



# Cascade Highlands Herald

[www.neighborhoodlink.com/vancouver/cascadehighlands](http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/vancouver/cascadehighlands)

February 2025

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

## Upcoming CHNA Events

**February 8** - Green Bag Food Pick Up

**April 12** - Green Bag Food Pick Up

**April 19** - Neighborhood Cleanup, 8:00 a.m. – noon, NO chipper this year, but there will be a yard debris box

**July 15** - Annual meeting, 7:00 p.m. Homestead Park south end

## Annual Meeting Agenda (So Far)

- Jeanne Bennett, Executive Director, Columbia Play Project
- Celebration of New Play Structure - Melody Burton and Omar Guzman
- Election of Officers
- Reports by Exec. Board



## CHNA's 25th Birthday! (we were 'born' in December 1999)

December 20, 2024 was CHNA's 25<sup>th</sup> birthday as a neighborhood association; we were the 51<sup>st</sup> neighborhood association in the city. Now there are 71!

## Interested in a Digital copy of this Newsletter?

Scan the QR code (below)



### C.H.N.A. LEADERSHIP

#### *Chair*

Jean Kent 360-896-7291 (v.m.)  
[jeaken@pacifier.com](mailto:jeaken@pacifier.com)

#### *Vice Chair*

Mark Crawford  
360-990-9673  
[hamfvan2012@gmail.com](mailto:hamfvan2012@gmail.com)

#### *Treasurer*

Maureen Humbert  
360-904-0677  
[mwhumbert@comcast.net](mailto:mwhumbert@comcast.net)

#### *Secretary*

Mark Johnson 360-260-9140

#### *City Liaison*

Natasha Ramras 360-487-8484  
[Natasha.Ramras@cityofvancouver.us](mailto:Natasha.Ramras@cityofvancouver.us)

#### *Newsletter Editor*

Mark Johnson 360-260-9140

#### *Newsletter Distributor*

Erika Johnson 360-260-9140

#### *Website Coordinator*

Rich Humbert  
[Richumbert@comcast.net](mailto:Richumbert@comcast.net)

#### *Neighborhood Police Officer*

Officer Cole Larson  
360-903-8020 or  
[Cole.Larson@cityofvancouver.us](mailto:Cole.Larson@cityofvancouver.us)

#### *City of Vancouver website --*

<https://www.cityofvancouver.us>



## Annual Meeting Elections

Since this is an odd-numbered year board seats for vice chair, website coordinator and secretary/newsletter editor will be open for nominations at the annual meeting this July. If you wish to be on the CHNA board in one of these positions, please let a board member know. Thanks!

## Financial Report

By Maureen Humbert

The last finance report indicated the association's balance was \$7,499.42. Since then, \$20 was received and deposited for curb painting. Our \$3,535 grant this year for tree planting did not cover all the costs. A donation of \$300 was received and deposited to complete the purchase of the new trees. A pass-through check for \$3,835 was sent to Friends of Trees. Our new balance, until we pay the \$6,000 to the city for the two new benches, is \$7,519.42.

I hope everyone has a great New Year and do hope you have been in the park to see the new playground equipment and the new benches.

## September was Library Card Sign-Up Month

But it's ok. You can sign up for a library card at any time! It's easiest if you visit one of our libraries (the closest is at 600 NE 136th Ave.) but you can start the process by visiting <https://www.fvrl.org/library-accounts>.

Having a library card enables you to borrow over 500,000 physical items, access the complete digital collection (over 150,000 eBooks and eAudiobooks), use experience passes (gets you free

admission to many nearby museums), and request materials which exist within the library district. You can even suggest that the library consider purchasing a new book you heard about.

We know you know you can get books from a library. But you can also: explore genealogy resources like *Fold3* and *Ancestry Library*, stream movies and TV shows, stream music, take online courses, access learning tools, borrow board games, take crafting and video classes, find job search assistance, participate in drop-in Tech Help sessions, and more. Fun fact - libraries in the U.S. are visited more than one billion (that's Billion with a "B") times a year.

