

July 2014

The Castle Hills *Reporter*

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Message

From the Mayor Pro Tem



Tim Howell
Mayor Pro Tem

Now that the election is over, the never ending volley of promises and proposals have ended, and I for one am ready to start the implementation of the task of coming together. We now have most of the completed information to begin planning and budgeting the tasks that lay before us. In the coming weeks and months, your new council will be proposing the future of our city. I still continue to look ahead and believe that our city will now come together and tackle those tasks that still remain a constant reminder of neglect, being our infrastructure. The report that the Streets and Drainage Committee completed and presented in a recent council meeting, shined a spotlight on some good solid ideas for council to work towards. You the voter, decided on the continuation of the ¼% sales tax, which will produce \$200,000 annually in infrastructure revenue to address the maintenance of our streets. This in an exciting and opportunistic time for our city. Come join us at city hall, and as always please contact me if you should have any comments or thoughts.

Timothy A Howell
City of Castle Hills
Alderman Place 4
Castle Hills Texas

timothyallanhowell@yahoo.com
timothyallanhowell@gmail.com
timothyallanhowell@facebook.com
Castlehillstimh@twitter.com



Mark Your Calendar

July 14, 2014 – Budget Workshop at 5:30 p.m. in the Community Room.

July 15, 2014 – Town Hall Meeting at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

- Presentation on VIA Services and Question and Answer Session with VIA Representatives.
- Presentation by a Representative from the Texas State Comptroller's Office discussing the optional uses of sales tax revenue as allowed by state law.

July 28, 2014 – Budget Workshop at 5:30 p.m. in the Community Room.

August 4 – Budget Workshop at 5:30 p.m. in the Community Room

Please check the city website for the official agenda postings and meeting dates and times. www.cityofcastlehills.com

CITY COUNCIL

Mayor

Lesley Wenger
Place 1

Stacia Spridgen
Place 2

John Squire
Place 3

Tim Howell
Place 4, Mayor Pro Tem

Douglas Gregory
Place 5

CITY STAFF
(210) 342-2341

Rita Hoyl
City Manager, ext. 214

Janie Willman
City Secretary, ext. 216

Suzanne Riley
Finance/Human Resources, ext. 224

Jerry Riedel
Fire Department Chief, ext. 217

Wayne Davis
Police Department Chief, ext. 210

Rick Harada
Public Works & Animal Control
Department Director, ext. 206

ALL EMERGENCIES, EMT, FIRE &
POLICE CALL 911

Non-emergency (210) 342-2341

Monthly Meetings
All meetings are held at
City Hall unless otherwise posted.

City Council
2nd Tuesday, 6:30pm

Achitectural Review Committee
3rd Monday, 7:00pm
Upon Request

Board of Adjustment
3rd Wednesday, 7:00pm
Upon Request

Zoning Commission
1st Tuesday, 7:00pm
Upon Request

Crime Control & Prevention District
3rd Monday, 6:00pm
As Needed



City Manager - Rita Hoyl

The City Hall Family

This month I will acquaint you with the administrative people that work for you, the residents and businesses. These people, you will not see on the streets as you will, the Police, Fire and Public Works.

Behind the scenes, the administrative staff serves 4200 residents, 400+ businesses, countless contractors, and hundreds of customers paying their fines daily.

Suzanne Riley, the longest tenured employee in the Admin Department. She was hired full time three years ago to take care of accounts payable and payroll. She eventually took over Human Resources which had been handled by our previous city secretary. Suzanne does a great job of taking care of the reconciling the city's bank accounts and makes sure that everyone gets paid on time! Were you aware that when SAWS took over the defunct Bexar Met Water District, she conducted an audit of all the garbage accounts. She soon discovered that there were a number of accounts that were not paying for garbage service for years. Going back four years, her persistence resulted in the City recouping nearly \$35,000 in unpaid garbage fees. Every two weeks, Suzanne becomes all the employees' favorite; that's when she processes payroll checks (just kidding Suzanne). Suzanne is fun to be around and has a contagious laugh. Since coming on board, our auditors have reported that

each year our audits have become less challenging.

