

Interested in a hummingbird garden of your own?



FREE Workshop

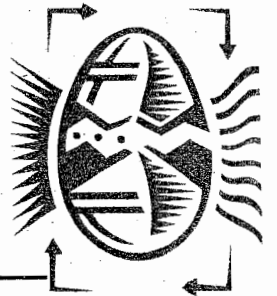
March 25th

See article on page 10!

THE

GRIT

SANDIA HEIGHTS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION SPRING ~ 2000



Charlie Pechewlys

President's Message

"It's Not Them ..."

This is a bit of an editorial with my own view of things. There seems to be a lot of discord in Sandia Heights these days. Perhaps it's just that problems bubble to the top and are more visible. Maybe not. Maybe we have developed more friction among ourselves.

Consider some of the issues that have or still are affecting the SHHA. Some owners complain that their neighbors are storing boats or other recreational vehicles in violation of covenants. A few other owners who are storing the boats or RVs are not happy when approached about this (read, take no action), and the Association turns to legal counsel for help. In at least two cases, law suits are started to insure compliance. The boat or RV owners, and their neighbors, are all not happy, now.

An owner wants to remodel and expand their home and properly submits their plans for approval. Neighbors and Architectural

Control have concerns, and the plans are not approved. A law suit is started against the SHHA and at least one neighbor is claiming that the covenants are being too strictly enforced. Another unhappy neighborhood.

In still another area, plans for a new home are approved after modifications are made. Most of the Architectural Control Committee felt that as many changes as could be made were made. The neighbors directly affected by the new house, however, understandably thought that the covenants were not being enforced strictly enough. Still other owners wanted to re-stucco. After not getting approval of their preferred color, the owners determined that the covenants didn't apply to them and proceeded with the re-stucco.

Every year at the annual meeting, members identify covenant enforcement as an important concern. Yet, there seems to be anger over change. For example, a home being built on what had been a vacant lot, creates havoc as neighbors' views are compromised. Then there is anger at not being permitted to change -- to remodel, to change colors, etc.

There are all sorts of restrictions placed on us -- building codes for construction safety and quality, drainage easements for the flow of rain water, zoning to limit density and commercial use. One of the purposes of all of these, as well as covenants, is to insure that each of us has the quiet enjoyment of living here. Few, if anyone, would say directly to a neighbor, "I don't care about you." But it is said figuratively more and more often.

A question for us all -- is it the change or lack of it, or is it the process? Is there a softer, better way to work for the common good? At the February meeting of the Board of Directors, it was heartening to see many more members of the Association than usual attend. They got involved, and I'm glad they did. I invite everyone else to get involved as well. Send us your comments, suggestions and, yes, criticisms of our processes and decisions, e-mailed or written is best, so they can be forwarded. Come to the board meetings. They are open to all members. Finally, the Association will hold its Annual Meeting in June, as always. Come and participate.

It's not them -- it's us.

**Bernalillo County
Environmental
Health Survey on
Page 4... Check it out!**



Photo courtesy of Chuck Brink

Spring Season Greetings from the Sandia Heights Homeowners Association!

HELP WANTED

BOARD MEMBERS NEEDED

The Sandia Heights Homeowners Association is seeking interested energetic members who are willing to serve on the Board of Directors. Various openings exist and will be filled at the June 2000 Annual Meeting.

The criteria for selection is that you are a current member of the Association, in good standing, and want to keep Sandia Heights a "unique place to live."

It is important that you do not have a "single agenda" of what needs to be done, but are dedicated to the best interests of all the homeowners.

If you are willing to volunteer your time please forward a short bio and include your reasons for wanting to serve to:

SHHA, P.O. Box 20021,
Albuquerque, NM 87154-0021

HELP WANTED



THE GRIT
is published quarterly
as the official newsletter of the
**SANDIA HEIGHTS
HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION**
P.O. Box 20021
Albuquerque, NM 87154-0021
Phone: 505-797-7793
Fax: 505-856-8844
Web Page: <http://www.nmia.com/shha>

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Barbara Rosnagle

Bill Stabler

Mary Westpfahl

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Carolyn Hindel

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e-mail: fhindel@aol.com

Write: The Grit, c/o Hindel Inc.

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TOP ISSUES

BOARD NEWS:

By Debbie Miller



During the
last quarter
the Board has:

- heard requests from residents asking for more access to area hiking trails and open space
- appointed a nominating committee to begin the process of filling Board positions that will become vacant in June
- continued to follow covenant violations
- prepared for Y2K possibilities
- monitored various traffic and safety issues including cable upgrades
- hired a new "support contractor"
- received the annual audit report
- began revising the
New Resident Guide

SHHA Business Manager, **Martha Sutter**, is leaving that position. She has graciously offered to stay on while we search and transition.



SHHA is evaluating its needs and will conduct a search for support. Anyone knowing someone with an interest is encouraged to write, fax or e-mail the Association.

**BOARD MEETINGS ARE THE 2ND
WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH
AT THE LT. SIBRAVA SHERIFF'S
SUBSTATION ON EUBANK & HOLLY**

**MARCH 8TH****APRIL 12TH****MAY 10TH**

<http://www.nmia.com/shha>

Board meeting "Minutes"
will be posted by the 3rd
week of every month.

Sandia Heights

Wildflower Club**HARVESTING WATER:**

How to Make the Ecosystem Work for You

at the home of

Susan Cook

1842 Tramway Terrace Loop

797-2452

Wednesday, March 15th

7:30 PM

GUEST SPEAKER

Aspen Evans - Santa Fe Garden Center

WANT THE
GRIT ON SANDIA
HEIGHTS?
CHECK OUT...

WWW.SANDIAHTS.COM

County Of Bernalillo

Spring 2000 Report



COMMUNITY PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

In early spring of each general election year, County staff conducts public meetings in each of the County Commission districts. Notice of these meetings is given to neighborhood and homeowners' associations, in community newsletters, public libraries and community centers and ads in local newspapers. The purpose of these meetings is to identify priorities to be included in the County bond proposals and inclusion in Six Year Capital Improvement Program - 2001-2006.

Unfortunately, participation from Sandia Heights has been minimal; consequently, items of interest to you may not have been included in bond issues or the CIP. A second result is the difficulty of obtaining state funds. The legislature gives first priority to those projects identified in the local governments Capital Improvement Program.

If you are unable to attend the CIP meeting in District IV, please let your board members know what is needed and desired in Sandia Heights. Too often needs are identified far too late for us to be effective in obtaining the necessary funding.

IMPORTANT MEETING

2000 GENERAL OBLIGATION BOND PROGRAM
and
2001-2006 SIX YEAR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

MARCH 23, 2000

7:00 PM

LT. SIBRAVA COMMAND CENTER
10401 HOLLY NE

PROPOSED UNIFICATION OF BERNALILLO COUNTY

By an extraordinary majority in both Houses, the New Mexico State Legislature in the 1999 session passed legislation placing a New Mexico State Constitutional Amendment on the statewide ballot for November 2000. It asks the voters to allow Bernalillo County and the municipalities therein the opportunity to explore the possibility of unifying governments.

The process outlined by the State Legislature is this:

- November 2000: The whole state votes on an amendment to the New Mexico State Constitution.
- By January 2001: A Bernalillo County charter commission shall be appointed. This commission will propose a new charter for an "urban" or "home rule" county government. The rationale behind this step is that it will bring Bernalillo County governments up to home rule status, putting city and county governments on similar operating bases.
- By January 2002: All eligible Bernalillo County voters will have the opportunity to vote on the proposed charter.
- By January 2003: An eleven-member charter commission shall be appointed. This commission shall propose the form and organization of a single urban government for Bernalillo County.
- By January 2004: The proposed single government charter will be submitted to the qualified voters of Bernalillo County.

The constitutional amendment which will go before the voters in November 2000 is simply asking for the privilege of self-determination. After passage, the charter commissions will have extensive out-reach to the public. The will of the people must be addressed in the proposed charters. The charters will be put before the public for a vote. Hopefully, the charters will address how a unified government could more adequately serve outlying areas such as Sandia Heights. There are portions of Bernalillo County that are still rural and they should be respected and protected. This can be accomplished through fair representation of rural areas, equitable allocation of resources and wise planning in the formation of the unified government. It is not too early for us to begin studying the constitutional amendment so we can make our voices heard in November 2000. Our destiny is in the balance.

