

Volente Voice

A Joint Newsletter between the Volente Neighborhood Association (VNA) & the Volente Volunteer Fire Department (VVFD)

June 2009

[A MESSAGE FROM YOUR VNA PRESIDENT](#)

It's gotten too hot too fast this summer. We're midway into June and already we are seeing temps well into the 90's – and, far worse – very little RAIN. Add that to a recession/depression and it's enough to cause us to behave funnier than we normally do. I hope that no one calls my Mom and reports on me. Water has become a very big topic because we don't have very much. The Austin American Statesman just ran a cover story on the LCRA and lakes Travis and Buchanan. We didn't get our much needed and anticipated rain in May, or even this spring, and the levels of these two lakes continue to drop. At the same time the BCRUA just received funding approval for phase 1 of their project. There has been a turnover of board members and leadership, and elections in Leander could bring about even more change. Please read Judy Graci's report in this newsletter for a complete update. We are all, also, going to have to discuss and take a position on the current "discharge ban" on Lake Travis, preventing any kind of treated wastewater effluent from being discharged back into the lake, even though the original water was taken out of the lake. Watch for much more discussion on this issue.

Our roads also continue to raise concern. Lime Creek Road is seeing a lot of breakdown of the finished surface at the edges. Bullick Hollow has seen its vegetation trimmed back along most of it, and a resurfacing take place that some say is more dangerous and slippery that it was before the work started. Add to that the planned roadwork at the 620 end of Bullick Hollow in preparation for WTP#4, as well as the expansion of the intersection of 2769 at Highway 620, and we have a lot to keep track of. Ryan Janda from the VNA board is watching all of this. Read his articles in the newsletter and know that he, and we, will be watching and keeping all of you informed.

Don't forget to stop by regularly and peruse the new lighted information sign in front of the Volente Fire Station next to the Mailbox. There are three sections – one for the Village of Volente, one for the Volente Fire Department, and one for the VNA. We will all try to have pertinent and helpful information posted there. Many thanks to Lonnie Moore for taking the lead on making this happen and providing a very nice upgrade to the Village. Finally, I am sad to announce that Anthony Demicielli is leaving the VNA board after several years acting as our treasurer. We thank him for his service and we send prayers along with him for healing in his family. At the same time I am delighted to have Babs Yarborough and Bill Connors join our board. Later in this newsletter you will see the board listed and the areas of responsibility listed next to each member as well. We need your MEMBERSHIP in the VNA in order to do the community activities that benefit you all. We have approximately 40 paying members out of a population of near 400. We need your interest, and we need your annual payment of only \$15 per family to give us the wherewithal to do our work. Best to you all,

~ Ken Beck, President ~ Volente Neighborhood Association

[BCRUA WATER INTAKE FACILITY AND PIPELINE THROUGH VOLENTE UPDATE](#)

The Texas Water Development Board undercut its sister agency in authorizing the \$182M Phase 1A bond sales for the BCRUA because Leander's increased inter-basin transfer permit, Leander's water for the BCRUA project, is being contested at TCEQ. Phase 1 consists of increasing the floating intake on Sandy Creek, the raw water pipeline trenched through the Trails End neighborhood, the new treatment plant, and the treated water lines. At this meeting there was a repeat performance by BCRUA President Mitch Fuller committing to responding to Volente's oppositions regarding the construction and operation of the BCRUA industrial facilities within its municipal boundaries. But the engineering firm has not been authorized to proceed with any cost, impact or benefit studies regarding the Village. The PR Firm, Group Solutions, said it is working on a response to Volente. The BCRUA has spent \$500,000 on their public relations firms, and still cannot authorize an independent engineering peer review on this project. With the

virtually untapped Simsboro aquifer as their alternative source, why is the BCRUA constructing another project into drought-prone Lake Travis?

Cedar Park is also currently working on acquiring the easements to move their Lake Travis intake into deeper water. Will LCRA/Leander's follow, then the new BCRUA intake? Why are these cities spending \$500M to go to the bottom of Lake Travis? There are indications that the BCRUA is negotiating the purchase of their recommended intake Site 4, (Jackson Street Neighborhood). They are continuing with their plans, disregarding the Village Council that has repeatedly stated the BCRUA does not have the power of eminent domain in Volente without its consent. The Council stands on its position that it controls development that affects its citizens from a health and environmental standpoint. Will the BCRUA start Phase 1 of construction this summer in exceptional drought conditions without Leander's increased permit and in our economic downturn? If so, the BCRUA has the same regard for their ratepayers as they do for the residents of Volente.

