



VEHA VOICE

WINTER 2020

Newsletter of the Villa Encantada Homeowners' Association
6565 Academy Road NE, 87109

FROM THE VEHA PRESIDENT

Dear VEHA Community,

SEASONS GREETINGS! On behalf of the board we would like to offer joyful greetings to all of you. We are coming into my favorite time of the year; I hope you all are staying well and finding ways to thrive despite the current pandemic situation. I was driving through my old neighbor the other evening, and it was so nice to see several of the homes lit up already, and the giant green tree in the Ford sales lot on Montano looking like a giant cheery beacon.

I always admire and appreciate people who go all out for the holidays, because I get to experience joy from their efforts. When it comes to decorating a home, I can really appreciate this. I grew up in Northern New Mexico in the days when it snowed from October until May. Every year, my younger sisters and I would climb on the roof and staple Christmas lights and fresh greenery to the roof. Once they were up, wow, were they beautiful, but oh, was it cold getting them up there. Our gloves would get so wet, we would put socks on our hands to keep them warm. Mom would reward us with homemade cocoa with marshmallows and biscochitos. We lived on a hill, so the lights could be seen throughout the valley. It was something people appreciated every year. Not only our house was lit, but so many throughout the community. It is one of my favorite memories, especially on Christmas eve. Looking out into the stary dark sky, everything would be quiet, and snow covered. If the moon was out, you could see the sparkling snow reflections. It was quite magical.

This year we are initiating some holiday traditions for our community. We are beginning with a luminaria fund raiser. This will help us to light up our community with holiday joy and spirit and will help contribute to our Good Neighbor Fund community projects. We hope everyone will participate with a little or a lot of twinkling at your homes. Get your orders in early, so we don't run out! We are hoping to have a goodie exchange as well. We will keep you updated as we know more. Let us know if you have any holiday ideas for this year or the future as we create our VEHA holiday traditions.



VEHA CHRISTMAS LUMINARIA FUNDRAISER

The first fundraiser for our Good Neighbor Fund will be the sale of luminarias, or farolitos, for this Christmas. All proceeds will go to the VEHA GOOD NEIGHBOR FUND for the benefit of VEHA Community Projects.

Pre-Orders for one dozen will be \$22. Luminarias will be available for pickup at the office December 18, 19, and 21 during regular office hours, or they can be set up at your home on Christmas Eve for an additional \$3. Luminarias will be lit around the Community Center, sidewalks, and parking lot area. All will have 15 hour candles to make a beautiful

and long-lasting Christmas Eve for our community to enjoy. Please contact the office to order. Thank you to homeowners Mirella and Jericho Ortiz (#61) who volunteered folding hundreds of bags!

TELL ME SOMETHING GOOD! VEHA PROPERTY VALUES!

We have had nearly a dozen homes sell at record prices since the beginning of the year in VEHA. A couple had a harder time selling than others, and many realtors have said that the biggest complaint potential buyers express is that many of our homes appear neglected and reflect poorly on the community as a whole. Homes with missing vegas or vegas ready to fall off were by far the top complaint followed by fences that need repair, and some areas of streets lined with vehicles not being parked in garages. Clean and well-maintained neighborhoods send a message that residents care about their community, and our proximity to each other requires that we each do our part regarding our home's exterior maintenance.

ARCHITECTURE

We are seeing more homeowners updating their homes this year. This is wonderful not just for individual homeowners but for the entire community. When a home looks nice, it improves the feel and the value of the home and the neighborhood. We are seeing this as property values are increasing, and the more we comply with the architectural standards and maintain the beauty of our homes, the more that feeling and value will increase. We are encouraging homeowners to invest in updating the exterior or your properties as needed. This is a good time to do this as HOA fees will remain the same through the rest of this fiscal year. The Architectural standards are posted on our website at www.veha.us. We will be mailing out the Architectural standards along with next steps for improving your home's feel and value. Please inform the Architecture Committee of any updates, improvements, and exterior repairs to your property before work is done. This helps to avoid anything that may not meet the Architectural standards.

ANNUAL MEETING

We will not be having an annual meeting due to COVID 19 restrictions until further notice. In addition, we know that many people may be experiencing a financial strain at this time, and so we will be keeping our budget for 2020-2021 the same. The Association fees will continue at the monthly amount of \$175 until next summer when we review the budget again. To keep costs down, please keep your water usage to a minimum as this adds to budget overages. We are also looking at our common area water usage as well once we go back into Spring.

WINTER WATERING

Please follow the City of Albuquerque Water By The Numbers system for the shrubs and trees on your property. For the winter, you should be watering them at least ONCE a week—aiming for a deep watering every seven to ten days until March. Trees that are not getting watered sufficiently become stressed and are vulnerable to disease and cause roots to begin coming up to the surface looking for water, leaving your sewer lines vulnerable to being cracked and invaded.

