



CRANERIDGE NEWSLETTER

MAY 2022

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HELP US to "HATCH" NEW IDEAS

You live in an HOA. You have a great idea. You're not on the board, and elections are months away. What next?

Present it.

Presenting a good idea, whether to a board or to a boss or to anyone else in the position to approve it, isn't about them. Or you. It's about the idea.

A good idea needs a spokesperson. And if you've come up with the idea, that spokesperson is you. If you can imagine the concept and how it will benefit our community, paint that picture in your presentation. Or, if you can count the ways it will profit your community, tally it up and explain how the numbers will help.

And before you present your idea at the next board meeting (in the agenda as "Other" or "Discussion" or "Comments,"), contact the board Executive Secretary and ask if your idea can be featured as a "New Item" during the meeting.

Give your idea wings and a voice, and it can fly!

A Great Tit bird is perched on a bare, light-colored branch. The bird has a black head and back, a white cheek patch, and a bright yellow belly. It is facing right. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

President's **MESSAGE**

Dear Neighbors,

As we emerge from social distancing, we enjoy the fantastic natural surroundings of Craneridge. We have witnessed the steady growth of committees and volunteer opportunities. The most important thing that I want you all to be aware of is the work that our Board of Directors is doing. Being on and off the Board over my lifetime here in Craneridge, I must say that this is the strongest and most focused board that I have ever been part of. Please join me in congratulating these volunteers and all committee volunteers for the selfless work that they are doing for our community. I look forward to you joining us at the annual meeting. There will be so much to talk about that are improvements to our community. Join us!

**JEFF RANDALL
PRESIDENT,
CRANERIDGE HOA BOARD**

Meet your BOD Nominees!

There are (5) Craneridge HOA Board Positions opening, to be elected during the Annual Meeting -- Here are your Nominees:

Gwen Alegre – *“My husband Mitch and I made our home in Craneridge in 2004. After retiring two years ago, I discovered the ideal way to give back. As Chair of the Woodlands Committee and with strong support from neighbors and the BOD, we have expanded the scope of the Woodlands (& Habitat) Committee to focus on improving and maintaining all parts of our natural neighborhood. When a spot opened on the Board early this year, I stepped in. I hope to continue to offer my broad business and non-profit expertise as well as my ability to bring people together to support the Craneridge mission.”*

Chuck Dickhut – *“My wife Marilyn & I moved to Craneridge in 1970. We immediately fell in love with the nature all around us & the friendly neighbors we met. I served as a member of the Board of Directors and was President in 1973. Since then I have served on the Board and was elected President of the Association various times, I have also served as a member or chair of the various committees. During the next few years there are great opportunities to enhance our neighborhood and also challenges. I hope my experience on the Board will contribute to those opportunities & help solve the challenges. I look forward to contributing to the continuation of the natural environment and friendly neighbors that we found here 50 years ago.”*

David Reese – 92 Meadow Trail – unavailable for comment

Jeff Randall– *“We purchased our house in 1997 as a seasonal home. In 2008, we made this our full-time residence. We enjoy Craneridge! I have been on and off the board a couple of times with a variety of duties including treasurer and currently president. All told, I have spent about 11 years in the service to this fine community. This election should be my last for a while. There is probably the greatest interest in being involved as we have seen in a long time. Hopefully, I will help to encourage progress and viability to our neighborhood. There is so much to accomplish and many people with the willingness to be involved, it is great to see and participate with.”*

Kathryn Orrange- *“I moved to Craneridge in 2008 with my husband and son, drawn by the beauty of the area and the idea of living in the woods, but with neighbors. Over the years, I have been involved with many Craneridge committees, helped out on workdays and enjoyed time with neighbors during book club meetings, gourmet club dinners, end of the school year parties and many others. I believe in the mission of keeping Craneridge a woodlands based community where neighbors treat each other with kindness and respect. I am seeking election to the Board of Directors to give back to the community I call home and to work to preserve the nature of our community.”*