The LCRA/SAWS project has been canceled. In a drought, when no water would be available from the proposed Pierce Ranch Reservoir, San Antonio would have still received their water--from Lakes Travis and Buchanan! This project was a major water management strategy for our basin. For more updates please go to: www.DrainingLakeTravis.org

~ Judy Graci, Membership ~ Volente Neighborhood Association

ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS

BULLICK HOLLOW RD - the City coordinated the project with Travis County to identify road improvements and construction traffic routing requirements. During construction, flaggers will be in place to assist drivers and to insure that early morning and late afternoon traffic flows as smoothly as possible on Bullick Hollow Road. Temporary water quality controls will be in place on the north side of the road in the right of way to ensure environmental protection from possible storm water runoff. The improvements will include left turn lanes and widening the existing road pavement in certain locations to accommodate construction traffic at the secondary entrance into the plant location, which is located just west of the intersection of FM 620 and Bullick Hollow Road, and at the raw water pump station. A climbing lane will also be constructed at the entrance of the raw water pump station to accommodate heavy truck traffic turning out of the pump station and onto Bullick Hollow Road. Relocation of existing utilities are included as part of these improvements.

ANDERSON MILL RD – the widening of Anderson Mill Road from FM 2769 to FM 620 has been funded and TX DOT is in the process of right of away acquisition.

~ Ryan Janda, Roadways and Safety ~ Volente Neighborhood Association

WATER CONSERVATION TIPS

As we all know from current lake levels, central Texas is currently experiencing severe drought conditions and reports of water wells going dry are starting to trickle in. It is very important that we all conserve water going forward.

SIMPLE WAYS TO SAVE AROUND THE HOUSE

Bathroom - bathroom use accounts for about 75% of the water used inside the home.

- Check regularly for any leaks in your toilet, faucets and water hose bibs and fix them. *Water saved: up to 200 gal per day.*
- Install a low-flow showerhead. *Water saved: about 2 gal per minute.*
- Replace older, larger-use toilets with the newer higher efficiency toilets. *Water saved: .5 to 5 gal per flush.*
- Take short showers and save the baths for special occasions. *Water saved: 2 to 5 gallons per minute.*

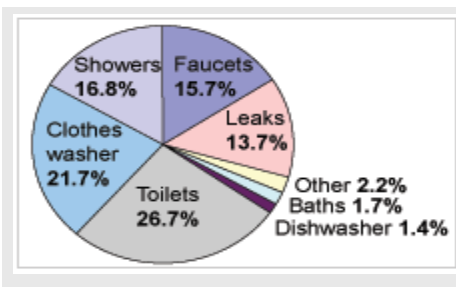
Kitchen - about 8 percent of in-home water use takes place in the kitchen.

- Don't rinse dishes before loading dishwasher. *Water saved: 20 gal per load.*
- Wash only full loads in the dishwasher.
- Install a low-flow faucet aerator, which can cut water use in half. *Water saved: 1 to 2 gal per minute.*
- When buying a new dishwasher, consider purchasing a water-saving model. *Water saved: 3 gal per load.*

Around the house

- Wash only full loads in the clothes washer. Washing small loads uses over twice as much water per pound of laundry.
- When buying a new clothes washer, consider purchasing a water-saving model. *Water saved: up to 40 gal per load.*

AVERAGE INDOOR WATER USE



- Insulate hot water pipes where possible to avoid long delays (and wasted water) while waiting for the water to "run hot." When building a new home, keep the distance short between the hot water heater and showers and other places that hot water is used.

6 EFFICIENT LANDSCAPE IRRIGATION TIPS

1. **Apply only enough water to moisten the root zone** of your plants (6 to 8 inches deep), then allow the soil to dry before watering again. This means: In clay soils, water no more than one inch per week. This is enough to moisten your plants' roots. In thin Hill Country soils, apply a maximum of ½ inch of water twice a week.
2. **Water when the sun is down.** No sun and less wind means that the water reaches the roots of your plants rather than evaporating before it hits the ground.
3. **Use low-angle sprinklers** that produce droplets of water. Sprinklers that spray water high into the air or produce a mist lose water through evaporation.
4. **Use multiple start times or a "cycle and soak" feature.** This allows water to be applied a little at a time, eliminating run-off, and is especially helpful for sloped areas and areas with clay soil.
5. **Aim before you shoot:** Direct sprinklers toward your lawn and away from sidewalks and driveways.
6. **Use drip irrigation** for shrub beds, gardens and trees. Drip irrigation systems apply water directly to the root, where it does the most good, and reduces water loss from evaporation. Make sure you slow the flow so the water has time to soak into our region's tight clay and caliche soils —instead of running off.

