

THE GRIT

Sandia Heights Homeowners Association

March 2012

President's Message

~ **Kate Fry**

Whether March comes in like a lion or a lamb, it still means that spring is on the way. We'll probably have a snowstorm or two just to remind us that this is New Mexico, but before we know it, the spring winds will subside and it will be June. Which leads me to—

An appeal for volunteers for the SHHA Board and committees. It's hard to believe, but the Annual Meeting on June 9 is coming up fast. Your SHHA Board of Directors is close to the minimum number of members needed in order to exist, which is a worrying position to be in. It also means that the current Board members are spread pretty thin doing the business of SHHA. So, if you have an interest in helping to maintain our "peak of living" here in Sandia Heights, please consider volunteering for a position on the Board. Even if you don't have experience volunteering with homeowners' associations, you are welcome to join us, and we'll help you learn the ropes. Qualifications include a desire to help the community, time and willingness to work (yes, being a member of the Board does take time and requires work!), and ability to work well with other people. You can pick up a Statement of Interest at the SHHA office (or our office staff will cheerfully e-mail a copy to you). If you don't have the time to serve on the Board, we encourage you to volunteer for one of our committees. You can find a description of the committees on the SHHA

website in the Residents' Guide. The Residents' Guide is also in the SHHA Residents' Directory and Guide. We're looking for interested people with ideas and the time to be an active committee member. The time commitment varies by committee, so check them out and talk to the committee chairs for more details.

And to clear up a misunderstanding about SHHA committees: Every member of every SHHA committee has a vote with regard to committee business. In response to our appeals for new committee volunteers, we have heard several residents say that they don't see why they should do the work required on a committee if they can't vote. We don't know how this misconception came about, but please be assured that it is not true! Our committee members are the lifeblood of SHHA, and every committee member (not just Board members) is entitled to vote on the business of his or her committee.

Coming soon-- exciting changes to the SHHA website! Look for a more colorful, up-to-date look with lots of photos, easier navigation, and online forms for ACC projects and covenant violation complaints. Our current website has a huge amount of useful information, and the new site will have even more information, including trail maps, wildlife information, an events calendar, landscaping and gardening information, and safety information.

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Continued from front page

We will also have a members-only area with secure login where members can update their profile and mail preferences and a Tram pass availability calendar. These are just a few of the new features we are working on to make the new website user-friendly, attractive, and useful.

Cunning coyotes: Recently we have heard concerns from several residents about coyotes attacking pets. We don't know if there has been an increase in these incidents, although it is possible that coyotes have been adversely affected by the drought, along with other wildlife, and are preying on pets due to scarcity of their usual prey of rodents and rabbits. However, it's more likely that the coyotes are simply taking advantage of pets roaming free or left unattended in back yards. They're just doing what comes naturally for a predator, and that's hunting for prey wherever they find it. The answer is not to try to eradicate coyotes—coyotes are extremely adaptable, and eradication efforts historically have not only been unsuccessful, but have caused populations to expand rather than decline in response to eradication attempts. It's our responsibility to keep our pets safe, not only from coyotes, but also from bobcats, owls, and hawks, which will also take unprotected pets. Here's how to keep your pets safe and keep coyotes from becoming a problem.

- Don't let your pets roam.
- Keep an eye on your dog when it's outside in your yard.
- Don't leave pet food outside.
- Keep your garbage in the garage until the morning of pickup..

For more information, including what to do if you meet a coyote, check out "Keeping Pets Safe" on the SHHA website or pick up a hard copy in the SHHA office. With a better understanding of coyotes and their

habitat, people can coexist harmoniously with these adaptable and cunning animals.



Wastewater and Septic Systems Update

As a direct result of the attendance of more than 50 residents from Sandia Heights at the January 10, 2012 Bernalillo County Commission meeting, your District 4 Commissioner, Michael Wiener, was able to get a 60-day extension to a final vote by the Commissioners that would amend the County wastewater ordinance to require inspection of septic systems on a 5-year repeating schedule and to upgrade failed septic systems to meet present code requirements. This inspection could be done in conjunction with a normal pumping operation. Upgrading a failed system could cost as much as \$30,000. The County maintains a list of registered and certified septic system evaluators which, in most cases, are the same contractors that pump and install septic systems.

The Sandia Heights Wastewater and Septic Systems Committee met with Commissioner Wiener (District 4), Special Assistant to Commissioner Hart Stebbins (District 3) Wende O'Brien, and others, including Mr. George Schroeder, Bernalillo County Environmental Health Manager, on January 26, 2012. We were especially concerned about the following actions by the County: the haste in seeking to pass this amendment without public input; whether or not there is a need for such an amendment; the one-size-fits-all approach to all septic systems in Bernalillo County; the arbitrary assumption that septic systems on less than 0.75 acre pollute ground water whereas identical systems on more than 0.75 acre do not.

