

Vineyard Estates Newsletter



Neighborhood News for February 2008

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About this newsletter

The newsletter of the Vineyard Estates and Surrounding Subdivisions Neighborhood Association is published four times per year. Past newsletters may be found at <http://www.venaabq.org>. The primary distribution method is through E-mail and the website, but non-computer users may request that a paper copy be delivered to their home. Contact Lee Ann Riesen (lafisk@swcp.com, 280-5792) for any newsletter related business.

March 2008 general membership meeting delayed to April 24

Normally we would be having our quarterly general membership meeting in March, but because crime in our area is an issue that has moved to the front of our agenda, we have decided to de-

lay the meeting until April and make it a *crime summit*. We want to get all the concerned parties in the room at the same time, including victims, witnesses, concerned citizens, City of Albuquerque chief of police Ray Shultz, and Northeast Area Command commander William Henz.

Please come to this meeting and add your voice to our discussion of the problem with Chief Shultz. Please join the conversation to propose changes that can have a positive impact on the crime situation in our area.

The meeting will be a 7 PM on Thursday, April 24 at Covenant United Methodist Church, 8510 Wyoming Blvd, NE. The Church is just south east of Wyoming and Wilshire.

Increased criminal activity and what we can and should do about it

We have learned of the following criminal activity occurring in our area in the past few months.

Cars regularly drag race along Carmel between Ventura and Holly on weekend evenings. Some have stopped to throw eggs on homes along Carmel, or driven into the streets off Carmel to t.p. and egg the fronts of these homes.

On Tuesday, February 12th at 10:45pm, a garage was broken into on Vineyard Ridge in Vineyard Estates I&II. The cars inside were searched and some items stolen. The side door of the garage was penetrated via a doggy door and the deadbolt was removed. Fortunately, the theft was limited to small items.

Early this month, gun shots were heard early on a Friday evening in Vineyard I.

In late November, gun shots were heard late at night in Vineyard III.

This is just a sampling of recent criminal activity. In reference to the garage incident, please keep

the door between the house and garage locked. Had this one been unlocked, the danger would have been much greater. Several armed robberies were reported in the Desert Vista subdivision in 2006, with the robbers entering through the garage. It is common in this area for people using swamp coolers to let the air exit through the garage. If you do this, it is important for the opening to be too small for a person to enter through it.

There are three aspects of fighting crime that we as individuals or we as an association should be engaged in. One is always reporting crime to the police, at the appropriate level of urgency, as soon as you safely can. The second thing is organizing your subdivision, your block, or even just your end of the block through one of the City's two crime fighting programs for neighborhoods. The third thing we need to do as an association is get with the police and ensure that they are patrolling our neighborhoods effectively, and that we are doing all we can to fight crime.

If you witness a crime in progress or hear gun shots, call 911 right away. If you are certain the crime is not threatening life or property (for example illegal dumping on a vacant lot) call 242-COPS.

If you are not sure you are witnessing a crime, but something just doesn't look right, call 242-COPS to report this.

Our police substation is on Osuna, west of Wyoming. You can call them if you have a general concern about activity that is occurring in your neighborhood. Their phone number is 823-4455. You can speak to someone at the front desk Monday through Friday from 8 AM to 6 PM. If you want a contact there, you can try asking for Lt. Olstad between 2:30 and 3:00 PM Monday through Friday.

One of the City programs you may want to get involved with is called Community Policing. You can attend a free workshop on Saturday March 8 from 9 AM to 1 PM to learn whether this would



be effective for your subdivision or block. You can learn more about this and register for the workshop by calling 924-3914 or by going to this website:

