

THE GRIT

Sandia Heights Homeowners Association

December 2005

President's Message: **HAPPY HOLIDAYS!**



Occasional Legal Necessity

In past numerous articles the importance of enforcing the covenants and maintaining the high standards of Sandia Heights community has been stressed. Enforcement can sometimes get complicated and the Sandia Heights Homeowners Association (SHHA) has on a few occasions had to resort to legal action to ensure protection of our neighborhood. This legal approach has never been a desired action but, when it is found to be necessary, SHHA has been and will continue to be willing to devote the appropriate funds to pay for good legal representation. The SHHA will consider initiation of legal action for enforcement of the covenants, on behalf of a unit's property owners, based on the following criteria: severity of the violation, inability to clear up the violation by routine methods and procedures, and the availability of funds. SHHA would much rather spend its money in other ways, but the protection of the property values in Sandia Heights is very important to all of us. It is fortunate and with good reason, that SHHA has been successful on matters of litigation and has never lost a case. SHHA will continue to enforce the covenants; and, with your help, we will maintain the high standards of our Sandia Heights community. Encouraging membership in SHHA is one way to help our community address these issues.

New Wastewater Treatment Ordinance

On November 8, 2005, the Bernalillo County Commission preliminarily approved stricter rules for wastewater (septic system) treatment. This was the first reading of the new ordinance. The public has 30 days in which to respond to the proposed new rules. This action was taken as a result of the State of New Mexico passing in September 2005 of new laws requiring stricter rules for wastewater and wastewater treatment. If your system is functioning properly, you have until January 1, 2015, to comply with the revised ordinance. However if you modify or replace your wastewater system, or sell your home, you must comply with the new ordinance after its acceptance which, if passed, will take effect in January or February 2006.

Compliance can be achieved in several ways, depending on lot size and bedroom count. Some of the acceptable solutions range from simple filters to aerator pumps, small processing systems (Nitrate depletion), or even holding tanks. Some of these solutions can be quite expensive.

SHHA was approached by the Bernalillo County/City of Albuquerque Sewer Authority to consider running a sewer system to the Sandia Heights homes that are on septic tanks. This would require establishment of an assessment district to fund the sewer system. Cost without state or county funding or both will be very costly. There are no plans at this time to form an assessment district.

SHHA is working aggressively to learn more about the regulations. The pros and cons of requesting a variance for Sandia Heights is being investigated with the help of our county commissioner and state representative. We have established an ad hoc committee, headed by SHHA member Bob Francis, to stay close to the issue and communicate as much as we can. SHHA is reviewing the proposed ordinance and will provide input to the county commissioners in the next 30 days.

This issue, like many others, affects all of Sandia Heights. If you are not a member of SHHA we encourage you to join to help us protect our property values. If you have any questions regarding your system, you should contact a certified wastewater company, or call the Bernalillo County Office of Environmental Health at 314-0333.

MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT

CASH FLOW – November 2005	
RECEIVED	
2006 Directory Ads	\$7,986.24
2006 Grit Ads	\$10,799.75
2006 Little Grit Ads	\$3,992.56
ACC	\$275.00
Member Dues	\$12,001.25
Total Received	\$35,054.80
EXPENSES	
<u>Committee Expense</u>	
CS & Membership	
Halloween party	\$331.00
Legal Expenses	\$2,332.58
<u>Office Expense</u>	
Comcast	\$60.25
Paper	\$68.91
Telephone	\$104.48
Electricity	\$70.57
Office Lease	\$971.59
Website updates	\$300.23
Postage Stamps	\$459.89
Security	\$11.61
Total Office Expense	\$2,047.53
Office Staff	\$3,108.51
Sandia Services	\$1,425.09
Total Disbursed	\$9,244.71
Received less disbursed	\$25,810.09

Condition November 30, 2005	
Cash in Banks	
Checking	\$75,112.15
CD	\$35,777.36
CD 2	\$10,138.25
Petty Cash	\$124.32
Total Cash in Bank	\$121,152.08
Other Assets (at Cost)	
Computers & software	\$2,224.81
Due from Advertising Sold	\$0.00
Event Signs	\$164.54
Holiday Decorations	\$77.25
Inv Glass/Mugs	\$309.54
Office Accessories	\$1,207.06
Office Furniture	\$175.64
Postage in meter	\$212.49
Postage Bulk	\$779.00
Prepaid expense	\$300.00
Prepaid Rent	\$880.00
Security Deposits	\$1,075.75
Total Other Assets	\$7,406.08
Total Assets	\$128,558.16
Liabilities	
Prepaid Advertising	\$1,938.67
Legal Reserve	\$50,000.00
Total Liabilities	\$51,938.67
Cash in Banks	\$69,213.41

A Helping Hand

We have heard many stories of Sandia Heights residents contributing to the recent disasters in the south and on the other side of the world. These contributions have varied from financial donations (both large and small), sponsorship of displaced families, onsite volunteer work and even in communication support by local Amateur Radio operators. Our community should be proud that it can and does pitch in when the need arises.

