



.. NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2013 ..

With this newsletter we see the end of the calendar year, the beginning of the holiday season and the return of many of our seasonal residents.

Once again we will have a **holiday party at the Mission Hills Country Club**. It will be on Saturday, December 7th, from 4 to 6 pm. We had over 80 attend last year and we are eager to see even more of our residents this year. Our host will be the club and it is a great opportunity to meet your neighbors and say hello to some of our new residents and those we don't see often. Please spread the word and maybe even invite a neighbor to ride with you. By having it from 4 – 6 pm it allows those attending to go to other parties in the evening and still take part in our neighborhood meet and greet.

I have received a number of requests for **floor plans for our homes**. I will share with you that by going to the website . . . Christina-Cook.com you will find the original brochure for the Montage at Mission Hills. She has also posted a plat map should that be of interest. Another suggestion is to go to Google Maps . . . Satellite view and you can get a birds eye view of our area.

By going to CathedralCity.gov you will be connected to the local government calendar and informational web site with a treasure trove of information and connections to other parts of our city. Library membership allows you to use any of the Riverside County Libraries with the exception of the Rancho Mirage Library on Hwy. 111. Membership is free there as well and they have a very full

calendar of events and activities that could keep you busy almost every day of the week.

Close by is **Sunnylands**. This was the home of the Annenbergs and the reception center is open and a great place to visit and explore. If you want to tour the grounds you will need to reserve tickets in advance for yourselves and your guests.

This area has a wealth of things to do from exploring many hiking trails for all skill levels to exploring the **Living Desert** and the animals and plants of the worlds desert regions as well as a huge model railroad that is ever expanding.

Art museums and galleries abound to say nothing of consignment shops as well as the high end enticements of the **Paseo**. The **Cabot Museum** in Desert Hot Springs is a one of a kind experience and can be the start of exploring the history of this area and the many surprises you will discover.

Emergency Preparedness Training

Tuesday, November 5 in the San Jacinto Room at Mission Hills Country Club
from 1:30 -3

Topics on the agenda will include: Getting Prepared..How to prepare your home and family for an emergency, Fire & Utility Control...What should you do to control or shut off utilities? and Your Home Emergency Kit...What should it ideally contain? Sign up for this important training session by calling **Mission Hills Member Services at 760-324-9400**. Seating is limited, so call soon to reserve your seat for this free community service that could save your home and your life. Spending just 90 minutes could

be the most important time investment of your year.

Do you have mysterious dead spots in your lawn?

We had a lush and vibrant lawn as the summer began but in mid to late July we saw some odd patches of grass dying and not for lack of care or watering. We were finishing up on some landscape upgrades and our landscape professional said it looked like 'Pearl Scale.'

He had moved here full time from the Phoenix, AZ, area and said it was not uncommon in AZ. On closer examination it indeed was as he feared. I have included information on this problem as it seems to be something others in the area have been dealing with and is becoming a common problem in this area.

Pearl scale or ground pearl, refers to an insect that can be a problem for St. Augustine, Zoysia and Bermuda grasses. Hybrid Bermuda grasses are usually more affected than common Bermuda. As the name implies, an infestation will resemble miniature pearls. Scale insects secrete a whitish to brown substance that covers and protects their bodies, and are seldom larger than one-sixteenth of an inch. These insects suck the juices from plants, usually killing the root. The grass gradually weakens, turns yellow, then brown, thins and dies, and circular patches of dead grass will appear on the lawn.

Damage will appear in the fall as the grass is going in to dormancy. These damaged areas will not recover the following spring when the grass begins to grow again. In late May and lasting throughout the summer, the majority of females emerge from their pearl scales and lay about 100 eggs in a waxy coat. In a few days the eggs hatch into crawlers, which attach to grass roots. They secrete a hard,

waxy coating that becomes the next generation of ground pearl scale. Here are some tips on detecting pearl scale.

