



Cascade Highlands Herald

www.neighborhoodlink.com/vancouver/cascadehighlands

February 2023

A little time, a little effort, makes for a better neighborhood!

Upcoming CHNA Events

February 11 - Green Bag Food Pick Up

April 8 - Green Bag Food Pick Up

June 10 - Green Bag Food Pick Up

June 17 - Annual CHNA Cleanup - MVHS, 8:00 a.m. to noon

July 11 - Annual CHNA Dessert Meeting in Homestead Park

August 4-6 - CHNA Community Garage Sale

Financial Report

By Maureen Humbert

The last finance report (September 2022) saw the association's balance at \$3,939.42. Since that time there have been two \$20 general donations made, bringing the balance to \$3,979.42.

Blairmont Repaving Near MVHS

Blairmont is scheduled to be paved this summer with the city's overall resurfacing program. The recent replacement speed humps were reinstalled/repaved to make sure they were there until the full street work was done this coming summer.

The original plan was to have the school district repave a large portion of the street, but then the city and the district agreed to have the district contribute to the full-width paving so it could all be done at the same time.

Nominations Open for Vice Chair, Secretary/Newsletter Editor, and Website Coordinator

Since this is an odd-numbered year, board members for vice chair, secretary/newsletter editor, and website coordinator are open for nominations. If you wish to be on the CHNA board in one of these positions, please let a board member know. Elections occur during our annual July meeting. The following are willing to serve again in their respective roles: Mark Crawford, Mark Johnson and Dan West. Thanks!

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CHNA page on City website --
<https://www.cityofvancouver.us/cmo/neighborhood/cascade-highlands>



Friends of Trees Planting on December 3

December 3rd was a busy day with the leaf box available, the return of the Walk 'n' Knock event, and the Friends of Trees (FoT) tree planting for SW Vancouver. Cascade Highlands took part and planted 24 new trees. Among the 13 species planted, two seemed to be the favorites: Vanessa Persian Ironwood and Princeton Sentry Ginkgo (with four each).

This was our 21st tree planting with Friends of Trees. Over the 21 years we've planted 574 trees, a few of which died, but most of which are helping our neighborhood be more beautiful, have slightly slower traffic, experience somewhat slowed-down rain, and have a bit cleaner air.

Replacement Trees on Blairmont

On Saturday, December 18 Vancouver Urban Forestry planted two trees to replace three older trees which were lost recently.

The first is a European Hornbeam to replace the tree immediately in front of the new Mountain View H.S. at 17th St. Years ago when we got the Blairmont traffic-calming grant, the city planted trees on the newly installed bulb-outs at 17th St. [The bulb-outs help narrow the wide road so that pedestrians can cross more safely.] We received two trees with that grant - one for each side of Blairmont, but the high school construction efforts removed the west-side tree.

The second tree, another European Hornbeam, replaces the sick old Mountain Ash which grew further south on Blairmont in the south center divider. It kept losing major limbs and was a safety hazard, so we had operations remove it. Urban Forestry paid for our new tree to be planted there. Thank you Urban Forestry for our beautiful new trees!

Unfortunately, the third tree we lost was the mature flowering plum growing in the north of the two center dividers on Blairmont. It was cut down and the entire center divider removed (along with two rose bushes, many daffodil bulbs, several lavender bushes, some fairly aged kinnikinnik, and a couple coreopsis plants). The area will be a northbound left turn lane for entry into the high school. Obviously, this tree cannot be replaced in the immediate area.

Urban Forestry Would Like Your Thoughts

Vancouver's Urban Forestry department is undergoing its every-15-year management plan and would like your feedback and thoughts. If you're willing, the survey is at: <https://www.beheardvancouver.org/ufmp>

Also, there will be a public meeting scheduled for March 18th, from 10 to noon at MLK Elementary School.

Mulching Your Trees

For all you tree enthusiasts, it's time for Mulch Madness: lace up your boots, throw on your gloves, and mulch some trees!