SUMMER PET TIPS

1. NEVER LEAVE YOU PET IN THE CAR

In nice weather you may be tempted to take your pet with you in the car while you travel or do errands. But during warm weather, the inside of your car can reach 120 degrees in a matter of minutes, even if you're parked in the shade. This can mean real trouble for your companion animals left in the car. Dogs and cats can't perspire and can only dispel heat by panting and through the pads of their feet. Pets who are left in hot cars even briefly can suffer from heat exhaustion, heat stroke, brain damage, and can even die. Don't think that just because you'll be gone "just a minute" that your pet will be safe while you're gone; even an air-conditioned car with the motor off isn't healthy for your pet.

2. DON'T PUT YOUR PET IN THE BACK OF A TRUCK

It is very dangerous, and in some states illegal, to **drive with a dog in the back of a pick-up truck**. Not only can flying debris cause serious injury, but a dog may be unintentionally thrown into traffic if the driver suddenly hits the brakes, swerves, or is hit by another car. I know this behavior tends to be very prevalent in Texas however just because you grew up doing it that way doesn't make it ok.

3. AVOID USING FERTILIZERS AND PLANTING DEADLY PLANTS

Summer is often a time when people fertilize their lawns and work in their gardens. But beware: Plant food, fertilizer, and insecticides can be fatal if your pet ingests them however there are non-toxic alternatives out there. In addition, **more than 700 plants** can produce physiologically active or toxic substances in sufficient amounts to cause harmful effects in animals.

4. PET CARE 101

Make sure your pet is always wearing a collar and identification tag. If you are separated from your pet, an ID tag may very well be his or her ticket home. With people and dogs spending more time outside, **dog bites** are likely to increase in the summer months. **Spaying or neutering** your dog reduces the likelihood that he will bite and provides many other health benefits.

CURBSIDE RECYCLING IS AVAILABLE IN OUR AREA



Still using IESI for your trash service? Switch to TDS (Texas Disposal Systems) which offers both curbside trash and recycling services. Please call TDS at (512) 421-1360 to switch services now. **Recycling** involves processing used materials

into new products to prevent waste of potentially useful materials, reduce the consumption of fresh raw materials, reduce energy usage, reduce air pollution (from incineration) and water pollution (from landfilling) by reducing the need for "conventional" waste disposal, and lower greenhouse gas emissions as compared to virgin production. Let's set a positive example for our kids and grandkids when it comes to reducing wasteful consumption habits and conservation.

SAFE HAVEN

Four years ago the **VNA** adopted **Safe Haven**, a local 24 hour a day low demand shelter for persons who are homeless and are living with symptoms of a mental illness. The goal of Safe Haven is to ensure a safe and accepting living environment, while providing qualified staff to establish a trusting relationship, and to guide each resident to review the choices in their lives. Safe Haven offers sixteen beds and eight semi-private rooms, three meals a day, and laundry facilities to all of their residents. It also provides a place for residents to heal and prepare for re-entry into

society. **Safe Haven is currently in need of a new 4 slice toaster – if you have a new 4 slice toaster you would like to donate please contact Al Blunt at 336-1260, otherwise we are currently accepting donations towards a new one.**

!!! WELCOME NEW VNA MEMBERS !!!

The VNA Board would like extend a special welcome to the following new VNA members: Mack Brewer & Janice Hazeldine, Joe & Lydia Lamoreux, Hung & Khank Hua, DaLee & Eddy Trevino, Linda Carter w/ Highland Lakes Marina.

