



Village East Update

September 2019

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

Connect with your neighbors on VillageEastAurora.org, [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/VillageEastAurora), and [Nextdoor](https://www.nextdoor.com)

What's Your 2020 Vision? Make your mark on the neighborhood.

UPCOMING EVENTS!

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

October 15

**Annual VENA Meeting and
Elections**

December 15

**Holiday Lighting Contest
Deadline**

January 14, 2020

Quarterly VENA Meeting

YEAR-ROUND

Adopt-a-Street Cleanup

VENA quarterly meetings are open to all residents the third Tuesday in JAN, APR, JUL (but see above), and OCT, at 7 at Village East Elementary School or Fire Station #11. Come check it out!

Have a desire to make an impact in our community? A burning curiosity about Aurora goings on? Ideas for how to make VENA better? Now's your chance! The annual VENA meeting is coming up in just a few weeks.

At the meeting we'll discuss holiday plans for the neighborhood, recap some of the year's events, and lay plans for the coming year. City representatives will also be there to share information on Access Aurora and plans for the Canterbury Park redevelopment.

The Board will also be holding elections for office for the new year. The Vice Presidency and a few Board spaces are waiting just for you! Vote for new officers, run for an office yourself, or just see what's coming up (and how you can get involved)!

Sadly, with the turning of the leaves comes the turning over of the VENA Board. This year we're bidding goodbye to members Greg Toler (17 years), Mike Welford (5 years), Christina Anderson (1 year), and Jack Dougherty (4 years). We owe them immensely for the time and effort they've put in over the years—you will be missed!

**Join us Tuesday, October 15, at 7 pm at Village
East Elementary School for the Annual VENA
meeting.**

A Letter from the President

GREAT NEIGHBORS, GREAT NEIGHBORHOOD

As summer comes to an end and autumn approaches in full swing, I can't help but think about how blessed the Village East neighborhood is to have such great neighbors.

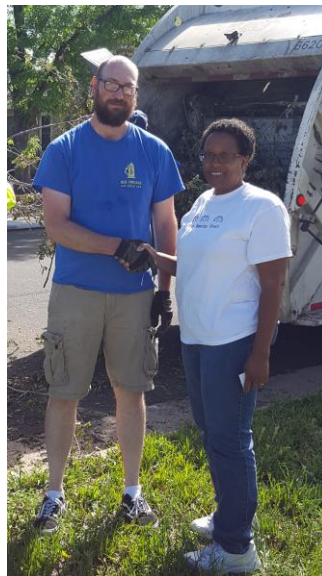
The activities during the summer including Neighborhood Yard Sale, Spring Clean Up, Candidate's Forum, and Neighborhood Picnic are a testament to how active and caring our neighborhood is.

We have earnest, caring neighbors like Derek (*right, with Robin*), who volunteered his time, gas, and muscles going about the neighborhood on Spring Clean Up day picking up piles of the tree branches from the freak storm that littered our streets for weeks prior since the city was unable to send a collection truck to help clear the debris. Although the City provided a dump spot for the debris, most of our residents did not have the means to haul large tree parts to the dump site. This young man, as well as all the Spring Clean Up volunteers, certainly saved the day, and their hard work was truly appreciated. Please take a peek at the Spring Clean Up article on page 5 for more photos and the story about what turned out to be a great bonding event for our neighborhood.

The Neighborhood Picnic was also a great opportunity to solidify old relationships and make new ones. Normally the picnic is held at Village East Park; however, Utah Park was the go-to spot this year. VENA would like for you to weigh in on which location you'd prefer for next year's picnic: Village East Park or Utah Park.

Let us know on NextDoor, or shoot us an email to VENAColorado@gmail.com.

Speaking of solidifying relationships, I'm absolutely thrilled to hear of more residents hosting block parties! It's a fun way to get to know your neighbors while welcoming in the new season. As long as the city street is not being blocked off and you actually live on the block(s) where the party is to be located, a permit is not needed to throw a block party, so feel free to party on with your neighbors whenever there's an opportunity. For more information on hosting block parties, go to www.auroragov.org/blockparty.



Fall is a great time of fun opportunities for our neighborhood's children as well. As school doors open and classrooms fill up, there are still plenty of outdoor activities available for our children and grandchildren to participate in.

It's harvest time, which means Halloween and harvest festivals, so please be mindful of our little ones crossing the streets and pay more attention to your speed as you drive down our neighborhood streets.

Fall also means fishing at the Aurora Reservoir and Nick's Garden Center Annual Fall Festival, where kids can enjoy pumpkin picking, a straw maze, train rides, and more (go to tinyurl.com/AuroraPunkinChunkin for more information).

Of course, there are plenty of fun opportunities in our own yards. What kid can resist jumping into a big pile of leaves?

