

Vineyard Estates Newsletter



Neighborhood News for June 2008

Contents

About this newsletter	P.1
Annual meeting in August	P.1
A (long) plea for nominations for new board members	P.1
Report on our <i>Crime Summit</i> with APD	P.2
Weeds	P.3
Chairman of Albuquerque Association of Realtors meets with VENA board	P.3
Pete's Landscaping to the rescue	P.4
Recycle your cans to benefit VENA	P.4
Have you tried calling 311?	P.4

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.

Annual meeting in August

Our annual meeting this year will be in Vineyard Park, tentatively on Saturday August 23. This meeting is open to all residents of the 22 subdivisions within the boundaries of the Vineyard Estates (and Surrounding Subdivisions) Neighborhood Association. We are in the planning stages at this point, but we are hoping to have food donated by a local title company, and perhaps music.

The usual Association business will take place, and in addition we will be taking nominations for board members. (If you are interested in joining the board, but can't make the August meeting,

please contact one of the board members and we will nominate you in absentia.)

At this point we would like to make our annual plea for residents to consider serving on the board, as a representative of their subdivision or home owners' association.

A (long) plea for nominations for new board members

The VENA board meets 8 times per year, usually on a Thursday evening. On the 4 months when we don't meet as a board, we are having a quarterly general membership meeting.

VENA is a recognized neighborhood association under Albuquerque city ordinance 92. As a recognized neighborhood association we have to follow certain rules, and file certain papers once per year. In return we are included in decisions that are made by the City that impact our area. We interact with the city's Office of Neighborhood Coordination, with the Zoning Examiner, the Environmental Planning Commission, our City Councilor, developers, and others. Our President serves on Albuquerque's Planned Growth Strategy committee. This model of neighborhood involvement was novel when it was established, and has inspired other cities to set up similar arrangements.

We are different from a home owners' association. Participation in a neighborhood association is completely voluntary. We ask people to join for \$20 per year, but you are not required to do so. If a few people join, we can buy postage and printing to send out fliers or postcards and keep residents informed. If more people join, we can work on beautification projects like hiring someone to kill weeds at our subdivision entrances.

A home owners' association is usually responsible for upkeep, safety, and members' adherence to rules. Membership is required. It's a legal entity and a contract is usually signed. A neighborhood association is just a group of people who work with the City and do the best they can to see that

their neighborhood grows to be a place where they are happy and proud to live.

A resident of Vineyard I replaced the missing *R* on the sign at their entrance at her own expense. The neighborhood association was happy to reimburse her for the cost of that *R*. But we were not responsible for paying or replacing the *R*. That is the difference between a neighborhood association and a home owners' association.

The number of subdivisions within VENA has quadrupled within the last 2 or 3 years. Most of the board is from that original one fourth of the current area. We would love to get new board members, particularly from the new areas. We need you to let us know what is going on in your area. Is there a missing *T* on the Tierra Morena sign? We would probably never know.

In addition, there are sometimes issues we must vote on, where a *yes* vote may be good for part of the VENA area, but bad for another part of the VENA area. If you are a member of the VENA board, you can speak up for your subdivision, and vote on their behalf. (We have been in meetings with the Zoning Examiner, where he actually asked the VENA President how many voted *yes* and how many voted *no*.)

We currently have board members from Carrington, Vineyard III, La Cueva Tierra, Ventura Village, and Vineyard IV.

We would like to have board members from Desert Ridge Place, Vineyard I or II, Vineyard IV, Los Vigils, Vineyard Court Estates (the *Grape* streets), Ocotillo, Wilshire Estates, Tierra Morena, Desert Vista, and Villa Firenze. (The VENA boundaries can be viewed at the <http://www.venaabq.org> web page.)

Until we have 22 board members (one from each subdivision), we will be happy to have more board members from the 5 subdivisions already represented.

The activities of board members on behalf of the neighborhoods vary according to their inter-



ests and their time. You will never be asked to do something you don't have the time or the inclination to do. We do recommend that you attend a free half-day class that the City provides, which will teach you about zoning, permitting, the development process and neighborhood/City interaction.

Normally board members are nominated in August. Our bylaws allow us to make interim appointments to the board, so if you are reading this at some other time of year and would be willing to represent your subdivision, please contact one of the current board members (they are listed at <http://www.venaabq.org>).

