



December 2023

Vol. 39 – No. 12

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On the Subject of HOAs

From the Editor

Homeowners Associations, commonly referred to as HOAs, have recently garnered significant negative attention in the media. This year HBO's *Last Week Tonight* dedicated a full episode to the subject, offering a critical perspective that quickly gained traction on social media, amassing just under 6 million views on YouTube at the time of this writing. Additionally, CNBC aired a segment last month, broadly accusing American HOAs of abusive meddling, the excessive issuance of fines, and general overreach.

The main argument in favor of HOAs, as presented by the recent CNBC segment, is that they preserve or increase home values within their communities, according to some estimates, by as much as 4%. Contrasting studies suggest that the majority of homes within HOAs are valued less than neighboring properties outside of them. It's worth noting that HOAs can also manage community property and shared amenities, normally delegated to local government, which of course provides value.

So, how does SHHA differentiate itself from typical HOAs, and how does it steer clear of the negative reputation tied with these associations elsewhere? In contrast to many HOAs that delegate day-to-day operations to for-profit businesses, SHHA operates under the governance of an entirely uncompensated board of directors comprised of volunteer residents. As a non-profit entity, our dues remain notably low, currently set at \$15 per month as of this writing. Unlike profit-driven HOAs, we are not motivated to aggressively collect fines, opting to address covenant violations only when a formal complaint has been filed.

In instances where actions negatively impact the community, such as erecting a disruptive light or constructing a non-compliant garage, encroaching on an easement, we endeavor to address the issue for the betterment of the community, without a financial incentive. While this approach is ideal for non-monetary reasons, it can pose a strain on our resources when we must act to address complaints.

If you are passionate about upholding the positive reputation of SHHA, we invite you to consider applying to join our board of directors. Please visit our website for more information on how you can contribute.

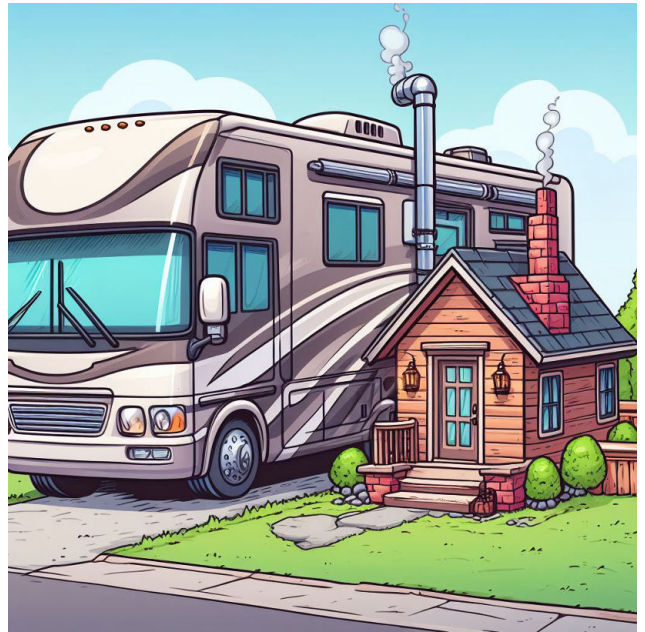
Prevent Fires, Remove Dead Trees

Kathleen McCaughey, E&S Committee

This past summer was a real killer – of trees. Lack of rainfall, combined with high temperatures, caused some of our neighborhood’s ponderosas, pinons, and junipers to die off. Dead trees have much lower moisture than live trees, and burn more readily. As they burn fast and hot, they are more likely to throw “firebrands” - bunches of embers that can be carried by the wind for miles. Embers land in other trees, setting them on fire, and can be blown onto roofs, under eaves, porches and decks, quickly setting houses on fire. This is how wildfires spread so rapidly to a wide area.

Simply put: dead trees throughout our community put Sandia Heights’ homes at increased risk for a catastrophic wild-fire. *If there is a dead tree on your property, you are required by the neighborhood covenants and Bernalillo County ordinances to remove it.* Now is the perfect time to cut and remove dead trees because the Pine Bark Beetle is less able to move from the dead pines to infest live trees in cold weather.

