

Woodlake Property Owners Association Neighborhood Watch Newsletter Halloween Issue

The publication of this newsletter is unofficial and does not reflect any opinion, directive, or policy of the Woodlake Property Owners Association members or Board of Directors.

The primary purpose of the newsletter is to convey information designed to assist us to reduce or prevent crime in our community.

The information presented is available through various public access sources, personal interview, or observation. Your comments as to how we can improve this effort are welcome.

Stay alert. Ghosts, goblins, and ghouls aren't the only scary specters haunting our communities. Have a fun but safe Halloween!

1. Bell County Sheriff Tip Line: Wanted

<http://www.bellcountytexas.com/cscd/cscdwanted.htm>

If you have any information regarding those individuals, please call the Bell County Sheriff's Office at 254-933-5400, your local law enforcement, or **CRIMESTOPPERS AT 1-800-729-TIPS** (Local 526-TIPS).



AUSTIN - The Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) has added Thomas Lee Elkins, 58, to the Texas 10 Most Wanted Sex Offender list, and a \$5,000 cash reward is now offered for information leading to his capture. Elkins is identified as a sexually violent predator and is wanted for a felony charge of Failure to Comply with Civil Commitment Requirements.

Texas Crime Stoppers tips are guaranteed to be anonymous.

Elkins fled from an east Houston halfway house where he was electronically monitored until October 5. He has family in Texas, Virginia, Ohio and Indiana, and has worked as a truck driver and diesel mechanic. His arrests include Aggravated Sexual Assault, Assault, Aggravated Kidnapping, Aggravated Rape, Forcible Rape and Indecent Liberties with Child. He was considered a person of interest in a serial homicide investigation outside of Texas, although no charges were ever filed.

Elkins is approximately 6 feet 6 inches tall and weighs about 200 pounds. He has blue eyes, grey hair, a distinctive "Fu Manchu" moustache, wears silver glasses for reading only, and walks with a limp. He has also been known to shave his head and facial hair: <http://www.dps.texas.gov/Texas10MostWanted/SexOffenderDetails.aspx?id=169>.

2. Crime Update:

Copperas Cove - Animal Control Officers caught a raccoon reported as "acting strangely". The labs, sent to the Texas Department of Health Laboratory in Austin, were positive for rabies.

Take all precaution if you have been exposed to animals with rabies.

Killeen - A shooting occurred at an apartment at 3203 Hereford Ln. 11:30 p.m. Thursday night that left one man dead. The investigator said the victim was visiting the apartment where a verbal altercation became physical. Another male shot the victim then fled. If you have information about this shooting call Crime Stoppers at 526-TIPS (8477).

Nolanville - City Councilman, Robert Meeks Jr., was charged with aggravated assault, resisting and evading arrest. Police responded to shots fired around 1 a.m. at 300 Nolan Ridge Dr. where Meeks, to avoid arrest, took off running down the street. The neighbors told police that earlier they heard Meeks in a heated argument with his wife.

Fort Hood - Spc. Christian S. Holley was arrested on suspicion of attempted rape, attempted murder, and communicating a threat.

3. Crime, Criminals, and the Nuances of Crime Prevention - This issue includes a glossary of typical crimes and an explanation of how a misdemeanor differs from a felony.

Fraud is the intentional deception by one party in order to wrongfully obtain possession or control of money, goods or specific rights belonging to an innocent party.

There are many words used to describe fraud: Scam, con, swindle, extortion, sham, double-cross, hoax, cheat, ploy, ruse, hoodwink, confidence trick. Because personal information is so easy to obtain, identity theft, also a type of fraud is a growing problem that often goes undetected until it's too late.

Fraud can be committed against individuals or businesses, over the phone, through the mail, and most commonly, over the internet and e-mail. Internet fraud is pervasive because the suspect(s) is so often near impossible to trace, apprehend, and prosecute. Its perplexity makes training to deter or prevent being a victim of fraud a complex and difficult task. Refer to the video:

<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/microsites/idtheft/>

Trespass is entering another person's property without the permission of the owner or legal authority. Criminal trespass occurs if it is done with an illegal intent. An action for trespass can be maintained by the owner or anyone else who has a lawful right to occupy the real property, such as the owner of an apartment building, a tenant, or a member of the tenant's family. The action can be maintained against anyone who interferes with the right of ownership or possession, whether the invasion is by a person or by something that a person has set in motion.

Every unlawful entry onto another's property is trespass, even if no harm is done to the property. A person who has a right to come onto the land may become a trespasser by committing wrongful acts after entry.

A person who enters property with permission but stays after he has been told to leave also commits a trespass. Moreover, an intruder cannot defend himself in a trespass action by showing that the plaintiff did not have a completely valid legal right to the property. The reason for all of these rules is that the action of trespass exists to prevent breaches of the peace by protecting the quiet possession of real property.

