



Monthly Newsletter

May 2023

WDDNA systems upgrade to launch soon

WDDNA will soon be going live with a new membership portal designed to make communicating with us a little easier.

What's a membership portal? It is a secure application gateway designed to provide you with a single point of access to WDDNA's most used services such as contacting a patrol officer, scheduling a vacation watch, changing your account data, checking on dues invoices and sending messages to us.

We will be sending you an alert email just before this new system goes live. After that, when you log in on the WDDNA website you will automatically be taken to the portal window.

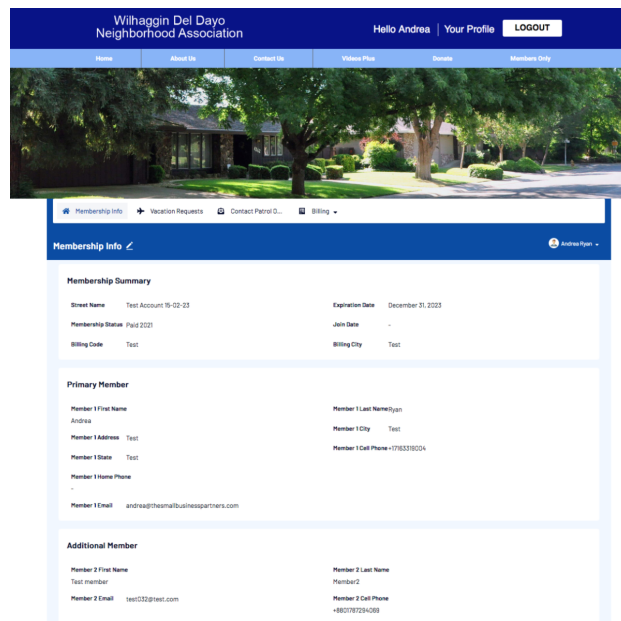
The window will appear within the framework of our website and will provide buttons linking you to our most-used services. No need to go hunting on a drop-down menu.

WDDNA is adding this new feature as part of an overall upgrade of our membership database system.

The need to do an upgrade made itself apparent late last year when we experienced a series of system failures that made it difficult for some members to pay their dues. Our membership growth had stretched the limits of our existing system and revealed flaws in some of the programming linking our website to our membership database.

To solve these problems, we engaged a consultant who specializes in Zoho, the system we use to manage our data, produce invoices and record payments.

In addition to correcting system flaws, the consultant helped us incorporate some new



functionality we had long wished for. Most particularly, the new system will allow us to establish an “auto pay” system that members can use – if they so wish – to automatically pay their dues each year.

For those who agree to it, our new system will be able to securely store their credit card information and use it again in future years to pay their annual dues each Dec. 31. This will not only make things easier for members, it also will dramatically decrease some of the year-end labor required of our association volunteers.

The new system will also solve a problem that has long troubled us: that is, providing a more equitable dues system for new members who join late in any given year. We now will be able to prorate those first-year dues so new members need only pay for the months remaining in the year in which they join.

Of course, with all the benefits of a new system, there always are some complications. In our case, it relates to member passwords. Because our old system did not allow us to see or store new account passwords created by members, we have been unable to port your personal passwords over to the new system.

As a result, if you wish to use a password that you created, you will need to recreate it in our new system. To start things off, we will provide you with a unique password based on a standard protocol. You will need to use that password the first time you log in after the portal goes live. Then, once you have logged in, you will be able to change the password if you wish.

We will describe the password protocol to you in an email that will go out just before we go live with the new system. But here it is now, so you can see how simple it will be to use.

USER NAME: This is the email address you currently use to log in.

PASSWORD: This is the last name of the individual in your household under whose name you signed up for membership (with first letter capitalized), followed immediately by your house number (no space between the name and house number). So, if your name was John Smith and you lived at 1234 Shady Lane, your password would be Smith1234.

We truly appreciate your patience and we hope the system improvements will make up for this temporary inconvenience.

Gate planned at River Walk Way

More than a year ago, members of the WDDNA board of directors brought a security issue to the attention of the Regional Parks District. As a result, the problem may soon be resolved.

The issue involved an open area at the intersection of Sand Bar Circle and River Walk Way adjacent to the entrance to the Sheriff's Department Academy. During warm summer months, that area had become a late-night gathering spot for young people and a concern for some nearby homeowners.



Thanks to the response by Sacramento County Regional Parks to WDDNA's concern, a security gate may soon be erected at the site.

The issue arose during WDDNA's annual membership meeting in December of 2021 when a member who lives at the corner of Sand Bar Circle and River Walk Way expressed concern about the late-night activity. She said she was worried that some of the visitors to the site may include auto burglars.

WDDNA immediately sent an alert to night shift deputies about the problem, but we believed there should be a better way to prevent the problem from happening in the first place.

