



Unit numbers shown in parentheses

Officers

- President - Jim Stewart (7)
- Vice President - Eric Faulring (10)
- Secretary - Martin Kirk (23)
- Treasurer – Charles Ewing (14)

Board Members

- Stan Davis (10)
- Larry Dragan (16)
- Elizabeth Edgren (South 1)
- Charles Ewing (14)
- Heidi Komkov (8)
- Phil Krehbiel (14)
- Anderson Kressy (52)
- Kathleen McCaughey (5)
- Claudia Mitchell (5)
- Arthur Romero (7)
- Terry Walker (11)
- Cathy Yandell (3)

Committee Chairs

- Architectural Control Committee (ACC) – Phil Krehbiel
- Communications & Publications Committee (C&P) – Claudia Mitchell
- Community Service & Membership Committee (CS&M) – Elizabeth Edgren
- Covenant Support Committee (CSC) – Stan Davis
- Environment & Safety Committee (E&S) – Kathleen McCaughey
- Finance Committee (FC) – Charles Ewing
- IT Committee (ITC) – Heidi Komkov
- Nominating Committee (NC) – Eric Faulring

Office Staff

- Lead Administrator – Trish Lovato
- Administrator – Anna Levchuk

SHHA Office

12700 San Rafael Avenue NE, Ste. 3
Albuquerque, NM 87122

Office Hours: Mon – Thurs, 9 AM – 4 PM
Fri, 9 AM – noon

Closed on federal holidays.

Phone: 505-797-7793

Fax: 505-856-8544

Website: www.sandiahomeowners.org

Email: shha@sandiahomeowners.org

Message from the President, February 2025

Jim Stewart

Howdy Neighbors,

Unbelievably, I am approaching the one-year anniversary of my time on the SHHA Board as the President. This first year was just as stimulating and rewarding as I could have hoped for upon assuming the position. Our residents, SHHA Board members, and volunteers have been a great asset to me as we worked through the challenges inherent to any organization with as many members as we have in Sandia Heights. I am looking forward to one more year in service to you.

Of note, the Sandia Heights Homeowners Association (SHHA) recently reached a settlement of litigation with a property owner/resident. As part of the settlement agreement, it was agreed that I would acknowledge that the matter could have been, and should have been, handled differently by the SHHA and the property owner and that there were other, more appropriate means at hand to resolve contentious issues prior to initiating litigation. Further, as a result of this settlement the SHHA has subsequently developed a written policy, approved by the Board of Directors, detailing procedures—such as mediation or binding resolution—to be followed prior to initiating litigation against a property owner.

The monthly ‘soap box’...as I finish up this month’s column (I have a way early deadline!!), I have been watching the news regarding the fires in LA County. The images are incredibly sobering...but thoughts of a fire in Sandia Heights keep creeping into my mind. The crew on the Environment and Safety Committee (ESC) worry about the prospect of an uncontrolled fire. They are in frequent contact with the emergency management staff and fire services. But...much of the preparation for such an event is in your hands, both with prevention/protection of your home and in being prepared to evacuate. The ESC schedules periodic forums with a focus on fire safety. I encourage you to attend.

Remember our office staff (Trish and Anna) can be reached five days a week, via the contact info on the left. Of course, you can also reach me at president@sandiahomeowners.org. I promise you will receive a response.

And...please plan on attending the SHHA Annual Meeting on February 22nd; more about that elsewhere in this issue. O’Beans will have refreshment items on hand for your enjoyment.

Sandia Heights Homeowners Association (SHHA) Annual Meeting

Saturday, February 22, 2025, 9:00 AM–11:30 AM

Church of the Good Shepherd
7834 Tennyson Street NE

This is an open meeting.
All Sandia Heights homeowners are welcome.

**The Board will respond to questions received by
the SHHA Office one week in advance
(February 15, 2025).**

Agenda

Business Meeting

- I. Call to order and establishment of a quorum
- II. Approval of the agenda
- III. Approval of the minutes of the 2024 Annual Meeting
- IV. Introduction of the 2024 Board of Directors and SHHA Standing Committee Chairs
- V. Reports for 2024 to the membership by the Officers and Standing Committee Chairs—written reports are in the packets distributed at the meeting.
- VI. Vote to approve the amendment of the Articles of Incorporation
- VII. Vote to approve the amendment of the SHHA Bylaws
- VIII. Election by membership of the 2025 Board of Directors
- IX. Announcement of 2025 Officers and Board of Directors.
- X. Business meeting adjourns

Break

Refreshments provided by SHHA neighbor O’Bean’s

- XI. Question and answer session for questions submitted in advance. The author of the question may request clarification as time permits.

Adjournment

SHHA Board of Director Candidates for 2025-2026

Per [SHHA bylaws 6.5.1](#), below are the qualified candidates for the 2025-2026 board of directors, as of the February 2025 GRIT print deadline, with a brief bio on each. Recognizing that no election of directors was held at the 2024 SHHA annual meeting, we present the individuals who began serving since Feb 2023 as well as more newly appointed directors. For your information, we have also included the directors who were elected by the membership in Feb 2023 and prior.

Dues-paying SHHA members are eligible to vote (one vote per address) on each individual candidate by secret paper ballot at the February 22, 2025 annual meeting.