If you decide to replace the tree, you might want to consult the “NM Climate-Ready Tree Lists” for trees that can thrive in the warmer, drier climate coming our way, along with the ACC Design Guideline for Landscaping. Any trees or major landscaping changes to your property requires approval from the Architectural Control Committee.



Store Your RVs

Arthur Romero, CSC Committee

The number one complaint, to our committee concerns RV's & pop-up campers parked on Sandia Heights properties. If you can sleep in it, it's a recreational vehicle and storing it in your driveway is a covenant violation. Please respect your neighbors and store your RV in the garage or a storage facility.

Complaint procedure guidelines

Complaints must be submitted using the form found on the SHHA website or at the SHHA office. The online form is found under “Quick links” at the bottom of the homepage.

Any SHHA member in good standing may file a covenant violation complaint. If not a member, the complainant must join the SHHA and agree to maintain membership for one year. Tenants/renters cannot file a complaint.

The CSC guidelines help facilitate investigations into violations alleged by a property owner who resides within the same unit where the alleged violation exists, or within an adjacent unit, or in direct line of sight of the violation, as described in the Covenant Violation Form available online. If a complaint is submitted by a member who resides in a location that is not consistent with these requirements, the CSC reserves the right to act, or decline to act, upon the complaint depending on the nature, significance, and proximity of the violation. The decision to act upon such a complaint will be at the discretion of the CSC committee.



Drones

Robert Thomas

There's lots of news these days about drones and their commercial and recreational uses. Commercially, this new technology offers the potential for improvements in safety and security for all of us as well as other applications including agricultural production, wildlife management, and package delivery to your doorstep. And it's a great recreational tool to get that aerial photo you only saw before in National Geographic or Google Maps. But as with any new technology, along with the beneficial uses, there are always those who bend or break the rules for personal gain or for criminal activity.

It needs to be noted that there are no current Sandia Heights covenants concerning the use of drones. What follows is some information on practices and potential future actions regarding the use of drones at the federal, state, and local levels which can impact their usage use in Sandia Heights.

The FAA has set the federal rules for drones. The FAA clearly distinguishes between drones for commercial purposes and those for the hobbyist. Commercial drones must be registered, an FAA Remote Pilot's Certificate is required for the drone operator, and if the drone will be flying in a controlled airspace, prior approval from FAA's air traffic control system is required. Recreational drones are covered under the Small UAS (Unmanned Aircraft System) Rule, effective Aug 29, 2016, which places drones under the same rules and guidelines as those for model aircraft. Specifically, operators must (taken from the Special Rule for Model Aircraft, Public Law 112-95 Section 336):

- a. Register the UAS with the FAA.
- b. Fly for hobby or recreational purposes only.
- c. Follow a community-based set of safety guidelines.
- d. Fly the UAS within visual line-of-sight.
- e. Give way to manned aircraft.
- f. Provide prior notification to nearby airport and air traffic control tower, if one is present, when flying within 5 miles of an airport
- g. Fly UAS that weigh no more than 55 lbs. unless certified by a community-based organization

An aide to Lonnie Talbert, our District 4 County Commissioner, said that the County has plans to take up the issue of drones sometime in the future.

There is a sign at the entrance to the Elena Gallegos Open Space states that drones are not permitted in the area. Although the city has no ordinance restricting the use of drones in public places, the rangers at Elena Gallegos cited proximity to a National Wilderness Area. And public safety. Similar "No Drones Allowed" signs stand at both the bottom and top of

the Sandia Peak Tram. The top is clearly encircled by the Sandia Mountain Wilderness Area. And at the bottom Tram terminal, although it is private property, the guards cite public safety concerns and will/have kicked out violators. The High Desert Community to our south has no rules or regulations for drones. Rules and guidelines for outdoor hobbyists who want to employ drones for that big photo shot can be found at:

www.jmpeltier.com/2017/05/14/rules-flying-drone-backpacking-hiking/

That article specifies that drones are prohibited:

- a. Within all national parks.
- b. Within all federally-designated wilderness areas.
- c. Can be, although are not generally, prohibited in state parks. Rules vary from state to state and park to park, so look for signs.
- d. From flying within five miles of an airport, hospital or heliport.
- e. Within Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFR), such as over a fire or a crime scene.
- f. From operating less than 100 meters from wildlife.

