

THE STATE OF THE ESTATES

ICU ADU/PAGING HOWARD ROARK/ARE YOU ALARMED YET?/M.A.D. IN THE 'HOOD?/CAROL KING'S COMEBACK/K.WR.G/RATATOUILLE/INFO McNUGGETS/ROCK AROUND THE BLOCK

Woodridge Estates Homeowners Association Newsletter

September 2021

NEIGHBORS: The reviews are in! *"Sliced bread is overrated compared to this,"* Ventura County Star; *"Boffo,"* Daily Variety; *"Unsurpassed local coverage,"* CNN; *"A conspiracy to displace us,"* MSNBC; *"Thousand Oaks goes rogue again,"* LA Times; *"Who let the dogs out?"* Hip Hop Weekly.¹

*As of now, this newsletter goes only to each homeowner's "official" contact email address—we would love it to reach **all** residents, so please pass this along to your family and any neighbors still talking to you. Fun tip: If you print this out on 30 weight paper, it makes for several great paper airplanes!*

BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU VOTE FOR

Our community recently awoke to a flyer at their front door advising them of a Woodridge Estates homeowner's plan to construct an "Accessory Dwelling Unit" on his homesite in the Morning Ridge cul de sac. This unusually shaped parcel has a sizeable "side" yard that actually fronts on the cul de sac. If this was just an effort to increase attendance at the HOA's monthly Board meetings, it worked—some 38 hearty souls, the subject homeowner included, attended the September 16 Board meeting by way of Zoom®, and our ace political reporter Carl Woodward was there.

"The meeting opened immediately to public comment on the proposed ADU, the Board noting on its own behalf only that it was consulting with legal eagles," reports Carl, "and that it could not and would not comment further but wanted to hear from attendees and assured everyone it was a matter being addressed very seriously by the HOA. All but one speaker was against the project, the one exception being the subject homeowner, who to his credit did attend the meeting to defend his plan. Said homeowner explained he had wanted to create a family compound on the property from the time he acquired it 18 years ago, said the new building is intended for family only, and noted that pains had been taken in the design to hide it from view behind existing shrubbery and to ensure its HVAC unit would not appreciably add to localized noise. I think it is fair to say that his defense was rejected by all the others who spoke, citing longstanding community rules and regulations, concerns about 'slippery slopes' and increased noise, traffic, and street parking that will result as others contemplate similar construction, and the likelihood of home value decline, among other points.

"The legalities of the planned ADU were not discussed in depth, at least in the public part of the Board meeting (the Board always meets first in closed session to attend to confidential matters), but at least two attendees fairly summarized the opposition by noting that, 'Just because you maybe can do something does not mean you should do it.' The subject homeowner said he was open to speaking to anyone with questions as long as they agreed to do so in a civil manner, and

¹ Actual review headlines! Just not of this newsletter.

accepted an invitation to meet privately with the Board for further discussion. No action was taken, but it is clear the Board is going to look further into the HOA's options. It is unclear whether the homeowner planning this ADU is open to changing his mind, but he could not have missed the clear message from his neighbors that he should.

It should be noted that despite the hot-button subject matter, the public comment portion of the meeting was, from the perspective of this reporter, very civil."

Our Sacramento Bureau reporter Bob Woodstein advises that while the statewide ADU laws are relatively new, the effort that led to their passage a year ago is at least a decade old. He says these statutes are just one part of a longstanding effort to "densify" housing in the state, an effort resumed just one day after Governor Newsom's recent victory over a recall effort when he signed legislation aimed at substantially limiting, if not eventually eliminating, all single family home zoning throughout the state.

"SB 9, for example," notes Bernward, "allows for many existing single family only parcels to be converted to as many as four separate family units, and SB 10 takes a lot of housing zoning control out of local communities and puts it in the hands of Sacramento legislators." The seasoned Sacramento observer noted that this density movement surprisingly has not diminished in the face of the contribution of dense living conditions to the Covid pandemic, and then opined, "A lot of voters are in favor of so-called 'affordable housing'—I mean, who isn't?—but it remains to be seen if legislation permitting largely unfettered ADU expansion and single family parcel subdivision will have that impact, and what the quality of life trade-offs will be. It is doubtful that many voters realize what they actually have been voting for in regard to 'more affordable housing.'"