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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.



Please note: The Tram will be closed for spring maintenance from April 9-20.

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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**
- High Finance Restaurant**
- Sandiego's Mexican Grill at the Tram (\$1 parking fee will be reimbursed with purchase of lunch)**
- Jade Enterprises**
- Los Equipales**
- Massage Envy**
- Ready Blinds & Shutters**
- The UPS Store**
- 3B Yoga**

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Next Coffeehouse Concert

Singer/songwriter Jack Williams performs on Saturday, April 14, at Church of the Good Shepherd Lower Hall at 7:30 pm.



"...the best guitar player I've ever heard..."- Peter Yarrow (Peter, Paul & Mary).
"Dazzling picking, expressive voice, unique and interesting songs. He is a showman in the best sense of the word and just wowed our audience. I think they would have followed him anywhere."-Rich Warren, WFMT "Midnight Special", Chicago, IL. Read more and listen to his music on www.jackwilliamsmusic.com. For more information or to volunteer to help, contact Linda Bolton, 856-7100, nlightsmgt@aol.com.



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

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 Albuquerque, NM 87122
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 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.

Last Month Call Type	# of calls	Last Month Call Type	# of calls
Alarms	33	Open door/window	6
Animal control asst.	1	Parking problem	0
Breaking & entering	2	Pet nuisance	4
Car accident	2	Rescue assist	2
Construction site burglary	0	Salesman problem	7
Customer assist	2	Sheriff office assist	0
Dumped/spilled material	0	Snake Call	0
Family dispute	0	Special request	3
Fire	0	Special (extra patrol)	13
Fireworks complaint	0	Speeding vehicle	0
Front office	5	Suspicious person	5
Loud music/party	0	Suspicious vehicle	16
Lost/found pet	3	Theft	1
Lost/found item	1	Threat/personal	0
Mailbox vandalism	0	Utility Co. assist	1
Motorcycle nuisance	1	Vandalism	10
Motorist assist	7	Vehicle burglary	1
Neighbor dispute	1	Wildlife report	1
Newspaper pickup	38		
Noise complaints	0	Total Calls	166

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.

Most burglars having entered a home will look in your sock drawer, bedside table and medicine cabinets. They almost never go into kids rooms however.

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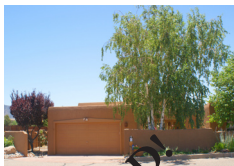
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Sharon and Judson are by your side, working hard to make sure your goals are achieved and your best interests are protected at all times.

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Cliffrose Drive NE

ELEGANT, UPSCALE ONE LEVEL SOUTHWEST STYLE CUSTOM ON MANICURED XERISCAPED LOT! 3 bedrooms, 2 baths, Greatroom with fireplace, formal dining room, Informal Dining Room, updated gourmet country kit & 2 CG--Flowing Floorplan, Upscale Appointments thru-out!



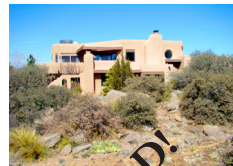
Eagle Ridge Road NE

DISTINCTIVE TWO STORY CUSTOM ON .95+/- PANORAMIC MOUNTAIN & CITY VIEW LOT! 3 bedrooms + study, 3 baths, greatroom, formal dining room, family room, gourmet country kitchen & 2 car garage. Serene retreat. Privacy & space abound! Awaits your family!



Tramway Terrace NE

UPSACLE, PRISTINE, ONE LEVEL CUSTOM ON BREATHTAKING/UNOBSTRUCTED MOUNTAIN VIEW LOT! Entry foyer, spacious greatroom with custom two-way fireplace, formal dining room, updated country kitchen, 3 bedrooms, 2 baths, manicured front & backyards. Backs to open space! Panoramic Mountain views!



Red Oaks Loop NE

CUSTOM RESIDENCE WITH MULTIPLE VIEW DECKS ON QUIET 3/4 +/- ACRE VIEW LOT! Informal living with panoramic views! Magnificent greatroom with custom kiva fireplace, spacious family room, formal dining room, fully renovated gourmet kitchen, sunroom, 3bedrooms, 4 baths, oversized 2 car garage and easy care front & backyards!



Honeysuckle Drive NE

MAGNIFICENT ONE-OF-A-KIND CUSTOM RESIDENCE WITH FINISHED BASEMENT & INGROUND POOL! Panoramic mountain views! Hacienda courtyard, greatroom, dining room, family room, billiards/media room, spa/jacuzzi room, Solarium, gourmet kitchen, 5 bedrooms, 4 baths, oversized 3 car gar plus manicured front & backyards!