Tina Zelenak, Municipal Court Clerk. Since coming on board two years ago, and working closely with Municipal Court Judge McCall, they have streamlined the efficiency of the municipal court operations and collections. We have fewer cases appealed by attorneys because of the court's attitude and communication. Additionally and extremely important is that we now have ALL warrants entered in the Incode system. And Warrant Officer Hayduk is definitely exceeding all expectations when it comes to warrant collections. Yolanda Martinez, Assistant Municipal Court Clerk has been with the City 15-months. She is the first point of contact when someone comes to the window to pay a ticket. And who would think that before people walk out the door, they are thanking her after paying their ticket! Why you ask? She has superior customer service skills. What a team!

Janie Willman, City Secretary, has been with the City for one year, but has many years of experience as a professional city secretary. Her vast knowledge of local government is impressive. Along with supporting the City Council and myself, Janie works countless hours and attends all committee meetings; Zoning, Board of Adjustment, Architectural Review, the Crime Control and Prevention District and Strategic Planning Committee. She captures the minutes of all meetings and transcribes them. She is responsible for publishing legal notices, posting agendas, elections, updating the website, records management, responding to open records requests, and so much more! This City found a jewel when we hired Janie Willman.

Janet Thelen, Administrative Assistant, has been with the City

Continued on Page 8>>

AARP Driver Safety Course

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12:00noon – 4:30pm**

**\$15 for AARP members
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COUNCIL MEETING

HIGHLIGHTS



May 13 - City Council Regular Meeting

1. Issued a Proclamation for the Karate Kids of America Contest Winners.
2. Issued a Proclamation to the Castle Hills Woman's Club, community partner to Jackson Keller Elementary School, and to Jackson Keller Elementary School Principal Anna Nicolai for the "Because I Said I Would Day in the City of Castle Hills."
3. Announced a Special City Council Meeting on May 19, 2014 at 8:30 a.m. to canvass the returns and declare the results of the May 10, 2014 General Election and Special Street Maintenance Sales Tax Reauthorization Election.
4. Announced a Special Swearing-In Ceremony and Reception for the newly-elected Council Members, Lesley Wenger, Tim Howell, and Douglas Gregory on May 19 at 5:30 p.m.
5. Received the Final Report and Presentation by the City Council's ad-hoc committee, the Street & Drainage Committee.
6. Received an update on the Street Maintenance Reclamite & Cartegraph Software Programs.
7. Received an update on the Project work arising from the Bexar Metro 9-1-1 Grant awarded to the Castle Hills Police Department.
8. Approved the April 2014 Treasurer's Report by minute order.
9. Approved the April 8, 2014 regular City Council meeting minutes.
10. Approved a Contract Extension with Linebarger, Goggan, Blair, and Sampson, LLP, for the collection of delinquent municipal court fines and fees for a three year period beginning May 31, 2014.
11. Received a formal presentation and accepted the Fiscal Year 2013 Audit and Comprehensive Annual Financial Report prepared by Armstrong, Vaughan & Associates, P.C.
12. Amended the Fiscal Year 2014 Annual Budget with the transfer of up to \$400,000 to the dedicated Supplemental Street and Drainage Maintenance Fund as authorized by Ordinance No. 1106, adopted on August 13, 2013.
13. Conducted a public hearing and acted on the recommendation of the Architectural Review Committee on an application for Covenant Presbyterian Church, 211 Roletto Drive, for demolition of the Church's North Wing, construction of the new Mission Hall, Elevator Tower, and removal of one 57" Arizona Ash.
14. Approved an amendment to the adopted Fiscal Year 2014 Annual Budget in the amount of \$44,000 for the purchase of the Watch Guard Digital In-Car Video System as submitted for approval by the Castle Hills Crime Control and Prevention District.