For more information on ADU's, please ask a nearby child to help you use "Google" or any other "search engine" and you will be amazed by how easy it is to find out what ADUs are, what their new rules are, and how you probably actually voted for all this. *#unintendedconsequences* and *#seecomunityruleofthemothforallthegooditwilldoya*

COMMUNITY RULE OF THE MONTH

The HOA's Architectural Review Committee ("ARC") attends not only to resident plans for main building structural alterations, but also to any significant changes to a home's hardscape, landscape, paint colors, supplemental structures (e.g., sheds), and ornamentation (but go ahead and change out those petunias on your own):

"Prior to the commencement of any addition, alteration or construction work of any type on any residential lot and dwelling in Woodridge, you must first make an Application to the Architectural Review Committee for approval of such work. Failure to obtain approval of the Architectural Review Committee shall constitute a violation of the Declaration of Restrictions affecting your home and may require modification or removal of unauthorized works of improvement at your expense and be subject to fines. In addition, the City Building Department, or other governmental agencies prior to the commencement of any work may require a building or other permit. Neither the Architectural Review Committee, nor the Association assumes any responsibility for failure to obtain such permits. Also, obtaining such permits does not waive the obligation to obtain the Architectural Review Committee's approval. Approval from ARC does

not constitute City or County approval, nor mitigates any City or County zoning or building code requirements.”

It is worth taking note of the express purpose of the HOA architectural guidelines:

“The Architectural Review Committee does not seek to restrict individual creativity or personal preference, but rather to help assure a continuity in design and aesthetic harmony which will help preserve and improve the appearance of the Community and enhance the property values of all Owners in the Community.”

For more details and forms for review submission for those projects the Legislature still will let you have some control over, please see www.woodridgeestateresident.com and its “Helpful Information” tab, which leads you to the “Woodridge Community ARC Guidelines” tab for more information about how to secure approval for your plans. And your HOA Board wants you to know it is committed to prompt turnaround on your submissions to the ARC Committee—so don’t be shy, and when in doubt, just ask.

DANGER, WILL ROBINSON!

We know the July newsletter is so two months ago, but remember the warning we transmitted from our community Gatekeepers (not security guards!) about organized burglary rings entering Woodridge Estates from our surrounding open space with intent on our own rings (and necklaces and bracelets and other valuables)? Well, it happened, and we promise it wasn’t just so our gatepeople could say, “I told you so.” One of our security insecure neighbors recently was victimized by an evening burglary of some easily transportable valuables from their open space-adjacent home, while they were away thank goodness. So, yep, personal property crime ain’t just for them big busy city folk no more.

Crimebusting tips, courtesy of local retired Detective Frank Drebin:

There are numerous property alarm systems available at all different price points. Get one, and then actually use it.

Light up your back and side yards at night, at least with motion lights. (Be sure to consider your neighbors when aiming. The lights, that is.)

Do not leave ladders outside. Or Covid gloves. (“Hey, thanks for the easy entry to your unalarmed top floor and the reminder not to leave fingerprints! You must want to be burgled! You’re welcome”.)

Do not leave valuables outside (maybe rethink that pergola-mounted big screen TV you actually almost never use and your neighbors hate).

Put some inside lights on timers, especially when you are away.

Report any odd activity you see in the open space to the local police at (805) 494-8200 or 8201, and then the Gatehouse, in that order. (Odd activity includes anyone walking off-trail—there are snakes and tarantulas out there, it is borderline crazy to be off-trail! Somersaulting off-trail also is considered odd, at least in some quarters. On-trail cellphone squawking sadly is not all that “odd,” but it is annoying.) Call 911, of course, if you think there is an immediate danger.