Note that Officers fill a two-year term; the rest of the Directors fill a three-year term.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE BOARD MEMBERS

(will appear on ballot)

Jim Stewart, President: *joined the board in October 2023, served on Covenant Support Committee; Architectural Control Committee & Finance Committee.* I am a retired Army Intelligence Officer, retired Chief Deputy Sheriff, and also serve as Treasurer on the Texas Chief Deputies Association Board of Directors. I am a member of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, New Mexico Board of Directors, and a member of the Bernalillo County Sheriff's Office Advisory Review Board. I am a three-year resident of Sandia Heights.

Eric Faulring, Vice President: *joined board in June 2023, current Chair of the Nominating Committee, currently serving on Architectural Control Committee and on the Information Technology Committee.* I am a Ph.D. mechanical engineer specializing in robotics, on pause from career to focus on raising three grade-school children. I have lived in Sandia Heights since 2014 and strive to be in my woodworking shop if I have a spare moment. My first passion with SHHA is contributing to the Architectural Control Committee. Much of that tenure has been spent learning the ropes of the organization and the issues before it, and I would like to use that experience now to help sustain our special community.

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Charles Ewing, Treasurer: joined board in May 2024, current Chair of Finance Committee. I am a native of Santa Fe, NM. I earned a B.B.A. (finance concentration) from UNM and an M.B.A. from SMU in Dallas. I retired to Sandia Heights after more than 40 years in commercial banking. I was on the faculty of the Western States School of Banking for 38 years and was a guest lecturer and a member of the adjunct faculty at the Anderson School of Management at UNM. I have also served in leadership positions for a number of community organizations in New Mexico.

Kathleen McCaughey, Secretary-elect: joined board in February 2022 and will need membership vote to continue for a second three-year term. Current Chair of the Environment & Safety Committee and serving on the Covenant Support Committee. I retired from the Sandia Lab after 33 years as an engineer/director. After living in ABQ Acres for 18 years, I moved here because of the strong covenants, the importance placed on sustaining the beauty and quality of life in Sandia Heights and being up close with wildlife. I aligned my committee involvement with my background and what's important to me. As E&S committee chair, the focus has been on wildfire prevention and preparedness, pedestrian safety, preserving our natural environment, and living smartly with wildlife.

Stan Davis: joined board in October 2024, current Chair of the Covenant Support Committee. I retired from my career as a geophysicist and moved from Houston to Sandia Heights in 2019. Prior to joining the board, I served on the Covenant Support Committee for almost five years, and on the Communications and Publications Committee. I have authored and co-authored more than 25 articles for the GRIT newsletter on covenant matters and on local geology and archaeology. I am a member of the Pastel Society of New Mexico and Friends of the Sandia Mountains and am currently being mentored to become a hike leader with the New Mexico Mountain Club. I enjoy hiking and geocaching, and painting what I see from along the trails. I also look forward to continuing to do what I can to help maintain our unique neighborhood.

Phil Krehbiel: joined board in August 2023, current Chair of the Architectural and Control Committee. I am a retired lawyer who practiced commercial litigation in Albuquerque for 43 years. I have been a resident of Sandia Heights since 2017, was on the Board of Directors of SHHA in 2018 and 2019 and served on the Finance Committee.

NON-EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE BOARD MEMBERS (will appear on ballot)

Martin Kirk, Secretary: joined board in 2018, 3/4 vote of the Board approved extending term up to one year, for overlap with the new Secretary. Currently serving on the Environment and Safety Committee and Nominating Committee. I have lived in Sandia Heights for 24 years. I participate in my Las Casas Neighborhood Watch. I have a B.S. in Chemistry from West Virginia University; a Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; and performed postdoctoral studies at Stanford University. I have been on the faculty at UNM since 1993. I am currently Distinguished University Professor of Chemistry and Chemical Biology at UNM.

Heidi Komkov: joined board in June 2023, current Chair of the recently formed Information Technology Committee. I am a Ph.D. engineer in the defense industry and a mother of two boys, proud to call Sandia Heights home since 2021. Over the past year, I have worked closely with office staff to update office tech and implement efficiency improvements. I am motivated to preserve the natural beauty and tranquility of our community, and I am doing my part to foster an organization that operates transparently and effectively for all residents.

Terry Walker: joined board in August of 2023, currently serving on the Finance Committee. I am a semi-retired mechanical engineer and own Walker Consulting Engineers. I am the president of the local chapter the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers. I have been past president of the Altamont Little League and am currently on the advisory board of the Mountainside YMCA. My wife and I have been residents of Sandia Heights for over forty years, raising our two children in the house we still occupy. We love it here and I aim to provide positive input into our community by serving on the board of directors.

