

Vineyard Estates Newsletter

Neighborhood News for May 2009

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About this newsletter

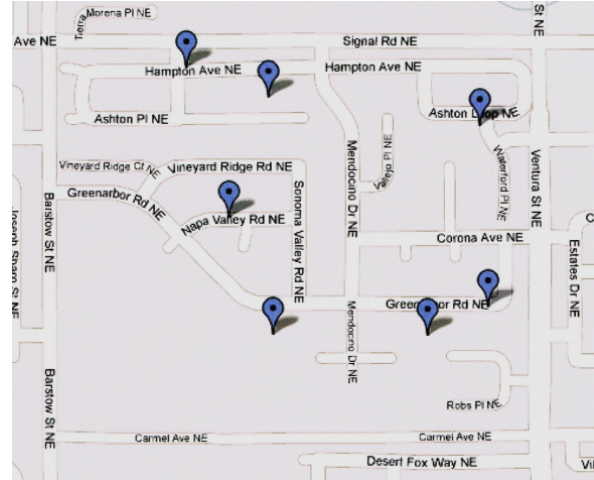
The newsletter of the Vineyard Estates and Surrounding Subdivisions Neighborhood Association is published four times per year. Past newsletters may be found at <http://www.venaabq.org>. The primary distribution method is through E-mail and the website, but non-computer users may request that a paper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

Nominating committee appointed and board members needed

At the May general membership meeting, the VENA board appointed Donna Daniello, Larry Feight, and Mike Brewer to the nominating committee.

Board members will be elected at the August general meeting. Please consider serving on the VENA board of directors. At this point in time,

Figure 1: Location homes of traffic flow committee members



we have no board member from Tierra Morena, Desert Vista, Wilshire Estates, Vintner Court, Desert Ridge Place, Los Vigils, Ocotillo, Vineyard 4, Vineyard 5, or Vineyard 5 A and B. (Vineyard 5 A and B is Fresno Way, Visalia Way, and the portion of Vina Del Sol that is accessed from Carmel.)

Potential nominees should contact Mike Brewer at 828-0371 or through email at mike-brewer03@comcast.net. The board meets once per month January through November, at 7 PM, usually on the third Thursday of the month.

Report on May general membership meeting

The association quarterly general membership meeting occurred at 7 PM on Thursday, May 21 at Covenant United Methodist Church. The main topic of the meeting was controlling through traffic on our residential streets in the region between Holly and Signal, and between Barstow and Ventura.

Prior to the traffic discussion, the VENA board appointed a nominating committee, as required by our by laws.

This meeting was called specifically to discuss the fate of Greenarbor barricade just west

of Mendocino, which prevents drivers from using Greenarbor to pass between Barstow and Ventura. The barricade was put in place about sixteen years ago, and was supposed to be temporary. However it seems clear that if the barricade is removed, the traffic along Greenarbor will exceed in quantity and speed the sort of traffic that we want on our residential streets. Residents from Desert Vista and Carrington, which is north of Greenarbor and just south of Signal, pointed out that through traffic uses the intersections on Signal at Carrington and Mendocino to drive through their neighborhoods to and from Ventura. They feel it is not fair to block the Greenarbor traffic at their expense, and no one present disagreed with this point of view.

Another factor in the traffic flow situation is the status of Signal between Barstow and Ventura. It was paved by AMAFCA several years ago, but has never been adopted by the City of Albuquerque as an official street. A developer would like to close Signal between Carrington and Ventura and create a walking path. It is feasible that he could do this, because it is not an official street. But closing Signal would almost certainly increase traffic driving through Carrington and Desert Vista to pass between Signal and Ventura.

The developer who wants to close this portion of Signal, has offered to extend Mendocino north through his development to Alameda. It was not clear to those present at the meeting that this would reduce traffic in Carrington and Desert Vista.

We had some very good discussions on these interrelated topics at the meeting. It was decided that the neighborhood association needs to study the area and its traffic flow as a whole. We need to consult with our City Councilor and also City traffic engineers, and of course with the residents of the affected areas. We need to determine what changes would be best for our neighborhoods, and then begin the process of getting those changes made.

