



Village East Update

Winter/Spring 2016/17

published by the Village East Neighborhood Association for its residents and friends

COLORFUL COLORADO

Vibrant Village East

Our **Holiday Lighting Contest** resulted in a First Place, Second Place and Honorable Mention. Our First Place winners were the Peevys at 11669 E. Montana Place. The Peevys have been in Village East since 1993, along with their four children. Both Johnny and Paula are retired postal workers. They met on the job. Their son Jeffrey still lives with

them, and he and his father have a landscaping business together. They are "BIG TIME" CU Buff fans. The first place winner received a \$25.00 gift certificate to Target. See page 3...



UPCOMING EVENTS!

Look for our distinctive yellow signs around Village East informing you of activities. The announcement signs are posted about a week in advance.

Wednesday, June 1

Newsletter Articles Due

Thursday, April 20

Spring VENA Meeting

Fri-Sun, May 19-21

Village East Yard Sale

Saturday, June 3

Spring Clean-Up Day

Tuesday, October 17

**VENA Annual Meeting
and Elections**

Year-round

Adopt-A-Street Cleanup

VENA Monthly Meetings are open to all residents the third Thursday in JAN, APR, JUL, and SEP, at 7 pm in the Village East Community Elementary School library, 1433 S. Oakland St. (east main entrance). Come by and check it out!

VE "Cash for Clutter Sale" May 19-21

Stage it in your yard, stage it in your garage, it means uncluttering your life for Spring Cleaning over the weekend of Friday May 19 to Sunday May 21. Delightful finds and willing buyers are as close as your neighbors. Details in President's Letter page 2. ☼



Clean-Up Roll-Offs on June 3rd 8 am-12 Noon

We will have two roll-offs at Village East Elementary School for the cleanup. We had a great turnout the last 2 years and anticipate another successful cleanup. **All Village East residents can use the dumpster without fees.** You may bring your unwanted items to the parking lot at Village East Community Elementary School on Saturday, June 3, 2017 from 8:00 a.m.-12 noon or until the roll-offs are full, **WHICH EVER COMES FIRST.** See President's Letter next page for details. ☼



President's Letter

Steve Huffman

VENA President

It is late March as I write this and it feels like it is trying to become summer. We have had a very dry March so far. However, there is snow and rain predicted for tomorrow. We sure need the moisture. Our spring issue of the newsletter had pictures of a lot of snow last year. It's only going to be April and we may yet have some heavy snow to break the branches on our trees and smash down our spring tulips or daffodils. But spring is here and summer will come once again. We are designating a weekend for the Village East Neighborhood- wide spring yard/garage sale, having a spring clean-up and "Yard of the Month" contests again this summer.

Spring Yard/Garage Sale May 19-21

The Spring Yard/Garage Sale weekend will be May 19, 20 and 21 this year. We are hopeful that more people will schedule yard sales this year during the designated weekend. No sign-up is required; just plan your own sale for that weekend. This will be the fourth year we have done it. We will post signs around the neighborhood several weeks before the date to remind one and all to start tagging their valuables for sale or to browse for bargains yourself. You can put up your own signs if you wish. Just remember we are not allowed to put any signs on public property such as stop signs, light poles, etc. (the Board has permission to use the light poles for the yellow meeting/announcement signs only). Remember the adage: "One person's junk is another person's treasure!" It's also an opportunity to reconnect with neighbors.

Spring Rollup Cleanup Saturday June 3rd

The Spring Cleanup will be the weekend after Memorial Day (June 3rd). Last year we applied for the Aurora Beautification Program and are doing so again this year. It also includes a cleanup of Florida and Jewell Streets. We need volunteers to help with the cleanup. Call Steve Huffman at 303-369-6863 or shuff110@comcast.net if you are able to help with our cleanup. We will have two roll-offs at Village East Elementary School for the cleanup. We had a great turnout last 2 years and anticipate another successful cleanup. All Village East residents can use the dumpster without fees. You may bring your unwanted items to the parking lot at Village East Community Elementary School on Saturday, June 3, 2017 from 8:00 a.m. – 12 noon or