The new millennium brought some interesting challenges for me. My fellow Commissioners elected me Chair of the Commission. I am the first woman elected to this position in more than a quarter of a century... and the very first from District IV. I am humbled and honored.

I am sitting at my desk writing to you and taking advantage of the wonderful view from my office. After many months of no moisture, today the mountains are snow covered and the air is so clean and clear. Once again I remember how blessed we are.

Until next time...



Barbara J. Seward

Bernalillo County Commissioner - District 4

Regardless of race, creed, color,
or when you were born...

Come Join Us Sunday morning!

You don't have to stop thinking when
you walk into our church.
Our pastor is known for his intelligent
and thought-provoking sermons.



Sandia Presbyterian Church

Worship Services: 8:10am, 10:30am
Sunday School, all ages; 9:00am
Nursery available all services

Very active youth, adult,
and singles program.
Counseling service available
to the community.

Rev. Dewey Johnson, Pastor
10704 Paseo Del Norte NE, Alb., NM 87122
(just east of Eubank), 856-5040



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Covenant Support



By Susan Carlow – SHHA Covenant Support Committee, Chair

The thirty-seven units that comprise Sandia Heights Community have thirty-seven different sets of covenants, however, one section exists with the same wording for all units. **These covenants are to run with the land and shall be binding on all parties and all persons claiming under them until the year 2000 A.D., at which time said covenants shall be automatically extended for successive periods of ten years, unless the then record owners of a three-quarters majority of the residential lots in said Sandia Heights South agree to change said covenants in whole or in part.**

The year 2000 is the year to take action, especially if you are dissatisfied with sections of your covenants that appear imprecise or lax, or if it is the case, restrictive! The SHHA Board, the Covenant Support Committee and Architectural Control Committee can only be as effective in protecting and preserving special features in our community as they are clearly and precisely articulated in the Covenants.

For five years, the Covenant Support Committee had a moratorium on enforcing the section of the covenants that addressed motor homes, RVs, boats and campers, while the issue was deliberated in the courts. Many of you were aware that during the years of prolonged legal deliberation, the number of RVs, boats and campers dramatically increased in our community. After Judge Woody Smith ruled in 1999, that the covenants were unambiguous regarding the prohibition of the storage of motor homes, RVs, boats and campers on property in Sandia Heights, the Covenant Support Committee was able to move with renewed force, and to strongly request compliance. The positive response of residents who have noted the recent decrease of recreation vehicles, boats and campers in Sandia Heights has been encouraging to the SHHA Board, and to the Covenant Support Committee.

At the June 1998 SHHA Annual Meeting, the Association's legal counsel David Campbell spoke about the process of changing a set of covenants in Sandia Heights. The Administrative Office has copies of his guidelines for those residents who are interested in changing their unit's covenants. Generally, 75% of the property owners in that unit must agree to the suggested change; if the property is jointly owned, both owners must sign. Each lot counts as one vote. Recently, Unit 24 successfully changed one section of their covenants, proving that anything is possible for those who take action!

The year 2000 is the year to take action if you are dissatisfied with covenants that appear imprecise, lax or restrictive.

BERNALILLO COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT
600 Second Street, NW, Albuquerque, NM 87102

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SURVEY

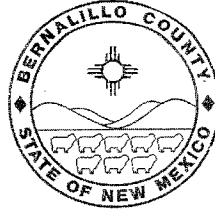
In order for our department to best address your environmental health concerns, please fill out this survey and return as soon as possible. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Tom Duker
Bernalillo County Environmental Health Department
600 Second Street, NW, Suite 500
Albuquerque, NM 87102

If it is more convenient, you may fax your completed survey to 924-3684. You may also contact Tom at 924-3667 or e-mail at tduker@mercury.bernco.gov

1. Are you a Bernalillo County resident? YES NO. If YES, please indicate the area of the county in which you live. _____ (North Valley, South Valley, East Mountains, etc.)

2. What are your concerns about the environment that relate to the health of county residents?



3. Are there issues that are of particular interest to you? If so, which ones? Are there any you would like to learn about in greater detail? _____

4. In addition to public meetings, what is the best way for you to access/receive information that affects you and your family? _____

ROUNDHOUSE REPORT

Legislative Session 2000

Greetings from Santa Fe:

Although you will be reading this after our session is over, here are some insights about the comings and goings during the session now in progress. Unfortunately, there has been more than the usual partisan bickering. I look (or at least hope) for that to subside somewhat and a great deal of work between the parties to be accomplished.

Obviously the biggest issue is the budget, as that is constitutionally what we are to spend most of our time working on. The big debate is whether the House, who has always prepared the first draft of the budget, will prevail. Or whether the Senate, under the leadership of Manny Aragon, will get its will. More spending is in the Senate budget, where the House has more economic development incentives built in. Neither seems to want to go with an income tax reduction that most of you want.

Other issues undergoing a great deal of debate and work are also fiscal in nature. How best to spend some \$56 million in our first tobacco settlement payments. The general plan is to save 60% for future needs, in a permanent fund. But where to spend the first year's \$19 million installment? The Democrats want to spend it on a myriad of projects, with only \$10 million being spent on tobacco cessation, prevention and research programs. The rest would be spent on other social programs. The Republican plan calls for \$5 million for prevention and cessation, \$7.5 to UNM Health Sciences and Lovelace Respiratory Research Center for new cancer and breathing research. The rest could be saved for next year when more money will be needed for research, prevention and cessation.

Economic development tax credit and job creation bills are getting a great deal of bipartisan attention. A statewide telecommunications infrastructure bill that I am sponsoring should get most of rural New Mexico the products they need to bring them new job opportunities. And provide them with telemedicine capabilities with UNM's Hospital.

There are currently eight different property tax bills being considered. It's too early to tell how they will fall out. The drug issue has really taken backstage during most of this session, where it belongs. Gaming is an "also ran" as well. A bipartisan mental health party bill will be introduced very soon and should go all the way.

There have been five veto overrides in the Senate, but the House has resisted the three attempts brought to the floor so far. Look for more override attempts, including new taxes on cigarettes and a new (and expensive) retirement plan for legislators. Hopefully both should fail in the House.

On a final note, the thirty day session is filled with more tension than during the 60 day event. But with that said, there seems to be a very legitimate bipartisan effort by the rank and file legislators. I am sponsoring five bills that have democrats as co-sponsors. Likewise, I am co-sponsor on six of their bills. That is one way to take the partisanship out of the work. We'll see if it works in the final 17 days left in this session.

My Santa Fe phone number is 985-4470. And my e-mail is FAAMrob@aol.com. I should be home after February 17th. The phone there is 856-6881. Keep in touch.



Robert Burpo

State Representative/District 23

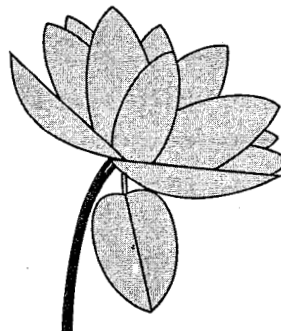
Business: 883-0083 Home: 856-6881

Perfect Pet Pix



This is GIZMO, an American short hair, who lives with the King family of Sandia Heights. He spent his youth jumping into the baby carriage of daughter Allison for a wild and crazy ride. No one could tell him he wasn't a baby doll.

If you have a favorite pet photo, send it to The Grit and share the joy!



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LICENSED AND BONDED

Membership, Community Services & Communications

By Melanie Christman – Committees Chair



SHHA 6th Annual WineTasting

All residents are invited to the popular SHHA 6th Annual Wine Tasting. It will be held on March 18th at **Futures for Children, 9600 Tennyson NE from 5:00 to 7:00 PM**. Fill out the reservation form on the Grit cover and send it in by March 14th.

Don't forget to bring one of your favorite hors d'oeuvres and a recipe for The Grit! See you there.



This year's SHHA Winetasting is once again at Futures For Children

Pet Owners Take Precautions

We want to remind pet owners of the dangers that exist here in Sandia Heights. It is not uncommon to see coyotes and bobcats in the area. Your precious pets can become a meal for these animals... it's nature's way. There have also been more sightings of mountain lions in our area. Your pets should be kept on your premises, not wandering the neighborhood. Walkers and joggers should also be prepared for a possible encounter with our wildlife.

