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Betsy Rodriguez – Lead Administrator
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SHHA Office

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Closed on federal holidays

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shha@sandiahomeowners.org

Thank you, Members! Join us, Non-Members!
Community Service & Membership Committee

We invite you **ALL** to SHHA’s Membership Appreciation Event, Sunday, June 5th from 1:00 to 4:00 PM at the Sandia Heights Village (formerly Quail Run) shopping center on the corner of Tramway Blvd and San Rafael Ave. We’ll have live music, food trucks, face-painting, dog training demonstrations, local businesses with info and promotions, a fire engine, giveaways and drawings, as well as your SHHA Board members on hand. The music will be provided by Twisted Mojo playing blues-infused classic rock.

If you’re a member, this is our way of saying “thank you!” for your participation in the SHHA. It is also an opportunity to talk to your neighborhood Board members and maybe find a niche shaped just for you as a volunteer on one of our committees or on the Board itself.

If you’re not a member, this is our way of inviting you to join the SHHA! You can learn more about what the Association does and how it benefits you, find ways to get involved, and even sign up that day.

Parking will be in the business complex immediately east of / behind Sandia Heights Village center, on San Rafael Ave. Signs will direct you.



Primary Election Day, June 7
Early voting through June 4
Make your voice heard—VOTE!

Elena Gallegos Open Space Site Improvements

SHHA Environment & Safety Committee met with City of Albuquerque Leaders

The Environment & Safety Committee (E&SC) met with representatives of the Elena Gallegos Open Space on May 4. Representing the City of Albuquerque were David Simon, Director of Parks & Recreation; Colleen Langan-McRoberts, Superintendent, Open Space Division; and Jim Sattler, Open Space Division.

Superintendent Langan-McRoberts presented an overview of the proposed site improvement plan to include the public planning process thus far, recent site improvements, and needed maintenance/site improvements to the existing facilities. Also discussed was the proposed education center with possible locations, the proposed Simms Park Road update and potential parking lot off Simms Park Road in the Pino Arroyo. The City has not procured money to make these improvements yet, which may be 2–3 years away. Many of the questions we and you had, along with the missing details in the Feasibility Study, will start to be answered with ongoing studies currently underway, e.g., an environmental impact study.

Presentation soon to be available on their website: <https://www.cabq.gov/parksandrecreation/open-space/lands/elena-gallegos-open-space>

E&SC presented the initial results and comments from our survey to the City representatives. To date, we have had over 250 responses. Highlights from the responses thus far:

- Over 70% of our residents use Elena Gallegos Open Space and foothills/hiking trails every month.
- The majority of residents agree with doing the trail improvements and maintenance projects: 74% stated trail improvements were choice #1.
- 72% of respondents disagreed with the construction of a 4800–6500 sq. ft. education facility.
- 50% ranked offsite parking as the lowest priority, with 75% saying “no” to building a parking lot at Tramway and Simms Park Road in the Pino Arroyo.
- Widening the road: 36% said “yes,” 55% said “no.” See the road graphic for what “widening” implies.

A complete analysis of the survey data will be presented in next month’s GRIT. Interim data can be found on the SHHA home page.

The meeting concluded with a commitment from the City to keep us involved and in the communication loop so we are up to date on what’s happening. We will give you other opportunities to stay involved in subsequent GRIT articles, including maintenance funds needs provided through Open Space Alliance, volunteering opportunities in the Open Space, fire watch training, and National Trails Day activities on June 4. If you’re interested in the last item, see

<https://www.cabq.gov/parksandrecreation/open-space/events/national-trails-day-2>