All fun and no work, however, will not sustain a successful neighborhood. Village East would not be as great if it were not for all the hard work of your VENA Board members.

As the VENA president, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the VENA Board members for all their hard work and dedication this year in assuring that Village East remains a great place to live. Thank you.

To our Village East residents, there's plenty of opportunity for you to join the VENA team or give input on the progress of the neighborhood even if you find serving on the Board is not right for you.

As we head into a new year, come share your 2020 Vision for Village East at the VENA Annual Meeting coming up in October.

There is still opportunity to benefit the neighborhood by serving on the VENA Board, as there are a couple of vacancies awaiting dedicated neighbors like you to step up and fill the position. The Vice President position is up for election as well, so come out and vote, if not run, for the position. All Village East residents are entitled to vote.

With that said, cheers to Fall and the great residents of the Village East Neighborhood!

Robin Bruce, VENA President

VENA Candidate Forum



As you may know, Aurora is holding a general election on November 5. The quarterly VENA Meeting on July 30 included a candidate forum, which several candidates attended. Mayoral Candidate **Omar Montgomery**; Aurora City Council Ward 4 Candidate **Juan Marciano**; and Aurora City Council Member-At-Large Candidates **Angela Lawson** (incumbent), **Thomas Mayes**, and **Martha Lugo** all took the time to meet with VENA residents, answer questions, and share their visions for Aurora's future.

Make your voice heard in the election. For information on registration and other resources, see https://www.auroragov.org/city_hall/elections/voter_resources; for information on candidates and issues, see [https://ballotpedia.org/city_elections_in_Aurora,_Colorado_\(2019\)](https://ballotpedia.org/city_elections_in_Aurora,_Colorado_(2019)).

If you'd like to see more of the candidates in action, the Aurora City Council Candidate Forum will be held on October 8 from 6 to 10 pm in City Council Chambers (15151 E. Alameda Pkwy. The event is free and open to the public and will be televised by Channel 8.

YARD OF THE MONTH



The **June Yard of the Month** winners were Bill and Carol Stutz at 1332 S. Peoria Court. They have lived in Village East since 1993. The house is nicely landscaped with a stone walkway and many terraces filled with many flowers. Both are retired and have worked together in the yard for the last 3 years. Carol worked for Cherry Creek Schools. Bill worked with the City of Aurora in the Water Division and is very familiar with xeriscaping techniques. They have one son who lives in Kearney, Nebraska, and is on staff at the University of Nebraska. He attended Cunningham, Prairie, and Overland schools. 🌸

The **July Yard of the Month** was 1851 S. Paris Circle. The owners are Roberto and Norma Tovar. They moved to Village East 13 years ago. They have three daughters. Their youngest, Naidelyn, still lives with them and recently graduated from Overland High School. All three attended Highline, Prairie, and Overland schools. They have a small dog named Lilah. The yard worked is shared by both Roberto and Norma. First, they tore out all the juniper bushes in the front. Then they added colorful flowers and plants and finally added a new walkway. Roberto is a self-employed truck driver and Norma works for the Medical Center of Aurora in the Radiology Department. 🌸



The **August Yard of the Month** belongs to Jana and Seth Hamilton at 1341 S. Lima Street. They have lived in Village East for ten years. Both the front and back yard are filled with many gorgeous flowers. Jana does all the work except for the lawn mowing. Seth must do that. The family calls Jana "Mrs. Flowers." Jana is a stay-at-home mom. Seth works for Ameriprise Financial. They have four children, Graham, Chad, Nicky, and Dillion. They attend Village East, Prairie, and Overland schools. 🌸

Cleaning Out & Cleaning Up

You may have noticed a lot of activity in the neighborhood on June 8. A garbage truck set up next to Village East Elementary, and folks from across the neighborhood brought yard trimmings, tree branches, household waste, discarded metal, and more. The timing couldn't have been better, as a storm had knocked down branches all through Village East. Neighbors chatted over donuts as cleanup crews of all ages scoured the streets and canal paths for debris. It was a great chance to make new acquaintances and keep our neighborhood looking its very best. Special thanks to Christina Anderson and her cleanup crew, to Pro Disposal for providing the truck, and to all who participated!



Behind the City Scene

August 2019

Let me say at the very outset that this is not a subliminal effort to push for a full time City Council like Denver. That is a separate and potentially very robust debate for a much later date.

But I am experience a left political brain versus right political brain dilemma. The reference to left and right has no political spectrum import but instead relates to the issues as between Federal, State, and City. I started working for the City in 1976 as the substitute night court bailiff. So I have a pretty good idea of what is new and what is not. For the first time City Council is being regularly swept up in historical State and Federal issues. I think this is the result of the hyper partisan environment we find ourselves in.

