

BELLA VISTA NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2014

VOLUME 20, ISSUE 3



"PICNIC REMINDER: Sunday, August 24th, 4 to 7 pm"

The 2014 Annual Bella Vista Neighborhood Picnic is just around the corner. Wear your **ugliest shirt** and win a **prize**. You are limited only by your imagination and public decency laws! The winner will be determined by the collective **Groan-O-Meter** and in the unlikely event of a tie, our illustrious leader, Tom, will decide the winner. Hot Dogs will be on the grill with all the trimmings. Bring a side dish or a dessert to share at this **always-fun pot luck picnic**. *Badminton and Giant Jenga* will be back!!! So start working on that "game face".

Corrections! Perry Ellis was a fabulous fashion designer who sadly passed in 1986. He was therefore NOT present at the Directors Meeting last May 1st as cited on page one of the last newsletter. However, our own and equally fabulous director Perry Elliott WAS present and continues to represent our neighborhood in fabulous fashion.

A second correction of great importance, also from page one of the last newsletter, is the correct date for the **Annual Fall Yard Debris Clean-up**. The correct date is **Saturday, November 15th from 9am to 3pm**. As in past years, Waste Connections will have large dumpsters available at Behrens Woods, the corner of Bella Vista Drive and Bella Vista Road, to handle the plethora of leaves, branches, and yard debris that Fall gives to us all.

Youth News

More great minds are coming out of the Bella Vista Neighborhood. Smile! Brittany Degen graduated from Midwestern University with a Doctor of Dental Medicine degree. She will begin a thirty-month residency in Orthodontics. And Jonathan Degen has been accepted to Gonzaga School of Law in Spokane, Washington and begins his schooling this month. Congratulations and best of luck to both!!!

Minutes from July 22, 2014 Bella Vista Neighborhood Director's Meeting

held at the home of President Tom Perkins. Tom called the meeting to order at 6:37pm. Present: Tom Perkins, Monica Neice, Reggie Frost, Cheryl Higgins, Nancy Roth, Bob Rowe, Perry Elliott, Kathy Carmody and Ren Weaver.

Kathy Carmody gave the Treasurer's Report. Balance as of 5/1/14 of \$3,503.36. Contributions from four neighbors for \$95.00 and \$120.00 for Cheryl attending a recycling class sponsored by the City of Vancouver's Solid Waste Division. Expenses of \$75.86 for Behrens Woods upkeep and \$96.27 in leftover grant money. Balance as of 7/22/14 is \$3,546.13. Thanks to the households that contributed for supporting your neighborhood ☺

Upcoming Activity: Updating the Neighborhood Action Plan will require a specific meeting to discuss details of rewriting it; Welcoming Chairperson to replace Kathryn Lockwood; New chairperson to replace Monica Neice as Bella Vista Rose Garden Chairperson as she is moving out of state. Guest speaker for the November 6, 2014 General Meeting will be Rick Dyer, CFO of Clark Public Utilities. The topic will be Street Lighting and Energy Efficiency.

Parks Update: Bob Rowe reported continued upkeep of Behrens Woods with the help of Jessica Antoine of Urban Forestry, Urban Forestry workers and local students this past June. Weeds were pulled, bark chips laid on trails, blackberry bushes cut and trees trimmed. Mowing at Bella Vista Park has been irregular due to City budget cuts. Doggie waste baggies at Bella Vista Park were refilled thanks to Kathy Carmody placing a call to the City.

Traffic: The idea of placing traffic calming signs in neighborhood yards was discussed to curb speeding on Bella Vista Road. Reggie reported that the City is considering lowering the speed limit from 25 to 20 mph in heavy traffic residential areas like McGillivray Boulevard.

Crime Watch & Safety: There was a discussion about recent pranks such as items being left on lawns and late night door knocking. Kids were reported playing with the water hose for the community garden. No damage was done but we pay for the water that is supposed to be used for the community food garden. Ren Weaver contacted the Phone Tree Captains to keep the group informed and organized. Discussion ensued over concerns of questionable activities from a trailer parked on SE 21st and Bella Vista Road.

2015 Calendar: Discussion for things to place on the 2015 calendar.

Annual Picnic: Picnic volunteer assignments were reviewed. **Altenhof-Long family:** Hot dogs/grill/condiments and ice for beverages. **Nancy Roth:** Ice for pot luck table, Paper Towels and 3 card tables. **Bob Rowe:** 1 table. **Reggie Frost:** 1 table. **Kathy Carmody:** Table center-piece plants. **Cheryl Higgins:** Prizes, games, table cloths and duct tape. **Mike Higgins:** Pick-up and return City tables and trash cans.

President's Discretionary fund: Cheryl Higgins made a motion to buy a new "sandwich board" type sign for displaying neighborhood events. Bob Rowe seconded the motion. A budget of \$200 was allotted.

Meeting adjourned.