Report on our *Crime Summit* with APD

The VENA general membership meeting on April 24 at Covenant United Methodist Church focused on crime north of Paseo del Norte. Commander Lt. Bill Henz of the Northeast Area Command responded to residents who described break ins, armed robbery, vandalism, and lack of police presence and police response.

For details, see the minutes of this meeting at <http://www.venaabq.org>. They should be up on the website within a week.

We were looking for hard numbers on crime statistics in our area. Commander Henz said that average time for response to a 911 call is 10 sec-

onds. Arrival time at the scene in response to a non-emergency call depends on the rating the call receives when it comes in.

Commander Henz said the police perception is that our area is very quiet. He said we should call them more often when something happens or when something doesn't look right.

The substation is starting up a quarterly newsletter. We will watch for it and send it out on this list when it appears.

Commander Henz offered residents the opportunity to ride along with the officers as they do their job. Several people at the meeting planned to take him up on the offer.

Anecdotally, we noticed more police presence along Ventura north of Paseo del Norte with days of our discussion on our email list (<http://lists.topica.com/lists/venatalk>) about crime problems and the need for a *crime summit*.

Weeds

We would like everybody's help in spreading the word about the City weed ordinance. Many residents do not realize that they are responsible for removing the weeds not only in their yard, but also from their property to the curb. This true even if the curb is on the other side of a wall at the back of or at the side of your home. The City does not remove weeds along the sidewalk.

If you have a problem property in your area, call 311 to report it. A zoning inspector will come out to the home and talk to them about cleaning it up. If you'd rather not unleash Zoning on them, report it to us and we'll send them a warning letter.

We also ask your help in identifying for us homes that have a legitimate reason, such as disability or long term absence, for being unable to keep up their property. Rather than harassing these residents we would like to try to find a solution for them.

Figure 1: Cathy Olson



Thank you to all the residents who have been pulling, spraying or burning weeds, not only your own but as many as you can stand to do. This makes a huge difference in the appearance of our neighborhoods.

Chairman of Albuquerque Association of Realtors meets with VENA board

Cathy Olson, Chairman of the Greater Albuquerque Association of Realtors, spoke to the VENA board of directors at their May 22 board meeting. The discussion centered on real estate trends, maintaining property values, and ways to get more people aware of and involved in their neighborhood association.

She said that some of the most important contributors to residential property values are location, views, curb appeal, and infrastructure (roads, schools, stores, etc).

She predicted for our area an increase in homes on the market in the coming years as people approaching and in their retirement years decide to downsize.

Ms. Olson had suggestions for those problem properties (featuring weeds, trash, inoperative vehicles, etc) that decrease the value of their neighbors' home. She suggested a letter from our architectural committee sent to all homes in the area. This letter would announce that the committee will be touring the area looking for violations. Apparently this can be effective in getting people to clean up their properties.

To get out a message and raise visibility of the neighborhood association, Ms. Olson suggested creating door hangers with the information we want to distribute. It should mention our web site as well. She said we could get a business to pay for it to defray our costs, and the business would advertise on one side of the hanger.

For those who want to keep up with the economic scene in Albuquerque (real estate and otherwise) Ms. Olson suggested reading the Central New Mexico Economic Guide which is online at <http://www.centralnewmex.com>.

Inspired by Ms. Olson's suggestions, the board decided to create door hangers with a message about the weed ordinance. Area realtor Regina Barela kindly offered to pay for them. Let us know if you think these are effective in increasing awareness of the association and in reducing our weed problems.

Pete's Landscaping to the rescue

We would like to express our appreciation to neighborhood business Pete's Landscaping. They came out early in May and removed a dead yucca from the Ventura Median.

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- Concrete & Flagstone Work
- Xeriscape Design
- Brick Trim
- References Available

Mon-Fri 8-5 • Sat 8-3

Ask Pete's about **ARTIFICIAL TURF INSTALLATION**

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Recycle your cans to benefit VENA

Please save your aluminum cans and clean aluminum foil for your neighborhood association! (To someone out there: SlimFast cans are not aluminum.)

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 answering 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.

If there is a problem in your neighborhood, or something just doesn't seem right, you will find 311 to be very responsive.