until the roll-off is full, **WHICH EVER COMES FIRST.** **Items that can NOT be accepted are:** liquid paint, solvents, motor oil, tires, concrete, rocks, sod, computers, computer monitors, TVs and large tree branches and shrubs. Paint, in cans with lids removed, that is dry or has had kitty litter added to the liquid and has solidified is acceptable. **Branches and shrubs should be cut into 3 foot lengths.** We request your cooperation in not bringing unacceptable items. With a neighborhood of over 1,300 homes, we strive to maximize the disposal space in the roll-offs in order to accommodate as many dues paying members as possible. While we will have volunteers on site to organize the disposal efforts, you are responsible for placing your materials in the containers. We will also have a metal recycler on hand.

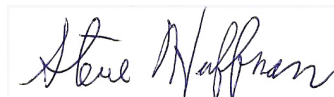
Adopt A Street This Year

We are continuing our Adopt-A-Street again this year. The goal is to try to keep our streets and sidewalks clean and free of trash. VENA actively participates in the city's sponsored Adopt-A-Street Program. Neighbors who are concerned with the general appearance of the neighborhood and willing to make a difference spend about a 30-45 minutes a month picking up trash, mostly litter, on lawns, sidewalks, near curbs and in vacant lots. We are fortunate to have a great crew of street monitors who put forth time and effort to keep them neat and tidy. If you live on such a street feel free to pick up any pieces of trash in front of your or your neighbor's house. The weather is getting warming, making it more conducive to keeping Village East looking attractive and clean. If you would like more information on the program or would like to join the cadre of concerned and involved neighbors who participate, please call our Adopt-A-Street chair, Steve Huffman at 303-369-6863 or shuff110@comcast.net.

Please Volunteer This Year

We're are still in need of additional volunteers. None of our activities happen by themselves. The volunteers active in our organization are few and dwindling. We have two open director positions. We need your help to continue the programs and activities we conduct each year. Board meetings for the coming year are the third Thursday in January, April and July. The Annual meeting should be the second Tuesday in October. Please let Steve Huffman (303-369-6863 or shuff110@comcast.net) if you are interested in helping us out.

Thanks again for your support. ☼



Steve Huffman

Vibrant Village East *Continued from Page 1*

Second Place went to the Redmonds at 1685 S. Lansing Court.



Honorable Mention went to the Darlings at 1740 S. Ironton Street. ⌘



Good Things Happen When Everyone Pays Their VENA Dues!



Our **Yard of the Month Contest** will start in June. Each winner will receive a \$25.00 gift certificate. This is VENA's way of saying "thanks" to those who have done an extraordinary job improving their yards and homes. We try to choose different winners every year. Since we have 1300 homes in Village East it would take 325 years to award each home once. Our committee narrows it down by looking for displays showing pride of ownership through such attributes as xeriscaping, well-groomed landscapes that adhere to all watering restrictions, and blooming gardens that change color at different times of the year, as well as complimentary hardscaping and charming accents. We appreciate everyone's effort to keep Village East looking good. Anyone living in Village East may nominate a neighbor's or their own yard for judging by the Yard of the Month Committee. from trailing pathways to seasonal wreaths. You can recognize each month's winners by the VENA "Yard of the Month" sign in their front yard. Winners for June, July, August, and September, with accompanying photos, will be posted in the Fall VENA Update and on the VENA website. To serve on the 2017 Yard of the Month committee or to nominate a yard, please contact Steve Huffman at 303-369-6863 or shuff110@comcast.net . Thank you. ☼

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your city, your community, your home



<https://www.auroragov.org>

Aurora Places

The city of Aurora is in phase two of their Aurora Places program. It is a comprehensive plan for decision-making related to land use, development, transportation, public facilities, parks and open space. They will be having a meeting close to us on April 26th at 5:30 pm at Overland High School. Go to <http://auroragov.org> for more information. ☼

Aurora's Light Rail R-Line

The R Line along I225 is now open. It is 22 miles long from the Lincoln Avenue Station up to The Peoria

