

THE GRIT

Sandia Heights Homeowners Association

February 2012

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President's Message

~ Kate Fry

February is one of my favorite months. That may sound crazy, because February is often the coldest and stormiest month, the wintriest month of winter. But it's also when we start to see signs of life in the garden and the landscape. The earliest bulbs and perennial plants start to stick their noses up out of the ground. If you look closely, you can see buds barely beginning to swell on dead-looking twigs. February also brings Valentine's Day, when we celebrate love and affection. Life returning to the land and the spirit of Valentine's Day always amplify my awareness of why I love living in Sandia Heights. So here is a valentine to Sandia Heights.

Ever since I can remember, I wanted to live in Sandia Heights. Even the name sounded magical—it made me think of eagles soaring over the mountaintop. When Sandia Heights was established, it was pretty remote—none of the nearby development you see today was here, and “town” was a good way down the hill on dirt roads. But even as inexpensive as the lots were by today's standards, they cost more than my parents could afford, so I had to wait a long time to live here. But now I'm here, and every day I revel in the magic of the place.

It's hard to say what is my most favorite thing about Sandia Heights, but the wildlife is way up there. It's a great joy to be sharing our habitat with such a variety of

wildlife, and it never ceases to thrill me when I see a wild animal of any kind. I've seen bears, deer, bobcats, coyotes, foxes, bridled weasels, raccoons, skunks, rabbits, rock squirrels, bull snakes, rattlesnakes, coachwhip snakes, pack rats, chipmunks, hawks, and turkey vultures, as well as all kinds of smaller birds right outside my house, and I get excited every time. Well, maybe I get excited in a different way when I see the squirrels eating my flowers! The best part is that the wild animals retain their wildness, because Sandia Heights people respect wildlife and their habitat, and have learned how to coexist with them.

How cool is it to live nestled at the foot of the beautiful Sandias, so close to them that you can really see how they change every time you look at them? Only when you're this close do you realize how rugged the mountains are on this side, a massive tumble of huge boulders with piñons and junipers somehow finding a way to grow among them. And to be in the middle of such astonishing sunsets painting the sky in the west while the mountains glow pink behind us takes my breath away. I never tire of watching storms approach with their magnificent clouds and lightning, and the city lights sparkling below us delight me as much as the day I moved up here.

You can't beat being able to hike a beautiful mountain trail a few minutes out your door. It's also pretty amazing to feel like you're living out in the wilderness but then hop in the car and be at the store in five minutes.

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Continued from Front Page

In fact, we do live almost in the wilderness—the eastern boundary of Sandia Heights marks the edge of the Sandia Mountain Wilderness. This means that the mountains will always look like mountains, unlike some communities where houses march high up the sides.

Although driving on our streets sometimes increases my adrenalin, I love the narrow winding roads—it’s one reason Sandia Heights looks like it belongs in the landscape, along with the architectural styles that are diverse yet harmonious with the terrain and the stucco colors that blend with the colors of our surroundings. The native vegetation and the lack of sidewalks contribute to the feeling of living “away from it all”, and keep Sandia Heights looking uncluttered but not manicured.

Add to all this the friendly people in our neighborhoods--and the fact that we have the absolute best water in the County--and it’s indisputable that we enjoy “the peak of living”. We owe a debt of gratitude to the people who had the vision and foresight to create such a unique and beautiful community, and to the countless volunteers over the years who have worked so hard to preserve to look and feel of Sandia Heights.

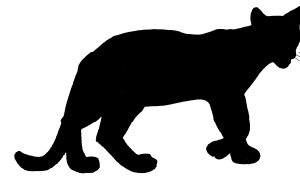


SHHA Filing Cabinets

The office has scanned and digitized all the Architectural Control and Covenant Support Committee Files. In doing so we are no longer in need of six ‘like new’ four-drawer filing cabinets.



They are on sale at the SHHA office to SHHA members on a first come first serve basis for \$50.00 cash or check.