Although there are no county or state laws concerning drones currently on the books, the operation of a drone for recreational purposes in a manner which constitutes an unlawful action, a law already on the books, will elicit an officer's response and could result in criminal charges. For example, flying a drone in a manner to look over a neighbor's fence will be addressed under peeping-tom laws. Continual photographing of children getting on/off a school bus or walking down the street can be treated under child pornography laws.

There are assertions Some Bernalillo County officials assert that Kirtland Air Force Base is looking into creating a drone-free corridor along the entire west side of the Sandia Mountains. Although the north-south runway at the Sunport has been closed for some time now, the Air Force does regularly fly helicopter missions in a north-south direction, seemingly along Tramway Blvd.

In conclusion, it needs to be noted that there has not been an avalanche of drone complaints to date. SHHA has received two calls in the past year but, as noted above, the covenants do not cover drones. Both an assistant to Lonnie Talbert and a lieutenant at BCSO report that they have received just a few calls in the last year. Sandia Heights Security reports four drone complaints in the same period. Taking an optimistic view, it appears so far that recreational drone pilots in our community appear to be operating in a responsible manner and we should feel good about that, at least for now.

OCTOBER CALLS TO SANDIA HEIGHTS SECURITY PATROL

The following statistics are the latest provided by Sandia Heights Security since the last GRIT. **Please be reminded that Sandia Heights Services (they provide water, sewer, trash and recycle collection, and security services) is a subscription service separate from Sandia Heights Homeowners Association membership.** Also, Membership in SHHA does not include Sandia Heights Security membership. You can call Security to confirm your membership with them. If you have questions, please call **Sandia Heights Se-curity** at (505) 856-6347, **mobile** (505) 263-4654.

October 2023	# of calls		# of calls
Alarms	13	Special Extra Patrol	2
Customer Assist	4	Special Request/Vacation	100
Fire/Smoke	1	Speeding Vehicle	1
Lost/Found Pet	2	Suspicious Activity	4
Newspaper/Package Pickup	22	Suspicious Person	3
Open Door/Window/Garage	9	Suspicious Vehicle	8
Parking Problem	3	Vandalism	1
		Total	173

Useful Numbers: Emergency Police/Fire/Rescue: 9-1-1 (Be sure to let the operator know you are in Sandia Heights – an unincorporated area of Bernalillo County) **Bernalillo County Sheriff Non-Emergency:** (505) 798-7000 **Bernalillo County Fire Department Non-Emergency:** (505) 468-1310 **SHS Water/Sewer Emergencies (M-F 7AM – 4PM):** (505) 856-6345 **SHS Water/Sewer Emergen-cies After Hours:** (505) 888-5336 **NM Gas Co. Emergencies:** (505) 697-3335 **PNM Outage & Emergencies:** 1-888-342-5766

Announcements & Notices:

- **Office hours:** Monday – Thursday 9 AM – 4 PM and Fridays 9 AM – NOON.
- **Board Meeting:** scheduled December 13, 2023, at 6:30 pm in person.
- **Office Closures for Holiday(s):** Monday December 25 through Monday January 1, 2024 for the holidays.
- **Notary services (Tues–Thurs, by appointment), copies (20 per month) and faxes, e-mail alerts, and searching contractor evaluation binder are free to members.**
- **Committee meeting dates** are posted on our web-site calendar: www.sandiahomeowners.org.
- **Classified ads** can be found on the website on the top bar menu under Notices and Information/Classifieds.
- **Safety vests for sale** in the SHHA Office. \$3.00 per vest for members, cash or check only.
- **Tram passes** for sale in the SHHA Office. \$10.00 per ticket for members on a first-come first-served basis. Cash or check only. Tickets purchased must be for one date at a time per residence. To view the Tram Pass Procedures for SHHA Members go to: www.sandiahomeowners.org/tram-pass-availability





