure Essential Oils. You can enhance and/or replace common medicines with pure medicinal oils that have no side effects and cost far less. Classes held in Westcreek on the 2nd Thursday of every month. Call 866-808-7676 to reserve your seat.  
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