We can be more effective if we pursue a coher-

ent plan rather than work piecemeal on one effort (such as a permanent Greenarbor barricade) at a time, and then consider the next problem. We want to be confident that we have a feasible plan, and the backing of our City Councilor and our residents. It was decided to form a traffic flow committee to create a plan for this area, which the neighborhood association can then work on implementing.

Other traffic related issues were brought up. Many Desert Ridge Middle School parents are not dropping off their children in the designated areas. The teachers on duty at drop-off time are reluctant to speak to the parents about it because the parents are rude. My understanding is that this results in cars backing up on Greenarbor at certain times of the day. We will discuss this issue with our APD substation commander.

The stretch of Ventura between Holly and Desert Ridge Place, on the west side of the street, has no sidewalk. This makes it difficult to walk to Trader Joe's with a stroller. The association can contact the property owner and our City Councilor to see what we can do.

The traffic flow committee volunteers are Kaye Lynn Robinson, Lucy Roverse, Elizabeth Meek, Nora Nevera, Bob Campbell, Samuel Smith, Lu Fang, and Lee Ann Riesen. They represent Vineyards I, II and III and Desert Vista and Carrington.

Bernalillo County notification

VENA is a recognized neighborhood association of the City of Albuquerque, and so we are notified of issues that concern us by the City's Office of Neighborhood Coordination. But even though some of our boundary is the City boundary, we were not being notified about issues in Bernalillo County just on the other side of our boundaries, which can also have an impact on us.

We contacted Bernalillo County's neighborhood office, and they offered to notify us when they are notifying other County neighborhood associations. This is an informal agreement, since



we don't qualify to be one of their recognized associations. The VENA board will have to contact the county every year or two, as County staff turns over, to ensure that we continue to be notified by them.

Paseo del Norte work

Paseo del Norte has been getting some upgrades from the New Mexico Department of Transportation. We were aware that a new right-turn lane would be added on east-bound Paseo at Ventura, because this was done by the Walgreen's developer. But we were unaware of the DOT's plans.

Mike Gibson of the VENA board located the DOT contact for us, and we will be in touch to find out what else is planned. We have also received complaints about the timing of the light at Paseo and Ventura, and will pass that along.

Figure 2: Walgreen's in progress



Update on new Walgreens

The Walgreens store that is under construction on the southwest corner of Paseo del Norte and Ventura is due to be completed in July or August. Because the store conforms to the La Cueva Sector Plan (<http://www.cabq.gov/planning/publications/>), it will be nicer than the typical Walgreens. For example, the logo on the iconic Walgreen's tower will not be lighted, but will be a two inch relief in stucco. The color scheme is earth tones, with stucco and rock veneer.

The rest of the shopping center planned for that site is on hold until the economy picks up.

Improvements at Vineyard Court Estates

VENA board member Michelle Garza of Vineyard Court Estates has been hard at work on the weed problem surrounding these new homes. (Vineyard Court Estates is the community of Grape View Court, Grape Arbor Court, Grape Vine Court, and Grape Harvest Court off of Holly between Ventura and Holbrook.)

She contacted the builders who own the empty lots and newly built homes. They immediately cleaned up their lots, including the area between their lots and the curb. By City ordinance, each lot owner is required to remove all weeds that reach a height of 4 inches from their property, and from

Figure 3: Thank you Legacy



Figure 4: Thank you Bealhen





their property to the curb on all sides. This even applies to the sidewalk that is behind the wall that is behind a home, which many home owners don't know.

Next Spring, Michelle hopes to organize the neighborhood to spray pre-emergent weed killer around the homes on Carmel, Holbrook and Holly. This prevents weeds from growing for the entire season.

Ventura Village organizes to fight crime and weeds

The residents of Ventura Village organized in April with a neighborhood watch, and also to battle the weeds on Holly, Ventura and Carmel.

The head of the APD crime prevention program, Steve Sink, met with residents in April at the home of Clarice Sanchez to discuss how a community can act to reduce crime. This program is described in detail at <http://www.cabq.gov/police/prevention/neighborhoodwatch.html>.

