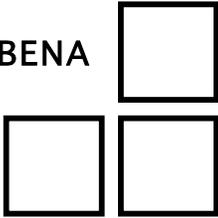


BENA



The Blenman Elm Neighborhood Association Newsletter

Blenman Elm Neighborhood Association
P.O. Box 42092, Tucson, Arizona 85733

Fall 2014

All residents of the Blenman Elm Neighborhood are invited to attend:
GENERAL MEETING of the BLENMAN ELM NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
Thursday November 13, 2014 at 7:00 PM
Ward 6, Meeting Room
3202 E First Street
Program: Living with Urban Wildlife, Pima County Natural Resources
Election of BENA Board for 2014-15, Neighborhood issues
Refreshments and social time

Learn about our resident wildlife, their habitat needs, and why they may be attracted to your yard. Also covered will be ways to design and manage your personal property to benefit both you and wildlife and practical tips on how to discourage wildlife that may become a nuisance or pose a risk to you and your family.

NOMINATIONS to the BENA Board: If you would like to nominate yourself or another neighbor to be a member of the Board of the Blenman Elm Neighborhood Assoc., please contact Nominations Chair Kathy Wilson via email at benapresident@gmail.com. We ask that those volunteering to be members of the BENA Board commit to attending as many of the board meetings as possible, usually held at 7:00 PM on the second Thursday of the month September through May.

Wild Critters - Oh My

How many of us have seen coyotes, javelina, owls, hawks, bobcats, foxes, bunnies, squirrels, or even a snake in our square mile? At the Annual Meeting we will have a speaker from Pima County Natural Resources present a program designed to help us get along with our wild neighbors.

Home Tour 2014

BENA volunteers and guests were lucky to have a beautiful afternoon for the Home Tour on March 30. Ticket sales were brisk and people loved the variety of homes and businesses. Thanks to the homeowners and volunteers, and of course the public who attended, making this one of the most successful home tours we have had. 565 tickets were sold, and including volunteers close to 600 people toured. We contributed \$565 to Emerge! Center Against Domestic Abuse. What a way to celebrate our neighborhood! Thank you home tour committee: Jane Powers, Linda Phelan, Teresa Vasquez and Kathy Kretschmer.

The City of Tucson, its officers and employees, its Office of Integrated Planning and all other offices neither agrees nor disagrees with the views expressed or implied in this communication or any referenced websites and are not therefore responsible. The distribution requester is solely responsible.



You never know who you will meet in the early morning. A. Roe

Curb Cuts for Rainwater Harvesting

Several years ago BENA helped fund a tree-planting project with curb cuts for rainwater harvesting along Treat Ave. If you were not part of that, but either have street trees or plan on planting some, and would like to harvest water off of your street for watering them, then you might be interested in doing so with other neighbors. There is a considerable fee for having the curbs cut, however we can get the price down by coordinating and having the contractor come out on one date to do all the cuts. Also, BENA has offered to contribute \$1,120 toward this second round of curb cuts. Permits are required for the cuts. If you would like to be part of this please contact Sonya Norman at 795-2622 or sonyanorman@hotmail.com.

The Blenman Elm Neighborhood is the area between Campbell and Country Club, Speedway to Elm west of Tucson Blvd., Speedway to Grant east of Tucson Blvd. BENA includes residents on the north side of Elm St. and Potter Place.

Rains and the aftermath

The skies in August and September produced some great rains.... lots of water which ran off. Everybody who has rain water harvesting barrels should have been topped off by the August 26 and September 8 (Norbert) storms. The storm Odile was a bust unless you lived in Nogales or Bisbee. Because there are limited storm sewers in our part of Tucson, our streets substitute for washes to speed the excess waters towards the Rillito along several known water courses. Here is a quote from the Blenman Vista Neighborhood Plan about run-off:

“Although there are no defined washes in the Blenman [Elm Catalina] Vista area, the square-mile is still subject to flood hazard. Urbanization has obliterated natural sheet flow areas in four watersheds that cross the plan area ... Storm run-off is currently concentrated in streets, such as Treat Avenue, Country Club Road, Tucson Boulevard, Norton Avenue, and Wilson Avenue. Thus, potential drainage hazard during heavy storms (of greater than 50-year frequency) may be expected.” - Blenman Vista Neighborhood Plan, adopted in 1986, page 22, *Transportation and Flood Control*.

Within BENA there are designated flood hazard areas for the Wilson Wash and Treat Ave. At Property Research Online: (Tucsonaz.gov/pro) you can find your parcel on the map. Then use the “Engineering” Menu under Table of Contents on the map to view the currently designated Flood Hazard areas.