Mulching is one of the best things you can do for your trees, shrubs and landscape. Mulch moderates soil temperatures, reduces soil moisture loss, reduces soil compaction, provides nutrients, improves soil structure, and prevents mower and trimmer damage to tree trunks.

Wood chips make good mulch. Simply apply the 3-3-3 rule: 3 inches thick of mulch in a 3-foot ring with a 3-inch space of no mulch immediately around the trunk.

The result? Healthier plants and soils!

One-Year Anniversary for our NPO, Jeremy Free

January 2022 was when Neighborhood Police Officer (NPO) Jeremy Free took over as NPO for the east side neighborhood associations, District 4. He's done a really great job dealing with situations that we neighbors would just as soon not have to mess with. He's helped with parking violations (lots of these), with neighbors causing problems for other neighbors (like yelling, loud parties, subletting rooms, late-night noise, unkempt yards, illegally parked vehicles, no-current-WA-licensed vehicles), critters invading local yards, excessive litter, etc.

To contact Jeremy, email: jeremy.free@cityofvancouver.us or leave a message at: (360) 487-7372.

Thank you, Jeremy!



Leaf Box Recap

During one weekend in November and one in December, Homestead Place hosted the city-supported leaf boxes. In general, things went pretty well this year. Each weekend, someone disregarded the need to drop off only leaves and left yard debris. However, nearby neighbors noticed. The items were removed from the leaf box and disposed of in a responsible way.

Weather-wise, it was chilly both weekends and actually snowed on December 4th. The leaves also held onto their tree branches later in the season this year, probably because of the hot weather late in the fall so we only used three boxes in November. In December, the city switched out the box each day.

Neighbor Ed supported the activity by 1) loaning his ladder so people could drop their leaves over the top of the closed end of the box (rather than having to tromp through a 3- or 4-foot thick mat of leaves to empty their containers) and 2) by babysitting the box while Jean was off planting trees with the Friends of Trees group (on December 3rd). Thank you, Ed! Most dumpers were grateful for the convenience of the box and expressed appreciation for having it. Thank you, City of Vancouver, for sponsoring and organizing this event.

CERT Basic Training Classes Available

There will be two CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) classes offered in the next few months:

2/23 to 4/1 and 3/29 to 5/6. For additional info go to: CERTClarkCountyWA.com

Classes meet at night for six weeks. Topics covered are: Disaster preparedness, Fire safety and Utility Controls, Disaster medical operations, Light search and rescue operations, CERT organization, Disaster Psychology, and Terrorism and CERT.

CHNA is willing to pay the registration fee for two neighbors to attend either of these CERT series of classes. Contact any CHNA board member for this support when you sign up.

Error in Former Article on Parking Near Mailboxes

by Jean Kent

An alert resident pointed out to me that my article in the last edition of our CHNA newsletter regarding the Mountain View High School student parking situation had an inaccuracy.

According to ordinance *10.04.040 No parking in front of mailboxes*, "It is unlawful to park within ten (10) feet of U.S. mailboxes, except temporarily for the purpose and while engaged in the delivery or pick up of postal items. (Sec. 1 of Ord. 2019-01-04)".

I'd obtained my information from a State Trooper and should have checked our local laws. I apologize for my mistake! Bottom line: Please don't park so your vehicle blocks any mailboxes. Thanks!

Mutt Mitt Dispensers -- One-Year Report

It's been just a year since the city installed our two new Mutt Mitt dog waste bag dispensers in Homestead Park.

With our home-made dispensers designed, installed and maintained by Pat P. (thank you, Pat!) we had no way of knowing how many bags were utilized because several people contributed bags to the dispensers.

But, with the Mutt Mitts, we KNOW. During 2022 forty-four (44) packages of 100 bags were inserted in the north dispenser and twenty-five (25) packages of 100 bags were filled in the less-used dispenser at Meadow Park. Each dispenser's capacity is 3 packages (300 bags).

