

The TWELVE OAKS ACORN

MAY 2024
Published for 46 Years

Reporter/Editor: Sue Pritchard
Editor/Publisher: IKare Publishing 813-991-7843

Proposed Housing Development Update:

The Results of the Zoning Hearing were posted on March 12th and the Zoning Master gave their Approval for the Planned Development. But we are not done fighting this. The next step will be the final Vote of the Board of County Commissioners. Currently, the date for that vote is scheduled for May 9th at 6pm. TOSD does have a Bus scheduled for this meeting, leaving from Morganwoods School at 430pm. Please Email Jhirst.TOSDtampa@gmail.com to confirm your spot on the bus. (\$5 per person driver tip requested) Please keep an eye on Facebook for more information. <https://www.facebook.com/events/913500780251365>

Application Type: Planned Development Rezoning RZ-PD-23-0472

Next Hearing Date: May 9, 2024

LUHO Date: N/A

ZHM Date: Feb 20, 2024

BOCC Date: May 9, 2024

Document Search: PGM Store

Contact: Maricela Medrano (MedranoM@HCFLGov.net)

This will be our **last community opportunity** to stop this development from being built. It is very important to make sure ALL the County Commissioners know how we stand on this issue. Please make plans to attend the hearing on May 9th **AND** email ALL the County Commissioners with a statement at least a week prior to the vote. <https://hcfll.gov/government/board-of-county-commissioners/contact-your-commissioner> (make sure to click on **EMAIL ALL COMMISSIONERS**)

TWELVE OAKS CIVIC ASSOCIATION



Asociación Cívica de Twelve Oaks

P.O.Box 261012

Tampa, FL 33685-1012

TOCA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2024

Aplicación de la Membresía de TOCA 2024



ANNUAL DUES / Cuota annual: (January 1-December 31, 2024)

\$10 minimum plus any additional contribution you wish to make

Donación de \$10 o más si lo desea

NAME(S)/Nombre(s): _____

ADDRESS/Dirección: _____

PHONE#/Teléfono: _____

EMAIL/Dirección Electronica: _____

Mail check to address above or pay by PayPal at

twelveoaksonline.com/toca.html

Hillsborough County Customer Service Center At Your Service

<https://service.hillsboroughcounty.org/311/>

At Your Service allows you to make Hillsborough County online service requests 24 hours-a-day, 7 days-a-week. Your request will be routed directly to the team responsible for providing that service. This is where any issues with Roads, Sidewalks, or Canals should be reported! **REMINDER: HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY is SOLEY RESPONSIBLE for maintaining Roads, Sidewalks, and Canals in Twelve Oaks.**

- Requests are monitored during regular business hours.
- For best results, **Sign Up for a new customer service center account** so that you can track the progress of your requests.
- Any information included is not confidential and is subject to Public Record Laws of the State of Florida and will be provided upon request. Any information included cannot be deleted or retracted once submitted.

Do not use this system to report emergencies. Please call 9-1-1 to report emergencies.



To date, we only have 193 houses that have paid their TOCA Dues of just \$10 per household.

A \$10 annual donation (or more if you choose) supports year-round community events and services that maintain the quality of living in our beautiful neighborhood!

**SUPPORT YOUR COMMUNITY AND
PLEASE PAY YOUR DUES TODAY!!!**

LET'S GET YOU HOME

with the help of VanDyk Mortgage

Are you thinking about upgrading your space? Maybe you would first like to know what your current home is worth? As your community lender, I can help you determine your home's value and get you pre-approved for a mortgage loan before you even sell your house.

CALL TODAY



PRE-APPROVAL



Corp NMLS#3035 | nmlsconsumeraccess.org

Mortgage Loan Advisor
NMLS#1180706
jenniferjohnson@vandykmortgage.com
Cell: 270-300-3787

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*Subject to credit approval and credit limit. See stores for details.