Board of Directors: President-Tom Perkins 944-5552; **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:** Eugene Chang; Marilyn Cramer; Perry Elliott; Reggie Frost; Fred Garmire; Cheryl Higgins; Kate Alenhof-Long; Ren Weaver; Ruth Wilmoth. **Committee Chairs:** Community Food Garden-Ruth Wilmoth 513-2691; Crime Watch-Ren Weaver 896-1616; Newsletter Editor-Cheryl Higgins 314-2141; Parks-Bob Rowe; Road Improvement-Reggie Frost 260-4418; Rose Garden-*Open Position*; Welcoming-*Open Position*.



Good Bye and Hello! There's been more activity on Bella Vista Loop. "Good Bye" to Dave and Monica Neice as they have traded moss for dust devils and relocated to sunny Tucson, Arizona. "Hello" to Michael and Amy Spank from Camas who made the purchase of the former Neice house. Welcome to "The Loop" Michael, Amy and daughter Keeley!

Life moves on and change is inevitable. And as we say farewell and good luck to Monica, we find ourselves in need of new Rose Garden Chairperson as well as someone to take over as Welcoming Chairperson. So if you'd like to get more involved in your neighborhood, please consider becoming a Board Member for the Bella Vista Neighborhood Association and share your talents. Interested? Give Tom Perkins a call, 944-5552. And thank you again, Monica, for all you did in helping to make the Bella Vista Neighborhood beautiful.

Recipe for the Backyard Gardner

In anticipation of this years' tomato crop, here is another recipe for a **Fresh Tomato Soup** that is easy and delicious. It may just become your favorite tomato soup recipe too. To easily seed tomatoes, cut them in half crosswise. Hold one half and squeeze gently.

Ingredients:

8 large ripe tomatoes, divided	3 ½ Tbsp. all-purpose flour
1 medium onion, sliced	6 cups beef broth, divided
3 to 4 Tbsp. olive oil	1 celery rib, chopped
1 clove garlic, minced	Sprig of cilantro
1 chili pepper, seeded & chopped	Salt & Pepper
¼ cup chopped green onion	Optional sour cream & sliced chili peppers

Preparation:

Seed and coarsely chop tomatoes, discarding stem ends.

In a large deep skillet or saucepan, cook onion in olive oil until golden, stirring occasionally. Add half the tomatoes and half the garlic; cook until tomatoes begin to brown and liquid is absorbed. Add remaining garlic, chili pepper and green onion; continue cooking until vegetables are lightly browned.

Sprinkle flour over vegetables, stir to mix well. Add half the broth, stirring until smooth. Add remaining tomatoes, celery and cilantro; cook over medium heat for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Press mixture through a food mill or sieve.*

Add remaining broth and simmer 20 minutes. Season to taste. Serve hot or cold, topped with sour cream and/or sliced chili peppers. Makes 6 servings.

*Note: I'm too lazy to mess with a food mill or sieve though I own both. So I pureed the whole batch in my blender thus saving all the wonderful tomato pulp and skins (where the vitamins are).

Make it your own and Enjoy!

Editorial - Straw Bale Gardening:

-by Cheryl Higgins-

Coming to the Pacific Northwest from the deserts of Southern Nevada, I've never grown anything but frustrated trying to cultivate a green thumb. So I would like to share my first attempt with Straw Bale Gardening (SBG). I first heard about SBG at a local home show demonstration last fall. I was intrigued and bought a small book for \$10, Straw Bale Gardening- A Complete Guide to Growing in Bales Without Soil or Weeds, written by Joel Karsten who made the presentation at the home show. Here's the short story. Even I, who can kill the heartiest of plants, found a certain amount of success with straw bales. For the most part, bales sit like a raised bed that you can move from year to year and, if you buy good bales, have no weeds!!! Do your research and then consider these suggestions: Buy quality straw bales. We bought bales for \$4 each. Half sprouted so much grass I thought we would have to mow them before anything else grew. You can buy clean, quality bales for no more than \$7 apiece. Next spring I will do a double row, side-by-side. As the season progresses, the bales start to break down through the process of composting (which they are supposed to do), and sag, especially if you have something heavy growing like cabbage. I think a second row, snugged up along the side of the first, will help give support to both rows of bales.

Personally, for me, I found the following vegetables to do great in the bales: peppers like jalapeno, serrano and bells; basil; green beans; snow peas; leafy stuff like chard and lettuces; cucumbers, tomatoes and squashes. What I didn't have luck with was the cruciferous veggies, specifically cauliflower, cabbage, and broccoli. However, Reggie noted immediately when he saw how I had planted my starts that they were too close together. As they tried to grow, his early observations became glaringly obvious even to me. I ended up pulling some out and discarding them so that others could have a chance. But by then it was too late. I'll know better for next year. My yield was still enough to definitely encourage me to try it again next spring. It's also worth noting that the bales are only good for one season. They eventually break down and become compost for the following year. So don't plant the things that will come back in subsequent seasons like garlic, asparagus and artichokes. Those are best suited for your raised bed.



And Don't Forget to check out the City's website for all of the latest information. Go to www.cityofvancouver.us and click on Calendar of Events for all the latest happenings downtown and all around! You can also visit the Office of Neighborhoods website to see what other neighborhoods are doing.

Bella Vista Neighborhood Association

PO Box 871145

Vancouver, WA 98687-1145

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.