– Ed Whitten



COMMUNITY SERVICE & MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

-Vicki Criel, Chair

The First Sandia Heights Coffeehouse will take place on Sat., January 14, 7:30 p.m. at the Church of the Good Shepherd. The performers are the internationally renowned duo Acoustic Eidolon.

This remarkable duo is in town for a concert January 13 at Windchime on Central Ave. (downtown) and the Sandia Heights Homeowners Association is extremely fortunate to be able to present them in a special concert for Sandia Heights residents on Saturday, January 14.

Friends and relatives of Sandia Heights residents are welcome to attend, and we are also inviting the Church of the Good Shepherd congregation, but we have promised not to compete with AMP Concert's January 13 show (www.abqmusic.com). Our concert will only be publicized in the GRIT, the Church of the Good Shepherd newsletter, and via flyers at the church and at local businesses.

Hannah and Joe perform music from Bach to the Beatles on cello and Joe's unique double-neck guitjo, built exclusively for him. They have performed at such venues as the Kennedy Center in DC, St. Paul's Cathedral in London, and the Spandau Theatre in Berlin, Germany. Their recordings have been featured on NPR's "All Things Considered." They have also performed in Albuquerque's own "Summer Nights" series at the BioPark. Read about them and listen to their music on www.acousticeidolon.com.

A donation bucket will be at the entrance, and donations of \$15 will be suggested but not mandatory, and attendees may contribute what they can afford. Money collected, after

deduction of our few expenses, will go to the artists, who normally receive a substantial performance fee.

Coffee, teas, and desserts will be available. This will be an alcohol-free event that may be enjoyed by people of all ages.

We need a few volunteers to help the day of the show. Please contact Coffeehouse Chair Linda Bolton at 856-7100 or via email, nlightsmgt@aol.com. Kerney Bolton, who has extensive sound experience and a complete professional sound system, can use a couple of volunteers with strong backs to help set up sound. Contact Kerney at 856-7120 or kernarch@aol.com.

This will be the first of what is hoped to be many Sandia Heights coffeehouses, taking advantage of national and international artists' appearances in Albuquerque.



PARKS AND NEW DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

- Mark Boslough, Acting Chair

Walking Path Along San Bernardino

We have received a commitment from the county to contribute matching funds for a cost-share walking path paving project that will connect the deadend sidewalk at Little Cloud Park to Tramway Lane, providing an important pedestrian access link from our neighborhoods to the pathway along Tramway Blvd. The Board has approved reserve funding in the 2006 budget to pay for our share of the project, and actual allocation will be up for vote at our January 11 meeting. Funding for this project will demonstrate to the county that we are

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committed to such improvements, and put us in a better position to receive Capital Improvement Project funds for other improvements in the future.

National Forest Access

The 2006 budget also includes reserve funding to begin research to acquire an easement for traditional access (pedestrian, non-motorized) to the National Forest open space directly from Sandia Heights. We hope to work with a boundary lot owner to obtain permanent access from the neighborhoods.

Capital Improvement Project Opportunity

We are seeking volunteers to help write Capital Improvement Project proposals. We have been informed that North Albuquerque Acres gets most of the money for our region because their members attend the meetings and are active in writing proposals. Sandia Heights did not participate last time around, two years ago. This is your tax money. If our San Bernardino walking path project is successful, we will be in a good position to get more funding for future projects along those lines.

School Bus Stop Improvement Competition

The SHHA has allocated \$200 to improve a school bus stop in Sandia Heights so children can have a safer and more pleasant wait every morning. We will be accepting proposals from SHHA members until February 1, 2006. We will award \$200 toward improving an existing bus stop. This project was inspired by the neighborly park bench that was installed by a resident on the corner of Rockrose and San Rafael.

