

THE STATE OF THE ESTATES

Woodridge Estates Homeowners Association Newsletter

January 2023

WOODRIDGE ESTATEISTS: Here's hoping you all got what you wanted over the holidays, and that your blessings continue throughout the new year.

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Ask the Newsletter (landscaping, rat deterrence, long HOA meetings)

HEADS UPS

● **Woodridge Burglaries.** Happy to report no new burglaries within our community since mid-December, but SATG¹ are still active in Thousand Oaks, and a January 13 incident on Eaglewood (see below) reminds us that this is no time to let our guard down! PLEASE use your outdoor lights, install cameras as an early-warning system, and install or use existing alarm systems (especially glass-break sensors). Meanwhile, the effort to address the parking lot just outside our front gates is ongoing.

● **HOA Election:** Two (2) Directors will be elected in April this year, but per state law the election timeline is short—anyone wishing to run for the Board MUST be registered as a candidate by noon on February 2! All households received a registration form from the “Ballot Box” organization that runs our HOA elections, with all instructions, and you also can find that form on the community website at https://www.woodridgeestateresident.com/files/ugd/fccece_6d12fe9278fa43928c12fdc9a6326c48.pdf.

● **Street sweeping on Fridays:** PLEASE get your trash cans off the street on Thursday nights!! (It is actually a community rule.) The streetsweeper comes around early Friday morning, and trash bins prevent much of that important work from being done thoroughly. And also try to remember to get your guest or permitted vehicles off the streets Friday mornings as well—*same reason!* Let's all try to help keep our streets clean. Thanks!²

¹ See prior Newsletters, which are on the website here, <https://www.woodridgeestateresident.com/newsletter>, or just “Google”™ it.

² FYI, your HOA Board did try to get Athens Services to change its street sweeping day so it does not immediately follow trash pick-up day, but the Athens schedule unfortunately could not be adjusted for reasonable reasons. So please let's all just try to follow the rule and get those trash cans pulled off the curb Thursday nights, m'kay?

WOODRIDGE COMMUNITY BASICS

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

Police: 805-654-9511

Fire: 805-371-1111 ext 34

● **Management Contact:** *Email your requests, concerns, and inquiries to PMP Community Care at care@pmpmanage.com to automatically open a “ticket.” If you need to speak with someone, call (805) 642-2400 and ask for Julie Phan. You also can submit a request via your PMP Management account at www.woodridgecommunityassociation.com and its “Dashboard.”*

● **Website:** The Woodridge community website is at www.woodridgestatesresident.com. Suggestions for the website are encouraged.

● **Get the GateKey app at www.gatekey.com/resident-login.** Tutorial access is on the site. *No complaining about visitor lane backups at the gate unless you are signed up with Gatekey! It really is easy and really helps avoid backlogs at the gate.*

By the way, you soon will receive information about how to pay for transponders through your existing HOA account. This should speed up the process of getting new or replacement transponders, and those devices also soon will be available for pickup more frequently at the gatehouse.

WHAT YOU NEED/WANT TO KNOW, OR NOT-- WHATEVER

NEW YEAR'S EVE VANDALISM

Sorry to report that several young people were caught on camera knocking over and then kicking a Christmas decoration on Heavenly Ridge on Dec. 30. A nearby fire road gate also was damaged, and a porta-potty was tipped over as well. It is believed the vandals were in the community for a party—one that reportedly had to be shut down by TO Police at that.

Here is the video of some of this hooliganism:

<https://vimeo.com/785653774/925e082409>

*If you can identify any of the people in the video, please contact Julie at PMP Management at 805-642-2400. You actually will be doing these kids, and their parents, a favor—a little trouble for them now may very well save a lot more serious trouble for them in the future. IOHO, “kids will be kids” doesn’t cut it, and being out and about late at night these days is especially not a good idea given the recent burglaries and consequent **homeowner hi-alert security mindsets.** (Trust us, that’s a very real thing.)*

This is a good segue to:

WOODRIDGE RULES OF THE MONTH

Section 1.6: Responsibility for Guests. Residents are responsible for their guests, renters, service workers or anyone else admitted on their authority into the community while they are in the community and for any damage they cause or problems they create.

Section 1.24: Noise. No music, shouting, or noise of any kind shall be permitted at any time which unreasonably disturbs any other resident. No Homeowner shall cause or allow to be caused any noise-producing activities in the common areas or personal residence between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. Examples of "noise-producing activities" shall include, but not be limited to, loud music, parties, power tools, sports and recreational equipment, barking dogs, etc.