<http://www.cabq.gov/planning/nbrcoord/neighworkshop.html>

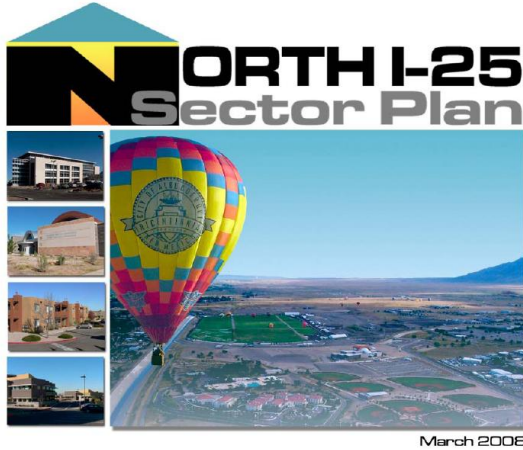
The other training offered by the City helps you to start a Neighborhood Watch. This does not involve patrolling but rather organizing your subdivision or block under a block captain and teaching people to be aware of their surroundings. The block captain is a point of contact for the police department. You can find out more by calling APD Crime Prevention at 924-2600 or by going to this website:

<http://www.cabq.gov/police/prevention/neighborhoodwatch.html>

Finally, as a neighborhood association we need to have a *crime summit* at one of our general meetings. We should invite representatives from the police department and our city councilor and discuss what all of us can be doing to make our subdivisions safer. Board member Duke Winsor is in the process of drafting a letter to the police and our city councilor requesting just such a meeting.

New Mexico Educators Federal Credit Union

Two staff members from the New Mexico Educators Federal Credit Union visited the January meeting of the VENA board of directors. They told us about their new branch that will be opening in October 2008 on the southwest corner of Paseo del Norte and Barstow. At 9000 square feet it will be their largest branch. It will include live tellers, a mortgage office, an investment office, and a drive up window.



In the spirit of the Credit Union’s commitment to community involvement, they will be offering memberships in the Credit Union to all members of our neighborhood association. We need to complete some paper work with them before they can begin signing up VENA members. We’ll keep you posted.

Qwest damage on Ventura

The construction activity that you may have noticed along Ventura in January was a contractor for Qwest putting in new fiber optic cable. While we appreciate that Qwest is planning ahead to add capacity for the many new homes being built in our area, we were sorry to see the mess they made of our simple landscaping.

We contacted Qwest who contacted their contractor and they came out last week and did a nice job of putting things back together. They were extremely apologetic. When the weather is warmer they will also come out to repair the damage to the stucco on the wall east of Ventura between Holly and Carmel.

North I-25 sector plan

If you have been following the developments in the creation of a sector plan for the North I-25 area, you might like to know that a proposed plan has been submitted to the EPC (Environmental

Planning Commission).

You can view the March 2008 version of the plan on the City’s website at <http://www.cabq.gov/planning/advance/pdf/northI-25sdpcolor.pdf>. The plan will be evaluated at a special March 13 meeting of the Environmental Planning Commission.

The main impacts on our area of improvements in the North I-25 area have to do with accessibility to the west side of I-25 and traffic flow.

The plan adds an east-west street (San Diego) crossing I-25 which should relieve some traffic on Paseo del Norte at I-25 and Alameda at I-25. Recreation trails are planned along two east-west arroyos (La Cueva and Domingo Baca) and a bike lane is planned along Alameda, so that it will be possible for us to travel by bicycle to the west side of I-25. A new north-south road from the balloon museum down to Paseo should help with the back-ups of cars trying to get onto Paseo del Norte. The plan proposes opening up Paseo del Norte to truck traffic. The only east-west street at this time that permits truck traffic is Alameda. So this should improve the traffic situation on Alameda, at the cost of truck traffic on Paseo.

Bob Turner Ford donates \$75

The Vineyard Estate Neighborhood Association received a \$75 unrestricted donation from Bob Turner Ford in December. That will pay for quite a few mailings to residents!

Join VENA

If you have not yet joined your neighborhood association, we would like to encourage you to do so. The membership year begins in August and ends at the end of July. The cost of membership is \$20. Most of this membership fee is used to pay for mailing postcards or fliers to all residents (members and non-members) notifying them of our meetings. Money left over usually is spent on beautification projects. We also make \$50 contri-

butions to subdivisions that plan a block party, and we make a contribution to the church that hosts our meetings.