Mountain Lions

MOUNTAIN LIONS SIGHTED IN SANDIA HEIGHTS

We have heard reports that a few Sandia Heights residents have seen mountain lions in their neighborhoods. This is very unusual—although mountain lions do live in the Sandia Mountains, they are very shy and elusive—and most likely means that the lions are suffering from the effects of the drought along with other wildlife.

Lion attacks on people are very rare, with fewer than a dozen fatalities in all of North America in more than 100 years. However, we do share habitat with our Sandia lions, so it’s a good idea to take some simple precautions. Lions are most active from dusk to dawn, so make lots of noise if you come and go during this time. Closely supervise children when they play outdoors. Watch pets closely when they’re outside, and never leave them outside alone, especially at night. Hike in groups, keep your dog on a leash, and make lots of noise.

We can live peacefully with these incredibly efficient predators if we respect mountain lions and their habitat. Please follow these precautions, and urge your neighbors to do the same. If you have a direct encounter with a lion or an attack occurs, call NM Game and Fish at 222-4700. More information about living in lion country, including what to do if you meet a lion, is posted on the SHHA website. You can also pick up a hard copy in the SHHA office.



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SHHA membership Cards and membership benefits

SHHA members are issued an *SHHA membership card* and *key-ring tag*. The membership cards and tags can be used to expedite: admission to SHHA sponsored events, picking up Sandia Peak Tram Passes, access to SHHA Office benefits & services, and for claiming SHHA Merchant Benefits. Your SHHA member benefits and services include: office and notary services, annual classified ads, Coffeehouse Concert Series, Sandia tram passes, covenant enforcement, no-fee ACC applications, and discounted safety vests.

Check out the entire SHHA Member Benefits Program at sandiahomeowners.org and enjoy discounts at our supporting local merchants. The SHHA Merchant Benefits Program includes the following current participating merchants:

- Asian Café
- Bair Medical Spa
- Best Way Carpet
- Black Diamond Taekwondo
- Bob's Painting
- Chiropractor, Mark L. Schwartz DC
- County Line of Albuquerque
- Curves
- Dance Fitness Party
- Granite Transformations
- Jade Enterprises
- Los Equipales
- Massage Envy
- High Finance Restaurant & Sandiago's
- Mexican Grill at the Tram (\$1 parking fee will be reimbursed with purchase of lunch)
- Ready Blinds & Shutters
- The UPS Store
- 3B Yoga



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YOUR DUES ARE HOW MUCH?

That's the question we hear from other homeowners' associations in Albuquerque when they find out the amount of dues paid by SHHA members. We pay a great deal less than other neighborhoods but we enjoy an amazing variety of benefits for such a small sum. However, expenses such as office rent, utilities, labor costs, and insurance costs have risen steadily over the past several years, and the cost of popular member benefits like Tram passes have also increased significantly. For many years we have continued to provide free Tram passes, free Coffee House concerts, and Meet & Greet social events, as well as a fully staffed office with free copy and fax services, free notary services, and the ever-cheerful assistance of Betsy and Sheraz, without raising the membership dues.

In an effort to continue providing these valuable services that SHHA members have come to depend on, we find it necessary to increase our monthly dues. Effective March 1, 2012, SHHA membership dues will increase from \$8.00 to \$10.00 per month. The last time dues were raised was approximately ten years ago, and we know you will understand and support the need to raise the dues at this time.



TRAM PASSES:

There are 6 corporate tram passes per day!



Please call the SHHA office at 797-7793 or visit our website for details: www.sandiahomeowners.org.