While we're on the subject of pets, please be a responsible pet owner and abide by the county ordinance requiring that you pick up after your pet. Keep Sandia Heights a community for all to enjoy.

Vandalized Mailboxes

It has been brought to the attention of the Homeowners Association that there has been an increase of vandalism to mailboxes in Sandia Heights. Although SHHA is not a law enforcement agency, we can alert residents to be aware of suspicious vehicles. If you see vandals, call the Security Patrol or Sheriff's Department.

Capitol Improvements Projects Meeting

Bernalillo County will be holding a meeting for residents requests for Capitol Improvements in Sandia Heights. Our county commissioner, **Barbara Seward** along with other representatives from Public Works, Public Safety, Community Services and Capitol Improvements will be in attendance. This is your opportunity for input to our county. The meeting will be held on March 23, at 7 PM at the Sheriff substation on Holly Drive. (Paseo del Norte west to Eubank, north one block to Holly.)

City Envisions Tramway as Express Corridor

SHHA acknowledges the concerns raised by residents related to an article that appeared in the Albuquerque Journal on January 4th entitled City Envisions Centers, Corridors. The article detailed the city Planning Department's proposal to create a web of job centers, shopping areas and community gathering points connected by streets with appropriate and adequate bus service. Under the proposal, which could be adopted this summer, some streets would be designated as express corridors with limited access and higher speed traffic. Tramway was listed as one of these. The policy could become the framework for decisions about development and investment of public funds over the next 20 years.

Under a new proposal, some streets would be designated as express corridors with limited access and higher-speed traffic.

Resident concern centered around the city viewing Tramway as a beltway that could eventually allow truck traffic to bypass major urban areas. SHHA contacted County Commissioner Barbara Seward, who indicated her awareness of the plans, and that "express corridor" referred to the type of bus route schedule that could be implemented along these avenues (express buses running on half-hour intervals). Other high-speed corridors listed in the article included Unser, Rio Bravo, Second Street, Paseo del Norte, Alameda and the interstates.

"Enhanced transit corridors" would have more public transportation, with buses running every 10-15 minutes (Montgomery, Lomas, Coors, Gibson, Wyoming and Menaul). "Major transit corridors" would run through high-density, mixed-use developments and have buses running every 5 minutes (Central, Fourth Street, San Pedro from Uptown to Gibson).

City Councilor Hess Yntema intends to set up a study area, so the public can weigh in on where centers and corridors should be. When finalized, the plan will be proposed as an amendment to the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan. Stay involved. If you would like more information, call Director Bob McCabe at the city Planning Department.

Double Eagle Elementary School Fall Registration

OPEN HOUSE

for Parents of New Students

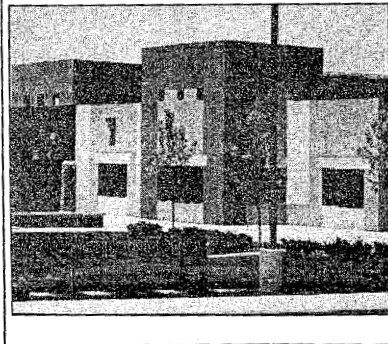
Thursday, March 23,
9:30AM

Registration packets can be
picked up at the school
office beginning April 3rd.

REGISTRATION

for Kindergartners
and New Students

Tuesday, April 11,
10AM ~ 6PM



Security's mobile number:
263-4654

**SANDIA HEIGHTS SECURITY
CALLS JAN- DEC 1999**

TYPE OF CALL:	YEAR TOTAL:
Alarms	553
Open Door/Window	58
Motorist Assist	153
Breaking & Entering	9
Attempted Breaking & Entering	7
Possible Breaking & Entering	2
Construction Site Burglary	5
Vehicle Burglary	7
Suspicious Vehicle	194
Suspicious Person	73
Peeping Tom	2
Theft (Larceny)	23
Animal Control Assist	33
Lost /Found Pet	42
Pet Nuisance	30
Snake	24
Family Dispute	8
Neighbor Dispute	8
Loud Disruptive Party	15
Loud Music	11
Fireworks Complaint	5
Vandalism (General)	49
Mailbox Vandalism	46
Lost/Found Items	8
Speeding Vehicle	12
Assault /Battery (Fight)	6
Death Threat	2
Unusual Special Request	59
Salesperson Problems	19
Phone Problems	11
Car Accident	22
Motorcycle Nuisance	0
Fire	25
Rescue	29
Utility Company Assist	45
Construction Sites	18
Vacant Houses (For Sale, etc.)	68
Specials (Extra patrols/observation)	42
Homeowners on Vacation	2277
TOTAL CALLS	3390
Total Mileage	43,505
Days Security Vehicle in Shop	4.5

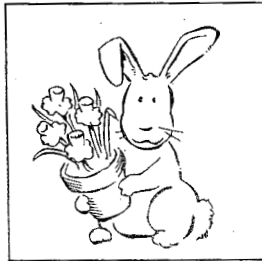
A van and other items were stolen from a garage in the Willowbend subdivision on 12/27/99 and subsequently used during a police shooting on 1/1/00. According to the APD, a teen gang member was shot after pulling a handgun on an officer who was investigating a call regarding a van that had crashed into a wall on the West Side. The officer found the driver passed out with a beer between his legs. When asked to take a sobriety test, the teen pointed a gun at the officer and was shot. An internal police investigation of the incident is pending.

Sandia Heights residents are urged to take precautions to discourage and combat vehicle theft: Lock your cars, keep garage doors closed and locked, and report any suspicious persons/activity in your neighborhoods to Security or the Sheriff's department.

ATTENTION HOMEOWNERS!

There has been a rash of mailbox vandalism in the community. Report any suspicious persons or vehicles to Security at 856-6347.

A house under construction on Juniper Hill Road burned down in a late evening fire on January 4th. Arson is suspected. Anyone with info related to the fire should contact the investigator, Dave Dionisi, 761-4225. A reward is also being offered through Crime Stoppers.



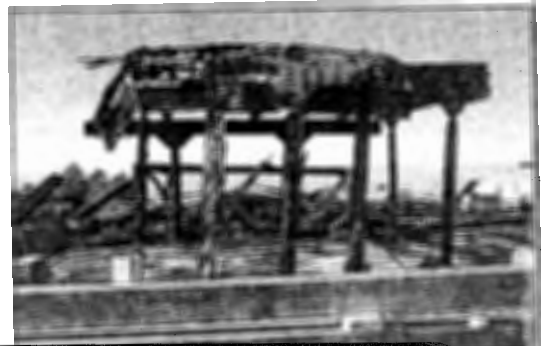
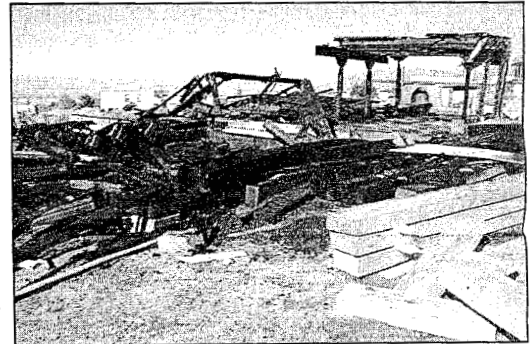
**New Security Chief
Takes Helm**



John R. Pickering has succeeded Will Jackson as the Sandia Heights Services Manager effective November 5, 1999. John has worked for the Sandia Companies for 21 years, beginning with the Utility Co., installing water and sewer systems for the community. During that four-year tenure with Utility he worked winters at the Sandia Peak Ski area.

After returning to school, he transferred to the Sandia Peak Tram Co. John earned a Bachelor's degree at the University of New Mexico and remained at the Tramway facility following graduation until his appointment as Service Manager.

John is married to wife Barbara and has two children, Whitney, age 14, and Ian, age 11.



REMODELING

Does Your Home Still Fit Your Family?



If this is the year you decide to remodel, learn about **REMODELING Made Easy**.

We can make you fall in love with your home all over again.

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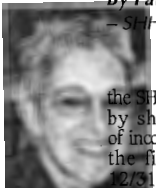
Visit Our Newly Remodeled 3000 sq ft Showroom With Complete Kitchens and Bathrooms.