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DECEMBER CALLS TO SANDIA HEIGHTS SECURITY PATROL

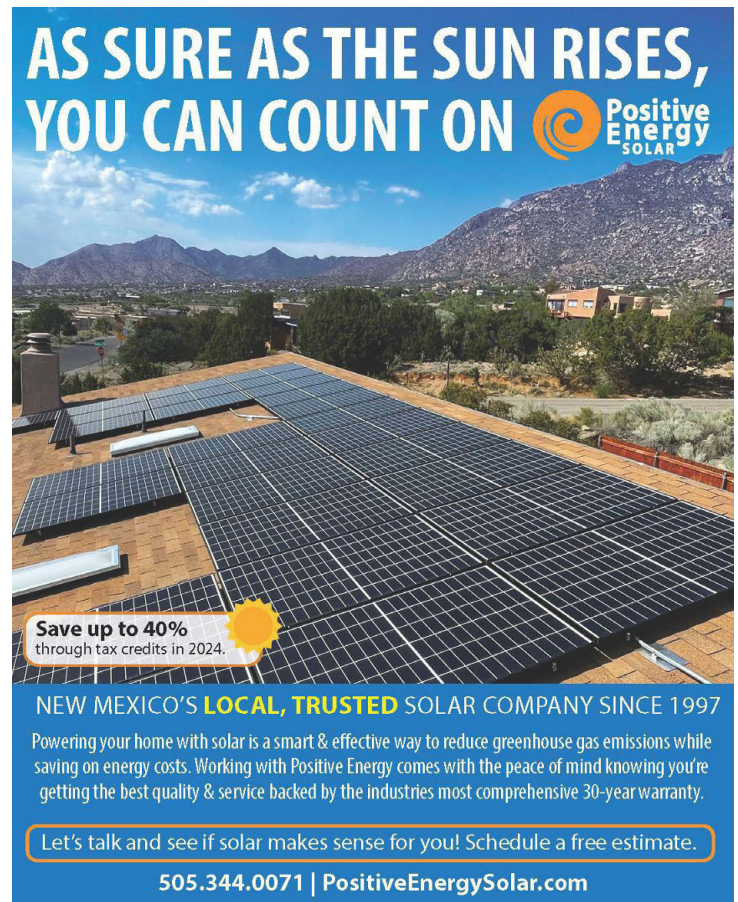
The following statistics are the latest provided by Sandia Heights Security since the last GRIT. **Please be reminded that Sandia Heights Services (they provide water, sewer, trash and recycle collection, and security services) is a subscription service separate from Sandia Heights Homeowners Association 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 (505) 856-6347, **mobile** (505) 263-4654.


December 2024	# of calls		# of calls
Alarms	7	Open Door/ Window/ Garage	1
Attempted Breaking & Entering	2	Special Extra Patrol	6
Car Accident	1	Special Request/Vacation	110
Customer Assistance	2	Suspicious Activity	3
Dump/ Spilled Material	1	Suspicious Person	1
Home Burglary	1	Suspicious Vehicle	5
Lost/Found Pet	2	Vehicle Burglary/ Break In	1
Miscellaneous Call	1	Wildlife Report	1
Newspaper/ Package Pickup	24		
		Total:	170

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:** Mon – Thur 9 AM - 4 PM. Fri 9 AM - Noon.
- **Board Meeting:** the next board meeting will be held at the SHHA office on February 12, 2025, 6:30pm.
- **Annual Meeting:** February 22, 2025, 9:00 am.
- **Office Closures for Holiday(s):** February 17, 2025, for President’s Day.
- **Notary services (Tues–Thurs, by appointment), copies (20 per month) and faxes, e-mail alerts, and contractor evaluation binder, free to members.**
- **Committee meeting dates** are posted on our website calendar: www.sandiahomeowners.org
- **Tram passes** for sale in the SHHA Office. \$10.00 per ticket for members on a first-come first-served basis. Checks and Credit Cards are accepted. To view the Tram Pass Procedures for SHHA Members go to the SHHA website.



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ACTIVE



\$1,250,000

67 Pinon Hill Pl NE
3,896 SQ FT 4BR 4BA 2.44 Acres

ACTIVE



\$975,000

338 White Oaks Drive NE
4,598 SQ FT 4BR 4BA 1.09 Acres

SOLD



2434 Tramway Terrace Court NE
1,405 SQ FT 2BR 2BA .12 Acres

SOLD



2326 Calle De Gabriel NE
1,807 SQ FT 3BR 2BA .17 Acres

SOLD



656 Roadrunner Lane NE
2,151 SQ FT 3BR 2BA .74 Acres

SOLD



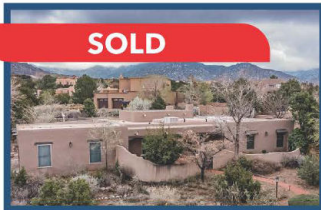
1104 San Rafael Avenue NE
2,758 SQ FT 3BR 2BA .62 Acres

SOLD



152 Juniper Hill Road NE
2,294 SQ FT 3BR 3BA .56 Acres

SOLD



997 Lynx Loop NE
3,050 SQ FT 4BR 3BA .62 Acres

SOLD



1 Sandia Heights Drive NE
3,106 SQ FT 3BR 3BA .6 Acres

SOLD



347 Paintbrush Drive NE
2,504 SQ FT 2BR 2BA .82 Acres

SOLD



963 Antelope Avenue NE
3,841 SQ FT 4BR 3BA .65 Acres

SOLD



330 Paintbrush Drive NE
3,505 SQ FT 4BR 4BA .69 Acres

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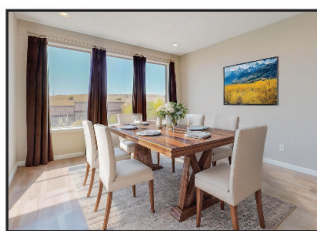
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Larry Dragan: *joined board in March 2024, currently serving on the Finance Committee.* I have twenty-three years of experience in budgeting work as a budget analyst and finance director, and in hospital administration. As a newcomer to Sandia Heights, I joined the board to learn more about my community.