May 19 - City Council Special Meeting, 8:30 a.m

1. Convened in a special meeting to conduct the canvass for the May 10, 2014 General and Special Elections.
2. Adopted Ordinance No. 1125 – An Ordinance Canvassing the Election Results and Declaring the Result of the May 10, 2014 General Election for the Purpose of Electing Three City Council Members in Places 1, 4, and 5. Declared elected:

Lesley Wenger, as Council Member in Place 1; Tim Howell, as Council Member in Place 4, and Douglas Gregory as Council Member in Place 5.

3. Adopted Ordinance No. 1126 – An Ordinance Canvassing the Returns and Declaring the Results of the May 10, 2014 Special Reauthorization Election of a Local Sales and Use Tax in the City of Castle Hills Under the Provisions of the Texas Tax Code to Maintain and Repair Municipal Streets.

May 19 City Council Swearing-In & Reception, 5:30 p.m.

1. Administered the Oaths of Office to the Newly-Elected City Council Members and held a brief reception immediately following.

May 27 City Council Special Meeting, 5:30 p.m.

1. The City Council met in Executive Session, pursuant to Section 551.074, Personnel Matters, to deliberate the evaluation of the City Manager. No action was taken upon the City Council's reconvening into open session.

June 10 City Council Regular Meeting

1. Recognition of Outgoing City Council Members Michael Catalani and Tom Davis.
2. Introductions of New Staff Members Leanne Collins, Public Works, and Gary Tomblin, Police Officer.
3. Received an Update on Digital Billboards Request for Proposals.
4. Received an Update on the Street Implementation Plan.
5. Announced Budget Workshops to be held on Monday, July 14 and July 28, at 5:30 p.m. to discuss the FY 2014 and FY2015 General and Special Funds Budget.
6. Announced a Town Hall Meeting to view presentations and to conduct a Question and Answer Session regarding withdrawing from VIA and options on reusing the additional sales tax revenues as a result of withdrawing from VIA on Tuesday, July 15, at 6:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.
7. Approved the May 2014 Treasurer's Report.
8. Approved the City Council Meeting Minutes of May 13, May 19, and May 27.
9. Appointed Council Member Tim Howell to serve as Mayor Pro Tempore for a period of one year.
10. Had scheduled a closed Executive Session to deliberate the employment status of the City Manager. City Manager Rita Hoyl requested that the matter be considered within the regular City Council Meeting. Discussed matters pertaining to the City Manager's employment status and employment contract. Tabled the matter relating to the City Manager's employment contract until the October City Council Meeting.
11. Authorized Council Members John Squire and Lesley Wenger to meet with the State Comptroller's representatives in Austin to get all the details on the ballot language pursuant to withdrawing Castle Hills from VIA, including alternative uses of sales tax revenue and other relevant information.
12. Mayor Smiley-Kaliff announced his resignation from the City Council effective on June 10, 2014 at midnight.

EMPLOYEE HIGHLIGHTS

Anniversaries

15-Years

Kenneth Lehman, Fire Department

1-Year

Chad Reed, Public Works

Janie Willman, Administration

Robert Trojcak, Fire Department

Jake Vierra, Dispatch

New Employees

Leanne Collins, Public Works

Luis Zamarron, Code Compliance



Friday Movie Nights at the Commons

Presented by the
Castle Hills Community Organization

July 18th
August 15th
September 19th

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Movie Night is held in the council chambers.



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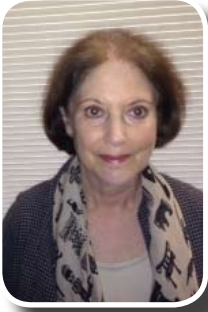
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Council Comments



Lesley Wenger
Place 1

No Article Submitted for This Issue



Stacia Spridgen
Place 2

The question of continuing VIA service in Castle Hills can only be resolved by a public vote. VIA provides bus service to approximately 285,000 riders (in an average year) who board the buses at Castle Hills stops on major arteries that connect our city to the wider San Antonio community, as well as, VIATrans services to Castle Hills residents needing special transportation accommodations.