865-4400 www.lingmadeeasy.com

Treasurer's Report

12/31/99

By Patricia Grossman
— SHHA Treasurer



I have presented the SHHA financial picture by showing categories of income and outflow for the fiscal year ending 12/31/99. In addition, I have included the cash balance in our checking account as of that date. With the help of the Finance Committee, I am exploring ways of establishing separate accounts to address the intention of the Board to designate funds for potential litigation and acquisition of property. I will report on the specifics once a decision is made by the Board of Directors. Please contact me with any ideas and suggestions.



WELLS FARGO BANK

Total Cash/Bank Accounts: \$55,422.03

Liabilities: .00

Inflows		Insurance:	
ACC contracts	2,240.00	Directors/Officers	1,518.00
Directory Ads	3,565.00	Liability	1,368.00
Dividend	121.90		
Grit Ads	4,815.00	Total Insurance	2,886.00
Interest Earned	277.74	Internet	180.00
Membership Dues	44,005.52	Leases:	
T-shirts	50.00	Postage meter	221.36
Total Inflows	55,075.16	Total Leases	221.36
Outflows		Office expenses:	
ACC expense	30.00	Annual meeting	419.05
Bank Charges	50.69	Board meeting	7.09
Directory expense:		Copies	1105.25
Label, sort, etc.	102.46	Letterhead	412.51
Labels	36.95	Postage	1,033.00
Postage	550.00	Supplies	596.89
Directory - Misc	3,589.60	Office expenses - Misc	347.91
		Total Office expense	3,921.70
Total Directory exp	4,279.01	Other expenses:	
Donations	200.00	Coffee- New members	64.29
Equipment	254.88	Mileage-exec asst	591.24
Executive assistant	11,791.74	Signage repair	217.69
Fees:		Total Misc expenses	873.22
L & P Fees	3,661.55	Plaques	64.22
Sandia Heights Services	5,894.44	Refund:	
State corporation	10.00	Dues	5.00
		Refund - Other	30.00
Total Fees	9,565.99	Total Refund	35.00
Gifts	22.79	Storage - off site	88.00
Grit expenses:		Taxes	40.00
Label, sort, film	228.51	Telephone	1,271.32
Labels	110.84	Total Outflows	44,099.41
Postage	850.00	Overall Total	10,975.75
Grit expenses - Misc	7,134.14		
Total Grit expenses	8,323.49		

M
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LETTERS TO THE SHHA BOARD

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



This represents a new section of the Grit aimed at providing SHHA members an opportunity to submit comments and pose questions to your Board. It is also planned to create a new section on the SHHA web page where these comments and questions will be maintained for all to review. There seems to be a series of questions that periodically resurface. Much of this is attributable to new residents to the area who do not have the historical knowledge of the SHHA, the Board and its standing committees, the covenants for the various units within Sandia Heights and how these covenants differ from unit to unit, etc.

While the new Resident's Handbook, the Grit Newspaper and our website are aimed at keeping all Sandia Heights residents informed about the SHHA and the various functions and activities of the SHHA Board, these are all one-way communications - from the SHHA to the homeowners. There has been no vehicle where homeowners and property owners could pose a formal question to the Board and receive a formal answer, with both being published for the benefit of all. This is the intent and purpose of this new section of Grit.

Questions and comments should be mailed to the SHHA Office. We do not guarantee that all comments and questions will be published in the Grit, but all will be responded to and posted on the website. We asked that you keep your questions and comments to the point and that you limit each to a single subject so that a concise answer can be furnished.

The following are two questions recently posed to the SHHA President, Charles Pechewyls:

Q: Why do I have to get approval of a re-stucco when I am just using the same color that is already there?

A: The SHHA has established a pallet of colors for stucco that satisfy the covenants. It is possible that an existing color does not satisfy your covenants - it was re-stuccoed at some time in the past and is not a compliant color. Now that you are ready to re-stucco, why not make sure that your home is in keeping with the covenants? Your neighbors will certainly appreciate it.

Q: Why do I have to comply with the covenants at all? They are not mentioned in my deed.

A: The covenants for each unit were recorded in the records of Bernalillo County prior to homes being built in the unit. A property deed typically says something like, "subject to reservations, restrictions and easements of record..." So our deeds require compliance with items on the public records, such as the covenants, easements for utilities, and easements for drainage. Visit the SHHA web site to look up the covenants for your unit



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Designing and Planting a Hummingbird Garden

By Dan Caudillo

AN INTRODUCTION TO HUMMINGBIRDS

Hummingbirds are not found everywhere in the world. Of the seven continents, they are found only in North and South America. There are about 320 different hummingbird species in the New World, ranging from the cold Andean mountaintops at elevations of 15,000 feet to the hot deserts of the American Southwest. Twenty-four species have been reported in the United States, and they are found in every state except Hawaii.

We are blessed with 17 verified species that visit New Mexico and 2 species that nest here. Ten hummingbird species are found in the Albuquerque area alone. We rank #2 in the United States for total number of species. Only Texas has more with 19.

INTERESTING FACTS

Although some birds can hover, hummers can do it for prolonged periods of time. They also have the ability to fly straight up and down or backwards and forward. Cruising speed ranges from 30 to 40 mph, which is easily doubled if a strong tailwind is present. They can dive at speeds reaching 60 mph.

A hummingbird's body has been modified to process large amounts of sugar to feed its supercharged body engine. They consume half their body weight in nectar and visit from 2000-5000 blossoms daily. Hummers feed from dawn to dusk and are one of the few birds that actively feed during a rainstorm.

HUMMINGBIRD REQUIREMENTS

Hummingbirds have three major requirements - food, water and shelter. Insects and spiders provide proteins for maintenance and growth while nectar supplies carbohydrates for their energy needs of flight and other motions. Water is needed for drinking and bathing. Shelter (trees) provides protection from the elements and predators, and a home for nesting females.

A WORD ABOUT COLOR

Unlike color blind bees and insects, hummingbirds have the ability to see all colors. But they are especially attracted to red and orange and can see them from farther distances. Research shows that certain red and orange flowers produce a higher sugar content than other blooms and hummers will readily seek them out. They are born without any color preference, so the red/orange choice becomes a learned behavior as they mature. Hummingbirds can be taught that other colored blooms can yield a nectar as well.

HUMMINGBIRD FLOWERS

Flowers that attract hummingbirds form a partnership for the benefit of both. The flowers produce a nectar food for the birds, while the hummers transfer pollen to other plants. Cross-pollination produces superior plant offspring. Hummingbird plants discourage insects because the flowers lack fragrance, produce primarily red and orange blooms to which insects are color blind, and lack the physical structures on their flowers to enable insects to land.



Annuals like Snapdragons and Pinks are good for attracting hummingbirds.

Using natural plants has several distinct advantages over feeders. First, the natural nectar of flowers are preferred over sugar solutions. Second, there is no mixing, scrubbing or sterilizing of feeders. Third, there are no unwanted bees, wasps or ants often associated with artificial feeders. Fourth, hummingbird-attracting plants provide a beautiful landscape. But for many situations, using both plants and feeders is a good compromise.

FEEDER PLACEMENT AND TIMING

It is important to set out feeders one week prior to the arrival of hummingbirds and one week after the last one departs.

In Albuquerque, the first hummers arrive around April 2nd and the last leaves October 5th. Several feeders placed outside is better than just one. This keeps bully hummers from monopolizing the entire food source. Place feeders in the shade, out of the wind and high enough to be out of reach of leaping cats.

Adding four parts purified water to one part sugar is considered an ideal mixture for hummingbird feeders. Boil the solution for two minutes to sterilize and retard fermentation and allow to cool. Make enough to fill feeders several times and refrigerate the extra. It's best to change the mixture every 2-4 days, more often in hotter weather. Between refills clean the feeder thoroughly with a 10 to 1 solution of water to bleach or clean with water and vinegar. Use a brush for any dried material and be sure to rinse completely.

MIGRATION

Hummingbirds migrate twice a year in New Mexico. The northern migration occurs in the spring as warm weather causes hummingbird plants to begin blooming. The first plants to flower are located in the warmer areas of southern North America. As blooming progresses northward the birds follow. As fall approaches, cooler weather depletes the nectar supply and the southern migration to Mexico or Central America begins.