813.964.7155

CMC1249497



A+ Rating

TOCA Officers and Directors

TOCA Officers

Susan Pritchard – President 813- 767-4965
 Mercita Ramos – Vice - President 813- 810-5284
 Martha Holmes – Secretary 813- 885-4879
 Chantale Pierre-Louis – Treasurer 813- 886-1933

TOCA Directors

Marsha Craig 813- 625-9186
 Jennifer Fontana 813- 508-5822
 Scott Galusha 813- 735-4926
 Paulo Ponce 619- 392-8512
 Sara Richards 813- 453-0007
 Todd Keil 813- 748-8947
 Amy Keil 813- 748-8962
 Sarah Wentworth 813- 817-6101

TwelveOaksGeneral@gmail.com
vnramos@netzero.com
mholmes12oaks@yahoo.com
Chantale2163@yahoo.com

marshacraig2017@gmail.com
jennifermahoney@yahoo.com
scottg1794@gmail.com
paulodavidpb@gmail.com
srich000@msn.com
freen3737@gmail.com
freen3737@gmail.com
swentworth.tosdtampa@gmail.com

Neighborhood Watch Twelve Oaks Watch Patrol

General Coordinator
 Twelve Oaks Watch Patrol Doreen Clauer
nwatch12oaks@gmail.com

Community Resource Deputy:
 Master Deputy Gary S. Mechler Jr. 196293
 Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office
 District III Community
 Resource **813-247-0330**
 (leave msg at Dist.3 office)
gmechler@teamhcsso.com

Sheriff Emergency Number: **911**
 Sheriff (Non-Emergency
 Dispatcher) **247-8200**



Twelve Oaks Special District Board of Trustees 2024 TOSD Officers

Paulo Ponce .. President.....619- 392-8512
pponce.tosdtampa@gmail.com

Sarah Wentworth .. Vice-President .813- 817-6101
swentworth.tosdtampa@gmail.com

Mercita Ramos, Secretary..... 813- 885-5753
vnramos@netzero.com

Julie Hirst, Treasurer813- 888-9814
jhirst.tosdtampa@gmail.com

Trustees

Marsha Craig.....813- 625-9186
Mcaraig.tosdtampa@gmail.com

Sarah Richards813- 453-0007
Srichards.tosdtampa@gmail.com

Dawn Fair813- 401-1934
Dfair.tosdtampa@gmail.com

Nancy Hendrix.....813-455-0655
nhendrix.tosdtampa@gmail.com

**TRUSTEE POSITION OPEN - INTERESTED PARTIES
 PLEASE EMAIL TOSDTAMPA@GMAIL.COM**

Twelve Oaks On Line

<https://www.twelveoaksonline.com/>
<https://facebook.com/twelveoakstampa>
<https://facebook.com/groups/TwelveOaksTampa>

Twelve Oaks
 Special District
 P.O. Box 260352
 Tampa, FL 33685-0352
TOSDtampa@gmail.com

Twelve Oaks Special District Meetings and Business Hours

7:00 – 9:00 pm
 2nd Wed. of every month
 Town 'N Country Library
 7606 Paula Drive
 2nd floor Conference Room
 Tampa, FL 33615



The Twelve Oaks Ladies Social Group

The Twelve Oaks Ladies
 Social Group will meet for
 lunch at Longhorn
 Steakhouse at 14457 North

Dale Mabry Highway, Tampa, FL. On Monday, May
 20th, 11:30 am. We would love for you to join us.

YOU MUST CALL or EMAIL Marsha so that your
 name can be added to the number of reservations for the
 restaurant. Contact: Marsha at ph. 813-625-9186 or
 email marshacraig2017@gmail.com Thank you!

TOSD MEETING

**Wednesday, May 8th
 7:00pm**

Town 'N Country Library
 7606 Paula Drive
 Second floor meeting room
 Tampa, FL 33615

TOCA COMMUNITY MEETING

**Tuesday, May 28th
 7:00pm**

Town 'N Country Library
 7606 Paula Drive
 Meeting Room A
 Tampa, FL 33615



At our TOCA meeting pn May
 28, 2024 we are planning to
 have **Kristan Keyes** Director
 of Information and Cyber
 Security Division with
 Hillsborough County as an
 Expert Speaker on Cyber
 Fraud.

She will be giving a
 presentation on ways to detect fraud and avoid being a victim.
 Please plan to attend. Light refreshments will be served.