The issue is not as simple as earmarking the current VIA tax (approximately \$450,000 annually) for drainage and road maintenance projects. A possible option would be to vote in an additional sales and use tax at a ½ percent rate (equivalent to the \$450,000, assuming the same level of sales tax revenues collected) if VIA is repealed and our obligations to VIA are met. This tax would be used to reduce ad valorem taxes. If a bond was passed for street maintenance and improvements, ad valorem taxes for repayment of the bond would take the place of the ad valorem taxes eliminated the by new ½ percent sales tax. My concern with this scenario is that it might not pass. The proposition would need to be carefully worded to ensure full understanding of the voters.

If VIA is discontinued, then we may have lost a valuable service, and still do not get our streets and drainage issues adequately addressed. At the last Council meeting, the Streets and Drainage Committee laid out economic options to repair street, drainage, and alley deteriorations within the City. One of those options was to discontinue VIA service. We do not yet have all of the information to make an informed decision and many questions need to be addressed for the City. These are some of the questions/issues, you, as city stakeholders, should consider if Castle Hills discontinues VIA service:

- If VIA service is discontinued, what is the net financial obligation Castle Hills owes VIA? This obligation includes value of bus shelter site work (e.g., concrete pads) and other line items that are being evaluated currently by VIA Fiscal Management.
- What message do we send to potential residents and businesses looking for a home if we do not have public transportation for residents, employees or customers?
- What is the financial impact to our local businesses? Will business loss be significant enough for business owners to move out of Castle Hills, thereby reducing sales tax revenues? What is the employment impact (hiring of employees) to our local business community?
- What is the certainty of VIA doing away with all bus stops on the Castle Hill side of Blanco, Jackson-Keller and Lockhill-Selma roads, and both sides of N.W. Military Hwy and West Avenue in Castle Hills?
- What is the status of VIA's \$2,000,000 funds to assist suburban cities with street maintenance issues that was brought up at the April Council meeting? If VIA service continues, will Castle Hills be eligible for some of this funding to help with current and future road

maintenance?

- In an average year, over 285,000 people board VIA from Castle Hills bus stops/shelters, how will their routes be re-routed? Will we become an island within San Antonio?
- If VIA service discontinues, what is the plan for those residents who are disabled, elderly, etc., and depend on VIATrans service for their transportation? Annually, over 2400 trips are made in and out of Castle Hills.
- If VIA discontinues, what is the impact to residents who depend now or in the future on VIA Services?
- If VIATrans service is discontinued and we consider contracting this service out, what will the cost of this service be? Will drivers be trained (as they are at VIA) in transporting people with special needs?
- Will doing away with VIA service shine a negative light on Castle Hills as a desirable community to work, live, and play? Would this damage the gains we have made to encourage new residents and businesses?

If this issue is placed on the upcoming election ballot, I urge you to make an informed decision based on fact and not emotion.

Knowledge is power. Information is liberating. Education is the premise of progress, in every society, in every family.

-Kofi Annan – Former Secretary General of the United Nations
Please check the Castle Hills website at www.cityofcastlehills.com for city operations and service information and do not hesitate to contact me with questions or concerns at place2@cityofcastlehills.com.

Stacia Spridgen



John Squire
PLACE 3

First, let me start off by again mentioning that the City of Castle Hills has excellent city services, and I want to recognize the hard working employees of Our City. Our police officers, fire fighters, public works employees, and administrative staff deserve our appreciation for the sometimes very difficult jobs they have to do and services they provide that are second to none. Please take a minute to wave or say hi as they pass by or at city hall.