Section 2.6.1: Large Events of More Than Twenty-Five (25) People. Guest lists are required for events over 25 people. Any Resident or renter hosting an event that requires more than twenty-five (25) people to access the Association through the Main Entry Lane (MEL) is required to enter their own event or party list into Gatekey as well as notifying the gate personnel or HOA at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance. If a party or event exceeds twenty-five (25) people, the Resident may be required to pay for an additional guard gate officer to assist with the entry of visitor vehicles.

Section 2.6.2: Restricting Event participants. Access control officers may deny entry to visitors or vendors, including pedestrians, if the Board deems a party or event disruptive, when requested by law enforcement or when proper notification procedures were not followed.

All current Rules and Regulations for Woodridge can be found at:

<https://www.woodridgeestateresident.com/files/uqd/fccec64a2f8a3ffdb465693bd55d6ea9e491f.pdf>

COMMUNITY BURGLARY UPDATE

First, there have been no burglaries within Woodridge since December 15, 2022, the date of the 6th or so burglary or attempted burglary within the community during the preceding 6 weeks.

HOWEVER, on January 13 of this new year an unrecognized hoody-and-hat wearing male was challenged while walking on Eaglewood and immediately high-tailed it to the end of that street and the adjacent open space. The TO Police responded immediately to a neighboring homeowner's call, including with three police vehicles and a helicopter. This is the second instance of a non-resident roaming the neighborhood and running to open space when challenged—the other was in November on Sunset Hills and Morning Ridge.

Obviously, we cannot let our individual and collective guards down! Virtually every one of our homes is "open space adjacent," but these sidewalk encounters prove that even our more internal residences are not immune from the scourge of SATG. (See footnote 1 above.)

Second, on the collective and preventive³ front, a big Newsletter and HOA Board “Thank You” to all of you who wrote to the powers-that-be about the trailhead parking lot outside our front gate in response to our call to action in the December Newsletter. This lot has been the scene of more nefarious activity than mere hiker and biker trail access, including a couple of auto break-ins and the capture of an SATG getaway driver. It is pitch black at night and cannot be observed from our front gates. In the December Newsletter we asked that you write to the city and to the Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency (COSCA) about closing the lot after dusk (when the trails also are supposed to be off-limits).

We don’t know the exact number of letters sent, but we know it was enough to get pretty fast action—or at least what counts as fast action in gov’mint circles—from the Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency (COSCA), which owns the parking lot and which obtained input from the TO Police. Sadly, the result is not (yet) what had been hoped. Apparently (and to us inexplicably) the police told COSCA they do not agree (with all of us) that closing the lot at night would be a deterrent to criminal activity in and around Woodridge:

“The consensus was that closing the parking lot at night is not likely to reduce the potential for this type of crime in the area. According to the police, those committing these crimes are not deterred by a lack of parking and would otherwise get dropped off and picked up if working in this area, as has been the case in other areas. In fact, having a car remain in the lot may increase their exposure to apprehension. Since the police did not recommend closing the lot, COSCA is not planning on installing gates at this time. . . .”

Your newsletter disagrees, and wonders if the TO Police actually considered our little parking lot in particular—it seems to us that street parking on Sunset Hills at night would stand out a whole lot more and pose a much greater risk to the malefactors than a dark parking lot, thus likely keeping them away from the immediate area. That said, it may be true that apprehension in the lot is easier—it already happened once (a getaway driver was caught in his car awaiting his team after a burglary attempt in the Lang Ranch community to our south outside the gate). In any case, other possible security ideas respecting the parking lot continue to be pursued by the HOA Board, including lighting and closing the lower entryway.

Your HOA also has seen to it that brighter (but still soft-white) street light lamps are on the way—we don’t have a lot of streetlights in Woodridge, but those we do have make a significant difference within the community.

We remind you again, moreover, to please get your outdoor lights working and turned on from dusk to dawn, that helps a great deal as well.

Remember, any security measure any of us takes with respect to our own home helps the entire community as well.⁴

³ Our English teacher reminds us that “preventative” is not really a word. Yeah, it is used a lot, but so is “irregardless,” also not really a word. (You’re welcome for that grade school flashback.)

⁴ In other words, don’t be the slowest person when the bear is chasing you and someone else.

HOA BOARD ELECTION UPDATE

Two HOA Board seats are up for election in 2023. Both are occupied currently, and both such occupants plan to run again (Mr. Nakos and Ms. Rue)—but at the recent HOA Board meeting (you shoulda been there!) both of them *expressly encouraged others to throw their hats in the ring!* Your HOA encourages *everyone* to consider getting involved in some way—this is your community and your input matters. How about helping out one of the committees for example? Sure, not everyone will agree with you all the time, but diverse input makes for better decisions, and if there is something you would like to change, well, it won't change by just griping about it to your dog from the comfort of your Barcalounger. Get some skin in the game! Participate!