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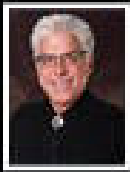
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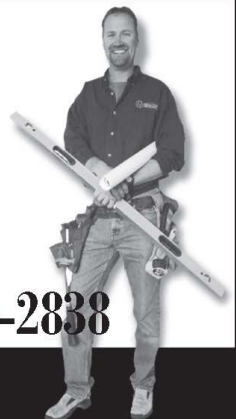
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FOR SALE



\$650,000

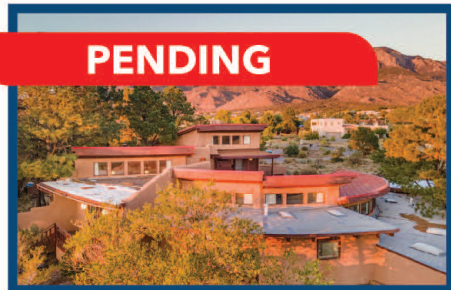
**1104 San Rafael Avenue NE
2758 SQ FT 3BR 2BA .62 Acres**

PENDING



**12709 Carmel Court NE
1583 SQ FT 3BR 2BA .14 Acres**

PENDING



**1213 Marigold Drive NE
3920 SQ FT 4BR 3BA .71 Acres**

PENDING



**1182 Laurel Loop NE
3839 SQ FT 4BR 3.5BA .72 Acres**

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The Artist Next Door

Claudia Mitchell

Judy Zabel



Tax Law and photography do not often occur in the same sentence, but for Judy Zabel, they have some aspects in common. Judy Zabel has lived in Sandia Heights for over 20 years, but she began her life in New York. She obtained her law degree at Hofstra University Law School and soon after she received an offer she could not refuse to live in Albuquerque. This was quite a change, but undaunted, she passed the New Mexico Bar—one of the first one hundred women to pass the New Mexico Bar since it was established in 1886. Judy became one of the first female Assistant District Attorneys in the state. Being part of the D.A.'s office, she was only doing criminal prosecution work. “It was tough. There was only one other female in the office and no female judges.” Judy stuck with it for a couple of years but returned to New York University to earn a Master of Laws in taxation. She came back to Albuquerque and opened her own office. She joined a firm for a few years but returned to private practice, which she maintained for thirty-plus years until her retirement. Judy enjoyed her work primarily consisting of estate planning. “I met with people and their families. I had to listen carefully to help them determine the best way to get what they wanted. I had to be attentive.” That attentiveness required visual observation of the body language and emotions of her clients. This led Judy to an interest in observing people and the world around her through photography. Photography and tax law required attention to detail.

This attention to the details of her surroundings became a keynote of Judy's growing love affair with the camera. The advent of digital photography spurred Judy to join the Enchanted Lens Camera Club where she received great support and opportunities to learn. She had always liked taking pictures but now she was learning to be a photographer. She began to study and understand the principles and technique involved in distinguishing a carefully thought-out composition from a snapshot. She began to think like an artist. There were monthly competitions in the Camera Club, and she got up her courage to enter. To her surprise, she received a top score. “Wow! Somebody liked it!” she remembers thinking. She was on her way. Judy has since won many awards within the Camera Club and at the Annual New Mexico Photographic Art Show (ANMPAS). This year She won a coveted Merit Award at the ANMPAS with her photograph “Red Magic” (see photo with this article).

Judy also loves to travel, having just returned from Bulgaria and Romania when I interviewed her. Her photography and travel are synergistic, heightening her experiences around the world. She especially likes to roam a bit off the beaten path and has been to Hungary, the Czech Republic, Namibia, Laos, Vietnam, and Russia to name a few. Her main subjects are people and animals. She favors black and white over color. “I like to take photos of people unaware that I am photographing them. I love their expressions and what they are doing. My favorite photos are black and white street scenes. I do color but in black and white, you can really see the people, and not the pink T-shirt they are wearing.”



Continued on page 11...