Castle Hills is changing. As I go around I see lots of new families moving in, children in our streets, families walking their dogs, and people walking and jogging on our streets. Our city continues to come alive and it's wonderful to see. With the influx of our new families it is my hope for you to get involved in your community. We have several organizations available to participate in, some of which include the Civic Participation Committee, the Castle Hills Community Organization, the Castle Hills Woman's Club, and the Garden Club. These groups have been involved in serving our community for many years and are worth checking out. Please get involved in some form because this city only really works and thrives with the active participation of its citizens. Additionally, we have many new and existing businesses, and I would encourage everyone to support and use those businesses established in our City.

I encourage everyone to check to see if there are any items on the agenda that are important to you. If so, please attend that meeting. Your comments, suggestions, and criticisms are important. So, please at the very least express them at council meetings. Also, keep in mind that on the agenda of each regular council meeting is Citizens to be Heard. This is an opportunity for you to convey items of concern that are not on that month's agenda.

In closing, have a great summer, stay cool, relax and enjoy your family

Council Comments Continued on Page 7>>

<<Council Comments Continued From Page 6

and friends, but please take the time and interest to attend and be involved with the council and committee meetings that affect all of us in Our City. As has been said before, government works best when citizens participate in the process.

As always, I am available to discuss our City's issues and encourage you to keep in touch. I can be reached at:

- email address – jsquirecastlehills@yahoo.com or
- phone – 210-390-4611

Respectfully,
John Squire



Douglas Gregory,
PLACE 5

With the election behind us, I want to thank you for your overwhelming show of support for my returning to City Council. I walked our streets for almost 4 months and visited over 400 households in order to get a clear perspective of what was on your mind and to determine what direction our City needs to follow.

First, you demand substantive action year in and year out addressing our drainage and street concerns. For the foreseeable future, significant amounts of money will be earmarked for many improvements. All avenues for revenue must be examined before we ever raise taxes on any of these projects. We must first know exactly where we stand fiscally.

Second, in order to make our tax dollars count, the City Council should work like the Board of Directors of a small business with a \$6 million budget, 50 or so employees and 4000 shareholders (you the citizens). The City Council must have a competent, hard-working team in place to provide quality oversight over the huge tasks ahead. This means that everyone, Councilmembers and employees alike, must "think outside the box". Good ideas without follow through die a slow death.

The next few months should be an exciting and upbeat time for our City. Elected officials and employees will be expected to bring a fresh new perspective to challenges. Status quo ideas and attitudes do not enrich our City. Our future is at stake. Now is the time for this Council to embrace bold proposals and bold actions. We are all in this together, failure cannot be an option.

Councilman Douglas Gregory

DEA Drug Turn In

Sgt. Steve Hart

On April 26, 2014, the DEA sponsored a "Drug Turn In" again in Castle Hills. A wide variety of over the counter and controlled drugs were turned in from local residents and citizens. This year's total weight was 319.9 pounds. That's down from last year's 371.8 pounds but still a sizable amount. Responsible disposal of medications helps keep all of us safe. Thank you to all who participated. If you have medications and are wanting to dispose of them safely, a second "Drug Turn In" will be held in the fall. Please remember to never to dispose of medications or drugs by flushing them or tossing them in the trash! Improper disposal often results in contamination of the groundwater which ultimately becomes your drinking water.

<<City Manager Rita Hoyl Continued from pg 3

for only 7-months. Janet came to us from another municipality with extensive knowledge of municipal government. Not only has she been a police officer, a certified code enforcement officer, but has extensive experience in permitting, zoning, and is always willing to help others in the department. Janet also has incredible customer service skills. Her positive attitude when communicating and interacting with residents, businesses, and contractors at the window or telephone brings a smile to my face. It is so pleasing to have her in the office.

The newest member of the team is Luis "Louie" Zamarron, code compliance officer. He was hired June 16th. He immediately began training on the new customer relations software. Louie is a retired police officer from out of state. He has a fantastic attitude and is already focusing on what needs to be accomplished in our City. It's very likely you'll see Louie in the code compliance vehicle on the streets a lot more.

The other departments, i.e., police, fire, and public works have been featured in previous in stories submitted by former Councilman Michael Catalani, Tom Davis, and Mayor Bruce Smiley-Kaliff.