VNA BOARD CONTACT INFORMATION

The contact information for the 2009 VNA Board officers and members along with their respective areas of responsibility can be found below:

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| * Ken Beck, President | Ph. 331-0298 |
| * Al Blunt, Vice President | Ph. 336-1260 |
| * Connie Curtiss, Secretary | Ph. 258-7646 |
| * Bill Connors, Treasurer | Ph. 422-8344 |
| * Judy Graci, Membership | Ph. 257-8626 |
| * Jessica Janda, Newsletter | Ph. 577-1148 |
| * Al Graci / John Scholtzhauer, Lake Travis | Ph. 257-8626 |
| * Babs Yarborough, Community Relations | Ph. 656-6667 |
| * John Scholtzhauer, Business Development & Public Relations: | Ph. 258-8136 |
| * Ryan Janda, Roadways & Safety | Ph. 789-0260 |

Feel free to contact any of the VNA Board Members with your thoughts and suggestions as many people in the community have already done. **Questions, comments or concerns can also be directed to the VNA board e-mail inbox at: vnafedback@gmail.com.** This email address is a convenient way of letting us know your thoughts. If you would prefer, write your comments on the feedback form provided at the end of this newsletter and mail or drop it off to the Fire Department. The Board invites you to attend our monthly meetings, held on the first Tuesday of each month, 7:00 p.m. at the Fire Hall. **Our meetings are open to the public.** Feel free to come share your thoughts and **TELL US** what we can do to help. Our role is to serve our community and all of you who live here.

~ Jessica Janda, Newsletter ~ Volente Neighborhood Association

VOLENTE FIRE DEPARTMENT UPDATE

EMERGENCIES: CALL 911

NON-EMERGENCY: 258-1114

15406 FM 2769, Volente, 78641

Board Meetings: Second Monday at 7:00 P.M.

CONTROLLED BURNS: 258-1114

Web site: vafd.net

Fire Chief: Walter Groman

2009 Board of Directors

Scott Spurlin, President
Gary Potts, Vice President
Jennifer Zufelt, Secretary
Jean Shull, Treasurer

Members-at-Large

Ann Anderson
David Gordon
Mike Vandenack
John Torres

PROPOSED IMPROVMENTS TO THE VVFD CURRENTLY UNDER EVALUATION

The Volente fire station is now manned by full time firefighters. This has been a tremendous improvement to our response time, community safety, and lowering our homeowner insurance rates. With these improvements come changes required by the fire station. To address these changes, The ESD #14 and VVFD members organized a 5-year Planning Committee. The Committee is made up of Roger Shull, Lonnie Moore, Walter Groman, Suellen Jordan, Mike Vandenack, and Gary Potts. Two critical needs have been identified by the Committee that impact the safety of our firefighters and the operation of the station. The first of these needs is to isolate the dorms for the firefighters from the exhaust from the trucks. The second need is to provide secure shelter for all the fire trucks. To address these needs the Committee has been evaluating plans to construct a "truck bay" building on the adjacent 5 acre tract that would house the fire station vehicles. The existing building would remain the dorm for the firefighters with some room for expansion and remain our community event center. The "truck bay" building would be approximately 5000 s.f. and cost estimates of \$50,000. The committee members believe the cost could be absorbed into the current budget with long term financing and the retirement of debt for Eng. 1401.

The committee is also working on an application for grant moneys recently made available through the Stimulus Act. Roger Shull is presently preparing the application, and feels we have a fair chance of getting it. Having reviewed the document, Roger has done an exceptional job in fitting our station and its needs into complying with the requirements and conditions for the grant. One of the conditions for the grant is the project must be "shovel ready". To this end, the

committee and ESD board have been working with a local civil engineer to develop a sit plan with cost estimates for several scenarios. The scope of the project will depend on the amount of grant money. If a full grant was approved, a new 10,000 s.f. fire station costing \$1.75 million would be built on the adjacent tract. These funds would not be repaid and the existing fire station would be available for community improvements. We probably won't know about the grant until late summer or fall. Until then we will continue our readiness for all options to improve our fire station.

~ Gary Potts, Vice President ~ Volente Volunteer Fire Department Board

HEAT RELATED EMERGENIES

It appears that summer is finally upon us. That means 90-100 degree temperatures with high humidity. The **Heat Index** (HI) is the temperature the body feels when heat and humidity are combined. Here are a few examples: On average, about 175 Americans succumb to the taxing demands of environmental heat exposure every year. Our bodies dissipate heat by varying the rate and depth of blood circulation and by losing water through the skin via sweat glands. Sweating cools the body through evaporation but high relative humidity retards evaporation, robbing the body of its ability to cool itself.