Shannon Wichlacz – *“I moved to Craneridge in 2017. Soon after I founded the Communications Committee and have been updating our social media and publishing the newsletter since 2018. I have served on the board for the last 3 years, and I hope to continue my position to further the Strategic Development initiative that the BOD took up earlier this year. My vision for Craneridge would be for Healthy Woodlands, Healthy Budget, Happy Neighbors and Maintained/Improved Shared Amenities.”*

Craneridge Community Center Update

Last summer at the annual meeting, we announced that we are researching the feasibility of building a 4-season structure to replace our pool house. As the pool house is aging, and in need of some major repairs, this is a good opportunity to take a step back and decide if it's worth doing repairs or consider replacement. A 4-season structure certainly would have several benefits and would address several wants and needs of our community.

A year-round community center could provide:

- A banquet area members could use for events throughout the year
- Improved storage space
- Year-round meeting space
- Year-round recreation/community area that serves more than pool users
- A centralized location for neighborhood business and records. (Community records are currently scattered throughout basements and attics across our neighborhood)

Of course, any discussion like this brings up the question of cost. Those conversations will come. Though we need to remember the cost would be split across 180 lots, we are also mindful of the current rising costs of everything right now. As such, we are not rushing any plans. We want to take our time, do this right, and if we do move forward, it will be when it is economically feasible. When appropriate, we will share more info and ultimately hold a vote of the community before we move forward with anything.

The committee has received a fair amount of feedback and continues to look for more. If you have anything you would like this committee to consider, either in support of or against the project, please email Cory Bowen (bowen.cory@gmail.com).



Please Don't Feed the Raccoons!

The association understands you have a soft heart and good intentions, but feeding backyard wildlife, like raccoons, can lead to problems. **Feeding raccoons is a bad idea as it will habituate them to certain areas and make them dependent on a food source. Feeding wild animals puts them close to human proximity, which puts strain and pressure on the animal, raising the risk of accidents and possible aggression from the animal. Also, a reliable source of food and shelter over their head is a raccoon's dream home. By feeding a wild raccoon, you are unintentionally inviting them into your home or outbuilding.**

They may seem hungry, and it can be especially heartbreaking to see a raccoon trundling around in the snow, digging for frozen acorns. *But the truth is, wild animals are designed to survive in harsh conditions. When food is scarce, animals will change their diets to include bark, pinecones, buried acorns, old fruit, and in a raccoon's case, even garbage to survive.*

Committee Launches “Woodlands Help” Pilots

Craneridge & Habitat Committee
Mission: We inspire and educate residents to improve and maintain a healthy and diverse woodlands habitat.

Woodlands & Habitat

Gwen Alegre
Woodlands Chair



For the second year of the Committee’s expanded efforts, we’ll start to implement parts of our multi-year plan. Guided by recommendations from the DEC (Department of Environmental Conservation) and PRISM (Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management), we’ve mapped out two pilots in Craneridge common areas to test out new processes and will begin to apply what we’ve learned. The first pilot will be at the east end of the Meadow and the second, across from the Mail Center. In May, the Woodlands Committee will start with a site inventory led by our DEC forester, Nate Morey. We’ll record what we see in these areas such as: Soil and light conditions; Trees in the area currently and tree density; Under-tree plants (understory); Evidence of heavy deer browsing; Non-native aggressive plant “invaders”; Potential areas for resident recreation; and Where we can make improvements.

Following the May inventory, we will: 1) Create a work plan, 2) Get feedback from the Craneridge Board and neighbors, 3) Implement the plan, with the help of many volunteers and stewards.

How can I learn more? For more details, key dates, and updates, visit the Woodlands & Habitat webpage at:
craneridge.org/craneridge-woodlands-and-habitat/

Woodlands on Facebook! Stay current with frequent updates as well as access to learning resources and tips by joining our private Craneridge Woodlands Facebook group, use the QR code to the right or Go to:
www.facebook.com/groups/craneridgewoodlands

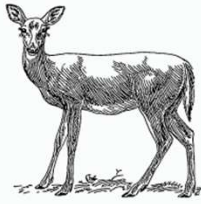
I have questions! I want to help!