*Anyone wishing to run for the Board MUST be registered as a candidate by noon on February 2! (Yeah, we know the timetable is short for an April election, but this is a state law thing.) All households received a registration form from the "Ballot Box" organization that runs our HOA elections, with all instructions, and **you also can find that form on the community website at this link:***

https://www.woodridgeestateresident.com/files/uqd/fccece_6d12fe9278fa43928c12fdc9a6326c48.pdf.

Please consider running or nominating someone else or otherwise getting involved—and if you do want to run for the Board, remember to submit your registration form by the Feb. 2 deadline, state law permits no excuses or exceptions!

RAIN ON THE PLAIN

We have had almost 15 inches of rain in Thousand Oaks so far this season (the rainy season commences October 1), which is more than twice the average, and almost twice the amount, for the same time period last year. The relatively gentle rain we have had so far also is the best kind—more soil absorption, more aquifer recharge, and less total runoff to the ocean.

You can keep an eye on TO rainfall info here:

<https://www.google.com/search?q=ventura+county+rainfall+2022&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&hl=en-us&client=safari>.

This information can be useful for, among other things, evaluating and (perhaps) anticipating city water provider drought plans. On that subject, by the way, see also this article on desalination progress in Cali: <https://www.vcstar.com/story/opinion/2022/12/29/droughts-technology-thrust-desal-to-the-forefront/69754296007/>. We find it encouraging that someone finally is seriously looking into this as a realistic statewide drought remedy.

And here is an interesting article on the status of capturing and storing rainwater when we do have it: <https://www.inverse.com/innovation/california-flooding-water-drought-solution>. (Seems to your Newsletter like this is a better use of money than a non-bullet train to and from Mayberry to Pixley, but what do we know?)⁵

⁵ Lots of obstacles are mentioned in this article, but no mention of the enormous amount of water we let run off into the Pacific in order to save the Delta Smelt, which isn't doing very well despite several years of our very generous efforts to save it. (Didn't we people evolve from fish? Food for thought. (Smelt, that is, not people.))

ASK THE NEWSLETTER

What's the latest on common area landscaping plans in light of ongoing water restrictions?

After reviewing responses to a request for proposals, your HOA Board has decided to change the common area landscaping provider. *Marina Landscape will take over commencing February 1, and we welcome them to the neighborhood.* As spring approaches, the HOA Landscape Committee is prioritizing beautification of the front gate entry area and the parkways along the HOA-maintained areas of Sunset Hills Blvd., Heavenly Ridge, and Willow Canyon (much of which presently is landscaped with high-maintenance water-hogging and now mostly dead grass). The Landscape Committee already is exploring alternatives with the new landscape vendor. Your input is invited!

How can I keep rats and other vermin from eating my car wires?

First, take good care with your bird feeders—we also love our feathered friends, but the “pellet” kinds of feeders make a mess that attracts less pleasant creatures than birds and squirrels. Second, check out our previous article on this subject in the June 2022 Newsletter, found at https://www.woodridgeestateresident.com/files/ugd/fccece_4d4f82ec561140f995fb22f4aaf9522.pdf. Third, the grapevine has good things to say about this local installer of noise devices that keep the rats away: <http://ricksjapanese.us/>. Fourth, cleaning your garage will help. (Just sayin'.)

Why do HOA Board meetings take so dang long?

As usual, you can blame the state legislature. HOA Boards must comply with “open meeting” transparency/full disclosure/“sunshine” laws, which means Board members can discuss HOA stuff only as a group and in public (with a few exceptions for things like personnel matters, privacy in regard to discipline, etc.). With a five-person board, no more than two board members can get together to discuss HOA stuff outside a duly noticed public meeting, and the law prohibits “serial meetings” where one Board member has, for example, separate discussions with each of the other Board members on the same topic. This applies even to their emails and texts! In short, even leaving aside that board members are volunteers who often are busy with paying jobs, state law prohibits Board members from discussing and deciding things other than at the monthly Board meetings. So, what the occasional observer hears at a Board meeting usually is the first time the subject has been discussed by the board as a whole (or at least since the last time it was discussed in public). Hence, the meetings can get long to accommodate good discussion. But please remember, patience is a virtue—and so is transparency. Each has a price, but each is worth it.⁶

That said, Board meetings begin at 6:30 pm and usually end between 7:30 and 8 pm, including time allocated for homeowner input. And the Board meets in executive session for an hour beforehand, so they are trying to move the meeting along quickly. In any event, you should attend, it is the best way to provide input and get questions answered.