Figure 5: 9100 Holly construction area



Figure 6: 8428 Greenarbor



Residents also split the cost of having a pre-emergent weed killer sprayed along Holly, Ventura and Carmel. This will save them the trips around the corner to pull the weeds behind their homes that they have enjoyed (NOT!) for the past three weed growing seasons.

Getting problem properties cleaned up

The procedure for getting a neighborhood property cleaned up is as follows. First call 311 to report the weed or litter problem. Take down the reference number that they give you.

The Albuquerque code enforcement officer assigned to our City Council district will view the

property and will send out a citation. This is a warning, and the property owner has about two weeks to comply with it. If the property is not cleaned up, the officer will send a final notice, again with a deadline of about two weeks. If the property is not cleaned up this time, the City will clean it up, and will place a lien of the property to recover the cost.

In practice, the code enforcement officer often does not check back after the sending the warning notice. It is up to us to call 311 again, with the reference number, and with the information that the property owner needs a final notice. Wait about four weeks after your first call to make this second call.

If the property is not cleaned up two months after your first call, then call 311 again. Verify that the owner has been sent the final notice, and tell the 311 operator that this property needs to be cleaned up by the City.

If you see no action three months after your initial 311 call, then please let us know. We will send a letter on VENA letterhead to the code enforcement officer in charge of our area. We will request that the City clean up the property.

VENA has just sent a letter about the tumbleweeds and trash on the property north of Albertson's (9100 Holly), and the weeds on the property at the entrance to Vineyards I and II (8428 Greenarbor).

Tierra Morena administrative ruling

In our last newsletter we mentioned an administrative amendment that was granted to the developer of Tierra Morena, permitting him to omit some of the trees in the original plan. VENA objected to the fact that the neighborhood was not notified before the decision was made.

Carrington resident Darryl Millett appealed the decision with VENA's support. The appeal was heard by a Land Use Hearing Officer in March. The Officer recommended to the City Council that

Figure 7: Tierra Morena's Signal frontage



the tree decision be revisited in a public venue, such as the Environmental Planning Commission, with appropriate notification. The City Council accepted the finding.

The VENA board voted to support Mr. Millett's request that the trees be planted along Signal as indicated in the original site plan.

Why you should join VENA

It is getting close to the time of year when we work on drumming up support for our neighborhood association. Vineyard Estates Neighborhood Association is a recognized neighborhood association of the City of Albuquerque. Our boundaries include most of the homes within the City boundaries that are between Barstow and Eubank and are north of Paseo del Norte.

Our membership year runs from August 1 through July 31, and the annual dues are \$20. Approximately 10% of our 800+ homes and businesses are dues-paying members. This is very good participation for a neighborhood association, but we would like it to be higher.

Most of the money received in dues is spent on printing and postage to announce our general meetings. Some meetings are announced through the mail, and some by volunteers who deliver announcements to your door.

Other expenses include a donation to the church which hosts our meetings, office supplies, and a \$50 contribution to any neighborhood which would like to plan a block party.

If there is money left over, it is usually spent on beautification projects like spraying to prevent growth of weeds in our medians and at our subdivision entrances.

If we succeed in increasing our paid memberships, we will embark on a thorough program of spraying for weeds early in the Spring. We would like to spray our medians, along the sidewalks outside of our subdivisions, and at the entrances of our subdivisions.

We would like to consider other beautification projects as well, such as xeriscaping locations that need it. If our paid memberships increased to 40% or 50% of our residents, we could also hire private security to patrol our subdivisions at night. Other neighborhood associations have had some success in reducing crime by implementing this idea.

You can join the neighborhood association at the August general membership meeting, or by downloading the membership form on our website (<http://www.venaabq.org>)

Dog waste issue

We would like to say that we've made progress on the dog waste issue, but we have not. Many dog owners are not cleaning up after their dogs in Vineyard Park and along our sidewalks. This is against the law.

We can only suggest at this point letting your neighbors know that this is illegal, and that most people really dislike the sight of smell of dog droppings.

New signs

VENA board member Regina Barela designed, ordered and distributed the new signs announcing the next VENA general membership meeting. The signs will be placed in strategic locations on the Friday or Saturday before our Thursday night general meetings. They list our web site (<http://www.venaabq.org>) where further details will be available.