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 _____

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EMAIL ONLY or www.venaabq.org
website

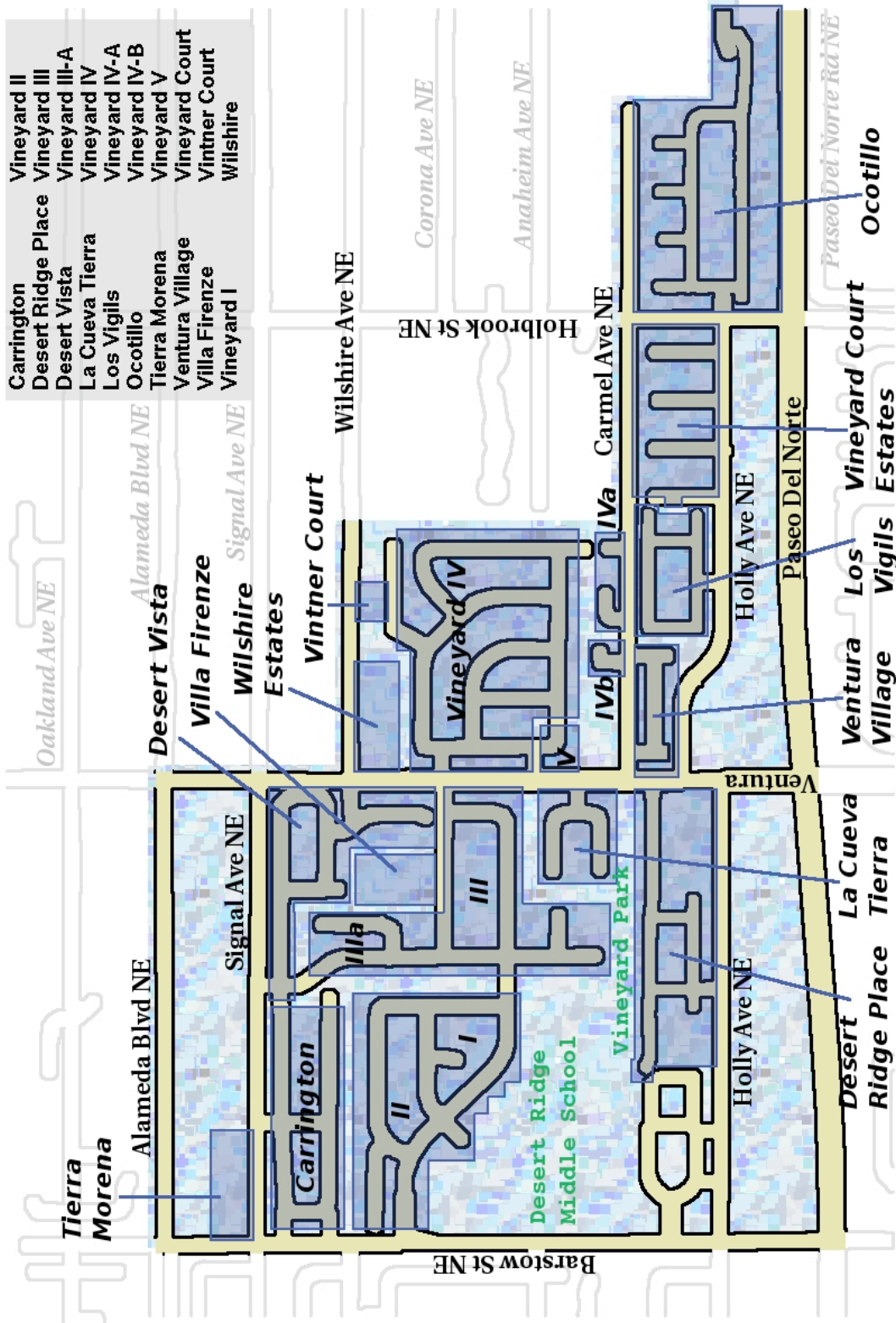
Membership is renewable annually.

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

Vineyard Estates Neighborhood Association Communities



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: August 23, 2008 (tentative)
Time: 7:00 PM
Place: Vineyard Park directions directions

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: Eat and nominate VENA board of directors