ACC Activity Log

Summary of **Approved -Projects** activity since the last GRIT:

2898 Tramway Pl. – Fence pickets/Level brick path
711 - 25 Tramway Pl. -- Re-roof with Tan TPO
1726 Quail Run Ct. -- New AC units
365 Big Horn Ridge Dr. -- Re-roof with Tan TPO
619 Cedar Hill Rd -- Add storage shed
518 Black Bear Lp. – Kitchen re-model
511 Roadrunner Ln. -- Reinforce fence
1166 Laurel Lp. -- Xeriscape backyard & south side
527 Live Oak Pl. -- Re-stucco
793 - J Tramway Ln. -- Patch stucco
1470 Morning Glory Rd. – Re-roof with Tan TPO
8233 Raintree Dr. – Extend patio/shade/ stucco
2881 Tramway Pl. – Re-stucco
1553 Eagle Ridge Ln. – Re-landscape backyard
7716 Cedar Canyon Ct. – Install artificial turf in backyard
793 M Tramway Ln. – Re-roof w/Tan TPO/Repair ceiling



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Sandia Heights YTD MARKET TRENDS

Year to date 1/1/23 to 11/12/23

Closed Sales

79

+9% from 2022

Average Sale Price

\$708,593

+1% from 2022

Total New Listings

107

+2% from 2022

Avg Price per sq.ft.

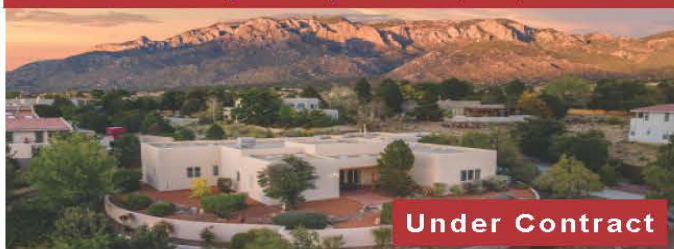
\$258.74

Avg Days on Market

24

11 Avg DOM in 2022

Sandia Heights 1548 Eagle Ridge Ln. \$1,025,000



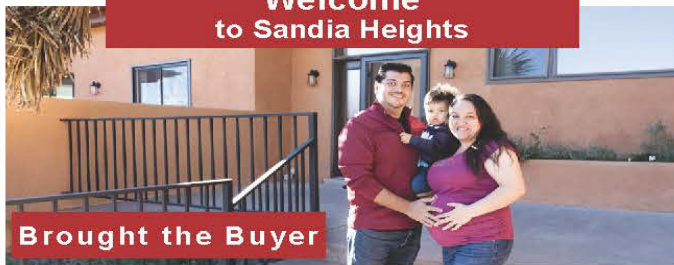
Under Contract

Mountain Cabin on 10 Acres in Evergreen \$600,000



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Signature SOUTHWEST
PROPERTIES

... continued from page 7

One day about 5 years ago Judy saw the signs in the neighborhood announcing the Sandia Heights Artists Tour. She began exhibiting in the tour. She also began exhibiting in some other local shows. Her work began to “sell enough to support my work. But I really only do it because I enjoy it.”

Judy also loves running marathons and has completed a dozen. She still runs four to five miles several times a week, taking in her surroundings with runs into the Elena

Gallegos Open Space. Running, traveling, and capturing her experiences with photography all combine to inform Judy’s life. When asked what inspires her about her art, she thought a bit and replied, “It gives me a different way of seeing things. I have a good time doing it.”

Judy’s work can be viewed and purchased at the Sandia Heights Artist Tour, and online at www.judyzabelphotos.com

Ron Lohrding



What does the International Space Station have in common with Ron Lohrding’s Art? Read on to find out!

Ron’s roots go deep into Kansas soil. He was born there and grew up on a cattle and wheat ranch 22 miles from the nearest town. He learned his “3 R’s” in a

country school which for grades one through four was one room. Ron stayed on the ranch through his high school years. But, as Ron put it, “Driving tractor 10 hours a day in the July heat makes you want to do things far away from the ranch.” He made that wish come true, getting an athletic scholarship in football to Southwestern College in Winfield, Kansas. He was particularly apt at the ‘rithmetic part of his early education and majored in mathematics.