Stats and more from the Sandia Heights Security Patrol:

Officers

President – Kate Fry
 Vice President – Andy Anderson
 Secretary – Sarah Pirkl
 Treasurer – Ann Marie Caffrey

Board Members

Phil Abshere
 Ana Acosta
 Bob Bower
 George Connor
 Sharon Evanich
 Pete Heinstein
 Burt O’Neil
 Joe Pappé
 Michael Pierce
 Dick Wavrik
 Ann Zimmerman

Office Staff

Betsy Rodriguez – ACC
 Administrative Assistant
 Sheraz Saint-Lôt – Publications
 & Communications Editor

SHHA Office

2-B San Rafael Avenue
 Albuquerque, NM 87122
 Office Hours: M-F, 9am-4pm
 Phone: 505-797-7793
 Fax: 505-856-8544
 Web site:
www.sandiahomeowners.org
 Email:
shha@sandiahomeowners.org

GRIT Editorial Policy is:

- Provide information on subjects of interest to the community.
- Reserve the right to edit any submission.
- Not to print any unsigned letters or articles.

Month of November Call Type	# of calls	Month of November Call Type	# of calls
Alarms	24	Open door/window	8
Animal control asst.	0	Parking problem	1
Breaking & entering	1	Pet nuisance	1
Car accident	2	Rescue assist	0
Construction site burglary	0	Salesman problem	2
Customer assist	5	Sheriff office assist	0
Dumped/spilled material	0	Snake Call	0
Family dispute	0	Special request	4
Fire	0	Special (extra patrol)	13
Fireworks complaint	0	Speeding vehicle	0
Front office	4	Suspicious person	3
Loud music/party	1	Suspicious vehicle	26
Lost/found pet	7	Theft	0
Lost/found item	1	Threat/personal	0
Mailbox vandalism	1	Utility Co. assist	7
Motorcycle nuisance	0	Vandalism	5
Motorist assist	7	Vehicle burglary	0
Neighbor dispute	1	Wildlife report	1
Newspaper pickup	16		
Noise complaints	2	Total Calls	143

Security Tip:

If you have questions regarding these stats, please call Security at 856-6347, mobile 263-4654. Please be reminded that Sandia Heights Security is a subscription service separate from Sandia Heights Homeowners Association membership. Membership in SHHA does not include SHS membership. You can call Security to confirm your membership with them.

A loud TV or radio left on can be as good of a deterrent as the best alarm systems. Most new TV’s have timer systems built in. If not they are available at many electronics stores.

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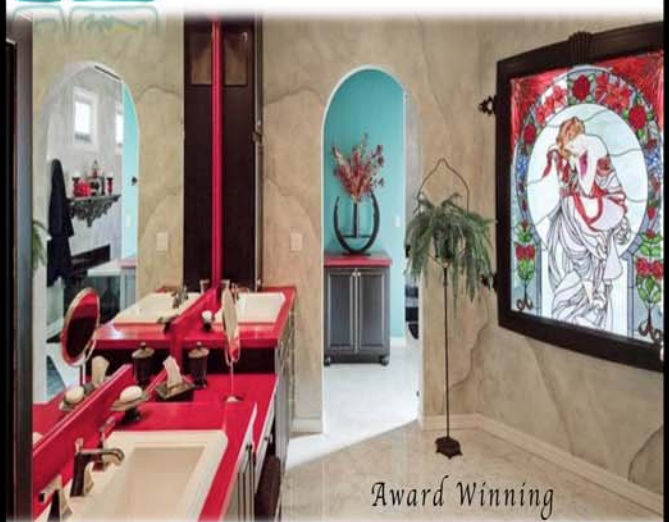
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AN UPDATE ON RESIDENTIAL PHOTOVOLTAIC SYSTEMS

by Bob Bower, Chairman, ACC

In August 2010, I wrote a GRIT article on residential photovoltaic (PV) systems (solar panels, if you will). Please refer to that article if you are planning to install one of these systems and for factors to consider regarding the architectural and aesthetic features that the ACC will be looking for when reviewing your application. Remember that the ACC has a guideline for your use that provides information on these types of installations. The guideline is available in the SHHA office and online at the SHHA website (sandiahomeowners.org).