Community Resource Deputy
 Master Deputy Gary S. Mechler Jr. 196293
 Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office District III Community
 Resource **813-247-0330** (leave msg at Dist.3 office)
gmechler@teamhcsso.com

Sheriff Emergency Number: 911
Non-Emergency Dispatch 813-247-8200

Below is a link to the HCSO website that provides information
 about the Citizen Patrol program.

<https://teamhcsso.com/Page/28349841-f8dd-4e44-b807-62401ad8b2e8/Volunteer-Citizen-Patrol>

At our community meeting in February, HCSO suggested that
 neighbors may want to volunteer to be part of the HCSO citizen
 patrol program. If you are interested, please email AMANDA B
 WOODKE <awoodke@teamhcsso.com> for more details.



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813-252-1226

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Services Available

\$99 Diagnostic Service Call

Duct Services

Repair, Modification and Replacement

Air Conditioning System Replacements

Free Estimates

12 Months No Payment - No Interest
Available for qualified clients

Twelve Oaks Special District

Fiscal 2024-25 Budget

2024 Budget		
	\$	%
# of Homes	994	
Proposed Assessment per Home	\$ 150	
Gross Assessment	\$ 149,100	102.8%
less County Collection Expense	(4,000)	-2.8%
Net Revenue from Assessment	\$ 145,100	100.0%
Maintenance		
Maintenance- Contract Services	\$ 49,930	34.4%
Emergency Repair Expense	40,000	27.6%
New Projects	20,000	13.8%
Maintenance- Storm Water Ponds	8,200	5.7%
Maintenance- Street Sweeping - 3x per year	8,550	5.9%
Maintenance- Utilities	12,000	8.3%
Total Maintenance	\$ 138,680	95.6%
Security		
Security TBD	\$ 15,000	10.3%
Neighborhood Watch & Patrols	1,500	1.0%
Total Security	\$ 16,500	11.4%
Administration		
Officer Bonding	\$ 300	0.2%
Printing & Office Supplies	700	0.5%
Postage & PO Box	250	0.2%
Department of Community Affairs	175	0.1%
Storage Facility	900	0.6%
State Required Audit	6,100	4.2%
Internal Concerns	3,000	2.1%
Legal Services	1,400	1.0%
Community Donations	500	0.3%
Election Fees	325	0.2%
Special Projects Manager	15,000	10.3%
Total Administration	\$ 28,650	19.7%
Total Proposed Expenses	\$ 183,830	126.7%
Excess (Shortfall) of Revenues over Expenses	\$ (38,730)	-26.7%
Excess pull from prior year accumulated funds	\$ 38,730	

Please note that there are enough funds in the TOSD Cash Accounts to handle repairs, maintenance, or replacement to the Twelve Oaks perimeter walls and entrance signs due to accidents etc. Due to the high cost of replacement insurance, we are "self insuring" these assets at this time.

Submitted by: Julie Hirst, Treasurer, Twelve Oaks Special District

**We look forward to taking
care of your hair care needs!**

Convenience

Call ahead for your appointment
Located right outside Twelve Oaks

Services

Hair care for your entire family

Hours

Mon - Fri • 9am - 7pm

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FANTASTIC SAM'S
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\$3.00 OFF

any haircut service

Not valid with any other discounts

\$5.00 OFF

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**SENIOR
DISCOUNTS**

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7334 West Waters Avenue
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**YEARS OF
AGENCY
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**FAST, RELIABLE, AFFORDABLE
GRAPHIC DESIGN**

SOME OF OUR SERVICES INCLUDE:

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

LOGO DESIGNS

WEBSITE DESIGNS

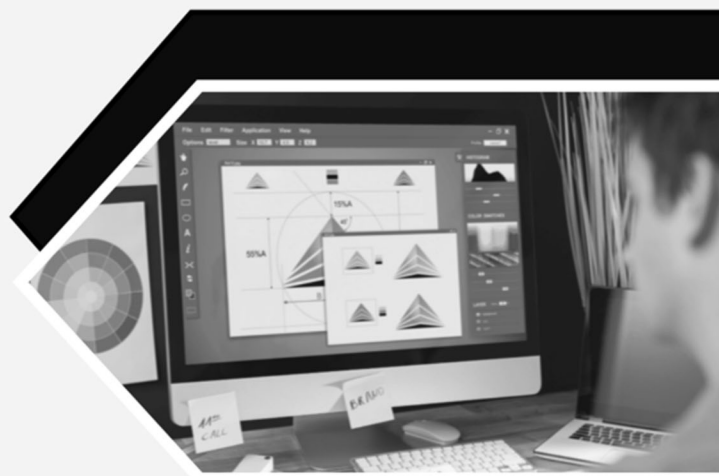
MARKETING MATERIAL

BRANDING

FLYER DESIGN

BANNER DESIGN

MERCHANDISE



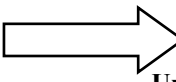
TEXT or CALL: 813 • 778 • 2595

EMAIL: CONTACT.RU.DESIGNS@GMAIL.COM

YOUR MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

TOCA MEMBERSHIP

If you haven't already done so, please take the time now to join or renew your Twelve Oaks Civic Association membership. A \$10 annual donation (or more if you choose) supports year-round community events and services that maintain the quality of living in our beautiful neighborhood. **There are 994 homes in Twelve Oaks. We have currently collected dues from only 193 homes for 2024.** We need more participation if we are to continue to have a Civic Association. We now offer PayPal as an easy way to pay your membership. Simply go to <http://www.twelveoaksonline.com/toca.html> and follow the prompts (a PayPal account is not required to pay in this manner). If you prefer, **complete the application on page one in this issue of the Acorn and mail your application with a check made out to TOCA, PO Box 261012, Tampa FL 33685.** Thank you for your support!

 **At this point, TOCA is not planning on doing any reminder mailings to collect 2024 dues because of the costs and time involved in doing so. Unfortunately, because of several years of low participation, we will have to look at cost-cutting measures until and unless membership levels increase.**

Armand Circle

Frances Beauregard

Brook Hollow Ct.

Diego & Lisa Ponssa

Brookview Circle

Debra Sexton & Jeff Wargo

Brookview Circle

Ines Torrano-Jauregui (aramburu)

Edenbrook Court

Chet & Joan Szeeglowski

Fairford Place

Willie & Lynn Noriega

Forestview Court

Fidel Nodarse & Aimee Martinez

Forestview Court

Nicole Milligan

Heather Court

Marilyn Castro Prieto and Iroel Hernandez

Kirkwood Drive

John & Carol Phillips

Kirkwood Drive

Wely Chantal Van & Christopher Millis

Malvern Circle

Deanna Repozo

Meadow Drive

Rhett & Rebecca Reardin

Oakview Circle

Thomas Marshall / Bill & Debbie Fricke

Oakview Circle

Jason & Angela Sanders

Oakvista Circle

Noelle Schweizer

Summerbridge Drive

Harvey & Cheryl Hawkins

Sunshine Circle

Armando & Zeyda Columbie

Sunshine Circle

Sam & Aileen Wilson

Twelve Oaks Blvd

John & Julie Provenzano

Twelve Oaks Blvd

Jennifer Kauffman

Twelve Oaks Blvd

Joyce Gambacurta

Twelve Oaks Blvd

Bill & Gloria (Tanya) Hines

Willow Court

Les & Kris Holland

Windwood Court

Mislaydis Cabrera-Linares

Woodhall Court

James & Sandra Blanchard

The Benefits of Having A Civic Association

When you consider purchasing a home within an Civic Association for the first time, there are many questions you may have. The most commonly asked question.

First, it is essential to understand that no two Civic Associations are exactly alike. In a well-managed civic association, there are numerous benefits.

Increased Community Engagement

Community gatherings and activities such as parades, picnics or holiday-themed festivals bring neighbors closer together. Regardless of the community's size, there is a sense of camaraderie and joy among neighbors at any community event.

Studies indicate that Civic Associations can facilitate increased social interaction and community involvement, leading to a stronger sense of community and a higher quality of life for residents.

Well-Maintained Common Areas

Civic Associations typically do an outstanding job maintaining their common area. If the neighborhood looks good, the community feels good.