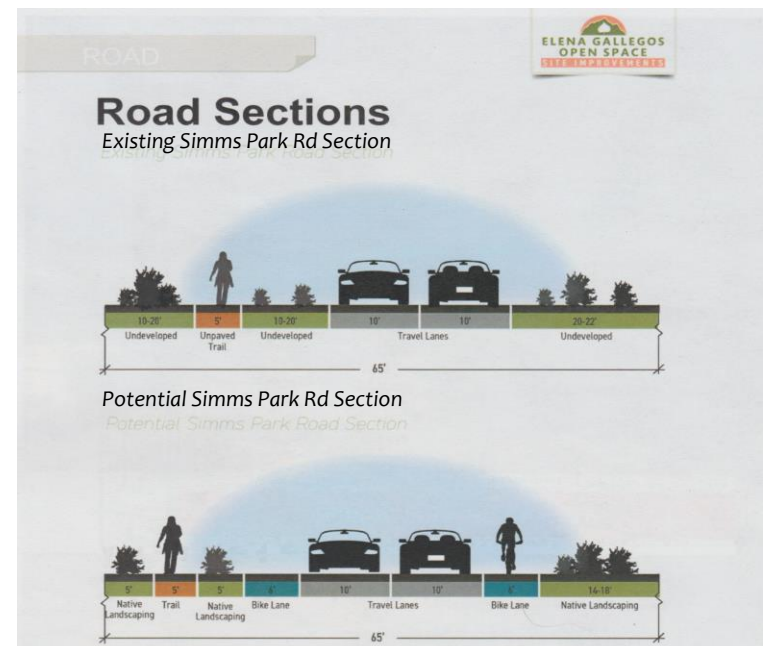
TAKE THE SURVEY

There is still time for everyone to express your opinions and concerns regarding the Elena Gallegos Open Space via a survey that was email blasted April 27/8. Didn’t get an email? Use the link below to respond to the survey by June 10. The purpose of the survey is to:

- Inform Sandia Heights residents of the proposed expansion project for Elena Gallegos Open Space and Simms Park Road.
- Obtain input from residents regarding the current Elena Gallegos Open Space project with a focus on the aspects of the project that uniquely impact Sandia Heights residents.
- Guide the SHHA board in developing a position and strategy that reflects homeowner concerns.

https://www.survey-monkey.com/r/SHHA_Elena_Gallegos_Open_Space_Survey

The last day to respond to this survey has been extended to **June 10**. There will be other surveys and meetings to get your opinions as we obtain more information and after some of the current studies are completed later this year.



CSC is Working to Prevent Long-Term RV Parking

Covenant Support Committee

The Covenant Support Committee (CSC) faces many challenges in our goal of tightly enforcing the Use Restrictions for Sandia Heights. The CSC currently has eight committee members—all volunteers—who typically handle 40–50 complaints per year. We are investigating about 10–12 complaints at any given time. The CSC goes to great lengths to protect the identities and addresses of both complainants and alleged violators and the nature of the complaint. All CSC meetings are held under “Executive Session” and the CSC meeting minutes are strictly confidential. Both the meeting agenda and minutes are for recording purposes only; they are never released outside the committee.

Because of confidentiality, the work of the CSC is not highly publicized in *The GRIT* newsletter or posted on the SHHA webpage. However, beginning with this article and in a series of articles to follow, we are striving to better inform homeowners and SHHA members of the work the CSC is doing to enforce the Use Restrictions. These will be high-level overviews only, without divulging confidential information. Each article will focus on one of the major issues facing the CSC—that is issues with the largest number of complaints having the greatest impact on the Sandia Heights community.

There are 38 units in Sandia Heights, each with its own set of covenants, although they are similar in their restrictions. All the Unit Covenants are posted on the SHHA website. These covenants are filed with the Bernalillo County Clerk and are legally enforceable in the courts. A typical Unit Covenant has two parts: the first part addresses major construction requirements and is primarily the responsibility of the Architectural Control Committee (ACC), and the second part addresses the Use Restrictions and is the responsibility of the CSC.

It is important to note that the CSC only acts on complaints filed by SHHA members with the SHHA office. The CSC does not patrol the neighborhood. Each complaint is handled by a committee member employing the same rigorous investigation activities for every complaint filed. The work of the CSC directly supports the SHHA Mission Statement which has two objectives: maintaining property values and preserving the quality of living in our Sandia Heights community.

Recreational Vehicle Parking is Prohibited Long-Term

All Unit Covenants prohibit the long-term parking of recreation vehicles, house trailers, pickups with large overhead campers for living, towed trailers and commercial vehicles with living accommodations, and similar vehicles. The ability of the CSC to enforce these Use Restrictions has been upheld several times in District Court. It requires no stretch of the imagination to see that long-term parking of such vehicles degrades both property values and the quality of life in Sandia Heights. No homeowner wants their neighborhood to look like a trailer park. (It should be noted that an RV parked in an enclosed garage and not visible from the street is permitted.)

Since January 2021, the CSC has received 20 complaints about RVs and similar camper vehicles being parked long-term on residential lots. Most complaints were resolved amicably with the violator moving the RV to an off-site storage facility. Ignorance of the SHHA Covenants is the excuse most often cited. In rare instances, the homeowner believes that for some reason they are not subject to the covenants, and the CSC has taken legal action against them in District Court. Some homeowners say they are not subject to the covenants because they are not SHHA members. However, all Sandia Heights homeowners and occupants are subject to their Unit Covenants, members or not.