Please remember that our Gatehouse is not a security station, so do inform our gate operator ninjas *but call Ventura PD for action first*. TOPD also has a Facebook page if you are into that—if you are, we are sure you can find it (we aren't and can't). There also is this:
<http://www.venturacountycrimestoppers.org>.

WHAT THE HECK ARE THOSE THINGS?

Have you ever wondered what in tarnation is in all those various metal cages and plastic boxes and cylinders and fake boulders and whatnot that pop up throughout the neighborhood medians and parkways? Or in those grate-covered round hatches buried at ground level here and there in your or your neighbor's yard with a large "WARNING!" decal peering up at you through the grate? You haven't? Okay, know-it-all, then just jump ahead to the next section. But if you *are* curious, read on, because we have some partial answers and a lot of wild speculation for you right here!

The large unmarked silver metal boxes on a couple of our main streets are electrical transformers; the other tall silver metal boxes with a big black letter sticker hold common area irrigation controls; the low green plastic boxes marked "Telecommunications" are, surprisingly, for telecommunication connections; we think the low green metal boxes and fake boulders hide local gas connections; the cages holding pipe connections that look like something out of an Escher drawing protect local water connectors; and the pretty brown cylinders that look like traffic "bollards" (so nice looking you probably never even noticed them) are for local power connections. All of these above-ground containers allow access for technicians working on some kind of wiring or piping (or surveillance camera lines) for your immediate area's various connections, most of which otherwise would be overhead on a pole, but you may have noticed that all our wires are underground (at least you maybe noticed they are not overhead). Most of the meters and localized irrigation controls are in ground level vaults. Fans of déjà vu experiences will love the many ground level vaults still marked for "Pac Bell" and "GTE," which can make for a fun antitrust history lesson with the young'uns to go along with trying to explain why Bruce Willis had to use a pay phone marked "Pac Bell" in a Washington, D.C. airport to call for help in the second of the 34 "Die Hard" movies (and what the heck is a pay phone anyway, Grandad?).

And the grate-covered hatches with the scary warning labels? No, they are not like the hatches in "Lost"—that was a tv show, silly, we are talking real life here! They actually either are missile silos or alien landing beacons, and we will have to get back to you on that when we decipher the encrypted explanatory email we got from the Lone Gunmen.

DID IT MOVE FOR YOU, TOO?

On Monday September 13 at 7:59 am we found ourselves in a brief Carole King flashback as the earth moved under our feet, thanks to a 3.6 temblor centered in Casa Conejo near Wildwood Regional Park, a neighborhood just west of Newbury Park (which in turn is actually part of Thousand Oaks, for the most part—so is part of Westlake Village for the most part; betcha didn't know!) No real damage reported, nobody hurt, nothing to see here, move along now--it was easy to sleep through, but those awake for that one second definitely were reminded that Mother Nature still knows how to rock!

Earthquake preparedness is next to both Godliness and wildfire preparedness. We recommend <https://www.redcross.org> for the basics, also www.ready.gov, but just get one of those annoying neighbor kids to type “earthquake preparedness” into your search engine for you (yeah, they will know what that means) and you will see all sorts of great resources in myriad formats. (Okay, okay, we know you got all readified and stuff after the last local fire scare—but have you checked the “use by” dates on that stroganoff-in-a-box lately? Even boxes of water expire eventually.) Earthquake, fire, zombie or alien or alien-zombie attack—they are all the same when it comes to being ready, so time to freshen up your go bags, sheeple! Now drop and give me twenty.

WAIT, WHAT? ANOTHER ELECTION?

Just when you thought it was safe to go to your mailbox again, another election is coming up fast! Not another recall, but the geniuses we put in Sacramento have played with the HOA rules again and Board elections are coming up earlier than usual. So, time for nomination submissions if you are interested in serving on the Board, or know someone who ought to be interested (i.e., tortured). As Yul Brynner’s “Vin” so memorably replied to Steve McQueen’s “Chris” in the original “Magnificent Seven” when asked if he got “elected” (hit by gunfire), “No, but I got nominated real good” (his cigar got shot off—classic). (And why did they bother to remake that perfect movie, anyway?)