Additional library options are:

*Brainfuse HelpNow* offers students in K-12 on-demand, personalized homework help in core subjects (math, reading, writing, science and social studies) including S.A.T. preparation. (Students communicate with live, online tutors using an interactive, virtual whiteboard to chat, write, draw, copy/paste text or images and graph homework problems. There's even a Writing Lab for help and feedback on papers.) Find it on the library's *Student Resources* page.

You can check out two board games with your library card. It's a great way to try a new game before you buy it. You can browse the shelf at the library or place a hold for an item.

Your library card gives you access to the paid version of *Consumer Reports* right from your home. [You access *CR* from the library website with your card.]

There's also InterLibrary Loan, which allows you to request print books from other libraries and districts.

## Work Party at Homestead Park

On the last Friday of the month, September 20th, several volunteers worked for 4 solid hours to accomplish two tasks in our beautiful Homestead Park: 1) pull as much as the birdsfoot trefoil invasive weed from our natural area as possible, and 2) remove ivy from around the trees in the south end of the park and distribute arborist mulch around those trees after getting rid of the ivy. Both tasks were hard work as the birdsfoot has massive root systems and the ivy was NOT cooperating.

We almost filled a debris box with the ivy and trefoil and still have mulch yet to spread, but it was a beautiful day and the volunteers from Underwriter's Laboratory were an amiable and hard-working crew. Plus, the UL volunteers provided us with lunch.

As we worked, several yards away from us a crew installed plastic fencing around the play structure in preparation for the old playground's removal.

Thank you to the Volunteer Dept. at the city for organizing the work party event, the three new AmeriCorps volunteers who are learning the ropes, and also thanks to the 15 CHNA neighbors and other volunteers who worked.

## Important Contact Information for when you need it

1. Code Compliance questions or concerns: Call 360-487-7810

Or go to:

<https://www.cityofvancouver.us/cdd/page/code-compliance>

2. Rules for Recreational Vehicle parking: <https://www.cityofvancouver.us/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Recreational-Vehicle-ROW-Permit.pdf> (Scroll down for the rules.)

3. "One Stop Shop" for concerns (parking, traffic, code compliance, public works like potholes and lights)

Go to:

<https://www.cityofvancouver.us/services/report-concern/> and scroll down.

4. Contact City Council members: <https://www.cityofvancouver.us/departments/mayor-city-council/#form> and click on "Requests and Contact Form" to get to "Contact City Council."

5. Information about city council meetings, agendas, and minutes: <https://www.cityofvancouver.us/government/mayor-and-city-council/meetings-agendas-minutes/>



## Leaf Box Report (from 2024 Leaf Drop Season)

Vancouver Solid Waste, the organizer for the leaf boxes, reported that Cascade Highlands had over 100 cubic yards of leaves between the two separate times when we had the leaf boxes. (That's a LOT!) Also, there were no issues with contamination or other yard debris being dumped into the boxes.

THANK YOU everyone who dropped off leaves and only leaves. We all appreciate your willingness to follow the rules which enables us to be able to apply for the leaf box in the future.

## Blue (Recycling) Bin Basics

NO plastic of any kind (including plastic bags) is allowed in the blue recycling bin, except for clean containers with a neck and some 'tubs'. Also, no block foam ("Styrofoam"), glass or electronics: thanks!

## October and December Green Bag Food Donation Reports

October's pick up was interesting because dedicated driver/retriever/truck-owner Pat was sick. Daughter Paisley was willing to work however, and her brother Liam stepped in to be a bag retriever while I drove Pat's truck. It worked out ok and CHNA donors gave an impressive 1,269 pounds of food and personal care products plus \$335.00 to the food pantry.

But for the teens the best part was when Rex, manager of the food pantry, gave the kids a pint of Ben and Jerry's (Oreo cookie chunky) and a plastic fork (since that was all he had, implement-wise)! On the way back home picking at the frozen treat with a challenging plastic implement was heaven! Sharing this refreshing snack revived these young volunteers and made the entire morning worthwhile for them!