Increased Community Pride

Community activities and events help bring neighbors together, which increases the pride of ownership within the community. Studies has a positive effect on residents' perception of their community, as well as on neighborhood satisfaction.

The study also found that residents in a Civic Association are more likely to express pride in their communities and participate in local activities, which in turn fosters a sense of belonging and engagement in the neighborhood.

Rules and Regulations Deter Nuisance Activity

Each resident who owns a home in the community is held to the same set of standards for the upkeep of their home's exterior, as well as the adherence to noise policies, parking restrictions, short-term rental guidelines, etc.

Added Layer of Support

Living in a Civic Association not only offers an array of practical benefits but also instills confidence in the community's ability to maintain high standards. The added layer of support through effective partnerships with municipal code compliance departments demonstrates how Civic Associations are committed to delivering a superior living experience for all residents.

Helping Maintain Property Values

Since residents are held accountable to county deed restrictions, homes and common areas are consistently taken care of and well-maintained.



THE
WENTWORTH
COLLECTIVE

LOOKING FOR A REAL ESTATE AGENT?

CALL JEFF & SARAH
WENTWORTH

Let us help you buy or sell your home.
Schedule your appointment to get
a complimentary market evaluation.

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Thewentworthcollective@compass.com

Compass
3615 Bromley Grand Ave #230,
Tampa, FL 33607
Phone: (813) 355-0744
www.compass.com

COMPASS



Congratulations and Welcome to Twelve Oaks! The Twelve Oaks Civic Association would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the best community in the Town 'N Country area. You probably already know that this is a convenient neighborhood making it an ideal place to live. There are many opportunities for meeting neighbors and making friends in your new community. Begin by joining our civic association. Attend meetings, ask questions, become a volunteer. YOU can make a difference. Remember, Twelve Oaks is YOUR community. Take the time to read The Acorn, our monthly community newsletter, visit our community website – www.TwelveOaksOnline.com, and sign up to receive Neighborhood Watch email notices at nwatch12oaks@gmail.com. You can even join our private group and follow our public page on Facebook by searching TwelveOaksTampa. Members can use this group to exchange information, learn more about the community, and interact with neighbors and local businesses. These are the best ways to stay informed about what is happening in and around our neighborhood. Questions? Concerns? Please call any TOCA Board member.

Recent Homes Sales in Twelve Oaks:

Address	Bed	Baths	Square Footage	Price per/ square foot
7402 Overbrook Dr	4	4	2388	\$214

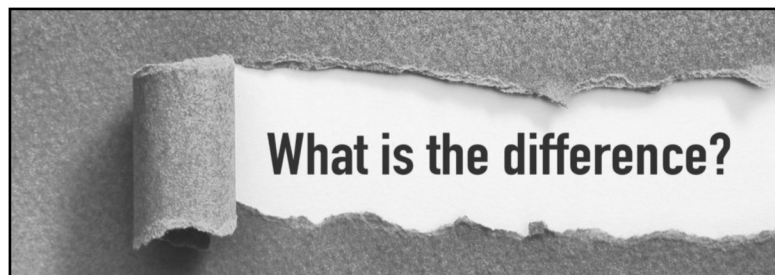
Thank you to Abby Keil of THE ALDRICH AGENCY REAL ESTATE LLC for providing us with recent home sale information. Abby can be reached at 813-635-6275 abby@thealdrichagency.com.

Keep up to date on Twelve Oaks events at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/TwelveOaksTampa/events>

IMPORTANT REMINDER: Twelve Oaks is a Deed Restricted community and single-family residential homes ONLY are allowed. Renting out a subdivided portion of your home, a garage apartment, RV, or modified shed is illegal based on our Deed Restrictions. If it is reported, it will be sent to Code Enforcement for investigation. Further, offenders are subject to being sued by any owner of a home in Twelve Oaks for breaking our Deed Restrictions. <https://hcfll.gov/residents/property-owners-and-renters/code-violations/report-a-code-violation>

Property Care Reminder:

Care and maintenance of the area between the road and the sidewalk (easement) is the responsibility of the adjacent homeowner(s) even if there is a fence in place.



Do you know the Difference between TOSD and TOCA?