There was one incident of somebody pulling all the newly installed bags out of the north dispenser. We shut that post down for a couple weeks hoping to discourage a repeat of that kind of behavior. And, so far, so good, no more intentional wastage.

The city provides us with those bags for free, although the grant we won from The Watershed Alliance paid for a whole lot of bags in addition to the installation.

Here's a shout-out to Charlie who faithfully informs the dispenser-filler when the supply is getting low. Thanks Charlie!

We're glad the bags are being used! Thank you dog owners for picking up after your dogs.

Is it Legal to Display Only One License Plate?

According to an article by Alyse Messmer-Smith of the *Bellingham Herald*, a car must have a front and back license plate affixed to the vehicle.

Additionally, according to RCW 46.16A.200 you 'must have and display in full force and effect a current and proper vehicle registration'. License plates must remain clean and clearly readable and must be attached horizontally no more than four feet from the ground.

License renewal tabs are only required on the rear license plate. The Month tab is displayed to the left of the Year tab.

Having your license plate in your windshield is not ok. An infraction for no or expired registration is usually more than what it costs to maintain the registration on the vehicle.

Not all vehicles are issued two plates - motorcycles, campers, mopeds, trailers, semitrailers, collector vehicles, and horseless carriages are issued only one license plate.

Maintenance on 14th St. Property

Our Neighborhood Police Officer (NPO), Officer Jeremy Free, called Code Compliance due to reports of rats and other animals living on a property on 14th St. After several communications with various people later, we volunteered to help clean up the yards around this house. Several people spent hours and hours dealing with the impressive quantity of berry vines which had grown in the entire back yard and partially over the fences into the side and front yards. Landscaper Andrew Ili spent several hours hacking away at the berry vines and edging the sidewalk. Thank you, Andrew!

Code Compliance provided us with a debris box so that on Saturday, October 29th we would have a place to put all the clippings, trimmings, stumps, branches, weeds, vines, stickers, etc. which we encountered. We almost filled that box!

Another issue is the twelve feral cats which have taken up residence; we now have a case/call for service filed for this location. Donna Goddard from the county will work with her team to assess the situation. The team will attempt to trap the cats over a period of time

and then transport them to the Humane Society.

Lastly are the three (maybe four) inoperable vehicles which reside there. Code Compliance will be dealing with this situation in due time.

We thank the city for their help with sprucing up this location and are grateful for all the neighbors that volunteered to help with this clean up.



Remove Lids from Glass When Recycling

Please remove the lids from glass jars and bottles before recycling. Also, glass goes in a separate bin from the big blue roll cart. Don't mix glass in with anything. Thanks!

Save Metal for Cleanup

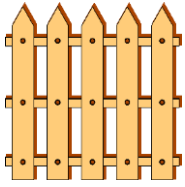
If you have the space and the interest, you might consider saving your metal to dispose of at our cleanup in June. We separate metal from other disposed-of items (where possible). The box is hauled to a metal buyer and the proceeds are given back to the neighborhood associations' bank accounts. Your metal could get us one step closer to getting a couple additional benches in the park.

At last year's cleanup we, along with the Mountain View neighbors, filled up one of those giant Waste Connections boxes with our metal and we added \$153.00 to our bank account. MVNA received the same amount.

Pressure Washing Your Driveway or Sidewalk?

Please gather up the gunk which is produced from pressure washing your driveway and/or sidewalk. In addition to it being an eyesore, if somebody drives through it, the goo gets spread wherever the tires go. Additionally, when it rains, part of that sludge gets washed into the river.

Just think of how it must be like to be a fish or other river creature with that stuff washing into your home. BLECK! Thank you for your consideration.



Neighborhood Fence and Foliage Maintenance

by Mark Crawford

Have you ever wondered who maintains areas that are along major streets – especially when a long fence runs across many homes' back or side yards? Well, technically it is the responsibility of each property owner to maintain and repair fences and walls bordering their property. In addition, it's their responsibility to keep adjacent areas clean of leaves, branches and litter as well as trimming the foliage to keep pedestrians safe.

