

## Woodlake Property Owners Association Neighborhood Watch Newsletter

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.

Summer may be just about over, nonetheless, there is an average 15% increase in the number of traffic accidents likely to occur over this holiday weekend than any other. Read why.

**1. Bell County Sheriff Tip Line: Wanted as of August 29, 2013 -** [http://71.6.170.26/revize/bellcounty/departments/cscd\(adult\\_probation\)/most\\_wanted.php](http://71.6.170.26/revize/bellcounty/departments/cscd(adult_probation)/most_wanted.php). Two of this issue's outlaws from Killeen are wanted for Possession of a Firearm by a Felon: 33 y/o James Williams, and 35 y/o Ronald Harris. Jason Newsom is a 35 y/o, W/M from Belton, wanted for Burglary of a Building. Another Beltonian - Tevin Morrison, is a 20 y/o B/M, who is wanted for Escape Causes Bodily Injury. Daren McLeod, 48, from Burnet wanted for Harassment of a Public Servant and Archie McPherson, 60, is from Moody is wanted on his third-strike for DUI.

Please review the attached flyer; if you have any information regarding those individuals; 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) There is now an "on-line" crime reporting system for your convenience at: [http://71.6.170.26/revize/bellcounty/citizen\\_online\\_reporting\\_system/index.php](http://71.6.170.26/revize/bellcounty/citizen_online_reporting_system/index.php)

**Austin:** Up to \$20,000 is offered for information leading to the arrest of Larry Valdez. Race: White, Sex: M DOB: 7/25/1970,



Ht: 5'9" Wt: 185 lbs. AKA: Larry Valley, Lorenzo Valentino, Lorenzo Valentins SMT: Tattoos: Heart/ribbon/arrow on left side of chest Wanted For: Parole Violation, Aggravated Assault with Deadly Weapon, Assault Causes Bodily Injury-Family Violence, Duty on Striking Fixture/Highway landscape. CCH: Sexual

Assault, Burglary, Unauthorized Use of Vehicle, Resisting Officer, and Trespassing. LKA: 3001 Lourdes St., Dallas, Tx. Caution: Subject should be considered armed and dangerous!

Details: Valdez was arrested in Dallas County for Sexual Assault of a Child for an incident involving a two-year-old female child. He was paroled on February 21, 1991. On April 26, 1991, he was convicted and sentenced to 29 years for Burglary of a Vehicle. He was paroled again on August 6, 2004. In March 2005, a warrant was placed on Valdez for assault on a family member. On June 22, 2005, a warrant for his arrest was issued for Parole Violation (Original Offense: Burglary of a Vehicle).

He is also wanted in Dallas County brutally assaulting a woman and leaving her for dead on the roadside on August 20, 2006.

He has family in the Dallas area and has previous employment as an iron worker. (Source: <http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/texas10mostwanted/>)

### 2. Crime Update:

**Temple -** Mazzio's Pizza Restaurant, 1400 block of Southwest HK Dodgen Loop, was robbed at 8 A.M. on Wednesday. A man had entered the restaurant as employees were preparing to open the business, displayed a handgun and demanded money.

The suspect, a 6'-tall black male wearing a dark colored hooded sweatshirt and mask, cotton style work gloves and blue jeans, got away on foot in an unknown direction.

Another robbery occurred just after 8:30 a.m. at The Great Western Inn, 400 block of Southwest HK Dodgen Loop, where 3 men entered the office and demanded money.

The 3 suspects were wearing masks over their faces and at least one of the suspects had a handgun. Two of the suspects were described as being between 5'4" and 5'8". Witnesses say the third suspect was wearing a gold colored mask.

Anyone with information about either of these incidents is asked to contact the Temple Police Department at 254-298-5500. (Source: KXXV. Com)

**3. SVFD: Then, Now and Tomorrow** - If you were to ask the person in charge, "How does a little girl from Hot Springs, Arkansas, become President of Sparta Voluntary Fire Department?"... More-than-likely the only answer you'll get is a shrug of the shoulders and a look of 'I haven't the slightest clue'. None-the-less, that's what Pat has been asking herself for the past, little more than 5 years.

Pat moved to Central Texas with her family during a period of uncertainty and turmoil. The country was embroiled in the war in Vietnam, the economy was flat-lined, at best, and opportunities for earning a decent wage were 'far and few between'.

