



WUNA Newsletter

March 2013

West University Neighborhood Association

P.O. Box 42825

Tucson, AZ

85733

www.westuniversityneighborhood.org

Message from the President

By Chris Gans

Board of Directors

Chris Gans	President
Richard Mayers	Vice President
Jim Glock	Secretary/Treasurer
Bridget Werchen	Historian

Area Representatives

- 1 Jan Labate
- 2 Jim Glock
- 3 Jim Chaffee
- 4 Albert Marsh
- 5 No Representative
- 6 Judy Sensibar
- 7 Dallas Elkins
- 8 Richard Mayers
- 9 Robert Pitts & Patricia Pinzon-Pitts
- 10 Jane McCollum

At Large

CJ Jones, Michael Morse, Kurt Tallis, Carolyn Niethammer, John Patterson, Barb Tanzillo and Matt Williams.

Editor	Carolyn Niethammer
Layout	Cheri Wiens

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Board Meetings are held the first Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m., except for January. No meetings are held in July and August. Meetings are held at Trinity Presbyterian Church at 400 E. University Blvd. in Room 205.

Dear Neighbors:

The past 2 years has been challenging for the West University neighborhood with several large student housing projects being planned and built. The WUNA board and neighbors are working on ideas and solutions to issues we face and we welcome and need input from all residents.

Student Housing. The District on 5th St. with 750 beds, has created traffic and safety issues for residents, pedestrians, and cyclists that reach far into the neighborhood and noise problems for the immediate neighbors. WUNA is working with Ward 6 to find solutions for the street/traffic safety issues as the streets and safe operation of them are the responsibility of the Council and Mayor.

We are in contact with the new owners, EDR, who bought The District in the fall of 2012. They have said they will make changes on their campus to address resident student behavior and to attempt to slow traffic exiting from their campus. The original owner of the District agreed to remediation steps on noise and traffic but the City did not get a legally binding agreement before the sale of the property so those steps will not be taken.

In the UA Main Gate area, a rezoning and a Neighborhood Plan Amendment passed over our objections has resulted in three student-housing towers that will be built to house 1800 students. Hopes for a more varied housing and commercial / retail mix there are fading, as this area is becoming an enclave of student housing which will likely limit what else will be developed there. (See article inside on the various developments).

A WUNA board member, Matt Williams, is working to get commitments from Main Gate student housing developers to fund traffic mitigation for the northeast area of WU which has a

lot of cut-through traffic. Matt has also worked with neighbors near Tucson High on a traffic circle on 1st Ave and 5th St. Once built, the steel posts on 1st. Ave and 6th St. will be removed. Funds from the Ward 6 office will pay for this and another traffic circle on 3rd Ave. The projects are out for bid by the City.

Last year, as a result of Pima County bond money and many volunteer hours, we saw new features built in Catalina Park. The park has become a great place for families and children to enjoy the splash pad and new play equipment. WUNA will host workshops in the Park on topics like water harvesting and tree pruning, for neighbors to learn skills and meet each other. Board members Jan Labate and Barbara Tanzillo are organizing the workshops.

WUNA with Ward 6 will have a meeting in May, on a date to come, about what new infrastructure projects neighbors would like, including sidewalks, curb cuts, mitigation etc. In the fall of 2014, Pima County may issue a new bond for Neighborhood Reinvestment to create funds for projects in neighborhoods. With a plan, we can build toward those new amenities that neighbors want.

We welcome several new homeowners that have moved into the neighborhood, bringing families and investing energy, time and money into our older homes. The proximity of WU near the UA and downtown makes it a good location for homeowners and renters who work nearby.

Please join us at our meetings and let us know what's on your mind. Traffic? Sidewalks? Security? Let's talk. Our meetings are the first Thursday of each month, 6.30 to 8.15 p.m. at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Room 205. There are always a variety of topics and we encourage you to come and participate.

Postal History Foundation Braces for More Business

by Carolyn Niethammer

With the closure of the University Station post office on Euclid (see story below), the Postal History Foundation (PHF) post office will become the closest West University option for buying stamps and mailing packages.



Lena Rogers helps a patron with a stamp purchase at the Postal History Foundation.

place you will be able to get a Tucson postmark on your mail.

A beautiful library is adjacent to the main building. It is worth a visit for the fascinating western paintings of early mail deliveries. The room is available for meetings during open hours by donation.