MATING AND NESTING

On the northern migration, males arrive several days before the females. When a male finds a location with an ample nectar supply, he defends it against all rival males. Hummingbirds live solitary lives until the females seek out males for breeding. Female broad-tailed hummers prefer to nest in coniferous trees (pinyon, blue spruce, and ponderosa pine) while female black-chinned hummers favor large-leaved, deciduous trees (sugar maple, mulberry and umbrella tree).

Nests are built from 6 to 30 feet above the ground. The hummer selects branches with second year growth to insure stability but not enough to support the weight of a predator. The nests are the size of half a walnut shell and is made of hair, feathers and plant materials. Spider webbing binds everything together and gives the nest flexibility for growing chicks. Normally, the hen lays two small white eggs that measure 1/2 inch long. She incubates the eggs for average of 16 days. Hummingbird chicks are born blind, have immature bills and lack feathers. At first, the mother feeds her young regurgitated insects, then begins



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adding nectar to their diet. After 3 to 4 weeks of hatching, the chicks take flight but the mother continues feeding her young for several more weeks. It's common for the female to build a second nest even before the first brood becomes fully independent. Original nest sites are returned to year after year by the mother or her female offspring.

DESIGNING THE HUMMINGBIRD GARDEN

As earlier stated, New Mexico is one of the nation's premiere hummingbird watching areas. Here in Albuquerque we are blessed with favorable temperatures, a large natural hummer population and a wealth of plants to attract them. A hummingbird garden can be successfully designed for any size space – whether it's a small container garden, a courtyard or a half acre lot. I have confirmed 417 different hummingbird attracting plant species that will grow in our area. Every plant counted has been inventoried at nurseries here in town and in Santa Fe! They are found among seven plant types: trees, shrubs, vines, cacti and semi-succulents, perennials, bulbs, and annuals. An entire garden can be designed using exclusively hummingbird attracting plant. Your home can become a mecca for these delightful creatures. So many, in fact, that it will look like the Los Angeles Airport during the holiday season!

THE LANDSCAPE PLAN

Developing a landscape plan is most prudent step you can take in the entire process. The more time spent on planning your design, the fewer mistakes during installation. And the best time to plan is *right now*, since March and April are still too early for plant availability.

First, select the area where a hummingbird garden can be most appreciated, such as a front entry courtyard, outside the master bedroom or next to a large window. Next, get a large sheet of grid paper (I found it at Cooper Press). Draw in the boundaries of the yard and the adjacent part of the house. (I use the scale of one square equals one square foot of garden space.) Use a pencil so mistakes can be erased. Design the hardscape items first – a flagstone path, a table and chair set, boulders, birdbath, and so on. Don't clutter the garden with too many items.

Make a list of the hummingbird attracting plants that you know and like (maybe autumn sage, trumpet vine, penstemons), then ask a knowledgeable friend or neighbor for their favorites. Visit a nursery and check labels for plants that attract hummers or ask for a catalog (Plants of the Southwest and Bernardo Beach have good ones) or any literature they have. Some books on hummingbirds will provide a list of plants, but they may not grow or be available in New Mexico. List 20 to 30 plants and separate them by type, noting specifics on each such as size, bloom time and color.

Place the plants on the grid plan starting with the tallest which are usually put in the background behind smaller species. Don't overuse trees. They can make a large area seem small in no time. Next add vines and shrubs to the design. Vines on a trellis or arbor look especially nice. Last, smaller plants like perennials, bulbs and annuals make excellent fillers between the larger plants and work well in containers. Determine whether you will be using an irrigation system or not.

Now review the plan and ask yourself the following questions. Have I included the hardscape items I wanted without using too many? Do I have a good selection of different plant types? When the garden matures will it be too crowded? Will there be blooms occurring throughout the growing season? Are there a variety of bloom colors? Have I supplied the three primary hummingbird needs? If the answers are yes, your well-designed plan is ready to install.

INSTALLING THE GARDEN

Mid to late spring is an excellent time to implement your plan. Temperatures are mild enough to find a nice selection of plants at the nurseries, but not too hot to stress the new plantings. Installation follows the same order as the designing – hardscape items are placed first. Plant taller species before the shrubs and vines, then add perennials, bulbs and annuals. Most plants do best with a half and half soil to planting mix ratio. Be sure to have a basin around plants to insure a deep soaking. The first year, keep plants moist. The following year reduce the frequency of water and fertilize normally. *



Above, pottery patches of alluring color.

Front to back, Coral Bells, Red Yucca, Cherry Sage and Butterfly Bush line an entry drive.



Above left, Wisteria blooms in early spring and catches the eye of the newly arriving hummer.

Above right, a Bird of Paradise tree over Pinleaf Penstemon.



Bearded Iris and Petunia can fill a fountain or birdbath with an inviting waterfall of color.

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Summary: Proposed County Wastewater Ordinance



Introduction

The existing Bernalillo County Code regarding wastewater has been found to be inadequate in many areas and does not address other identified problems in order to protect individual's health and to keep the groundwater from becoming contaminated. In the following paragraphs, the major differences between the present code and the proposed new code are explained.

Prescriptive vs. Performance-Based

The present County Code focuses on preventing sewage from inadequate or failed septic systems from surfacing. And thereby preventing the exposure of humans to this sewage. To accomplish this, the present code relies on a prescriptive approach. That is, it requires 1) that four (4) feet of soil be provided between the bottom of the drainfield and the groundwater or bedrock, 2) that the sewage not surface on the ground, and 3) that a septic tank be used. If the system can meet these three requirements - regardless of how well or how poorly it treats the wastewater - a permit may be issued.

The proposed new code is a performance-based ordinance. This means that, in addition to preventing surfacing sewage, the wastewater treatment systems must treat wastewater to a specific quality. The main emphasis of the proposed new ordinance is to require better treatment of wastewater in those areas most sensitive to groundwater contamination. The proposed new ordinance does not specify how this will be done, but gives the public the latitude of installing the system that best meets their needs, while still protecting the groundwater.

In designing wastewater treatment systems, the level of treatment required is based on the vulnerability of the groundwater. The easier it is for wastewater to reach the groundwater, the more the wastewater needs to be treated.

Product Approval

Under the existing County Code, alternative wastewater treatment products are not evaluated to determine how well they treat wastewater. Each is considered to be equivalent to a septic tank. Therefore, there are no allowances granted for providing better treatment.

Under the proposed new code, a wastewater treatment product will be evaluated prior to

the product being sold in Bernalillo County. During this review process the level of treatment provided by the product will be determined.

Maintenance Requirements and Operator Permits

Under the existing County Code there is no management plan outlining how a wastewater system should be installed, operated and maintained. Once the Bernalillo County Environmental Health Department has performed a final inspection, the system is not re-inspected to verify that the system continues to operate properly. The system is re-inspected only when a complaint is received.

With the proposed new code, the owner of the system would be shown how to properly operate the wastewater system. With each change in property ownership, the new owner would be shown how to properly operate the system. A maintenance contractor would periodically inspect, clean and repair the wastewater system and, after each inspection, would submit a report to the owner and to the Bernalillo County Environmental Health Department. The Environmental Health Department scientists would then review the reports and randomly spot check the maintenance contractors by inspecting some of the wastewater systems themselves.

Sewer Connection

The present County Code requires that any developed property within 200 feet of a sewer line be connected to the sewer line. However, it does not specify how soon the property must be connected to the sewer line after it is in place. It also does not take into account that there may be reasons why it is not possible to connect the property to the sewer line.

The proposed new ordinance requires that developed property be connected to the sewer line within one (1) year of the sewer line becoming available and, in any case, before the property can be sold. It also takes into account that an easement may be needed prior to connection.

Existing Lots

Under the present code, new wastewater systems, or existing systems that are modified or replaced, must come into compliance with the most current code.

The proposed new code adds that all systems must come into compliance with the most current code no later than January 1, 2015.

Community Wastewater Systems

Under the present code, the County does not have jurisdiction over wastewater systems larger than 2,000 gallons per day. (The equivalent amount of wastewater from 4 or more homes.) These systems are currently regulated only by the State of New Mexico Environment Department's Groundwater Bureau.

Under the proposed new code, Bernalillo County would also regulate these systems.

