Bienvenido! Willkommen! Welcome! I’d like to start our first newsletter of 2015 with a warm welcome to new neighbors James and Melody Duenas residing on Bella Vista Road! Welcome to the neighborhood!

BUDDY, CAN YOU SPARE A DIME? Some folks believe that money is the root of all evil. This could not be further from the truth when it comes to your Bella Vista Neighborhood Association. Once a year we ask that you consider giving a small donation to your Association. A once annual $20 gift, or less if that is what is comfortable for your pocketbook, helps to keep your Association productive and proactive. Your contribution helps to pay for mailing costs for the newsletter, post office box rental, annual picnic supplies, the Rose Garden, materials to help your volunteer directors keep all neighbors informed, welcoming new neighbors, and occasionally a donation of our own to show our support for a neighbor. So please consider making a contribution with the enclosed envelope. It will be greatly appreciated and put to good use.

BVNA Director’s Meeting Minutes from January 20, 2015.


President’s Report: Tom advised that Eugene has withdrawn as a director. Eugene told Tom he is just too old and too tired.

Tom bid a welcome and thanks for those attending the meeting. He then made the first business of the night the issuance of the Sparkle Award to Michael & Cheryl Higgins.

Eugene and Reggie have both removed themselves as directors and asked to be replaced citing health concerns. So there are now two openings. NTSA is not covered right now. Tom advised NTSA leader Ross Montgomery of Reggie’s withdrawal. Tom urged Cheryl to advertise in the newsletter for another representative. NTSA discussion followed citing its importance to the neighborhood.
Tom is to withdraw as President due to doctor’s orders to simplify his life as much as possible. His plate overfloweth. He will need to be replaced. Bob is President Pro-tem in the meantime. Tom would like to remain involved with the group.

Community Food Garden: Box rentals. There is a chance that a box will be available. If interested, contact Ruth for availability. She’s still waiting for email responses from current box renters to determine statuses.

Treasurers Report. Currently $2,929.88 in account. Five more member contributions. Budget. It was suggested that the budget not exceed what was brought in the previous year regardless of needs. Bob suggested the same budget as last year, 2500. Cathy suggested it should equal what we took in the year before. $50 was agreed to go to Shannon for welcoming committee budget if she needs it.

Welcoming Committee: Shannon is the new welcoming person. She will have a budget of $50 to welcome new residents to the neighborhood. Shannon didn’t know of any additional new neighbors to welcome. Discussion ensued with Shannon Dickerson as to welcome duties. It was suggested to mention that volunteer dues help support the welcoming of new neighbors. Also, Shannon should make sure that new neighbors are informed of who to contact if the neighbor has any questions or concerns about the neighborhood.

Calendar for 2015. February newsletter to follow the meetings for sure. Then before and after picnic. So April/May, August (picnic reminder) and November. General meetings will be in May and November.

Newsletter: The goal will remain four per year. It was suggested that newsletter expenses be added to the request for the annual Association donation.

General meetings: This year’s general meetings will be in May and November. Exact dates to be determined and announced later. Guest speakers? May-Radon. November-Jennifer from Urban forestry and maybe an arborist. Ruth recommended finding someone to speak about how to deal with mature trees so residents don’t feel the need to cut them down. She suggested that the focus the meeting be on maintaining the tree canopy in the neighborhood.

Directors meetings. It was agreed to try to keep it at four per year; roughly January, May, August and November.

Parks: Bob reported to Tom that he is trying to organize a work crew with Mountain View High School.

NTSA- Cheryl will try to cover the meetings until Reggie can resume them or a replacement can be found.

Crime watch. Ren Weaver will try to have the yearly meeting of the captains at the end of Feb or beginning of March.

Rose Garden: No needs for the Rose Garden were known of.

The City: Chad Eiken reported about the upcoming report from the City comprised of the strategic planning process, priorities for the City, and the vision for the City. The coming report should be in the local papers over the coming months.