As for December, rain was forecast and neither Pat nor Paisley were unable to volunteer. But Pat let us use his big pickup with the canopy and the rain only sprinkled occasionally so it worked out with one major caveat; The truck wouldn't start! OOPS. Barefoot Pat emerged from his house early Saturday morning (as I was attempting to drive his pickup away) and wiggled a wire on the battery connection and PHEW, the beautiful old truck fired right up.

We agreed the safest practice would be to leave the truck running for the entire route as there was no guarantee that it would start again. I only forgot and turned off the engine once. DANG! But Pat had shown me which wire to wiggle, so capable sub packer-volunteer Jon held that wire and, much to our relief, the truck started again and I remembered not to turn it off again until I got the truck parked back at Pat's house.

You CHNA donors were so generous - 1,209 pounds of food (and personal care products) and \$175.00 was donated to

F.I.S.H. of Orchards. That's 25 banana boxes full, in case you're wondering. Here's a big thanks to Pat for the loan of his truck and to Jon for stepping into the packing job. And here's a gigantic thank you to our 65 donors.

If you want to be part of this outstanding effort please contact me, Jean Kent. I'll get you all set up with a green bag for you to use and get you entered into the program.

## Green Bag CHNA Donor Statistics of 2024

Date/poundage/money/number of participating donors (we have 80 people signed up):

Feb.	1,219	\$380	66
Apr.	1,175	\$455	65
Jun.	1,121	\$195	59
Aug.	1,161	\$155	62
Oct.	1,269	\$335	67
Dec.	1,209	\$275	65
<u>Total</u>	7,154	\$1,695	384

## Homestead Park Sign Flower Bed

Our volunteer who was maintaining the foliage by our Homestead Park sign on 160th has moved and we need someone else to step up and assume this responsibility. The work is primarily weeding and deadheading because previous sign-area gardeners have planted perennials which come up every year.

If you enjoy working in gardens and want to support your neighborhood by caring for this sign area, please contact Jean Kent for details. Thank you!

## **Flooding at the Mill Plain and Park Crest Intersection**

Perhaps you noticed that the intersection of Park Crest and Mill Plain Blvd. often flooded when it rains substantially. We asked the city about it last spring and were told that the city would work on the area in the fall.

In September workers DID work on the drain field. As a result, the east side of that intersection is now draining storm water well. Weirdly it took a couple rainstorms before the west side opened up. Now pedestrians and bikers are able to navigate those corners without having to wade through inches of puddled water nor do they get drenched when a vehicle plows through the water and sprays it everywhere.

Additionally, the part of Park Crest where the surface was dug up was not resurfaced well resulting in very uneven, bumpy pavement.

A city staffer said that they'll redo the surface patch when the weather cooperates and they can fit the work into their schedule.

We appreciate getting the drain field cleared so that the water can drain. And we look forward to a smooth surface on Park Crest in that area.

## **Oak Trees as Caterpillar Nurseries**

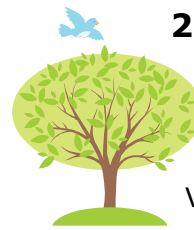
Oak trees support hundreds of species of caterpillars. So, oaks become fully stocked for baby birds and their busy parents, who must feed them hundreds of caterpillars daily.

## **Another Tree-Planting Grant for Next Year? No.**

You can pretty much plan on CHNA participating in the Friends of Trees planting event come November or December of 2025 since we are eager to do our part in raising Vancouver's tree canopy percentage closer to 28%.

However, we will not be applying for any more grants to offset the cost of the trees or to provide watering bags (and mulch) for the trees. The reason – Watershed Alliance is struggling financially and this past year changed its policy of allowing a flexible grant to respond to the number of trees ordered. So, unfortunately no more cost offsets will be in the offing.

Specific information about the 2025 Friends of Trees planting will come in later newsletters.



## **2024 Friends of Tree Planting**

There were 113 trees planted in the SE Vancouver Friends of Trees planting on December 13.

Seventeen of those were trees planted within CHNA boundaries and those trees consisted of 13 different species: 3 Merlot Redbuds, 2 each of Autumn Brilliance Serviceberry and Edith Bogue Magnolia, and one each of Columnar Tuliptree, Goldenrain Tree, Paperbark Maple, Persian Ironwood, Princeton Sentry Ginkgo, Rivers Purple Beech, Starlight Dogwood, Sunburst Honeylocust, Turkish Hazel and Venus Dogwood.