We wish to thank VENA board member Mike Gibson who, through The Associated Contractors of New Mexico, donated the funds to buy the new signs.

Vineyard Estates Neighborhood Association

2009 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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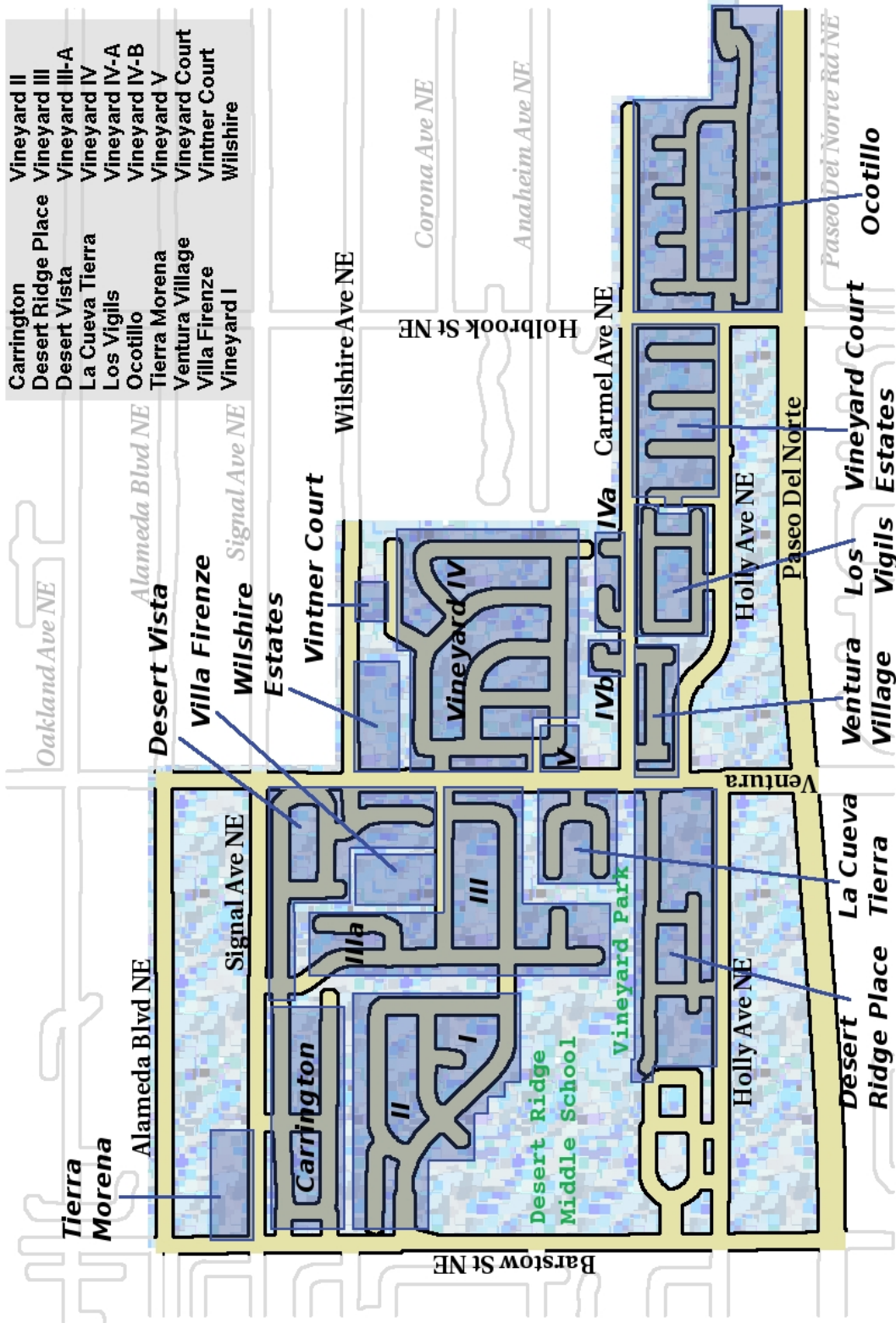
Membership is renewable annually.

Membership is valid from 08/01/2008 through 08/01/2009

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



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