Contact Sam Lewandowski at
slewandowski92@gmail.com or Gwen Alegre at gwenalegre@gmail.com



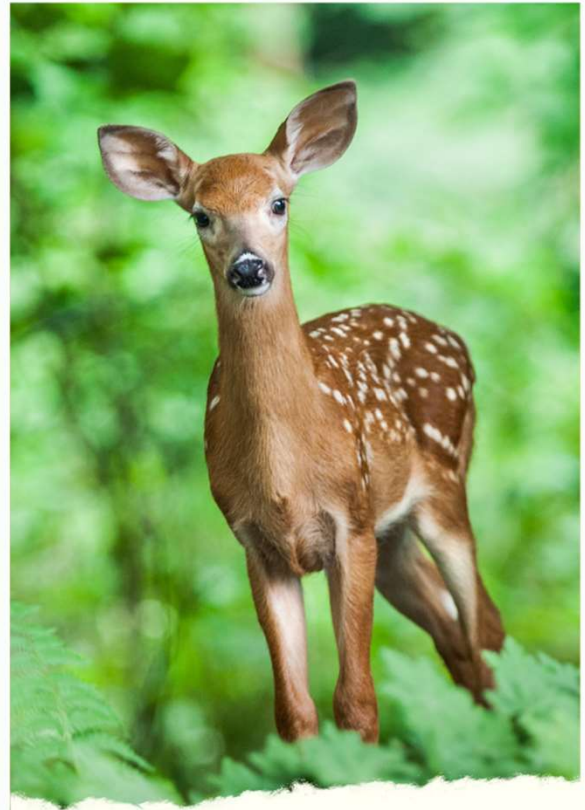
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WHAT ABOUT ALL THE DEER?



Gwen Alegre
Chair, Woodlands & Habitat Committee

We all love our wildlife in Craneridge, and we know we have a lot of deer, but what is too many? At what point do they prevent new tree and plant regeneration and damage our unique neighborhood? Experts* consistently say that a healthy deer population that is in balance with its environment is between 10 and 25 deer per square mile. Folks, that's 640 acres. To understand how big this is, it's equivalent to all Craneridge (160 acres) plus half of Sprague Brook Park (~500 acres). As many of us experience, we can see a dozen deer in our yards on any given day! An overabundance of deer is not just nature "doing its thing." In the northeastern US, it is human caused.



deer vs. plants and trees

Yes, we have a deer problem. Our forests and trees cannot regenerate and grow when the deer are eating ALL the young seedlings. Shade is not our biggest challenge for new trees and plants. It's the deer. So, what can you do? For one, please STOP feeding the deer! You are encouraging unhealthy behavior and bringing them to our backyards. Feeding deer is also unhealthy for you, your kids, and your neighbors. Remember that deer carry ticks and Lyme disease, which continues to be on the rise. You can also select deer resistant plants (lists are available; ask the Woodlands Committee). And, for newly planted trees and shrubs, protect them with wire cages or other protective barriers. Deer deterrent sprays DO work, however you need to spray often (once/week, after a heavy rain). Recommended brands are: Liquid Fence (the concentrate is a good bang for the buck), Deer Scram, Plant Skyyd, and Repels All.

**US Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Cornell University, Penn State University*

Woodlands Committee Refreshes Tree Removal Process

Along with an updated Tree Removal Request form, the Woodlands & Habitat Committee can provide guidance on tree replanting and remediation if trees need to be removed on a homeowner's property.

BEFORE CUTTING! All trees, whether dead or alive, greater than 5" in diameter must request tree removal. **WHY?** Craneridge is an extraordinarily unique community founded to maintain and sustain our beautiful, wooded habitat, which includes common and private land. Whenever we can, our goal is to cut one + plant one.

