



HUNING HIGHLANDS

The newsletter for the Huning Highland Historic District Association, Albuquerque, NM since 1977

November 2011

Dickens of a Dinner By Ann Carson

It is time to prepare for “Dickens of a Dinner”, which takes place on December 3, 2011. Our yearly fundraiser is in its 23rd year.

We need guides who dress in Victorian clothing to guide our five groups to the five different locations. Their job is to welcome the guests and provide information on the neighborhood. Couples may work together as guides.

We also need workers - waiters to serve food, people to prepare food, folks who love to decorate, helpers to shop and deliver food, furniture and dishes.

This is a joyous event where we get acquainted with our neighbors and show off our wonderful houses decked out for Christmas.

There will be the usual prizes for hanging lights and decorating the

exterior of your house by December 3rd. So plan ahead and get involved. We really have fun introducing our guests to a Victorian “Dickens of a Dinner”.

If neighbors wish to attend the event the price is \$65.00 per person. Call Ann Carson for reservations, to volunteer or to purchase tickets... 242-1143

Lead/Coal Project Update By Bonnie Anderson

The Lead/Coal project from I-25 to Washington is slated to be completed by April or May. At that point, the contingency fund (along with \$500,000 from the recent bond election) will be refocused on completing the last leg of the project that runs through our neighborhood. Wilson and Company, the design contractors, are planning to modify the original plans so that they can be accomplished with the smaller budget. For example,

we may only get improvements one side of each roadway, or some feature (such as lighting) may not be included. Community input will be sought before these decisions are made final. This approach means that we won't have to pay the typical 6% (or more) of the budget to redesign the whole section from I-25 to Broadway. The current plans will be used with enough “shaving” to be accomplished with the smaller budget.

Councilor Isaac Benton is the one who fought to get our neighborhood's part of this project included in the final plans and has consistently supported completion of the entire project – from Broadway to Washington. He has promised to continue to monitor the allocation of contingency funds toward project completion. When completed, Lead and Coal will be safer for pedestrians and bikers.

Here's the Dirt By Bonnie Anderson

A few hardy marigolds and herbs spot the garden as a newly planted winter cover crop of nitrogen-fixing plants starts to emerge. The latest project for this season was improving the fence surrounding the garden so that the chicken coop area could be opened into the garden area for the winter.

A planning meeting for the next growing season will be held in Feb.

at the garden. All people on the waiting list (over 10 families now) who live within HH will be invited. Some ideas we'll be considering at the meeting are a possible rate hike (from \$25 to \$30 for the season), erecting semi-permanent structures in part of the garden to allow growing up, enriching the soil, having zone captains who would guide the planting and care of two adja-

cent rows, changing the group work sessions from Sat. mornings to Sun. mornings, and the possibility of setting up a bee hive. We anticipate being able to include everyone on the waiting list in next year's garden membership since we will no longer be offering private rows. If you have ?s about the garden or want to be on the waiting list for next year, please contact me at 242-8848.

Update on 119 Arno SE re Surface Parking Lot

By **Moisés A. González**

First, a little background for those of you who have not been in the loop. The lot on 119 Arno SE has been vacant for some time. As happens with many empty lots in our neighborhood, it slowly became a de facto parking lot. At some point, the owner, Art Hayman (represented in these matters by William Kraemer), was told the lot could no longer continue as an unofficial parking lot. So the owner sought a conditional use permit to operate as a paid surface parking lot. A mediation with the owner's agent and interested parties was held some months ago. At that meeting, Bonnie and I made it clear that our board had voted against the lot becoming a surface parking lot but that we were also interested in working with the owner in trying to find a way to make the best of the situation should the permit be granted. (Suggestions included garden space, porous paving, picket fences. The hope was that the owner, should he be granted the permit, would go above and beyond the minimal landscaping requirements stipulated by the city for surface parking lots.)

