

# Landscaping Committee 2022 Report to the Board

## **There has been a significant amount of work done in the neighborhood.**

Four large cacti have been transplanted to the entrances to begin sprucing up the entrances

The end of Rosmarino has been completely re-worked and replanted with appropriate cactus for the neighborhood and the small area. 5 saguaros were harvested and planted along that strip.

The strip still needs to be over rocked but there was no budget given to do that.

The drainage wash area along Rosmarino was cleared of dead and decaying material, trees limbed up, and walk paths opened. This was imperative since the area is a drainage swale that was over silted due to years of neglect. With the drainage swale full of dead cactus and debris, and dirt being washed into the area due to neglect, it was no longer moving water through and down to the drainage area.

The water was instead washing up over the road which continues to degrade the road.

The drainage area at the end of Rosmarino was cleaned up and dead material removed, trees limbed so that water would continue to move through there as it was designed.

The corner of Rosmarino and Agrifolio was reworked. A “rumble” strip of rock was put at the edge to hold rock off the road. The area was then rocked. The neighbors in that area have been waiting for rock for 10 years.

We then planted 10 cacti and other material there that was more appropriate for the site, exposure, and water needs.

The area under the large mesquites was left bordered so that it would make it easier to rake debris when they lose their pods and leaf litter. This allows for a better use of landscaping time.

The large mesquites in that area were trimmed back and pruned to keep them healthy.

The pool area was reworked. Vines and appropriate plant material were planted inside the pool area to make the area more conducive and safer for people/children wearing bathing suits.

The area outside the pool was reworked. Overgrown bushes that required extensive trimming were removed and replanted with more appropriate material that does not require trimming.

The rock drainage in front of the pool area was reworked and dug down so that it would move water where it is needed.

A very large cactus was harvested out of a neighbor’s yard and transplanted in front of the pool area.

A drip system was put in the pool area to slow drip plant material. (This is the only area that we can get water to)

Areas between townhomes on Strada de Rubino and Via Vigna were cleaned out more than 2 times throughout the year.

The large Palo Verde at the entrance off Strada de Rubino was trimmed and limbed up to open the area and keep the tree healthy. This tree had been broken in storms and neglected but it has since been revived due to appropriate care.

The hillside up from the pool was cleared of dead, downed, and decaying cacti. No healthy material was removed from that hill. The hill looked full because the cactus there was dead but still standing or downed on the ground. We have started reworking that hillside and have transplanted numerous barrel cacti on to the hillside as well as planted 50 new plants/cacti appropriate for the sun exposure and lack of water.

The dirt road area behind Via Vigna was cleared and cleaned. Special attention was paid to removing downed trees that were decaying and creating a haven for rats. There was a large mesquite that was totally infested with mistletoe that was able to be saved by cleaning all the mistletoe out of it then trimming it appropriately. Prickly pear that was overgrown and infested was removed from the area.

Over 70 dead or dying Texas Rangers have been removed from the property and the remaining ones have started to be regenerated.

Due to storms, there has been numerous hours spent cleaning up downed debris and broken limbs from trees.

5 large dead trees were removed from the property.

We have taken out over 25 dumpster loads of dead or overgrown material out of the neighborhood.

We have many more to go.

### **What still needs to be done?**

The wash area behind Strada de Rubino needs to be cleared and reworked for critter control as well as movement of water. The hillside at the end of Strada de Rubino needs to be cleared of dead material, thinned of overgrown material, and appropriate material replanted in the area.

The drainage area at the end of Strada de Rubino needs to be cleaned up and scarified so that it drains water in times of heavy rain. Currently the rain collects in the basin and stands due to years of neglect. This creates a haven for mosquitos. This area is meant to be a drainage basin.

All the property that borders Territory still needs to be reworked and addressed. There is quite a lot of dead and decaying material as well as material that is not conducive to a walking area.

There is also significant rip rap work that needs to be done to shore up the steep areas of the hill so that they do not continue to erode in heavy rains.

There are many areas along territory that need to be rocked.

Entrances need to have continued work so that they create a visual welcome to the neighborhood.

There are currently 5 different types of rock in neighborhood common areas. These areas need to be over rocked with the same rock so that there is a consistent and aesthetically pleasing look to the neighborhood.

Waterways behind townhomes have been identified as either decorative or in use. There are many of these waterways that need to be reworked to direct water onto plant material and not into the street. There are also waterways that need to be reworked due to a significant amount of erosion.

We have identified over 18 saguaros that can be harvested and moved to our neighborhood as part of the territory project.

### **What is needed to properly maintain and improve the property?**

We currently budget 10 man hours a week to take care of the neighborhood.

This is not enough man hours to even take care of weeding and common area maintenance.

We have solicited numerous landscapers to see if they would bid for the neighborhood. All of them responded that they would not touch the neighborhood for less than 30 hours a week. They all expressed that there is no way to properly maintain the vast amount of area that is required to be maintained for 10 hours per week.

Our current landscaper is asking for at least 20 hours per week to continue working on the neighborhood.

The current board is not willing to contract for more than 10 hours.

## **A special thanks!!!**

Thank you to the homeowner's that have spent numerous hours helping with landscape clean up! If you add these hours up, we have several hundred donated hours of clearing, planting and cleaning.

There were also cash donations by individuals for plant material as well as plant material that was harvested out of neighbor's yards.

## Myths and Facts

**Myth-** The committee is going to take out all the Texas Rangers in the neighborhood.

**Fact-** We are not taking out all the Texas Rangers in the neighborhood. We are leaving Texas Rangers where they are healthy and can be regenerated appropriately. Our landscape contractor as well as people in the neighborhood have identified numerous Texas Rangers that are overgrown, half dead, dead or infested. Those Texas Rangers will be taken out.

Texas Rangers will be left where they can be regenerated and grow in their natural pattern rather than “poodle cutting” them. Trimming Texas Rangers at the top does not regenerate them, it in fact kills them.

As many of you have seen, when left in their natural state they are quite large, but beautiful when they bloom. Where they have space to grow in their natural state they will be left.

**Myth-** Cactus do not need water ever.

**Fact-** Cactus store water within their systems. If they are left too long in a droughted state, they will die.

You can tell when a cactus is in a droughted state by looking at its ribbing. If its ribbing is shriveled or close together, it is not healthy and needs water.

**Myth-** Preemergent will keep all weeds from growing.

**Fact-** Preemergent helps with weed control. It is ineffective in areas where there is no rock cover to hold it against the ground. In these areas, if there is significant rainfall or wind, the preemergent will just blow off or wash off the area making it ineffective.

There is a type of spray on preemergent however the experts have said that it is no more effective than granular in areas that are bare dirt.

**Myth-** The weeds are worse than ever

**Fact-** It may seem worse than ever however the fact is 2021 was a record monsoon season. We thought we could catch up after that but 2022 broke the 2021 monsoon record and was recorded as the wettest monsoon in 100 years.

When there is this much rain on top of years of neglect, it makes it difficult to keep the neighborhood clear of weeds.