

Heritage Grove Homeowners Association June 2020

NEWSLETTER

Hello from the board and landscaping committees. We hope you're staying healthy and as well as can be in these unprecedented times.

Landscape Committee

Mario Gonzalez
Robert Martines
Juliet Vadvilavich, Chair
Karen Vogel Hayes

Board of Directors

Nate Barton, Treasurer
Dana Marcus, Secretary
Dennis Reker, President

Heritagegrove.org is a one-page website with links to COVID-19 resources, Grayson Community Management's Resident Portal, community projects/photos, email addresses to connect, volunteer, or attend a meeting. Next board meeting is June 16, 7:30pm via zoom.



Apricot Picking Sunday Morning to aid food insecure families in tough times

You may remember them from last year - they're the nonprofit volunteer group that coordinates projects to harvest fruit and distribute through food banks to feed the hungry in our greater community.

Heritage Grove homeowner Sherri Tomlin connected us again this year, for a morning pick that benefits us as well as those in need. The abundance of apricots on trees in the orchard attracts rats and encourages nesting, and also lures drivers on Blossom Hill Road to stop and get out of their cars to pick the fruit on our HOA property.



2019 Impact

A few statistics from last year's community-focused efforts:



Our orchard was originally all cherry trees, which are being wonderful hosts again this year for California native butterflies, but over the years some trees were replaced with fruiting apricots which are great as long as we minimize the rat situation. The landscape committee and board unanimously granted Village Harvest to come back this year for a three hour pick, and they just scheduled us for Sunday, June 14th from 9 - 12 noon, with a possible second date end of the month. Leaders may arrive early, and have established social distancing protocols (<https://villageharvest.org>).

We hope homeowners will please warmly embrace the idea of helping meet some of the greater community's hunger needs at this difficult time.

Don't worry! The trees are quite prolific, and within a day or two after they pick, there will again be more ripe apricots for homeowners to enjoy! So, please let's be sure not to overpicking trees between now and Sunday. Thanks so much, and thank you Sherri for making all the arrangements!



Landscape Committee News

From Juliet Vadvilavich

As chair of the HOA Landscaping Committee, I want to update the community on our common areas. As we are all no doubt aware, we have been living in an unprecedented time with the COVID-19 pandemic, Shelter in Place orders, and civil unrest and protests. There is probably not a single resident who is not experiencing anxiety and stress during these times, as well as possible hardship and loss. Let us please remember we are community and neighbors and band together to help one another.

Along those lines, I wanted to update the community regarding some of the landscaping (or lack thereof) during this shutdown period. In the first Shelter in Place (SIP) orders, the HOA was unable to have regular and routine maintenance of our common areas. Only essential and emergency services were performed, such as fire hazard, weed abatement, and the removal of a large beehive from the orchard. As the SIP orders are amended and allowing work, the HOA and the landscapers are playing catch up. It was discovered that the irrigation system timing was off, some sprinklers and drip irrigation had suffered damage, and the landscapers have worked to identify and fix these issues. Work is progressing and coming back on schedule.

I also understand that there have been questions regarding the removal of the olive trees at the front entrance. The decision to pull these two young trees planted last year was not an easy one for the HOA Board or the Landscaping Committee. There is a demarcation blue line along which the line of cherry trees were planted. Unfortunately, the young olive trees that replaced the cherry trees removed last year were planted in front of this blue line and too close to the curb which resulted in obstruction of the visual sight lines for traffic. The photos here show an overhead view with the blue line and also from the perspective of a vehicle waiting at the limit line to make a left onto Blossom Hill Road. The olive trees clearly obstruct a driver's vision and necessitate moving further out to gain a safe line of sight. The HOA and various Landscape Committee members received complaints about the visual impairment and felt the trees could not remain as they stood.



Alternatives considered included trying to move the trees in, to the line. Unfortunately, the large cherry tree stumps and root systems remain, making that difficult and costly. The olive tree canopies in maturity are also much larger than cherry or other orchard type trees, stretching up to 30 feet, so there would be no guarantee that the move would remedy the visual obstruction. Moving and replanting trees in another section of the common area was an option, with costs to properly dig out, replant, and irrigate with the probability that some trees would not survive. Reluctantly, we decided the most economic and safe action was to remove them without need for permit under 4".

The front area is a work in progress and we welcome and ask for input from the community. Please feel free to contact the Landscape Committee, five of your neighbors, through proper channels to give your thoughts and feedback so we move forward in a way which is constructive, inclusive and appropriate. We welcome thoughts and ideas as to what would work best to make the front entrance welcoming and beautiful as we are now able to move forward with more landscaping work. Email hoa@heritagegrove.org and we'll be happy to set up a time to talk.

Thanks again and see you soon. Stay well.