As reminder, if a tree is on common property, the Craneridge Association will cover the cost of removal. To access the Tree Removal Request form and a Homeowner Tree Planting Guide go to:

<https://Craneridge.org/craneridge-woodlands-and-habitat/>

Questions? Contact Sam Lewandowski -- Woodlands & Habitat Committee

BOD Strategic Development Process

What Is Strategic Planning? Simply stated, strategic planning is a process whereby you figure out where you're going and how you're going to get there. Strategic planning isn't long-range planning. Long-range planning is about maintaining stability. Strategic planning is about changing to meet future opportunities. Long-range planning ensures that you do things right. Strategic planning ensures that you do the right thing.

Our neighbor Mitch Alegre, who is a consultant and educator in organizational effectiveness, volunteered his time to assist the BOD with Strategic Development earlier this year. The Strategic Sessions were 20-minute segments inserted into the monthly board meetings in January, February, March & April. During the first session Mitch went over the Seven Elements of an Effective Team – Relationships, Mission, Vision, Values, Goals, Roles & Procedures. There is not much that could be accomplished in twenty minutes once a month, so the BOD members were also given “assignments” between meetings. An effective team is built upon a strong foundation. This means improving team performance by identifying and employing the existing strengths within a team and the BOD's first assignment focused primarily on the foundational element of relationships. At the end of the 4-Sessions, Mitch identified three areas the BOD should concentrate on: 1) Clarify mission, vision, and strategy, 2) Board relations, communication, operations, & 3) Relations and communication with the Craneridge community. Mitch also observed that the strength of this board is our shared commitment to the values upon which this community was founded. Values are the foundational principles that are to inform the work of the board. Mitch found that there were two values were shared by nearly all on the BOD and are the shared values for which the BOD cares deeply:

Sustainability & Community

Next Steps for the BOD Process? The BOD plans to pick-up the process again in September with:

- Setting goals that identify what we need to accomplish in order to achieve Craneridge's Mission;
- Deciding how we will meet our goals;
- Developing an action plan; and
- Monitoring and updating our plan.

***Special Thanks to Mitch Alegre** for volunteering his time & expertise for the Community!*

VOLUNTEERING

MATTERS

Craneridge is a small community that is entirely run by volunteers. As such, we'd like to thank the community members who serve on all our Committees!

The importance of volunteerism can't be overstated. It builds social bonds, reduces isolation, provides the satisfaction of accomplishment, decreases feelings of powerlessness, gives residents a sense of control, and makes community associations vibrant and thriving places to live. **This is the foundation for building community.** Craneridge would not exist without volunteers; they're the lifeblood of our community.

Successful communities—those where residents are united by common goals and interests—are created by a broad base of active volunteers. This broad volunteer base brings essential diversity to the association—viewpoints, opinions, ideas, talents, and contributions. **The greater the number of people who participate in the community, the better the decision making, the smaller the workload for each, and the less likely people are to burn out.**

*“Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot,
nothing is going to get better. It's not.” – Dr. Seuss*

The following Committees provide the backbone of Craneridge

- Architectural
- Maintenance
- Social
- Pool
- Woodlands
- Finance
- Bylaws
- Lighting
- Communications
- Welcoming
- Recreation Complex

Thank you!

**& all our Dog Poop
Station Clean-up
Volunteers!**

To Volunteer e-mail: ExecSec.craneridge@gmail.com

Pool Committee News

Welcome back to summer. We're looking forward to providing safe fun in the sun. The Craneridge Pool provides American Red Cross Trained Lifeguards with CPR training as a level 2 pool during business hours.

- The Pool will open Memorial Day weekend
- For official Pool hours go to "News" @ Craneridge.org



**Swimming is prohibited when Lifeguards are not on duty.
We will close due to inclement weather.**



What the Architectural Committee Does for You

Are you getting ready to put a new roof on your house, install new windows, paint your house, or build a new shed? Before you break out the miter saw, make sure to get your plans approved by our association's Architectural Committee.

While it may seem arbitrary from an individual homeowner's standpoint, the architectural committee looks out for the entire community. Aside from stopping residents from painting pink polka dots on their houses, the committee's job is to make sure that the size and style of the project, the type of building materials being used and the overall look of the new structure adhere to the association's design requirements. Not only does this keep the community looking cohesive, it also helps to keep property values up by preventing individual structures from standing out. Of course, it's also important to note that unapproved structures might legally have to be removed at the owner's expense, so save yourself money and headaches by getting approval before building.