Meeting concluded at 7:30.
Board of Directors: President-Open; Vice President-Bob Rowe 254-8699; Secretary-Nancy Roth 254-4384; Treasurer-Kathy Carmody 254-4538; City Liaison-Chad Eiken 487-7882; Neighborhood Police Officer-J. Burgara 487-7540. Directors: Marilyn Cramer; Perry Elliott; Fred Garmire; Cheryl Higgins; Kate Altenhof-Long; Ren Weaver; Ruth Wilmoth. Committee Chairs: Community Food Garden-Ruth Wilmoth 513-2691; Crime Watch-Ren Weaver 896-1616; Newsletter-Cheryl Higgins 314-2141; Parks-Bob Rowe; Road Improvement-Open; Rose Garden-Penni Howard 256-8744; Welcoming-Shannon Dickerson 256-0315.

YOUTH NEWS: MVHS LEADERSHIP CLASS PROVIDES MORE SERVICE

by Bob Rowe, BVNA Parks Chairperson

On February 10, 2015, students from the Mt. View High School Leadership group again helped out the Bella Vista Neighborhood Association by dedicating their work project time to Behrens Woods. As they did last month, the group spread chips on the remaining trails and along the north border. They picked up fir boughs from winter blow down to be disposed of.

The woods are looking better and ready to burst out with spring bloom; Indian Plum, Trillium, and Bleeding Heart, Red-flowering Currant, Vancouveria, and other native plants will emerge these next two months. Take a walk through this wonderful natural area and enjoy a piece of urban forest. Our thanks go to these students, their advisor Peter Van Datta, and Jessica Antoine of Vancouver Urban Forestry who together made the Woods a better place.

We Want You!

Due to age, health, and unavoidable circumstances brought on by........ well..... life, your Bella Vista Neighborhood Association has found itself with some open positions. Consider volunteering to be a Board Member, the neighborhood representative for the Neighborhood Traffic Safety Alliance, or even President of the Association. If you are interested in becoming a director would like to nominate someone that you know would like to be a bit more involved with the Bella Vista Neighborhood, contact Tom Perkins. In the meantime, we would like to extend a sincere Thank You to Tom, Reggie and Eugene for the years of dedication to the Bella Vista Neighborhood. We live in a better community because of them.

New Recycling program begins for fluorescent lights

As a Washington resident you can now recycle fluorescent lights and other mercury-containing lights for free at 130 sites throughout the state, with more being added in the months ahead. Light Recycle Washington collection sites will take traditional fluorescent tubes (including straight, curved and circular tubes), the twisty compact fluorescent lights and high intensity discharge lights, which are commonly used in outdoor lighting fixtures. The program does not
accept lighting fixtures or ballasts. Both individuals and businesses can drop off lights for recycling, although there is a limit of 10 lights per day. Visit [www.lightrecyclewa.org](http://www.lightrecyclewa.org) to find a collection site near you. For more information visit [www.ecy.wa.gov/news/2015/001](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/news/2015/001).

**Tips for the backyard gardener:** According to the Eating Well magazine article “Fronds with Benefits”, don’t toss those tops! Don’t throw away the tops of all of your leafy greens. You can cut down on food waste and expand the use of your purchase and your garden bounty will be even more bountiful. Radish tops have a pungent and peppery flavor similar to arugula. Great in a stir-fry, think green onions. Speaking of green onions, I hope you’re using the green tops of those for sauté in quiche, minced into a salad or salad dressing and of course, to top that baked potato when you don’t have actual chives. Fennel. The feathery fronds have a bold anise or licorice flavor. A little goes a long way as an herb to season fish or gazpacho. Maybe even in tabouli? And beets! Just beet it!! If you like chard, you will love been greens which have a similar earthy flavor. They are excellent sautéed or added raw to salads.