There are almost 800 homes within our boundaries, and over 10% of the homes have joined the neighborhood association. This may not sound like much, but it is very high participation for a voluntary neighborhood association. In spite of that, we would still like to get more people involved, both as members of the association and as board members. Please contact anyone on the board if you would consider representing your subdivision on the board of directors.

A membership application can be found in the paper copy of this newsletter, and also on our web site at <http://www.venaabq.org>.

Update on Ventura Plaza (Walgreen's)

The shopping center southwest of Paseo del Norte and Ventura now has a name. It will be called Ventura Plaza. Other than Walgreen's and the Mountain America Credit Union we have not learned who the tenants will be.

The development is moving through the process of getting the various City approvals required before construction can begin. We do not have a date yet for when they plan to begin construction.

Update on Villa Firenze

Jay Rembe, developer of Villa Firenze, reports that two homes are completed and available for sale. Three more homes will be under construction within the next three months. If you are interested in these homes or in the available lots, you can contact Jay Rembe at 242-1871 or at rembe@infillsolutions.com.

Update on Hope Plaza

On February 1, the Hope Episcopal Church (hopeepiscopal@yahoo.com) broke ground on Hope Plaza. The church and a hospice will occupy

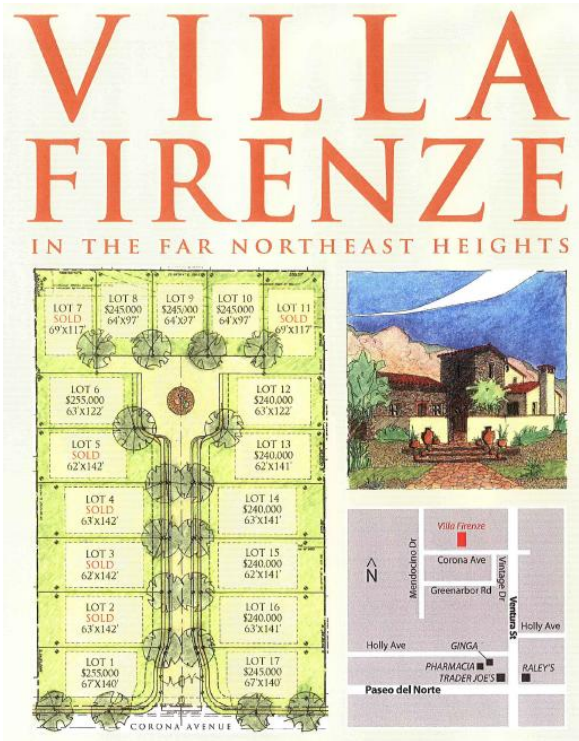


Figure 1: A Hope Plaza office building



the southern half of the lot, and an office park will occupy the northern half. Rev. Dan Tuton, Vicar of Hope Episcopal wrote that the church should be ready for services by September.

Hope Plaza is between Signal and Alameda, in the center of the block from Ventura to Barstow. The construction plan is on our website at <http://www.venaabq.org/constructionnotes.htm>.

Rev. Tuton writes: *We are very excited about our new church and about being your new neighbors. We plan to be an active and positive presence in the neighborhood. We welcome your communication and/or visits at any time. If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to e-mail or to phone me at 830-0572.*

Update on development northwest of Signal/Ventura

The latest plans we have seen for the Bob Keeran development north west of Signal and Ventura show 58 homes with varying lot sizes. This is good news because at one time we were hearing that about 90 homes would be built here.

Progress has stalled on the issue of whether we and other surrounding neighborhood associations will support the developer's plan to close Signal, which he would landscape, light and turn into a walking path.

For a historical discussion of the status of Signal, please see Pat Verrelle's account on our web page at the *Important Documents* link: <http://www.venaabq.org/importantNews/importantNews.html>

Our neighborhood is divided on the issue of closing Signal, and we have not at this time come to a consensus on the issue. This is because unfortunately it would be good for some of us, and not so good for others of us. The Nor Este association to our west is opposed to closing Signal until the City and the County have improved Alameda to 4 lanes all the way to Eubank.