F	90%	80%	70%	60%	50%	40%
80	85	84	82	81	80	79
85	101	96	92	90	86	84
90	121	113	105	99	94	90
95		133	122	113	105	98
100			142	129	118	109

When heat gain exceeds the level the body can remove, body temperature begins to rise and heat related illnesses may develop. The two issues you need to be aware of are Heat Exhaustion and Heat Stroke. Heat exhaustion is brought on by over exertion in a hot environment without adequate hydration. Basically, that's working or playing for a long period of time, without drinking enough fluids, outside in the Texas summer heat. The body loses fluids via sweating, which then reduces the body's ability to cool itself and also reduces blood flow to skeletal muscles. This can cause the person to become extremely weak, dizzy, nauseous, severe headaches and their skin may be pink or gray and cool to the touch. What do you do to correct this? First, move the person to a cooler environment. This can be an air conditioned building or even just to a shady location with a fan blowing on them. Also, give modest amounts of fluids such as water or an electrolyte drink (sports drinks like Gatorade). This will replace the lost body fluids and help the body cool to a normal level. If the patient doesn't cool down, Heat Exhaustion can progress into Heat Stroke. Heat Stroke is the complete failure of the body's heat regulatory system due to heat stress. This means that your body has been overheated for so long that it cannot cool itself anymore. When this happens, the body temperature rapidly rises to life threatening levels. Signs of this are an altered mental state, hot and dry skin (in some instances, it may be moist), a body temperature of over 104° and possibly even seizures. This situation is a true emergency. **The first thing you do is dial 9-1-1.** Next, move the patient to a cooler environment and use aggressive cooling measures. This includes wet towels and ice packs to the neck, armpits and groin area to assist the body with cooling. This will help the patient until we can get there to provide care and EMS can transport them to the hospital.

We all love Austin because of the wide variety of outdoor activities it offers. When you are enjoying the outdoors during the hot summer months, be sure and take care of yourself. Use sunscreen, keep cool and drink lots of fluids so you don't end up calling us and taking a ride with our good friends, the Austin / Travis County Paramedics!

~ Walter Groman, Fire Chief ~ Volente Volunteer Fire Department

NEWS FROM THE VVFD AUXILIARY

Thanks to everyone who joined us at the VVFD annual **fish fry** on April 25th. This year's fish fry was a huge success due to the volunteers who cooked fish, served food, cleaned facilities, ran errands, baked sweets, donated raffle prizes, played music, and ate fish. Cookers hustled to keep fish filets and french fries in pace with cole slaw, beans, and brownies; while beverage servers kept the crowd cooled off with sodas, water and beer. A total of 313 meals were served and \$3,200 was raised. If you enjoyed yourself as much as we did, mark your calendar for April 24, 2010 and come eat fish!

As always, your generous contributions go to support our community fire department. In fact, you'll notice "**Ole Red**" is going through a face lift with a new paint job. "Ole Red" is the first fire truck purchased by the department in 1961. It had been a State of Texas dump truck and volunteers removed the bed so they could install a tank on it. It stalled during a fire response on Bullick Hollow in 1974 and was retired from active duty. Since then it has been parked in front of the fire hall as a tribute to the volunteers with the foresight to protect our homes and community.

Thanks again for supporting the annual fish fry event and the VVFD.

~ Jacque Potts ~ President ~ Volente Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary
VNA MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Interested in joining the **Volente Neighborhood Association**? Benefits include an annual dinner, a quarterly newsletter, monthly board meetings, and a great opportunity to be involved in community issues that affect us all. The annual membership fee is \$15 per household / \$30 per business. Please fill out the form below and mail it along with your check (payable to the Volente Neighborhood Association) to the following address:

Volente Neighborhood Association (Attention: Membership)
15406 FM 2769
Volente, Texas 78641

Want to know more about what's happening in the Volente area? To receive updates on local news and events via email subscribe to the VNA / Volente Fire Department distribution email list at www.volente.org and follow the directions there.



2009 Volente Neighborhood Association (VNA) Membership Form

Yearly Dues: **Name** _____

\$15 / Household **Address** _____
\$30 / Business

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Phone _____ **Alt Phone** _____

Mail To: **Email** _____

VNA - Membership
15406 FM 2769
Volente, TX 78641

Comments & Suggestions:



Volente Neighborhood Association
Bill Connors, Treasurer
15406 FM 2769
Volente, Texas 78641

Non-Profit Org
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LEANDER, TX
ZIP CODE 78641
PERMIT NO. 32

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Route 3
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