Black Bear Road NE

CONTEMPORARY TUSCAN ELEGANCE ON PRIME SANDIA HEIGHTS VIEW LOT! PRIVACY, SPACE & VIEWS ABOUND! Courtyard w/water feature, expansive greatroom w/kiva fireplace, elegant formal dining room, master chef's gourmet kitchen, library, 4 bedrooms, 4 baths, professional landscaping, view balcony, outdoor fireplace & more!

SOLD!

Cougar Loop NE



MAGNIFICENT CUSTOM HACIENDA RETREAT ON 0.9 ACRE PANORAMIC VIEW LOT! 3 bedrooms, 3 baths, greatroom, dining room, gourmet kitchen, 2 car garage, manicured front & backyards

SOLD!

Bobcat Blvd NE



SPACOUS, ONE-OF-A-KIND TWO STORY CUSTOM ON .87+/- ACRE VIEW LOT WITH LARGE BASEMENT! 4 bedrooms, 3 baths, living room, dining room, family room, country kitchen & 2 car gar.

SOLD!

Tramway Terrace NE



UPSACLE, PRISTINE, ONE LEVEL CUSTOM ON BREATHTAKING MOUNTAIN VIEW LOT! 2 bedrooms, 2 baths, greatroom, dining room, country kitchen, 2 car gar plus easy care front & backyards.

SOLD!

Black Willow NE



IMMACULATE/SPACIOUS ONE LEVEL CUSTOM ON PANORAMIC CORNER VIEW LOT! Private courtyard, greatroom, dining room, kitchen, 3 bedrooms, 2 baths plus natural southwest landscaping.

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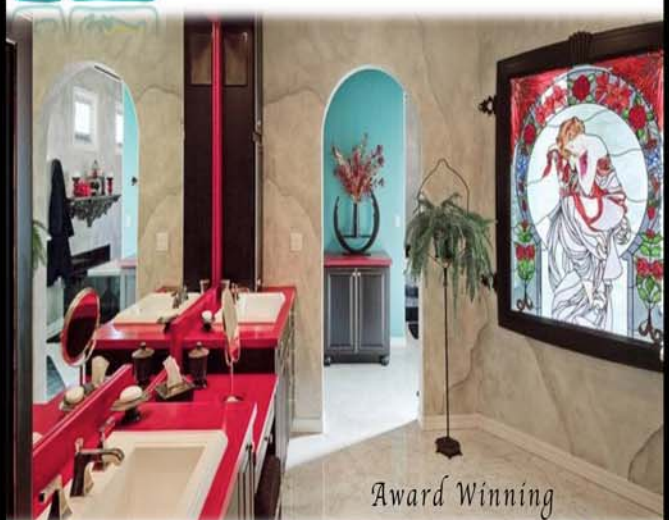
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Continued from page 2

The apparent discrimination against homeowners who have less than 0.75 acre; the retraction of the statement in the Albuquerque Journal that areas supplied by a private water utility are exempt from the inspections; the costs for the inspection of the septic systems; and the high cost to bring these systems up to meet present code.

As a direct result of the meeting of January 26, Mr. George Schroeder mailed a letter to every homeowner in Bernalillo County with a septic system on less than 0.75 acre outlining the proposed schedule for the septic system inspections. The main argument used by the County, especially Mr. George Schroeder, is that Sandia Heights septic systems pollute ground water downstream, i.e. to the west of Sandia Heights. This assumption is based on a 2000 modeling study that predicts nitrate concentrations of 6 mg/L in the ground water. EPA and State standards for safe drinking water are nitrate concentrations of 10 mg/L or less. Actual nitrate measurements by the County in two test wells along Tramway Blvd in 2005 and 2008 showed that this projected accumulation of nitrate was exaggerated. For a number of years the nitrate concentration averaged 3 mg/L. More important, these measured concentrations did not increase but remained steady at 3 mg/L. Sandia Peak Utility Co., our water provider, lists a nitrate concentration of less than 1 mg/L (2010 tests) in our drinking water. Therefore, there is no proof that septic systems contaminate ground water in Sandia Heights or ground water to the west of us.

We also met on February 6 with Commissioner Wayne Johnson, District 5, who represents homeowners in the East Mountain communities that have the highest septic system concentration in Bernalillo County. Apparently these homeowners have

similar concerns about this amendment as do Sandia Heights residents.

These proposed changes to the Bernalillo County wastewater ordinance will again be discussed and will come up for a vote at the regular Commission meeting on Tuesday, March 13, 2012, at 5:00 PM in the Vincent E. Griego Chambers in the basement of 1 Civic Plaza NW. It is important that Sandia Heights is again represented by as many residents as possible.

In the meantime, it is important that we keep our septic systems functioning properly. The best way to do this is to have a regular pumping schedule. Every septic tank should be pumped every 3 to 5 years.



