

# THE WOODCREEK UPDATE

## A Monthly Newsletter of Woodcreek, Texas



### Note from the Mayor

Woodcreek Neighbors:

As we enter this festive holiday season, I'm honored to introduce myself as Woodcreek's newly elected mayor. My name is Debra Hines, and I am grateful for the trust you've placed in me to help guide our community forward. This time of year invites reflection, connection, and a renewed sense of purpose. I intend to carry these values with me as we continue strengthening Woodcreek's future. You can read more about my background and vision in this newsletter.

You can also learn more about our first-ever Holiday Jingle & Mingle celebration, taking place on Saturday, December 13, from 3 to 6pm at the Triangle. It will be a festive time for all ages, with a visit from Santa, caroling, cookies, cocoa, and a fun "Letters to Santa Station." Don't miss it!

Here's a brief rundown of what's happening in Woodcreek:

- Two positions on the City Council were also filled in the November 4th election. Krista Richardson was re-elected to her seat, and Linda Swedberg was newly elected. Please join me in welcoming them aboard—we'll feature their profiles in upcoming newsletters.
- Following a November 17 public hearing, the City Council voted 5-0 to deny a request by Aqua Texas for a System Improvement Charge, which would raise water and wastewater rates for residents. While the City works with Aqua Texas and the Public Utility Commission to resolve these issues, customers will likely see an interim increase in their water bills this month. If the rate case ultimately determines that these new rates were overages, Aqua will issue credits to rate payers.
- Our November Tree Giveaway and Water-Wise seminar were informative and well attended. If you signed up for a free tree but haven't yet picked one up, stop by City Hall to collect it.
- A city subcommittee is reviewing pricing, location, and logistics for purchasing an emergency siren within Woodcreek as part of our review of the emergency operations plan. No decisions have been made.
- Chair yoga is moving to City Hall for the winter months. This gentle yoga improves flexibility, balance, and circulation while reducing stress. It's taught by Carla Daws, a 27-year resident of Wimberley and longtime yoga instructor. The free, hour-long class is hosted every Monday at 9am. [Sign up here.](#)

- The Trees and Parks Board is making recommendations for the aesthetics of the Triangle Park rainwater tank. They will consult with Water-Wise experts for native plantings to partially conceal the tank.
- A reminder that we're still looking for volunteers to serve on the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Trees and Parks Board, and the Community Relations Committee, as well as on small projects. Please consider helping out! [Sign up here](#) or stop by City Hall if you have any questions.
- Finally, mark your calendars for Friday, March 6th. We'll host our first "music in the park" event. Details are still being finalized, but it should be a great way to get out and celebrate spring.

In the meantime, thank you for being such an engaged part of the Woodcreek community this year. We wish you a safe, joyful holiday season filled with warmth, laughter, and time well spent with family and friends.

Debra Hines  
Mayor

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## **Welcoming Debra Hines, Woodcreek Mayor**



*Debra Hines was elected Mayor of Woodcreek on November 4, succeeding Jeff Rasco. We caught up with Mayor Hines to learn more about her background and priorities for Woodcreek.*

**Q: Tell us a bit about yourself - how long have you lived in Woodcreek, and what do you like most about it?**

The first house I ever lived in after my birth forty years ago was in the neighborhood of Brookmeadow in Woodcreek. I spent my first 17 years living in and around the City of Woodcreek. I moved back in 2020 to raise my children. I love Woodcreek's character. The charming houses, the wildlife, the trees, the people; it is a wonderful place to live.

**Q: When and how did you get involved in Woodcreek city government?**

I joined the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Body in the Fall of 2020. I ran for the City Council in 2021 and have served on the governing body since then.

**Q: Why did you decide to run for Mayor?**

Mayor Rasco was ready to step down and retire from the role. I had spent the last four years preparing and learning as much as possible, hoping to carry on after Jeff with the goals and progress we have been working towards.

**Q: What are your top priorities as Mayor?**

- Create a comprehensive and city-wide stormwater (drainage) management plan and execute the first stage
- Update the Comprehensive Plan

- Retain and build the city reserves
- Preserve natural spaces
- Maintain reasonable tax rates

**Q: What are some of Woodcreek's biggest strengths, and how do you hope to build on them?**

A close-knit, involved, and passionate community is our greatest strength. Woodcreek looks out for Woodcreek. While we have experienced a great divide recently, through this I have learned that Woodcreek has some deeply caring and strong-voiced residents advocating for this community. We are very fortunate on this front.

I hope to continue to empower everyone through volunteer opportunities on our advisory bodies and ad hoc workgroups. We will continue to hold community events to bring everyone together and maintain this strong sense of neighborly camaraderie. We are better and stronger when we work together.

**Q: What message do you most want to send to residents as you begin your term?**

I am listening, and we want to see you all get more involved. Get out and enjoy our park upgrades, share a neighborly wave on a walk, stop by City Hall to say hi and give thanks to our hardworking staff, volunteer to help on a park cleanup day, show up to a meeting, give a public comment, or join an advisory body! I look forward to getting to know you all and working alongside you to preserve and protect our Woodcreek Way ~

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## Our Inaugural Jingle & Mingle: Help Start a Holiday Tradition!