Rains and our garbage and recycling

The September 8 rains came hard, fast and early in the day that was our garbage and recycling collection day. Many individual barrels placed in the street or even on the curb of some of the more flood prone areas were pushed over by flood waters, spewing the contents down stream. The Wilson Wash area paper for recycling was pretty well turned back to pulp by the time it came to rest downstream. What can we learn for the future? If your barrel was one that participated in papering the neighborhood, next time heavy rain is predicted, try to keep the barrel on higher ground. Also, do not pile extra waste or recycling next to your barrel. If you need more space, contact a neighbor or secure the extra in your yard until the barrel has been emptied.

Welcome Packets

Miriam Pattison has made up these packets in the past and is ready to pass the baton to a new person. Thank you Miriam. The job involves assembling packets as needed with a welcome letter and other useful info. We deliver the packets upon request. Contact Alice Roe, 795-7310
benapresident@gmail.com

BENA honors retired Treasurer Jane Powers

Last spring the BENA Board honored Jane Powers for her years as treasurer and home tour organizer. In addition a few years ago Jane and some neighbors conceived the Historic Neighborhoods Map project. Jane has been the primary distributor of the first printing. Neighborhood artist Erika Parrino provided the drawings of historic houses for the project. The board commissioned Erika to do a small painting of one the houses for Jane in recognition of her service.

Our Sidewalks – Our Responsibility

As anyone who has ever walked around our neighborhood knows, our sidewalks are a mixture of concrete, brick and dirt. The varying composition makes walking a bit difficult. Sometimes passage is simply not possible due to obstructing vegetation and man-made structures and pedestrians are forced into the street. So let’s solve this problem.

The City of Tucson maintains an easement along each of our properties. This is called the “sidewalk right of way” and varies from about 4 to 7 feet in width. No one is allowed to plant or build an obstruction in the right of way that impedes pedestrian passage. Nor is anyone allowed to park a vehicle in the right of way. If notified, the City will send an inspector and issue a citation for violations.

Let’s take a proactive stance. If you or a previous owner of your property planted obstructing vegetation, please remove it. If it’s a mature tree too large to easily remove, please trim any branches that intrude into the remaining right of way. If a structure was built such as an extension of a wall along the side of your property, please remove it and smooth the sidewalk path. If a vehicle is typically parked fully or partially in the right of way, please park it in the driveway or on the street.

Lots of residents and visitors enjoy walking around our neighborhood. Children use our sidewalks to walk to Blenman School. We need to assure that these activities can be conducted in as safe a manner as possible. Together, we can make Blenman Elm even more livable. – Dale Keyes

Weeds, Weeds and more Weeds

In the aftermath of the rains, the weeds along the rights of way and in our yards are magnificent. The weeds in the ROW adjacent to your property, both in the sidewalk area or where the sidewalk would be were it paved, are your responsibility. Please mow them, pull them, however you like, but recognize that the weeds make for an untidy neighborhood. Tall weeds are a fire hazard and are a code violation. Those who walk dogs are especially aware of the bumper crop of Goatheads, aka Puncturevine. The best control per UC Davis Integrated Pest Management is to remove the plants before they go to seed. This must be done consistently for years to reduce the seeds in the soil. Unfortunately seed dispersal for Puncturevine is by passing feet, shod, furred or feathered, and by tires. The article in the link below suggests that after removing the plants, we should rake up the burrs, or even pat down the ground with a piece of carpet to pick up the burrs for disposal. We should lightly hoe the area as seedlings come up in the spring. Mowing is ineffective against Puncturevine because it grows very low to the ground. Per UC Davis, pre-emergent chemical control is only partially effective.

<http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn74128.html>

How to Report Transportation Concerns after

Storm Damage - Is there a tree in the road after a thunderstorm? Is there a pothole you'd like to see fixed? Is a street sign missing? You can report these issues to the Tucson Department of Transportation, (520) 791-3154, or email the exact location to tdotsr@tucsonaz.gov

How does BENA spend its funds?

The proceeds of BENA fundraising are used for newsletter printing, postage, post office box, tax accountant and the fee to the state as a not for profit corporation. In the past BENA sponsored tree plantings, sent funds to the Jefferson Park Neighborhood for legal expenses in connection with the Zoning Determination that clarified the definition of Single Family Residence going forward. BENA contributed to the original printing of the Historic Neighborhoods Map. A decade ago, BENA substantially funded the Blenman Elm National Historic District Nomination.