All kidding aside, those 38 of you at the recent Board meeting—increasing usual participation by about 32—now maybe understand a little better why it is so important for more people to participate in the HOA’s operations. Take a look sometime at some other 20+ year old neighborhood and see what it looks like without an HOA. City services and personal pride simply ain’t what they used to be, and our community does not look and feel so clean and friendly by accident: It takes a lot of work by volunteers who give a darn, and all of us could give a little more darn. (There really should have been 380 people at the last meeting, not just 38.) There is an old joke about never electing people to Boards who want to be on them, but it wouldn’t be ironic if we simply had more people willing to provide some of their free time to Keep WoodRidge Great. So give it some thought and nominate yourself or someone else—your eventual ride to Boot Hill, even without a Chris and Vin escort, will be all the better for it.

HOA elections and the like are governed by the California Civil Code, but mere mortals should turn yet again to the magic search/spy engine on their computer (Google, Bing, Edge, etc.) and look for explanatory articles like this one:

www.sandiegouniontribune.com/business/story/2019-11-09/hoa-election-processes-much-more-difficult-in-2020

Keep watching this space for more information as the election process periodically proceeds progressively. Nominate, Vote, and Keep WoodRidge Great!

RODENT ROUNDUP

The HOA employs Animal & Insect Pest Management, Inc. of Simi Valley to help control non-human vermin in our community. Our Varmint Desk’s Edward R. Burrow reports:

“AIPM has placed nearly 100 bait stations literally around Woodridge, which are re-filled monthly. The black bait boxes you see adjacent to Woodridge’s surrounding open space contain a special brain toxin bait/poison that is ‘secondary poisoning’ free and so of no risk to other wildlife, in particular predators like owls and coyotes and mountain lions lucky enough to happen upon a sickened or recently expired pest at dinner time. The boxes are not traps; they contain the poison bait and unlucky diners usually simply return to their homes feeling poorly and die a painless and relatively prompt death near their loved ones. I am not sure how anyone knows it is painless, scientist I am not, but these bait boxes do a pretty good job of keeping the populations of these automobile and other wire eating buzzkillers under control.”

AIPM reports that our neighborhood has been “slightly above maintenance level” in terms of bait usage so far this year, so yeah, you may be seeing more than usual (and our coyote neighbors are in fine fettle). As temperatures cool and if we start to get any rain, all our local critters tend to get even more active and AIPM will step up its bait game a notch as winter approaches. Homeowners interested in all manner of fiend control in home and yard are welcome to call AIPM at 805-499-5050, they offer Woodridge residents a nice discount. (But before you ask, no, they can’t help with your Aunt Karen.)

TASTY BITS

Some interesting (or not) happenings and goings on about Woodridge:

--That lone potted plant by the Gatehouse is also the last of its kind. After going through our inventory of expensive pots (we got a deal, don’t worry) thanks to the same morons you yell at daily for their lack of driving prowess (you are perfect, of course, you could give driving lessons to NASCAR racers), the HOA has decided to construct a curbed planting area where the pots used to be lined up to keep people from colliding in the approach and exit lanes (yep, that really is a thing). The new curbing will survive the backer-uppers at the entrance lane; the plants will be sacrificed, but are easier and less expensive to replace.

In related entryway news, the HOA finally found someone who could get the Gatehouse fountain working again (water features are a pain, right?), and also is planning for additional Gatehouse lighting and new signage while focusing the landscape crew on the flowers, all to brighten up our approach and make us sadder to leave.

--Thanks to an enterprising and skillful HOA Board member, we are a lot closer to repairing the decorative mailbox pole damaged by an Amazon vehicle on Heavenly Ridge. Turns out they don’t make our mailbox poles anymore, but the Board’s Mr. Fixit (looking at you, Robert!) has tackled the repair project with great enthusiasm and, we are happy to report, success. The repairs should be finished by the next edition of this non-award winning (we know, hard to believe) circular.