The PHF is run by three paid staff members and about 60 volunteers. Volunteers sort stamps, and participate in fundraising, advertising and administrative work. There is always a need for more volunteers. Anyone looking for more information can look at the website at www.postalhistoryfoundation.org or call 623-6652.

Located on First Avenue between First Street and Second Street, the post office is open between 8 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. There is a parking lot in the rear.

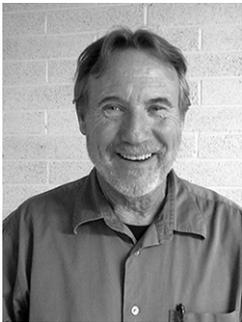
The PHF offers all the services of larger post offices except for post office boxes, selling money orders and offering passport applications. You will also notice there are no wanted posters.

The PHF also offers services not found at other post offices. It is the only philatelic post office left in Arizona. You'll find all the stamps currently in circulation and you can spend as much time as you want choosing just the perfect version for your mail. (Try that at a larger post office with 15 people in line behind you.) Also, with the closure of the Cherrybelle Main Post Office, the PHF is the only



Jim Kelly assists Miles Thompson with the complications of mailing a package to Europe.

These four neighbors joined the WUNA Board of Directors in January.



C.J. Jones



Albert Marsh



Jim Chaffee



Judy Sensibar

CVS to Open Drugstore at Euclid

by Carolyn Niethammer

West University residents will soon be able to walk to buy a bottle of vitamins, choose from a selection of sunscreens or fill a prescription. An 11,000-square-foot CVS drug store will soon occupy the northeast corner of University Blvd. and Euclid Ave. The store will take over the space formerly occupied by Johnny Rockets, the University Station post office, the Marine recruiting office, and the already-closed Malibu Ice Cream and La Salsa restaurant. Only the Marine office will be relocating.

The new project was announced at the February WUNA board meeting by Jane McCollum, General Manager of Marshall Foundation, which owns the property.

CVS will occupy the same building as the previous businesses, the only change being that some of the current doors will become windows. According to Jane, the company is attempting to fit in with the historic nature of the neighborhood by incorporating some wood floors and trim for the refrigerator cases in the design.

The store will include all the usual CVS offerings: a pharmacy, photo printing, greeting cards, health and beauty aids and seasonal items. There will also be limited food items and alcohol. WUNA is neither supporting nor objecting to the liquor license application.

The new store is projected to open in August of this year.

West University for many decades relied on University Drug on the corner of Park and University. It was closed when renovations began for the present Wilco in that space. Originally Wilco carried a few drugstore items, but they were soon phased out. Many years ago West University also had a drugstore on the southeast corner of Stone and University.

Catalina Splash Pad Completed with Historic Touches

By Judy Sensibar

It took seven years of hard work and compromise, but the grant we received from the 2004 Pima County Neighborhood Reinvestment Bond Fund was finally unveiled in the fall of 2012. Catalina Park, or as we in West University like to call it, “The 4th Ave. Park,” now sports a new splash pad, an enormous, covered playground, and several other improvements, including new plantings, new walkways, and new lighting.



After several years of meetings, letters, and neighborhood advocacy, the county committee awarded almost \$500,000 to Parks and Recreation to develop a design and overhaul the park. The project was then delayed because of a long redesign process where the neighborhood spent quite a bit of our grant money negotiating a more “historically accurate design.” The resulting walkways that crisscross the park reflect how the park was originally laid out.

Unfortunately, while the original grant application included restoration of the wading pool so it could be enjoyed by everyone, the existing wading pool will remain in place to serve only as a reservoir for the splash pad. The moneys also did not cover redesigning the bathrooms so we



now have locked bathrooms and a port-o-let in the park. We hope the Parks and Recreation will find the funds to get these restrooms ADA compliant in the near future.



One of the most expensive elements in the redesign is the steel ramada with a terra cotta tile roof that protects the playground from the sun. It is in keeping with the historic nature of existing elements, specifically the existing, historic ramada which has been preserved with a new ramp added to provide handicap access. Security lighting, wood chip surfacing, and rubberized entrances are also new, as are the pistache trees on the west

border of the park.

Matching grants and additional funding for this project were provided by former Ward 6 Council Member Nina Trasoff (the post currently held by Steve Kozachik) who provided CDBG Funds for design, City of Tucson which provided CDBG Funding for the playground and ADA improvements, the Trinity Presbyterian Church, and the Mayor’s office.