2020-2021 VEHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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VEHA Clubhouse
823-9190



Happy Holidays

FROM THE MANAGER'S DESK

VEHA SECURITY: In the early hours of 10/17, around 4AM, a person went thru our community checking for unlocked vehicles. The individual is on camera, but his/her face is not clearly visible. Please make every effort to keep your vehicles inside your garage. We have many homeowners with vehicles that simply will not fit inside their garage, but please do not leave anything inside that could be seen as valuable to a criminal, and always double check that your vehicle is locked. Two additional cameras have been added to the Community Center. We are currently looking at the cost of LED / Infrared lighting in our parking areas that would have cameras as well, but this would be an item that would have to be funded in the budget. PLEASE leave on your front exterior lights as LED lights cost just pennies to use.

KUDOS TO OUR VEHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Thank you to Board members Janice Nance, Diane Aiello, and Deanna Page who personally paid for a desperately needed new window in the Community Center that was leaking. This saved the VEHA homeowners over \$500. Please extend a thank you the next time you see them. Your Board members have done so many things, made so many financial contributions to VEHA over the last year that have not been properly recognized. It has been a very difficult year and they have all stepped up personally to help our community when they have had no obligation to do so. We owe them a debt of gratitude.

PARKING REMINDERS

There is no storage of non-running vehicles on VEHA property either on the street or in the Community Center parking lot. All homeowners are expected to park their vehicles in their garage. There are many homeowners that have larger trucks and SUVs that simply will not fit into their garage, and every effort is made to work out the best parking solution for these homeowners. However, there is not enough space within VEHA for large numbers of vehicles being parked on the streets or in guest parking.

SEWER LINE PROJECT UPDATE

Tuesday, November 24, nine of our homeowners on Calle Playa Del Sol participated in having their sewer lateral lines cleaned before the repairs to the sewer main are started early next year. One homeowner was found to have a severely cracked line from a tree root laying on top of it that they will have to have repaired, and a few others have root intrusions that they will need to have addressed. We strongly encourage all homeowners to be proactive when it comes to periodic cleaning of your sewer line that runs from your home to the main. Sewer line repairs can cost thousands of dollars versus periodic maintenance costing less than \$200. Most homes had roots in their lines and others also had sludge which required back flushing. Remember that VEHA homes were built in the early 1970's, are nearly 50 years old, and require more maintenance. We have been reminding homeowners in newsletter after newsletter the importance of deep watering all of your trees including in front of your fence. Poorly watered trees will seek out water, and these old clay sewer lines are easily broken from age and ground settling and by tree roots.

LANDSCAPING ISSUES

There have been some questions in the last few months regarding what our landscapers are responsible for and some complaints that need addressing. Our landscaping contract with Michael's Landscaping ended in August as the owner, Michael Flippin, passed away unexpectedly. We entered into a new contract with Grasshopper Landscape effective September 1, which was started by the supervisor for Michael's Landscaping, Salomon Rael. The same crew is here each week on the same day providing the same services, but at a reduced cost to VEHA.

- **Let's Talk Expense:** VEHA sits on 15 acres of land. We pay \$600 per week for the care of approximately 11 of those acres which include landscaped areas, rocked areas, and streets that are blown clean weekly. This is an extremely reasonable price for the services that we receive 52 weeks a year.
- **Let's Talk Weeds:** The landscapers, in their contract, periodically spray COMMON AREAS for weeds. Many homeowners over the years have asked that weed killer not be sprayed around our homes for various reasons. We are, however, then responsible for pulling any weeds that will certainly grow. Not only to keep our properties clean and tidy, but to keep weeds from spreading to other homeowner properties and VEHA common areas. Homeowners are responsible for maintaining the landscaping within their property line which extends to the street.
- **Let's Talk Leaves & Trash:** Every Tuesday after the landscapers are done mowing and trimming common area shrubs, they go thru the complex blowing debris into piles to be swept up. One major problem we are having is that homeowners are sweeping and blowing out the contents of their courtyards and back patios onto common property for the landscapers to clean up—**this is prohibited**. In way too many instances, homeowners are doing this AFTER the landscapers have left for the day leaving homeowners coming home from work looking at leaves, debris, and trash in the streets and other areas leaving them to think the landscapers are not doing their job when in fact it is their own neighbors that are being discourteous. As the leaves begin to fall, it may be very tempting to just sweep or blow out your areas Monday evening or Tuesday morning before the landscapers get here, but it is not acceptable to add to their workload. It may not seem like a big deal, but when more and more homeowners do this, it adds up to a lot of additional work very quickly that only results in costing VEHA more money that will increase our assessment further. Another problem happening on Tuesdays— some homeowners are putting trash in their bins that is not bagged. When the trucks pick up those bins, loose trash flies around into and onto other homeowner's properties and VEHA common areas leaving some homeowners to believe that the trash is from the landscapers. Please have pride in your neighborhood, your home, and yourself and clean up your own patio and courtyard no matter where the leaves may have come from. That is just part of being a good homeowner.



FEATURED HOMEOWNER

In this newsletter, we would like to spotlight homeowner Lori Durgin in #71 for exceptional exterior appearance of her home. From professionally installed new windows, pristine stucco, manicured landscaping, to newly painted vigas and garage door/trim. Thank you Lori for representing VEHA so well! Lori will receive a \$25 Amazon Gift Card as a token of our appreciation for her contribution to keeping VEHA looking wonderful!