RULES:

* Projects must be collaborations between the homeowner closest to the bus stop and

one or more parents of children who use the stop.

* Participants must be SHHA members.

* Submission of a 1-page description of the project, with a sketch, list of children who use the stop, and signatures of the collaborators with addresses and phone numbers.

CRITERIA:

* Enhanced safety, neighborhood harmony, low maintenance requirement, and appeal to children.

* Number of children who use the stop every morning.

The winner will be announced in March, 2006.

Special Liaison Committee

- Don Wortman, Chair

VANDALS HIT "\$1.50 CLEANERS"

Early on the morning of Sept. 21 vandals damaged the "\$1.50 Cleaners" to the tune of \$10,000. They went on a rampage, breaking everything. To the Sheriff's Deputies investigating they seemed intent on closing down this new business. They broke the dry cleaning machine, scattered the claim tickets outside and even went so far as to take the photo of the owners – Beth and Dave Eisenhower, along with their young son - and smashing it.

They entered the store through front windows that face Tramway. By extraordinary effort by the Eisenhowers, and the fast help of repair and maintenance companies, they were back in operation within 24 hours.

The next night there was an aborted attempt to break into the Phillip's 66 station. A panel of glass was broken and set off the station's alarm system. The vandals seemed to have stopped at that point.

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The Architectural Control Committee (ACC) Needs Your Help!

Please help us do a better job by completing this questionnaire. We won't get a big head if you praise us and we promise not to sulk if you blast us. Please be brutally honest!

Reminder: The Architectural Control Committee (ACC) enforces the covenants for new construction, additions, pools, walls, fences, and landscaping. The ACC does not regulate homeowner offensive activities such as in-home business, improper trash or garbage disposal, trailer, boat, junk car storage etc. These are regulated by the Covenant Support Committee (CSC).

How important is it to you for the ACC to enforce the following, even if it infringes on your ability to build on your own property. (Please circle your answer.)

1. Building heights and property line setbacks?
Very . . . Somewhat . . . Not at all
2. Wall and fence heights and locations?
Very . . . Somewhat . . . Not at all
3. Detached building size, location, and appearance?
Very . . . Somewhat . . . Not at all
4. Structures in harmony with their surroundings?
Very . . . Somewhat . . . Not at all
5. Natural vegetation, drought tolerance, non-allergenic plants?
Very . . . Somewhat . . . Not at all
6. Undue view obstruction caused by construction?
Very . . . Somewhat . . . Not at all
7. Undue view obstruction caused by trees?
Very . . . Somewhat . . . Not at all
8. The spirit and intent of the covenants to protect property values?
Very . . . Somewhat . . . Not at all
9. The spirit and intent of the covenants to protect the interest, welfare, and rights of the homeowners of Sandia Heights?
Very . . . Somewhat . . . Not at all

What best fits your evaluation of the ACC's past performance? (Please circle your answer.)

Outstanding . . . Good . . . Controls more than it misses . . . Misses more than it controls . . . Useless

Please provide your personal comments on the responsibilities and authority of the Architectural Control Committee. (use other side)

Please fold and mail or drop off at the SHHA Office. Thank You !!!!

Staple/tape here

Comments

Place postage here

Sandia Heights Homeowners Association – ACC
2-B San Rafael Ave.
Albuquerque, NM 87122

Fold

Staple/tape here

Vandal's continued from page 4

Considering these two events, plus an earlier incident when somebody tried to break into Albuquerque Kwik Lube, the businesses there have joined together to have Sandia Heights Security patrol their area. Some of the businesses have also upgraded their alarm systems.

There is no question that we are experiencing increasing vandalism, especially in the last two years. This may be due to the increased traffic on Tramway. The neighborhood of Tramway Terrace Court held a meeting on their security concerns in July with Commissioner Cummins and representatives of the Sheriff's office.

Acts of vandalism, along with drag racing on Tramway, require all of us to be more observant and to report suspicious activity to the Sheriff's office promptly. If life threatening call 911, if not, then call their non-emergency number, 798-7000.