The plaintiff does not have to show that the defendant intended to trespass but only that they intended to do whatever caused the trespass. It is no excuse that the trespasser mistakenly believed that they were not doing wrong or that they did not understand the wrong. A child or a person who thought that they were on their own land can be a trespasser.

Damage is not necessary for the defendant to be guilty of trespass, although the amount of awarded is relative to the extent of damage.

Trespassers are responsible for nearly all the consequences of their unlawful entry, including those that could not have been anticipated or are the result of nothing more wrongful than the trespass itself.

Murder and non-negligent manslaughter is defined as the willful (non-negligent) killing of one human being by another. The figures for murder do not include suicides, accidents, or justifiable homicides either by citizens or law enforcement officers. Some data suggest that a murder is committed every 32.4 minutes or a rate of 5.6 murders for every 100,000 inhabitants.

Rape is the carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will. Assaults or attempts to commit rape by force or threat of force are included; however, statutory rape, inter-course with a consenting minor without force, and other sex offenses are not.

Rape is a crime of violence in which the victim may suffer serious physical injury and long-term psychological pain. Though, statistics indicate that the incidence of forcible rape are decreasing, the data is difficult to interpret because the crime often goes unreported.

The number of reported cases of rapes of males is so small that no statistics are available. Neither are homosexual rape and "date rape" (sex forced upon a woman by her escort) included in the data.

Most experts conclude that in 80- 85% of all rape cases, the victim knows the defendant. Rape by adult females in authority against young pubescent males is increasing consequently; public attitudes and legal definitions of rape are changing to encompass an ever-widening range of sexual events. These actions can include varying degrees of violence, submissiveness, and injury, but the victims of forcible rape are always female.

By the late 1990s most states also recognized marital rape, for which a husband could be charged with raping his wife.

Robbery is the taking or attempting to take anything of value from the care, custody, or control of a person or persons by force or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear. Robbery is a particularly threatening crime, is the only one of the seven FBI Index crimes that is both a property crime and a violent crime with a relatively high probability of victim injury or death. Its thousands of victims each year suffer psychological and physical trauma, and even non-victims experience anxiety from the fear of robbery.



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This fear can cause people to change their lives in ways destructive to social life and the sense of community, especially in urban areas.

Burglary is defined as the unlawful entry of a structure to commit a felony or theft. The use of force to gain entry is not required to classify an offense as burglary.

An estimated 2.15 million burglaries were reported in 2002, a trend that has been in decline since. The rates trend higher in cities outside metropolitan areas with rural counties reporting the lowest rates. The highest burglary volume was in the most populous region, the South, with 44.8% of total burglaries. Total burglary volume was lower in the West, 23%, and Midwest, 21%, with the lowest in the Northeast 12% of all reported burglaries.

In the study of 2.15 million burglaries reported, 65.8% were residential and 34.2% involved non-residences such as stores and offices. An interesting fact is that most residential burglaries, 62%, occur during daylight hours, while most nonresidential burglaries, 58%, occur at night.

Non-residential losses from burglary averaged \$1,678, compared to \$1,482 for residential burglaries.

As the amount (dimes-to-dollars) the burglar may collect varies, the dollar amounts indicate the value of goods lost to the property owner.

Larceny-Theft is the unlawful taking, carrying, leading, or riding away of property from the possession of another in which no use of force or fraud occurs. This crime category includes offenses such as shoplifting, pocket-picking, purse-snatching, thefts from motor vehicles, bicycle thefts, and so on. It does not include embezzlement, "con" games, forgery, and passing bad checks.

In 2002 seven million larceny-theft offenses were reported for a rate of 2,445.8 per 100,000 people. This crime category amounted to 51.9% of the Crime Index total arrests and 71.9% of all property crime arrests. The South, the most populous area of the nation, accounted for 40.9% of the total number of larceny-theft offenses. Larceny-theft occurs most frequently in July and August and least often in February. Oddly, females are arrested more often for larceny-theft than for any other offense.

The average amount taken varies from shoplifting, \$187 to as much as thousands of dollars by theft from buildings with the largest value from the theft of motor vehicles.

Motor Vehicle Theft is reported an average of just over 1.2 million cases annually with the highest rate of motor vehicle theft occurring in metropolitan areas (498.6 per 100,000 inhabitants). In cities outside metropolitan areas, the motor vehicle theft rate was 207.6 per 100,000 inhabitants, while rural counties had a rate of 132.8.

The total value of motor vehicles stolen in 2002, for example, was approximately \$8.4 billion. The average loss per vehicle was \$6,701. Many stolen cars are recovered, and insurance covers a portion of the loss for most victims.