This was our 22<sup>nd</sup> annual neighborhood planting – thanks to all who have participated through the years and we look forward to many more!

## **Children's Play Structure Completed**

Our new play structure was completed right on schedule! Omar Guzman, city park designer, coordinated the project for the city. Two design concepts were developed in February. In March over 200 residents (!) responded to a survey which came in heavily requesting traditional swings. Some preliminary work began in early July which is also when we had an open-house style event sharing the plans. We saw a presentation by Omar at our annual meeting. Construction began in late September with Stateline LLC based out of La Center, WA, as the contractor. Completion date was December 31, 2024.

Three benches directly related to the structure are included (one near the old bench location, another near the new swings, and the last one is close to the ages-5-to-12 play areas, nearest to the net system).

Regarding the swings, the finalized plan included two regular swings and one baby swing, so there will not be a third swing.

The lawn areas will be fully completed in the spring. Due to the colder winter temperatures, grass replacement wouldn't be successful right now. In the meantime, the city covered the muddy areas with hay straw until seeding can happen in the spring.

We actually have three NEW benches in our park - one at the play area and two on the east side of the park paid for by CHNA.

There is some concern about the open-top nature of the new structure-related garbage can. Will it be too stinky for the people using the nearby bench? If so, we'll deal with it. If not, we're good to go. Either way we appreciate the third disposal option.

## **Two New Park Benches Installed on the East Side**

Our two new neighborhood-paid-for, comfy benches are IN. This accomplishment has been a money-raising effort for many years. Thank you to those who paid for their curb number to be painted, who attended recycling classes, who helped with recycling at our cleanups, who donated money specifically for this cause, and who wrote the grant request (which was rewarded) and babysat it through the process. That's how we gathered in the money to pay for these benches.

We also benefited from the timing of the construction of the new play structure as workers accomplishing the site work and concrete paving could perform related bench work at the same time and not have to make a special trip just for the bench construction.

The total cost of the two benches came in at \$7,227.55 including tax.

(subtotal \$6,650.00, Washington State Sales Tax (8.7%) \$578.55)

Terry Snyder, long-time city parks designer (maybe you remember that he helped us with our fitness equipment choice and installation), wrote: *I provided you an estimate months ago of \$6,000 for the two benches. Your cost will still be \$6,000 and the city will cover the extra \$1,727.55 We're thrilled with how the park is shaping up.*

Thank you, Terry! And thank you City of Vancouver for paying the difference.

## **Have a Sidewalk Near Your Home?**

Be sure someone in a wheelchair as well as someone 6 feet tall can have safe use of your portion of our community sidewalk system.

## **Lighting, Bird Migration, and the Environment**

From hummingbirds and warblers to sparrows and geese, millions of birds migrate across North America every year, covering hundreds to thousands of miles. Most of these birds - some that weigh as little as half an ounce - make this remarkable and perilous journey at night, visualizing the magnetic pull of the earth and using the moon and stars to set their course.

As migrating birds pass over brightly lit cities, skyglow from lights drowns out the stars, confusing the birds and luring them into urban areas. Once trapped in the windowed maze of the city, birds either hit buildings directly or circle them until the birds collapse from exhaustion. By reducing skyglow over our cities, we can help migrating birds make it to their destinations safely.

*Lights Out* programs help to prevent birds from being attracted to urban areas. In Chicago, one Lights Out building showed an 80 percent decrease in strike rates after joining the Lights Out movement.

Turning off unnecessary overnight lighting also helps us save energy (and money!), reduce our carbon footprint, and protect our view of the stars.

In addition to hosting migratory birds on their way north or south, the night is actual habitat for many species. Biological systems evolved on this planet in cycles of light and dark. When we light the night, we are in fact fragmenting habitat occupied by nocturnal species. We are also tampering with highly complex ecosystems that rely on carefully timed circadian rhythms (light/dark cycles) that govern sleep, mating, migration, flowering, hunting, hibernation, plant budding and flowering, leaf drop, etc.