Ron met and married his wife, Jan, during his junior year in college and one year later they relocated to Puerto Rico to teach math. While in Puerto Rico, Ron received a National Institute of Health fellowship to attend Kansas State in Manhattan, Kansas. There Ron earned his Master’s, and PhD in mathematical statistics. He landed a job at Los Alamos National Laboratory and began an interesting career that culminated in becoming the assistant director for LANL’s industrial and international programs.

Ron retired from LANL to start a second career running a biotech company in Albuquerque. While looking for a permanent home, they found Sandia Heights and loved the space and the views. In 1991 Ron and Jan bought a lot here, had their current home built and, in 1992, moved in. Ron retired from the biotech company in 2002, but soon became involved helping to run an import business in Guatemala that focused on benefitting the local population. As Ron puts it, “I failed at retirement three times!” Although he is still involved in aiding youth in Guatemala, he has finally slowed down enough to do yard work.



Continued from page 11 ...

But he still yearned to stretch his mind and work with his hands in a creative way. Pottery came to mind, but he took some classes from a fused glass artist in Rio Rancho and became intrigued. He bought a tiny (tiny as in “fits in a microwave) kiln, and began making jewelry pieces using dichroic glass. Now this is where the space station part comes in.

Dichroic glass changes colors under different lighting conditions and viewing angles. The word dichroic comes from the Greek: “di” meaning two and “chroma” meaning colors. Although fragments of glass with changeable colors have been found dating back to the fourth century, modern dichroic glass was developed by NASA. The technology involves depositing multiple ultra-thin films of transparent oxides of metals onto a glass surface. This specially coated glass shields the instruments and humans in spacecraft like the International Space Station from cosmic radiation and the UV from unfiltered sunlight in space. When light hits the dichroic layer, depending on the oxides used and the thickness of the layer, specific wavelengths pass through and specific wavelengths are reflected resulting in a display of different color groups that change with the angle and condition of the light. These colors are iridescent and jewel-like in their brilliance.

Ron was fascinated by the science behind the material and its inherent beauty. His math background became a source of inspiration. He began utilizing the Fibonacci sequence and the Golden Ratio in his designs. Ron turned out eye-catching pendants from his little microwave kiln. Jan was wearing one when she and Ron were at Weem’s Art Gallery in Albuquerque. The owner complimented Jan on it and when Jan explained that her husband had made it, she asked Ron to put some of his work in the gallery. Ron was on his way. He bought a larger 17-inch kiln that could fire up to 1400 F. He could express his love and knowledge of math with carefully calculated creations that were larger and more complex. Although based on science, the combinations of colors and their behavior in the firing were not always predictable. Ron had to make subjective choices and he found that he had evolved into an artist making unique tabletop and wall art. He told me that “creative ideas come to me when I am sitting at meetings, or in quiet time before sleep or just waking up.”

He joined the Sandia Heights Artists after seeing signs about the annual Studio Tour about seven years ago. Since then, he has won a first-place ribbon at the New Mexico State Fair and an Honorable Mention in a world-wide international competition.

“I really enjoy when I take a piece out of the kiln and I see the scientific effort in the materials and my design melded

into a piece that is inspiring for others to look at. I just hope that my creation is something that they will enjoy.” Ron’s work can be viewed and purchased at ScoJo’s Gifts in Albuquerque, and online at www.etsy.com/shop/Lohrding-GlassArt.

An Explanation of the SHHA Environment & Safety Committee

Kathleen McCaughey, E&S Committee

We are looking for interested residents to join this committee.

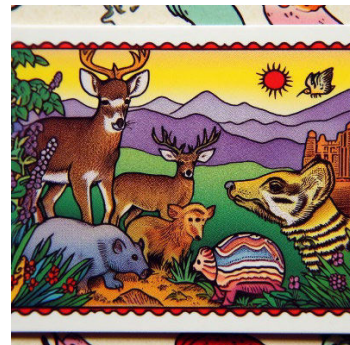
Our Purpose

The Environment & Safety Committee is charged with protecting the wildlife and environment, and improving the safety of our surroundings in the Sandia Heights neighborhood. We try to stay abreast of any potential changes or impacts. We also play a role in educating residents on relevant topics. This committee, in association with Sandia Heights Security, which provides security oversight for our residents, works to make sure Sandia Heights is a safe and secure place to live.