Requirement of an Engineer's Stamp

Under the present County Code, whether a professional engineer is needed to design a wastewater system depends on the type of wastewater system used. A professional engineer's stamp has been required for some single-family residences.


Under the proposed new code, a professional engineer's stamp would not be required for wastewater systems serving a single-family residence. A professional engineer may be requested if the wastewater system will treat commercial wastewater, and a professional engineer would be required for all systems treating over 2,000 gallons per day.

Certification

Under the existing code, site evaluators and maintenance contractors are not required to have any specific training. Installers must have the appropriate State issued plumbing license.

The proposed new code provides for the establishment of a certification program within one (1) year of the adoption of this ordinance. During this year a training program will be established to train site evaluators on how to properly perform a site characterization; train system evaluators on how to properly determine if a wastewater system is working; train installers on how to install the more advanced wastewater systems; and to train maintenance contractors how to properly inspect and repair the wastewater systems. Those who receive this training and pass the examinations will be granted certification.

based ordinance: This means that, in addition to preventing surfacing sewage, the wastewater treatment systems must treat wastewater to a specific quality. The main emphasis of the proposed new ordinance is to require better treatment of wastewater in those areas most sensitive to groundwater contamination. The proposed new ordinance does not specify how this will be done, but gives the public the latitude of installing the system that best meets their needs, while still protecting the groundwater.



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Hamburger is Harmful to Our Roadrunners

Roadrunners and their babies will be healthier if you do not feed them.

Hamburger is full of fat and even the lean variety has very little value. The calcium/phosphorus ratio is not in balance. It is extremely high in phosphorus, about 1:15. The ratio should be a balance of 2:1, with calcium higher.

Adult roadrunners eat a variety of whole foods like insects, lizards, snakes, small rodents, small adult birds, and yes even baby birds. From 65% to 85% of the baby birds each season do not survive to adulthood. Reason? They are food for other critters.

THE PROBLEM - By feeding a steady diet of hamburger to the adult roadrunners, their babies develop rickets. Rickets is a deficiency condition that results in adequate deposition of calcium in developing cartilage and newly formed bone, causing abnormalities in shape and structure of bones. When adult roadrunners are accustomed to hamburger balls, they will go right down the "block" getting freebies to take back to their babies. It's a steady source of food, easier to get than the wild diet. Because their antics are enjoyable to watch, many residents have plenty of hamburger ready to feed them. But please don't.

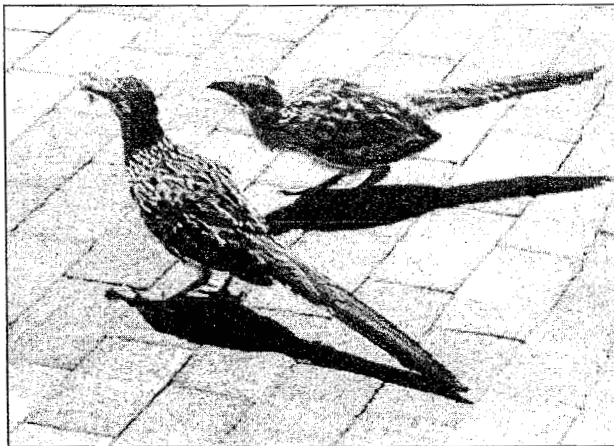
There are other ways to attract these marvelous birds:

- Having water available at all times will help to keep them coming around. In summer, put the water in the shade so it won't get too hot.
- Remember that the roadrunner is an excellent source for rodent and insect control. By not feeding them inappropriate food, you will find fewer unwanted critters invading your domain.

Remember, when baby roadrunners are brought in for help, their bones can be so weak and deformed from bad diets that they cannot walk or fly and must be euthanized.

Be part of the solution. Enjoy them when they do come around but don't encourage them with hamburger. You will feel better knowing you are not part of the problem.

From an article by The Wild Bird Center



Roadrunner moms feeding their young raw hamburger on our patios is a wonderful sight but a dangerous replacement of their natural diet.

New Development

By **George Hight** - SHHA New Development, Chair



No report submitted.

Committee Members:

Melanie Christman, John Keller, Barbara Rosnagle,
Mary Westpfahl

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Sandia Happenings

By Carolyn Hindel – Grit Editor

Development at Cedar Hill and Tramway in Planning

By Charlotte Norwood – Sandia Heights Resident

The last parcel of land in our area along Tramway Boulevard is about to be developed. The lovely 3.7266-acre tract at the corner of Cedar Hill and Tramway will be the subject of a hearing before the Extraterritorial Land Use Commission (ELUC) on March 1st, during which a petition by Countryside Properties to construct nineteen residences on this land will be considered (Case SC5 990012 Cedar Hills).

Homeowners in the area have mounted a campaign to instead have this plot acquired by the county and established as a parkland for the use of all residents. We are comfortable with the need for such a park. With the exception of Little Cloud park at the corner of San Bernardino and Tramway (one mile to the south), Sandia Heights has no established recreational area. An unofficial count recently determined that there are at least 1100 homes that would be served by such a facility. The county standard calls for approximately two acres per thousand residents with a zero to one-mile service radius. With the Tramway bike and walking trail on its west border, it is obvious this park would also serve as a convenient stopping place for users of that popular attraction.

It has been ascertained that the owner of the subject property would be willing to sell and he has provided an asking price. Bernalillo County officials have indicated their agreement that the corner of Cedar Hill and Tramway Boulevard is a logical place for a park and they are in favor of one at this site. State Senator William S. Davis has written in a letter to several area residents that he has filed a Capital Outlay Request for \$100,000 for land acquisition for this project. It is unclear whether or not this request will be funded.

Thus the problem, as always, is funding. Homeowners are currently investigating the possibility of assistance from the Bernalillo County Capital Improvements Program. **A meeting will be held at the Sheriff's substation at Eubank and Holly on March 23rd, at 7 pm, for the purpose of placing requests for area projects.** Representatives will be present to make the case for a park facility at Cedar Hill and Tramway. Should this effort fail, another consideration may be a bond issue which would be voted on by the public. But time is a concern. Representatives will attend the ELUC hearing to request that the case be deferred, since concerns the residents have had in the past regarding the development planned at this site have not as yet been satisfied.

Sandia Black Bear Update



In 1999 the Sandia and Manzano mountains had lots of summer rains. But we had essentially no snow in the winter of 1998, which resulted in a near-zero acorn crop for the fall of '99. Acorns are the main source of food for bears in the fall. Acorns fatten bears up and sustain them through the winter months while they are in a semi-hibernation state in their dens. They come down to the lower elevations because of low food supplies due to drought conditions. La Nina is expected to stay with us and could mean continued bad conditions for our bear this year.

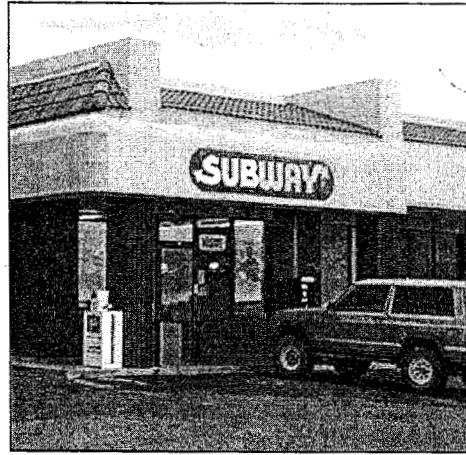
HUNT DATA: BearWatch called NM Game & Fish to ascertain available data on 1999 bear harvest results. It appears that about 220-240 bears were killed in the last hunt. Only 48 were females, a very low 22%, compared with historical ratios (around 40%). On the plus side, this is below the 250 maximum to ensure a stable bear population. On the minus side, after many years of high harvests, it could signal a drop in the NM bear population. Data will be examined.

Mailbox Vandalism Increases

By John Pickering – Sandia Heights Services Manager

Recently there has been a rash of mailbox vandalism in the community. We at the Security office are aware of the problem and are employing several tactics to catch the perpetrators. The Sheriff's office has promised additional patrols in the most affected areas and we have instituted a "triple watch" in those areas where the pattern of vandalism appears to be concentrated. Additionally, we have posted an unmarked vehicle to watch these areas on Friday and Saturday nights, which is when the vast majority of the occurrences are taking place.