In conclusion, the CSC vigorously enforces the ban on long-term RV parking in Sandia Heights, and has successfully concluded these cases either by resolution with the violator or legal action through the courts. The case load, however, continues to be a major effort for the CSC, and is unusually high during the summer. Let’s work together to keep Sandia Heights the high-level community we all signed up for. *If you have an RV, only keep it at your home for 48 hours before/after a trip.* The CSC and your neighbors will thank you.



APRIL CALLS TO SANDIA HEIGHTS SECURITY PATROL

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

April 2022	# of calls		# of calls
Alarms	12	Parking Problem	1
Animal Control Assist	1	Special Extra Patrol	3
Attempted Breaking & Entering	1	Special Request/Vacation	77
Car Accident	1	Suspicious Activity	7
Customer Assist	2	Suspicious Person	2
Lost/Found Item	2	Suspicious Vehicle	2
Mailbox Vandalism	1	Utility Co. Assist	1
Motorist Assist	2		
Newspaper/Package Pickup	3	Total Calls	118

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

Announcements & Notices:

- **Office hours:** Monday – Friday 9 AM – 4 PM.
- **Board Meeting:** scheduled June 8, 2022, at 6:30 pm via Zoom.
- **Office Closures for Holiday(s)** Monday, June 20, 2022, in observance of Juneteenth.
- **Notary services (except on Fridays), copies (20 per month) and faxes, e-mail alerts, and contractor evaluation binder** are free to members. **Also, voter registration in office.**
- **Committee meeting dates** are posted on our website calendar: www.sandiahomeowners.org.
- **Classified ads** can be found on the website on the top bar menu under Notices and Information/Classifieds.
- **Safety vests for sale** in the SHHA Office. \$2.50 per vest for members, cash or check only.
- **Tram passes for sale** in the SHHA Office. \$7.50 per ticket for members on a **first-come first-served basis**. Cash or check only. Tickets purchased must be for one date at a time per residence. To view the Tram Pass Procedures for SHHA Members go to <http://sandiahomeowners.org/notices-and-information/notices-and-information/96-tram-passes>.

ACC Color Reference Guide is available to borrow in the SHHA Office for up to 30 days. \$20 refundable deposit is required. Cash or check only.

SHHA Member Benefits:

Check out the entire SHHA Member Benefits Program and the discounts offered to SHHA members at www.sandiahomeowners.org, under the **Notices and Information** tab. Each participating merchant offers a discount to SHHA members. The following is a list of currently participating merchants:

Criel and Associates, LLC
HelpTek – Computer Services
Jade Enterprises Inc.
O’Briens Realty LLC
Remax Select – Pete Veres
Tutor Doctor
Waterstone Mortgage



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Sandia Heights MARKET UPDATE PAST YEAR 6/2021 to 6/2022

3 Larger home For Sale on Larger Lots | Avg Asking price \$853,333 Avg Asking price/sf \$239.65
 5 homes Pending | Avg Asking Price \$917,800| Avg Asking price/sf \$290.05
 55 Homes Closed past year to date | Avg Sold Price \$839,417 | Avg Sold price/sf. 233.02
 2 Smaller homes on smaller lots | Avg Asking price \$451,450 Avg Asking price/sf 207.92
 8 homes pending | Avg Asking Price \$408,365 Avg Asking price/sf \$233.61
 38 Homes Closed past year to date | Avg Sold Price \$393,914 Avg Sold price/sf 228.43
 Note Every Home Is Unique . Price is always based on condition, updates, location and views.

Current Interest rates hovering around 5.5% for 30 year conventional & 5.625% 30 year VA!



San Rafael PINE



Bobcat Blvd NE



Indigo Court NE



Rock Ridge Court NE

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Stage Your Home to Sell

Staging your home is a powerful way to sell it faster and at a higher price.¹ Here are some easy, affordable ways you can ensure your property is ready for the spotlight.

Clean Thoroughly

A clean home is a sign that you've taken good care of your property, so ensure yours is spotless. Give everything a deep clean from floor to ceiling, keeping in mind that homebuyers will look in closets, cabinets and under sinks.

Declutter

Not only is clutter an eyesore, but it also makes your home appear smaller. Now's the time to get rid of things you no longer need or consider getting a temporary storage unit. Give extra attention to closets, cabinets and pantries to give the impression of ample storage.