Mark your calendars for Saturday, December 13th, from 3 to 6pm as Woodcreek kicks off a brand-new holiday tradition: the Holiday Jingle & Mingle! It's a cheerful, family-friendly celebration open to all ages at Triangle Park. Neighbors are invited to gather for an afternoon filled with festive fun, cozy treats, and plenty of Christmas spirit.

This free community event will feature hot cocoa, cookie decorating, classic Christmas carols, a holiday bounce house, and photos with Santa, captured by local photographer Charles Quinn from 3 to 5pm. It's the perfect chance to enjoy the season with friends, family, and fellow Woodcreek neighbors.

One of the most magical highlights to this year's celebration is Woodcreek's Santa's Mailbox, where kids (and adults!) can write down their Christmas wishes and drop them into our special North Pole Post Mailbox. Every letter will receive a personalized reply from Santa before Christmas!

Can't make the Jingle & Mingle event? The Santa's Mailbox will move to City Hall at 41 Champions Circle, ensuring every Woodcreek resident has a chance to participate in the fun. The deadline to receive a response is December 19th at 4pm -- after all, Santa is busy this time of year!

Whether you're sipping warm cider, decorating cookies, enjoying festive music, snapping a Santa photo, or watching little ones bounce with joy, the Jingle & Mingle is designed as a warm, welcoming holiday moment for neighbors of all ages. It's a chance to pause, connect, and celebrate the season together right here in Woodcreek.

Are you interested in being one of Santa's helpers? The Community Relations Committee is looking for volunteers to welcome revelers, assist at the Letters to Santa Station and the Santa photo line, and help spread holiday cheer. Just [email City Hall](#) or call 512-847-9390.

See you there!

## Why Hiring a Certified Arborist

### Protects Our Neighborhood

### (And Your Wallet)



Our trees in Woodcreek are under significant duress right now. Years of drought have weakened their natural defenses, reduced their ability to compartmentalize wounds, and made them far more susceptible to disease. At the same time, oak wilt continues to spread throughout Central Texas, and stressed trees are the first to succumb.

This combination means we are in one of the most dangerous periods our oak canopy has ever faced. When a tree is stressed, even small mistakes can have significant consequences.

A single improper cut can attract Nidulid (aka) Sap beetles carrying oak wilt spores. A pruning wound that would normally seal quickly may now remain open much longer, increasing infection risk. Drought-weakened immunity slows tree recovery, making timing and technique even more critical. Over-pruning or incorrect cuts can push a stressed tree into irreversible decline.

This is why DIY pruning or hiring a cheap, untrained tree cutter is especially risky right now. Even a well-meaning resident who knows “a little about pruning” may unintentionally prune during prohibited or high-risk oak wilt periods, fail to clean tools thoroughly enough, leave exposed cuts unsealed, remove too much canopy when the tree can’t spare the loss, or misdiagnose stress symptoms as normal or harmless. If a non-professional damages property or injures themselves, the homeowner can be financially responsible, and your property insurance may or may not cover it.

### Why a Certified Arborist Matters

Certified Arborists are tree health experts, trained in tree biology, oak wilt prevention, proper pruning standards and timing, and risk assessment. Their work protects the tree's long-term health and reduces the risk of disease spread or structural failure. This means they don't just trim; they actually improve the tree's life and longevity, reducing future hazards and costs.

### City of Woodcreek Oak Wilt Abatement And Tree Replacement Program

In response to our challenges with oak wilt, the City of Woodcreek offers an abatement and tree replacement assistance program to help residents offset the costs of oak wilt diagnosis, treatment, and prevention. This program supports responsible tree care and makes it easier for homeowners to hire qualified professionals.

You can apply for assistance if you are in the process of:

- Working with a certified arborist
- Have identified oak wilt
- Treated an infected tree
- Performed preventive trenching or injections
- Removed a diseased tree

The City wants to help maintain our canopy—please take advantage of this resource by applying here. Details of the assistance and reimbursement program are included in the application.

Preventing oak wilt and protecting our tree canopy is in everyone's best interests. Using a certified arborist protects the health of our trees, the safety and value of our homes, and the beauty of our community.

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# Paws & Applause: Introducing Woodcreek's Pet of the Month!



To celebrate the furry, feathered, and occasionally scaly friends that brighten our days, we're launching a brand-new Pet of the Month program! Each month, one special Woodcreek animal will take center stage in the city newsletter and on our website, giving our community a chance to meet the companions who make life here a little sweeter.

Here's how it works: any pet who calls Woodcreek home is welcome to participate—as long as your pet is allowed in Woodcreek. Residents can nominate their pet by sending a great photo, their name and age, and a short bio that shares what makes them lovable and unique. Whether your pet performs impressive tricks, has a heart-melting rescue story, or simply excels at napping in sunny spots, we want to hear about it!

A small committee will select each month's winner based on personality, charm, and photo appeal, and pets can win once per year, so everyone gets a fair shot. By submitting your pet's story and photo, you confirm that we have permission to share it in Woodcreek communications.

Winners will enjoy local fame and a feature in the monthly newsletter. So get those cameras ready, fluff those tails, and prepare your pets for their moment in the spotlight. Think your pet has what it takes?

[Nominate them here.](#)

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