⁶ State law also requires that a subject be on the agenda in advance of any meeting at which it will be discussed—and it can't be discussed if not on the agenda. So, when your great idea is put forward at a public meeting, don't be offended if it is not immediately discussed at that time, 'cause it really ain't supposed to be.

OLD BUSINESS

- Reminder that you always should *check in with the Architectural Review committee if you are planning renovations in and around your home*—sometimes the Committee even has very helpful recommendations for contractors and the like! The Committee promises to promptly respond to your inquiries and submissions, but checking in with the Committee up front can save you lots of time and even money.

The Architectural Guidelines and forms for review can be found here:

<https://www.woodridgeestateresident.com/files/ugd/fccec7c9127bcb5194ae792fccd3236b8ffc5.pdf>.

Please direct all ARC inquiries to PMP at care@pmpmanage.com or call (805) 642-2400 and ask for Julie Phan. No homeowner should contact any Board member directly with regard to Architectural Committee submissions.

Also be advised that the Woodridge Architectural Guidelines are being updated to make them more user friendly and in the hope the review process will be even faster.

- **Help for the homeless:** Call the TO Police non-emergency response line, 805-654-9511, to report anyone you see anywhere in the city *who seems to need medical care or non-emergency law enforcement intervention.*
- **Hazardous Waste Disposal:** Please check out this website for good info on hazardous waste disposal: <https://www.toaks.org/departments/public-works/sustainability/trash-recycling/trash-recycling-residential-services/haz-waste-home-collection-program>
- **Fence Repair:** If your home shares a fence with open space or common area, your HOA will split the repainting cost with you. A fresh coat of paint now and then helps prevent fence deterioration and looks great as well. For cost sharing please get three bids; contact PMP for more information, including as to Pedro, a very reliable and HOA-favored painting contractor.
- **Drones:** The updated Woodridge Rules and Regulations prohibit flying drones in the community (with very limited real estate promotion exceptions). Those of you with eagle eyes and rabbit ears who have noted drones in the area of late most likely are seeing drones flown by Thousand Oaks Police over our adjacent open space as part of their diligent effort to stop the recent rash of burglaries in the area. Police drones are pretty large with four propellers and a spotlight—a sight and sound nuisance that seems worth the disruption to our peace and quiet now and again. TO Police are really committed to stopping the SATG!
- **Thank you!** We want to pass thanks along to all of you who participated in the HOA's Holiday Season Gateminder Fundraiser. 41 households (about 20%) contributed and raised \$3500 (\$85 average contribution) for distribution to our gate personnel as a holiday bonus. That's a generous amount and we hope participation will increase in the future—thank you, our gate service vendor and personnel really appreciate it and say "THANK YOU" (yes, in all caps).

MISCELLANEOUS

Holidays of Next Month: Thursday, February 2 is Groundhog Day if you are into that sort of thing, but nothing will be closed that day (except your mind if you are not a believer in Punxsutawney Phil). Tuesday, February 14 is Valentine's Day—you're welcome for that reminder (much will be closed to you that day if you forget). Monday, February 20 is Presidents Day, on which banks, courts, and the Post Office will be closed whether you forget or not. Also, February still has only 28 days this year, but that means Daylight Saving Time arrives a day earlier this year than it will next year.⁷

NextDoor App Quote of the Month: Any post beginning with, "I probably shouldn't say this, but . . ." *Your first instinct was right.*

Judicial Quote of the Month: "Ma'am, your husband's expression of his desire to be cremated was not a request that you make him an appointment."

That's all s/he/it/they/we wrote for this month. Please find a list of helpful local phone numbers at www.woodridgeestateresident.com/helpfulphonenumber. Let us know of any others you can suggest. (This month's un-helpful number is 1-555-coldweatherevchargers.)

NEXT HOA BOARD MEETING: February 16, 6:30 pm by Zoom. Watch your email for an invitation and connection information a few days before the 16th.

NOTE: *In-Person meetings will resume on March 23*—at which time the regular Board meeting schedule also will change to the *fourth Thursday of each month* (instead of the third). The new in-person meeting location will be the PMP offices at 515 Marin Street, Suite 404 (opposite The Oaks mall off Hillcrest).

TO PROVIDE INFORMATION AND IDEAS FOR THIS NEWSLETTER, WRITE jbriggs@jbriggslaw.com

SEND COMPLAINTS ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER TO whathappenedtotheRams@andtheChargerstoo.com

⁷ "Time . . . keeps flowing like a river . . ." Except when standing on a train platform while a very fast train passes—or something like that, we are no Einsteins over here.