



Introducing: The Green Team

By Kriste Lindberg

Kermit the Frog said, "It's not easy being green".

With gas prices and related costs the way they are, it becomes easier! There are so many challenges encouraging us to adjust, it's actually a good time to be "green".

Over the past year, we've found it increasingly necessary to start taking steps towards sustainability, i.e. dealing with Woodlands concerns related to the grounds and buildings. The better we take care of them, the greater benefit for all.

Did you know conscientious landscaping can help keep costs down? For example, strategically placed trees, such as those we have around our perimeter, keep energy costs down during the warmer months by reduc-

ing the "heat island" or the amount of heat generated by blacktop, for instance. Conversely, during the cooler months, they keep costs down by creating a wind block and thus reduce the cost of heating. Basically, they help to moderate the climate.

In addition, native plants, those that are accustomed to the local environment, can help keep soil in place, reduce maintenance costs, and provide food and cover for wildlife.

And why not designate common areas where we can gather to have a picnic or just visit so we don't have to commute elsewhere?

Our little community has a lot to offer, so we have created **The Green Team (TGT)**, a committee of residents to advise the board regarding recommendations on how we can improve our quality of life here at The Woodlands by being more environmentally friendly where appropriate. We are, all the while, keeping aesthetics in mind, and in-

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It is basically an extension of efforts already made—for instance The Woodlands has been designated as a **National Wildlife Federation Backyard Wildlife**



Habitat (our bullfrogs were even featured on a video, see page 2), storm drain

marking has been completed, and other essential steps will continue to evolve over time.

Currently, our members include Ken Cantu, Doris Hahn, Jenny Kander, Susan Seitzinger, and myself (Chairman), along with board liaison, Ed Gubar.

In order to facilitate the process, we have retained Debra Beck to oversee operations (meet her on page 2)—for instance she acts as our liaison to the landscaping firm maintaining the grounds and the pond contractor. She is making recommenda-

tions re tree maintenance and removal of dead trees, and re other aspects related to our endeavors.

A few projects TGT is working on include:

- Updating landscaping, including surveying trees and shrubs, replacing overgrown shrubs, reducing areas needing to be mowed, introducing more native plants...



Green dragon

- Marking gardens that are being tended by homeowners
- Controlling and eradicating invasive plants that are threatening our native habitat
- Designating a place for disposal of yard waste
- Improving the pond and storm water drainage/quality
- Creating common areas to gather in, including picnic tables
- Enhancing the entryway
- Improving connectivity to trails and public transportation so residents can more

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Check out Farmers' Market at the City Hall plaza - Saturdays 8 am—1 pm Tuesdays 4 pm—7 pm bloomington.in.gov/parks



Virginia bluebell

easily access Childs Elementary School, the upcoming Jackson Creek Trail system, and more

- Introducing community involvement days – Garage sales, plant swaps, grounds maintenance workdays for all who wish to participate, and so on
- Researching recycling and environmentally-friendly appliances—see below
- Considering the concept of community gardens and doing more with green building

We are currently in the process of writing a mission statement and working on setting a date for regular meetings. Lately the latter have been held on the second Monday of the month, in advance of board meetings slated for the second Tuesday. Both are at 7:00 p.m. and take place at members' homes. Besides regular business items, they occasionally include informational presentations.

Ribbit! Ribbit! Ribbit!

Being lulled to sleep by a lovely melody rising from the pond? It's the call of bullfrogs, and they are quite active this time of year! We have many, and as we understand, the pond and surrounding area are in good ecological balance. As a matter of fact, our bullfrogs were filmed for an online "webumentary"... Midwest Frogs.

See: midwestfrogs.com and click on "Bullfrog—*Rana catesbiana*" to see a close up video of a bullfrog in action.



David McGowan of Ravenswood Media filming bullfrogs in retention pond, 2005

During the process of meeting and exploring needs, we decided a day devoted to "green" education would be helpful and, we hope, welcome. It would include a lunch and likely take place this fall. Stay tuned!

Our efforts will be coordinated with the website, kiosk, postings, and more.

Of course, there is a bit of work involved with this, as you can imagine! Therefore, there are a few openings available and more ideas are welcome:

- **Secretary** – We need someone to take notes
- **Recycling liaison** – We need someone to explore recycling possibilities
- **An appliances liaison** – We need someone to explore green options, such as environmentally-friendly appliances (heating and cooling, washers/dryers, dishwashers, refrigerators and more). Note: Possibly, if a couple or more residents are wanting to replace old appliances, a better 'group' deal can be negotiated.
- Others t.b.a.

We also plan to include a feature on items of interest, such as information on plants that may be in bloom or critters that may be out, including photos and/or illustrations and websites to visit. For starters, see: "Ribbit! Ribbit! Ribbit!"

For more information on The Green Team, contact Kriste Lindberg at Kriste.Lindberg@gmail.com 

Interest in recycling?
Visit the Monroe County Solid Waste
Management District at
mcswmd.org

Meet Deb...

Debra Beck, project manager of The Green Team, is a member of the American Society of Landscape Architects and proprietor of Natural Connections, LLC, a small landscape architecture firm located in Bloomington, has a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture from Ball State University and was a contract professor there. She works as a project manager for various area businesses and individuals, providing personal attention to details within the big picture. She also serves on the Bloomington Tree Commission.



Monarch butterfly

Meet Kriste...

Kriste Lindberg, chairman of The Green Team, has received a B.G.S. in the "ologies" (various natural and social sciences as well as business) and an M.S.Ed. specializing in Instructional Design—both from Northern Illinois University. She coordinates cave education at the local, state, and national levels. Locally, she has branched out to include the broader concept of sustainability, is employed by the City of Bloomington as an education specialist, and serves on the Bloomington Environmental Commission where she helps to facilitate "green" endeavors throughout the area. Lately, she has been exploring the arts as an additional venue to get the word out on conserving our natural heritage.