Special appreciation goes out to the department heads; Chief Davis, Chief Riedel, and Public Works Director Rick Harada. These fine gentlemen are the most respectful, dedicated and trustworthy men I have worked with these past 20 years.

I give a big round of applause to this family that proudly serves your family.

CITY OFFICES CLOSED LABOR DAY, SEPTEMBER 1ST

Trash and Brush Pick-up Holiday Schedule:

Southside trash pick-up is Tuesday, September 2nd and Thursday, September 4th.

Northside trash pick-up is Wednesday, September 3rd and Friday, September 5th. Normal trash pick-up will resume the week of September 8th.

NO BRUSH PICK-UP the week of September 1st – September 5th. Brush pick-up will resume on Wednesday, September 10th.

Update on Street Repairs

A selection of streets in Castle Hills are scheduled for pavement rejuvenation as approved by the City Council. This city streets were evaluated to identify which streets and portions of streets that can be improved and protected to increase the longevity of the street. Public Works Director, Rick Harada, has been working diligently on the new project and is pleased to report that work is scheduled to commence between July 28 and August 08, 2014 (weather permitting).

Before the street rejuvenation process begins, please trim any tree limbs that are over the roadway and hang below the height of 12 feet. The Reclamite application truck is very large, and will not be able to pass under the trees if the branches are lower than 12 feet. During the Reclamite application no street parking is allowed.

Door flyers will be placed at each residence 24 hour prior to the street application. For information about the Reclamite Rejuvenation process, please visit the Pavement Restoration website at www.paverestore.com, visit the city website or contact Public Works at 342-2341 Ext 222.



The Castle Hills Garden Club donated two Sego Palms to the City as an Arbor Day project. The Garden Club treated the Public Works employees to a fried chicken lunch in thanks for planting the Sego Palms, installing the Christmas lights, and the various other projects with which Public Works lent a helping hand.

Castle Hills Police Department Patrol BY

Captain John Siemens

Summertime has arrived which means our children are out of school and families are gearing up for vacation. We would like to encourage ALL our residents to let us know when you are leaving town. Your dispatcher can place you on our "patrol by" list which has many benefits, not only to you and your family leaving town, but to the community at large.

When you are placed on a "patrol by" an officer at least once per shift, 3 times in a 24 hour period, drives by your residence and notes any particular details. This should comfort you while you are out of town. What it does for the rest of the community should also be noted. As officers are en route to your residence they are also checking, by default to some degree, every other residence along the way. This is a win-win for you, your neighbors, and the community.

We are now receiving residents' feedback from this program. The feedback we are receiving is that you are seeing more patrols in your neighborhoods. This is why it is so important that you place yourself on our "patrol by" list when you go out of town. Additionally, we also have unmarked and subdued police vehicles that commonly patrol the neighborhoods as well. Rest assured we are doing our part to keep you as safe as possible on a 24 hour per day/7 day per week basis.

We pride ourselves in public service. Keeping you safe is priority one.

To place yourself on a "patrol by" call the Police Department at 342-2341. Tell the dispatcher you wish to be placed on the "patrol by" list as you are leaving town. The dispatcher will have a few questions that shouldn't take more than a couple of minutes. As always, you can also do it in person any time day or night.

Other news: The Bexar Metro 911 grant is in full swing. The new telephone system is operational. The new police radios and dispatch console improve the efficiency of responding to calls for service to the police department and improve officer safety. Software upgrades are in progress as well as enhancements to city hall to help aid the security of visitors and employees. The work is anticipated to be completed within a couple months.

Please contact me or any member of the Police Department anytime if you have any questions or concerns.

Wayne Davis
Chief, Castle Hills PD

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Service with a Smile!

YOUR COMMUNITY



Karate Kids of America were recognized at the May 13th City Council Meeting.



Councilman Elect, Douglas Gregory Sworn into office by Sheriff Parmaleau at a Special Meeting May 19th.