Arson offences, defined as any willful or malicious burning or attempt to burn, with or without intent to defraud, a dwelling house, public building, motor vehicle or aircraft, personal property of another, etc., were never tracked prior to 1979. Not all agencies report arson statistics nor are statistics for fires of suspicious or unknown origins reported. The 66,308 arson offenses reported in 2002 nationwide represented only 73% of the population.

In cities with a population from 250,000 to 499,999, the arson rate is highest, at 68.3 per 100,000 inhabitants, while cities with 10,000 to 24,999 inhabitants had the lowest rate.

Structural arson accounts for 41.3% of all arson offenses. Residential property accounts for 60.7% of all structural arsons. Mobile property comprises about one-third of all reported incidents of arson, with motor vehicles accounting for about 95% of all mobile property arsons. Just over one-quarter of incidents of arson were directed at property such as crops, fences, signs, timber, etc.

Aggravated Assault is an unlawful attack by one person upon another for the purpose of inflicting severe or aggravated bodily injury. This type of assault is usually accompanied by the use of a weapon or by means likely to produce death or great bodily harm.

An aggravated assault rate of 310.1 per 100,000 inhabitants has declined by 2.7 percent from 2001. By comparison, the rate of aggravated assault has declined by 14.2 percent since 1998.

Misdemeanors v.s. Felonies differences may often overlap. Distinctions are sometimes based on such things as monetary values of stolen possessions or the exact amount of controlled substances found on an individual. Whereas a misdemeanor conviction may imply imprisonment of less than one year, either in a local or county jail, a felony conviction connotes that the crime was serious enough to result in a prison sentence of at least one year in a State or Federal penitentiary.

If a sentence issues no jail time whatsoever, the crime is termed an infraction, which is a subset of a misdemeanor.

The comparison will certainly be assigned a monetary fine that can range anywhere from \$200 to about \$10,000 for a misdemeanor to as much as \$250,000 fine for a Federal felony. Punishments, like mandatory rehabilitation programs and community service, are typically be applied.

In misdemeanor offenses conviction a faster process in special courts is typical while in felony cases, a grand jury to charge the offender applies.

Additionally, the majority of misdemeanor offenders will not be afforded the right of having a lawyer supplied for their trial. Other general felony vs. misdemeanor variations, which again depend on the specific felony vs. misdemeanor laws of a State, include the following: Misdemeanors include crimes along the lines of trespassing, vandalism, prostitution, most DUI, DWI, and reckless driving charges, petty theft (like shoplifting), public intoxication, indecent exposure, and disorderly conduct.

Felonies include, murder, rape, kidnapping, aggravated assault, burglary and other property theft like arson and motor vehicle theft, almost all assault and neglect cases involving a minor, forgery, counterfeiting, and practicing without a license.

Contrary to convicted felons, misdemeanors do not result in revoked voting, military, gun rights, and other civil rights. Convicted misdemeanor offenders still have the potential of working within licensed professions like law, teaching, and nursing.

Convicted felons will often have a very hard time finding insurance, jobs that require a license, jobs in public office, in larger companies, to work with children, and jobs working with explosive and other potentially dangerous material. If the felony conviction involves a sexual crime like a rape or sexual assault of a minor, he or she will be required to register as a sex offender as well.

(Source: <http://www.libraryindex.com/pages/13/Types-Crime.html#ixzz27D8L0NDK>

<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/microsites/idtheft/video/avoid-identity-theft-video.html>

4. On The Horizon – Halloween; There's a Lot of Scary Things Out There, and I'm Not Talking About Ogres, Ghost, Mummies, and Frankenstein's... Except, in the Child Predator Sense -

Nothing takes the fun out of Halloween more than real-live monsters lurking behind their decorations and charm to lure in and take advantage of their young victims.

Some states mandate that convicted child predators post "No Trick-or-Treating" or "No Candy" signs as well as keeping their lights off to discourage visitors, but these restrictions may not be enough to keep your children safe. Child predators and pedophiles are repeat offenders; thus, the best protection is avoidance.

There are numerous precautions a parent can take to keep your children safe from these sick-o's and a variety of web-locals you can visit to check which houses to avoid like this one:

https://records.txdps.state.tx.us/DPS_WEB/SorNew/Mapping/index.aspx?PageIndex=Map&SNU_NBR=7100&SNA_TXT=Palisades%20Point&CTY_TXT=Belton&STA_COD=TX&ZIP_TXT=76513

Gang and "flash" mob violence seems spontaneous and is on the rise. In the next issue I will expose the phenomenon for the crime that it is and what to do if you happen to be victim of gang or flash-mob assault.