**A Word About Radon - An Editorial by Cheryl Higgins**

I was fortunate enough to be able to attend the 3rd Annual Radon Forum Northwest at the library in downtown Vancouver on January 7th of this year. It was free and hosted by the American Lung Association and the Washington State Department of Health. Prior to the start of the forum, the only Radon I knew of was Rae Dawn Chong who starred in the movies Quest for Fire, The Color Purple and Commando to name just a few. But more on that in the movie review section….just kidding (unless you want me to add one. BTW, The Imitation Game is a must see! I give it five rhododendrons on my one to five rhododendron scale.) But I digress. The radon I learned about at this fabulous forum is a colorless, odorless, and tasteless radioactive gas that occurs naturally in most rocks and soils. It is produced by the breakdown of uranium in soil, rock and water. Radon is harmlessly dispersed in outdoor air, but when trapped in buildings, it can build up, increasing the risk of lung cancer. Researchers at Portland State University have discovered that this side of the Columbia River is particularly susceptible to the dangers of the naturally occurring gas. The state of Washington has designated seven counties as having potential for high radon levels including Clark County. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has stated that radon is the No. 1 cause of lung cancer among non-smokers in the U.S. and causes more than 22,000 deaths annually. According to Cancer Survivors Against Radon (CanSAR) that’s more than breast, prostate, colon and pancreatic cancers combined!

While radon has long been acknowledged as a threat to uranium miners, it was only discovered to be potentially harmful in our homes since 1985. One of the reasons that we have moderate to high levels of radon may be due to all of those beautiful and sometimes pesky boulders left here by the infamous Missoula Flood some 14,000 years ago. Radon levels can vary from place to place and even from house to house in the same neighborhood. Radon gas typically moves
up through the ground and seeps into homes through tiny holes and cracks in basements or concrete slabs and from crawlspace.

What can we do as homeowners? The EPA and the US Surgeon General recommend all homes be tested for radon. And we can test our homes ourselves. Home radon test kits are very easy to use and generally cost somewhere around $15.00 but I saw one of the “big box” home improvement stores selling them for less than $10.00. In the basic short term test, a radon sensitive medium is placed in the lowest lived-in part of the home for 3 to 7 days. My test results came back at 3.8 pCi/l. The EPA recommends that you take action to reduce radon levels that are 4.0 pCi/l or higher. So I am under the EPA “action level” but because it is close I may opt for a long term test. Again, easy to use, inexpensive and will measure anywhere from 91 days to one year. The longer the testing time, the more accurate your reading will be.

And OMG! What do you do if you are over 4.0pCi/l? No need to sell your home or move to Alaska. Radon reduction systems, also know as radon mitigation, can reduce radon levels by 99 percent. Even very high levels can be brought down to within acceptable levels. And a worst case scenario will probably cost less than your annual property taxes.

CanSAR.com and Planetclark.com are just two of the local organizations that provide information to help keep us healthy and happy in our homes. And don’t block your crawlspace with Styrofoam blocks. Those vents are there for a reason and blocking them will increase your risk for radon and mold.

**Sparkle Award**

On page three you were informed of open positions on the Board of Directors for our neighborhood association. One of those positions is for president. Why would you want to consider presidency for our neighborhood? Well, for one reason, you will have a large say in who receives the Sparkle Award. This year Tom Perkins felt inclined to bestow the award and honor on Michael and Cheryl Higgins. Tom stated that besides a noble effort to maintain their yard (no small feat considering they moved here from the desert), he noted their involvement and contributions with Behrens Woods, the Rose Garden, the annual picnic, and volunteering as a director and publishing the newsletter. They were happy and humbled to accept the award and look forward to continued involvement with this wonderful neighborhood.

**A heart felt remembrance.** We were able to donate $100 to a college fund for the young children of Kimberly Rowe Dabbs who was tragically killed in a Christmas Eve car accident at the end of last year. Kimberly is the daughter of Bob Rowe, who does so much for our neighborhood above and beyond his involvement with the parks. Here’s hoping it will help a little knowing that we are thinking of you and appreciate you.

“When you come to the end of all that you know, you must believe one of two things; you will find earth upon which to stand, or you will be given wings.” Unknown Author
The City of Vancouver supports the Neighborhood Associations in their effort to share vital information with residents to create a more informed public. However, the information provided and the opinions and views expressed in the Neighborhood Association newsletter or other documents do not necessarily represent the position of the City of Vancouver, nor does the City determine whether the information published is accurate or appropriate. Printed by the City of Vancouver Office of Neighborhoods.