Anderson Kressy: *joined board in November 2024, currently serving on the Information Technology Committee.* I have been a proud resident of Sandia Heights since 2010. As a former SHHA Board member and a retired attorney, I bring both experience and a deep commitment to our community. Currently, I am a stay-at-home father to my 11-year-old son, while my wife serves as a manager at Sandia National Labs. I believe the SHHA plays a vital role in promoting the common interests of our neighborhood, and I am resolved to enhance its effectiveness and success.

Cathy Yandell: *joined board in December 2024, currently serving on the Community Service and Membership Committee.* I grew up among the red rocks in Gallup, studied at UNM, and then completed graduate degrees at the U. of California, Berkeley. Having recently retired as the Daniell Professor of French and Francophone Studies at Carleton College (a liberal arts college near Minneapolis), I am thrilled to be back in New Mexico in the gorgeous foothills. I have been fortunate to live among diverse people near the Navajo reservation and in France, Mali, Japan, Greece, and India. I appreciate other cultures, other opinions, and other ways of looking at things. My commitment as a member of the Board is to work toward making it as effective, participatory, and responsive to residents as possible.

**NON-EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE BOARD MEMBERS,
previously elected by the membership at the February
2023 Annual meeting or prior
(will not appear on ballot)**

Randall Tripp: *joined board in October 2019, currently serving on the Finance Committee.* I started working in the 1970's in engineering, building and maintaining commercial touring and in-house sound systems for major venues and acts through 1985. I have since worked in healthcare as Administrative Director Industrial Occupational Medicine for Gallatin Medical Foundation/

Whittier Presbyterian Hospital, California; and as Field Project Manager for GH Palmer Associates constructing housing throughout southern California.

Arthur Romero: *joined board in February 2023, currently serving on the Covenant Support Committee and the Nominating Committee.* I attended the New Mexico Highland University of Electrical Engineering and worked at UNM in instrument applications. I worked at Sandia National Labs in telemetry systems and aircraft compatibility. I retired from Baxter Healthcare/V. Mueller, working with and repairing surgical instruments and operating room equipment. I have been a Sandia Heights resident since 2017. My goal with my work on the board is to maintain the unique character and natural beauty of Sandia Heights, and to sustain property values through covenant adherence.

Claudia Mitchell: *joined board in February 2023, current Chair of the Communications and Publications Committee and editor of the GRIT newsletter.* I retired from careers in clinical laboratory management, and hospital laboratory equipment sales. We moved from Whidbey Island, near Seattle to Sandia Heights in January 2022 feeling exceptionally fortunate to have found a home here. I am an artist painting in oils, and an active member of the Sandia Heights Artists. I volunteered to serve on the board to help maintain the excellence and beauty of our extraordinary community and to contribute to communications especially through our monthly newsletter.

**NOMINATED BY MEMBERSHIP
(will appear on ballot)**

Larry Layne: *nominated for board membership.* My wife and I have been residents in Sandia Heights since October 2012 and have enjoyed the quality and pace of life here. I recently retired from the Indian Health Service where I was involved with managing data and reporting on the public health status of tribes in the U.S. My education and background are in the areas of wildlife ecology, ecology, statistics, and geographic information systems (mapping). I am looking forward to participating in and contributing to the Sandia Heights community.

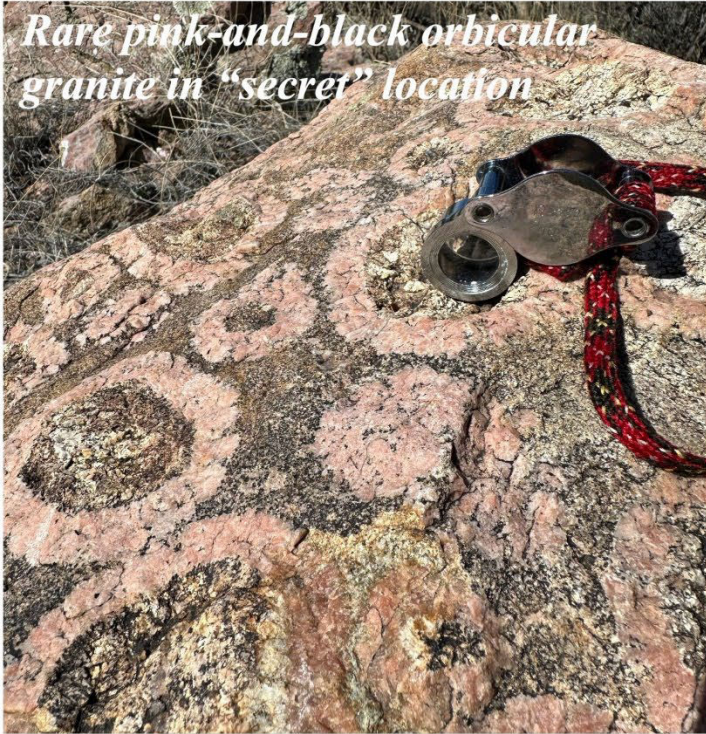
**Covenant Support Violations
as of December 31, 2024**

Received: 1 Open: 10 Closed: 4 (3 vegetation, 1 RV)