The best way to combat this type of activity, however, is with community involvement. We encourage all of you to take an active part in helping the Sheriff's department and Sandia Heights Security Service by reporting suspicious persons or vehicles to our office at 856-6547. We ask your help in our continuing efforts to keep this a safe and pleasant community in which to live.



New Subway Owners Sensitive to Our Covenants

Welcome to our new neighbors, **David and Milessa Gonzales**, new owners of the Subway on San Rafael and Tramway! David is a 1987 graduate of Eldorado High School and his wife, Milessa, is a graduate of Del Norte High School. David grew up in Sandia Heights, where his mother is still a resident.

David and Milessa bought the Subway store in January and are eager to be good neighbors. David's first gesture of neighborliness was to install a trash receptacle outside the restaurant, an issue that had been requested of the previous owner by the Covenant Committee and residents for years. David is also aware of continuing concerns about the store's bright yellow awning, and plans to change it to a more discrete Subway sign in the near future. Do stop in and welcome David and Milessa to our community!



David Gonzales and his wife are new owners of the Subway sandwich shop on Tramway and San Rafael.

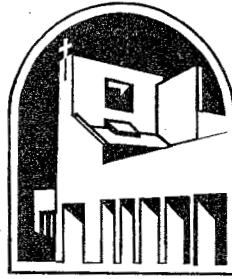
Grit Editor Awarded for Community Service

By Melanie Christman – Community Services Committees Chair

At a recent Albuquerque Environmental Health Department banquet, Carolyn Hindel was named recipient of the Fall 1999 Community Service Award. Dr. Rudy Bueno Jr., Ph.D. cited her continuing efforts as editor of The Grit, to help get the department's environmental message to the residents of Sandia Heights; especially the timely dissemination of information regarding wildlife and pest activity in the foothills. Understanding the "nature" of the area and how to deal with it is critical to the health and well being of both residents and wildlife. The Department is grateful to Carolyn and SHHA for providing the link that will contribute to that harmony in this very special neighborhood.



Carolyn Hindel, Grit editor at large, in greater Los Angeles.



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Traffic & Safety



By Irene Middleton
SHHA Traffic & Safety Committee, Chair

As the new year begins we hope to get more accomplished in the neighborhood. We get lots of promises, but not much action from the county on issues that concern us.

COMCAST CABLE intends to continue improvement of their cable and replace some of their boxes. We hope that they will be more sympathetic to the natural ambience of our Sandia Heights community. They have to move some boxes that were placed previously to comply with County regulations concerning line of sight. We are told that the areas to be affected this time are Cougar Loop and 1507-1510 Eagle Ridge Road. If you have any questions concerning their planned activity, please call Ms. Karen Shore, Communications Coordinator at 761-6241.

HOUSE NUMBERS still remain an important issue. We hope to be able to offer several vendors from which to order them for your residence. I understand that years ago someone came around offering a reflective sign to residents. Anyone recalling who that was, please let me know at 821-6343. The signs are quite attractive and very functional.

Let's Slow Down!

Two speeding vehicles and a pedestrian were involved in another accident recently on Live Oak. Petitions and requests to have speed bumps installed have been submitted, and thus far no action has been taken.

The county and sheriff's department are the ultimate authority, but we as residents must take more responsibility for our reckless and unsafe driving habits. To echo an officer of the sheriff's department who was at the scene; "a number of people were very lucky here this evening." Let's slow down!



NEW!!!

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PLANT OF THE SEASON



Trumpet Vine
Campsis radicans

Trumpet Vine (*Campsis radicans*) is a deciduous vine with a vigorous growth habit to 30 feet or more. Compound leaves are composed of 7-11 serrated leaflets. Large 3 inch, orange tubular flowers occur in clusters of 6-12 blooms. A heavy bloomer in mid-summer to early fall attracts hummingbirds. In fact, Trumpet Vine is native to the eastern United States and Texas. It is cold hardy to -30°F and can be planted anywhere in New Mexico. Plant in full sun to part shade.

Planting: Dig a hole twice the size of the root ball and mix one part planting soil with one part native soil. Build a berm with soil 18 inches around the base of the plant. Fill the basin twice with water to insure a deep soaking. For the first two weeks keep the plant moist. As time passes, decrease the frequency of water but increase the amount of water given. How often to water depends on many factors, such as time of year planted, weather conditions, etc.

Trumpet Vine is borderline drought tolerant but performs best with regular waterings, especially during the blooming period. Deep soak established plants every 10-14 days during the growing season and monthly in winter.

Recommended Use: Trumpet Vine, as with all vines, have a unique use in the garden. They can be planted on slopes, trained on a trellis or arbor, and cascade over walls. It is one of the few vines with the ability to cling on block or stucco walls. Occasionally, old stems need to be thinned out to control the growth. This is an excellent plant for hummingbird gardens.

Related Species *Campsis radicans* "Flava" is a yellow blooming cultivar. The popular vine, Mme. Galen Trumpet Vine (*Campsis tagliabuana* "Mme. Galen") is a hybrid cross between Trumpet Vine and Chinese Trumpet Creeper (*Campsis grandiflora*).

If you have questions regarding this plant, call Dan Caudillo at 856-6617.

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Telecommunications Towers Precedent set by NAACA

By Bonnie Harley – President, NAACA

Last November, the North Albuquerque Acres Community Association (NAACA) Board received notice from the County that AT&T had applied for a Concealed Wireless Telecommunications Facility permit at The Church of the Good Shepherd on Tennyson NE. AT&T wanted to place a freestanding, 16" in diameter, 50 ft. "flag pole" structure and equipment enclosure on the church property.

After reviewing the application, the board decided to file an appeal to the Extraterritorial Land Use Commission (ELUC). There were no variance signs posted because they were granted permission to place their tower at this location via an "administrative decision" made by the Bernalillo County Zoning, Building and Planning Director. After looking into this matter, it was discovered that this procedure is okay if it is a permissive use for that zoning. In this case, the property is zoned R-2 and a "Concealed Wireless Telecommunications Facility" is a permissive use. If this tower were considered "not concealed" this would not have been a permissive use in R-2 zoning and would have required a variance or the facility would not have been allowed.

NAACA did appeal the administrative decision based upon the definition of "concealed." The newly approved County Ordinance #213, Bernalillo County Code, Appendix A, Regulations for Telecommunications Towers, Antennas and Related Facilities, contains the criteria for a "concealed" facility. It must be architecturally integrated with an existing building, it cannot be a dominant silhouette and it must be located on an existing vertical infrastructure. NAACA felt that this flag pole/tower did not meet any of the criteria for a "concealed" facility. In fact, this type of structure would be considered a "Wireless Telecommunications Tower," – a freestanding pole which was not a permissive use.

This is significant to our entire neighborhood because these poles of "facilities" must be located every 2 to 2.5 miles. The two cell phone companies entering the Albuquerque market and installing their equipment are AT&T and US West. This was a test case under the new Ordinance and would have set a precedent in our area. Based upon the required spacing of these poles and the fact that two companies need to locate within our area, we are due to have at least four of these "facilities" within our boundaries.

The ELUC agreed with our position and unanimously denied their permit application. Subsequently, AT&T has resubmitted a new design showing that their equipment will be located in the roof parapets of the church. The parapets will be raised 6 feet and the equipment will be completely enclosed. US West has applied for a permit to have a facility at the same location. They are planning to locate their equipment in the church bell tower, raising the tower by 5 feet – again completely enclosed. No further challenge to these applications is anticipated. Kudos to Sandia Heights Homeowners Association and John Keller for their help with this issue.

The NAACA has a new web site. Check out development along Pasco del Norte, South Domingo Baca Dam or La Cueva parks at

<http://www.naaca.org>

Y2K Reflections

By Sandra Cline



I am relieved and pleased that the y2k computer glitch landed with a soft thud. The experience taught us all a lot about preparedness. Emergency response teams across the nation admit that their readiness has significantly improved as a result of analyzing possible threats posed by y2k issues. I toured the county EOC (911 center) on 12/31/99. The quiet "behavioral" aspects around the city, and the world as a whole, on that special night was reason enough to rejoice.

Given all of the information we had at our disposal, the effort put into our community preparedness task force. The idea of having reserves and being ready for emergencies is a sound one, whether it be for a natural disaster, a job lay-off, or something else unforeseen.