On 11/04/2005 The Sheriff's Department conducted a Tactical Plan to combat drag racers on Tramway Blvd and surrounding areas. The operation was done between the hours of 9PM and 2:30AM. 6 Detectives, 2 Patrol Deputies, 1 Sergeant, 1 Lieutenant, and the Sheriff participated in this Tact-Plan. Deputies were able to make 1 arrest (reckless driving) and issue several citations for careless driving, no insurance and drag racing. While issuing citations and making contacts, warnings were given out: Stay away from Tramway and stop drag racing or the Sheriff's Dept. would take more action. During the course of the night the racing was minimal, and action was taken for those who were participating in illegal activities. Unfortunately the Sheriff's Dept. does not have the resources and budget to conduct these tact-plans every weekend. They continue to enforce traffic laws and conduct operations periodically throughout the year. If the residents are able to get license plate numbers and a brief description of what they see. The Sheriff's office will do a follow-up and speak with the registered owner about the event.



Executive Committee

President – Ed Whitten
Vice President – Thomas Coyne
Treasurer – Dick Cline
Secretary – Marsha Thole

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Mark Boslough
Dick Brackett
Gene Church
Vicki Criel
Larry Desonier
Rick Fairbanks
Jim Irving
Bill Johnson
William McCall
Mona Lee Schilling
Victoria Smidt
Frank Soper
Ed Tull
William Wiley

Office Staff

Lena Martinez – ACC Administrative Assistant
Sheraz Saint-Lôt – Publications & Communications Editor

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shha@sandiahomeowners.org

GRIT Editorial Policy:

- Attempt to publish both sides of every issue, including constructive criticism, but neither abuse nor insulting remarks.
- Reserve the right to edit any submission.
- Not to print any unsigned letters or articles.

Announcements & Notices:

- Office Hours: 9am to 3pm, Monday through Friday.
- The office will be closed for Christmas from Friday, December 23 through Monday, January 2.
- Notary public services are free to members only. Please call to make an appointment.

NEW ACE IS MORE THAN JUST A “BIG TOOLBOX”- Unique Helpful Home Improvement Service Right in the Neighborhood

Imagine a hardware store where all the supplies you need to impeccably manicure your lawn and repaint your family room are all in one place. The days of wandering from department to department with aisles packed with unorganized nuts, bolts, pipes and lights are now over. Thanks to the new Rio Grande Ace Hardware opening on 7847 Tramway Blvd, this home improvement dream is now a reality.

“The design of this store, along with our highly trained staff, focuses on helping consumers solve their home improvement problems,” says Robert R. Coca, Jr, owner. “This environment not only makes shopping for home improvement supplies a less daunting and intimidating task for do-it-yourselfers, but also creates a unique and helpful shopping experience.” Signature areas of the store include Housewares, Giftware, and soon to come, Outdoor Nursery.

The grand opening activities are planned for the weekend of December 2-4. (Doors open early at 7am). Festivities will include special sales, discounts, door prizes every hour, lots of FREE giveaways, 770 Kkob live remote (Jim Villanucci), drawings for prizes, free balloons, face painting, clowns, pictures with Santa, piano by D’Irvin, Mariachi music, live performance by Old Man Shattered, and much more all weekend long.

The store stocks more than 20,000 products and can readily tap into an additional 65,000

products carried in the Ace distribution center for the region.

“We’ve designed this store with one key element in mind – our customers,” said Coca. “We wanted to provide our customers the ultimate helpful shopping experience.

For maximum customer convenience, Rio Grande Ace Hardware is open Monday through Saturday 8 a.m. until 8 p.m. and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Membership & Community Service Committee

- Vicki Criel



Lights in the Heights

Do not forget to light up your homes with sparkling lights and luminaries the three Saturdays in December. Let’s “LIGHT UP THE HEIGHTS” in Sandia Heights. Please call Kit Anderson, chairperson at 856-3667 or Vicki Criel, committee chairperson at 615-3333 if you need assistance installing lights or luminaries. They are compiling a list of volunteers willing to help with this task. If you would like to be included in that list (volunteer or perhaps, a teenager wanting to make a few bucks), please call Kit Anderson or Vicki Criel with your contact information.

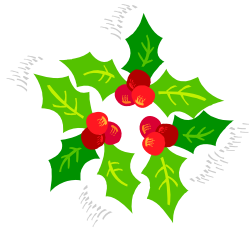
The SHHA Membership and Community Service Committee will provide hot chocolate, Dec. 10, 17, and 24. Call Chairperson Vicki Criel if you would like to host a brief gathering at your home for your particular unit on one of these evenings.

The committee has been corresponding with Santa Claus and is hoping he will be able to drop in at these gathering locations. Also, SHHA is encouraging caroling groups to participate. If you are interested in assisting with this task, please contact Vicki Criel at 615-3333 or VCRIEL@comast.net.