After a “dry spell” of about a year, we have seen an increase in applications for residential PV systems. Solar panels have gotten cheaper and are available in sizes that produce more electrical power than those that were available a year or so ago—good news for consumers. In addition, the industry now favors the use of micro inverters to convert the direct current (DC) produced by each individual panel into usable alternating current (AC). These small inverters can be mounted directly to the back of each individual panel and they replace the much larger and more visible macro inverters that were used in earlier installations. If a macro inverter fails, you would lose all the power from the entire PV system. Since the micro inverters are unique to each panel, failure of one of them would only affect that panel and not the whole system—a nice improvement.

In addition to the information contained in the ACC guideline, here are a few additional points to consider when planning the installation of a PV system:

1. A good “rule of thumb” is that here in sunny New Mexico, a one kilowatt PV system generates about 1800 kilowatt hours of electrical power per year. Knowing your annual energy consumption (use your PNM records to obtain this information) along with this “rule of thumb”, you can size a PV system to meet your needs.
2. For roof-mounted systems, make sure your roof is in good working condition. Many contractor will not install a PV system on a “marginal” roof. Also, if your roof develops problems (leaks, etc.), the presence of a lot of PV panels makes it difficult for a roofer to gain access to those portions of the roof under the panels.
3. Once installed, don’t let large trees next to your home shade the panels. Any amount of shading, including clouds, reduces the electrical output of the affected panels.
4. Orientation of PV panels relative to the sun affects their efficiency. The highest efficiency is achieved if panels are oriented to the south (at an azimuth of 180 degrees, to be precise). An orientation of plus or minus 20% from that 180 degree value will result in a relatively small (about 2%) decrease in system efficiency. For Albuquerque’s latitude of 35 degrees, the ideal pitch angle for the panels (the angle that the panels are oriented above the horizontal) is about 25-30 degrees. However, pitch angles as low as 15 degrees will result in a decrease of only about 6% in overall efficiency. Larger deviations from the southern azimuth orientation and from the ideal pitch angles, of course, will have a greater impact on overall system efficiency.

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5. Solar panels can be mounted on pitched or flat roofs. For pitched roofs, the panels can be flush mounted or mounted at angles to take advantage of azimuth and pitch angle orientations. For flat roofs, panels can be installed using ballasted mounts or attached to roof-penetrating support mounts. Ballasted mounting usually requires that the pitch angles be less than about 15 degrees or so to limit the impact of system damage due to high wind loads. The advantage of these types of systems is that they are easier and cheaper to install than those systems where roof penetrators are used. The use of roof penetrators permits the panels to be installed at high efficiency pitch angles without the worry of damage from strong winds. The ACC has seen applications for all these types of installations.
6. State and County statutes prohibit homeowner association covenants from preventing the installation of solar collectors, so don't worry about the ACC "shooting down" your application for installing PV panels. The ACC's goal is to try to limit the negative visual impacts of these installations on neighboring properties while at the same time not causing undue efficiency reductions of your PV system. The ACC will work with you to try to achieve the best possible system to meet your needs while at the same time addressing the concerns of the ACC relative to the impact of your system on your neighbors.
7. Once your PV installation project has been completed, please take the time to provide feedback (both positive and negative) to the SHHA office on your overall experience with your contractor. We don't have much data on these types of installations and any feedback would be appreciated.



ACC Activity Log

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

- 29 Sandia Heights Drive – Solar Panels
- 61 Pinon Hill Place – Cover Wooden Fascia and Trim
- 725-11 Tramway Vista Drive – Addition
- 1121 Marigold Drive – Solar Panels
- 1218 Rockrose Road – Window Replacement
- 1509 Eagle Ridge Road – Solar Light installation
- 2103 Navajo Willow Drive – Reroof, Trim & Paint Gate
- 2712 Tramway Circle – Reroof
- 2726 Tramway Circle – Wall
- 8241 Raintree Drive – Swamp Cooler Replacement

Disapproved Projects:

- 364 Juniper Hill Road – Garage Addition

Go to the website: sandiahomeowners.org. to read about all projects currently under ACC management.