Twelve Oaks is a Special Taxing District (TOSD). Our trustees meet once a month, and the public is welcome to attend. A Special Taxing District is a unit of local government created for a special purpose, as opposed to a general-purpose, which has jurisdiction to operate within a limited geographic boundary and is created by general law, special act, local ordinance, or by rule of the Governor and Cabinet. In our case, TOSD collects \$150 per year

per home that is billed with your property taxes. TOSD then is responsible for using that money to maintain our community public areas (**NOT including roads, sidewalks, and canals which are OWNED and MAINTAINED by HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY**). You may contact TOSD at TOSDtampa@gmail.com

Twelve Oaks Civic Association (TOCA) is a volunteer civic organization. We attempt to collect a \$10 membership fee per home per year. TOCA does things like organize our community events (Hotdog Shindigs, parades, light fight, Holiday Market, community garage sale, community cleanups, etc.), and makes improvements to the neighborhood (duck feeder, little libraries, doggie bag dispensers, garbage cans, etc.) TOCA has quarterly board meetings and quarterly Community Meetings where we try to increase community involvement in our neighborhood and offer important information to our neighbors. TOCA may be contacted at TwelveOaksGeneral@gmail.com

We do not have an HOA in Twelve Oaks. Legal issues must be pursued neighbor to neighbor. HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY is SOLEY RESPONSIBLE for maintaining Roads, Sidewalks, and Canals in Twelve Oaks.



The IRS doesn't initiate contact with taxpayers by email, text messages, or social media channels to request personal or financial information. Know the telltale signs of a scam and how to know if it's really the IRS. <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/how-to-know-if-its-really-the-irs>



Homeowner Fraud Alert!

Title Fraud has become a major problem for Florida Homeowners. Make sure to sign up for Property Title Change Alerts to protect yourself from possible title theft! www.propertyfraudalert.com

Twelve Oaks Real Estate News



***You're not seeing
Double - I have TWO
fantastic Twelve Oaks
homes for sale!***



7501 Twelve Oaks Blvd

- 4 Beds, 2.5 Baths, 2 Car Garage
- 2,168sqft of living space
- Large screen enclosed pool
- Oversized corner lot
- Bonus parking pad for boat/RV
- New Roof
- Offered at \$500,000

Visit www.7501TwelveOaksBlvd.com

8231 Vassar Circle

- 4 Beds, 2.5 Baths, 1 Car Garage
- 1,927sqft of living space
- Private pool & large deck
- Oversized, fully-fenced yard
- New Roof & New Plumbing
- Fantastic curb appeal
- Offered at \$525,000

Visit www.8231VassarCir.com

Both homes will go fast! But don't worry if you miss out on them because I have even more Twelve Oaks listings coming up in a few months so stay tuned!

Time to sell? Time to buy? Want to know more? Call me. As your Realtor and a Twelve Oaks homeowner for 16 years, I can help you with all of your real estate needs.



JEFFREY BERG - Realtor®

500 N. Westshore Blvd Suite 850
Tampa, FL 33609

Cell (727) 534-1679

Office (813) 286-6563

jeffrey.berg@floridamoves.com

www.floridamoves.com/jeff.berg



**COLDWELL
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NEWS BRIEFS

Hillsborough County Yard Waste Collection guidelines:

- ▶ You may set out up to 12 (twelve) 30-gallon containers of yard waste (which amounts to approximately 2-cubic yards) per collection.
- ▶ Use your own cans, boxes, bags, or other containers to store your yard waste (grass clippings, leaves, shrubbery, tree trimmings) and place these items curbside. NOTE: Each container cannot exceed 50 pounds.
- ▶ Bundle tree branches securely with twine or rope. Do not use wire. Each bundle must be less than 4 feet long and 6 inches in diameter.
- ▶ Yard waste must be placed within 10 feet of the curb.
- ▶ If you experience a missed pickup including Recycling, Garbage, or Yard Waste contact Republic Waste, our solid waste hauler. Republic Waste Services – 813-265-0292.

The Town n' Country Garden Circle will meet Wednesday, May 3rd, 2024, at the Jackson Springs Recreation Center Annex at 11:30 AM. Lunch will be brown bag and members are invited to bring any goodies they might wish to share. See our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/tncgardencir>. Questions? Contact Linda Mann at 813-886-8193.