While LED bulbs are great for saving energy and money, not all LEDs are safe

for birds, wildlife, and human health and vision. Research on blue-rich white light LEDs shows them to be a serious risk both to our environment and to human health. Luckily, there are warm light LED alternatives and emerging best practices in lighting design that include: fully shielded light fixtures, aiming light down, and carefully considering lighting levels and spectral output.

Make sure your exterior light fixtures are well-shielded and not overly bright. Select warm LED bulbs that are under a 3,000 Kelvin rating. Use motion detectors rather than leaving the lights on all the time.

During migration seasons, close your blinds or curtains to reduce light spill that contributes to sky glow. Try to extinguish unnecessary overnight lighting from late August through mid-November (fall) and mid-March through early June (spring).

## **Ahhh - Spring is Coming, When We Fertilize our Lawns and Wash Our Vehicles**

And, as a result of those two, and other, actions, we contribute to polluting the Columbia River. If you choose to fertilize your lawn, please take care to allow no fertilizer to fall into the street where it will be washed into the drains.

If you wash your car or other vehicle, please do not toss the sudsy wash water into the street as those suds will be washed into the storm drains.

Where do the catch-basin drains 'drain' to? They go directly to the Columbia - those liquids are not treated before they are dumped into the river. Please remember what goes on the ground and streets goes into the river.

One might conclude that fish and other aquatic life prefer dirty cars and unfertilized lawns!

## Food Scraps Go into the Green Yard Debris Cart

What do you do with your potato peelings, your turnip tops, your gnawed-on bones, your corn husks and cobs, the peas the kids won't eat? All of that should go in with your yard debris in the green roll cart.

As a community we're working to lessen the methane gas produced by our garbage. Our city has created a way to do this by allowing us to put our kitchen scraps in the yard debris "organics" container.

There are 33,000 of us Vancouverites who have yard debris pickup. Let's use those carts and put our eggshells, moldy cottage cheese, fish bones, and chicken skin nobody wants in the green cart.

## Dirt Hugger

Keep food out of the gray garbage cart! That's the goal of the Organics program which the city and Waste Connections provides for us.

Food, and food waste, goes in your yard debris cart - that's the green one, not the blue nor the gray carts.

If you are interested in seeing what happens to your yard debris - and food waste - after it is collected from your debris cart, consider taking a virtual tour of Dirt Hugger (38 mins):

[https://youtu.be/g7\\_Di\\_XPi3k](https://youtu.be/g7_Di_XPi3k)

This is an excellent video where the Dirt Hugger guy explains the recycling process, some of the chemistry, a bit about the critters, plus other factors involved in turning yard debris and food waste into organic compost. Plus, there are other pertinent details included. It's pretty interesting!

## Want to Donate Items to the Library's Bookstore?

Here's what they do NOT want:

Beat-up or water-damaged books

VHS and cassette tapes

Encyclopedias

Most textbooks older than 3 yrs

Self-help, business, computer books, and travel (guidebook type) older than 4 yrs

Magazines (they give those away)

Romance novels: Harlequin books more than 5 yrs old or contemporary romances more than 10 yrs old.

However, very popular authors' books such as Danielle Steel, Nora Roberts & Debbie Macomber are usually accepted regardless of age.

Everything else, especially children's books and including puzzles, will be greatly appreciated.



**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, Dave and Susanne Bush, Mark Crawford, Tim and Kathy Davis, Son Do and Jessica Tu, Susan French, Sandy Hadenfield, Pat Henderson, Jim and Shareefah Hoover, Ann Horstman, Maureen Humbert, Mary Ellen Hunt, Annette Idler, Mark Johnson, Judie Kearney, Jean Kent, Julie Nakao, Holly and Rob Orr, Pat Poe, Rose Ann and Tony Ranft, Donna Schaefer, Steve Schmidkofer, Reland Short, Mike Small, Lee Ann Stewart and Teddy Peetz and Niel Wolfe* for helping distribute the September 2024 newsletter.

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 Neighborhood Association newsletters 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