Preliminary and Final Design and Construction Plans ~ Bob

Bower, Chairman, ACC

As I mentioned in my article entitled “Planning your Home Improvement Project” published in the October 2011 edition of the GRIT, the ACC encourages all property owners of Sandia Heights to submit an application for preliminary approval of design and construction plans, particularly for new construction and major addition projects. Preliminary plans are the ones that are done during the initial stages of the planning process prior to the preparation of final (and much more expensive) plans. Review of plans at the preliminary phase can identify any problems with governing Unit covenants or with any of the ACC Design Guidelines related to the project. This early review will make it easier to correct any compliance problems before incurring further costs as you proceed towards the preparation of final plans. As a minimum, these preliminary plans should contain the floor plans, elevations, and the location of the proposed structure on the lot.

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It is also advisable to include exterior materials, colors, lighting, etc., if known at the time. The ACC will point out what can and cannot be approved based on the completeness of the preliminary plans. The applicant will be encouraged to submit additional information to address any inadequacies with the initial submission of the preliminary plans in order to avoid the risk of later disapproval of the project. Once the ACC gives its written approval of the preliminary plans, you can then proceed with the preparation of final design and construction plans. Two copies of the final plans should accompany the submittal of another application for final approval of the project, and these documents will be used by the ACC to conduct a neighborhood review of the project, if needed, prior to the final approval of the project.

Keep in mind that the ACC only requires final drawings that show the overall floor plan, the elevations, the location of the proposed project on the lot, and any other features that affect the external appearance of the residence. The ACC does not need drawings showing such items as internal electrical wiring, etc., that are not related to what the external appearance of the project will look like when completed.

Once the ACC approves the final plans, you must keep the ACC fully informed if you make any changes to these plans, regardless of how trivial you may think these changes are. Such items as changes to an exterior chimney design or relocating an air conditioning unit from a ground-mounted location to a location on your roof or vice-versa need ACC approval if these changes are not part of the originally approved plans. Experience has shown that neighbors who have examined plans made available to them during a neighborhood review are especially sensitive to any changes during construction that appear to differ from the plans that they were invited to review.

Just for your reference, the ACC currently has six Design Guidelines for use by property

owners within Sandia Heights to ensure covenant compliance and to ensure that property development within the community does not unduly interfere with the natural landscape and homeowners' visual access to it, and that the resulting construction is in harmony with the natural surroundings and residences in the immediate area. These Design Guidelines are available at the SHHA office and on the SHHA website. These Design Guidelines are listed as follows:


- Detached Buildings
- Landscaping
- Roofing
- Setbacks and Variances
- Solar Collectors
- Walls and Fences




ACC Activity Log: *Summary of Approved Projects activity since the last GRIT:*

- 412 Live Oak Loop – Reroof
- 626 Blackhawk Drive – Landscaping
- 638 Cougar Loop – Stucco Repairs
- 725-9 Tramway Lane – Garage Door Replacement
- 727-21 Tramway Lane – Replace Retaining Walls
- 795 Tramway Lane – Landscaping
- 810 F Live Oak Road – Fence Replacement
- 948 Deer Drive – Window Replacement
- 1049 Red Oaks Loop – Driveway Storm Abatement
- 1243 Rockrose Road – Reroof, Restucco, & Swamp Cooler
- 1466 Morning Glory – Window Replacement
- 1504 Eagle Ridge Road – Re-stain Trim
- 2320 Calle de Gabriel – Reroof
- 2441 Tramway Terrace Court - Reroof
- 7710 Cedar Canyon Place – Wall-in windows & Paint Stucco
- 8248 Raintree Drive – Repaint House & Walls



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Community Event Bulletin Board

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

Sandia Heights Artists will meet Wednesday, March 28, 7:00 p.m. at Barb Nahler's house, 1202 Marigold Dr. The 9th annual Sandia Heights Art Tour will take place September 8-9. If you would like to participate or need more information contact Mary Ellen Merrigan (280-9772 or me@maryellenbeads.com) The work of some of the Sandia Heights artists will be on display and for sale in the lobby at the April 14 Coffee House Concert.

Church of the Good Shepherd Looking for a welcoming, safe, liberal and friendly church? Sunday Services at Church of the Good Shepherd (7834 Tennyson NE) are at 8:30 and 10:45 a.m. Visit www.ucccogs.org or call the church office @ 856-1004 for more information.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & NOTICES:

- **Office hours:** Monday – Friday 9am – 4pm.
- **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 Handymen and Septic System Contractors. You may download the form from the website or contact our office and we can email you one.
- **SHHA Board Meeting** – Wednesday, March 14 at 7:00 pm in the SHHA Office.
- **Committee meetings** 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!



Dues increase SHHA members 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.

HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY 



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

Don't forget to:

SPRING

Forward

on Sunday, March 11!