So when you're ready to start your new project, or if the design of your project changes midway through building it, send your plans to the architectural committee first so that we can make sure they're in compliance with the association's design standards. If we do find any issues, we'll let you know what they are and try to help you come up with other options. We appreciate all the hard work residents have done to make their homes and this community beautiful—help us keep this association looking great by keeping us in the loop of all your building projects.

Architectural Project Submittal Form online:

<https://Craneridge.org/architectural-online-submission-form>

Quotes about being a Good Neighbor:

"A bad neighbor is a misfortune, as much as a good one is a great blessing."

"All will concede that in order to have good neighbors, we must also be good neighbors. That applies in every field of human endeavor."

"And good neighbors make a huge difference in the quality of life. I agree."

"Being a good neighbor is an art which makes life richer."

"Don't throw stones at your neighbors if your own windows are glass."

"The happiest people I know are people who don't even think about being happy. They just think about being good neighbors, good people. And then happiness sort of sneaks in the back window while they are busy doing good."

Craneridge - Board of Directors

Jeff Randall (*term ends 2022*)

President

716-913-6507 | Randall@agro-shield.com

Shannon Wichlacz (*term ends 2022*)

Vice President

716-432-4778 | scmenter@yahoo.com

Cory Bowen (*term ends 2023*)

Secretary

716-480-4090 | bowen.cory@gmail.com

Rich Barber (*term ends 2023*)

Treasurer

716-913-9169 | rjb14crane@gmail.com

Gwen Alegre (*term ends 2022*)

Director

716-480-1159 | gwenalegre@gmail.com

Chuck Dickhut (*term ends 2022*)

Director

716-592-3571 | CDickhut2@aol.com

Ron Krasnek (*term ends 2024*)

Director

585-981-9991 | krasnek@gmail.com

Sam Lewandowski (*term ends 2024*)

Director

716-771-9094 | slewandowski92@gmail.com

Rory Rinaldi (*term ends 2022*)

Director

716-982-2383 | roryrinaldi@gmail.com

Kathie Sharp

Executive Secretary

716-425-1280 | ExecSec.craneridge@gmail.com

**Sunday
JUNE 12
2022**

ANNUAL MEETING

**2:00 pm
@ Pool
Shelter**

ALL Neighbors are encouraged to attend the Annual Craneridge Members' Meeting!

The association's annual meeting is the best opportunity for you to learn about this year's events and get caught up on everything happening in *our* community. Here are a few agenda items and meeting activities you won't want to miss:

- Meet board and committee members.
- Get an update on all current and future scheduled projects.
- Vote for new Board Members -- There will be five (5) Board positions open.

Be an active community resident and attend the annual meeting. Come introduce yourself to the board and your neighbors and find a wealth of information about your community! The meeting will last approximately an hour and directly after, we will have a meet-and-greet with neighbors as well as a Post-Meeting Picnic hosted by the Social Committee!

Hope to see you there! -- SUNDAY, June 12, 2022 @ 2:00 pm at the Pool Shelter

Good Neighbor Rules & Reminders

1. The **Speed Limit in Craneridge is 30 MPH** and much slower around the blind spots on Hardwood and Woodstock. Be mindful of walkers, runners, bikes, dogs and children. The road IS our sidewalk! Remind all visiting family members and friends to slow-down when driving in our neighborhood!
2. **No unauthorized vehicles are allowed** on Common Property nor on the Roads. This includes but is not limited to golf carts, ATVs, and dirt bikes.
3. Don't push your **brush and leaf-litter** into piles onto the Common Property between you and your neighbor's lot.
4. Do not **blow leaves/lawn litter/snow** into the roadway.
5. **No smoking** is permitted at the Pool Area nor on Common Property.

**Want to help save the HOA money on Newsletter
printing and postage costs?**

Sign-up via the link below:

<https://craneridge.org/signup>

Follow us on Social Media!