"Well, I was born in Hot Springs, Arkansas; I got here in 1961, and I've been with... here in this area since 1986, and Eddie and I have been together since 1978."

Having her roots in the Midwest, strength in her faith and character, Pat didn't let the circumstances weigh her down; she always did her best at whatever she tried.

They worked - he as a welder and mechanic and she at whatever job was available; usually, staying on until economic circumstances interfered.

Not to be despaired, Pat could always find another job.

Pat and Eddie have always had a desire to support the community. Their civic-mindedness has never been more evident since moving to the Belton Lake area.

Their home and life - literally, is the SVFD station. When Eddie isn't doing routine maintenance and repair on the equipment, engines and vehicles, he helps out as a volunteer firemen and driver.

I pacifically peeked-in where 12 or 13 volunteers, in what at one time had been Eddie's workshop, (which now served as meeting, class and ready-room, and lounge for the 20-odd firefighters) that grace the Sparta Volunteer Fire Department, and stepped-in to a shadowy rhombus with a spongy sole and over-worked circuitry.

Excusing myself for the interruption and meeting the crew, at once I was impressed, not by what I saw, but what I sensed.

No expert I, but the individual qualities that characterize a firefighter: pride, accomplishment, confidence and resolve were palpable among the crew in attendance. Their objectives: desire to serve the community, motivation to be there, and selflessness, was apparent.

Pat went on to describe how she and Eddie got involved at the grassroots establishing SVFD, "David Kirk approached us in February, 2009, to do a volunteer fire department. Well, I signed a petition, and the next thing I know, David goes, 'we'd like for you to be president of Sparta Valley Volunteer Fire Department!'"

Pat, understandably, was terribly reluctant, "I said, 'oh, I don't know..... I've never done something like that before'; but after a lot of persuasion from their long-time friend, David Kirk and likely fire chief, (and a couple of beers) she reluctantly conceded.

"And, so I learned", she added, "...a very hard lesson when David had a heart attack, and (we) had to join Nolanville, to be Central Bell County Fire Rescue.

So, we went to Central Bell... we needed a fire department here. We don't need somebody 15 minutes away. So, David said 'Let's regroup'. We couldn't regroup as Sparta Valley so we regrouped as Sparta.

On March of 2012, we became Sparta Volunteer Fire Department and we have grown ever since".

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I was disappointed Chief Taylor wasn't available but I did take the opportunity to have a long discussion with the Assistant Chief, (Captain) Joe Whiteley.

"I understand you've been with the crew for several years but, you've just taken... uh, you've only been the assistant chief for a short time; what is your background; where are you from, and how long have you've been in the area?"

"I was originally born in Galveston. (I've lived in) Florence, Georgetown, Killeen area for 35 years. I've been here in Belton for the last, uh... 10 years.

Uh... Fire department's (firefighting is) my life".

Joe went on to explain that he at one time was in trucking. Now he has his own remolding business, (coincidentally, is a pretty resourceful occupation for a firefighter...) Nonetheless, Joe is dedicated and committed to serving the community.

"I run my own business; I have for almost all of my life. I'm going in the field of EMS. I've gotten my certifications, and I'm working to get my license up-to-date; once I get them, then I'm going to a paid EMS department, and this will be my second job".

I asked Joe about equipment, training, personnel, and finances:

"Uh..., finances are low. We're a volunteer fire department; we don't have a lot of people donating.

(Also) we're a new department so we have a lot of tools and equipment that we need to buy... need to purchase so, when we get our money in we kind-'a spread it out over the months to cover our costs for each month but we're trying to buy tools too, and get everything stocked on the engine that we need".

Captain Whiteley trains his crews twice a week. Primarily, on Tuesdays; the crews are rotated on Thursdays on which everything is repeated but: "... everybody gets to train; that's part of quality control through the fire department, or through SFFMA certifications is that you have to train so many hours a year to keep your certifications up.

We sent 6 guys to A&M this year; we sent 6 guys last year; all 6 guys passed. They took firefighter phase 2, which is a little more than phase 1.

Phase 1 is just the basics, here's a hose, here's a nozzle, here's water (*subtle laugh*). In phase 2 you get how to ventilate, how your flashovers, uh... and all that take place, what to look for, uh... proper ventilation, proper entry, to make forceful entries; uh..., so it's a little more involved than phase 1. All the phase 1 training we did right here in house."