However, the reality is that most residents do not perform these tasks. Some residents may rarely even see these areas they own if their commutes do not take them by their back or side property.

HOA's exist to reinforce these rules. Unfortunately, active HOA's are non-existent across Cascade Highlands neighborhoods and the vast majority of residents don't want to establish them. Even if a large group of neighbors are in favor, establishing an HOA in an older neighborhood is very difficult, if not impossible.

One solution we residents in Homestead Acres (H.A.) have come up with is to create a voluntary monetary fund, monetized by the residents of the neighborhood, and then hire a landscape maintenance firm to perform the work.

Where I live, in the H.A. neighborhood, we have established a maintenance fund that is now over 10 years old. Though we only get about 40% of the residents to contribute \$100/year (and some generous folks contribute more), these donations are enough to hire basic trimming and cleanup of these common areas. However, the fund is insufficient to affect any repair of aging or damaged fences or foliage.

Most of these common fences in Homestead Acres are 30+ years old and are prone to damage from wind and other weather events such as we have experienced this winter. When these fences fall down, the residents who own them have so far repaired them but eventually there will be a need to start replacing all of these fences. It's time to start saving for that day!

The block wall at Homestead Place and 159th also falls into this category of individual ownership but neighborhood amenity. It was damaged when a tree fell on it and is leaning precariously at this time. The homeowner's insurance company has been informed and we're hoping that the wall will be replaced soon.

Residents with back yards leading to 160th Ave., 15th St., Village Loop, 164th Ave., and 158th Loop are all participants in this issue. Hopefully you're setting aside funds so that when your portion of the fence 'bites the dust' you'll be prepared to do your part to maintain our neighborhood's boundary.

Can Small Pieces of Paper Be Recycled?

No!

Small pieces of paper such as Post-it notes, business cards, price tags, receipts, and paper scraps smaller than a 4"x6" postcard. should not be placed in recycling carts.

Despite being made of a material that is recyclable, here in Clark County, the sorting machine at the transfer station sorts items based on size and shape. Because of this, the machine has trouble identifying and properly processing small pieces of paper. Ultimately, the small paper creates a mess for staff to clean up and is eventually placed in the garbage.

Try to use an alternative way to recycle small pieces of paper. If you do backyard composting, plain paper can be included but it's best to avoid glossy or colored paper. Shredded paper can also be used for worm bin bedding. If these options aren't available to you, it is okay to place the paper in the garbage.

Why is this important?

Small pieces of paper are best left out of the recycling because they create a mess at the transfer station. Even though the paper is made of recyclable material, the size is too small to be sorted by the machine and will eventually end up as garbage.

Please help Clark County keep small pieces of paper out of the recycling process.

[Note: this information also applies to shredded paper.]

What is Hazardous Waste?

E-cigarettes are! Spent e-cigarettes and vaping products do NOT go into your garbage nor into your recycling carts.

To identify other potentially hazardous products, you can look for words on the product label or packaging such as: *poison, danger, warning, caution, or flammable.*

Most household hazardous waste items come from one of the following categories:

Automotive Products: oil, antifreeze, gasoline, brake fluid, transmission fluid, windshield wiper solution

Household Cleaners: oven cleaners, drain cleaners, disinfectants, laundry products, furniture polish

Paints and Solvents: latex and oil-based paint, thinners, varnishes, wood preservatives

Poisons/Pesticides/Herbicides: fungicides, insecticides, herbicides and rodenticides

Also; fluorescent light bulbs, mercury-containing light bulbs, fingernail polish and remover, flea controls, pool chemicals, shoe polish, some hair products.

E-Cigarette ‘Butts’

By Jean Kent

Here’s what I found when walking my dog the other morning: 33 e-cigarette butts. I contacted City of Vancouver Solid Waste and learned that not only can these not be recycled, they’re considered HAZARDOUS WASTE and should not be tossed into either the garbage or the recycling carts! They have a battery inside, plus they contain other hazardous chemicals. Please don’t toss these in your garbage. They need to be treated as you treat hazardous waste (i.e., taken to a transit and recycling center).