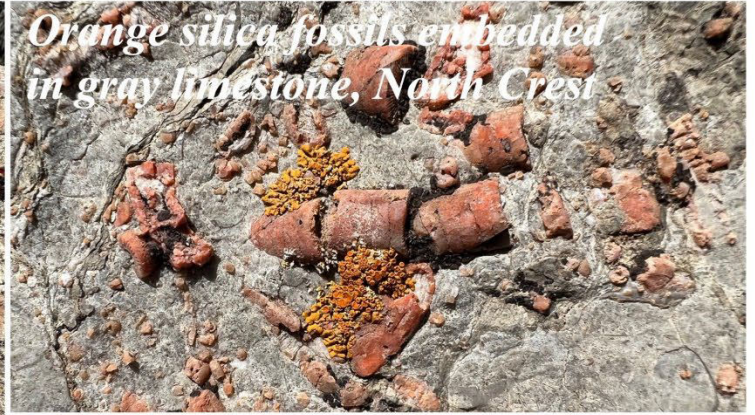
Mineral Magic in the Sandias

Stan Davis (all pictures by author)

Rare pink-and-black orbicular granite in "secret" location



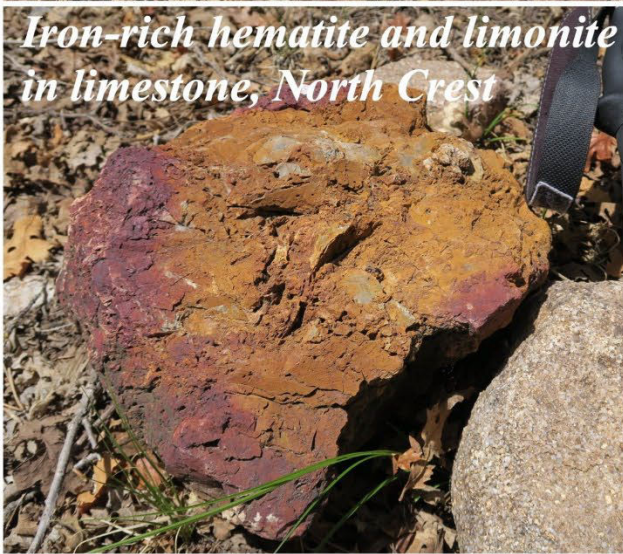
Orange silica fossils embedded in gray limestone, North Crest



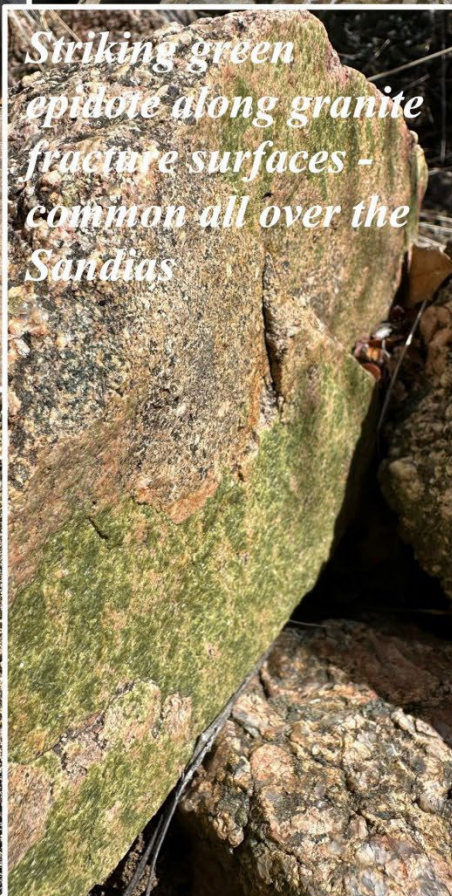
Heavy, white barium-rich barite at Lands End mine, North Crest



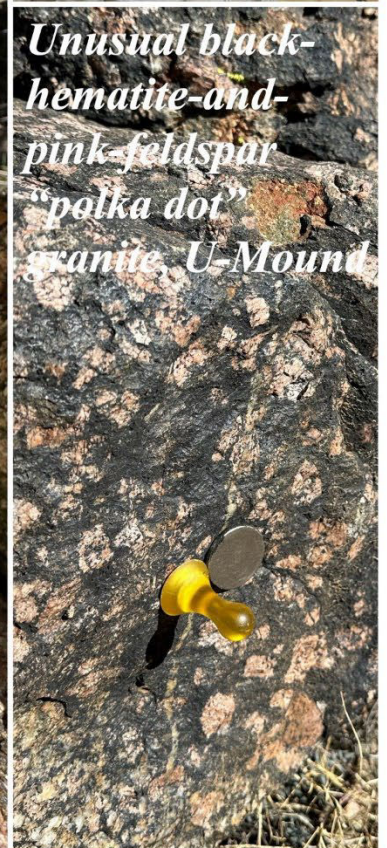
Iron-rich hematite and limonite in limestone, North Crest



Striking green epidote along granite fracture surfaces - common all over the Sandias



Unusual black-hematite-and-pink-feldspar "polka dot" granite, U-Mound



Placer magnetite winnowed out of granite gravel, ubiquitous in Foothills arroyos.