How to 'Green' Your Historic Home:

There is a wealth of new and accessible information at the City's Historic Preservation Office's website. Here are suggestions from the pamphlet "Sustainable Historic Homes, A Guide for Green Retrofitting Historic Homes".

- Use light exterior paint colors
- Insulate attic, basement, and crawl space
- Repair original windows
- Use interior storm windows, weather-proofing, or replace "like for like"
- Inspect, maintain, and repair existing roof
- Keep doors airtight
- Install fireplace draft stopper
- Use native, low-water landscaping
- Reuse old materials when making home improvements
- Install water efficient fixtures (shower-heads, faucets, toilets)
- Utilize harvested rainwater, gray water, overflow bleed-off from evaporative coolers, and AC condensate for irrigation
- Replace inefficient appliances
- Use whole-house air filtration systems

<http://www.tucsonaz.gov/preservation/greenretrofitting>

Historic American Landscape Survey: Arizona Inn

The Arizona Inn was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1988 and is significant for its association with Isabella Greenway, Arizona's first woman in Congress, and its embodiment of Pueblo and Spanish Colonial revival architecture, designed by noted local architect Merritt Starkweather. The 2013 survey documents the history and significance of the Arizona Inn and its landscaped grounds with text and photos.

http://oip.tucsonaz.gov/files/preservation/ArizonaInn_AZ-9.pdf

Backyard Chickens, Urban Ag Code

The project of creating sensible regulation that permits the backyard agriculture that can help with food sustainability is in process. After a Planning Commission hearing in October the rules will eventually go to Mayor and Council. Most people's chicken coops do not meet current code setbacks, yet many people keep chickens. We can look forward to protections for neighbors as well as the backyard chicken owners with these new regulations. Look for Urban Ag info at the Planning Commission documents:

<http://pdsd.tucsonaz.gov/pdsd/planning-commission>

Front Yards Walls, Property Taxes, Hot Tucson

Property taxes keep going up. A benefit of owning a Blenman Elm Historic District contributing property is to cut property taxes by approximately 1/3 by having your home reclassified as a contributing historical property. But one thing that many BENA residents may not be aware of is that IF you put up a wall in your front yard, your home will be disqualified for this 50% discount of the assessment ratio. Another disadvantage that masonry walls bring is more heat. That wall will absorb heat all day long and then stay hot into the evening, heating up your yard, as well as the overall temperature of the neighborhood. Walls tend to halt cross breezes, making your yard/patio area feel still warmer. So... some things to ruminate on before calling the contractor.

-Sonya Norman

Front Walls policy for historic properties:

Guidelines regarding the relationship of the house to the neighborhood from the State Historic Preservation Office:

"Solid front yard walls/fences shall be no more than 48 inches tall at the property line. This allows for a private space and some containment of noise/traffic while still allowing a view of the house from the sidewalk/street.

"The placement of a front yard wall/fence shall not be such that it breaks the relationship of the house to yard, i.e. placement at the property line is preferable to mid-yard placement.

"Front yard walls/fences should include openings to allow for the property and its character defining features to be viewed of the property from the street.

"Regarding the design qualities of front yard walls/fences, such construction shall meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation."

From: Arizona State Historic Preservation Office Guidelines Regarding Front Yard Walls/Fences

http://az.stateparks.com/SHPO/downloads/SHPO_SPT_Front_Wall.pdf

What Protections does Zoning give us?

What are the protections that neighbors enjoy under the current R-1 and R-2 zoning in BENA? Development, or redevelopment, modifications require setbacks from the property lines that are usually the greater of 6 ft. or 2/3 the height of the building for side and back yard. Street setback is defined at 20 ft or 1.5X building wall height. When a neighbor wishes to build into the setbacks, there is a variance process, the Design Development Option (DDO) that allows adjacent property owners to be noticed and have the opportunity to protest or not. Criteria are defined on which to base objections, for instance privacy, access to light and sunshine, increased noise. Sometimes the DDO will be granted even over objections; however, frequently there will be conditions required to mitigate the impact of the development.

Many Thanks to all the volunteer newsletter deliverers who make sure everyone in BENA gets the newsletter.

What is happening at NW corner of Speedway and Campbell?