Station. The Aurora Metro Center and Fitzsimons Medical Campus are among the places that can be accessed from the R Line. Go to <https://www.auroragov.org> for more information. ☼

*Your Editor
rode the "R"
Line on
opening day
and received
this nifty squish toy,
sunglasses, and more!*



Behind the City Scene by Charlie Richardson

January

Let's jump into the deep end of the pool! What is a Sanctuary City? Is Aurora a Sanctuary City? The answers can be found on the Internet. I will pause for a moment to let the laughter die down. But it is true and here is why I say this. There is no government sanctioned, promulgated, or published definition. Various persons and entities have taken

to the Internet to create both a definition and list of purported Sanctuary Cities. If you have an interest in this subject matter I encourage you to conduct your own research and come to your own conclusions.

There appears to be three criteria. The first one is the formal passage by the City Council of a Resolution declaring the status or in a strong Mayor form of government an unambiguous statement by the Mayor. BTW Aurora is a weak Mayor/strong City Manager form of government. Secondly a statement by a City official that the City will not recognize/enforce "detainers" issued by ICE to hold prisoners 48 hours beyond their otherwise applicable release date. Thirdly a statement by the Chief of Police that the City's police will not enforce Federal immigration laws. As far as I can tell Aurora has met the latter two criteria. I have come to the conclusion that those who constructed the concept would consider Aurora a Sanctuary City. This is confirmed by the results on the various web pages dedicated to this issue.

Now let me be absolutely clear that I take no position on this identification. Reasonable people could be proud and supportive of this status and likewise others could be alarmed and critical. Regardless of your position we will all have to wait and see how the incoming Administration will define the concept and more importantly what punitive measures, if any, will be applied to those cities deemed to be a Sanctuary City. I would note that with respect to the detainer issue we have appropriately declined to honor the one type of ICE detainer that would require a hold of an additional 48 hours of incarceration because of legal liability to the City. We operate a jail which, by Federal guidelines,

can only hold prisoners for a maximum of 72 hours. As to the actions of our local police the fact is that city police do not enforce Federal immigration laws. But apparently the public announcement of that fact plays a role in triggering the receipt of the label.

As always, I welcome your comments by contacting me at Richardsonward4@comcast.net.

February

Seemingly within minutes of being sworn in I started to understandably receive requests for help with violations

of traffic laws. I learned that there were approximately 50 active pending requests for targeted enforcement. I was able to obtain some assistance but clearly many individuals and neighborhoods remained disappointed.

However this article discusses a different aspect of traffic regulation. Traffic Engineers frequently refer to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. It is promulgated by a Federal Alphabet Soup agency. We can obtain our very own copy for about \$80. I tried to Google the number of pages but could not find it. My recollection is that it is something like 600 pages.

Whenever an elected official requests the installation of new traffic control devices (TCD) the response is invariably that, "The Manual does not allow it!" The standard response is that the installation of a "non-warranted" TCD would subject the City to liability. This effectively stops any elected official's activity because most elected officials don't have the background to question this false assertion. However a couple of important things need to be said. It would not be good public policy to allow for the installation of signs whenever and wherever a Council Member directs them to be placed. I also do believe that the Manual has a lot of merit in the sense of not permitting blue stop signs or signals that are not immediately recognized.

A "warranted" TCD is the result of a Finding/Study by... you guessed it the Traffic Engineers. Because of my almost 30 years with the City I am aware of situations where political pressure has caused there to be action but it is very rare. Plus, new Council Members are cowed by the assertion that the City could be sued. I recently asked the City Attorney to provide me with those lawsuits that resulted in liability where non-warranted signs were installed. The answer, as I already knew, was none. Adding to the challenge is the necessity of convincing a majority of Council to appropriate the hundreds of thousands of dollars for powered traffic signals.