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Sharon's Sandia Heights Market Update Past Year 2/2024 to 2/2025

3 Larger homes For Sale on Larger Lots | Avg Asking price \$1,750,000 Avg Asking price/sf \$282.57

4 Homes Pending | Avg Asking Price \$937,250 Avg Asking price/sf \$266.79

48 Homes Closed past year to date | Avg Sold Price \$883,480 Avg Sold price/sf.\$259.08

6 Smaller homes on smaller lots | Avg Asking price \$433,167 Avg Asking price/sf \$253.21

3 home pending | Avg Asking Price \$531,000 Avg Asking price/sf \$294.57

39 Homes Closed past year to date | Avg Sold Price \$471,308 Avg Sold price/sf \$271.13

Note Every Home Is Unique . Price is always based on condition, updates, market appeal, location and views.

Current Interest rates hovering around 7.25% for 30 year conventional & 6.625% 30 year VA!



1114 San Rafael Ave NE



2027 Quail Run Dr NE



730 Tramway Lane NE



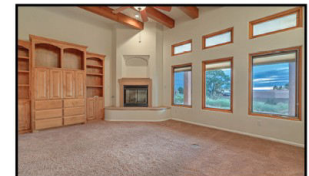
1723 Quail Run Ct. NE

ANOTHER GREAT SANDIA HEIGHTS HOME!

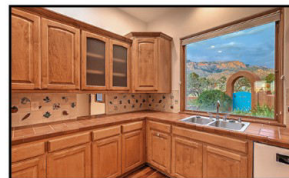
908 TRAMWAY LANE NE | ASKING PRICE \$732,000 | 2517 SF | 3BR | 2 BATHS 2+ CAR GARAGE



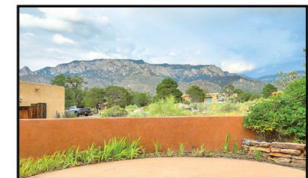
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Quality Features!



Views!

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SANDIA HEIGHTS 2024 MARKET SUMMARY

HOMES SOLD: 96
AVERAGE SIZE: 2697 SQ. FT
AVERAGE SOLD PRICE: \$704,367
AVERAGE DAYS ON MARKET: 28

HAPPY 2025. REFLECTING BACK ON 2024, SANDIA HEIGHTS IS STILL STABLE AS OUR OVERALL MARKET HAS CHANGED. INTEREST RATES MAY REMAIN ABOVE 6.0%. INVENTORY AND DAYS ON MARKET ARE INCREASING IN THE OVERALL MARKET. IF YOU WOULD LIKE A DETAILED MARKET VALUATION PLEASE CALL ME. HERE TO HELP SUPPORT OUR SANDIA HEIGHTS RESIDENTS.

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A Memorial to Ben Abruzzo Merrilea Mayo

The February 2025 GRIT celebrates the life and contributions of Ben Abruzzo, the visionary developer responsible for the existence of Sandia Heights. Ben died in a small plane crash on February 11, 1985, almost exactly 40 years ago, at age 54. Hence it seemed fitting to honor him this month.

After being posted to Kirtland AFB as a Lieutenant in the Air Force, Ben fell in love with this area. He served as President of Alvarado Realty Company (which developed Sandia Heights), President of Sandia Peak Ski Company, President of Sandia Peak Tram Company, and President of Sandia Peak Utility Company. Ben's imprint spans all our neighborhood design and services. In this issue, we recognize Ben with a reprint of one of his earlier GRIT articles and also a remembrance by Ann List—one of Sandia Heights' original residents, who knew Ben personally.

Ben was not just known for his real estate ventures. He was also a celebrated balloonist, having been the first (along with Larry Newman and Maxie Anderson), to cross the Atlantic Ocean in a manned balloon, the *Double Eagle II*, in August of 1978. For this feat, Ben, Larry, and Maxie were awarded a Congressional Gold Medal, as shown in the photo below. They also received a hero's welcome, complete with tickertape parade, back in their home town of Albuquerque.



Ben Abruzzo, Maxie Anderson, and Larry Newman receiving their Congressional Gold Medals. Ben is the leftmost of the three medal winners. Also in the photo are US House Representative Harold Lowell Runnels (leftmost, front row) and US Senator Pete Domenici (leftmost second row).

Ben and his ballooning partners set several more world records afterwards, including the first crossing of the Pacific Ocean in a manned balloon. This was a much longer flight than the flight over the Atlantic and set the record for the longest distance ever traveled by a manned balloon. More on Ben Abruzzo's ballooning career can be read at <https://www.nationalballoonmuseum.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Ben-L.-Abruzzo.pdf>.

Ben's visionary plans always started with a small and practical first step, but that step was inevitably executed with an eye to massive future expansion. The Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta, which Ben started in 1972, had just 13 balloons lifting off from a local parking lot. That same event, in 2024, had 551 registered hot-air balloons lifting off from the now-familiar Balloon Fiesta Park, with its 86 acres of launch field. For Sandia Heights, Ben's plan started with a community of just 40 households, and now encompasses nearly 2200 — as Ann List notes in her article below.

Remembering Ben Abruzzo (1930 – 1985) Ann B. List, Sandia Heights resident since 1972

This is more than a backstory to the article Ben Abruzzo wrote for the February 1980 GRIT (see p. 12), as it's actually a personal story.

For the first seven years of marriage, my husband Bob and I spent a month every summer backpacking up and down the Rocky Mountains and north into Canada. During our academic years living in the snow-belt of upstate New York, we learned to ski on fairly gentle slopes. But on long weekends and holidays, we often headed to Vermont and New Hampshire to ski on steeper slopes.