As y2k loomed, our national government, for the first time ever, recommended that all citizens prepare to be self-sufficient for several days. It gives me a good feeling to know that had the pendulum swung the other way I, and other SH residents, had the ability to help our neighbors through a crisis. Our efforts could be compared to investing in an insurance policy.

The y2k issue has pulled our community together in many ways, not the least of which is an emergency communications system that has been proven to work. Also, we now have alternate power at our water source. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to the multitude of men and women who spent countless hours fixing problems associated with the date change. At the New Year's Eve party I attended, a toast was made to Scott Witschger and his team at PNM.

Those of you who stocked up for y2k have the added benefit of eating your investment, but I'd like to offer an additional, alternative way to put any excess stores to good use. I recently met some of the good folks at Roadrunner Food Bank and they would appreciate a donation of any size. Almost 27,000 cubic feet of commercial freezer and cooler space allow the food bank to accept and store all kinds of donated food. Peggy Miller was my charming tour guide of Roadrunner's 32,000 sq. ft. warehouse and distribution center. (She also is a Sandia Heights resident.) Peggy explained that more than 150,000 people seek help from emergency feeding programs in New Mexico each year; most of those encompass the elderly, children, and the working poor.

New Mexico ranks number one among the 50 states regarding need and the hungry. Roadrunner Food Bank distributes nearly 4 million pounds of food (20,000 pounds every working day) to more than 225 agencies around the state. These organizations include churches, soup kitchens, shelters, the American Red Cross and many others. Roadrunner acts as an umbrella to these agencies so that the food is there when it's time to serve each individual or family.

Even with all the hard work now taking place, only one third of the total hunger needs in New Mexico are met. Maybe the extra storage of y2k supplies that many people still have could be viewed as a Godsend, an opportunity to improve those grim statistics. As well as food, Roadrunner welcomes paper goods and unopened over-the-counter medications. Please consider a donation. If you have no y2k excess or have eaten it all, just put together an extra bag of groceries (earmarked for Roadrunner) next time you shop.

The warehouse is easy to find: Take Gibson to Yale (as if you were headed for the airport), go left off of Yale at the Waffle House restaurant, take the fork in the road to the right and you'll soon see Roadrunner on your left towards the end of the street. You can call for updated operating hours at 247-2052. Peggy Miller's line is extension 101.

God Bless all of you who decide to support Roadrunner Food Bank. (Ongoing support, of course, is also needed.) Thanks also to all of you in Sandia Heights who supported me in coordinating community emergency preparedness. So many of you gave of yourselves in countless ways ... you know who you are! Ron and I are so very grateful for the rich friendships we have made over the past year. In that way, the y2k issue was a true gift. May each of you have wonderful, grand adventures over this next year and century!



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Celebrating St. Pat's Day

By Patricia Aaron - Home Economist
Cooperative Extension Service, NM State University



Although the origin of corned beef goes back to the 16th century, its traditional use in America on St. Patrick's Day is more recent. Thanks to a cartoon character named Jiggs in the popular comic strip "Bringing Up Father," Americans adopted corned beef and cabbage as the holiday's official dish. However, if you'd like to celebrate the Y2K holiday with a different dish, read on.

Cookery in the land of shamrocks and leprechauns is uncomplicated, with wholesome and superb ingredients. A traditional supper from an Irish larder includes "Meat and Three," which on the Emerald Isle means more than just meat and three vegetables. Mounds of fresh Irish Soda Bread and side dishes using cruciferous vegetables like cabbage and Brussels sprouts and root vegetables like carrots, turnips, parsnips, rutabagas and potatoes are common on Irish tables. The Irish rely heavily on the potato, because they like it and it is an easily produced crop.

Tea, rather than coffee, is a popular drink. Folks enjoy a cup of strong tea for breakfast, midday dinner, afternoon tea and evening supper. The standard strong drink is Irish coffee, a beverage invented at Shannon Airport, Ireland. Hot coffee served in a glass is liberally spiked with Irish whiskey and topped with whipped cream.

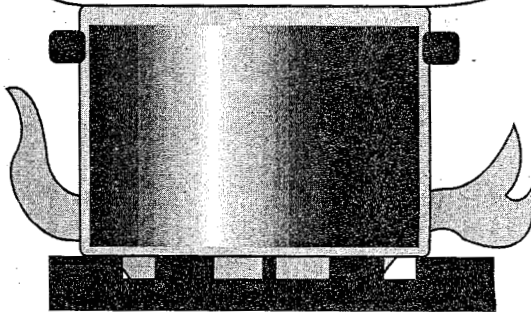
Classic Irish Stew is made only with lean and tender lamb, onions and potatoes. It is essential to use good meat to make a real Irish stew, as the meat should take only as long to cook as do the sliced potatoes. If older meat is used, partially cook beforehand. The potatoes at the bottom should dissolve, absorb the meat juices and be creamy and just moist. The addition of carrots or any other vegetables renders it a "stew" only.

So as those March winds blow, in honor of St. Patrick's Day, prepare supper for your special *caraid* - an Irish term of endearment for a loved one. Before you know it you can have Irish Stew bubbling in the kitchen. How lucky can one get?

Irish Stew

12 medium-size Irish potatoes, peeled
4 large onions, sliced 1/2 in. thick
3 lbs. lamb cubes
8 oz. thick-sliced bacon, cut in 1/2 in. pieces
1 tsp. dried leaf of thyme
3 Tbs. minced fresh parsley
2 tsp. salt
1 tsp. pepper
3 cups beef or lamb broth
1 bay leaf

Preheat oven to 350°F. Slice half of potatoes; layer in bottom of a deep 3-quart Dutch oven or casserole dish. Layer half of onions over potatoes. Arrange lamb and bacon over onions. Sprinkle with thyme, parsley, 1/2 tsp. salt and 1/2 tsp. pepper. Cover with remaining onions. Arrange remaining whole potatoes over onions. Pour over broth. Sprinkle with remaining salt and pepper. Tuck bay leaf into mixture. Bake covered 2-1/2 hours or until lamb is very tender and bottom potatoes have cooked down to make sauce. Discard bay leaf. **Makes 6 servings.**



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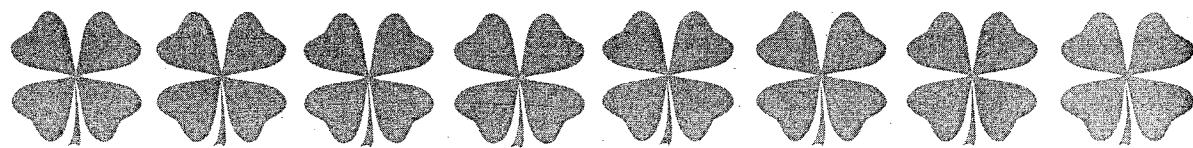
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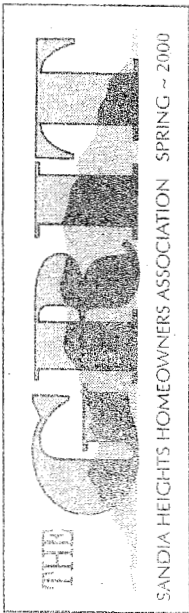
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SHHA 6th Annual Wine Tasting March 18th

We are looking forward to seeing many of our residents at the SHHA 6th Annual Wine Tasting. Last year close to 140 persons attended. We'd like to beat that record this year! It will be held on March 18th at Futures for Children, 9600 Tennyson NE from 5:00 to 7:00 PM.

This has become the social event of the year here in Sandia Heights. National Distributing Company, here in Albuquerque will provide an extensive list of wines including some very special vintages. There will be music, hors d'oeuvres, and a great opportunity to meet and visit with friends and neighbors. We are again asking your help in providing some of the appetizers. Bring one of your favorites, along with a written recipe that will be published in The Grit throughout the year.

If you have not yet registered for this event, please do so...you don't want to miss out on the fun! At only \$8.00 per person, it's a bargain! **Please send in your reservation form (see below) by March 14th.** Tickets cannot be sold at the door. See you there!!!

Inside...

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- 18 Irish Stew
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Amount enclosed _____ (\$8 per person) Please check this box if you are bringing an Hors d'oeuvres dish!

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