During the zoning hearing, William Kraemer stated that the owner has no interest in seeing this lot be a parking lot forever. Indeed, his greatest interest is in seeing something that would be an asset to the neighborhood constructed on that lot. For that reason, he asked that the city grant a two-year condition-

al use permit. As a representative of the neighborhood association, I informed the hearing officer that our board opposes the granting of the permit. Rob Dickson, from the EDo Board, said they were supporting the request with two conditions: 1) That the permit expire when parking meters are installed, adding that the applicant could re-apply based on experience once the meters are installed. 2) Landscape the parking lot according to EDo UCOZ standards. Rob then went on to explain why he personally did not think the parking lot is a good idea. In a nutshell, surface parking lots go against the stated goals of both Huning Highland and EDo. Walkability is a primary express goal for both associations. Surface parking lots deteriorate the streetscape and make walking less pleasant. There is actually a surplus of parking within a few blocks of the businesses on Central. People in urban centers often have to park a short distance from their ultimate destination. This is not only good for sedentary Americans, it is good for other businesses, as walking people stop and notice what's inside the stores they pass, and good for residents as people on the streets make a neighborhood safer. During the hearing, I quoted an article from Jacksonville (where they are trying to revitalize inner-city neighborhoods) that points out that urban neighborhoods succeed when they hold on to their char-

acter by having on-street parking rather than by trying to emulate suburban parking schemes (where they will always be at a disadvantage). Some business owners are in favor of surface parking for obvious reasons. But it is my opinion that they are being shortsighted. The restaurants along Central are doing phenomenally and part of their success is the unique urban neighborhood in which they exist. If new businesses continue to open along Central, and I hope they do, there would be increased pressure to open new surface lots rather than use the ample on-street parking. If new parking lots become the solution to increased business and residential density, eventually there will be a devastating impact on the character of the neighborhood and the golden goose, whose eggs the businesses are enjoying, will be dead.

Update: At the November 14 zoning hearing, I was able to speak to Bill Kraemer and make it clear that our neighborhood association would like an opportunity to go over the site plan before the zoning officer makes a decision. He agreed and requested that there be a postponement. The new hearing date is January 17, 2012. I spoke on the record saying that our association remains opposed to any surface parking, but that we will also continue to work with Mr. Kraemer in the hopes of making the best of the situation.

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Huning Highland Business Beat

Cheapskate

Cheapskate is a place to get unique gifts for friends, family, and self. Owner/proprietor, Megan Raloff, opened doors recently at the garage on Coal, behind her house at 500 High St. SE. Inspired by the crafts and decorative items that round out our lives and homes, Megan has searched

afield in her quest to bring you stylish and useful "stuffs for your home." Though the new storefront is small (only 240 square feet), Cheapskate can still afford an eye-ful. From home crafted pillows to neighborhood artist's paintings, jewelry, bags, ceramics, metals, and woodcrafts, you need to stop

by to discover Cheapskate's various and sundry for yourself. With many thanks to the neighborhood for its support, Cheapskate is so happy to be here!

Open Thursday through Sunday, 11-7

Phone (505) 750-0227 or email meganraloff@cheapskateabq.com

The Shop Automotive, LLC

On September 3rd, three friends and highly experienced dealership technicians (Mercedes and Infinity Certified) bought Highland Autoworks from Adli Yacoub to start their own automotive partnership. The partners are Jeremy Sanchez, Jerry Hesch and Matt Buckingham. Jerry's wife manages the

books and you will often find Jeremy and Matt's spouses helping out with scheduling. The shop services automotive needs in the general Huning Highland community which includes Presbyterian Hospital and CNN. Clients will be able to make prior arrangements for a pick-up, or drop-off depending on

available time. The repair shop is conveniently located on the corner of Coal and the southern ingress to I-25, The three partners stand behind their collective mechanical skills and guarantee their work. They can be reached at 620-3007

Welcome to the neighborhood.

Fire Station #2 to Be Closed in 2013 *By Greg Bloom*

It was with some surprise that the neighborhood association learned in September that our historic fire station on High Street (across from the Greek church) will be closed in early 2013. The last we had heard about Station #2 was that it was going to be remodeled. Station #2 had been on some city council agendas but none of us knew the discussion had changed from rehabbing it to shuttering it.

At our November 2 meeting we asked Fire Chief Breen and Councilor Benton to attend. Breen offered apologies saying that two community meetings had been

held--but not in our community. The city has already had a property exchange which gives the Fire Department land for a new station near I-25 and Gibson. Plans have already been drawn up for this facility.

Breen stated that we will be served by the station on Silver and 8th. The new Gibson station will be within about a mile too. Finally, he said that because Gibson will house paramedics our response time for paramedic service will be better than it is now.

Given that the closure and land exchange seem to be done deals,

the neighborhood association agreed to focus on what will happen with the old station. Councilor Benton committed to help us find a new use for the site that will benefit Huning Highlands. One possibility is that ABQ's Family and Community Services Department will get the spot. Calls to FCSD have not yet been returned.

Moving forward the neighborhood association will continue to work with Benton and the city to make sure that the old fire station will continue to contribute positively to our community.



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