--Our common area landscapers at Showscapes are doing some mid-year brush clearance in the open space that surrounds our community, and for free because the lack of rain has made for relatively minor growth since the last clearance effort. Still, the work has to be done. Thanks, Showscapes!

--Applications for resident street parking permits seem more likely to be approved if a homeowner actually is using most of his/her/its/their garage for parking some cars

--The HOA Rules and Regulations (https://19856904-a4e4-46cb-a1f2-ca0d972952e8.filesusr.com/ugd/fccece_ce5d2c79b9184a67b916ea60d517ced6.pdf) Committee is working on revisions and is happy to receive your input prior to its submission of revisions to the Board for approval. Send your comments to lmellini@pmpmanage.com and he will make sure they get to the Committee.

--We have several new folks now handling our front gate. Pull in the Visitor side now and again and introduce yourself!

--Sad to report that a patrol car checking the community for illegal resident street parking after hours was greeted with an egg recently. *Really?* Does anyone not know cameras literally are everywhere these days? C'mon, friends, the patrollers are just doing their job, and you know what the rules are. That sort of behavior is, well, this is a family newsletter so, you know, fill in the blank with your own favorite synonym for "imbecilic."

--We had another gate-arm crasher this month, the second in about 5 weeks. Yet another stolen car driver under the influence went right through the Visitor gate arm, and only by a miracle did not bash through the actual gates. (In a related story, Connecticut's "Old Sparky" has been retired and is available to the HOA for a good price. We can think of lots of uses.) The gate arm now is back in action. (It's a new year this month, so all one can say is "Oy.")

--One way to beat hungry rabbits and gophers is to install artificial turf to replace your grass. Such installation requires ARC approval (see "Rule of the Month" above), and the ARC is partial to "Sage 80 ounce" turf because it is very natural looking, as it has some browns in it along with the green. See <https://www.turfexchange.com/our-products/tx70-sage-turf-earthly-natural-looking-turf/>. (See also "Median care" notes in "Old Business" below.)

WOODRIDGE LOOP TRAIL

Quest reporter Lance A. Lott advises that a walk on every street of the neighborhood is about 6500 steps and takes about an hour at a moderate pace. Assume a starting point at the front gate and adjust these directions to your own abode accordingly so as to end up back home after hitting every street inside the Woodridge gates (a few of them on both sides):

East on Sunset Hills, left on Windridge, left on Country Vista all the way around and back down to Windridge, left on Windridge and all the way around it back to Sunset Hills; left (east again) on Sunset Hills to Woodley, all around Woodley back to Sunset Hills, east again on Sunset Hills to Woodworth; left on Woodworth all the way around it and back down to Willow Canyon, left on Willow Canyon and up and around Essex Junction, then Country Home Court, and then Hampton Court, and then continue south on Morning Ridge and around its cul de sac to Sunset Hills; left on Sunset Hills to Heavenly Ridge, left on Heavenly Ridge to Woodflower, right on Woodflower and around Cove Creek cul de sac and continue up Woodflower to Eaglewood, then go back down the other side of Woodflower and back down the hill to Heavenly Ridge; right on Heavenly Ridge and up the hill and around the Willow Haven cul de sac, and then follow Heavenly Ridge up and around to the west to Eaglewood; left on Eaglewood and around the cul

de sac, look at all the rabbits in the open space area there, and then continue back north on Eaglewood to Sunset Hills.

We promise that walking these directions is less dizzying than reading them. Consider the gauntlet thrown!

OLD BUSINESS

Prior newsletters are posted on the website at www.woodridgeestatesresident.com). Some quick reminders of prior topics:

-Community resident vehicles bearing an RIFD transponder on the headlight to open the front gate will receive a citation and ultimately a fine if parked on community streets between 7 pm and 7 am. Vehicles lacking an RIFD but visibly bearing a gate-issued guest pass on the dashboard may park on the street anytime, so please make sure your guests receive and display such a pass.