The goal is to brighten Sandia Heights, but also, to get out briefly meeting a neighbor. These gatherings may be cookie exchanges, hot wassail exchanges, or simply meeting at one corner in that unit.

Traffic, Safety, & Environment Committee Report

- Mark Boslough,
Outgoing Chair



New Policy For Mowing and Trimming Requests

In October we offered to forward requests for mowing and trimming to the county for action. We received numerous requests and in most cases the county performed the requested action with no complications.

However, due to potential for conflict in situations where neighbors do not agree on what should be trimmed, we now ask that requests go straight to the county. Please call Bernalillo County Dispatch with your requests at 828-1503. On corners where there is a clear sight-line visibility and safety concern, the SHHA can help expedite your requests.

Low Speed Limits Are For a Reason

Sometimes we get queries from residents who think that our community's speed limits are too low. There is a reason that most of our streets are limited to 15 mph. They are narrow and curvy, and in many places there is limited visibility because we value our vegetation and natural environment more than we desire the wide and straight thoroughfares required for rapid transit. Traffic engineers have driven our streets with a ball-bank indicator, determining that many of our curves are unsafe at speeds greater than 15 mph.

Moreover, our streets are a multi-modal transportation system. They are used by joggers, dogwalkers, babystrollers, and children walking to the bus. We've even see an in-line roller-skater running his dog. Please keep these other users in mind at all times when you are tempted to drive faster than the posted limit.

How To Get Speed Humps

The SHHA is dedicated to helping residents make their streets safer. Several neighborhoods within our community have opted for speed humps, and others are inquiring about how to go about getting them installed. The county has a well-defined process that neighborhoods must follow in order to qualify for these safety devices.

The SHHA role is to foster communication and cooperation between residents and the county, but, contrary to the understanding of some, we have no control over the process. Residents who want humps on their street must ask the county to do a site visit and speed survey to determine whether the speeding, traffic volume, and street properties (segment length, existence of sidewalks, etc.) meet the county's criteria. If it qualifies, then neighborhoods must get 75 percent of the residents of their street segment to sign a petition. After the county confirms the petition signatures, it issues a work order. We get occasional complaints from residents of other neighborhoods, who felt that their opinions were not considered, but this is not part of the county's process and SHHA has had a longstanding policy of not interfering with local neighborhood decisions.

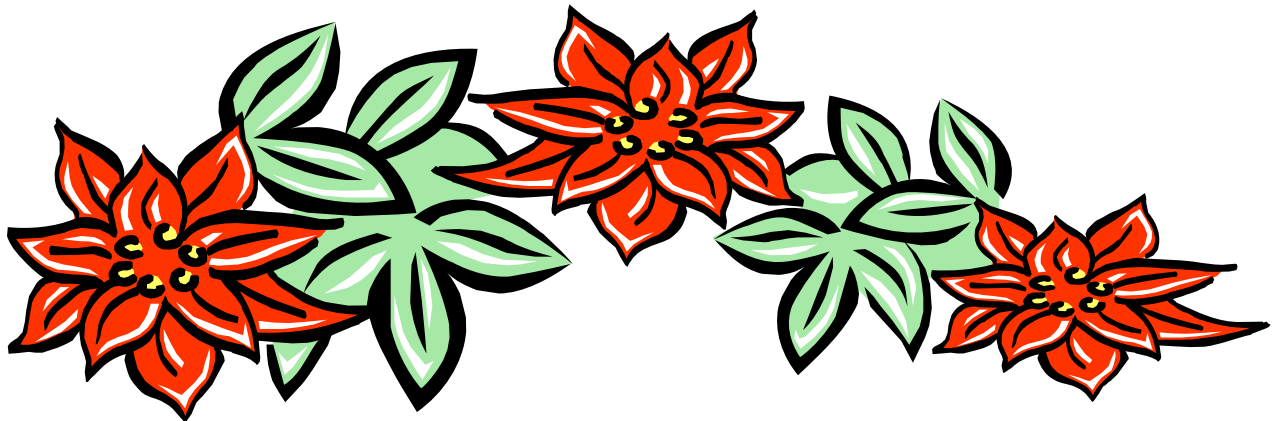
*Have a
safe and
Happy
Holidays*





Sandia Heights Homeowners Association
2-B San Rafael Ave NE
Albuquerque, NM 87122

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**MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR
FROM THE SHHA OFFICE**