A Message from Tampa Electric: Utility lines can easily be damaged by planting trees, installing fences, etc. Avoid potential service interruptions for you and your neighbors. Call 811 two full business days before you begin your project to have utility lines marked for free. Digging on a Saturday? Call 811 by Thursday. For additional information visit sunshine811.com or www.tampaelectric.com/callbeforeyoudig.



Did Your Dog Drop Something?
Doggie Bag Dispensers and trash receptacles, provided by TOCA, are

located at the canal areas on Kirkwood, Barry, Armand, Overbrook, Rustic (1 near Oakmoor and 1 near Vassar), by the duck feeder, by the benches on the large lake, and on Twelve Oaks Blvd (near Oakview), and on Barry Rd & Mitchell. Dog walkers are encouraged to take and use one of the disposable bags that are provided to clean up after their pet(s). If you walk your dog in an area that does not have a dispenser, plan ahead and take a disposal bag with you. Please dispose of the bags properly. Remember, not cleaning up after your pet can result in a fine starting at \$84. Many neighbors now have cameras and can report you to animal control.

How do I report a dog off the leash in Hillsborough County?
Call Animal Control at (813) 744-5660.



I know many people have expressed concern for elderly neighbors that may need help or assistance in Twelve Oaks. The Department of Elder Affairs offers a very good online Quick Resource Guide that may be helpful in assisting our older neighbors in obtaining the help that they need:
<https://elderaffairs.org/resource-directory/quick-resource-guide/>

If you suspect this may be a case of elder abuse, you can also report to AHCA:
<https://ahca.myflorida.com/contact-ahca/filing-a-complaint>

General Social Services information may be found here:
<https://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/en/residents/social-services>

Mental Health Resources may be accessed here:
<https://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/en/newsroom/2022/05/06/mental-health-resources-available-all-around-the-county>



Prepare Your Home For Summer

We're weeks away from sweltering temperatures, hurricane warnings, and bug invasions.

Give Your Air Conditioner a Checkup

Now's the time to make sure your air conditioning is in perfect working order. If you test your HVAC system today and find out it's not functioning properly, you need time to come up with a solution before the weather gets unbearable.

First, replace your air filter to make sure the whole system runs smoothly. Clear any debris on or around your vents or exhausts, and clean off any dirt from the main unit outside. From there, test the unit itself to make sure it's doing its job. If your unit isn't working properly or efficiently, it might be time to call in a professional from this newsletter. They'll test the unit itself and test your air ducts for any potential leaks.

Check for bugs

For the most part, many bugs and insects go into some form of hibernation during the spring and winter months. Other insects migrate someplace warm to wait out the colder months. Still others decide the best way to stay out of the cold is to camp out in your home. You may see more bugs in your house in the winter months, although many of them make their homes inside walls and attics where you are unlikely to encounter them.

Change Your Ceiling Fan Direction

Yes, your ceiling fan is designed to rotate differently depending on the season. In winter months, it should rotate clockwise to help distribute heat that's risen. In the summer, though, you should run your fan counter-clockwise at higher speeds to get a breeze going.

Prevent Water Damage

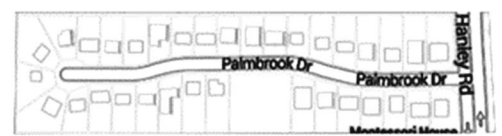
Summer weather isn't just hot and sticky. It can also be stormy and, sometimes, dangerous. For example, hurricane season hits in the summer months, and with it often comes flooding.

Make sure your house is protected starting with your foundation. Check your home for cracks and leaks. Build up dirt or place grates outside your house to direct water away from the foundation. If the dirt you currently have has settled around your house, water will start running toward your house. As a general rule, a grate of one-inch-per-foot will ensure proper water runoff. You should also test your gutters. Turn on your garden hose and place it inside the gutter so water begins to run. Then, walk around your home's perimeter and check the gutter.