Because of all of the above the City Administration has and continues to hold a very strong hand of cards over any Council Member who individually tries to obtain a new TCD. As I have said on many occasions we currently have a weak Mayor and Council and a very strong City Manager. All the above confirms that fact. Right now the City Administration is vigorously fighting another Ward Council Member's efforts to have 4 stop signs installed at a very dangerous intersection.

March

Why aren't there any condominiums being built – just apartments? The answer involves the Construction Defects Litigation (CDL) conundrum. Builders assert that building condominiums exposes them to unreasonable liabilities for premises lawsuits. **(Continued on page 6)**

Behind the City Scene (Continued from page 5)

I know what many HOA's play a very important role in the management of neighborhoods. This is why the approval of new communities by the City is dependent upon the creation of a "mandatory" HOA. A mandatory HOA means that every owner is subject to the jurisdiction of and fee collection by an HOA. A non-mandatory HOA is a voluntary association of owners with no mechanism to enforce covenants or to collect any fees.

There are good HOA's and bad HOA's both in terms of effective management and budgeting; and the fair and reasonable treatment of the residents. HOA's are typically created by Declarations and Covenants imposed upon the subdivision property by the original developer. They are said to "run with the land". Bylaws are also provided which govern the duties and responsibilities of the HOA Board of Directors. All of these documents should be provided to you at the time of the purchase of your home. If a dispute arises between a resident and their HOA it is important to review these documents. Because of complaints regarding abuses by HOAs, the Colorado Legislature has enacted a comprehensive set of statutes that spell out the rights of residents when a dispute arises.

In addition, a requirement for licensing of management companies acting on behalf of HOA's was created in an effort to professionalize their services. The State statutes have provisions concerning the award of attorney's fees to both the resident and the HOA. This aspect needs to be considered very carefully before litigation is brought against an HOA. I am aware of a situation where an

unsuccessful resident/litigant was assessed 10's of thousands of dollars in attorney's fees when their lawsuit failed. I don't mean to discourage litigation in appropriate situations but this factor must be considered. It is vitally important to consult with an attorney who has experience with this area of law.

Because HOA's are creatures of the above referenced documents any dispute must be analyzed using the law of contracts and not the police powers of a City. In other words, the City has no authority to become involved in HOA disputes. There are no City laws whatsoever that deal with either criminal or civil issues arising from HOA disputes. The State statutes provide the sole governance over HOA's. As cold as this sounds a City Council Member has very little resources to assist in these abuses. Of course, an HOA must comply with all City regulations concerning landscaping and common ownership property. Otherwise the City cannot become involved in the interpretation or enforcement of the covenants or management practices.

City Codes related to zoning and community maintenance are a means of ensuring that the neighborhood's land uses are compatibly located and used for the health, safety and general welfare of the neighborhood. The City of Aurora has a commitment to provide safe and sanitary living conditions for all its residents. It takes a cooperative effort of investors, owners, tenants and the City to achieve a successful property maintenance program. ☹

Code Corner

The Neighborhood Support Code Enforcement

section is responsible for enforcing zoning and housing codes, as well as regulations for businesses, on a proactive, but mostly complaint basis. There are standards to maintain any residential property (privately owned or rental), which is to observe all city regulations. Specific ordinances that often are found to be in violation with residential properties are the following:

1. Exterior maintenance – properties must be maintained (painted where necessary, windows and roof in good shape, etc.)
2. Parking – all vehicles must be legally licensed, operable and parked on an approved surface (i.e., concrete, asphalt, or pavers)
3. Auto repair is prohibited unless in an in-closed garage;
4. Landscape – all landscape must be maintained in a healthy condition, which means there should be no

no weeds and the lawn and plant material are fertilized and watered as needed in accordance with any watering restrictions;

5. Occupancy – no more than 4 un-related adults may live in a single-family home. Single-family homes must remain single-family, i.e., additions for the purpose of renting to others and/or renting out the basement are prohibited.

A complete list and details of the ordinances relating to Code Enforcement for residential properties may be found on the City's website, www.auroragov.org Brochures are available from Aurora's Neighborhood Services Department or from a VENA board member.