The owner of the Palm Shadows apartment complex is planning to re-develop the area. The first step in the plan for a new mixed use development with a tower is amending the University Area Plan adding a section for Sub Area 1, Helen-Warren Station Area. The University Area Plan is the City's guide for planning and what is to be permitted for re-zonings in this area. Over the summer there have been neighborhood meetings, a Planning Commission public hearing as well as a Mayor and Council public hearing this fall. This first step defines the three dimensional space for the developers to design the building. Under current zoning before the amendment the plan would allow a box, not as tall as some of the new private dorms west of the university. The developer has a different vision and is willing to design a project that has mixed use including retail, grocery store, office as well as residential apartments or condos on the upper floors. The final plans for how the building will fit the dimensions permitted under the amended Area Plan will be defined as the permitting process unfolds for a PAD, or Planned Area Development. The re-zoning for the PAD will address the concerns expressed by some about how many stories as the amendment gives the maximum height in feet allowed. The PAD will also address concerns for infrastructure, street capacity, parking, sewers and so forth. Once the Plan Amendment is passed by Mayor and Council, re-zoning for the PAD will take another year before permitting and construction. The PAD process will include more public and neighborhood input.

How to get rid of stuff that you do not know what to do with:

Here are some suggestions for the recycling of stuff from Tucson Clean & Beautiful:

<http://tucsoncleanandbeautiful.org/recycling-education/recycling-directory/>

- Electronics: RISE, 1134 S Park Ave 623-7162
- Household goods and good clothing: Thrift stores
- Medications: dispose-a-med box at TPD Midtown station, 1100 S. Alvernon Way, 8:00-5:00 Monday to Friday.

The link also has suggestions for many common items you may want to get rid of, such as cooking grease and printer/copier cartridges.

Another way to learn about what to do with stuff: Download the smart phone App *MyWaste* from City or your smart phone's app store. You can query and the app will tell you if the item is recyclable in the blue barrel, or should go into the trash.

Graffiti: Erase, Paint over, Abate

The sooner the tags are gone, the less payback for the tagger. People who create graffiti want to see their work, either marking territory, or just to raise their status with their peers.

Report Graffiti in the right of way: 792-CITY or report online: <http://tdot.tucsonaz.gov/graffiti/removal-report>

Cover the graffiti if you can. Abate the graffiti: there are many solvent products, but you need to be careful not to destroy the reflective surface on Stop signs and other street signs.

Davis Monthan released the Draft Total Force Training Environmental Assessment

The Draft Environmental Assessment for what had been Operation Snowbird has been totally re-written to include all the types of visitor training at D-M, Air National Guard, sister services and support for foreign military services. It is a long and complex document, but if you wish to understand the training of the visiting units, read it, link below. Although the draft EA was released with a 30 day comment period starting on September 22, the MCRC (Military Community Relations Committee) is requesting an extension due to the document's complexity.

A. Roe <http://www.dm.af.mil/library/tftea.asp>

Useful Phone Numbers

(adapted from Council Member Steve Kozachik's newsletter)

- Tucson Police Emergency 911, non-emergency 791-4444
- Street Maintenance 791-3154 TDOTSR@tucsonaz.gov
- Water issues, emergency & non emergency 791-4133
- Graffiti removal 792-2489
- Abandoned shopping carts 791-3171
- Neighborhood resources 837-5013
- SunTran/SunLink 792-2222
- Environmental Services 791-3171
- ParkWise 791-5071
- Pima Animal Care Center 243-5900
- Mosquitos 740-2760
- Sewer cockroaches 443-6501
- Davis Monthan Flight Operations comments: 228-5091, 355WGPA@dm.af
- City Tucson Ward 6 791-4601, Ward6@tucsonaz.gov

BENA Representatives for 2013-2014

Officers: President	Alice Roe	795-7310
Vice President	Steve Morrison	881-8330
Treasurer	Vacant, interim	Steve Morrison
Secretary	Linda Phelan	325-4470

Board Members:

Steve Farley	Lisa Orozco	Teresa Vasquez
Jackie Kinman	Miriam Pattison	Vince Vasquez
Alan Myklebust	Shirley Pitts	Kathy Wilson
Craig Orozco	Joe Spitale	

BENA Board Meetings are usually held at 7:00 PM on the 2nd Thursday of the month at the Arizona Inn, September to May. Occasionally, the board meeting date and/or place is changed due to scheduling difficulties. Residents are invited to attend. You may reach your board members at BENA, P.O. Box 42092, Tucson AZ 85733, or email benapresident@gmail.com

Want to support your neighborhood association?

Become a member! Send your 2014-2015 membership dues of \$10.00 per household to Treasurer, BENA, P.O. Box 42092, Tucson AZ 85733

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Membership dues ensure that you will receive your newsletter via first class mail.