Judge Tanner and Tim Howell at the May 19, 2014 Special Council Meeting.



Newly elected, Lesley Wenger is Sworn into office by Sheriff Parmaleau at a Special Meeting May 19th.



Councilman Tim Howell and his wife Cheryl display Councilman Howell's Oath of Office at the special meeting held May 19th.



Council Members (left to right) Douglas Gregory, Lesley Wenger and Tim Howell.



Re-elected, Tim Howell is Sworn in to office by Judge Martha Tanner at a Special Meeting May 19th.



Judge Tanner and Douglas Gregory, after being sworn into office at the May 19, 2014 Special Council Meeting.



Hopkins Furniture Boulevard, 2108 NW Military Hwy., owner Jim Peresich, celebrated their Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony May 13.



Community Easter Egg Hunt sponsored by the CH Community Organization

Fiesta Castle Hills 2014 Celebrated!



CH Court Clerk Yolanda Martinez volunteers with the San Antonio Food Bank at County Line BBQ Summer Concert Series

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Castle Hills Police and Fire Departments Receive Recognition

The San Antonio Northwest Rotary Club recognized Castle Hills Police Sergeant Steve Hart as Officer of the Year. Sgt. Hart is a 26 year veteran of the Castle Hills Police Department and holds a Master Peace Officers Certificate, the highest level one can achieve in law enforcement. Sgt. Hart has worked up through the ranks of the police department and currently serves as the Administrative Sergeant. His duties include all in-service police training for sworn personnel and civilians, maintaining the fleet of police vehicles, managing the police department property inventory, and assisting with the administration and enforcement of city ordinances. Additionally, he is the department liaison with the Bexar County District Attorney's office, Texas Department of Public Safety, Amber Alert, Bexar County Sheriff's Office, TXDOT and surrounding municipalities. When additional officers are needed for patrol support, Sgt. Hart supplements patrol staffing as needed. Congratulations to Sgt. Hart for his continued dedicated professionalism and service to the community.

Lieutenant Joe Hernandez with the Castle Hills Fire Department was commended by the Northwest Rotary Club as Fire Fighter of the Year. Lt. Hernandez joined the Castle Hills Fire Department in April 2002, and has

continued to pursue his education earning his Associated Degree in Applied Science from San Antonio College and a Bachelors of Applied Science in Fire Service Management from Wayland Baptist University. Lt. Hernandez holds commissions as a Firefighter Master, Fire Instructor Master, Incident Safety Officer, Fire Investigator, Fire Inspector, Driver Operator and Fire Officer IV. In addition he is certified in Ropes & Knots Operation, Swift Water Rescue Tech and Hazmat Tech Pro Board. In his days away from the department, Lt. Hernandez serves as a Fire Academy Coordinator with San Antonio College. Cheers to Lt. Hernandez for his hard work, professionalism and continuing commitment to success in the fire service.

Brittaney Compos, Chief Dispatcher was nominated for a national award that is presented by the National Emergency Number Association. Brittaney has shown strong dedication to making 9-1-1 and emergency communications work better, and aiding in improving the community with ready access to emergency personnel through the 9-1-1 system.

On June 12, 2014 Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) had a luncheon to honor Castle Hills Police Officers for their DWI enforcement. Corporal Jose Davila (not pictured) and Officer Gary Reeves were selected for their achievements for 2013. Both Officers received a plaque for their efforts.

Thanks to all our dedicated sworn and civilian police personnel!



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Published and distributed by:

Neighborhood News, Inc.

3740 Colony Drive Suite 120

San Antonio, TX 78230

(210) 558-3160 * (210) 558-3163 fax

Info@NeighborhoodNews.com

www.NeighborhoodNews.com

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Castle Hills Community Organization (CHCO)

By John Strieb, President

Castle Hills Community Organization
By John Strieb, President

As we move into the sixth month of 2014, and several months into our new name, I have found that old habits are not easy to change. I keep wanting to call ourselves "Homeowner's" instead of "Community". This will change in time. We recently received the official notification of our name change from the Secretary of State.