After completing his draft tour of duty in Honolulu as an Army doc during the Vietnam War, our decision to purchase a home in Albuquerque was easy. We had visited the area earlier on one of our cross-country camping trips, so already had some sense of what we were getting into.

Based mainly upon gut instincts, conversations with a

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realtor, and a few photos, we bought a home under construction in Sandia Heights during the summer of 1972. The Army quickly and efficiently moved us back to the mainland. My husband was a smoker, so they even packed an ashtray full of half-finished cigarette butts along with a layer of ashes. But worse yet was a carton containing a dried-out gecko buried among packaging materials. I didn't know whether to scream or cry for joy, as our home in Oahu had happily hosted a family of geckos to help with insect control. But it turned out to be a very good omen, because now a different species of geckos regularly scurry around my patio area.

As mentioned in an earlier article, our Sandia Heights South neighborhood was very small at the time with only about 40 families. We came to know almost every one, whether at the Four Seasons swimming pool, the tennis courts, homeowners' meetings, or when looking for teenagers to babysit our three young children.

We knew Ben and his family, Bob Nordhaus and his wife Marge (a clinical social worker like myself), Gerald Martin, Bob and Betsy Murphy, Tom Long, and the George Boyden family. All were in some way connected with building the tram and/or developing Sandia Heights.

There's a colorful "coffee table book" full of photos by Jay Blackwood entitled SANDIA PEAK: A HISTORY OF THE SANDIA PEAK TRAMWAY AND SKI AREA, written by Pamela Salmon and published by Salmon Communications in 1998. (No, I don't get a commission – but it really details beautifully the development of Sandia Heights in relation to the Tram.)

The last time I had a conversation with Ben was at our annual New Year's Eve progressive dinner party only a few weeks prior to his Cessna plane crash in 1985 that took his life, along with the lives of his wife Pat and four other Sandia Heights gals.

In spite of his busy life developing Sandia Heights and engaging in his own pioneering adventures, he was a very approachable guy. He usually attended our fledgling Homeowners Association meetings to keep us informed about his plans and listen to our concerns.

Those HOA meetings were held in the *original* firehouse, in a space right next to our very own fire truck. Because we were such a small group, it was easy to quickly set up folding chairs and participate in the business at hand.

Recalling those meetings, there are two statements Ben made that remain vividly in my mind: 1) that he and his family had already killed 27 rattlesnakes, and he hoped we'd assist in his efforts to make this a safe and livable neighborhood, and 2) that he envisioned eventually having 500 homes in our small foothills community.

I recall shrugging my shoulders about killing rattlesnakes, thinking, "Okay, no problem, as I'm fine wearing my old heavy-duty hiking boots and carrying a long stick or sharp-edged garden tool whenever walking on property outside our walled patio area and gravel driveway."

But Ben's second statement about 500 potential homes stunned most of us. "What, we had no idea that was part of the master plan!"

But here we are today—a thriving neighborhood of nearly 2200 homeowners continuing to appreciate Ben and his vision and determination—along with his many like-minded partners.

**Sandia Heights—
Its Concepts and Development
Ben Abruzzo**

*Reprinted from the Sandia Heights GRIT
February 1, 1980*

As those of us who live here recognize, Sandia Heights is a unique place to live with qualities in life style not easily obtainable in most areas of the country, or in fact in the world. The concept of Sandia Heights developed almost simultaneously with Sandia Peak Tramway with the first homes in Sandia Heights original subdivision being completed roughly a year prior to the opening of the tramway. The entire area was very carefully master planned and carefully restricted to provide the unusual and pleasant surroundings which residents today enjoy.

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Community Events Bulletin Board

These groups are not sponsored by SHHA.

Information is provided to keep residents informed.

Come play with us at the Duke City Bridge Club! Bridge uses playing cards to solve puzzles while providing a lively social community. Hundreds of thousands of people the world over have found a lifelong passion playing bridge. For lessons and games for players of all levels, call 505-271-2877, email dcbcbridge@gmail.com, or visit <https://dukecitybridge.com/>

Sandia Heights “Cork & Fork” Dining Activity: Cork & Fork is having 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 two 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.

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ACC Activity Log

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

1224 Rockrose Rd	re-stucco
1103 Marigold Dr NE	replace windows
82 Juniper Hill Pl	re-shingle
329 Paint Brush Dr	new construction
8203 Indigo Ct NE	front door replacement
454 Live Oak Rd	install drain in front of garage door
1182 Laurel Loop	multiple projects

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We are very proud of the fact that our community is essentially self-contained, providing our own water service, solid refuse disposal system, and with the developers providing the bulk of the roadway maintenance in the area. Our Fire District is one of the finest volunteer districts in the entire State of New Mexico, and our response to emergencies is indeed excellent in every respect.

At this writing there are approximately 650 residences completed and another 50 under construction. Sandia Heights Subdivisions are owned and have been developed by a Tri Venture consisting of ownership by Alvarado Realty Company, Sandia Peak Tram Company, and Sandia Peak Ski Company. The Tri Venture provided funds for the improvements in the subdivisions as well as facilities such as the Fire District #5 Volunteer Fire Station, which was constructed by the companies and subsequently sold to Bernalillo County. The Company also is responsible for the improved and expanded Guard Service presently offered.