VENA is not a homeowners' association

We recently received a complaint that VENA has not been very effective at getting the weeds and trash in our area cleaned up. We'd like to remind everyone that a neighborhood association is not a homeowners' association. We are all volunteers with many demands on our time, so most of our effort is spent working with the City on development and other issues within our boundaries. We remind people about their responsibilities to pull weeds and pick up trash, but we can not go out and clean the entire neighborhood ourselves.

A homeowner's association receives mandatory fees from all residents and is responsible for the upkeep and safety of their area. We do not have the resources to take on those responsibilities.

We do call 311 to report problem properties, and the City has been very helpful with these. But we can not see everything that needs attention, and so we always remind residents to call 311 to report trash and weed problems.

Recycle your cans to benefit VENA

Please save your aluminum cans for your neighborhood association!

There are three drop off points where you may deliver your cans. In Carrington, drop off your bags of cans on the east side of 8705 Ashton Place. We also have a drop-off point at 8415 Vintage Drive in Vineyard III, and at 9036 Village Avenue in Ventura Village (just behind the fence to the left of the front door). If you live in another area within our boundaries and would be willing to serve as a drop-off point for your subdivision, please contact Hank Happ at 828-9912.

Have you tried calling 311?

The City of Albuquerque has established a phone number for all citizen inquiries. It is 311. The 311 staff is highly trained in the workings of the City government, and they pride themselves on answer-

ing your call before the third ring, and getting you an answer to your concern. Since *311* was established, the other City departments have been able to be out in the City doing their jobs instead of answering phone calls from citizens. It has proven to be a very efficient system for the City and a helpful system for residents.

Vineyard Estates Neighborhood Association

2008 VENA Membership

A Community Volunteer Association
Annual Membership Dues \$20.00 per Home

Name (s) _____

Address _____

Phone (Home) _____

Phone (Work) _____

Email _____

Neighborhood (Select One)

- Carrington
- Desert Ridge Place (HOA)
- Desert Vista (HOA)
- La Cueva Tierra
- Los Vigils (HOA)
- Ocotillo (HOA)
- Tierra Morena
- Ventura Village
- Villa Firenze
- Vineyard I
- Vineyard II
- Vineyard III
- Vineyard III - A
- Vineyard IV
- Vineyard IV - A
- Vineyard IV - B
- Vineyard V
- Vintner Court Estates
- Vineyard Court Estates
- Wilshire Estates

You can count on me for support, you can contact me for the following:

- Architectural Committee
- Median
- Newsletter
- Park
- Recycling
- Refreshments
- Signs
- Welcome
- Board of Directors

Select Member type:

- Resident
- Business
- Property Owner (Undeveloped)

Check No. _____

Date of Check _____

Newsletter Delivery

EMAIL ONLY or www.venaabq.org
website

Membership is renewable annually.

Membership is valid from 08/01/2007 through 08/01/2008

Please make checks payable to VENA in the amount of
\$20.00

Remit to: **Tony Huffman, VENA Treasurer**
8912 Corona Ave NE
Albuquerque, NM 87122-2666
505-823-2456

VENA

Vineyard Estates
Neighborhood Association
8912 Corona Ave., NE
Albuquerque, NM 87122

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Vineyard Estates Neighborhood Newsletter Vineyard Estates Neighborhood Association Quarterly General Meeting Invitation

- Date:** Date in April to be announced
Time: 7:00
Place: Covenant United Methodist Church 8510 Wyoming Blvd. NE (Southeast Corner of Wilshire & Wyoming)
- Residents:** Carrington, Desert Ridge Place HO, Desert Vista HO, La Cueva Tierra, Los Vigils HO, Ocotillo HO, Tierra Morena, Ventura Village, Villa Firenze, Vineyard Court, Vineyard Estates I-V, Vintner Court, Wilshire Estates
- Speakers:** Topic: Discussion of neighborhood crime