If you don't feel comfortable speaking to your neighbor about the appearance of their property or if they are unresponsive to your concerns, you may register an anonymous code enforcement complaint by calling Access Aurora at 303-750-8824. They will usually respond within a few days. Don't feel guilty doing this; you are simply protecting the largest investment of your life. ☹

Aurora Cleanup Day – May 20, 2017

Disposing of large household waste properly is often a challenge, but Aurora Cleanup Day can help.

Residents may bring their large household waste - items that are not appropriate for curbside pickup - to one of six locations from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, May 20. Each location will have a roll-off dumpster and will be staffed by city staff and volunteers. One site is located in each council ward:

- Ward I: Lowry Park, 1001 Dayton St.
- Ward II: Northeast corner of South Airport Boulevard and East Alameda Dr.
- Ward III: Havana Machine, 840 S. Havana St.
- Ward IV: Ecotech Institute, 1400 S. Abilene St.
- Ward V: Griswold Water Purification Facility, 14201 E. Hampden Ave.
- Ward VI: Red-tailed Hawk Park, 23701 E. Hinsdale Way

This free event is open to Aurora residents only, and participants must show proof of residency with a driver's license, utility bill or other identification with an Aurora address.

This event is designed for disposal of residential items that are not appropriate for curbside pickup. The following items will **not** be accepted: refrigerators, freezers, air conditioners or other items with Freon; construction debris such as concrete, sod, dirt, rocks and bricks; car parts such as tires; electronics; household chemicals and paint; and hazardous waste. Disposal resources for many of these types of waste can be found online at AuroraGov.org/KeepAuroraClean.

Volunteers are needed to assist city staff at the Cleanup Day sites. Contact Jamie LaDuke at 303.739.7248 or volunteer@auroragov.org if you are interested. For questions about Aurora Cleanup Day, go to AuroraGov.org/KeepAuroraClean or contact Neighborhood Services at 303.739.7287.

Thank you for your efforts to Keep Aurora Clean! ☘

Enlightening Advice

Neighborhoods that are well light at night are safer neighborhoods. There are two things you can do to help keep Village East safe at night.

- Keep your porch and/or yard light on at night.
- If you notice a street light (not a traffic light) that isn't functioning correctly, call Excel Energy at 800-895-4999 to report it. They want the address closest to where the light is malfunctioning, what the problem is (outage, dim, flickering, or going on and off) the closest intersection, and whether the light is midblock or at a corner. If it is at a corner they may want to know which corner (northeast, southwest, etc.)

Thank you for being part of the solution. ☘

PET Peeve Prevented

A lot of people have been posting about lost and found pets on NextDoor.com so here are some suggestions to help getting your pet back if it gets lost and what to do if you find a pet.

If you own a dog or cat be sure to get it microchipped. If it is already microchipped and you have moved or changed a phone number or email address, make sure that the microchip company knows. If you don't know which microchip company your pet is registered with, have a veterinarian or animal shelter read the chip for you and they will be able to give you contact information for the microchip company.

Only about 5% of dogs and cats without microchips get returned to their owner, while about 92% of microchipped pets get returned to their owner. The 8% of microchipped pets that don't get returned to their owner belong to people who have moved or changed a phone number or email address and not notified the microchip company.

If you find a cat or dog, before keeping it, have it checked for a microchip. If it doesn't have one, then call Intake at the Dumb Friends League to see if anyone has filed a Lost Report there that resembles the pet. Also call the Aurora Animal Shelter to see if they have a Lost Report.