Set the Stage

Buyers want to envision themselves living in your home. Remove items like family photos, framed diplomas, keepsakes, kid's artwork or toys. If you have pets, remove their toys, beds and feeding dishes.

Lighten Up

Great lighting can make your home feel more inviting. Let in as much natural light as possible by opening all curtains and blinds. Turn on all the lights in every room, including closets - this saves buyers from having to hunt for light switches - and upgrade to higher wattage bulbs.

Staged Homes Sell Faster and for More²

82%

of buyers' agents

said a staged home made it easier for a buyer to visualize the property as a future home.

47%

of buyers' agents

stated that home staging influenced most buyers' view of the home.

23%

of buyers' and sellers' agents

agreed that home staging raised the price offered between 1% and 5%.

Staging the living room was found to be the most important for buyers (46%), followed by the master bedroom (43%) and the kitchen (35%).

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Architectural Observations #1.

A Love Letter to Sandia Heights

By Eric Haskins, AIA, SHHA member

Just this evening, what may have been an Aplomado Falcon and a Ladder-backed Woodpecker shared the tree in my back yard. My name is Eric, and I love Sandia Heights.

By way of introduction, I grew up in Albuquerque—Northeast Heights, to be more exact: Mitchell Elementary, Hoover Middle School, Eldorado High. We lived in a middle-class suburban house. It had a hipped, low-pitched roof of brown asphalt shingles. The front of the house was red brick. The sides and back were ivory-colored stucco. The front yard, the portion not covered by concrete driveway and cars, was gravel. The back yard was Kentucky bluegrass with a fruitless mulberry tree. The house next door was brick with a grass yard and the one on the other side was stucco with a flat roof and a gravel yard. A house down the street had an Astroturf lawn, and another had a dirt yard with cars parked in it.

My dad was a biologist and my mom was a real estate agent. Some weekends we'd travel New Mexico, hiking and camping, talking about ecology. Other weekends, I would ride shotgun with Mom, looking at home listings. I saw the neighborhoods of Albuquerque from the passenger seat of a 1980 Mercedes diesel. We walked through a lot of bad houses, a few good houses, one or two amazing houses.

In 1980s Albuquerque, in Mom's Mercedes, Sandia Heights was a revelation to middle-school me. Somehow, we drove across an invisible boundary and crossed over from *ad hoc*, schlock suburbia into a neighborhood unlike any other. Even to my young eyes, this was something special. The houses were cohesive. They looked like New Mexico, with flat roofs and stucco the color of the earth. Yet, somehow, they were also distinctive and unique. They were of their time—also completely of their place. Beautiful, harmonious buildings merged into the landscape rather than asserting themselves against it.

And that landscape! It was simply amazing, snuggled up against the sheer face of the Sandias. Pinon-juniper hillsides, native grasses, cacti and yucca. And perhaps most amazing of all: no gray concrete block walls to separate one yard from the next. There was minimal separation between nature and people, and between people and their neighbors. Roadrunners crossed the road; deer grazed in yards. To my eyes, it was the first neighborhood I had seen that deferred to its setting rather than rising against it. Yes, houses were present, but

somehow the landscape remained unspoiled. The landscape made the houses special, and the houses made the landscape special.

We stayed in our typical suburban house in the Heights. I grew up, went off to college out of state, and then to a big-city architect job in Houston, designing lofts for 90s downtown pioneers, real-estate developers, and a fair share of brick suburban home remodelers. I worked through the first loft craze and through the Mediterranean phase. I helped people fulfill their dreams of open-concept kitchens, exotic hardwood floors, and luxury bathrooms. I helped them remodel the outdated fantasies of others.

For an Albuquerque kid, life in Houston was fast, big, and humid. My formative years had imparted a deep love of New Mexico, and I knew I had to make a contribution to the place that felt like home. With my wife at my side, we returned in the early 2000s—back to big skies, long views, and mountains.

And back in Albuquerque, I again designed lofts for 2000s downtown pioneers, real-estate developers, and brick suburban home remodelers. Gradually, the size and complexity of my projects increased. We bought a little house in the North Valley and worked to make it better. Seven years ago, when the time came to find something bigger, we stumbled across the perfect handyman special right here in Sandia Heights, the neighborhood I fell for decades ago.

Living here in our beautiful ongoing project house is fantastic. I'm amazed by the landscape, the deferential quality of so much of the architecture, and the durability of the guiding vision created when this neighborhood was founded back in 1965.