Urban Runoff Water Management

from the City of Vancouver website

The City of Vancouver is creating a Stormwater Management Action Plan or SMAP. This Action Plan will help The City address pollution from urban runoff (stormwater) into our rivers and streams. Stormwater runoff is the leading cause of water pollution in Washington.

There are many actions we can take to better manage stormwater pollution issues. The goal of Vancouver’s Stormwater Management Action Plan is to protect and improve water quality for our community and to enhance the natural environment while meeting our future growth needs.

The Stormwater Management Action Plan will allow the City of Vancouver to focus on stream health and improve livability in the areas of our City that are most impacted by urban runoff. The Action Plan focuses on actions the City can take such as improving water quality, reducing flooding, restoring native habitat, increasing access to open space areas and adding to our tree canopy to reduce runoff and protect habitat from increasing temperatures.

When it rains or snows in urban areas, water often picks up pollutants as it flows toward creeks, rivers and lakes. This potentially polluted runoff is called stormwater. Some common sources of contamination include: car washing, oil leaks from vehicles, spills from outdoor activities, pesticides, fertilizers, litter, pet waste, leaves and yard waste.

Most storm drains lead directly from streets and urban areas to local waterways. If stormwater is not properly collected and treated, it can impact local water quality and wildlife habitat. Pollution in local waterways can harm fish and animals as well as people who swim and play in or near the water. Water quality issues can also impact the local economy.

The Action Plan will help support our Vancouver community members by prioritizing investments in projects and solutions that:

- Provide cleaner waterways
- Improve access and recreation around rivers and streams
- Help resolve flooding challenges
- Create opportunities for new open spaces, parks, and trees
- Use City funds more effectively by combining projects that offer multiple water quality benefits
- Reflect the community’s values on water quality
- Inform how and where future improvements are implemented
- Promote innovative stormwater management solutions for the future

A New Garden Pest

We're being invaded by an insatiable invertebrate jumping worm (aliases: Alabama jumper, Jersey wriggler, crazy worm, and Asian jumper - since they're native to Asia and arrived on the east coast in the late 1880's).

These worms flip, thrash, jump, and writhe when touched, are 3 to 8 inches long, are glossy gray or brown, have a smooth cream or white collar somewhere around their body, and are ravenous consumers of humus (the rich organic essential top layer of soil). Plants, fungi and other soil life cannot survive without humus and the jumping worms eat lots of it.

The worm's annual life cycle ends in winter but their mateless cocoons have tiny eggs which over-winter and produce a new generation in the spring. Their presence has been confirmed in 35 states, including Washington, and we've seen some of these in Vancouver. Fortunately, some birds (robins mainly), shrews, garter snakes and toads like to eat them. The worms' castings have a coffee-ground texture which, other than their behavior when touched, can be a clue to you that you have been invaded.



Thank you to all our dedicated newsletter distributors - you help make Cascade Highlands a great place to live! Thank you to *Jackie Andrewjeski, Judy and Dick Bird, Gary and Peggy Bowman, Joe Bruzda and Kim Peterson, Rosenna and Ken Cheng, Mark Crawford, Son Do and Jessica Tu, Marion Dittman, Julie Dunn, Sandy Hadenfield, Jim and Shareefah Hoover, Ann Horstman, Maureen Humbert, Mary Ellen Hunt, Annette Idler, Brenda Jensen, Mark Johnson, Judie Kearney, Jean Kent, Julie Nakao, Holly Orr, Pat Poe, Rose Ann and Tony Ranft, Donna Schaefer, Steve Schmidkofer, Reland Short, Lee Ann Stewart and Teddy Peetz, Sharon and Bill Wilton and Niel Wolfe* for helping distribute the October 2022 newsletter.

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