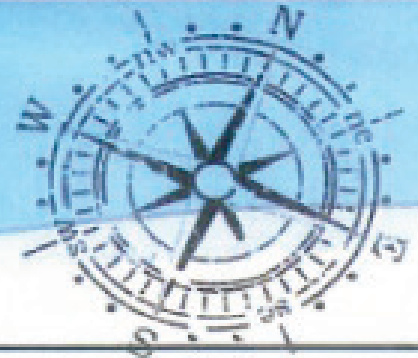
The Dumb Friends League accepts all dogs, cats, and small mammals (mice, rats, hamsters, Guinea pigs, gerbils, rabbits, ferrets, chinchillas, and hedge hogs). If they come in lost and found and have no tags or microchips, they go up for adoption after 5 days. If they have tags or microchips, they don't go up for adoption for 10 days and only after all attempts have been made to contact the registered owner fail. ☘



Canadian fertilizer factory



EXPLORE NORTH AURORA A RESOURCE TOUR 2017



1st Annual Resource Fair

Wednesday, April 19, 2017 ~ 11:00am -1:30pm

- Great Food
- Discover the Arts
- Employment Exhibitors
- Community Resources & Services
- Healthcare Access Information

FREE Event!

Providers' Resource Clearinghouse

14500 E. 33rd Pl, Aurora, CO 80011

RSVP: 303-962-2270 or at PRC@aumhc.org

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Shop Costco Safely

You probably have seen the new no left turn sign between 3 pm and 7 pm at the exit from Costco onto Florida. Signs on private property, such as at Costco, are not enforceable by the Police Department. However, it was paid for and put up by the City, because it is very dangerous to make that turn during those hours and also because it backs up the line of cars attempting to make that turn, sometimes preventing people from turning left into Costco's first area of parking spaces, when they enter Costco from Florida.

On NextDoor.com someone asked about the possibility of putting in a traffic light at that intersection. The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, or MUTCD, defines the standards used by road managers nationwide, including Aurora, to install and maintain traffic control devices on all public streets, highways, bikeways, and private roads open to public travel. It will not permit another traffic light that close to the one on Havana and Florida and there probably isn't enough traffic to warrant it.

Just play it safe and exit to the north where traffic is controlled by the light on Havana and Idaho Pl. It also has a left turn arrow if you want to go north on Havana. There is also a right turn only exit onto southbound Havana just to the south of Costco's fueling station. It is still safer to use the light on Havana and Idaho Pl. exiting out of Costco to the north. ☸



Spring is in the air. Birds and bees start pairing off at Utah Park.



NEIGHBOR NEIGHBOR *to* Roundtable

Tuesday, April 11, 2017

5:30 p.m. Light Supper, 6 to 7:30 p.m. Aurora Places Visioning Workshop

Join us for the second round of public outreach for the Aurora Places comprehensive planning project. This is a time for residents to share their vision for Aurora's future and their ideas for how to make it happen. Visioning is a group effort—sharing, debating and putting marks on a map—so we need you there to collaborate with your neighbors and be part of the process. For more details on the visioning process, visit auroraplacesplan.com.



Aurora Central Library, Community Room, 14949 E. Alameda Parkway
Program is FREE with a light supper being served. Registration is required.

To register, call Neighborhood Services at 303.739.7280



Help Us Contact You...

It's easy for all VE residents (owners AND RENTERS) to stay informed. We just need your preferred:

- ☐ Mailing name _____
- ☐ Mailing address _____
- ☐ E-mail address _____
- ☐ A check for \$15 dues made out to "VENA" (sorry, no credit cards)

Please print out and CLEARLY complete this page, include check, and mail to:

VENA Membership
1155 S. Havana St. #11-373
Aurora, CO 80012

Newsletter e-mail reminders provided upon request. E-mail addresses NOT used for any other purpose. Contact the Treasurer (below) with any contact info updates. We're trying for 100% participation among neighbors. Please send in TODAY. Thanks for your support of Village East!

Bookmark Our Website: www.VillageEastAurora.org

Welcome

Village East Neighborhood

[Home](#) [Our Info](#) [Discussions](#) [Calendar](#)

If you saw the yellow newsletter signs, please e-mail



VENA Board of Directors

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To submit articles or purchase ads for the *Village East Update* newsletter, please contact Terry Snyder, Village East Update Newsletter Editor at terry.j.snyder@comcast.net 303-696-6003.

SUBMISSION DEADLINES ARE THE 1ST DAY OF MARCH, JUNE, SEPTEMBER, and DECEMBER. The *Village East Update* is published four times a year by the Village East Neighborhood Association (VENA).