Many nights, deer sleep in our yard. A pair of great horned owls roosted in our tree for weeks. To me, Sandia Heights is the best place in Albuquerque. Until I lived here, I had never heard quail call or seen a family of bobcats. Like so many beautiful places, though, Sandia Heights is in need of stewardship and constant care, and it's all so fragile.

To honor this special place, one goal of this column is to pass on some things I've learned over 20+ years as a professional architect and a lifetime of home remodeling. Many of our houses are in need of updates, and I've been through the process enough times to have learned some hard lessons. If I can pass on useful information related to the homeownership challenges we all face, then perhaps as you make your own contributions to our shared environment, you can benefit from architectural experience without having to pay architectural fees.

ACC Activity Log

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

26 Juniper Hill Road – Reroof
37 Rock Ridge Drive – Replace Windows
112 White Oaks Drive – Landscaping
120 Juniper Hill Road – Paving Driveway, Three Concrete Slabs, and Coyote Fence Enclosure
147 Whitetail Road – Replace Pinon and Fruit Trees
301 Spring Creek Place – Reroof
359 Big Horn Ridge Dr – Re-stucco
345 Big Horn Ridge Drive – Re-stucco and Recoat Roof
373 Big Horn Ridge Drive – Roof Mounted Photovoltaic Panels Installation
408 Live Oak Loop – Roof Mounted Photovoltaic Panels Installation
604 Cedar Hill Road – Re-stucco, Repaint Entrance Trim and Garage Frame
657 Roadrunner Lane – Roof Mounted Photovoltaic Panels Installation
793-N Tramway Lane – Maintenance/Upgrades to Decks
869-A Tramway Lane Ct. – Repair/Repaint Stucco
1038 Tramway Lane – Roof Mounted Photovoltaic Panels Installation
1182 Laurel Loop – Reroof
1196 Bobcat Blvd. – Re-stucco
1454 Honeysuckle Drive – Window Replacement and Backyard Remodel/Landscaping
1560 Eagle Ridge Rd – Re-Stucco
1703 Quail Run Court – Landscaping
1908 Red Rada – New Construction
1924 Quail Run Drive – Landscaping
2002 Quail Run Drive – Replace Windows and Remove/Replace Mailbox
2002 Quail Run Drive – Replace Exterior Light Fixtures
2153 Black Willow Dr – Install New Patio
2307 Calle de Rafael – Replace Weed Barrier and Gravel
2308 Calle de Rafael – Replace Weed Barrier and Gravel

2715 Tramway Circle – Landscaping
2775 Wolfberry Place – Re-stucco House and Walls
2881 Tramway Place – Roof Mounted Photovoltaic Panels Installation
2888 Tramway Place – Re-stucco
7736 Cedar Canyon Road – Roof Mounted Photovoltaic Panels Installation

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

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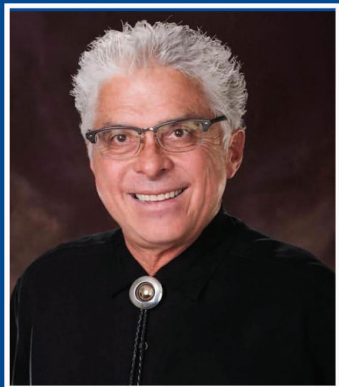
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HOUSING MARKET FORECAST: WILL PRICES OR SALES DECLINE?

The prices are not going to decline in 2022. The various forecasts from experts show that 2022 will remain a sellers' housing market, and home values are expected to increase by double-digit percentage points. The real estate market has emerged as a boon for sellers and a source of worry for buyers in the middle of this epidemic. Home prices have been increasing in the mid-single digits for many years. Recent double-digit price rises reflect the convergence of exceptional demand and chronically low supply.

Prices are increasing as a result of enough money on the sidelines and very low mortgage rates. The improving economy and the approaching peak homebuying years of millennials are driving a residential housing boom. The housing supply is now at its lowest level since the 1970s, due to millennial homeownership and other factors such as rising building prices and real estate speculators snapping up starter homes.

Low mortgage rates, coupled with more work-from-home possibilities created by the pandemic, have also fueled a rise in housing demand, especially in lower-density suburbs. Detached single-family houses continue to be in great demand. These properties provide greater living space and separation from adjacent houses than attached properties provide.

According to the most recent housing market forecast (by realtor.com), home price growth will slow further in 2022 but will continue to rise. As housing costs continue to consume a greater portion of home purchasers' paychecks, buyers will become more inventive. Many will take advantage of continued workplace flexibility to relocate to the suburbs, where many can still find homes at a lower price per square foot than in nearby cities. Prices will remain high, inventory will remain scarce, and mortgage rates will climb.