Yvonne Boyed Arden, mother of four sons ranging in age from 12 to 4 commented, “The park splash pad and playground is eye candy as well as an excellent place for kids to release their seemingly endless energy! We love it. Looking forward to the kids walking home soaked and cool in the summer heat – and drying off on the way back home. It is also a nice meeting place when we invite friends from other neighborhoods and show off our own.”

WUNA’s Tree Honors Local Heritage

The WUNA Board voted to sponsor a heritage tree to help recreate the Mission Garden located at the base of A Mountain. The 119 trees, representative of those brought to the area by Father Kino, were planted in the walled compound March 25, 2012. Here Jill Bielawski (left) and Ford Burkhart help a volunteer with the planting of the WUNA sour orange tree. The orange was chosen to represent the many sour orange trees along the streets in West University. Other trees in the orchard include quinces, figs, apricots, sweet limes and plums.

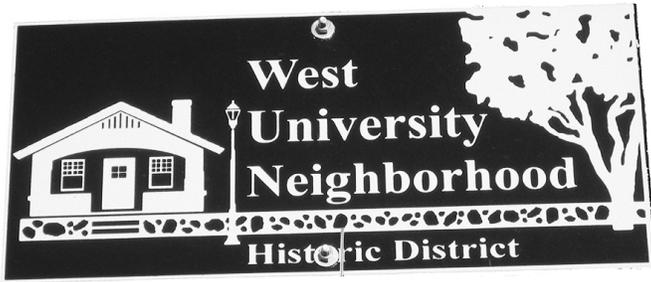
The Mission Garden, is located at the corner of Mission Lane and Mission Road is open on Saturdays from noon to 4 p.m. through May.





West University Neighborhood

Dated Material



WUNA has designed and ordered 104 metal signs to designate the boundaries and major traffic routes in our neighborhood. Some of the signs are still awaiting the completion of the modern streetcar route before being installed.

2013, a Year of Controversial West University Construction By Ford Burkhardt

Fueled by the unfolding modern streetcar, three high-rises for private student housing up to 14 stories are going up around Speedway and Park, changing the WU skyline, as most of downtown Tucson can see from a distance.

High-rise 1: Closest to Park and Speedway is a stunningly huge block of “luxury student accommodation,” built to 14 floors, or about 159 feet, at 1020 N. Tyndall Ave. It is renting at \$599 to \$1,500 per person, for rooms in the penthouse, with capacity of 588 student beds. The developer is Campus Acquisitions, of Chicago. It will have rooftop pool, 84 parking spaces and retail space. Oddly, the building, which towers above the one-story bungalows to the west and the UA buildings to the east, is called simply “Level.” Its web site praises it as a “real collaboration” between the developer and the City of Tucson.

High-rise 2: Just south is a 13-story Campus Acquisitions project, getting under way at the old Posner’s Art Store site (1025 N. Park Ave.), between First Street and Speedway. Its design consists of two mini-towers, stepped down from 12 floors to nine floors toward the west, with a swimming pool on the ninth floor.

High-rise 3: Developers Steve Shenitzer and Bill Viner (Kiva Star partners) sold their WU site in December for \$3.8 million to Core Campus of Chicago. They won city council approval last August for a 130-foot-tall building, lifted from the 90-feet agreed to by WUNA, for student rentals just north of First Street and Tyndall. The site, at 1011 N. Tyndall, backs up

to the home of Judy Gray and the late Brian McCarthy, at 1030 N. Euclid.

The High-rise 3 project was heavily modified in the Design Review Committee (DRC), says Matt Williams, a WUNA representative on the DRC. It will now have a tiered/terraced west end, with steps starting at 40 feet next to the alley behind Judy Gray’s house and going up to 100 feet for much of the building, reaching 130 feet along Tyndall Avenue to the east. The terraces are to be planted and with no access allowed for student renters.

Williams said, “It is still a massive building that packs 13 stories into the allowed height to maximize the density. One of the differences with this site from every other site in the district is that the Council via Shirley Scott erased the restriction on the number of stories allowed on this site and let the 130 foot height cap be the only restriction. This means that this is the only site in the district without an indicated density restriction and Core Campus intends to maximize the occupancy potential.”

With all this, the modern streetcar project construction churns along, with street closings and new traffic patterns.

But on the positive side, there is energy on the streets that may be linked to the new construction. “I see more vibrancy on the street. People see what’s coming and there’s a sense of excitement along Fourth Avenue,” said Jim Chafee, one of the WU reps, along with Matt Williams, on the DRC for the new projects.