We knew that the land at that location is managed by a number of agencies, including Sacramento County Regional Parks and the Sheriff's Department. So, on March 1, 2022, two WDDNA board members met with Regional Parks District Director Liz Bellas at the site to discuss the issue.

After inspecting the area, Bellas and her team determined that the problem might be solved by installing a gate across the entrance to River Walk Way that could be locked at night by Park Rangers. She promised to pursue the matter.

This week, Park Rangers Commander David Spencer informed us that the gate proposal has made its way through the usual government red tape and is on track to become a reality.

"After meeting with Parks management and the Sheriff's team we have decided to begin the installation of a yellow pipe gate near the entrance to the academy," Spencer said. "We would be installing it along the back fence lines of the houses at 1100 and 1104 Sand Bar Circle. Being placed at this location would limit vehicle traffic into this area after hours and I would hope it would solve any after-hours safety issues."

Timing of the installation is still to be finalized. "This project will be placed on our list to begin sometime in the future," Spencer noted. He promised to notify WDDNA when the work has been scheduled.

Parkway cleanup nets tons of debris

On Sunday, April 2, 41 volunteers, including Supervisor Rich Desmond, spent hours digging out old encampments and trash on the American River Parkway behind the Sacramento County Assessor's office in the Wilhaggin area.

The cleanup was one of many organized by volunteers with the River City Waterway Alliance (<https://www.facebook.com/rivercitywaterwayalliance/>) and its River City Cleanup team.



"It was a fantastic volunteer group," noted RCWA volunteer Mark Baker. "A record 41 volunteers spent their morning removing vast amounts of trash and debris left behind by flooded and abandoned camps," he said.

“Like so many areas around these illegal encampments, there is so much buried trash, sometimes two to three feet deep or more,” Baker added. “Finding a small piece of trash often leads to huge trash pits that can span hundreds of square feet. Many volunteers spent the morning digging while others gathered surface trash spread throughout the entire area by the floodwaters.

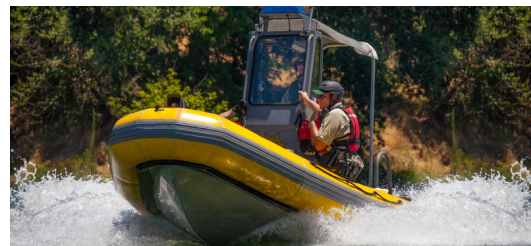
“We estimate 5,500 pounds of debris were removed. They filled at least four large trucks.”

Baker said his group often does three cleanups a week working with Sacramento County Regional Parks crews.

To watch a video about the April 2 cleanup, [CLICK HERE](#).

American River running cold and fast

With temperatures on the rise, swimming in the American River may sound like a great way to beat the heat, but, with the snowmelt causing the river to run colder and more swiftly than usual, [Sacramento County Regional Parks](#) is advising residents to find other ways to beat the heat.



“Cold rivers are dangerous rivers, and right now the American River is running colder than most people realize,” said Liz Bellas, director of Regional Parks. “Water flowing through the American River right now is in the low 50 degrees. We typically see water in the high 50- to low 60-degree range this time of year.”

[According to the National Weather Service](#), “Cold water drains body heat up to four times faster than cold air. When your body hits cold water, ‘cold shock’ can cause dramatic changes in breathing, heart rate and blood pressure. The sudden gasp and rapid breathing alone create a greater risk of drowning even for confident swimmers.”

Flows out of Nimbus Dam into the American River this weekend will be around 8,000 cubic feet per second (cfs). Park officials note that a typical Sacramento summer sees outflows at around 2,000 cfs or less. They urge people to stay out of the river this spring. For more water safety tips, visit [LifeLooksGoodOnYou.org](#).

Mosquito alert

The Sacramento-Yolo Mosquito & Vector Control District is urging homeowners to eliminate any small pools of water in their yards that may become breeding sites for mosquitoes.

“As temperatures warm up, conditions will be perfect for mosquitoes to thrive,” explained District Manager Gary Goodman. “Drain any water from flowerpots, bird baths, tires, dog dishes and other small sources where water can accumulate and breed mosquitoes.

Reducing mosquitoes now, will go a long way later in the season,” emphasized Goodman.

He noted that mosquitoes pose a serious public health risk because they can transmit debilitating diseases such as West Nile virus. Last year in California, there were 208 confirmed human cases including 13 fatalities.

Also of concern are the invasive mosquito species *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* which continue to spread in our area. These mosquitoes are capable of transmitting other dangerous viruses including Zika, dengue fever and chikungunya.

Avoid travel scams

The vacation season is quickly approaching and, with it, attention from scammers.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) received more than 53,891 reports of travel-related scams (including timeshare scams) in 2021, costing consumers at least \$95 million.