- Affordability constraints will prevent prices from increasing at the same rate as they did in 2021, even as supply-demand factors continue to drive prices upward nationwide.
- The housing market will remain competitive for buyers in 2022, particularly those looking for homes in entry-level price tiers.
- Numerous protective buyers (millennials) imply rising property prices, which, when paired with rising mortgage rates, would result in greater monthly payments for buyers.
- At a national level, they expect to see continued home sales growth in 2022 of 6.6% which will mean 16-year highs for sales nationwide and in many metro areas.
- With almost 45 million millennials between the ages of 26 and 35 who are prime first-time homebuyers in 2022, housing demand is likely to continue strong.
- 2022 is expected to have the 2nd highest sales level in the last 15 years, bested only by 2021.
- First-time homebuyers will need to be successful in the 2022 housing market if we are going to see the homeownership rate begin to climb again.

The listing price, also known as the asking price, is the amount a seller has marketed a property for, whereas the sale price is the amount it ultimately sells for. In March, the national median listing price for active listings was \$405,000, up 13.5% compared to last year. The median existing-home sales price rose to \$375,300, up 15% from one year ago. The median sales price of homes increased 15.0 percent to \$357,300, marking the 120th consecutive month of year-over-year gains, marking 121 consecutive months of year-over-year increases, the longest-running streak on record. Much of the growth was fueled by a 21.2 percent increase in property prices in the South. All other regions experienced home price growth of between 5% and 11%.



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302 Spring Creek Pl. NE
3,581 SQ FT 3BR 2.5BA



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... continued from p. 7

Beyond simple home improvement advice, I also hope to explore the links between the quality of the built environment and the philosophies and rules that guide its creation. Certain philosophies guided the development of Sandia Heights, and it may be instructive to assess how those philosophies are holding up today.

Full disclosure: philosophically, my goals are deeply conservative, in that I hope to conserve the beauty of the environment we share with each other and the quality of life Sandia Heights residents have enjoyed for decades. I'm not in favor of casually changing the environment, nor of dismissing the thoughtful and intentional rules that make this place special. Our high-desert environment is beautiful. The covenants that have bound development here were very carefully designed and we shouldn't lightly modify them. I want to perpetuate neighborliness, a spirit that has long been present in everyday life here (as I'm told by folks who have lived here longer than we have). I myself hope to be a good neighbor, and I want others to return the favor by not taking actions that will degrade the quality of our shared spaces.

Thank you for your attention, and please check in next month, when we explore lighting. There are only a few songs about housing developments, but I'll end with a quotation from one of the best—Arcade Fire, *Sprawl II (Mountains Beyond Mountains)*.

*Sometimes I wonder if the world's so small
That we can never get away from the sprawl.
Living in the sprawl, dead shopping malls rise
Like mountains beyond mountains
And there's no end in sight.
I need the darkness, someone please cut the lights.*

[ed. Maybe Eric can reprise that last line for next month's Architectural Observation.]

What's that Plant?

Elizabeth Edgren, CS&M Chair

Do you ever wish you had a plant expert on hand when you're out in the yard or walking through the neighborhood or on the trails? When I moved here three years ago, so many plants were unfamiliar to me. What are those squash-y looking things along the side of the road? What's that scraggly bush that's just everywhere with the yellow flowers in late summer? What kind of pine tree is that one in my yard where the jays go crazy over the cones?

I say only the obvious when I say, "there's an app for that!"

In a September 2018 article for *Southwest Yard & Garden*, Dr. Marisa Thompson describes her experience with some smartphone plant identification apps. Her favorite at the time was PI@ntNet. Home - PI@ntNet (plantnet.org). See her whole article, "There's an App for That: Identifying Plants with Tech Tools" at nmsudesperblooms.blogspot.com.

In February 2022, she updated her app recommendations, saying, "My 3 favorite plant ID apps are iNaturalist, PI@ntNet, and PictureThis, in that order. But these three don't ALWAYS work... or even help." Find that whole article at "Plant Identification When Apps Fail: Strategies for Untrained Botanists and Impatient Plant Lovers" (same link as above).

So, what to do when apps fail? Dr. Thompson also recommends some Facebook groups, whose users are often helpful in solving botanical mysteries. I found the Native Plant Society of New Mexico (NPSNM)'s Facebook page. It says the group "is a non-profit organization that strives to educate the public about native plants by promoting knowledge of plant identification, ecology, and uses; fostering preservation of natural habitats; supporting botanical research; and encouraging the appropriate use of native plants to conserve water, land, and wildlife." They also have an Albuquerque chapter, newsletters, events, and field trips.