Training seems to be the imperative. While I observed, they trained... while we tried to have a conversation, they trained....even during this interview, they trained - that included their 'alarm rooster', I dubbed "Claxton"!

Despite the lack of funding, the roster boasts 3 basic firefighters, 7 intro-level 'rookies' with 3 'Probies' (1 Captain and 2 Junior recruits) for a total of 21; of which 90% meet or exceed SFFMA (State Fireman's and Fire Marshals' Association of Texas) certification.

And, despite a limited budget, 50 to 100 calls per month, crew inexperience and age of equipment, without hesitation, Pat and Captain Whiteley were resolute that the increase in new home construction has had no effect on their response times; which has been consistent at between 3 and 4 minutes.

SVFD has an area-of-responsibility (primary responder) of about 7.5 square miles for which they have responded to between 50 and 100 calls per month. Year-to-date, they have responded to 13 or 14 house fires (the majority, kitchen fires), including one in Woodlake with, a 90% success rate.

Captain Whiteley went on to explain the rapid-response time;

"I live here, next door to the station, ... we have Mr. Ed as a firefighter that lives here on the premises; uh..., most of our firefighters live right here close to the area. We have a few that are out in Heights and Killeen, they get our second new engine; they get resources that we don't have on the scene, brought to the scene, so they're still utilized, they're still being used."

While I was escorted around the station yard, the purpose of some of the equipment, most of which is old or second-hand, but still perfectly functional, was explained. More equipment will be added commensurate with their needs and, of course, finances.

About which I commented to Pat, "I often see some of the crew on the corners during 'fill-the-boot' days, doing car washes and selling BBQ along FM 439; what are the other things you've done to raise cash?"

Pat described some of their other fund-raising ventures like garage sales. "We have our (2<sup>nd</sup> annual) benefit at 'Horny Toad' that we're gonn'a be doing but, mainly it's just a hit-and-miss of whatever we want to do."

Pat went on to explain that besides new or up-graded equipment, the main purpose for having to keep cash-on-hand is to pay for gas. "Well, I have to furnish gas for the trucks. And, then there's maintenance, uh..., we need a new brush truck; that one there...guys get in it and it don't start, or they get out on a call and it quits... so, we need maintenance; as a matter-of-fact, Eddie just had to buy a... an \$85 alternator".

Captain Whiteley interjected, "We also need nozzle(s), and that thing runs \$800; I need two of them; one for each engine.

Also need two hose clamps. A hose clamp uh..., runs seven-hundred and some dollars apiece. We also need uh.. AD's (automatic defibrillators) they're well... some of them run 2 or 3 thousand; cheap ones run \$800 to \$1000. Uhm... there's several equipment... pieces of equipment like that that we still need on our engines".

It was my impression that, despite the austere facilities, shoe-string budget and shoddy-looking equipment, motivation and dedication to their cause couldn't be higher. And, each member, rookie or veteran, understands their duty and how much TLC is required to keep every life and/or property-saving piece of equipment, regardless how new or old, in tip-top operating condition at all times.

But, they can't do any of it on their own. I'm counting on you to donate generously to help defray their costs, and hope to see you on Tuesday evening of 1 October between 6 and 8 PM at the tennis courts.

My thanks to: Pat Beard, President, Sparta Volunteer Fire Department, Captain Joe Whiteley, Assistant Chief, SVFD, The Firefighters and probies-crew, SVFD for their indulgence, hospitality, and Their Service.

### 4. On The Horizon - Headline "Attendance at National Neighborhood Night Out Breaks All Time Record".

Or, at least, is what I hope it will read. But, to make that happen, **YOU HAVE TO BE THERE!**

A demonstration of a wireless Video Surveillance System and lighting, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and emergency First Aid will be featured. SVFD will have some of their equipment and a fire engine on display.

In exchange for your generous donations to help minimize their cost for training and equipment, the SVFD has graciously offered to prepare and serve the food. This year's menu will feature FAJITAS!

Mike and Angela Mahler of *Wild Horses* will be here again to entertain us; on-hand will be a Bell County Deputy Sheriff to answer your questions about crime and home security.

Looking forward to seeing you soon. *The WPOA NW Coordinator.*