-If you see broken/leaking sprinklers or observe what you think might be unnecessary sprinkler operation in the common areas, please send a note to lmellini@pmpmanage.com.

-Homeowners are responsible for their own "medians," i.e., the planting area between the street curb and the sidewalk in front of your home. If your median is looking dry, you may need to break out the hose or even some dirt and grass seed to help keep our community streetscape looking fresh—it is part of the curb appeal that brought you here, remember? (See also artificial turf suggestion above!)

-Please do your part to fight mosquitos! Don't let water collect in flower pot saucers, on outdoor furniture covers, and similar little collection areas, and change your birdbath water (and all those crow droppings) at least every other day and empty them when you will be gone for a few days or more. The little buggers like small puddles, so your pools and spas are safe, but please police your yard now and again and fight all the nastiness mosquitos spread.

-Free hazardous waste drop off: Visit <https://www.toaks.org>

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

-Thousand Oaks is changing waste haulers as of January 1, 2022, and Athens Services has an FAQ page at <https://athensservices.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Thousand-Oaks-Residential-FAQ-FINAL.pdf>, it is worth a look. And yes, you will be getting all new trash containers, one of each kind, and you can contact Athens directly to order an extra of whatever you need.

-Thousand Oaks offers free mulch/compost for your garden projects:
<https://www.toaks.org/Home/Components/News/News/3331/3338?arch=1&npage=9>

Monthly Reminders and Notes

Website: Please visit www.woodridgeestatesresident.com for more information about our community and its rules and regulations, HOA activity, and a list of useful local phone numbers. Please send community questions, comments, and other general information and inquiries to PMP Management at lmellini@pmpmanage.com.

Emergencies: Our Gatehouse personnel *are not first responders* and aren't even security guards—they just operate the gates and process visitors and vendors (the use of “just” in this context is limiting, not derogatory). *Always call 911 first in an emergency or to report any sort of suspicious activity in or around the community.* You can let the Gatehouse know as well, *but call 911 or police or fire first.*

PMP Management Info: PMP provides an exclusive “PMP Gateway” online portal at WoodridgeCommunityAssociation.com to give you 24-hour access to your HOA account information, online payment options, management communication tools, and much more!

Peeve of the Month: In yet another “your tax dollars at work” wonderment, someone actually studied why people don't return their shopping carts to the convenient parking lot “corrals” instead of just leaving them all over for others to clang into while trying to park. Turns out, no, you are *not* “saving someone's job”; the grocery store employees have to collect them from hither and yon instead of doing their real jobs, and also, no, pushing one of those long collected-cart trains is not “fun.” Survey says the number one reason people leave their carts is that they are *lazy* (shocker!), and the number two reason is that community standards for basic orderliness seem to have all but disappeared (bombshell!). C'mon, people, you need the few extra daily steps, and you will make a grocery store employee's day. (Meantime, anyone have a body shop recommendation after our last trip to the store?)

Stat of the Month: The HOA website, woodridgeestateresident.com, has had 410 visitors in the latest three month tally. *We can do better.* (Website design volunteers welcome!)

This month's “It Could be Worse” Reminder: <https://people.com/home/kim-kardashians-neighbor-lawsuit-underground-vault-security-parking-gas-line-danger/>

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.woodridgeestateresident.com/helpfulphonenumber.

NEXT HOA BOARD MEETING: October 21, probably still via ZOOM (legislation pending—yes, seriously), and you will get an email invitation that will clarify the manner and means of the meeting about a week before. Share with your family, prizes will be awarded to newcomers (if you consider self-satisfaction a prize, and we do).

TO PROVIDE INFORMATION AND IDEAS FOR STUFF TO BE INCLUDED IN THIS NEWSLETTER, WRITE jbriggs@jbriggslaw.com

TO COMPLAIN ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER, WRITE whocares@dietcokeversuscokezero