Experts warn to be especially wary when using third-party hotel booking sites. According to a 2019 survey conducted for the American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA), nearly a quarter of consumers reported being misled by travel resellers on the phone or online, affecting \$5.7 billion in transactions in 2018.

Unscrupulous resellers draw consumers through search engine ads and send them, via links or posted phone numbers, to booking websites or call centers that appear to be affiliated with a hotel. The look-alike site will feature detailed descriptions of rooms and amenities; it might even have the hotel’s name in its URL. But you are not actually dealing with the hotel.

The [FTC](#) offers the following advice for spotting and avoiding travel scams:

“Free” vacations

You may see ads online for “free” vacations. Or you may have gotten emails, calls or text messages saying you’ve won a vacation, even though you never entered a contest. If you respond to these offers, you’ll quickly learn that you have to pay some fees and taxes first — so your “free” vacation isn’t really free. A legitimate company won’t ask you to pay for a free prize.

Robocalls about vacation deals

You might get robocalls offering you vacation deals at a discounted price. Unauthorized robocalls are illegal. If someone is already breaking the law by robocalling, there’s a good chance it’s a scam.

International travel document scams

You might see sites that claim to be able to help you get an international travel visa, passport or other documents. These sites are just copies of the [U.S. Department of State](#) website. But these sites charge you high fees, including fees for services that are free on the U.S. Department of State’s website.

International driving permit scams

An international driving permit (IDP) translates your government-issued driver’s license into 10 languages. Scammers create websites or use other methods to sell fake IDPs. If

you buy a fake IDP, you'll be paying for a worthless document and you could face legal problems or travel delays if use a fake IDP in a foreign country. Only the [U.S. Department of State](#), the American Automobile Association (AAA) and the American Automobile Touring Alliance (AATA) are authorized to issue IDPs.

Vacation home scams

Some scammers hijack real rental listings and advertise them as their own, so when you show up for your vacation, you find out that other people are also booked for the same property. Other scammers make up listings for places that don't exist. The biggest indicator that a listing is a scam is if you are asked to leave a listing platform such as Vrbo or Airbnb to provide a payment via an online payment platform such as Zelle. Those transfers are instant and cannot be reversed. The best payment method would be credit cards.

Charter flight scams

You may see an ad about an offer to travel to a vacation spot by private plane. You think you're signing up for a charter flight and vacation package, but it may be a scam. The U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) Special Authorities Division maintains a [list of approved public charter flights](#). If the charter filing is not approved by DOT before the package is sold, you're probably dealing with a dishonest charter operator.

Report Travel Scams

If you think you may have been targeted by a travel scam, report it to

- the FTC at [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](https://www.ftc.gov/ReportFraud)
- To report a travel agency scam to the California Department of Justice, go to <https://oag.ca.gov/consumers/general/travel-agencies>.

Q&A

Q: I noticed two recent deputy reports about a young man acting strange, but our deputy did not refer him to any mental health services. Shouldn't there be a way for a deputy to call in a mental health team in such cases?

A: Our deputies often do help people who seem to be in emotional distress, but they do so at the request of or with the cooperation of the individual in question. When a person firmly states that he does not wish to interact with a deputy (as this young man did) and he has done nothing illegal, there isn't much a deputy can do other than monitor from a distance.

The deputy who handled this young man in both encounters, is a very caring guy. He often gives homeless people rides out of the area when they ask him to and he has been very kind to people in trouble. He has saved a couple of lives in the years he has worked for us. But he can only do what protocols allow him to do. I believe he would have taken the young man for observation – just as he has done in a number of cases in the past with some homeless people – if he had felt the situation called for it.

HOW TO CALL FOR HELP

IN AN EMERGENCY

If you have an immediate emergency - if your life or property is in immediate danger, if you feel threatened by someone on or near your property, if you have just become the victim of a crime or if you are witnessing a crime in progress:

- CALL 911 from a land line.
- Or, if calling from a cell phone within Sacramento County, call (916) 874-5111.

TO REPORT A CRIME

There are two ways to report a crime to the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department:

1. Call the Sheriff's Department NON-EMERGENCY LINE at (916) 874-5115. To bypass the recorded messaging when you call, dial 0 after the line is answered.
2. File a report online through the Sheriff's Department website. Click on this link to begin the process: https://www.sacsheriff.com/pages/crime_report.php

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY (Not an emergency)

If you see someone engaged in suspicious activity but it is not an emergency, call 916-874-5115 (Sheriff's Department non-emergency line).

GENERAL CONCERNS, REPORTS OR QUESTIONS

If you have an issue that can be addressed later, you may contact our neighborhood patrol officers about it. The best way is via [EMAIL at wilhaggin4@sacsheriff.com](mailto:wilhaggin4@sacsheriff.com).

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