1. Dig at the edge of the damaged area that is next to an unaffected area.
2. Carefully dig down two to four inches. Try not to spread scale to unaffected area.
3. Look at the roots of unaffected area.
4. Pearl scale are obvious because of their contrasting color and their shape.
5. The insects are soft and can be easily squashed.
6. Be very careful with contaminated soil and the tools used to examine the lawn, as they can contaminate unaffected area.

Controlling scale. Pearl scales are spread in infested turf and through the use of dirty equipment. Always wash the soil off shovels, trowels or other lawn and garden equipment after each use. *Mowers are not likely to transfer scales unless they are very dirty.*

There are no chemical control methods that completely rid the lawn of pearl scale. However, there is some evidence that applications of soil acidifiers (these reduce soil pH), and/or the product Merit may help slow down the spread of pearl scale. The optimal time for treating a lawn with Merit is in late May when the females are emerging.

The best chance for control is early detection when the circular patches are small and manageable.

Carefully remove damaged patches one foot beyond the affected area and one foot deep. Then dispose of the affected roots and the surrounding soil. Pearl scales may withstand long periods of drought in the soil, and may still be alive after more than a year. So be very careful to avoid spreading them when replacing damaged turf.

Most of the pearl scale will be in the upper two to four inches of soil, but have been

found as deep as grass roots grow, making control very difficult.

After removing affected portions of the lawn replace the contaminated soil. At this time you may want to treat with soil acidifiers and/or Merit and then re-sod or seed the area.

To enhance the penetration of soil acidifiers, make holes in the area to be treated before applying acid mixtures.

Prevention. Proper maintenance helps prevent pearl scale infestations. Although rare, some lawns, particularly common Bermuda have been shown to grow out of an infestation when the lawn receives proper maintenance. Also, seeded Bermuda appears to be able to better withstand pearl scale, or at least the spots can be reseeded each year to cover the damaged areas. This is NOT a control method but merely hides the damaged spots.

Maintenance tips:

1. Water deeply (eight to 10 inches), but only as often as to avoid wilt.
2. Fertilize every four to six weeks using a complete fertilizer such as a 21-7-14 blend.
3. Mow no more than the top one third of the grass, using a sharp mower blade.
4. Remove thatch if it is more than one-half inch thick.
5. Use proper soil management.

For more Pearl Scale information: The University of Arizona Cooperative Extension Fact Sheet MC45, write to 4341 E. Broadway Road, Phoenix, AZ 85040 For more Turf Grass information: Contact the Arizona Cooperative Extension's Web Site - <http://www.ag.arizona.edu/pubs/garden/mg/lawns/index.html>

Web Site: www.westernsod.com

E-mail: wsod@westernsod.com

Phone: Tuft Hot Line: 10800-321-TURF for turf questions of the Lawngevity video Write:

Sharon Dewey, Western Sod, P.O. Box 10610, Casa Grande, AZ 85230

Sharon Dewey is a Certified Turfgrass Professional, a local turfgrass troubleshooter and a Master Gardener with the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension.

RULES COMMITTEE

The State of CA has passed legislation affecting HOAs. We are reviewing our Rules and Regulations as well as our CC&Rs to be sure we are in compliance. There have also been suggestions made by legal experts to positively effect how business takes place for associations. More information will be forthcoming as we implement these actions.

Mr. Nick Nickerson is heading up a homeowners group in doing this work.

NEXT BOARD MEETING

The next Board meeting will be Thursday, Nov. 14, 2013 at 3:00 PM at the Offices of Personalized Property Management 69850 Adelina Road, Cathedral City.

Check the community message board on the wall at the DaVinci/VanGogh corner or the web site for the agenda. It will be posted at least 4 days before the meeting.

Property Manager - Jennifer Zeivel 760-325-9500; jzeivel@ppmInternet.com

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Cathedral City Police 760-770-0300
Police Emergency Only 760-202-2411

Cathedral City Fire 760-770-8200; Emergency 911

Newsletter Input, Comments or Suggestions...
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