Prime in the plans for development were complete recreational facilities immediately available to the residents of Sandia Heights. The Four Seasons Club was constructed to provide availability of swimming and tennis courts to residents. Stables were developed to provide riding facilities, horse rentals, boarding facilities for those owning horses, and planned activities such as hay rides, steak rides, hamburger cook-out rides, and breakfast rides. Sandia Peak Tramway opens the “backyards” of residents to enjoyment of the entire range of activities available in the Sandia Mountains, including skiing, hiking, snow shoeing, hang gliding, picnicking and year-round outdoor activity. In addition, residents are afforded convenience to two fine restaurants. The Firehouse is located at the at the base of the tramway and High Finance is located at the top of the mountain.

An Unexpected Journey

Claudia Mitchell

The SHHA office welcomes Anna Levchuk, who started as office administrator in December. She arrived in Albuquerque via what she described as “an unexpected journey” that started nearly 3 years ago.

Anna was born in Kyiv, Ukraine, and grew up in traditional Ukrainian culture. She shared her mother’s love of cooking and baking. This life-long passion inspired her to complete a Master’s degree in Restaurant Management which led to management of fine-dining restaurants in Kyiv. After a few years she shifted her professional focus to cosmetology and the beauty-supply industry. In 2019, Anna’s son, Demyd, was born. In 2022 the war began and the family’s life path, as for all Ukrainians, was forever altered. The turbulent months that followed were full of stress and fear.



Anna Levchuk

Eventually, Anna made the difficult decision to leave her homeland, emigrating to the USA with her parents and little boy with only a couple of suitcases. The journey was not without difficulties. They arrived in Albuquerque to rebuild their lives with nearly nothing.

“I was determined to rebuild my life. Step by step, I worked hard and learned as much as I could. I now lived in a new country and constantly had to go through new experiences. It was scary to go. I did not have a map, I learned to act quickly and in new ways. I explored new opportunities, even appearing in a Netflix series.” She kept an eye out for a better situation.

By happenstance, Anna overheard a woman in a group speaking Russian and they struck up a conversation. That woman was Mrs. Komkov, mother-in-law of Heidi Komkov, current SHHA board member and chair of the Information Technology committee. Anna became friends with Mrs. Komkov, Heidi and their family. When Heidi learned that the office was looking for new staff, she encouraged Anna to apply. Happily for all involved,

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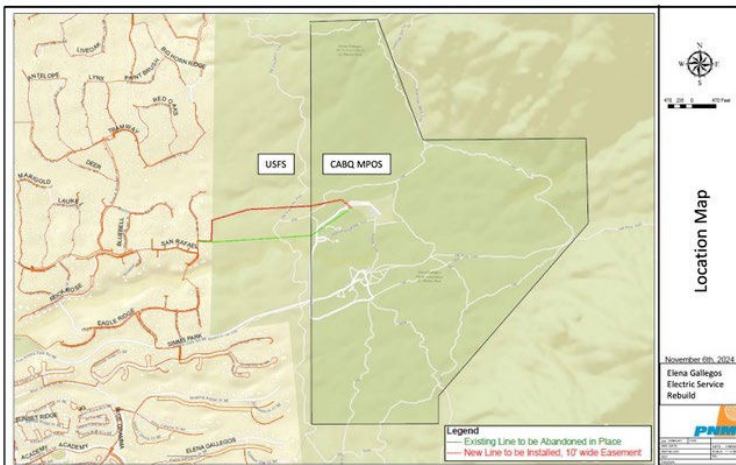
after the required multi-interview process, Anna was offered the position.

Anna has become “passionate about learning, growing and embracing new opportunities.” She is “deeply grateful to have found amazing friends and a supportive community who have made the journey so much brighter for me and my family. I believe that tomorrow will be better than yesterday.” Anna is dedicated to supporting the Ukrainian American community in New Mexico and has become a director of a small nonprofit organization focused on helping their motherland, Ukrainian Americans of New Mexico. This small organization is always looking for new members. Check their webpage <https://www.uanm.life> and on Facebook for more information and future events.

Anna is “very happy to be a part of this beautiful community” of Sandia Heights. Come on by the SHHA office and welcome Anna Levchuk.

City of Albuquerque Notice of Decision on the PNM Electrical Upgrade for Elena Gallegos

**Kathleen McCaughey, Chair,
Environment & Safety Committee**



We received numerous calls regarding this decision, which we were not notified of prior to decision and not asked for comment. After working to file an appeal with the City, which was done early January, we find out that this decision is only for the upgrade inside Elena Gallegos, City Open Space. If you remember last August,

the Forest Service asked for comment, but again this was only for the upgrade that is to take place on Forest land. Looking at the map below, these two pieces are inside the green shaded area. The new red line comes through Sandia Heights using the Honeysuckle Dr. easement to reach Elena Gallegos. Making changes within the easement is completely within PNM’s purview, and therefore no input is required from Sandia Heights. I have asked from PNM to share information regarding this project details with us. As of this writing, we have not heard back.

Service Awards Claudia Mitchell, Editor



SHHA board president, Jim Stewart, presents a service award to Joyce Harkwell for nearly 6 years of membership on the Covenant Support committee. Dave Crossley, member of the Architectural Control Committee, and Arthur Romero, of the Covenant Support Committee were there to contribute their kudos.



Gerard Del Monte receives a service award from SHHA board Vice President, Eric Faulring (left); and SHHA board President, Jim Stewart (right) for his work as a volunteer consultant on the SHHA Architectural Control Committee.



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



Icicles in the Sunset—Ann B. List