We were very pleased with our second year of participation in Fiesta Castle Hills. We had a booth set up adjacent to the Nextdoor booth and had lots of visitors – free cookies probably also had something to do with the interest. The booth was staffed by Sherry Yeckel, Kathy and Anthony Friedrich, Joyce Buie, my wife Donna and myself. This was the first event where we displayed our new name. We appreciate those who decided to become a part of our organization.

The turnout for our Annual Easter Egg Hunt was fantastic. Nancy Batchelder, event organizer, commented that this was one of the best turnouts ever. Our Mayor, Bruce Smiley-Kaliff delighted young and old when he made an appearance in his Easter Bunny costume. The Easter egg hunt was over in a flash and special prizes were given to the kids who found the golden eggs. Trey Batchelder took his life in his hands when he operated the Piñata. There was a petting zoo with a llama, pigs, chickens, goats and a horse that the kids could ride. Thanks goes to Nancy and Trey Batchelder for their leadership and participation, and Joyce Buie, Kathy Friedrich and Kathy's nephew, Dakota Garcia for hiding Easter eggs. Also, thanks to the Castle Hills Fire Department for their presence at the event.

Our first movie night was held at the end of May. Those in attendance were treated to snacks and drinks and enjoyed the movie with their family. The community extends our appreciation to Debbie Reeves for organizing the event. Special thanks to the Castle Hills Fire Department for setting up the electronic equipment and the movie screen and taking it down.

A reminder that our events are listed on the Castle Hills Website, Nextdoor and notification is sent out to members for whom we have current e-mail addresses. Again, I am happy to invite you to join NextDoor. Just send me an e-mail at jsf@prodigy.net. All you need to do is to be a resident of Castle Hills. The site is a means by which residents, the City, and other organizations can send out communications to the Castle Hills Community.

Castle Hills is a special place to live. Get involved, become active in our civic organizations like the Castle Hills Woman's Club, the Castle Hills Garden Club, and of course our organization. And please patronize all the great shops, businesses, restaurants, banks and churches that have chosen to be a part of our great

Do You Have All the Accessories You Need for Backyard Grilling?

By Homer Emery, R.S.



It's time to start getting those backyard grills cleaned up and ready for another summer of delicious Bar-BQ and hamburgers. Be sure to check your supply of LP-gas and charcoal before your first cookout. Don't forget to make sure you have all the spatulas, tongs, grill scrapers, skewers, knives and forks you will need to earn the title of

"Best Backyard Chef" on your block. If you have all the above accessories and think you have everything you need to start grilling, you need to read the rest of this article.

Since the 1992 deadly foodborne illness outbreak caused by undercooked hamburgers served in seventy-three Jack in the Box restaurants located in Washington, Idaho, California, and Nevada the high risk of undercooked hamburgers has been known. By the end of February 1993 this outbreak had resulted in thousands of individuals having to seek medical attention; several hundred being hospitalized and three deaths from acute kidney failure.

Today, public health officials estimate that up to 62,000 infections caused by toxin producing strains of E. coli occur each year, with more than 2,000 hospitalizations and 52 deaths involving kidney failure. Young children under the age of five and the elderly are at highest risk of infections, kidney failure and death.

Already this year, more than two-million pounds of hamburger meat being sold in U.S. grocery stores have been found to be contaminated with toxin producing strains of E. coli. The single best way to prevent illness caused by E. coli bacteria is by cooking hamburger patties to a minimum internal temperature of 155 degrees F for at least 15 seconds.

When checking for spatulas, tongs, scrapers, skewers, knives, forks and other accessories --DON'T FORGET THE MEAT THERMOMETER. A meat thermometer is the only way you can defeat toxic producing strains of E. coli bacteria that may be lurking in your raw hamburger patties. Have a fun and food-safe summer; and use a meat thermometer, especially; when grilling hamburgers for your kids or your grandkids.

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