Mail Theft

Mail theft is still a problem! Residents are advised not leave mail in mailboxes, either incoming or outgoing. If you cannot retrieve your mail promptly ask a trusted neighbor to get it for you. If you are leaving town suspend your mail delivery, have it held at the Post Office. Please be alert to anyone in a vehicle checking mailboxes. A license number on a vehicle along with a vehicle description would go a long way to putting an end to this activity. If you experience mail theft, notify the BCSO (798-7000), the USPS inspector (1-877-876-2455), and Sandia Heights Security (856-6347 and 263-4654). If you witness a crime in progress notify BCSO and Security.

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Sandia Heights Market Activity • 2005 - 2012 How is the Sandia Heights Market? Compare the Past 7 years.

2005 - 2012 MARKET ACTIVITY • SANDIA HEIGHTS DETACHED HOMES ON LOTS GREATER THAN .50 ACRES

There are currently 17 Sandia Heights homes FOR SALE on lots greater than .50 acres. The average asking price per sq.ft. is \$215. There are currently 6 Sandia Heights homes PENDING on lots greater than .50 acres. The average asking price per sq.ft. is \$133. There were 0 Sandia Heights homes SOLD on lots greater than .50 acres since January 1, 2012.

40 Homes on lots greater than .50 acres SOLD from Jan. 2011 - Dec 2011. The average sales price per sq.ft. was \$161
26 Homes on lots greater than .50 acres SOLD from Jan. 2010 - Dec 2010. The average sales price per sq.ft. was \$165
25 Homes on lots greater than .50 acres SOLD from Jan. 2009 - Dec 2009. The average sales price per sq.ft. was \$169
14 Homes on lots greater than .50 acres SOLD from Jan. 2008 - Dec 2008. The average sales price per sq.ft. was \$193
30 Homes on lots greater than .50 acres SOLD from Jan. 2007 - Dec 2007. The average sales price per sq.ft. was \$202
39 Homes on lots greater than .50 acres SOLD from Jan. 2006 - Dec 2006. The average sales price per sq.ft. was \$205
35 Homes on lots greater than .50 acres SOLD from Jan. 2005 - Dec 2005. The average sales price per sq.ft. was \$170

2005 - 2012 MARKET ACTIVITY • SANDIA HEIGHTS DETACHED HOMES ON LOTS LESS THAN .50 ACRES

There are currently 5 Sandia Heights homes FOR SALE on lots less than .50 acres. The average asking price per sq.ft. is \$152. There is 1 home on lots less than .50 acres PENDING. The average asking price per sq.ft. is \$121. There were 0 Sandia Heights homes SOLD on lots less than .50 acres since January 1, 2012.

27 Homes on lots LESS than .50 acres SOLD from Jan. 2011 - Dec. 2011. The average sales price per sq.ft. was \$154
29 Homes on lots LESS than .50 acres SOLD from Jan. 2010 - Dec. 2010. The average sales price per sq.ft. was \$158
26 Homes on lots LESS than .50 acres SOLD from Jan. 2009 - Dec 2009. The average sales price per sq.ft. was \$161
22 Homes on lots LESS than .50 acres SOLD from Jan. 2008 - Dec 2008. The average sales price per sq.ft. was \$171
18 Homes on lots LESS than .50 acres SOLD from Jan. 2007 - Dec 2007. The average sales price per sq.ft. was \$189
13 Homes on lots LESS than .50 acres SOLD from Jan. 2006 - Dec 2006. The average sales price per sq.ft. was \$179
11 Homes on lots LESS than .50 acres SOLD from Jan. 2005 - Dec 2005. The average sales price per sq.ft. was \$156

2005 - 2012 MARKET ACTIVITY • SANDIA HEIGHTS ATTACHED TOWNHOMES There is currently 1 Attached Townhome FOR SALE. The average asking price per sq.ft. is \$124. There is currently 1 Attached Townhome PENDING. The average asking price per sq.ft. is \$121. There were 0 attached Townhomes Homes SOLD since Jan. 1, 2012.