How do you identify plants? What resources have you found most helpful? Write and let us know at thegritshha@gmail.com.



European stickseed

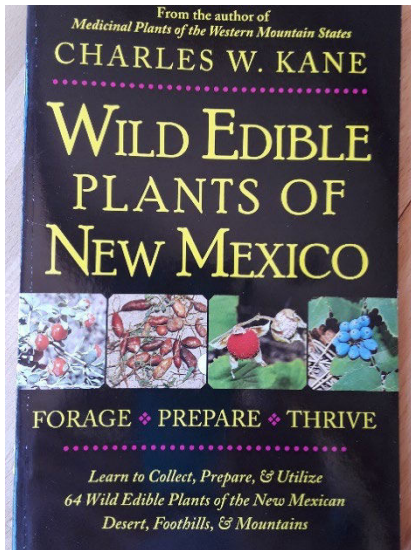
Lappula squarrosa

as identified by PictureThis

Further your Naturalist Education with These Other Resources

Elizabeth Edgren

Disclaimer: I'm not technically endorsing either of these two publications because I have not thoroughly read either one, but I am in the middle of finding them both intriguing.



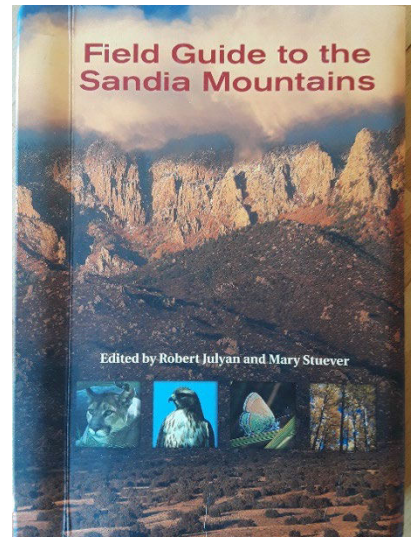
Our Washington-state brother and sister-in-law, who love visiting our sunny state, ordered us a copy of *Wild Edible Plants of New Mexico* by Charles W. Kane. Did you know that the immature flower buds of the cholla are edible? And so are the fruits after the cholla has finished flowering. Clearly great care

is needed in harvesting or preparing any part of a cholla, but the little book gives you techniques and recipes for preparing de-thorned buds, as well as medicinal uses of the pulp, and tells us that the roots are “a soothing diuretic.”



What about the stinky buffalo gourd found street-side throughout Sandia Heights? It can be picked when fully mature, cracked open, its seeds dried and roasted for an alternative to pumpkin seeds.

The other book, which may appeal to a wider audience, is *Field Guide to the Sandia Mountains*, edited by Robert Julyan and Mary Stuever. This spiral-bound book offers a bit of history, a lot of description, advice for enjoying our mountains, and an impressively comprehensive education on the ecology, geology, weather, plants, and animals of the Sandias: wildflower photos, drawings of tree and shrub features, photos and descriptions of critters from arthropods (otherwise known to me as creepy-crawlies) to reptiles and amphibians to birds to mammals. Not a book to sit down and read through cover-to-cover (at least not for me), but this book has a wealth of information and is easy to browse.



Monthly Fun Fact

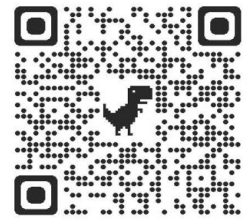
According to the *Washington Times*, New Mexico has more Ph.D.s per capita than any other state, mostly due to the many Government and private research facilities that call New Mexico home. The state as a whole stands at 3.4%, with Albuquerque having 4.7%. Los Alamos checks in with a whopping 24.2% holding doctoral degrees.





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*Homes for Sale
Homes Under Contract
Market Stats and more!*



Top 3 Group

Keller Williams
Academy



**Our Luxury
sales team**

**Sandia
Heights**
Year to Date
Market Stats

Closed Sales

29

-35% from 2021

Average Sale Price

\$728,188

+ 35% from 2021

Total New Listings

45

-25% from 2021

Avg Price per sq.ft.