Inspect your roof to ensure it's in good working order, remove any debris and leaves while you're up there. You can check your indoor ceiling for early signs of leaking, too. You might notice dark water stains or peeling paint. If you do find a leak, you want to call in a professional as soon as possible, especially if you live in an area that gets hit hard with summer rain. With a few tweaks and inspections, it's easy enough to make sure you're in good shape by the time summer arrives.



On the West Side of Hanley





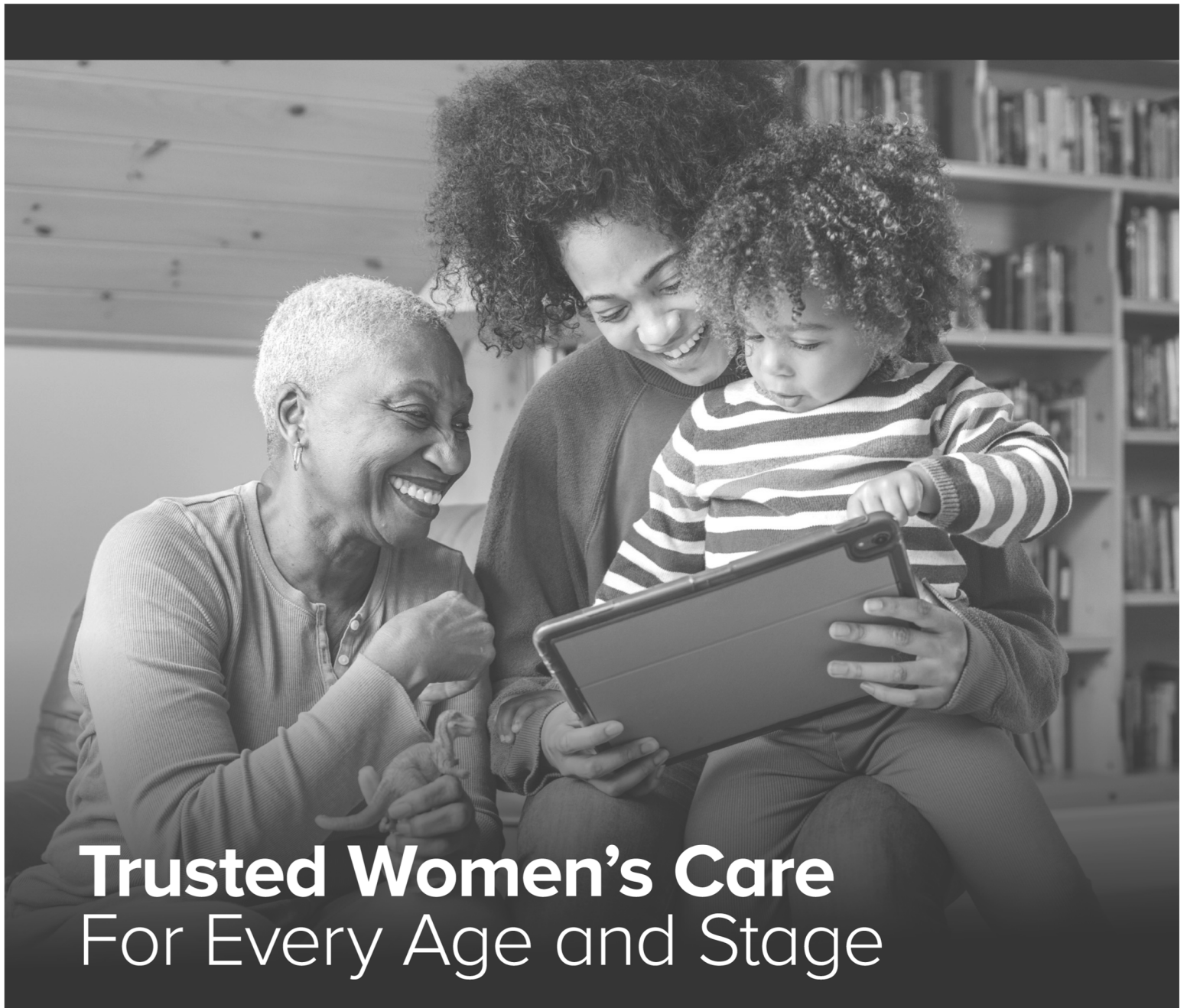
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