6 Attached Townhomes SOLD from Jan. 2011 - Dec. 2011. The average sales price per sq.ft. was \$115.
10 Attached Townhomes SOLD from Jan. 2010 - Dec. 2010. The average sales price per sq.ft. was \$120.
3 Attached Townhomes SOLD from Jan. 2009 - Dec. 2009. The average sales price per sq.ft. was \$144.
6 Attached Townhomes SOLD from Jan. 2008 - Dec. 2008. The average sales price per sq.ft. was \$140.
6 Attached Townhomes SOLD from Jan. 2007 - Dec. 2007. The average sales price per sq.ft. was \$147.
11 Attached Townhomes SOLD from Jan. 2006 - Dec. 2006. The average sales price per sq.ft. was \$151.
16 Townhomes SOLD from Jan. 2005 to Dec. 2005. The average sales price per sq.ft. was \$112.



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Community Event Bulletin Board

Not all of these groups are sponsored by SHHA. Information is provided to keep residents informed

The Sandia Heights “Cork & Fork” We’re always looking for new couples to join us, so if this sounds like an activity that might appeal to you, please call or e-mail Paula (821-3444, kpknarr@comcast.net) for more information.

Sandia Heights Artists

The Sandia Heights Artists group welcomes residents of Sandia Heights who would like to participate in the fall studio tour. For more information contact Merry Ellen Merrigan: 280-9772 or me@maryellenbeads.com

Church of the Good Shepherd

Looking for a welcoming, safe, liberal and friendly church? Join us Ash Wednesday, February 22nd for worship at either noon or 7:00 p.m. Visit www.goodshepherdunitedchurch.com or call the church office @ 856-1004 for more information.

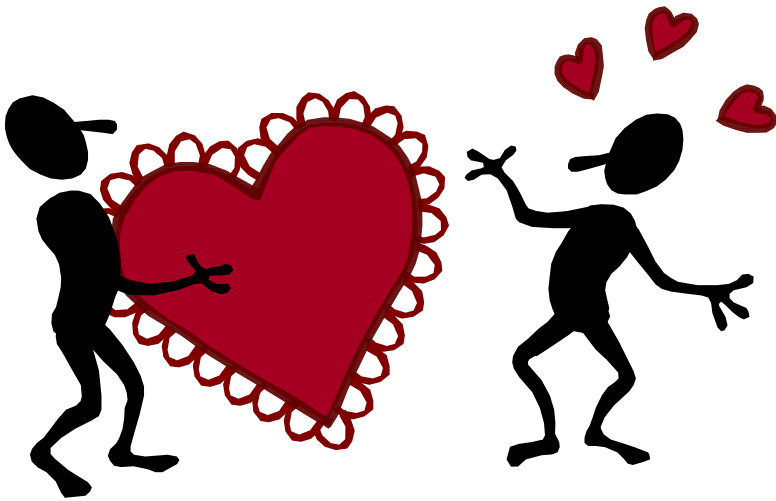
ANNOUNCEMENTS & NOTICES:

- **Office hours:** Monday – Friday 9am – 4pm.
- **Office closed:** Monday, February 20 in observance of President’s Day.
- **Notary, copies and faxes** free to members.
- **Tram passes** free to members, please check with the office for your reservation.
- **Contractor Evaluation binder** free to members. We are in need of evaluations for Handy Men and Septic Tank Contractors. You may download the form from the website or contact our office and we can email you one.
- **SHHA Board Meeting** – Wednesday, February 8 at 7pm in the SHHA Office.
- **Committee meeting** dates and times are posted in the monthly calendar found on our website: www.sandiahomeowners.org.
- **Classified ads and lost and found notices** can be found on the website under the News and Information page. Classified ads are free for members.
- **Safety Vests for sale** in the SHHA office. \$2 per vest for members.
- **SHHA membership cards:** do not forget to go to the website to get a full listing of the companies that offer a discount!





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



*Happy
Valentine's
Day!*