\$259.00

Year to date comparison 1/1/2022 - 5/9/2022 to same time period in 2021

single family homes

Impact of Rising Mortgage Rates

Mortgage rates are projected to move higher throughout the balance of 2022 but at a more moderate pace. Historical data has shown us that rising home rates have not had a negative impact on home prices and minimal impact on overall home sales. As we move forward into the 2022 housing market analysts are still predicting home appreciation to increase on average at a more moderate pace of 6.7%. Our current market is fundamentally different than years past and what we are seeing is a lack of inventory and a huge deficit of available homes for sale vs home buyers. The low supply of homes is still the biggest driving factor in projected home appreciation throughout 2022.

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SH Tips & Hacks: Home Recipes for Weed Killer, Garden Insecticide, Insect Repellent

By Susan McCasland

Summer is almost here—a time we spray a lot of chemicals for various reasons. There are inexpensive and safer alternatives to many store-bought spray chemicals. Try some of these and let us know what you think: thegritshha@gmail.com.

Weed killer. Roundup (glyphosate) is the gold standard in weed killer. I've also inadvertently killed a tree with it and it has been implicated in a number of health issues, including cancers, neurological and heart problems, liver and kidney damage. So, here's an alternative guaranteed to be safer.

- 1 gallon of 5% or higher household white vinegar
- 1 cup of table salt or 2 cups epsom salts
- 1 tablespoon of liquid dishwashing soap

Thoroughly stir the ingredients together. Funnel into a spray bottle. Apply the solution on a dry, sunny day, by thoroughly coating all surfaces of the weed. Plants soaked with this solution will die within a week. Be sure not to get this on desirable plants.

Garden insecticides and repellents. We need to be a little more discriminating here, because we want to get rid of the pest insects and not the beneficial insects. So, we need to know what the pests are we are treating our garden for. I'm only going to give one recipe here, with a link for others and what insects they are good for. But this one is a natural for New Mexico.

- 1 quart water
- 1 tablespoon hot chile powder
- Several drops of mild liquid soap

This mixture can be sprayed full-strength on the leaves of afflicted plants. It falls more in the repellent than the insecticide category. Do be sure to wear gloves and keep the spray out of your face. You don't want to pepper spray yourself.

For other recipes, see <https://www.treehugger.com/natural-homemade-insecticides-save-your-garden-without-killing-earth-4858819>

Insect repellents for humans. We are blessed to not have a lot of irritating, biting, stinging insects here. But we do have those extremely annoying gnats for a few weeks in the summer. For the most part, what keeps mosquitoes away will keep the gnats away. Here's a recipe using essential oils that should help with gnats.

- 1 cup isopropyl alcohol
 - ½ teaspoon citronella oil
 - 10–20 drops of lemongrass or peppermint oil
- Mix together and put in a spray bottle. Label your mixture with its ingredients and store in a dark-colored bottle or keep in a dark spot to prolong its effectiveness. Test any homemade bug spray for possible allergic reactions before using it more liberally. Oils may stain clothing.

Enjoy your summer!



Community Events Bulletin Board

These groups are not sponsored by SHHA. Information is provided to keep residents informed.

Sandia Heights “Cork & Fork” Dining Activity: We are happy to announce that Cork & Fork has resumed our bimonthly dinners. We gather in the homes of our members. Each small dinner group is typically 6–8 people, including the hosts. The host decides the menu theme and prepares a main dish, with attendees contributing to some part of the meal—along with a wine to go with their dish. The emphasis is on food and fun rather than formal elegance. Though most of the dinners are smaller, there are 2 whole-group dinners during the year. All adult Sandia Heights residents are welcome. To inquire or join any time of year, call Rene Kessel at (505) 504-3886 or email at rene.kessel@cblegacy.com.

Sandia Heights Art Tour: Saturday and Sunday, September 17 & 18 from 10 AM – 5 PM. Thirty-six artists in a variety of mediums will be at twelve locations for two days showing their artistic talents and creations. They will enjoy discussing and showing their work. As you take the tour you may meet Marta Burckley – gourd art; Deborah Griswold – jewelry and watercolor; Mara Malnekoff – jewelry and accessories; Lois Manno – glass; Mary Ellen Merrigan – jewelry. Come and meet these artists and join us for a delightful tour.

Notice: Any corrections to the printed version of the GRIT can be found on the website: www.sandiahomeowners.org. We always welcome Letters to the Editor and your response to articles in *The GRIT*. Email us at thegritshha@gmail.com.



A reminder of what the awful wildfires can do to us even at a distance.

Photo by Susan McCasland



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



**The SHHA Office will be closed
Monday, June 20th
in observance of Juneteenth.**