Our Focus

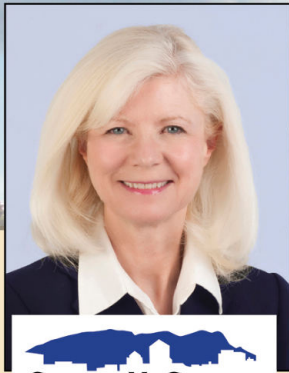
Since Sandia Heights borders the national forest, we are in a wildland-urban interface. Bordering on undeveloped wildland vegetation affects us most importantly in two areas: wildfires and wildlife. A major focus of this committee is on wildfire readiness and preventing wildfires, through Wildfire Workshops and GRIT articles. We have focused on creating fire-resistant buffers to protect not only your home, but your neighbors’, and on staying connected through notification systems. It is also our responsibility in Sandia Heights to coexist harmoniously with our wild neighbors and preserve their natural habitat.

Our roads are shared by pedestrians, bicyclists, automobiles (and sometimes skateboarders). The streets are narrow and curvy, and have speed limits that are lower than many residents wish to drive. To help keep our residents and wildlife safe, we continuously focus on speed limits, rules of the road, and keeping road setbacks clear for visibility.



Continued on page 14 ...

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Sharon's Sandia Heights Market Update Past Year 12/2022 to 12/2023

9 Larger homes For Sale on Larger Lots | Avg Asking price \$814,106 Avg Asking price/sf \$250.42

6 Homes Pending | Avg Asking Price \$870,650 Avg Asking price/sf \$265.11

49 Homes Closed past year to date | Avg Sold Price \$839,190 Avg Sold price/sf. \$253.95

4 Smaller homes on smaller lots | Avg Asking price \$443,475 Avg Asking price/sf \$259.13

5 homes pending | Avg Asking Price \$489,600 Avg Asking price/sf \$256.18

41 Homes Closed past year to date | Avg Sold Price \$519,209 Avg Sold price/sf \$260.82

Note Every Home Is Unique . Price is always based on condition, updates, market appeal, location and views.

Current Interest rates hovering around 7.035% for 30 year conventional & 6.5% 30 year VA!



1114 San Rafael Ave NE



1195 Bobcat Blvd NE



730 Tramway Lane NE



1723 Quail Run Ct. NE

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Continued from page 12...

An example of a recent special focus was the proposed development of the Elena Gallegos Open Space with impacts to the neighborhood such as increased traffic and visitors, and increased crime and fire risks, along with impacts to wildlife and environment. We solicited your responses, penned a letter to the Mayor, and communicated updates through the GRIT.

This past month we had our first Neighborhood Afternoon Out encouraging neighborhood watches and familiarizing residents with our safety and security partnerships with the Fire Department, Sheriff, and Sandia Heights Security.

We welcome you to join us. We meet once a month, mostly through Zoom. Help us continue to keep Sandia Heights a desirable and safe place to live. Call the office for more information.

SHHA MEMBER BENEFITS

To identify what discounts each merchant offers visit the SHHA website at: sandiahomeowners.org and under the [Information Tab/All Information](#), you will find SHHA Members Benefits.

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SHHA Annual Meeting

Save the Date

You are cordially invited to the 2024 SHHA Annual Meeting

Date: Saturday, February 24, 2024

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Location: Church of the Good Shepherd, 7834 Tennyson, The downstairs Fellowship Hall

Join us for a review of SHHA's past year's activities as the Board of Directors reflects on achievements and challenges. Be a part of the process as we elect new Board members and create opportunities for discussion during our Q & A.

Your presence and participation are crucial to the success of our association. Let's shape the future together!

We look forward to seeing you there.

Sincerely,

the SHHA





Sandia Heights Homeowners Association
12700 San Rafael Ave. NE Ste. 3
Albuquerque, NM 87122