Some of my colleagues believe that City Council should have an active role in “bigger” issues. Now before anybody gets their partisan politics up in a twist this is not a criticism of anybody or any issues. Just an observation. But I will share my personal perspective. I tend to concentrate on issues like how the City treats its pet population and how the City responds to homelessness concerns in our neighborhoods. The State gave the City oil and gas control for the first time ever. I have tried to take actions consistent with the best interests of the residents of Ward IV even though most of us realize that climate change and renewable energy needs to be taken seriously.

Immigration and the detention practices have moved to the forefront. Recently a public speaker asked Council Members to stand if they agreed with a characterization of the current immigration situation that included a reference to the conditions inside the GEO facility. Now I'm not sure City Council should be asked to stand or not stand during a formal Council meeting. Nevertheless I did not stand because the question was framed to include a Federal policy issue. I might have stood up if the question had related solely to the conditions in the facility. Of course when the government takes custody of any one for any reason it must provide decent conditions for those in custody. What is a Ward IV issue is certainly taking on a new dynamic.



**Charles "Charlie"
Richardson
Council Member
Ward IV**
crichard@auroragov.org

**Ward IV Town
Meetings** Held on
the third Thursday of
each month from
6:30-8:30 pm at
Garden Plaza of
Aurora Senior Living
center, 14221 E.
Evans Ave.

September 2019

WARD 4 GETS AN F! Do I have your attention now. In September of 2017 I partnered with Council Member Bergen to develop and fund a traffic program that allots 6 traffic calming devices per year per Ward. The 2 devices are either stop signs with a blinking light border or a radar speed read out sign. This effort was a result of the long suffering residents of Village East in trying to suppress speeding on E. Florida Ave. between S. Peoria and S. Havana. The Council authorized the necessary funding for this program in 2018. The program was also funded for 2019.

As you all know I write this column every month and then it is disseminated far and wide. OK mostly just around Ward 4. Nevertheless I thought I would write about this fantastic program so I checked with the City Traffic Engineer to see how many Ward 4 neighborhoods had submitted a request in 2019 for an analysis for these devices! The answer is ZERO! I am shocked and we are not talking about the discovery of gambling and Ricks. I can think of several locations that could use an analysis.

If you read this column please share it with a member of your HOA or civic association. The on line application can be found at Auroragov.org/trafficalming. Once it is filled out an analysis will be done to see if the location warrants the installation of one or both of these devices. It would be disconcerting to have the devices assigned to Ward 4 be given to a different Ward.

I accept most of the blame for not getting the existence of this program out to the community. Lastly, I hope you have noticed the more prevalent use of flashing yellow arrows at our intersections. The good news is that it allows more traffic to flow. The bad news is you have to be more careful to triple check for oncoming traffic.

Annual Village East Picnic



Neighbors enjoying a bite to eat



Board Member Jessica Ideus extends a welcome



Grillmasters hard at work

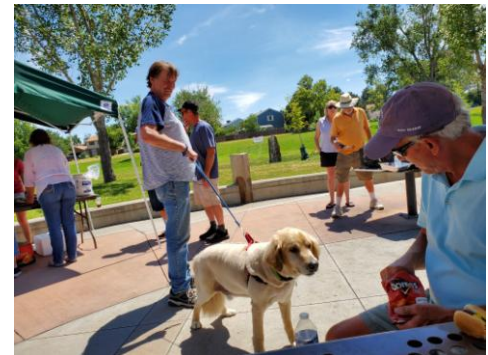


Getting connected and hiding out in the shade



Special thanks to Sugarlips Face Painting for the brilliant artwork!

On August 4, neighbors gathered in Utah Park for the annual Village East Neighborhood picnic. Friends old and new enjoyed hot dogs, snow cones, lawn games, and face painting. It was an excellent chance to catch up and enjoy the sunshine. Thanks so much to Picnic Coordinator Christina Anderson and all the other board members and neighbors who pitched in to make it happen!



Even four-legged neighbors enjoyed the gathering



Snow cones from Kona Ice took the edge off the heat



(right) Young residents comparing their new art

(left) A nice sunny day for a picnic





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 \$20 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!

Paying your dues just got easier! Find VENA now on PayPal and Venmo!

PayPal: venacolorado@gmail.com or [PayPal.me/VillageEast](https://www.paypal.com/paytogether/VillageEast)
Venmo: venacolorado@gmail.com or @VE-Association

Bookmark Our Website: www.VillageEastAurora.org

Like us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/VENAColorado>

Connect on Nextdoor: <https://nextdoor.com/neighborhood/villageeastco--aurora--co/>

Email us with your questions, comments, or suggestions: VENAColorado@gmail.com

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